



Shrewsbury Friends of the Earth

Newsletter February 2012

For meetings and contacts, see back page

www.shrewsfoe.org.uk

Disappointing Incinerator Decision

We were surprised and very disappointed to hear that we lost the incinerator public inquiry. Shrewsbury FoE was one of only 4 organisations who were accepted to make representations to the inquiry, we undertake a huge amount of preparation, including some very detailed work over waste figures and carbon emissions. We were there every day over the 20 days that the inquiry lasted and actually presented for 4 of those days.

We thought the inquiry went well and that the parties opposed to the plan put forward serious, wide ranging and convincing arguments to back up Shropshire Council planning committee's unanimous rejection of the scheme in 2010. However, whilst we seriously undermined Veolia's case for the incinerator it seems that the Inspector was looking for proof that it's a bad idea, which is obviously difficult if not impossible to provide. For instance we put Veolia's waste figures under considerable doubt but how can you prove how much waste will arise over the next 25 years? Similarly with the argument over the Waste Local Plan, which rejects mass burn incineration for this site but the wording is open to some interpretation. How can you prove that this sort of scheme was what was meant by that?

We haven't given up yet though. We have been pursuing three avenues. The first is to ensure that Shropshire Council seriously considers whether the permission granted is 'satisfactory'. The conditions imposed include some off site works and additional costs. If these are considered serious enough (and cost could be included as a criteria in this) then the permission could be regarded as 'unsatisfactory' and therefore not in compliance with the contract.

The second avenue is a judicial review. This now looks unlikely but a final decision on this will be made at our February meeting.

The third avenue is to question at Westminster the cost effectiveness of the PFI contract. Our figures show the incinerator would add about £3m a year to the waste costs of Shropshire Council, even if we're a long way out the savings in not having the incinerator could be enormous. As the Government is underpinning the incinerator costs through the PFI contract they should be very interested in this in the current climate.

Even if the incinerator does get built our work will not all have been in vain. As part of the inquiry process Veolia agreed to changes to the design of the plant which will mean it produces about 10% more electricity. The plant will still be hopelessly inefficient and this doesn't change our views on whether it should get built but it is a small crumb of comfort.

We'd like to thank Dave Green who, on our behalf, worked on the original planning application and hearing and then took on the co-ordination which enabled us to take on a full role at the inquiry. Also we'd like to thank Keith Kondakor, Tim Hill and Shlomo and Josh Downen for all their hard work on the inquiry and with our response to the decision. Lastly we'd like to thank all those who stood alongside us through the inquiry, including Joyce Jagger of Battlefield 1403, the Shropshire Council Planning Department, Michael Ryan, Nick Hall and Barry Hayes.



Shrewsbury Green Doors

The Transition Shrewsbury building group have organised the first Shrewsbury Green doors event for 24th/25th March, with our assistance. Details can be found at www.shrewsburygreendoors.co.uk.

2012 HERE WE COME

Just after Christmas, we held a workshop to agree our priorities for action in 2012. And here they are:

Local campaigns_ 1) Sustainable energy 2) Recycling. 3) Town centre traffic

National campaign Green products

Projects/programmes 1) Green guide 2) Walks and talks

Representation on committees/groups 1) Planning Liaison Group 2) Cycle Forum 3) Shropshire Community Recycling Network 4) Green Shropshire Exchange

Underpinning everything Communication

A small team of people is attached to each of these activities, with a named lead(s). Each team has started planning (or will soon start planning) how to tackle their issue.

If you want to help a team – please do let us know. The more heads the better. Your involvement will be determined by what you're happy to do and how much. Most of the issues would be helped by people who could do internet research (which can be done at times convenient to you) or write press releases/meet with councillors and Council officers/design or distribute posters...and other things. So you can pretty much determine how you want to be involved.

Please email Barbara on phillipsbarbaramark@yahoo.co.uk or ring on 01743.363010 and let her know which priority you're interested in, or what activity you could offer (e.g. internet trawling). She will link you to one of the lead individuals.

Want to know more about each of the priorities? There isn't really space to elaborate much here – and anyway, the details have not yet been planned. But briefly:

Sustainable energy. Likely to include the Shrewsbury weir. Also collaboration with Telford & Wrekin on developing community owned renewable energy companies.

Recycling. The issue of cardboard collection looms large. Our aim was to see Shropshire committing to halving the amount of waste that goes to landfill by 2020. This may need revising if Veolia builds an incinerator.

Town centre traffic. We want to work towards traffic in the town centre being hugely reduced

Green products. Making the companies who profit from selling products take responsibility for their full environmental impact. **Green guide.** We're going to continue with our guide to local green products and organisations. It needs updating, the website needs re-designing and hard-copy production needs to be addressed.

Walks & talks. Our programme of events needs to be managed and publicised.

Representation on groups. Members represent FoE on a variety of groups. They need briefing and support to communicate to other members/others what is going on

Communication. In lots of ways, this is the key. We need to talk to our members, and to inform and influence more widely. We are planning to make better use of social media.

So if any of that grabs you, please pick up the phone or email to let us know in a general way what you'd like to do. Thanks.

Biofuelwatch Alert over Ironbridge

Biofuelwatch have alerted Shropshire County Council's Planning Department asking them to not approve an application which would allow E.On to burn millions of tonnes of imported virgin wood at Ironbridge Power Station a year. This is not good for the climate, forests or local people. To find out more, please go to:

<http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/2012/ironbridgealert>

LEAF bids

Congratulations to Marches Energy Agency for their successful bid for energy work in Bayston Hill through round 1 of DECC's LEAF fund. They're also submitting a round 2 bid for work with the Coton Crescent residents. Also our Dave Green was instrumental in the successful round 1 bid for solid wall insulation in Church Stretton, and two further round 2 bids.

Walks and Talks

We've decided to approach things a bit differently...

For a long time, SFoE has arranged a regular programme of monthly events - visits to organisations we thought members would find interesting, presentations about green issues, social events, film showings. The point of these has been to increase everyone's understanding of the issues and to equip those who want to, to campaign better. There's been a mixed reaction with much interest in some activities, very little in others.

We've decided to cut down on the number of events we organise and to publicise them more widely. Also, we're going to point you towards some other green-related events. There are lots, of course, and you will know of many already.

In the past, it's been the recycling-related parts of our programme that have been most well attended. We think that the issue of commercial and industrial waste is especially important at the moment. 80% of Shrewsbury's waste is from this sector. And it's a very specialist and difficult area.

So we are currently organising a visit to Recresco and Shotton Paper Mill. Recresco recycles modern materials. This includes investigating and developing useful products from glass such as water filtration media and an environmentally friendly alternative to copper derived shot blast material. UPM at Shotton Paper Mill produces energy, pulp, papers, plywood, sawn timber, label materials, wood plastic composite.

The visit is likely to be in March or early April. We'll send you information as soon as a date has been fixed. We expect to organise transport.

Some other events:

| What | When/where | More details |
|--|--|--|
| Thursday monthly film and discussion nights. | Last Thursday of every month. 7.30pm for 8.00pm Old Post Office , 1 Milk Street, Shrewsbury SY1 1SZ | Organised by Transition Town Shrewsbury www.transitiontownshrewsbury.org.uk |
| Darwin Festival | 11 – 19 February Various venues | Shropshire Wildlife Trust http://www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/WhatsOn/events_pages/Darwin+Festival+2012 |
| Green Shropshire Conference | Sat 3rd March 9.30am-3.30pm Church Stretton School | Share ideas on climate change, food security, loss of biodiversity etc. Green Shropshire Exchange http://shropshirevcs.org.uk/site/blog/events/green-shropshire-conference/ |
| Talk by Francis Rayns from Garden Organic (formerly HDRA) entitled 'Green Matters' | Wed 7th March St Chad's meeting rooms | Shropshire Organic Gardeners Peter on: 01939 260935, Siobhan 01743 233544 or David 01743 235635 |
| Visit to Recresco and Shotton Paper Mill | To be decided. March/April | SFoE will let you know |
| Green Doors. | Sat and Sun 24/25th March | A weekend of open homes/offices which use sustainable energy Organised by Transition Town Shrewsbury www.transitiontownshrewsbury.org.uk |
| Shrewsbury Friends of the Earth market stall | Date to be decided Market Square | SFoE will let you know |
| Shrewsbury Green Fair | Sat 7th July Shropshire Wildlife Centre | Shropshire Wildlife Trust |



Green Shropshire Conference

Church Stretton, Saturday 3rd March 2012

For more information about the event including how to register, click [here](#)

Green Shropshire Xchange (GSX) is a new partnership of voluntary and community groups and local government.

GSX believes that all sectors of the community working together provides the best chance of producing a resilient community that will develop a secure, fair and sustainable future for our children and children's children as they face unprecedented challenges brought about by climate change, economic breakdown and dwindling natural resources.

GSX aims to motivate and inspire new activity across the communities of Shropshire; and to stimulate the links within our community needed to increase the range and level of actions which will reduce the impact we have on our local as well as global environment.

GSX wants to bring together all sectors of the community and get them working together to develop exciting new projects in Shropshire, and break down existing barriers to the creation of a truly sustainable county. We want to involve the whole community and promote the sharing of innovative and radical new ideas. Do you have a great idea or an inspiring project to share? Then book your place now!

Guest speakers will include **Richard Priestley** - environmentalist, speaker, writer and teacher, and **George Marshall** – founder of the Climate Outreach Information Network (COIN) and author of the book 'Carbon Detox: Your Step by Step Guide to Getting Real about Climate Change'.

The event is being held on Saturday 3rd March 2012 at Church Stretton School, Shrewsbury Road, Church Stretton SY6 6EX.

Places are filling up fast. Bookings can be made online at:

www.eventelephant.co.uk/greenshropshireconference or for more information please contact GSXchange@gmx.co.uk or call Claire Forrester on 01743 252577.

“Boxing” Clever

No one can have missed the brilliant initiative by Transition Town Shrewsbury in organising “Cardboard Christmas”. On one Saturday morning 5 tonnes of cardboard was collected in Shrewsbury with massive enthusiasm from people bringing it to two designated places. Congratulations to Ali Thomas and Katy Anderson for organising that and raising cash for local charities.

The idea arose from the sudden decision by Shropshire Council to stop people putting cardboard in their Green Bins. This followed a revision to the standard for compost produced from green waste which meant because of inks and bits of plastic in/on cardboard it had to be excluded. The Council is running a trial with a view to having a separate kerbside collection of cardboard but in the meantime the only option for residents is to take it to the few places (supermarket car parks) where bins have been placed or to the established recycling centres such as Battlefield. The situation is very disappointing because those arrangements are very limited and much of the cardboard won't be recycled. The price obtainable for recycled cardboard has varied a lot in recent months going from £100-£40/tonne but although that makes costing difficult putting it in landfill is an expense of £70/tonne and that is before wider environmental are taken into account. We will have to keep the pressure up on this issue.

The 2012 AGM held on 23rd November

This took place in The Hobbs Room at The Library and the necessary business was followed by two presentations.

In a short account by Robert Saunders (Telford FoE) he described progress so far of an initiative to increase the number of community owned renewable energy installations in Telford and Wrekin. They have so far obtained training on installing simple and complex PV and windpower. He has also become a mentor so he can advise community groups directly. They are keen to extend the initiative and are suggesting other FoE Local Groups in Shropshire join them. Our Group is considering this.

The other speaker was Katy Anderson from Cwm Harry who gave a very uplifting account entitled "Zero Waste Communities" of a Recycling and Waste collection scheme they have been running in Presteigne. They got the agreement of Powys Council to collect all domestic waste and recyclables for a year (possibility of longer) and by community involvement and the provision of appropriate containers have managed to get recycling up to 70%. For example by providing clear bags for non recyclable waste the recycling rate jumped 10%. Why?- because everyone could see whether you were putting items in that could be recycled. Although a small scheme it shows what can be achieved and the irony of Veolia and Shropshire heading into a 25 year period of incineration at this time is a stark contrast. The target in Shropshire for recycling requires a tiny increase from where we are now at 50% but there are real fears that we could slip back because of the disincentive to recycle that the presence of an incinerator engenders. Let's hope community based schemes are able to proliferate.

Twenty people attended the meeting and heard that Judith Rice was standing down from the position of Coordinator. Other "officers" were willing to stand for re-election and the following posts were filled:-

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Joint Coordinators | Barbara Phillips / Frank Oldaker |
| Treasurer | John Rice |
| Membership Secretary | Sue Fisher |
| Walks + Talks Organisers | Judy Coleridge / Philip Pool |
| Newsletter Editor | Jon Haycox |
| Stalls Organiser | Not appointed (Agreed discuss at next Business meeting as storage is an issue) |



Thanks Judith

Judith Rice stood down as Coordinator at the AGM but will continue to be active in the Group. She is also very busy with other environmental/community interests.

In her time as Coordinator she brought discipline and efficiency to monthly business meetings and because of her long experience working with voluntary groups it was a pleasure to work with her. So thanks Judith for a good two years!

Progress on the Shrewsbury Weir Hydro Scheme

Congratulations to Mark Scutt of Transition Town Shrewsbury who won £15,000 of funding from Energy Share to carry out further studies on the Shrewsbury weir hydro project. This was a very competitive process and amazingly 2,000 people signed up to support the bid. Mark has also successfully submitted an application to the Dept of Energy and Climate Change's (DECC) Leaf Fund 2nd round for the next stage of work, including building a model and holding a public meeting. Meanwhile Shrewsbury Town Council has set aside £100,000 for investing in the scheme when it comes to fruition. We look forward to the day when electricity is generated in the heart of Shrewsbury, especially if it's through a local, community based, company with shares available for the people of the town.

Contact details:

See contact information in the table to the right ->

Please keep in contact by sending us your E-Mail address!

Or Visit: www.shrewsfoe.org.uk

See also: www.foe.co.uk

| | | |
|------------------|---|--------|
| Frank Oldaker | Joint Co-ordinator frankoldaker@yahoo.co.uk | 260971 |
| Barbara Phillips | Joint Co-ordinator phillipsbarbaramark@yahoo.co.uk | 363010 |
| Dave Green | Incinerator, Energy | 360055 |
| Philip Pool | Transport, Walks & Talks | 367968 |
| Judy Coleridge | Green Guide, Walks & Talks judyc@thephone.coop | 364157 |
| John Rice | Treasurer | 792790 |
| Jon Haycox | Newsletter | 235865 |
| Sue Fisher | Membership Secretary 37 Sunnybank Rd SY2 6RG Suefish@talktalk.net | 358449 |

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Our monthly business meetings normally take place at Marches Energy Agency, next to the Gateway on the first Monday of the month at 7:30pm and aim to finish by 9:00pm. However, please ring one of us above as this may vary.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership renewal is due and continuing support from all our members is really important. Please will you renew your membership without delay and before you forget. All membership subscriptions become due on 1 January (unless you've paid for 3 years).

It may seem predictable that we push this issue because numbers have decreased but the credibility of all our actions is threatened by having an apparent low level of support.

It was interesting that at the Incinerator Inquiry the barrister representing Veolia chose to try and discredit us on this basis. This didn't work because regardless of the Inquiry decision our points couldn't be dismissed lightly and had to be answered in detail, but we need to treat it as a wake-up call.

For people who support our work but don't have time to be active just joining is being active. So if you have family or friends in this position and frame of mind persuade them to join – they could be making a bigger difference than they ever imagined.

Please send a cheque made payable to Shrewsbury Friends of the Earth, to:

Sue Fisher
37 Sunnybank Road
Shrewsbury SY2 6RG

It costs £8 a year (£6 unwaged; £22 for 3 years)

If you are a new member, please will you print the membership form that is on our website and send it with the cheque.

Thanks very much

National FoE Subscriptions are completely separate to local group subs. If you're a national member you should receive the Earth Matters magazine, if not then we strongly urge you to join. Do so by going to www.foe.co.uk or ringing 020 7490 1555.



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<http://tinyurl.com/39jj3z9>

RECYCLING

Plastic bottle tops can be left at the Household Recycling Centre at Battlefield. **Bras** can also be recycled there for Cancer Research.

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