

Wycombe Friends of the Earth

Wednesday 7th July 2010, 7.30pm

The Friends Meeting House, 25, London Road, High Wycombe

Present: 12

Apologies: 3

1. Welcome

Welcome and apologies

2. Ecotip of the Month will be:

When printing out documents, try using 'Century Gothic' instead of Arial. It is supposed to be the most ink-saving standard font due to its slim lines. Also try to use ink cartridges that are re-fillable – it can be a bit messy but very economical.

3. Forthcoming Events

Sunday 18th July – Pan Mill Open Day (restored water mill on the Rye). They mill flour available for sale. 11am – 4pm. Transition Towns will be showing a solar powered fridge.

Monday 19th July 7.30pm. A Wycombe FOE social to include Transition Towns at The Falcon in the High Street, High Wycombe

Saturday 24th July - Chesham Farmers Market

Wednesday 28th July – Transition Town Film Showing 'The Turning Point' (a positive and inspiring film about our transition to a low carbon future).

Saturday 21st August – Transition Towns – launch event of an energy saving kit.

4. Small Choices Big Difference leaflet

These encourage people to make green life-style changes. The leaflets can be distributed by anyone who wishes to take one/some.

5. Presentation on Feed-in Tariff by Aidan Stowe (Director: Cumberland Energy)

The Microgeneration Certification Scheme makes sure that renewable energy installations are worth while and effective. An installer must be a member of MCS for an address to be added for use by the Grid. Feed-in tariff enables one to get paid for renewable solar electricity (solar pv) whether you use it or not. Excess power can be exported to the Grid and it sells for more money than buying it back when needed. In the event of power cuts, home energy gets cut too. To get round this, one could have batteries but they are very expensive, contain acid and are heavy on materials. Should get your £9,000 investment back in about 13 years. Middle of the summer – around 9-13 hours - 8 panels, 1 ½ m high and 1m wide (12 sq m). Revenue is proportional to pay back according to size of the panel. Financial benefits - feed in tariff, export, and smaller bills. Panels should last a lifetime although output reduces a bit over time. There is a financial incentive from the Government to do this earlier rather than later and is funded by the energy companies as it helps them to meet their renewable energy targets.

6. Eden's Green Credentials

- Eden has issued a 'green' report where it outlines how it has made efforts to reduce energy etc.

- The plastic bags questionnaire highlighted a problem pointed out by shops that the recycling of materials was more difficult and expensive than is desirable.

7. WDC's Carbon Reduction Framework

- The Climate Change Bill is in so everyone including Local Government has to make carbon cuts.
- If anyone is interested in helping and encouraging the Council to make relevant and further reductions generally, through some research and dialogue with the Council, please let WFOE know.

8. High Speed 2 – Update

- A WFOE member has agreed to lead this and in September will give a presentation on it.
- In the meantime, we have been contacted by someone who thinks that like-minded groups need to combine efforts where possible.
- Aylesbury Vale FOE has expressed an interest in attending a meeting in mid July. Ideally, we need to agree about what view/s we might represent.
- Unfortunately, the above member cannot attend this meeting.
- The new Government anyway might come up with amended plans.

9. FOE Motions to Conference – amendment process

- It has been suggested that interested groups along the High Speed line could meet to discuss this on the Friday of conference in Reading in September.
- A few people expressed a general interest but no-one wishes to commit to go at present.
- It was decided that next year we need a longer time to consider a motion if we wish to put one forward.
- Likely motions are on the FOE website for perusal.
- SE Gathering – a member gave a brief feedback - well organised, good workshops, worthwhile and he attended 'How to effectively engage new people' Workshop which agreed with our previous thoughts on this.
- Edwina also attended talks and gave a brief feedback.

10. Food Chain Campaign – Private Members Bill success

The second MP on the list of the Private Members Bill ballot is taking through this item. It therefore stands a good chance of getting a good debate. Eventually there will be work for FOE to do, when this process has started.

11. Local Food Directory - progress

This is making slow progress. Potentially there are 150 local food outlets, so there has been much work checking that contact information is correct and compiling the list. Funding is 'delayed' which is not promising.

12. Finance

- 3 members paid membership.
- The role of treasurer will be changed to a different WFOE member.
- Change of signatories will be actioned for above to take place.

13. Blog

- 3 members met a few weeks ago with a view to writing a blog.
- Bucks Free Press were contacted to ask if they would receive another environmental blog (Transition Towns have one). No reply as yet.
- This will be pursued with the BFP.

14. AOB

- A sign will be made to go on the Friends Meeting House door so that any visitors/new members would be clear about where the entrance is.
- No relevant news from the Environment Centre. It is hoped to find new premises and consider its future in a positive light.
- A member is taking steps towards having the ability to edit the online green calendar from time to time. It will be useful for someone other than one person to be able to do this.

15. Next Meeting

will be on Wednesday 4th August at 7.30pm until 9.30pm at the Friend's Meeting House.