

Wycombe Friends of the Earth

Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday 3rd March 2010, 7.30pm at
The Environment Centre, Holywell Mead, High Wycombe

Present: 14

Apologies: 5

1. Welcome and apologies

Welcome to 2 new attendees.

2. Finance

- Money from WDC for plastic bag surveys has been received and paid out.
- One more membership fee has come in.
- Website fee was agreed
- New venue will be paid for shortly

3. Ecotip of the Month will be:

Our Food Chain Campaign (www.fixthefoodchain.com) reveals the damage global factory farming does to the climate and eco-systems across the world. Why not skip supermarket products from the far side of the planet and buy delicious, organic produce at your local farmers market instead? High Wycombe Farmer's Market is located in Frogmore on the third Saturday of every month. The next one is on Saturday 20th March 9.00am-1.00pm

4. Forthcoming Events.

- Green churches event at St Peter and St Paul's Church in Great Missenden, and Gt. Missenden Church of England School on Saturday 6th March, 10am – 4pm. A Conference on Care for Creation in Churches and Schools.
- Green day at Jordan's meeting house, 6th March, 1.30pm – 7.30pm. £5 advance ticket. More details at www.newjordans.org
- Monday 8th March. BBOWT illustrated talk on Wetland Flora at the Environment Centre, HW, 7.45 – 9.45pm. £2 including refreshments.
- Transition Towns local food - Wednesday 10th March
- A volunteers day at Bucks New Uni -11th March.
- Go Green Event in High Wycombe – Saturday 20th March - see below.

Members were encouraged to view the calendar of events on the website.

5. Formal Agreement of Third Signatory

Members at the meeting agreed third signatory.

6. Environment Centre Closure

Environment Centre site will close on 14th March 2010. There will be an auction on 20th March (view calendar or Environment Centre website for times and more information on items to be auctioned).

7. Wycombe FOE - new meeting venue.

This will be the garden room in the Friends Meeting House, 25 London Road (on the corner of London Road with Stuart Road). The key-holder lives on site. Leaflets and the website with our new venue will be changed.

8. Review of Members' Handbook

The purpose of this is mainly to inform new members of the structure of our organisation. If there are no objections, the handbook will be formally accepted at the next meeting.

9. Food Campaign 2010

1. FOE wish to develop relationships with farmers. Any group interested can attend a training day on 6th March in Birmingham. This would take a lot of time and we (Wycombe FOE) are currently heavily involved in the plastic bags campaign. If anyone is interested in this though, please let us know.
2. Members could write to the parliamentary candidates for Wycombe in order to express interest and concern about this campaign. Other local MPs could also be contacted.
3. The government has not yet decided on the appointment of a Supermarket ombudsman or what powers he/she will possess.
4. Transition Towns are looking for someone to organise a local food project. There is a small amount of money available from WDC to fund this.

10. Plastic Bag Campaign

- March 20th will be the climax to the plastic bag campaign and will be 'Bring your own bag day'. WFOE, Transition Towns, Energy Savings Trust, Waste Partnership, public transport, bee-keepers, Wycombe Wildlife Trust, will be involved.
- We will share a stand with Transition Towns. The stand will need to be set up before the shops open at 9am and then taken down after the shops close at 5.30-6.00pm. We will need our own display stands and a table with information on plastic bags.
- Transition Towns will concentrate on solar power and local food.
- There will be material to be displayed.
- It was requested that as many members as possible be present on March 20th to help, if only for a short time.
- There are posters available about the plastic bag issue and on the website there is a summary of the questionnaire conducted in the town centre when nearly 200 shops were surveyed. Two thirds of shops do not automatically hand out plastic bags. Some shops were concerned about waste disposal.
- The information session on 25th February was useful in that attendees were from various partnerships in the town and there were useful discussions. However, no shop owners attended.
- There are flyers which will be distributed to organisations to highlight the problem of plastic bags to employees, eg Wycombe District Council. This flyer needs to be adapted to be given to the public.
- Some shops have been identified from the survey and will be targeted for help to encourage the public not to take single-use plastic bags.
- Customers will be funded by the Council. Some shops have been contacted there has been a positive response.
- A juggler who might be willing to participate to attract attention to the campaign. It was agreed to investigate this further and pay expenses of around £50.
- Posters saying 'Why come to Wycombe without one?' will be pinned onto people's backs or bags. Anyone with a group of people in mind to wear these, please email.
- 3 posters will be produced; one set for the stall to give out to the public, one for the shops to distribute to customers and A4 posters for the shops to display in their windows.

11. Any Other Business

The Environmental Centre has an exhibition in progress on ways that Wycombe could attain a smaller carbon footprint.

12. Next meeting will be on Wednesday 7th April (first Wednesday of each month) at 7.30pm at **the Friends Meeting House**, 25 London Road (on the corner of London Road with Stuart Road). **the first meeting at our new venue.**