



newsletter

Issue 8, December 2006

Welcome to the eighth edition of the Manx Organic Network newsletter, another packed bulletin on MON's latest activities and achievements. Wishing you all a peaceful Christmas and prosperous 2007

Committee update

TO KEEP YOU updated in the best way possible, we've rearranged the newsletter into clear sections. If you have any comments, we'd love to hear them – please do get in touch.

So what have we, your committee, been doing? In brief, recent activities have included:

- Two days of meetings to discuss strategy

- Discussions with a number of key players at DAFF
 - Involvement with the Carnane Community Trust
 - Involvement in the climate change day
 - Involvement in the farmer's market at the Sea Terminal
- Read on for full details on all these and more...

MON goes POP

EVERYONE on the MON committee has a passionate desire to see more Manx organic products in our shops, as well as regular farmers' markets, box schemes and farm gate sales.

In three years MON has attracted over 700 members: a phenomenal growth rate which demonstrates how many people in the Island share that passion.

Our commitment takes us into many different areas, including Government discussions, agricultural shows, school projects, WI talks and media articles. All of this takes a lot of time and effort and, as MON is a voluntary organisation, everyone gives theirs freely.

That's why the committee sat down over two days to discuss the way forward for MON. We concluded that the best use of our resources is to concentrate on our organic producers. They are after all key to progressing Manx organic produce. Hence 'MON goes POP' – **Promoting Our Producers**.

Over the next 18 months we'll be doing just that, with the ultimate aim of convincing more farmers to convert to organic production, so creating a strong Manx Organic brand. If we want a healthy population, sustainable agriculture and an environment our grandchildren can enjoy, we have to make sure these farmers are being drawn into an economy that will support them.

In the words of E. F. Schumacher, author of *Small is Beautiful* and Soil Association president in the 1970s, *"Among material resources, the greatest, unquestionably, is the land. Study how a society uses its land and you can come to pretty reliable conclusions as to what the future will be."*

UPCOMING EVENTS

'Bread Matters', Andrew Whitely, Manx Museum, Spring 2007

We're delighted to announce that Andrew Whitley, a uniquely experienced organic baker and founder of the celebrated Village Bakery in Melmerby, has accepted our invitation to come and give a talk based on his acclaimed book *Bread Matters*.

From simple loaves to gluten-free baking, Andrew explains the process and shares the practical craft he teaches on his popular courses. He also reveals how commercial bread is laced with additives, can have little or no nutritional value and is sometimes even frozen, reheated, then sold as fresh.

Andrew will also be running a day-long master baking class at the Isle of Man College. We'll let you know dates, times and costs as soon as possible. If you'd like to take part, call Janet Bridle on 835436 – as spaces will be limited!

STOP PRESS

MON congratulates all new members of Tynwald and in particular Phil Gawne on his successful re-election. We've made great progress with DAFF in the last six months and hope to see Phil returned as Minister for Agriculture.

More good news is that 'Establishing an organic food action plan' is now one of the points in DAFF's 2010 Proposed Strategy. Watch this space...

Discussions with DAFF By Janet Bridle

OVER THE last three years we've had many meetings with the Ministers of Agriculture and officers of DAFF, all of which have seen a positive and mutually respectful exchange of views.

But we're now starting to enjoy much more focused discussions. For example, we recently met with DAFF Chief Executive Colin Kniveton to get an overview of his role, as well as his thoughts on potential changes to agriculture policies. We in turn gave him our views on the scope for expanding Manx organic produce and alternative forms of distribution.

This meeting addressed two key issues. Firstly, the cost and time involved in converting to organic (typically two years). Secondly, as seen in the UK, the increasing domination of organic sales by big stores like Tesco and M&S to the detriment of local suppliers.

Another recent meeting with Richard Lole, Director of Services, saw us discussing the formation of an Organic Working Party (OWP). The aim of the OWP would be to produce an Organic Action Plan (OAP) for the Island. We agreed that this is essential

in order effectively to diversify into organic prior to 2010.

The OWP membership has yet to be decided, but we have proposed one representative each from DAFF, MON, MNFU, Fat Stock and Creamery, plus an organic farmer and perhaps a dairy farmer interested in conversion.

We also proposed that representatives should have unqualified authorisation to speak for the organisations they represent. We wholeheartedly believe this should be a DAFF-sponsored initiative, with Government as a prime stakeholder providing a strong, clear framework of support.

The OWP would enable local entrepreneurs keen to get going, providing real 'freedom to flourish'. It would also help ensure that Manx production avoids the 'feast or famine' situation seen in the UK in the early days of organics.

We anticipate that the OWP will be meeting regularly by the time you get this newsletter, and will keep you updated on developments.

Getting in touch with our food By Janet Bridle

I SWITCHED on Radio 4 recently and happened upon a very interesting programme about the changing habits of shoppers.

The programme was based around three years of research from the Universities of Coventry, Warwick, Hull and Burbeck London. One of the researchers, Burbeck's Dr Rosie Cock, focused on the increasing number of consumers buying from box schemes, farmers markets and the farm gate.

These people generally started buying like this because they found it convenient, friends had recommended it and there was a novelty element. But they then tended to stick to it. Why?

- People felt deeply about connecting with the grower/producer
- Convenience
- Pure enjoyment

The research also showed that the gulf between consumer and producer is at last narrowing. It highlighted that shoppers get enormous satisfaction out of doing the right thing and, perhaps

surprisingly, that diets are becoming more diverse as people take on board the idea of using seasonal vegetables.

So, it's now clear that consumers want to support local producers, particularly if they are producing sustainably. Sir Don Curry, who oversees the UK Government's Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy, explained how we're seeing a fundamental change among post-baby boomers, who have more time, money and interest in food production: an attitude likely to influence future policy.

This is all very encouraging for supporters of local organic production in the Island. But it's important that public institutions also take the initiative. Organic food has moved rapidly away from the niche market and into all social strata. Put this together with a focused government that is prepared to put out strong messages and MON's vision will become a reality.

Garden Organic

Remember, we have group membership of Garden Organic (formerly HDRA), the national charity for organic growing. One of the benefits is advice for members by phone (0247 630 8215, 10am-1pm and 2-4pm Mon, Weds and Fri) or email through the website at www.gardenorganic.org.uk

To access the members only section of the site, type in 'Member' as user name and 'selmazeera' as password. Another great benefit is 10% off the 2007 Organic Gardening catalogue – call 0845 130 1304 quoting membership number 155259.

Go peat free with Soil Association-approved organic coir

Stephen and Jenny Devereau of Staarvey Farm near Peel are importing a range of Soil Association-approved products made from coir (coconut fibre). Unlike other coir, this isn't contaminated by salt water or sterilised with methyl bromide.

Coir is a waste product in the third world and provides income for people there. While it doesn't score well in 'travel miles', it is transported in highly compressed bales and made up in the UK. A great growing medium, it helps save our peat bogs and is the choice of many top growers.

The range includes blocks and bales of compressed coir to make your own compost. Also on offer are ready-made composts, a full range of pots and a fertiliser in liquid and pellet form. The pellets have a nutrient mix of 5N : 5P : 5K – slow release, long lasting and rich in trace elements. The liquid is made from fish derivatives containing no mammalian products.

Call Jenny or Stephen for a price list on 801387 or 463822. All orders will need to be placed by 31 January and discounts are available on larger orders.

Dairy By Janet Bridle

There has been a lot of talk about Manx organic dairy production, but unfortunately not so much action.

Encouraged by MON, and the fact that over 500,000 litres of organic milk are currently imported each year, the Creamery have been looking into the practicalities of producing Manx organic milk.

They are well aware of the established and growing market for organic dairy products in the Island and that all the supermarkets import the full range, which means there is an immediate market for LOCAL organic dairy produce. But logistics seem to be getting in the way.

The Dairy has been talking to four producers who are potentially interested

in converting to organic. One of these alone could produce enough milk to meet demand. **But we believe that if the Creamery were to produce a quality organic product, those shoppers who support local over imported organic would have a broader choice and a Manx organic Dairy would reap the rewards.**

The dairy farmers we're talking to are keen for the Creamery to find a solution, having seen the evidence for a growing market in the UK. This was backed up during a recent visit by Thomas Hind, the NFU chief dairy adviser, who believes indications are positive for the EU dairy market and sees organic milk as a growth sector.

He told me he felt organic dairy

should be encouraged with the right caveats – ie, a supply/demand balance. He also pointed towards significant opportunities in commodity organic cheddar and for branded organic cheese products, saying: "It is an opportunity for the Creamery to look towards value added lines such as organic."

We've been assured by Findlay Macleod of the Creamery that further discussions and negotiations are taking place towards finding solutions.

TAKE ACTION: Tell the Creamery you want MANX organic dairy. Go to www.iomcreameries.com and click on 'Contact us' to send an email. Or write to Isle of Man Creameries, Central Creamery, Tromode, IM4 4QE.

Chickens and eggs By Sharon Jamieson

With the supply of Manx organic eggs still non-existent, the Devereau family of Staarvey Farm are keen to get started, but are still waiting to see if DAFF can help with set-up fees.

Local egg producers Gellings have considered going organic, but are worried whether people would buy a premium price product. Some small farmers have

a few free range hens, but most aren't laying at all at the moment, so sadly there won't be any fresh Manx organic eggs for Christmas.

TAKE ACTION: Let the Island's leading egg supplier know you want organic! Email gelling@barroose.fsnet.co.uk



Log onto the Manx Organic Website for the latest news
www.manxorganicnetwork.com

Meat By Ian Davies

With the festive season upon us, Radcliffe's, the Island's sole certified organic butchers, are offering an expanded range of poultry from Lowther in Cumbria: turkey, duck, goose and chicken. Other recent additions include pork, dry cured gammon and bacon from a small family farm in Wales.

To order, call 822271, email butchers@manx.net or to www.manxorganicnetwork.com and download an order form from Unfortunately, all these have to be imported because there is no local

alternative. But at least one producer is very enthusiastic about converting. Based in the north of the Island, pig farmer and MON member John Taylor currently farms to organic principles as far as possible.

His chief frustration is that to convert and gain full certification he must feed his pigs on organic concentrates – wheat/barley, peas and beans. These can't be bought locally and importing is too expensive.

This is a clear example of the

interdependency within Manx agriculture, illustrating why we need several organic farmers: to provide animal feedstuffs as well as the animals themselves. Local organic feedstuffs are needed not only for pigs but also poultry and egg production – again, currently all imported.

TAKE ACTION: Write to Isle of Man Fat Stock at The Meat Plant, Cronkbourne, Tromode IM4 4QE – asking for MORE MANX ORGANIC MEAT!

Organic vegetable growing in the Isle of Man 2006 By Sharon Jamieson

Balladoole Farm

We currently have just one certified organic vegetable producer in the Island, Andrew Moore of Balladoole Farm, who this year had his share of successes and failures.

As he has to rely on nature to irrigate his crops, early yields were badly affected by the dry weather – particularly carrots, which simply didn't germinate. But thankfully Andrew is not easily deterred and a later sowing produced some very tasty results.

This year's Balladoole Cara potatoes are exceptional – brilliant for baking, boiling and chipping. It's also been a good year for Andrew's parsnips and beetroot, while white cabbage and cauliflower have been so-so. Savoy, red cabbage and parsley have not done so well and Kohl Rabi was, in his own words, "rubbish"!

Currently selling every Thursday at the Green Mann Market and from his farm shop, Andrew plans to grow the same crops next year.

Ballahot

Also in the south, experienced growers Erica and Juan Cain have been farming organically at Ballahot for many years. Now semi-retired, they've been trialling various fruit and veg in their 3/4-acre walled garden.

The great news is that they should get full organic status from Organic Farmers & Growers in 2007, which means next year's crop can be sold as certified organic.

This should include green beans, runner beans, swede, beetroot, baby leeks and carrots, courgettes, purple sprouting broccoli and herbs. Fruit crops including delicious raspberries and blackcurrants will come later – and we'll be letting you know where you can buy it all.

Ballakilley, Rushen

Supported by Bill Mizen and Cilla Platt, I started the season full of both enthusiasm and apprehension about growing on my newly ploughed 1/2-acre plot.

We got off to a good start and had the benefit of water for the dry early periods. By the end of June it was dawning on me that we'd grown much more than my family and friends could consume, so we decided to start selling from the farm gate.

I have to report that I'm loving it! It's great to experience the joy our customers get from the aroma and taste of vegetables fresh from the fields. Carrots have been our biggest success – we grew Resistaflay, which did what the name says.

Our only problem was that demand exceeded supply from early beetroot and potatoes onwards. Courgettes and lettuce were great all summer, while both yellow and red onions cropped better than expected but have recently failed to store – so there's a lesson to be learned there. Throughout winter we hope to supply leeks, parsnips, turnips, carrots, Swiss chard and some winter salads.

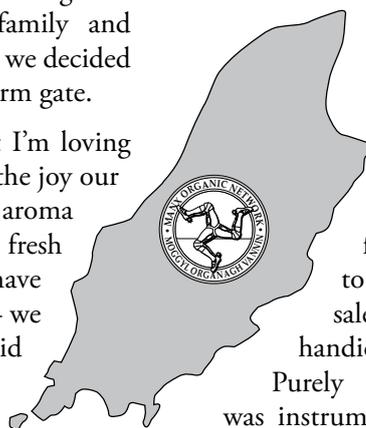
In 2007 we will be introducing our first Loaghtan sheep, erecting a polytunnel and registering for organic conversion. Thanks to everyone, and especially Bill for all his help and support.



Ramsey market

A new local farmer's market has sprung up in Ramsey's Mooragh Park – under cover and with easy parking!

Having started out as a suggestion from the nearby café proprietors, the market has been operating courtesy of Ramsey Town Commissioners every Saturday between 10am and 2pm since early October.



It's all about fresh local produce, with the bonus of meeting the producers. You'll find everything from vegetables to game terrine on sale, as well as some handicrafts. Dot Price of

Purely Plants in Andreas was instrumental in getting the stallholders together and continues to be the main co-ordinator.

Other markets, notably the Green Mann, have given their support and some stallholders carry other suppliers' produce – for example, Mill Millichap sells Greeba mushrooms and Green Mann apples.

As it's tough providing a full range of veg at this time of year, some important additions have been made to bridge the gap. Dot has provided vegetable plug plants, while more unusual varieties include Ken and Jenny Maynard's black turnip, locally produced South African-themed biltong and local game.

The market is a valiant and successful venture bringing local products to local consumers – and it's already clear that this can go from strength to strength. Secure in the knowledge that the market is here to stay, producers can grow to provide a wider range of goods all year round. Keep supporting them!

Green Mann market update By Janet Bridle

IT WAS A sad day when the Environmental Health closed down the food operations side of the Green Mann market.

There are of course well documented and legislative reasons for the offices of Environmental Health and we're grateful that they do their stuff when we hear scare stories of out-of-date chicken dipped in bleach.

But it was still a huge disappointment to those of us who have enjoyed a bowl of steaming, freshly made organic seasonal vegetable soup with tasty homemade bread and cheese every Thursday, whatever the weather.

The venue is rustic, there is no luminous fluorescent light zapping stray flies and I've never seen (and let's be honest wouldn't want to see) Kista in a hair net. But I'm over 21 and I think I can make informed choices about what I eat.

It got me thinking about the place

the Green Mann has taken in Manx life. It clearly filled a vacuum in many people's lives, as no sooner had it opened in October 2005 than it ran out of space. It was and continues to be a ground-breaker.

I've always loved the ethos behind the market: 'Come and sell your wares for no stall charge as long as it's all produced to organic standards and environmentally aware. Then stand by your product and engage with your customer.'

And we have all been engaged. Jimmy and Nadine have opened their land and their home to us. We have squeezed and tasted apples, tried a spoonful of chutney, munched on lemon drizzle cake, stampeded to get Andrew's broccoli and potatoes, clutched still-warm, sensually aromatic, fresh-baked bread.

The market has acted as a catalyst for budding producers who might not

The Green Mann market, every Thursday 11.30am - 3.30pm

have taken the step to expand otherwise. It has also given us something back that's been missing from our lives: a sense of community and connection.

It's become a regular meeting place, everyone huddled together under the tarpaulin as the rain tipped down. We've met friends, mothers, sisters, brothers, holidaymakers from across. We've all felt in touch with something special, something real, something that hasn't been homogenized and cling-filmed.

I'd like to thank Jimmy, Nadine, Kista and everyone else who works so hard to make every Thursday something special in our week. I know that the Green Mann spirit of Green Mann has not been crushed b that Environmental Health visit and I trust that a solution will be found to bring it all back. In the meantime I'll continue to support the market and keey my fingers well and truly crossed. See you there.

Organic fashion at 7th Wave, Port Erin

Run by Jenni Neil and John Quillan, 7th Wave in Strand Road, Port Erin has been open since the end of May – primarily as a sailing and powerboating centre, but also an undeniably cool clothes shop.

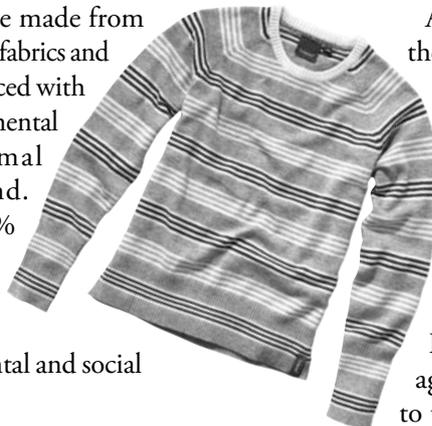
"We believe in ethical production and wanted to promote organic clothing in whatever small way we could," says Jenni. "This reflects our commitment to the marine environment – our sailing dinghies can be recycled for example."

After looking into various brands, Jenni and John decided to stock Howies: a Wales-based skateboarding-inspired label that started up in 1995.

The clothes are made from organic and recycled fabrics and everything is produced with fair trade, environmental care and animal welfare in mind. Even better, 1% of turnover goes to grass-root

environmental and social projects.

Jenni adds, *"People love the clothes and say 'even better' when they find out they're organic or recycled. The use of natural dyes and processes justify the prices, which are quite high, although no more than big brands. We've had everyone from teenagers to retired people coming back for more."*



Available at 7th Wave in the run-up to Christmas, Howies gift vouchers make a great present – especially for hard-to-please teenagers!

Opening hours: 12-6, Tuesday to Saturday. Closed January/February 2007, open again in March through to the end of the year.

Tel: 836366
www.7thwave-IOM.com
www.howies.com

Coming soon from Shakti Man, Ramsey...

...a new range of People Tree organic baby wear and underwear – arriving February 2007. In the meantime, don't miss out on a fantastic range of fair trade Christmas gifts in the shop's new expanded premises (next door to the old shop in Parliament Street!)

Climate change

By Janet Bridle

On Saturday 4 November MON took part in the Climate Change awareness campaign at Villiers Square in Douglas, organised by the One World Centre.

We were happy to support this initiative as organic farming is all about sustainable practices. Cheryl Cousins, the One World Centre co-ordinator, works tirelessly to raise awareness of world poverty and the impact of climate change, particularly in those areas in the world least able to deal with it.

Climate change and organic farming are connected in several ways. One of these is the use of nitrogen fertilisers, which have a big impact on wildlife and groundwater. The RSPB claims *“the UK countryside is being force-fed dangerous levels of nutrients mainly from the use of nitrogen fertilisers which are reducing the diversity of wild plants and insects, with knock-on effects for birds and other wildlife.”*

Under pressure from a media interviewer, RSPB spokesperson Jim Denshon recently said that while this pollution needed to be addressed, fertilisers were being used *“for a good purpose to grow crops... They’re very much needed – we need sustainable agriculture.”*

‘Should Nitrogen fertiliser be banned?’ asked Radio 4’s Farming Today on 2 November, as part of its review of the Stern report. Every year 80,000 tonnes of nitrous oxide (N₂O), are released from the making and use of artificial nitrogen fertiliser. Nitrous oxide is around 300 times more potent as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. Whereas other industrial sectors have reduced their N₂O emissions by 90% over the past 15 years, agriculture has only cut back by 15%.

NFU President Peter Kendall didn’t have much advice for his members, saying, *“I don’t think any*

Farmers market at the Sea Terminal



WE came, we saw, we conquered. It was a huge success. Andrew Moore ran out of vegetables and Radcliffe’s had to send back to base for more meat supplies. As they were with us on the MON stand, they were only selling Manx organic beef and lamb – imagine how much more organic meat and poultry they could have sold.

The Green Man stand attracted flocks of eager customers over the two days. If anyone was in doubt that a farmers market is not for the Island, they were proved well and truly wrong. The customers loved it and so did we; it’s a wonderful way to sell your products. We even gained around 25 new members.

The message is loud and clear: DAFÉ, THE MANX WANT MORE MANX ORGANIC PRODUCE, PLEASE!



of us know quite how we can change our practices, for example by reducing nitrous oxides. I know by putting nitrogen fertiliser on my crops, this has some impact on nitrous oxides. We need more research for farmers to do the right thing.”

Peter Melchett, the Soil Association’s Policy Director, had more specific recommendations. *“We do*

think organic farming has a major contribution to make,” he said. “Nitrogen fertiliser is the major user of energy in agriculture, some 37% according to government figures. Farmers are actually aware of the energy and environmental costs of fertiliser, given the use of natural gas in its manufacture – and as the price of gas is rising, so is the price of fertiliser.”

Building our knowledge of practical organics to support our expectations for the Isle of Man By Ian and Viv Davis

WHILE IN THE UK this autumn, we made four visits to help increase MON's knowledge of what our agricultural industry could be achieving in the Island. Armed with this knowledge, we will be able to make a more meaningful contribution to discussions on local organic agriculture/horticulture.

In September, we attended a seminar on 'Making organic horticulture grow in the north of England'. Hosted by local organic farmers Howard and Rosemary Wass of Newfield Organics, this brought together organic growers from across the north of England to talk about key issues affecting them.

With a strong emphasis on the challenges of practical growing, the Marketing and Growing panels for the morning discussions included an impressive range of experts. One of them was Alan Schofield, whose loose growing cooperative and box scheme Growing with Nature we later visited at Pilling, near Lancaster.

The afternoon included an extended farm walk, illustrating how organic vegetables can be grown on an agricultural scale (600,000 onions, over 1 million leeks and huge quantities of carrots, cabbages etc – all in one field!) This encouraged us to visit Leen Farm in Herefordshire, which grows on a similar scale.

Finally, we made two visits to Low Sizergh Barn Farm in Cumbria. As reported in the newsletter, farmer Richard Parkers was invited to the Island by DAFF last year to talk about his operation.

Key messages for the Isle of Man were that we need to make the most of local area conditions for profitable agricultural/horticultural diversification, reducing food miles and offering a range of opportunities to support that Manx 'brand' we hear so much about.

An overview of each operation visited:

Growing with Nature: 800 per week box scheme based on seasonal produce in the local area - 'Educate your consumers to accept and actively seek out seasonal variations'. Associated selling points include 'local supply and traceability, community support, understanding the lasting benefits to the land of this type of agriculture'.



Low Sizergh Barn: successful organic farm; farm shop with a wide range of produce and complementary, mainly local goods, café with view over the dairy, attractive

farm trail. Better dairy yields than before changing to organic, not to mention increased profits from the shop.



Growing Well (polytunnels and intensive outside vegetable growing on five acres rented from Low Sizergh): charitable trust linking growing with community schemes, including rehabilitation through Social Services and training schemes with local college. Supplying farm shop, local restaurants and a box scheme next year, this adds another dimension to the value of organic cultivation.

Newfield Organics: farm scale vegetable grower, supplying large box schemes and packers, as well as their own farm shop in the local village.

Leen Farm: farm scale vegetable grower supplying a large box scheme. Also a larger dairy operation supplying local organic milk cooperative, with linked business making and selling own branded organic dairy products. Strong links with Government-sponsored countryside management schemes and environmental initiatives have played a big part in the farm's financial viability.

There is room for elements of all of these in the Island, based on local produce serving the local market. As seen in areas like Cumbria, such enterprises have spawned high value-added processes for local consumption by residents and tourists alike. And there are real export opportunities by shipment or mail order.



For a more detailed review of our visits, click on 'December updates' in the 'Stop press' section at www.manxorganicnetwork.com

We have been invited to collaborate on a very exciting new project: the Carnane Community Trust. With our experience over the last three years, we believe MON's aims dovetail with the project. Read on...

The Carnane Community Trust

By Michael Whipp

Michael and Tricia Whipp, owners of the 800-acre Carnane Estate on the southern boundary of Douglas, are setting up the Carnane Community Trust. This will hopefully become a sustainable land-based working community, selling organic produce and providing a living for young adults unable to look after themselves.

Comprising the former lands of the Nunnery, the Estate is split into three holdings surrounding Carnane Hill: Nunnery Howe, Upper Howe and Wallberry Farms.

The plan is to convert the former farmhouse and outbuildings at Nunnery Howe into accommodation for nine young adults with special needs and around eight co-workers. The young adults would spend the working week on the farm, in the gardens or at the Visitor Centre.

The second development will be the conversion of Wallberry Farm into a Visitor Centre. Set around a traditional stone courtyard, this will comprise an organic farm shop, café and workshop for country crafts. There will also be a market garden producing bio-dynamic vegetables, fruit and honey: both to feed the community and sell in the shop.

The third element will be the organic beef and sheep enterprise based at Upper Howe Farm, providing sheltered work for residents and day placements. The produce – organic Manx Loaghtan lamb and pure-bred beef – will also feed the community and be on sale.

A few derelict cottages on the

Estate will be renovated for use by co-workers or special needs young adults on a 'supported living' basis. As in days gone by, the total community will house around 30 people.

The community reflects the Camphill Communities around the world, and members of the Camphill Movement are involved in its set-up.

The movement was founded in 1940 by Dr Karl Konig while he was interned in the Isle of Man. Based on the ideals of Rudolf Steiner, the movement works to create communities in which vulnerable people can live, learn and work with others in relationships characterised by mutual care and respect.

With high-end property prices being driven up by tax capping and agricultural returns not reflecting the work needed to produce our food, the easy option for today's landowners is to sell up. But in the spirit of Estates like Highgrove and Daylesford, these particular landowners are doing the opposite in an attempt to change how we manage our land, how we eat and how we care for others.

Our principal aims are:

- To keep the Estate financially viable in the long term. Pre-empting the end of the meat derogation, we intend to create our own niche market in organic Loaghtan lamb and pure-bred beef. MON's success indicates there are enough local people who care about what they eat for this to succeed.
- To preserve wildlife diversity and soil fertility for the next generation, by farming biologically rather than chemically.
- To preserve the Estate as an example of how we used to live before we consumed oil on such a grand scale. With Professor James Lovelock, author of the Gaia Theory, predicting unprecedented environmental disasters in the near future, we may have to revert to this way of life.
- To provide a residential working

community for vulnerable people, giving them an alternative to being cared for at home or by the State – the only options currently available in the Island.

Links:

www.camphill.org.uk
www.rudolfsteinerweb.com
www.gaiatheory.org
www.ecolo.org/lovelock
www.biodynamic.org.uk
www.daylesfordorganic.com
www.duchyoriginals.com

Manx Organic Network in a nutshell



Aims and objectives:

- To promote awareness of the benefits of organically produced food and sustainable agriculture.
- To promote Manx organic farmers and growers by encouraging consumers to buy locally produced organic food.
- To create a network of local resources, information and advice.
- To encourage the Manx Government to continue and increase its support for organic production.
- To develop an identifiable Manx Organic brand.

Membership:

716 and growing. For more membership forms to pass on to friends and relatives, please get in touch with Membership Secretary Susie Watson on 825755.

Contact:

Janet Bridle, Chair, 835436 or jbridle@manx.net

Viv Davies, Secretary, 882332

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