

Wycombe Friends of the Earth

Minutes of Monthly Meeting

Wednesday 1st February 2012, 7.30pm

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

Present: 9

Apologies: 2

1. Welcome and apologies

2. Ecotips and members' green tips

February's ecotip will be:

Watch 'Superscrimpers' on Channel 4, Monday evenings.

Have fun with 'make do and mend' and minimize consumption.

Or watch it online at:

www.channel4.com/programmes/superscrimpers-waste-not-want-not/4od

3. Forthcoming events, including FOE Bees Campaign Workshop

- 21st April - Bees Campaign Workshop. No venue as yet but will be in High Wycombe. Members are strongly encouraged to support this event. Other FOE groups and members will be invited. To be between 11am and 4pm. We could possibly have a networking session before or after, to build communication.
- Wycombe Harvest 2012 - A Celebration of Local Food – August 27th (Bank Holiday Monday). A TTHW inspired event. It will be a food festival supported by Wycombe businesses. The Town Centre Partnership will organise practical matters. TTHW will organise content, which will be food related.
- Monday 13th Feb – food group meeting for an ideas gathering exercise. WFOE will be invited. Perhaps we can make a link with the Bees campaign.

4. Updates on:

a) Mill End Road Hedge

The co-ordinator sent a letter to Grant and Stone to ask for an update – no reply yet.

b) High Heavens Waste Transfer Station

This has been given permission to continue. Central Government has to give permission as it is in the Green Belt.

c) Bucks Free Press blog

A piece has written for the BFP Blog. A password is needed to access it and add to it. Nothing posted as yet. In a meeting with the BFP, useful information was gathered about getting articles etc in the BFP. The Contents Editor should be contacted rather than individual reporters as all pieces have to go through the Contents Editor. Letters should go to the Letters contact in the BFP.

WFOE would benefit from someone to update the content of the website.

d) Marinet CFP Campaign and membership

The Latest stage of their campaign to reform of the EU Common Fisheries Policy is ongoing, but it is at a crucial stage. They are asking for support in the form of an email to relevant Government bodies to apply pressure and initiate dialogue – there is a letter on their website to forward.

More details will be forwarded.

WFOE donated £15 to Marinet last year. It was agreed to donate £15 again this year.

The website will be updated to show this.

e) Baregardens

No further update at present.

5. Finance, including income generation ideas

- The group is in credit.
- It was proposed that we recommend that our £5 annual membership fee be increased to £10, at the AGM.
- A member showed some re-cycled Christmas cards that could be sold at the Green Fair to raise funds.
- The treasurer said that our current outgoings exceed our income, as income is mainly membership fees and some are not being paid.

6. Organisation of local government and how decisions are made

A local parish councillor, talked to the members present about the above.

- Examples of parish council activities were given. Parish councils have land to look after, some of it tiny amounts left over from building projects. They also look after some public lighting. They can choose whether to illuminate or not. Lighting is expensive.
- Parish councillors are elected but if there is a lack of candidates, a single candidate could gain office by default.
- Parish councils are not really political bodies.
- Parish councils have a view on planning applications, but District Councils can make decisions although they can then be overturned by central government.
- The mayor is a ceremonial figure only, and is in post for a year.
- Chepping Wycombe council is one of the biggest councils in the country.
- Wycombe DC is also big – there are 60 district councillors.
- There is more responsibility and commitment for district councillors than parish councillors.

7. AOB

The new deadline for the solar power higher feed-in tariff is now 3rd March 2012.

8. Next meeting will be on Wednesday 7th March 2012 (regular meetings on the first Wednesday of each month) at 7.30pm at **the Friends Meeting House**, 25 London Road, High Wycombe (on the corner of London Road with Stuart Road).