

Wycombe Friends of the Earth
Minutes of Zoom on Wednesday 1st May 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: 7

Apologies: 2

1. Finance

£780 in balance. No changes.

2. Ecotip

No Mow May coming up

Our best mowing tip for this time of year is - Do nothing.

Not mowing in April and May will bring a boost of much-needed nectar to pollinators across gardens, parklands and verges; not to mention benefits to wildlife and biodiversity in general. For more info see [Plantlife's No Mow May Movement](#)

Buy or sell unwanted clothes rather than send them to landfill. Look in charity shops or at [Vinted – Vinted in your pocket](#) As well as giving users the opportunity to sell second-hand clothing, Vinted also enables people to swap clothes with one another if they wish. Instead of buying brand new clothes, it encourages everyone to purchase and swap items to help the environment.

3. AGM

> The WFoE AGM will be in person at the Friends Meeting House on 5th June. John Bajina will give a presentation for about 20 minutes at the start of the meeting about a proposal to put a wind turbine in Wycombe .

> A member will contact John and find out which group he is representing and whether there are posters available.

> A member will send any information to a member to mention in the AGM notice who will advertise the talk.

> A member will book the big room at the Friends Meeting House.

4. Consultations

See item 10.

5. Campaigns

a. Update on fossil fuel 2030 campaign -

> FOE is currently running a petition to protect climate action - Stop the Anti-Boycott Bill.

> They have a letter template to send to local MPs before this Bill becomes law.

> FoE is concerned about the right to divest from fossil fuels as well as the right to boycott goods tainted by human rights abuses. A new law could ban public bodies from boycotting goods based upon the above. They could be punished for divesting from fossil fuels produced by companies owned by foreign states.

> **All members** please consider signing. More details at:

[Protect climate action: stop the anti-boycott bill | Friends of the Earth](#)

b. Update on election campaign

> Aim to make sure that environmental questions and issues are raised at hustings. When the election date is set, the Bucks Free Press will probably advertise the hustings. We will try to devise some questions via email and then decide on which ones at the AGM to focus on.

> A member sent out an email to the group with links to webinars conducted by FoE. The one focusing upon Steve Baker is an important one.

> There are some pre Election Events during Big Green Week, June 10 -18.

> Webinar next week [Sign up – Great Big Green Week: What are members of The Climate Coalition planning?](#) WWF, Fairtrade (FoE is a member).

> Make your Big Green week have greater political impact - 8th May
<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/hopeforthefuture/1193137>

> Summer Gatherings in May and June - London 18th May. Brighton 29th June.

c. Update on Warmer Homes

> A member attended a call about this. They want candidates and MPs to sign the Warmer Homes pledge. Postcards are available for people to send to MPs. It was suggested meeting outside the MPs' offices to arrange a meeting and hand in a petition, requesting them to sign a warmer homes pledge.

> Perhaps write a letter to Steve Baker to encourage him to sign the pledge rather than have a group of only a few people outside his office - this might be counterproductive.

> A member will draft a letter to Steve Baker and mention that housing association landlords are currently prevented from claiming any more rent if they have invested in home insulation. This is a disincentive to increase insulation in their properties.

> FoE has 4309 signatures and needs another 691 to be able to trigger a public debate.

6. Petitions

> FoE - We need more renewables. FOE is running a petition to send to party leaders to lift the restrictions on onshore sites for sun and wind.

> FoE have mapped out fossil fuel sites in England and Wales. There are 92 active sites and 19 sites planning new activity. FoE is fighting with local communities to challenge some of these decisions.

> **All members** to consider sending to party leaders - this is on Facebook. The link is:

https://action.friendsoftheearth.uk/petition/tell-party-leaders-ramp-up-renewables-its-too-late?fbclid=IwZXh0bG9hZW0CMTEAAR1ttRE7C1VjHlqqafHmabtDyHePROZrT26UXpdybBnyGHx4pOOQhsxwQ_0_aem_AcePSaMsuLpPUEz8wlz-erE_IrAt0cs5WeGbm1WIWoD2OgfyaxJyOC6aS4GO5nT_z2gtq5BMibngafOeVTg4Qj-K

7. Social media

> Social Media - 41 posts, 13 comments, 73 reactions.

Most Viewed - Scientists Warning Europe : Events and Activities for Earth Day 2024.

Greener Frieth : Bucks CC Local Nature Recovery Strategy (Sally attended a meeting).

Least Viewed - Video on Planet versus Plastic (theme for Earth Day 2024) - 12 views.

> Facebook is used by an older age group. Instagram is the platform for younger activists. Instagram is the "go to" for younger people:

> Talking Climate Account - A global campaign and educational tool to engage people and talk about critical climate issues. 'The one thing we can all do is to talk about it'.

> The Steve Baker Watch group is successful at getting items focusing upon climate into local papers.

8. Events

- a. Saturday 27th April, 11am-3pm Grow Together community allotment open day. This was successful. They got a few volunteers from the open day.
- b. WEC AGM 2nd May, 7.30pm, The Room in Bucks New Uni. All are welcome.
- c. May 12th - Pann Mill - joint stall with WEC.
- d. May 26th - Frogfest - joint stall with WEC.
- d. Sunday 2nd June. Chinnor and Thame Green Fayre. We could attend this to support but won't have a stall there.

9. Stalls

- a. Pann Mill - 12th May - joint WFoE/WEC stall
 - > Rota organised.
 - > A member will find out where the T-shirts are and bring a puzzle.
 - > A member will provide Warmer homes publicity.
 - > A member will provide current Zero Hour publicity.
 - > A member will do the display board and children's activities.
- b. Frogfest - 26th May - joint WFoE/WEC stall
 - > Rota organised.
 - > Display board, above publicity and activities will be the same as for Pann Mill.
- c. Downley Festival/Festival of Wellbeing 15th June.
 - > We will leave WEC to do this on their own if they want to and WFoE members can join the rota if they want to.
- d. Pann Mill 8th September/Wycombe Festival? We decided to wait.

10. Gomms Valley Development

Gomms Wood is an important nature reserve and the Gomm Valley is connected to the central Chiltern chalk rivers. It is one of the last remaining chalk valleys so there is concern about river pollution.

The inquiry started on 5th March. The application is to be determined by an Inspector on behalf of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. This inquiry is expected to close on 21st May.

11. Future of WFoE

> We seem to be losing steam? Other groups are very active and we could link in with them, perhaps more effectively.

> A member has a list of 11 local environment groups within a 10 mile radius of High Wycombe. There could be more than 11. The member contacted 3 of them to enquire how they are getting on and to suggest some cooperation during this Election Year. Wendover is the one of the 3 that is active.

> A member will make contact.

12. Should political organisations post on WFoE Facebook page?

A member monitors and approves or rejects posts. It was decided to continue like this as it hasn't caused any problems so far and there are not many such posts.

13. AOB

A member reported that the High Wycombe Community led Assembly held an event last Sunday to try and connect local groups and find ideas to encourage people in Wycombe to be more involved and empowered. The next Meeting on May 12th 2pm at The Mad Squirrel. So if any members have relevant ideas, they would be welcome.

14. The next meeting is on Wednesday 5th June, in person, at the Friends Meeting House, 25 London Road, High Wycombe, 7.30pm and will be the Annual General Meeting. It will be a hybrid meeting but there will be no guarantee that the Zoom will work so please attend in person if possible.

A member will look into requesting to use the Quakers' screen.