

FUTURE EVENTS

- 24 February** Stall in Parkside – volunteers needed (Victoria 01525 385097)
- 27 February** Anoraks' Meeting 7.30 at 41 Corbet Ride, Leighton Buzzard (Victoria)
- 3 March** Protest against Government cuts in funding for canals – 11am at towpath near Tescos, Leighton Buzzard (Ken 01525 372036)
- 5 March** AGM and Monthly Meeting 7.30 for 8.00 at the Globe PH, Dunstable (Peter 01582 663915)
- 5-6 April** Campaign Against Climate Change Expose Exxon Day – Leatherhead (Michael 01582 663915)
- 10 April** Monthly Meeting – Leighton Buzzard (venue to be decided) (Chris 01525 382343)
- 7 May** May Fayre, Leighton Buzzard (Ken)

Further dates for future activities are listed below under Green Infrastructure Update.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 15 FEBRUARY 2007

Present: Victoria Harvey (Facilitator), Stella Goddard, Heather Fox, Janine Skinner, Albert Weston, Barry Metcalfe, Peter Hatswell, Chris Stevenson, Michael Taylor, Jane Brown, Alison Heywood, Ken Barry.

Janine Skinner was welcomed as a new member.

Updates

a. Green Infrastructure

Victoria reported that a further successful meeting had been held at the White House, Leighton Buzzard on 6 February and the following events had been arranged:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Contact</u>
25 February 2007 2 - 4 pm	Clipstone Brook Working Party Meet at the bridge over the brook at the bottom of Parson's Close.	Chris Stevenson chris.stevenson@newport-networks.com
3 & 4 March 2007 11am - 3 pm	Stone Lane Quarry Tree Planting weekend Meet at the quarry.	Alexe Rose, Greensand Trust 01525 378101 alexe.rose@greensandtrust.org
4 March 2007 2 - 4 pm	Clipstone Brook Working Party Meet at the bridge over the brook at the bottom of Parson's Close.	Chris Stevenson chris.stevenson@newport-networks.com
20 March 2007 times to be advised	Launch of Town Plan The White House	Steve Lakin 01525 631920 steven.lakin@leightonlinlade-tc.gov.uk
27 March 2007	Greening Group Meeting	Steve Lakin 01525 631920

7.30- 9 pm	Exhibition Room, Leighton Middle School. Entrance via gates on Bridge Street.	steven.lakin@leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk
2 April 2007 times to be advised	A505 Working Party 1 Planting Wildflower Plugs on the embankment.	Victoria Harvey (01525 385097) vharvey@btopenworld.com
Date to be advised	Linslade Wood Working Party	Victoria Harvey 01525 385097 vharvey@btopenworld.com
Date to be advised Awaiting planting licence from Bucks CC	A505 Working Party 2 This will be organised as a family event swing wildflower seeds and planting plugs on land by Bridleway 63.	Alexe Rose 01525 378101 alexe.rose@greensandtrust.org

b. Linslade Wood

Heather reported that there had been some vandalism and litter at a children's camp in the new plantation. Details had been forwarded to Malcolm Oliver and a note left for the children asking them to clear it up. There is concern about the mess which Anglia Water are making to the bridlepath as a result of their pipe laying activities. Concern about management of the new woodland has still not been addressed. A letter had been received from Simon Patrick to say that Robinson & Hall are now employed as consultants. They promised to send her concerns to Leake Woodland Trust who make the final decisions. Nothing further has been heard. There is a suggestion that the new plantation could be used as a green burial site, and Linda Carter (Deputy Town Clerk) is doing some research in connection with this before a case can be put before the Trust for their consideration.

c. FoE Regional Gathering and the Big Ask

Victoria and Ken had attended the Gathering. Ken reported that now that the Climate Change Bill has been included in the Queen's Speech we have to make sure that the Government does not try to water it down and make it meaningless. Therefore we will need to keep up the pressure on local MPs to make sure they continue to back annual targets and an enforcement mechanism. The timing of the campaign is now outside of our control and we will need to be able to respond to political developments at short notice. FoE is providing a new package of resources including leaflets, posters and postcards. They want groups to organise pub quizzes, climate change socials, workshops and film showings. More consideration will need to be given to this at future meetings.

FoE had defined their draft Aims and Objectives at the Regional Gathering. The idea is to concentrate their resources on 3 major categories ie Climate, Biodiversity and Natural Resources and Justice and Rights. This had been discussed in detail by those present but not everyone was happy with the proposals.

d. Luton & Dunstable Hospital

Alison reported on a recent meeting she had attended with Luton Council at which there had been a presentation by a representative of an organisation called liftshare.com. They have a website where people can sign up if they want to lift share either on a one-off basis or regularly. Alison agreed to do a press release for the Dunstable Gazette explaining the benefits of lift sharing. She is now leaving her employment at Luton & Dunstable Hospital in order to be a midwife in Leighton Buzzard.

e. Further updates which were not discussed at the meeting are detailed on the attached sheet.

Stall in Parkside – 24 February.

Victoria proposed that we have a stall on sustainable development during the consultation on the regeneration of Parkside and appealed for volunteers. Ken had recently received some publicity materials from FoE and will pass these to Victoria.

Green Meeting in Dunstable

It was agreed that this be more than just a new members meeting, but will include stalls and speakers on green issues. It was also suggested that Andrew Selous MP be invited. Possible venues are the Methodist Church Hall or Priory Middle School with possible dates 17 or 24 April. Peter agreed to investigate. Jane will obtain material on real food from FoE. Once the date is agreed Peter will ask the Blows Down Group to attend and Michael will contact Churches Together. Alison agreed to write to all schools in Dunstable.

Action against Tesco

Possible dates were late May or early June. This will be discussed further at the next meeting

Future Meetings and Events

Next meeting on 5 March will be the AGM. Any nominations for election of officers and motions should be sent to Victoria. Peter agreed to take over from Michael as the co-ordinator for climate change matters.

10 April: Members' Meeting in Leighton Buzzard – venue to be decided. Chris will arrange.

Anoraks' Meeting: 27 February at Victoria's house

Michael mentioned the Campaign Against Climate Change Expose Exxon Day to be held on 5 and 6 April at Leatherhead and the LSE Climate Change Conference on 12 and 13 May.

The May Fayre is to be held on 7 May in Leighton Buzzard. It was agreed that Ken would book 2 stalls preferably near the Cycle Forum stall. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Housing

a. Local Development Frameworks

These will be out for consultation in May. We need ideas to inspire the public to comment.

b. New Planning Bill.

This is aimed at preventing effective opposition to new developments. FoE is to provide briefing. It was considered that, as it will no longer be possible to prevent new development, we will have to aim to minimise the impact on the environment of such development.

Proposed Centre Parc Development, Warren Wood near Woburn

Andrew Locksley of Milton Keynes FoE attended to explain why he considered we should support this proposed development, which is due to go to Public Inquiry in March. Mid Beds Council had refused planning permission as they considered that the site was too small and constrained to make it viable within the Green Belt planning designation of the area. CPRE are also opposed.

Andrew argued that we should support the development as it would be beneficial to the environment for the following reasons:

- a. Centre Parcs proposed to replace conifers with native mixed woodland to make the site more attractive for wildlife and encourage greater biodiversity. This had the support of RSPB.
- b. The development would encourage people to take their holidays in Bedfordshire instead of flying off abroad.
- c. People staying at Centre Parcs holiday camps could adopt sustainable lifestyles and become more environmentally aware due to living closer to Nature.

Andrew had been in contact with Centre Parcs and was aiming to make it a planning condition that all visitors to the site arrive by public transport.

Ken outlined the case against the development, which is based on the following:

- a. Centre Parcs proposed to close the footpath that goes through the Wood, convert it to a bridleway and divert it round the outside of the Wood alongside a busy main road. They would prevent general access to the Wood which local people currently enjoy. The Ramblers Association were therefore opposed.
- b. The site would generate considerable amounts of vehicle traffic and cause excessive congestion in Ridgemont thereby negating any benefits from the proposed bypass.
- c. Other members pointed out that workers at Centre Parcs were very poorly paid.

Andrew explained that he is currently lobbying Centre Parcs to provide free ticketing to encourage their visitors to travel by public transport. After considerable discussion it was agreed that we support the proposed development but subject to mitigation in respect of travel to and from the site and provision of alternative woodland paths for public use.

Other Business

The Inland Waterways Association are campaigning against Government cuts in funding for the canals. They are arranging a major protest demonstration at Braunston on Saturday 3 March. Local members are taking part in a protest on the towpath near Tesco's, Leighton Buzzard at 11am on 3 March. All are welcome to join.

CONTACTS

Officers

Co-ordinator: VICTORIA HARVEY, 41 Corbet Ride, Leighton Buzzard LU7 2SJ
01525-385097 vharvey@btopenworld.com

Treasurer: KEN BARRY, 97 Bideford Green, Leighton Buzzard LU7 2TJ
01525-372036 kenwbarry@aol.com

Membership Secretary: JULES SANDFORD-FRANCIS tel 01582 600494 stobbo.jr@ntlworld

Publicity Officer: ANDY GAYLOR andy_gaylor@yahoo.com

Facilitator: STELLA GODDARD tel 01525 370833 stella@blackveg.co.uk

South Beds FOE Website: www.southbedsfoe.org.uk

Update for South Beds FoE. 15/2/07

Wing Bypass

Two thousand pounds were raised through the Manuka Fund and top independent transport consultants, Steer Davis Gleave have been appointed to do a scoping report for a full report on an alternative to building a bypass between the A41 and the Linslade western Bypass. We have seen the first draft of this report and it lays out the framework for looking at a range of alternatives and then selecting those which could meet the same aims as the road. There will need to be considerable discussions about the real reasons for the road and what do they mean by "strategic link"

Joint Transport Strategy for Leighton Linslade

This document, which was created as a result of the anti-bypass protests, which calls for better school travel plans, improving cycling and walking and better buses. There was a meeting on 1st of feb which all the county councillors attended and some of the community, and health and learning and skills. Heather Fox also attended.

There will be a better bus service to Aylesbury. They talked a lot about the sustainable transport site. The new transport portfolio holder (county councillor) for Bucks is Val Leatheren who is very nice. Beds CC are working on phasing the traffic lights.

Sustainable transport site

The planning application is going to appeal on 23rd of April. There has been a huge delay due to the audit department of Beds CC concerning "best value". We want the developer to work closely with Arriva in order to deliver the best service, however, under the best value and competition rules it is not possible to work this closely with a bus company, so we need the developer to have a direct contract with the developer. However it has taken the audit department 6 months to clear this. It has taken huge threats and endless pestering for us to get this far.

MARKET

An 11 page letter from our barristers, Iain Steele and Michael Fordham QC has been sent to South Beds District council. This is the final letter before going to court and incurring costs, giving all the grounds for judicial review. The main reason is the comparing of the commercial tender with a bid from the town council when they are very different things. Lack of proper checks on Wendy Fair and failure to consult the market traders are also reasons. This has cost £1300 plus VAT. The market traders have paid £352.50, the town council will definitely pay £800 and we need to raise the rest with the market traders.