

Wycombe Friends of the Earth - Minutes of Monthly Meeting

Wednesday 8th January 2014, 7.30pm at The Environment Centre,
Wye River Studios, 17 West Wycombe Road, High Wycombe, HP11 2LG

Who's here and who's missing **Present: 5** **Apologies: 6**

The business bit

Finance

The website fee for 2014 has been paid.

WEC fate

WEC are likely to have to evacuate the building by April.

Our venue

- A member suggested that we have a public meeting every 2 months and meet in between if necessary at people's homes for business meetings. The idea was well received.
- A member has enquired of the Friends Meeting House and a room there could be made available. We could meet at WEC in February, at least.

Marinet

WfOE is a member of Marinet and renewal is due. It was decided to support and rejoin Marinet, despite the possibility that Marinet may make themselves independent of national FOE.

What's on

Green Drinks This is a meeting in local pubs to discuss green issues. The Co-ordinator will email more details when he has them.

"Fostering Sustainable Behaviour" event

At Amersham community Centre. Wed 29th Jan. 7.30 pm. The Co-ordinator will circulate details.

FOE Regional Gatherings and Basecamp

Conference (Basecamp) is in June in Castleton, Derbyshire 13-15 June 2014.

Green living

The monthly ecotip will be:

Make a new year's resolution to **1. reduce, 2. re-use 3. recycle.**

1. Christmas Clear-up – for what to do with your Christmas tree, cards, discarded items etc. see Wycombe District Council's waste page at:

<http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/environment/waste-and-recycling.aspx>

2. New recycling scheme by Wycombe District Council's waste department is simple and will keep valuable materials out of landfill to be used again. So use your new bins/bags properly. Even better – make a decision not to accumulate so much 'stuff'. Much that we buy ends up being discarded after a very short time and even when recycled, energy is used in the process.

Find out more at: www.wasterecycling.org.uk/home_recycling/recycling_reuse_reduction.php

4. Charity shops. Good unused or unwanted items can be taken to a charity shop for others to use and the charity will benefit. High Wycombe has several charity shops in the town centre.

3. Medicines. All out of date or unused medicines (and old inhalers - see below) should not be put in your bin but returned to a chemist who will dispose of them. Old inhalers – whether empty, out of date but full, or partly full can be taken to the following participating chemists in High Wycombe:

Victoria Pharmacy 19 Desborough Avenue, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 2RS

Superdrug Pharmacy (1169) 19 Newland Street, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 2BY

Your Local Boots Pharmacy (0247) 27 Eden Walk, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 2AU

Asda Pharmacy (8199) Holmers Farm Way, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP12 4NU

Fox Pharmacy 9 Turners Place, Holmer Green, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP15 6RN

What we've been doing

'More Than Honey' film showing in November

- There was a good turnout and some donations.
- If anyone was not able to see the film in November, we have two copies, so you can borrow them to view privately.
- Steve Baker, High Wycombe MP, did not reply to a second response after declining an invitation to join us for the film.

Green spaces

- There have been several meetings with Red Kite Housing Association (during the last year or more) regarding wild flower planting in otherwise unused areas and leaving grassed areas unmown. However, unfortunately, actual progress has proved to be slow.
- There will be a separate meeting to discuss what we can do re green space usage etc. at a member's home on Monday 27th January, 7.30pm.

What's happening out there

EU 'Make It Better' law

MEPs have supported a strengthening of this law but there is a danger that some EU countries, including UK, are trying to weaken it. There may be an opportunity for us to campaign on this in the near future.

Thermal Imaging Project

Wycombe Environment Centre is conducting a Thermal Imaging project this month initiated by Transition Town High Wycombe. This involves using a thermal camera to discover where houses leak heat energy with a view to advising the owners on how to conserve energy.

Campaign ideas

Fracking

The postcards signed and sent off to National FOE were supposed to be returned to local groups but they have not yet materialised. There are not any plans to pursue fracking in Bucks at present.

Renewable energy and energy use

The National FOE Sunny Schools campaign involves encouraging schools to have solar panels and to educate the children in renewable energy. We could find out if Wycombe schools have solar panels and report back to National FOE.

Business security lights

These are often left on all night – we need firstly to find out who and why because they could be needed to fulfil insurance requirements.

WDC waste contract should be encouraged.

Members are asked to look through the WDC waste contract at www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/environment/waste-and-recycling/what-goes-in-my-bin.aspx and suggest any updates, changes, inaccuracies etc.

Biodiversity offsetting

The consultation is now closed but involves individuals and groups taking on conservation activities that are designed to give biodiversity benefits to compensate for losses - ensuring that when a development damages nature new, bigger or better nature sites will be created. However, in the case of, for instance, ancient woodland, nothing can replace it and it is difficult to balance the loss/gain equation.

Housing Numbers

Wycombe District Council will be issuing their projection for house building which is quite likely to include using green areas. WFOE could get involved to monitor and encourage responsible use. This is likely to be in the public domain in the next few weeks so WFOE could come back to this.

Anything we've forgotten

GM A member has suggested that an acquaintance would be willing to talk about GM at one of our meetings. This was agreed as long as we can ensure imparting both sides of the topic.

Focus talks A member suggested that we ask **members** (or others they know) with other areas of green interest who could inspire a discussion at a meeting. The idea was well received.

The next meeting will be **on Wednesday 5th February 2014** at 7.30pm at The Environment Centre, Wye River Studios, 17, West Wycombe Road, High Wycombe, HP11 2LG.