

FUTURE EVENTS

19th March

Exhibition for wind turbine to be erected at Double Arches Quarry, 12.00 noon to 8pm, at St Leonards Church Hall. Please attend as our support for the wind turbine will be needed.

20 March

Working Party by the Ouzel bridge, Leighton Buzzard 11am (Victoria 01525 851181)

Friends of Linslade Woods Working Party 10am - 1pm (Ken 01525 372036)

South Beds FoE AGM 7.30pm at the Globe, Dunstable (Victoria)

Friends of Linslade Woods Working Party 10am - 1pm (Ken)

Subscriptions are now due for 2010 (£5.00). If you have not already paid please pay to the Treasurer, Ken Barry, 97 Bideford Green, Leighton Buzzard, Beds LU7 2TJ as soon as possible. Please make cheques payable to South Beds Friends of the Earth.

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING FOR LEIGHTON BUZZARD GROUP ON 1 MARCH 2010

Present: Victoria Harvey (Facilitator), Heather Fox, Kirsten Hewitt, Neil Tidey, Chris Stevenson, Sylvia Lay-Flurrie, Dawn, Alison Heywood, Ken Barry.

Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan

A National Cycle Rail Award was presented to Leighton Buzzard for the work of the Leighton Buzzard Travel Plan in improving cycle-rail integration at a ceremony at the House of Commons. Victoria attended to collect the award along with Cllr Tom Nicols and there has been good publicity in the local papers.

Leighton Buzzard Station Flowers

Sylvia has been liaising with the U3A gardening groups about getting involved. The Station Manager has been very helpful. London Midland cannot give money but they will purchase plants. We have permission to work on the tubs and flower beds, and plants in the booking hall need to be cut back as they are obscuring the timetable screens. Funds may be available from Leighton Buzzard in Bloom and Victoria and Sylvia will attend their next meeting. A rota for watering will need to be drawn up following the planting. Local gardening expert, Liz Miller, has offered to help and Victoria will pass her contact details to Sylvia. Victoria will investigate choice of plants and we then need to draw up a planting plan. The Town Council (Gill Miller) need to be reminded about removing the old plants (except for the hellebores). Anyone with ideas and suggestions for planting should contact Sylvia.

Greening

The Ouzel river bank needs tidying, balsam and ivy need removing and meadowsweet needs to be planted.

A working party will be organised for Saturday 20 March at 11am. We still need to obtain more funding for planting.

The Town Council are organising a Green Infrastructure/Greening presentation at the White House on Tuesday 16 March at 2pm and 7.30pm. The Town Council will also be providing trees for the High Street.

Exemplar Project

Exemplar buses will be launched on Tuesday 20 April, and will run every 30 minutes from Billington Road to the town centre and railway station. However there are no information screens in the houses as originally promised and considerable lobbying may be needed in order for this to happen.

Regional Transport

Victoria is now on two regional transport studies, for Herts & Essex and Luton & Central Beds. Dept for Transport are freezing Kick start funding for buses. This would have meant that Leighton Buzzard would have had early morning services to the station so that commuters can use the bus. For improvements to local bus services members are urged to lobby Brian Sadler on the Town Council and all Central Beds Councillors except Peter Snelling.

Translink, now called Luton and Dunstable Guided Busway.

It was decided that South Beds FoE will no longer oppose the guided busway and will give their qualified support if Central Beds will agree to provide a package of measures which will benefit bus users and cyclists. The Council have promised to provide better bus information, a travel plan for Luton & Dunstable Hospital, bus services for new developments, promotion of shopping in Dunstable and will look at alternatives to the Luton Northern Bypass. Due to the urgent need to improve public transport and cycle provision in order to combat climate change it is considered that a package of improvements is needed now whereas the prospect of any rail development is unlikely to happen for some considerable time. Victoria has discussed with Dunstable FoE and they are in agreement. Luton FoE are not in agreement. Victoria will circulate a draft press release before any support is given.

Valley Farm, Soulbury

The developers recently held a further public exhibition which several members had attended. There was very little change for the original plans and the developers have admitted that they only found one person in favour of the development. Heather has established that the developer had not carried out any further ecological surveys and will be writing to the LBO to point this out. On 19 March at the Civic Centre in Aston Hall, Aylesbury at 10am the developer will be stating their case to the inspector (re: examination in public of AVDC's core strategy for housing in their area) to include the land at Valley Farm. Anyone can attend the meeting and speak against the proposed development. Phil Irving is carrying out a further survey explaining why the area is important as a green corridor. Victoria is liaising with the bat expert. A decision on the Stoke Road development is expected in May. If this goes ahead Soulbury could follow. We may need to invoke the European Biodiversity Laws (UK has been fined in the past for non-compliance).

Wind Power

There is bad news as the Podington Wind Farm has been turned down because of "noise and visual intrusion". Unfortunately the anti-wind lobby is very rich and powerful and is funded by the nuclear power industry. Ken reported that there were proposals for a wind turbine in Wingrave. [Details have since been published on page 18 of the Leighton Buzzard Observer of 2 March. Comments to AVDC quoting ref 10/00083/APP. A decision is expected to be made by 29 March. Local villagers are objecting as they believe that the value of their properties may suffer].

Other Business

- a. Waitrose have chosen Friends of Linslade Woods as one of their 3 charities for March. All members are urged to shop in Waitrose and put their counters in the box for Friends of Linslade Woods.
- b. Alison mentioned a special ceilidh to be held at St Mary's Church, Dunstable from 8-11pm on Friday 12 March. Entertainment and food are provided. Details from Alison on 01582 662467.

c. Cllr Brian Sadler will be speaking to Leighton Buzzard Society on the Green Wheel at the Gables Hall 7.30pm on Thursday 27 May. All are welcome - admission £3.

Next Meeting

AGM 19 April at The Globe, Dunstable. There will be lifts to Dunstable and it would be very good if as many people as possible from Leighton Buzzard could attend. The Dunstable group have given us masses of support in the past and it would be nice to repay some of that support!!!!

CONTACTS

Officers

South Beds Co-ordinator: VICTORIA HARVEY
01525-851181 vharvey@btinternet.com

Dunstable Co-ordinators PETER HATSWELL, 86 Half Moon Lane, Dunstable LU5 4AD
01582 663915 hatswell@tesco.net
ALISON HEYWOOD, 2 Borough Road, Dunstable LU5 4BZ
01582 662467 ali.heywood@ntlworld.com

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

Secretary: CHRIS STEVENSON
01525 382343 postmaster@stevenson59.f9.co.uk

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