

Wycombe Friends of the Earth

Minutes of Monthly Meeting

Wednesday 4th April 2012, 7.30pm

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

Present: 12

Apologies: 2

1. Welcome and apologies – as above

2. Ecotips and members' green tips

The ecotip for April will be:

1. Get into water-saving habits now - avoid hose pipe bans next year.

Go to the Energy Saving Trust website for some water-saving tips/products and a water-saving calculator. www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/In-your-home/Water

There was some discussion on train and bus fares. If travelling frequently on public transport, it is best to get return tickets or travel cards to minimise the cost for each journey.

3. Forthcoming events

- 21st April - Bees Campaign Workshop. At Friends Meeting House. Members are strongly encouraged to support this event. **Non-WFOE members also welcome.**
- Saturday 22nd April – Earth Day
- Wednesday 2nd May – WFOE meeting with a talk on 'Population Matters'
- May 13th – Pann Mill Open Day, 11am-4pm
- May 26th Milton Keynes or Aylesbury – local workshop on supporting local wind farm applications (mainly Aylesbury area)

4. Finance

It was agreed to wait until the AGM in June before collecting membership fees as it is proposed that it should be increased to £10.

5. Bees Campaign: 21st April Training: plus initial ideas brainstorm

10.30am-4.30pm at The Friends Meeting House.

If you would like to attend, please email Nikki Packham. nikki.packham@foe.co.uk

For actions re above, we could:

- promote wild flower planting in roundabouts.
- contact local area/woods/commons associations.
- contact the local councils to consider wild flower planting in public places.

6. FOE re-branding

- Edwina showed the FOE re-branding video. There was some discussion on the video.
- The only change is to the colour of the logo and the strap-line 'seeing things differently'.
- We will discourage National FOE from sending a lot of new material unnecessarily.
- We will ask if we can use up the old material first.

7. Future of Bassetsbury Allotments

There are two sets of allotments. The background to the contentious plot:

4 years ago it was discovered that there were levels of contaminants, ie heavy metals. The allotment holders disputed the levels. An independent test gave different results.

WDC are not prepared to invest in the cost of putting a concrete cap on it and putting top soil on top. One option is a land swap, giving the allotment holders alternative plots fairly locally.

The plot, due to abandonment, has become something of a nature reserve. It is feared that the site may be given over to property development. The maximum level of contaminants for

soil is higher for property use than for allotment use. The plot is alongside a channel of the Wye and the railway line, both of which has abundant wildlife.

- We should, without conflict with the allotment holders, promote the idea of a nature reserve for the site rather than develop it.
- A decision by Council Cabinet will be taken on May 3rd. Before that there is a meeting about the site.
- We could look round the site and have a discussion with the allotment holders, perhaps during the next week. This would inform our view. Perhaps this could be included in the 'Bee' walk.
- Is there potential for a half way promotion, ie, some housing but an area left to link with the railway line area to increase the wildlife corridor?
- The co-ordinator will contact Mr Bevan (who couldn't attend this meeting) with a view to a meeting to gather further information and to look round the site.
- The co-ordinator will contact the Liberal councillor, Trevor Snaith, to inform him that someone from WFOE will attend the next meeting and to ask if more wildflower planting could be promoted among Council planting areas.
- Details about the above meeting will be emailed to members.

8. Views of Steve Baker MP, on energy policy and other issues

- From correspondence from Steve Baker, it seems he is keen to leave energy research to the free market and he is in favour of extracting shale gas.
- There is scope for his constituents to enquire further in order to discover Steve Baker's ideas on future energy sources. **So, if any WFOE members feel able to do this, please do so, as this is one of the functions of Wycombe FOE.**

9. AGM – advance planning and processes

- This will be on Thursday 14th June.
- There will be a Treasurer's Report and a Co-ordinator's Report.
- A letter to members will be drafted:
 - informing them of the AGM and urging them to attend
 - asking for their membership fee
 - asking them how they would like to be involved and what the group should be achieving.

10. AOB

- At the next meeting there will be a talk 'Population Matters' about an hour.
- No further updates on Wycombe Incinerator, Mill End Hedge, the Blog or Marinet.
- Bare Gardens – three more gardens have been offered, but two gardeners have withdrawn. There are more gardens than gardeners

17. Next meeting will be on Wednesday 2nd May 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).