

Wycombe Friends of the Earth
Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 6th April 2022 at 7.30pm.
Held as Blended Zoom meeting

Present on Zoom: 16

Apologies: 3

A visitor spoke to the meeting about the felling of oaks in Leather Lane. HS2 started felling 3 of these oaks. A local lady, started to ask questions and discovered that no surveys had been taken before the work and she managed to stop the felling and formed a campaign group. She did her own survey and discovered that the oaks were homes for bats and HS2 work cut this bat community in two. There are two different alternative routes at Leather Lane, one which will require felling the oaks and one which does not. The group members are not seasoned campaigners but would welcome support from organisations such as WFoE. They hope that they can make a good case against felling the oaks as the alternative is quite cost effective and they have environmental values on their side. A WFoE member suggested they send information to Bucks Council to the Transport and the Environment and Climate Change Community Boards of Bucks Council. There is quite a feeling of tree protection in the council so the group could make a good case to them. The campaign group has engaged with Missenden Parish Council for support, which they hope to get. Moving them could be investigated as an option, if other options fail. They are also engaged with the Chiltern Society. The contractors might be better to approach rather than HS2 personnel especially as there is a reasonable alternative to felling these trees and HS2 personnel are increasingly aware that the work on the route is unpopular. They would prefer to get the contractors on their side rather than be adversarial.

1. Finance

- WFoE has broken even for the year.
- It is acting as banker for Wycombe Environment and is holding over money for WE. It was agreed that some donations from Repair Cafe could go to WFoE.
- WFoE has made an overall loss on the year of nearly £5 but above donations through WE will help to make finances more healthy.
- **Members** are asked to pay their subs for the current year.

2. Ecotip will be:

Buy less! Lots of household gadgets and equipment, as well as clothes, can be repaired and used for a much longer time instead of throwing out and buying new.

High Wycombe's Repair Cafe operates on the 2nd Saturday in the month, currently in All Saints Church in the centre of High Wycombe 10am-1pm. So bring your broken items to see if they can be mended.

The next two repair cafes are on:

Saturday 9th April

Saturday 14th May

Also, don't forget, when going to buy something new, ask yourself: What's the carbon footprint of this? Do I really need it? (Probably not!). A new twist on the saying 'Waste not, want not', is 'Want not, waste not'. Alter the mindset.

3. Housing Campaign

- National Consultation, which Steve has circulated on email, concerns people living in social housing, so please pass it on to anyone relevant.

4. Steve Baker

- Steve Baker, MP, is campaigning against net zero - he thinks that the speed suggested is not necessary and that the money for this would be better spent on helping members of society in other ways. He doesn't share the view that climate change is threatening human life.
- The WFoE coordinator writes good letters to the BFP countering Steve Baker's views and he will continue to do so.

5. Pann Mill (8 May)

- Booked. There is the absolute minimum of helpers this time, so we will welcome more help.
- Stall will target the climate emergency and Wycombe Environment's Bee Squared Campaign.

6. BCAA/Wycombe Environment

- BCAA - enthusiasm is waning slightly because it is difficult to get Bucks Council to take meaningful action against climate change. Questions for select committees have to be submitted at least 6 days in advance of the meeting and only relevant to the agenda of the meeting which is issued 7 days prior to the meeting which gives little time to submit questions. However, this may be reviewed. BCAA carries on stoically.
- Members are asked to write to Peter Strachan, cabinet member for environment and climate change, to stress the need for a less than 2050 Bucks net zero target, e.g. possibly 2030.
- WE - All members are invited to Saturday's WE seed packing event 10am-1pm in All Saints Parish Church in the centre of High Wycombe (9th April). The Repair Cafe will run at the same time.

7. Active Travel.

- A member attended Living Streets national walking summit. It launched their report on Walking for Everyone.
- Conference was addressed by a government minister and Chris Boardman who has been appointed Active Travel Commissioner.
- There was information from other areas that are doing better than Bucks. Bucks needs to engage with the relevant community, ie, to engage with bus users and bus providers.
- It is hoped to introduce Living Streets to Wycombe but information about how to do this is quite hard to find. The big obstruction seems to be Buckinghamshire Council.
- A member will provide a link to the Walking Summit and the Brighton scheme which is doing well.

8. Home Composting.

- Bucks Council are introducing a £50 charge for taking green bin items which could result in more car trips to the dump and more bonfires as residents are already under pressure from the rising cost of living. Green waste might also be put into grey bins.
- Green bin owners who have paid will be given a sticker to display on their bin. Is there a possibility of community composting, like in Brighton?
- A member will provide a link to the Council's discounted compost bins.

9. Forthcoming events

- Chinnor and Thame FOE Green Fayre on May 7th at Mill Lane School, Chinnor, OX39, UK
- Wycombe Environment's Saturday seed packing - see item 6.
- A member asked for members to be a collection station for the seeds. This means providing a waterproof box, a poster (supplied) to advertise on social media and 25 packets of seeds for local residents to collect.

10. AOB

Google Groups messages are not getting through at the moment so make sure your own copy is received.

The next meeting, probably a blended Zoom/in person meeting will be on Wed. 4th May 2022.