

Wycombe Friends of the Earth - Minutes of Monthly Meeting

Wednesday 5th March 2014, 7.30pm at The Environment Centre,
Wye River Studios, 17 West Wycombe Road, High Wycombe, HP11 2LG

1. Who's here and who's missing

Present: 10

Apologies: 2

Names in bold denotes action required by that person (also look out for 'all members').

The business bit

▶ New agenda format was agreed (to simplify it):

1. Present and Apologies.
2. The Business Bit (including finance and other administrative items).
3. Any contribution to AOB?
4. Brief updates on previous actions, ongoing campaigns, and environmental news and developments.
5. Main item(s) (presentation and /or discussion).
6. Ecotip.
7. Forthcoming events.
8. AOB.

▶ April WFOE meeting will be at The Friends Meeting House. The co-ordinator will confirm booking. The proposed new WEC venue is still not confirmed.

▶ Finance - Income approximately matches expenditure at present.

What's on

- ▶ Election forms to serve on FOE board are available if anyone is interested.
- ▶ A talk on GM will be arranged in the next few months at a monthly meeting.
- ▶ There is also a possibility of inviting someone to talk about solar farms (4 are proposed in South Bucks).
- ▶ A member suggested a talk on green economics.

Other forthcoming events:

▶ Earth Hour – 8.30-9.30 29th March. Turn off the electric lights for an hour.

▶ COIN (Climate Outreach Information Network) – Presentation on consequences of population movements due to climate change. At Oxford Friends Meeting House, 42 St Giles', Oxford, O1 3LW, 2nd April, 7.30pm. More details at www.climateoutreach.org.uk/forthcoming-events/

▶ Earth Day – 22nd April. More details at www.earthday.org.

▶ Pann Mill Open Day 11th May. A member will book a stall.

Green living. The Ecotip will be:

You could start growing your own salad leaves this month – put some 'cut and come again' lettuce seeds in a pot or two on the windowsill and watch your lunch appear.

What we've been doing

▶ Bassetsbury allotments site – this is now in the WDC Local Plan and likely to be turned into a residential development due to unsuitability for allotments.

▶ Food directory – 2 members are reviewing this.

What's happening out there

Marinet decision on their independence from FOE has been deterred,

Campaign ideas.

Our feedback on National FOE campaigns suggested:

1. Carrying on with the Bee Cause.
2. Fracking – keep monitoring this locally but no action at present.

3. Sunny Schools (Campaign X) – watch for further developments.

1. Bee Cause

- ▶ At present, this includes 1. regeneration of bee leaflet. 2. planting up Middlebrook Road corner of wasteland.
- ▶ Members will liaise in order to make a start on 2. in the next few weeks.
- ▶ The co-ordinator has spoken to Wycombe Wildlife Group (WWG). They were favourable to the idea of town planting of bee friendly wild flowers but WWG would like more details and they are not in a position to proceed at present.
- ▶ A member will arrange a subcommittee meeting to organise distribution of bee leaflet, planting up Middlebrook Road corner and Pann Mill stall (11th May).
- ▶ A member will arrange a HW town walk (possibly after clocks go back for lighter evenings) to identify any possible sites for planting.
- ▶ All members to look out for National Bee Pollinator Strategy and email the group.
- ▶ Living Churchyards – used to be a Wildlife Trust interest. ARC (Alliance of Religion and Conservation) also promotes this, see www.arcworld.org and www.arcworld.org/projects.asp?projectID=271

2. Fracking – The co-ordinator will contact South Beds FOE as they are reasonably proactive in Bedfordshire and Bucks, although there are no plans to develop fracking in Bucks at present.

3. Sunny Schools – The co-ordinator will contact a member who has expertise in this area.

MAIN ITEM - LOCAL PLAN AND OUR RESPONSE TO IT.

The Local Plan is for High Wycombe and District up to 2031, proposed by Wycombe District Council. All residents should have received a copy through their door. If you have not received one, please let WDC know as they contracted Royal Mail to deliver them but many do not seem to have got through. Consultation deadline – 4th April.

Possible comments to be made on the Local Plan resulting from discussion: –

- ▶ New building – as close to zero carbon as possible. New homes should be insulated and sustainable and many should be affordable homes. Housing should include village halls, community centres, cultural outlets, not just retail outlets.
- ▶ Greenery/biodiversity – should be taken into consideration in planning. Green roofs, green walls and possibly public green space around building that would necessarily be reasonably dense. Passive housing?? Outdoor green space would enhance community as well as biodiversity.
- ▶ Transport - planning should aim to try and reduce the need for car travel, combining jobs, homes and services as much as possible and ensure efficient transport and/or cycling links. There should be safe places for people to walk/cycle.

All Members please use email ring to discuss above topics and any others that interest you. All Members to complete Response Forms to indicate their areas of interest in the Plan. (It was decided that member should respond individually rather than WFOE as a group.)

Anything we've forgotten

- ▶ At the last meeting, a member mentioned discussion of flood plain for a later date.

11. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 2nd April 2014 at 7.30pm at The Friends Meeting House, 25 London Road (on corner of Stuart Road).