

Wycombe Friends of the Earth

Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday 1st December 2010, 7.30pm
at The Friends Meeting House, 25 London Road, High Wycombe.

Present: 9

Apologies: 7

1. Welcome and apologies

2. Ecotip of the month will be:

Since Christmas is coming up and potentially more items using batteries could be bought, check your old batteries and deal with them responsibly. Millions of batteries go to landfill each year in the UK. Wherever possible, **avoid** buying goods or gifts that need batteries - if you do, buy rechargeables. If you need to recycle standard batteries, they can be put in recycling bins in Sainsbury's, Homebase, Tesco's, Wickes or Screwfix or Robert Dyas in High Wycombe.

It was noted that water filters can be returned to Robert Dyas for recycling. A member asked if there are any other companies which refill ink cartridges as the Desborough Road one has closed.

3. Distribution of leaflets

Members were encouraged us to take any leaflets laid out at the monthly meetings and distribute them to those places which we agreed on originally and any other appropriate notice boards or centres – all helps to spread the word.

4. Woodland Service work parties

With reference to the leaflets about various nature reserves in the area which have been produced by the Woodland Service (formerly Rangers), a member asked if there would be any group interest to take part in a volunteer session with the Woodland Service, i.e. organised especially for FoE members. The idea met with approval and contact will be made to obtain more information on what could be organised.

5. Finance

Forms have been sent off to the Co-op bank to enable a third signatory to be added to the bank account. Once approved by the bank, any two of three signatories will be required to sign cheques etc.

6. Food Chain Campaign: Fall of Sustainable Livestock Bill, next steps

Unfortunately, the Bill did not get the required support from MPs. The debate lasted about 4 hours but was dominated by one MP speaking against the proposal. FoE are still looking on the positive side and hoping at least for some positive side effects from the exercise. A member had a detailed response from Dominic Grieve which has been forwarded to national FoE.

7. Correspondence with Steve Baker MP, Eden, WDC Waste

- A member had written to Steve Baker to thank him for seeing us. We received a friendly response back touching on various issues and whilst the Food Chain is not an issue that Steve wishes to get involved in, making contact has been a positive move.

- A member has sent off her letter to the Eden Management but had no response so far. It was suggested that she take a second copy round in person.
- A member. has written to WDC regarding expanding the range of plastics and other materials collected. No response as yet. Wycombe and Chiltern Districts are about to agree a joint Waste Disposal contract, so it will be chased.

8. HS2

Steve Baker has spoken about his scepticism of the benefits of HS2, and the fact that he is on the Transport Select Committee reviewing this project could be a big support for the anti-HS2 lobby.

9. Community Food Growing / Bare Gardens

A member has made contact with Bare Gardens and offered to help or take over the Bare Gardens project if they are unable to continue it. This member has some ideas on how to progress the Bare Gardens idea and will make contact again.

10. EC2

Environment Centre – the plans to take over premises in the Chilterns Centre have fallen through, much to everyone's disappointment. There is a longer-term idea to self-build an environmental centre close to St. John's Church in Desborough Road (now an Arts Centre).

11. Socials

- We were reminded of the joint social event / celebration on 5th January with Transition Towns.
- We also decided to hold our own get-together on 9th December from 7.30 p.m. at The Bell in Frogmoor.

12. Chance to contribute to mid-term review of FOE's Strategic Plan

It was felt that we owe it to national FoE to hold a discussion and send a response on this as it was at members' requests that the feedback opportunity has been given. However in view of time available and low number of members present, it was decided to await another opportunity and if necessary hold a special meeting for those interested. A separate e-mail will be sent out.

13. Buckinghamshire Incineration Decision, and associated Waste Transfer Site

Bucks CC have awarded the contract to WRG, who had held an informative display at Booker Airfield and propose a large waste transfer unit at High Heavens at which local waste (and that of South Bucks?) will be off-loaded and then re-loaded on to large transfer vehicles which would take the waste via the M40 up to Bicester and back past Aylesbury to reach the waste disposal unit (which we may call an incinerator, but WRG do not). Is this something that we should involve ourselves in? We are concerned that such a project would lessen the resolve to recycle. We seemed to be in general agreement that a smaller unit serving a relatively local area would be a preferable alternative. The transport of rubbish over this long route could otherwise be very costly in terms of fuel in the future. We would like to be better informed. Various documents will be circulated, including from SAVI (a group opposed to the incinerator) and perhaps explore co-operation. No planning application for the waste transfer unit has yet been submitted. This will be monitored.

14. Stadium proposals

We briefly discussed the stadium proposal for Booker Airfield and whether we want to get involved. There are several groups opposing this project already. There is a council meeting and street protest on 13th December. Details will be sent out separately. We will return to this in February.

15. AOB

The New Member's pack was found useful by a new member. Marinet are asking people to lobby their MP or MEP about marine and fisheries issues – details will be circulated separately. The Climate March is this Saturday in London – details have been circulated separately.