

Wycombe Friends of the Earth

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 1st July 2009, 7.30pm

The Environment Centre, Holywell Mead, High Wycombe

Present: 12

Apologies: 2

1. Ecotip of the Month will be:

Going on holiday? Get into the habit of unplugging as many appliances as possible, to save electricity, before you leave. Even if you switch them off, appliances can still use up energy if they're still plugged in.

2. Environment Centre

The centre is having to review its finances and suggests a minimum subscription of £50 per annum for us to use it. In addition, it suggests £10 for each evening open to the public and £25 for each evening not open to the public. This was discussed and the following agreed:

- The Environment Centre needs our support where possible.
- Together with Transition Towns, and with their permission, we might suggest to the centre that the subscription could include perhaps 5 free meetings.
- We may need to boost membership, receive subscriptions from lapsed members or explore joint meetings with Transition Towns.
- A letter will be sent out to those members who have not attended meetings or paid subscriptions for some time, encouraging more involvement.

3. Damage to woodland by 4x4s.

We have been contacted by a resident of Speen about the above. WDC have been persuaded to put a stop on this activity but it is not permanent. The Speen resident would like support from other agencies, like Wycombe FOE, to stop the activity more permanently. A letter has been drafted to be sent to WDC in support of this. Members present approved this action.

4. WDC Delivery and Site Allocations Document.

WDC are currently consulting on an important Planning Policy document, the "Delivery and Site Allocations DPD". Topics covered include a range of "green" policies as well as site-specific proposals. A series of consultation events will be held as below on different parts of the document - note that the last one specifically covers the policies on biodiversity, green spaces and construction standards. Traditionally these events include a significant element of workshop-type activity in small groups, and as individuals we can contribute by ensuring the environmental issues are not forgotten in those discussions.

- Marlow (exhibition) - Tuesday 7 July 1400-2200 Court Gardens
- High Wycombe Town Centre - Wednesday 8 July 1900-2100 The Hub
- Housing Provision - Thursday 9 July 1900-2100 Town Hall
- M40 Gateway - Monday 13 July 1900-2100 Amersham and Wycombe College, Flackwell Heath
- Desborough Area (exhibition) - Wednesday 15 July 1400-2200 Green Street Community Centre
- Sustainability - Thursday 16 July 1900-2100 John Hampden School

Attendees are required to register for these consultation events (other than the exhibitions) in advance. To register please contact Carol Courcha on mailto:carol_courcha@wycombe.gov.uk or 01494 421277, stating clearly which event(s) you would like to attend.

All consultation materials are available on the WDC website www.wycombe.gov.uk on the Imagine the Future Part 5 page (<http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/sitePages.asp?step=4&contentID=7688&categoryID=3854> MAY get you straight there). You should also be getting a flyer through your door. The consultation ends on August 14th, and again don't underestimate the value of putting in written comments on any aspect that particularly concerns you.

5. Food Chain

- Publicity material etc. about the above campaign was distributed from National FOE for members to borrow for information.
- Those present watched a promotional DVD outlining the Food Chain problems and the issues were discussed.
- Solutions to the problem are difficult, but basically the campaign suggests persuading MPs to withdraw subsidies to intensive farming in favour of more sustainable, local farming, which exercises good husbandry. Also to suggest that people eat less meat and dairy as the animal feed is often high protein soya, grown in countries where forests are cleared in order to grow it. Meat eating is also an inefficient way to acquire protein.
- More information is available through the National FOE website.

6. Food Chain event arrangements

- On 18th 11.00 - 16.00 and 19th July, 9.00 – 16.00 the Environment Centre is hosting a special Open Weekend and we will have a stall to publicise the Food chain problems and our group in general.
- The main event will be in September 26th, venue and full list of speakers to be confirmed.
- Marlow Farmers Market is on every Sunday 10am – 2.00pm. They would allow us to have a space at this market.
- 15th August is looking a likely date for a stall in the High Street, High Wycombe.
- A sub-committee meeting will be arranged to discuss this further.
- Help is invited from all members.

7. National FOE matters

- Members were reminded of the 2 day Conference 12-13 September in Nottingham – booking deadline is on 7th August – only one day after our next meeting. Booking form and details are on the website.
- Those present approved our nomination for 'Earth Movers' prize suggested by our regional representative

8. 'How Are We' Assessment

This was carried out at the meeting and will be sent to National FOE. Results will be emailed to members.

9. Next meeting will be on Wednesday 5th August at 7.30pm at the Environment Centre (first Wednesday of each month).