

Wycombe Friends of the Earth

Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday 5th May 2010, 7.30pm at
The Friends Meeting House, 25 London Road, High Wycombe

Present: 12

Apologies: 4

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies as above.

2. Ecotip of the month will be:

If you have children, consider joining a toy library. It saves money and is a great to meet other parents. There are over 1,000 toy libraries in the UK, serving approximately 250,000 children. See <http://www.natll.org.uk/> for more details. The toy library for High Wycombe operates at Mill Brook Combined School, Mill End Road, High Wycombe - 01494 463717. Or look up the Boomerang Toy Library in Bucks at http://www.bucksinfo.net/bucks-play-association/services?service_id=572029

3. Forthcoming events

- Thursday 6th May - Thame and Chinnor FOE are showing a TransitionTowns film at the Village Centre, Chinnor, 8pm.
- Sunday 9th May - Pann Mill Open Day. The Mill will be in operation and will be selling its own ground flour.
- Saturday 5th June - South East FOE Regional Gathering in London– Bookings by 18th May. Mike Ch will send round a link.
- Saturday 19th June - Thame and Chinnor FOE Green Fayre at Chinnor Village Hall, 10-4pm
- Wednesday 19th May, 7.15pm. Transition Towns meeting at the Friends Meeting House

4. Finance

- 3 members paid fees. Also, membership fees have been received from 2 other members not present.
- The Treasurer has prepared a Finance Report for the AGM. Our fees income at present only just covers the cost of hiring the room at the Friends Meeting House. Plus there is other expenditure. This year we had £500 profit from Wycombe District Council from the Plastic Bag Campaign, although this has not yet been received. However, without that, there might be insufficient funds.
- There was some discussion regarding the level of detail needed on the accounts in the Finance Report.

5. AGM reminder

- The AGM will be on Wednesday 2nd June. The Co-ordinator and the Treasurer are willing to continue in their posts although others were invited to consider standing.
- At the AGM there will be biscuits and simple refreshments – a member offered to bring biscuits and put the kettle on.

6. Motions to FOE annual conference; FOE Board regional election

- The Co-ordinator. informed members that they can propose a motion at the annual conference – deadline 28th May.
- A member suggested 3 motions:

1. FOE should emphasise Sustainability rather than Climate Change as the idea of Climate Change can be argued.
2. The FOE energy campaign should emphasise saving energy through saving space heating (rooms).
3. Make every form of transport as efficient as possible and there should be more information about this available to the public.

- After discussion by the group, the member will word No.1 carefully and send it out to the group for discussion by email.
- A member will word a population motion.
- There is a set procedure for selecting a motion at the conference. Another group will have to support it at the next stage.

7. Food Chain Campaign / Local Food Directory

- The 'Change your World' booklet has an article on Farming. A member has suggested that we contact the 3 farmers who attended our event in September 2009 to update them on the campaign.
- Local food directory compiled by Transition Towns. The project group had a meeting on 4th May. It was decided to finish collecting data by 15th May. The next stage involves someone contacting the entrants into the directory, to check the details. Anyone willing to do this can contact Transition Towns. A member offered to do this.

8. Follow-up from WSP "Plastic Bag Project", including "Eden's Green Credentials"

- We have supplied a final report to the Project. The Wycombe Partnership has written to the Head Offices of some companies, as they were unwilling to act without Head Office approval
- 3 members manned the stall at 'Lush' on April 25th. Thank you all. £50 was made and information about the group was available. The money has yet to be sent to us.
- The Eden Shopping Centre provided a list of the green initiatives they employ. eg rainwater harvesting for toilets, WCs have dual flush, low energy LED bulbs, a scheme to recycle as much as possible. Heating is turned off from 6pm until 6am, lighting levels in car park is as low as possible for security purposes, saving energy through incoming energy sources, electronic controls to reduce energy consumption, motion sensors in the 'behind the scenes' areas. Perhaps we can suggest other ways in which the Eden Centre could be greener. The Co-ordinator will circulate this and members please comment on those areas that need pursuing or other areas to pursue.

9. High Speed 2

- All 3 routes for the high speed railway have detailed maps. All routes will go through AONB in the Chilterns with no obvious benefit for local residents.
- The point was made that it should be affordable and well used.
- National FOE is deciding on their official response. The Co-ordinator will report to National FOE that there is high interest and that there should be a view on this.
- The full public consultation will be in the Autumn.

10. Recruiting and retaining members - discussion

- 2 members might be interested in doing some research into setting up a blog, so that there is a media presence for environmental information and ideas and for promoting our group.
- A member posts information about our meetings on Facebook. This could be mentioned on our website.

Regarding the problem of recruiting and retaining members, to improve we could perhaps:

- Give more acknowledgement of new members.
- Introduce members present.
- Outline the format of the meeting with a little background information where appropriate.
- Invite new members to take on a small task or partner someone undertaking a task.
- Ask them if there are any areas that interest them.
- Make sure someone is present at 7.15pm at meetings to greet possible new members arriving before existing members. A member offered to be here by 7.25pm.
- Have a telephone conversation with them or an email them to engage them more and encourage them to attend the next meeting.
- Give them a relevant leaflet.
- Have a meeting/social gathering in a pub quarterly, perhaps in addition to the business meeting.
- Have a speaker on a specific topic for a short time within a meeting (most members suggested this should be at the beginning of a meeting). Ivan offered to speak about population. A member offered to speak about the Rail link. Perhaps we could invite our new MP to speak on their environmental policy. 10 minutes mini-presentation and 10 minutes question and answer session.

11. AOB

Ivan offered leaflets for members to take and distribute.

19th-25th June is National Bike Week. www.bikeweek.org.uk/ where there are local events to view. www.walkit.com/ is now in High Wycombe and the links will be put on the website. This will plan a route for you, even a circular one.

12. Next meeting will be the **AGM** on Wednesday 2nd June (regular meetings on the 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).