

Wycombe Friends of the Earth - Minutes

For Zoom meeting on Wednesday 2nd June 2021 at 7.30pm:

Present: 12

Apologies: 5

1. Finance

2. Ecotip - Take part in Bee Squared.

3. Climate and biodiversity campaign

•We note Steve Baker has been appointed as spokesperson to the Global Warming Foundation, a climate change sceptical group. We discussed whether we should take any action in this regard. There doesn't appear to be any mention of it in the local paper and possibly only a minority will support him in this step. SB quotes a figure of £100 k. as the costs to each family for going to net zero. A member offered to look into the validity of this figure

His article can be found at: <https://thecritic.co.uk/its-alright-for-some/>

•He doesn't address the cost of inactivity. The Dasguptor Review and The Stern Review address this point,

•Conclusion: we won't plan specific action, but should be aware and use counter-arguments as appropriate and look into the £100 k quote reality. If we wish to write individually, post may more effective than emails as all politicians and councillors receive so many emails.

4. BCAA and feedback from the Council Elections.

•Very low turnout. Growth of Independents. Martin Tett still leader. Peter Strachan is now Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment. Councillor Steve Broadbent, who has been supportive of green issues in the past is now Cabinet Member for Transport. A member wrote to Peter Strachan and Jilly Jordan. Jilly responded. He also wrote to all on Committee. Bill Chapple very supportive. Because of the low turnout and because of the rise in Independent Councillors, Conservatives actually elected by only 15% of electorate. Our member put himself on the pensions committee, in the hope that he can influence decisions here, but it is not his prime interest. It seems they are already considering fossil fuel divestment. Climate change was not listed as a risk until our member pointed out it should be a key risk. This was accepted.

•The coordinator wrote to all new councillors in south Bucks on behalf of FoE, suggesting they take part in FoE webinar. Had three replies.

5. Bucks Council Pension Fund

Divestment Campaign. Divestment document sent to councillors on Pensions Committee. A member says send to officers who are more influential. A member confirms and says names should be on website. Officers draft propositions. Councillors make decisions.

6. Wycombe Environment (WE); bees and Solar Streets

- WE has handed out about 3500 packs of seeds, including 2300 to 12 schools and rest distributed through bee collection stations and posted on social media. 800 - 900 still in those collection stations. Getting too late to plant if not taken this week. Website is impressive, enabling anyone to enter details of when seeds are sown. This will hopefully assist monitoring.
- Solar streets is still waiting on Bucks Council to give a statement of endorsement to the project. Time essential as not many people think about solar panels in winter. Next zoom for Wycombe Environment is 7th June. All invited.

7. Campaigning around COP26

- Thursday is FoE discussion on COP and what we could do locally, nationally and in Glasgow.
- The coordinator would welcome any ideas of what we can do for campaigning during COP 26 in November. There will be actions before November i. e. a national day of action in September, with other organisations, plus some over period of conference. Need to get a network of contacts in place. A member is intending to go as part of Scientists Warning Europe. It is not yet certain that conference will be live, though this is the preference by governments.

8. Bucks Council Community Boards. Should be starting up again soon.

9. Coming Events

- Litter pick in Penn & Tylers Green next weekend.
- There is a new organisation Bucks Food Partnership, being set up to improve food distribution in Bucks. It comes out of some funding from Rothschild. Sustain and Feedback are supporting it. As a third of food is currently wasted, this connects with carbon emissions. Looking into countywide action on tackling food waste. A member will report on further developments. The Hazlemere Climate Action Group has invited a member to talk about the project on their Group Zoom on Monday.
- Our attention is drawn to Bucks Council press release from 14th May "How to Draw Wildlife into your Garden", and a list of talks by BBOWT on the subject.

10. AOB

- Gomm Valley development. Development was agreed as an eco-village for 1000 homes. This has fallen through and land is now in possession of Taylor Wimpey. There is a strong feeling that if the development is agreed with Taylor Wimpey as the implementer, TW does not have the ability or credentials to build according to the original brief of an eco-village and therefore the project for 1000 homes needs to be refused. Capacity may only be 400 - 600 homes. Hands off Gomm Valley facebook page. Do we wish to get involved? Is there action to be taken? Not everyone in our meeting agreed with this idea. It was concluded that both individuals and FoE could write with objections. A member agreed to present some bullet points to put into a letter.
- A member has received further support from Hazlemere Parish Councillors. 2 more co-opted to Group.

10. Next meeting will be the AGM on Wednesday 7th July 2021, 7.30pm, hopefully in person.