

Wycombe Friends of the Earth

Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday 1st September 2010, 7.30pm at

The Friends Meeting House, 25 London Road, High Wycombe

Present: 10 members

Apologies: 3 members

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies as above.

2. Ecotip of the month

Ecotip of the month for August has only just gone on the website for various reasons, so will stay for September and be renewed for October.

3. Food Chain Campaign – lobbying of MP/s

- The second reading of the Bill will be in November, so members are encouraged to contact MPs to request their support.
- There is a food chain day of action on 9th October.
- It was decided that we would seek an interview with Wycombe MP as a FOE group.
- A link which will explain the process will be circulated.

4. Eden's Green Credentials

- This has been looked into and findings reported at the meeting.
- There is a British Council of Shopping Centres that has a sustainability charter against which shopping centres can judge themselves. It covers 4 areas: Energy Usage, Wastage, Community, and Water.
- We could suggest Eden look into this (£130 pa), although they may already be a member.
- More information can be obtained by putting BCSC into Google.
- The Eden Centre Manager will be asked if the centre is a member of BCSC in the first instance.

5. Discussion on High Speed Rail

- HS1 – fast rail link between London and Dover.
- HS2 – fast rail link between Scotland and London.
- Why do we need one? To reduce short-haul flights and therefore carbon emission and to increase demand for transport not already met.
- Maps with proposed routes were displayed. A Governmental decision will be made in the Autumn at conference.
- Birmingham will benefit economically from it.
- 2 main arguments against – cost (£17 billion, please view government website, the Spending Challenge on how we can save money) and impact on the environment (Bucks CC are conducting an environmental impact study).
- FOE thinking is that it would be potentially good if it transfers car drivers and plane passengers to the train, but this is uncertain. Needs to have a lot of energy reducing aspects if FOE is to be at all positive.
- Consultation will be in early 2011.
- Government will announce final route Autumn 2011.
- Green Party supports it in principle but needs clarification.
- We need to wait for developments at the party conference/s and decide our stance.

- Members were encouraged to view relevant documents to become informed, such as the Baseline Environment Assessment (by Bucks County Council), the Briefing on the FOE website, and other opinions that can be found online.
- On 11th September, there will be an organised walk on part of the route to view the landscape that will be disrupted - can get details from The Chiltern Society website.

6. Local Authorities Plastic Recycling Practices – response to an email enquiry

- An email enquiry asked why there is little plastics recycling in Wycombe, when there is a facility in Aylesbury.
- The group discussed this issue and it seems that WDC has different contracting commitments from Aylesbury.
- A member will investigate when the contract period finishes.

7. WDC's Carbon Reduction Framework

- WDC will produce a strategy to reduce carbon emissions in the district. There is a working group investigating this until November, when Council members will be informed about findings.
- The aim is for a 40% reduction by 2020 from 1990 levels.
- They invite people to meetings for information - a member has attended one.

8. Local Food Directory

- Final stages – 99 businesses will be listed in it, plus some relevant articles.
- It targets the general public and raises questions such as *why is there very little local food available in this area?*
- Copies of the directory will be available in about a month.

9. Joint events with TTHW (Transition Towns High Wycombe)

- It was discussed that TT, Amnesty and the Environment Centre could have a joint venue and events, with possibly WFOE? This would hopefully appeal to different audiences, eg not just films but also MP visits and other visits for information.
- The university might be interested also, but less keen at the moment. This, however, needs a venue, persistence and publicity.
- A venue at the University may be a positive move and will send information to relevant member for possible action.

10. Forthcoming events and distribution of materials

12th September – World Plastic Bag Free Day, worldwide, <http://www.nomorebaggage.org/>

12th September – Pann Mill Open Day, on The Rye

22nd September – World Car Free Day, www.worldcarfree.net/wcfd

25th September – Chesham first farmers' market, in the High Street.

11. Finance

Internet banking and how the process will work for us is being considered.

12. Blog

No news on this.

13. AOB

- It was suggested that a group member may like to paint an environmental picture/message on the boards surrounding the 'Pepperpot' in High Wycombe during work on it. Requests will be sent out to relevant members.
- Highworth School has been given permission on appeal, to erect a wind turbine on an area of the school grounds.
- A member asked if anyone had a topic they would like to have a talk about at a meeting. Geo-engineering was mentioned. Also it would be useful to have

knowledge of statistics that are of high relevance to environmental issues, eg about biodiversity, climate change. We could compile these collectively and distribute them or put them on the website. Next month 2 members will report on Conference.

14 Next meeting will be on Wednesday 6th October (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).