

Wycombe Friends of the Earth – Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 1st April 2009, 7.30pm

The Environment Centre, Holywell Mead, High Wycombe

Present: 11

Apologies: 3

1. Finance

- New membership fees will be due from this month. A cheque for the National FOE Partnership Agreement will be sent which allows us to use FOE name and logo etc.
- Due to the precarious financial climate National FOE have had to make cuts which may affect local groups. Watch for communications.

2. Draft Handbook

This will be sent out to members via email and comments are invited. The purpose of the handbook outlines the basic workings of the group, lessons learnt and the guidelines we have set up for future reference. It will also aid any transference of roles within the group and will be informative for future members. The handbook will have to be finalised by the next AGM which this year, it was decided, will be in June.

3. Ecotip of the Month

The ecotip of the month, it was decided, will be: *Help your fridge waste less energy - and save you money - by trying these tips. Dust down the coils at the back of the fridge - dusty coils can waste up to 30% extra electricity. Defrost your fridge regularly. Let food cool down properly before putting it in the fridge. Put frozen food that needs to be defrosted into fridge overnight to help the fridge cool down and save energy.*

4. Website This is still in progress.

5. Communication between groups

This system, which will use people from like-minded groups to place publicity posters etc to advertise their events for each other, is ready to be set up.

6. National Campaigns

Members present considered the three National FOE campaigns before deciding on which one to support.

Renewables Campaign. This has already been activated and the national campaign targeting MPs is drawing to a close as the Energy Bill will be decided upon shortly.

Food Chain Campaign. Factory farming demands massive amounts of soy - a key ingredient in animal feed. Most of this comes from huge soy plantations in Latin America. Vast swathes of land have to be cleared to grow the soy - causing deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions and the loss of valuable wildlife habitat. The Campaign would also support local food production. This would be rather less work if time was short. We could also link up with Transition Towns on their sharing gardens/allotments campaign.

Get Serious. We are urged to lobby local Councils to consider much more seriously, reductions in carbon emissions when making decisions about planning, local transport, grants, etc. Also to get local Councils to commit to an agreement to reduce carbon emissions. This would require some knowledge and/or research into the Council process.

After much discussion, it was decided by majority vote, that the group will support the Food Chain Campaign. The Aylesbury Vale FOE group are encouraging their young people to produce art in response to the Food Chain campaign.

7. Local Campaigns

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- The meeting with the Sustainability Officer about sustainability in schools was postponed but will be rearranged.
- No further action as yet on plastic bag campaign.
- No advance, despite attempts, on greening up Eden. Other avenues to be explored.
- The sharing gardens scheme is going ahead.

8. Next meeting will be on Wednesday 6th May 2009 at 7.30pm at the Environment Centre, Holywell Mead, High Wycombe. (first Wednesday of each month).