

Wycombe Friends of the Earth

Minutes of Monthly Meeting

Wednesday 7th March 2012, 7.30pm

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

Present: 6.

Apologies: 8

1. Welcome and apologies as above

2. Ecotips and members' green tips

There will be 2 ecotips for March will be:

1. *Recycle your spent low energy lights (CFL's) at Robert Dyas (over the counter) 30 White Hart Street, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 2HL. Low energy light bulbs only. Please take fluorescent tubes to your Local council recycling centre.*

2. *No longer need that pair of specs? Just drop them off at your local optician where they'll be sent to Vision Aid Overseas, a charity that provides eye care and glasses for people in developing countries. Find out more about how to donate your glasses at <http://www.vao.org.uk/showpage.php?id=230&product=TIP>*

- Members mentioned that plastic flower pots and polystyrene seed trays can be recycled at some Garden Centres, eg Booker Garden Centre.
- Two books were recommended - 'Sustainable Energy – without the hot air' by David J C Mackay, and 'Prosperity without Growth' by Tim Jackson.

3. Forthcoming events, including FOE Bees Campaign Workshop

- Sunday 11th March, 2.30pm, Chiltern Green Party AGM, Penn Street Village Hall
- SuperHome Open Day at Ivan's home on Saturday 17th March.
- SuperHome Open Day at Chalfont St Giles, 18th and 19th March. See website for more details – www.superhomes.org.uk or <http://www.superhomes.org.uk/superhomes/chalfont-st-giles-bucks-palliser-road>
- Local 'Roots' Wycombe launch date on Monday 19th March (provisional date).
- May 26th Milton Keynes or Aylesbury – local workshop on supporting local wind farm applications (mainly Aylesbury area)
- Population Matters - a presentation (of about 1 hour). 50% climate change, 50% population. Will be at one of our monthly meetings.
- 21st April - Bees Campaign Workshop. No venue 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.

4. Finance

Finances are still not sustainable even after the proposed increase in membership fees to £10.

5. Mill End Road hedge

Grant and Stone have replaced the hedge (see previous minutes for history). The Co-ordinator wrote a letter for an update and has since sent an acknowledgement that the hedge has been replaced to Grant and Stone and a letter of thanks to the Council planning officer who assisted.

6. Blog

- This is now live on the BFP website in the Blogs section. . 'Nature connections' is the author.
- Co-ordinator has written a piece on the Common Fisheries Policy.
- Expectations for this are low at present because of time constraints, but it is now set up so if anyone would like to add to the blog, email the Co-ordinator.

7. Marinet

- Marinet is focussing on the Common Fisheries Policy.
- Initial letters from 2 members have been sent off.
- Public awareness could be raised by sending a letter to the Bucks Free Press.

8. BareGardens

- A member said that there is a possibility of having a BareGardens stall in the library which is free.
- A member mentioned a similar organisation on a national scale mentioned on BBC Radio's 'Gardener's Question Time' that is run by a prominent charity. Could we perhaps link up with this?

9. Environment Centre

- The new venue is at the Wye River Studios, West Wycombe Road.
- There are areas/rooms that the organisers could let out for meetings and/or events.
- If anyone can help moving items in, their offers would be welcome. Details to be distributed.

10. Incinerator

- The Waste Transfer Station has been given planning permission but the incinerator decision itself has been deferred until the Autumn.
- There is a chance that, with some pressure, the venture could be rejected.
- Many local groups have objected to the scheme and we could get involved.
- The Co-ordinator will send out an email to encourage members to write commenting about the incinerator.

11. Clean British Energy campaign / Steve Baker and wind / Low Carbon Chilterns Cooperative

- This links to the Final Demand Campaign (focussing on the 6 energy companies) and will aim to persuade people to change their supplier from the Big 6.
- There is a possibility for a discussion about this among members at a monthly meeting. Steve Baker, MP, was a signatory to a letter to The Times on Wind Energy. 2 members wrote to him about his wind energy policy.
- Low Carbon Chilterns Co-operative began when a group of people were trying to set up a community solar project. They have obtained a grant to research into pros and cons of different types of energy. It would be beneficial for WFOE and TTHW to link in with this to combine resources and information.
- There is a meeting this Friday for members of the above organisations for initial information gathering. The Co-ordinator will go on our behalf.

12. Bees campaign

- The set of 3 programmes 'Bees, Butterflies and Blooms' was discussed where Sarah Raven strongly encouraged individuals and Councils to plan nectar rich plants for summer displays in order to support insect populations which have declined.
- FOE will try to get national government and local government to be more aware of the need for nectar rich plants, as many of our garden plants are nectar poor and therefore do not support insect life effectively.
- Possible actions:
 - Discuss where this type of planting could be implemented locally.
 - Wild flower sale at the Environment Centre
 - Take over a roundabout?
 - Write to Dreams, for example, to encourage them to plant nectar rich plants at their advertising roundabout.

13. Regional Gathering report

Main points to note from the Gathering:

- There was a workshop on writing for a website (writing concisely etc.)
- WFOE Co-ordinator presented the Local Food Guide.
- Solar Power co-operative and Food co-operative discussed.

14. FOE re-branding

We will not print out too many leaflets at present in case FOE change the logo, but it is uncertain at present what this re-branding might involve.

15. FOE offer of support to Group

- The Co-ordinator received an email from Nicky Packham offering help to make campaigning more effective.
- Retaining members and getting members to be active is often a problem.
- Perhaps Nicky could inform us how other effective groups run their activities.
- The Co-ordinator will have a chat with Nicky about the above.

16. AOB

- Due to certain members being away during the first week of June, availability of the Friends room will be checked so that The AGM can be changed to the second week of June.
- We will not get involved in the promotion of Fair Trade in High Wycombe as, though worthy, it is not central to our concerns.
- Having WFOE meetings every 2 months will be discussed at the AGM. Could we make meetings more interesting to entice more members for the reduced number of meetings?

17. Next meeting will be on Wednesday 4th April 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).