



Shrewsbury Friends of the Earth

Newsletter

January 2009

For meetings and contacts, see back page

Shrewsbury FoE local news

AGM

On 26th November we had an enjoyable AGM, with a visual presentation of the year's activities, followed by the election of committee members. All current officers agreed to stand again, so Val Oldaker remains as Co-ordinator, John Rice as Treasurer, Sue Fisher Membership Secretary, Judy Coleridge and Philip Pool Walks & Talks organisers, Judith Rice Newsletter Editor. We could do with a Publicity person, so would anyone like to volunteer?

The elections were followed by 3 short talks, the first by Jude Wright about a wonderful Community Garden at Garth Hillside. This project has transformed a slice of gorse-covered hillside into a thriving organic vegetable and leisure garden.

Emma Bullard explained how the planning of the new cycle routes was going; using the money awarded from Sustrans and from being declared a 'cycling town'.

Dave Green gave us an insight into the work of LightFoot, which aims to reduce the carbon footprint of participants in the Bishop's Castle area. The differences in existing footprints are staggering – and it was obvious that flying and overuse of cars were the biggest contributors.

Shrewsbury FoE Christmas Drinks

On Tuesday 9th December, a number of us met at the Three Fishes for drinks and chat mainly about green issues. It was also an opportunity to discover more about each other apart from our shared interest in environmental issues. National Friends of the Earth sent each local group a thank you present to help members celebrate the passing of the Climate Change

Act as a result of all our work on the Big Ask campaign over the last three and a half years. The law commits the Government to deep cuts in the UK's emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050. The first of its kind in the world, the law is a huge step in the fight against climate change. The blocks of organic chocolate were gratefully devoured despite several people saying they did not think chocolate and beer went that well together. A DVD celebrating the campaign was also supplied by FoE.

Green Waste

On Sunday 12th October, the group had a very informative visit to Mark Gethin's farm, where he treats all of SABC's green waste. Since agreeing to take cardboard in with the household green waste, he now employs 4 people to sort out the cardboard for recycling, the larger wood to go to a biofuel plant, and to remove the plastic and other contaminants that people keep putting in the green bins. The rest is turned into compost. I suggested to the Star reporter that it would make a good article, and this appeared at the beginning of December.



Green Drinks is a regular meet-up for a drink and a chat for anyone interested in green or environmental issues. The groups are informal and organise themselves. Several groups meet around the county:

Shrewsbury

The Shrewsbury Green Drinks is held in the Loggerheads pub 6.30pm on the first Wednesday of the month.

Pontesbury

ReaVEN meet socially on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Red Lion in Pontesbury for an informal chat and to encourage each other on the journey to a more sustainable Rea valley.

Ludlow

Ludlow 21 (Agenda for the 21st century) hold a green drinks evening at 7.30pm on the 21st of every month at the Bull Ring Tavern in Ludlow

Newport

Newport 21's monthly Green Drinks meet at the Bridge Inn, Newport at 8.00pm on the 21st of the month.

Planning Issues

Battlefield Incinerator

A planning application will be submitted in mid January for an incinerator at Battlefield. Veolia is holding an event at the Lantern on 16th -17th January. This will include a model of the proposed incinerator. Once the application for planning permission is in, we will have 21 days to make objections. Shrewsbury FoE will be holding stalls in the Indoor Market and Darwin centre on Saturdays throughout January. Details of the stalls on Walks and Talks flyer. If you are in a position to help with any of these events in order to publicise the opportunity to object to the incinerator, please contact Bex on 01743 365290.

We will be asking people to fill in postcards to send them to the planners. We think that just signing either a petition or a pre-printed postcard does not have much 'clout'. There will be an accompanying leaflet with the cards, to explain our objections and to suggest reasons to add to the postcards. If you belong to any clubs or other organisations who you think would be supportive, ask Val for a supply of cards and flyers. There are also posters to display in windows etc.

Our major objection to the incinerator is that it is such a waste of resources – Veolia state that they will only burn what can't be recycled, but what they mean by that is anything which people haven't already separated. They will make no effort to reclaim any other materials, except ferrous metals after they have been burnt. We think the whole idea is flawed – it's about time we stopped thinking of this as 'waste' and more as secondary resources. Even Shropshire Council's Planner, Malcolm Bell referred to 'getting rid of waste', rather than describing it as recovery or reuse of resources.

The whole process is made more complicated by the fact that the Unitary Authority will be in place part way through the planning process. Nobody thinks this will take the 16 weeks that the government recommends for such a decision, but much longer.

Anyone lodging an objection will be allowed 3 minutes to speak to the committee, if they want to. The planners accept that many of the objections will cover the same points, and will try to get just one person speaking on each topic. They do not envisage more than 20 people speaking. Whilst this seems draconian, remember that Veolia will have an equal amount of time to reply and 20 people speaking for 3 minutes each adds up to one hour!

The proposed incinerator would burn waste from all over Shropshire but most of the concern so far has come from the Shrewsbury area, it's important that objections to the scheme come from all over the

county. If you would like some postcards, leaflets and posters to distribute to friends, family, group members, work colleagues etc do let us know as soon as possible – wherever you live in Shropshire.

Pengrove

Members are keeping a watch on the revised planning application 08/1531/F to construct five, 5 bedroom dwellings, an access road off Pengrove, Shrewsbury, SY3 7LE including turning head and provision of communal garden area. This land is home to much wildlife and fronts the river. Objections had to be received by early January.

Wind Farms in North Shropshire

The Poplar Lane Wind Farm proposal by NUON Renewables to erect seven wind turbines between Norton-in-Hales and Woore has generated much activity in the community. The plan is for four turbines. Nuon Renewables is appealing the refusal of its plan to build seven turbines at Bearstone, near Norton-in-Hales, while Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council chiefs meet to decide about another planned wind farm at Maer Hills shortly. No planning application has been tabled by Wind Prospects Developments yet, but residents are already worried at the prospect of another wind farm.

Friends of the Earth supports sensitively planned wind power developments. Without them we will continue to be reliant on fossil fuels and nuclear power which have implications for future generations. Wind power generation is often considered as a nuisance rather than as part of the solution to climate change. Although this is some distance from Shrewsbury - on the Shropshire Staffordshire border, Shrewsbury FoE is obviously interested in the outcome of this proposal.

Hencott Pool

Just off the Ellesmere Road, close to the proposed route of the NWRR lies Hencott pool, a RAMSAR site of international significance as a wetland area. The County Council accept that it is in a dire state and have plans to buy and re-instate it, but only if the NWRR gets built. Shrewsbury FoE members think that something needs to be done as soon as possible. We are planning to launch a campaign to save Hencott Pool, why not join us on our visit on May 10th to see why it's worth saving.

Lower Meadow Astley

There are two applications to build houses on a meadow that dates back to before 1400 in the conservation area of Astley. The meadow is a haven for local wild life and the houses will destroy their habitat. In addition a huge septic tank complex is proposed close to our river. The water table will be affected and flooding increased. Objections can be lodged by 16th January on the SABC planning website.

NWRR Not Dead Yet

A lot of people are assuming that the North West Relief Road is dead and buried but there's still a distinct possibility it could get built. The County Council would need to get regional funding to do so which has seemed unlikely, however the regional transport budget is drastically underspent and the NWRR has been put forward as a possible scheme to bring forward to use up the spare cash. There's also talk of getting some of the money for an updated version of the Integrated Transport Plan which would be a much better way of using the money, we're keeping a close eye on the situation.

Future events

SOGS Potato Day

Shropshire Organic Gardeners are holding another Potato Day at Nesscliffe Village Hall on Saturday February 14th, between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. The hall is on the Oswestry bus route, on the old A5 north of Shrewsbury. Admission is free and there are over 40 varieties of seed potato on sale (prices the same as last year). **Quality Refreshments and lunches** are mostly potato based. Local expert Andy McQueen will be there to offer advice and encouragement, there also will be a tombola, a raffle of Boxfresh fruit & vegetable boxes, and a company selling vegetable seeds at very reasonable prices in aid of charity.

FoE West Midlands Regional Gathering - 17 January, Birmingham

The Gathering will be at Carrs Lane Church Centre, Carrs Lane, Birmingham, B4 7SX. We'll be starting at around **11am** with lots of time for socialising after we finish at about **4.45pm**.

Agenda

11:00 - Welcome

11:15 - Plenary session: hear how the new Climate Change Law will work in practice, and find out what's in store for 2009

12:00 - New Food campaigning for 2009: a special briefing from campaigners in Friends of the Earth's food team

13:15 - Lunch: please bring your own packed lunch, or make a quick trip to a local café

14:15 - Campaign planning: every good campaign begins with a strategy, and this session will pool our planning skills and experiences.

15:30 - Campaign planning in practice: A chance to try out your planning skills on these current or upcoming campaigns:

- Coalition-building for Renewables Phase 2
- Recycling, resource use and anti- incineration campaigns

16:30 - Evaluation and finish: then wind down and socialise over a few drinks in a local pub.

To book your place at the event of the season, contact tim.atkinson@foe.co.uk

ReaVEN Travel in the Valley event

The Rea Valley Environmental Network is holding a free coffee morning with a difference on 17th January, 2009 in Pontesbury Public Hall between 10:00 a.m. and noon. Everyone will be very welcome.

A number of information stalls and demonstrations will illustrate how people can think about responsible travel options yet still get about and enjoy life. There will be:

- information for people who wish to save money by changing their driving habits
- an opportunity to calculate travel carbon footprints
- fun activities for young people
- ideas on alternative ways to travel to work
- electric bikes and information on cycling options
- information about *Wheels to Work*
- interactive displays to help people to consider how to reduce their travel carbon emissions
- info on bus routes and timetables
- electric vehicles and alternative fuels
- leaflets on lift sharing
- initial results from the local travel survey

57miles is the average distance a tonne of freight now travels by road. In 1953 it was 21 miles

OTHER NEWS

2008 is the tenth warmest year on record

Responding to a preliminary report by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) www.metoffice.gov.uk/corporate/pressoffice/2008/pr20081216.html which says that the global mean temperature for 2008 is the tenth warmest since records began in 1850, Friends of the Earth's climate campaigner, Robin Webster, said: "Evidence that humans are changing the climate is indisputable. The industrialised world must cut its emissions by at least 40 per cent by 2020 if we are to avoid catastrophic climate change. 2009 is a critical year. The planet is heating up - the world mustn't go cold on the need for urgent action."

Green New Deal

The global economy is facing a 'triple crunch': a combination of a credit-fuelled financial crisis, accelerating climate change and soaring energy prices underpinned by encroaching peak oil. It is increasingly clear that these three overlapping events threaten to develop into a perfect storm, the like of which has not been seen since the Great Depression, with potentially devastating consequences.

The Green New Deal Group, drawing inspiration from the tone of President Roosevelt's comprehensive response to the Great Depression, propose a modernised version, a 'Green New Deal' designed to power a renewables revolution, create thousands of green-collar jobs and rein in the distorting power of the finance sector while making more low-cost capital available for pressing priorities.

To find out more go to www.neweconomics.org

Since 1970, global bike production has nearly quadrupled, while car production has doubled. (Economist 22nd Sept. 2008)

95% of our food products require the use of oil, and the supply of food accounts for 21% of Britain's energy use

In 1970, the average temperature inside a British home was 12 degrees. By 2002 it was 18 degrees. (Prospect, January 2009)

Contacts:

E-Mail:

Val: val@shrewsfoe.org.uk

Dave: dave@shrewsfoe.org.uk

Send us your E-Mail address!

Or Visit: www.shrewsfoe.org.uk*

See also: www.foe.co.uk

www.bigask.com

Val Oldaker	Co-ordinator 49, Cleveland St, SY2 5DN	260971
Dave Green	NWRR	360055
Philip Pool	Transport, Walks & Talks	367968
Judy Coleridge	Waste, Walks & Talks	364157
John Rice	Treasurer	792790
Judith Rice	Newsletter	792790
Sue Fisher	Membership Secretary 37 Sunnybank Rd SY2 6RG	358449

MONTHLY MEETINGS, 1st Monday of the month at 7.30pm. Normally at Marches Energy Agency, next to the Gateway. However, please ring to confirm as this may vary. N.B. **May meeting will be the 2nd Monday due to Bank Holiday**

Membership – Sue Fisher writes...

The local Shrewsbury group has eighty six members. Most members prefer information via e-mail which is a good method of saving resources, (local FoE costs and saving forests). However, it would be great when you do change e-address, if you could inform FoE or we may not be able to contact you.

When it comes to renewing membership, snail mail usually produces a better response, presumably because there is something tangible available to remind us. I am therefore putting out a plea in this Newsletter, that we still exist and welcome continued support from as many people as possible.

More than half the membership is due to renew this January; if you are one of them you will find an individual e-reminder included. Several members have asked about direct debits as a payment method. Unfortunately, our bank informs us that the number of transactions that membership would generate is too small and has therefore suggested that standing order would be more appropriate.

If this is your preferred option, please find our bank details below. Please also remember to tell me that you have paid. The membership year runs from Jan to Dec. Cheques are still welcome. Many thanks for supporting your local FOE Group.

Account Name	Shrewsbury Friends of the Earth
Bank	Co-operative Bank
Address	PO Box 250, Delf House, Southway, Skelmersdale WN8 6WT
Sort Code	08-92-99
Account no.	65310641

Your views on the future of Planning Policy in Shropshire Local Government in Shropshire is welcomed.....In April 2009 the six existing local authorities in Shropshire will merge to become a single countywide council, to be called Shropshire Council.

How Planning Policy affects you.....Planning Policy affects many aspects of our lives. It delivers homes, jobs and better opportunities for everyone, but also helps protect and enhance the natural and historic environment.

Why the Council wants to hear from you.....The existing authorities have already started working together to develop joint planning policy and work on the Local Development Framework, the LDF. This guides how development will take place across the whole of Shropshire. Many people only become involved with the planning process when they object to a planning application or want to make one themselves. It is essential to the Council to find out what you think at an early stage of the process so that your comments can be included into developing future policy.

Consultation on the Core Strategy....The first LDF document to be prepared will be the Core Strategy, which will provide a policy framework for the next twenty years. During July and August the Council invited comments on a range of topics to start the debate - including housing, the environment, transport and accessibility. A consultation document called the Core Strategy – Issues and Options is planned. Consultation will take place starting late January to obtain feedback on key matters. Details will be publicised in the local papers, on the councils' websites, at libraries in your area as well as various other consultation events. Please look out for it and make your views known. For further information email: planningpolicyteam@southshropshire.gov.uk or telephone David Francis. Planning Policy Team Leader. on 01584 838337

FOR SALE

Yellow, Dahon folding bike with small wheels and six gears.

Only £50 which will be donated to Shrewsbury FoE funds

Contact Dave Green on 01743 360055

In 2008, over 5 per cent of the Egyptian government budget will go on bread subsidies. Subsidies as a whole cost more than the health and education budgets combined. (Prospect, October 2008)

This newsletter was assembled by Judith Rice, layout by Mike Richardson