

Wycombe Friends of the Earth – Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 1st October 2008, 7.30.p.m.

The Environment Centre, Holywell Mead, High Wycombe

Present: 7

Apologies : 2

1. AGM – Wednesday 5th November 2008

- WFOE year will run from April to April and those not renewing their subscriptions for the current year will be asked to do so in the AGM invitation for this year up to April 2009.
- A summary report of our activities in the last 18 months will be produced and invitations sent out with agenda.
- Refreshments (tea, coffee and biscuits) will be available after the business section of the meeting and after the formal meeting there will time for an informal discussion.

2. Renewables

- Saturday 25th October is the FOE Renewables Day of Action.
- National FOE suggests members occupy a space in town with a graffiti board, on which people will be invited to write their comments about renewables. This board will subsequently be joined to boards from other areas to publicise people's views visually. There will also be postcards to distribute encouraging people to sign and send to the MP before the renewables vote in parliament.
- WFOE will sign up to join this day of action.
- Permission will be requested from Eden for us to occupy a space in Eden with/without the graffiti board as a first choice. If permission not granted we will stand in town centre.
- A sub-committee meeting was arranged for organisational purposes.
- There is a scheduled 'Message in the Waves' film showing at BCUC and some people at the BCUC Freshers' Fair expressed interested in joining WFOE.

3. Schools Energy Wastage

- Some members from WFOE met the Head of Science at St. Bernard's School. St. Bernard's has been designated a Science College and they have an amount of money to use with the aim being to link up with the community that will produce a learning outcome. St. Bernard's could offer educational courses and could cover the costs of this.
- St. Bernard's will review the WFOE schools energy form (and amend if necessary) and encourage take-up by schools.
- The resulting schools' Energy Survey Form will be sent to schools in November.

4. Finance

There have been expenses from the Environment Centre leaflets, Biofuels talk expenses, joining of Marinet, and the FOE partnership agreement, leaving the group still in credit.

5. Biofuels

- It was reported that the proposal that 10% of transport fuels be sourced from biofuels by 2020 has now been considered by the EU Industry and Energy Committee. Whilst still retaining the overall target, they recommend a reduced target of 6% from crop-based biofuels, with the remainder from either second generation biofuels or electricity or hydrogen from renewable sources. They also recommend stricter conditions including ones relating to the type of land used to grow biofuels, and the minimum carbon emission savings they realise. FOE say these changes go beyond their most optimistic expectations, but the complete scrapping of the biofuels target is still the objective. There is also still a risk that these recommendations may be watered down by the Council of Ministers or by the full vote of all MEPs. Representatives of Wycombe and neighbouring FOE groups, have visited James Elles MEP to urge him to vote against the biofuels target, and presented signed postcards. The postcard campaign has now ended.
- Latest biofuels information will be put on the website.
- A discussion forum is available on the FOE website for comments which we will sign up to, if practicable.

6. Eden Centre

- There has been a contact between WFOE, the new Town Centre Manager and the Eden Centre Manager. One of the topics currently under discussion is the 'greening up' of Eden. It is intended that further contact will be arranged.

7. Ecotip of the Month

- In the light of increased prices for energy supplies, the ecotip 'Did you know you can get grants for insulating your home, eg loft insulation, cavity wall insulation? How about looking into sourcing your energy from green suppliers? Heatloss should be addressed before you look into renewable energy.' will be put on our web site this month.

8. Behind Priory Road

- The appeal for building on this site, situated behind houses and previously gardens, was allowed on the basis that the requirement to make effective use of previously developed land outweighed biodiversity loss. This has implications for protecting other gardens.
- WFOE will look into a producing a press release about this, indicating our disappointment.

9. National Conference, Loughborough, 12-14 September 2008

- One member attended the conference and gave a brief summary of the items discussed.
- Further information about the conference can be found on the National FOE website.

10. Any Other Business

- The number of hits our website is getting will be distributed to members.

11. Next meeting will be the **AGM** on Wednesday 5th November at 7.30pm at the Environment Centre (first Wednesday of each month).