

## FUTURE EVENTS

**3 September** Monthly Meeting 7.30 for 8.00pm at The Globe, Dunstable (Peter 01582 663915)

**8 September** Festival of Glocalisation at Lee Manor Field, Marsh Farm, Luton 12noon to 11pm (Jon 01525 270377)

**8-10 September** FoE National Conference at Reading (Victoria)

**22 September** Cycle Day of Action (Victoria)

## MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING ON 13 AUGUST 2007

**Present:** Victoria Harvey (Facilitator), Pete Jardine, Barry Metcalfe, Christina Johnson, Jon Shepherd, Peter Hatswell, Jane Brown, Michael Taylor, Sylvia Lay-Flurrie, Ken Barry.

**Apologies:** Stella Goddard, Chris Stevenson, Albert West

### Wildlife Gardens

The possibility of making Christina's garden into a wildlife garden was discussed. Jon gave details of the type of plants we should consider. These included purple loosestrife, living willow sculptures, willow scrub and as many native plants as possible. A means of harvesting rainwater if levels get too low will also be required and there was a suggestion for creating a permeable drive. Although dates for a site visit and working party were agreed it has subsequently been decided not to go ahead but to concentrate on a similar project at Brooklands School instead. Details are currently being arranged and members will be notified in due course. Jon mentioned the Festival of Glocalisation which he is involved with. This is a Marsh Farm Outreach Permaculture project and will be held at Lee Manor Field, Marsh Farm from 12 noon until 11pm on 8 September.

### Other Greening Projects

Victoria reported that the Greening Group is to be re-formed with funding from the Greensand Trust. There are a number of possible projects. Brooklands School want to convert their swimming pool into a wildlife area. Chris Stevenson is continuing with his work at Clipstone Brook, including the planting of trees. Unfortunately the wild roses planted in Knaves Hill were destroyed by a Council strimmer and will need replacing. Tree planting is proposed for Steppingstone Place. Sylvia suggested that we contact Southcott Residents Association concerning provision of wildlife areas as part of the communal green spaces in Bideford Green. Ken agreed to investigate. It was emphasised that we should ensure that wildlife areas are considered when green spaces are provided for human recreation, and that arrangements are made for care and watering after any planting has taken place.

### Climate Change Bill

Peter reported that 3 parliamentary committees have agreed with FoE and have asked for tougher targets with time spans continuing after general elections. A White Paper has been produced and the Bill is expected to go through parliament this autumn. FoE want a 3% cut in CO2 emissions each year and 80% by 2050. The climate change doubters have now been silenced and the scientific opponents have been discredited. It was essential to get cross party support to prevent the motorists' lobby planning further blockades. Sylvia reported that she had approached SBDC for advice on energy conservation and had been told that they could not help. It was suggested that she contacted her local ward councillor. Michael had also experienced problems with SBDC in obtaining a grant for installing photovoltaic cells, and had complained to Andrew Selous. It seemed that SBDC were very backward in comparison with other councils and councillors need to be made aware of this.

## **Cycle Day of Action**

This was proposed by the Cycle Forum and is to be held on 22 September with a Streets for People theme. South Street, Leighton Buzzard was suggested as a possible venue. Pete agreed to contact the local residents group. The Cycle Forum is struggling to get re-established after the Town Council's attempt to close it down. Victoria reported that Beds CC are likely to get funding for a cycle and pedestrian bridge at Wing Hill Roundabout. There is evidence that the number of cyclists using the Riverside Walk cycle path has now doubled.[A letter has since been received from Andrew Selous attaching a letter from Rosie Winterton at Department for Transport advising that Beds CC has submitted a bid to the Department to finance the bridge using Community Infrastructure Funding and the Bid is currently under consideration].

## **Core Strategy/Development Plan**

A joint statement had been agreed at the meeting with Luton FoE, and Victoria will be circulating details. It was emphasised that it was important to get policies which we can use in future planning applications. We need to press for houses to be built to high environmental standards with public transport provided. We need to continue to press for a no-roads option for the Luton Northern Bypass. All route options are disastrous and the area is the worse possible place for a road to be built. Ken agreed to draft a press release in late August.

## **FoE National Conference**

This is being held in Reading on 8-10 September. Victoria and Barry will be attending.

## **Updates and Feedback on previous events**

### a. Linslade Wood

None of the members present had been able to attend the Family Fun Day on 4 August. A report will be forwarded when details are available.

### b. Houghton Regis Carnival

A very successful event – 96 cards completed in connection with Government's white paper on planning and the Right to Choose where to Shop Campaign. These had been sent to FoE.

### c. Millers Dairy Site

Barry had spoken at the appeal as the changes proposed are still considered dangerous to cyclists. The outcome is still awaited.

### c. Kite Festival

Another successful event. Michael had brought his solar-powered car along which had proved very popular with children and had drawn people to our stall. The theme of the festival enabled us to put over the message on wind power and climate change.

### d. Buses

The public meeting on 21 July had been well attended (70 people), but Beds CC were very disorganised and expected Victoria to do most of the work. Beds CC were very impressed by the turnout. The Council are planning to improve the service to Heath and Reach and put out more information. A major problem is that bus companies are not being properly funded for bus pass users. Members are urged to write to their councillors and MP.

### e. Transport Update

Peter reported that the Government are running out of money for road building, but were still under the misguided impression that economic growth is dependent on the growth of transport.

### f. Sustainable Travel Site

This is still being held up by Dept for Transport

### g. Market

Wendy Fair had been convicted but are appealing. The number of market stalls continues to decrease and Peter and Barry agreed to write to the local papers about this. An organisation called "No Fakes" representing market traders, wholesalers and shop retailers fighting the sale of counterfeit products had written to Victoria and Ken asking for support. Victoria has replied.

### h. Climate Change Display in Nature's Harvest

This had attracted Councillors Brian Sadler, Adam Fahn and Karen Kirstons. They were sceptical about climate change at first but were convinced after hearing Paul Brown's talk.

## Other Business

- a. Jane suggested having a display at the information centre on Dunstable Downs. This will be discussed at the next meeting.
- b. Jon will email information on wildlife corridors to Victoria for a press release.

## Permaculture

Peter sent the following definition of Permaculture from the Permaculture Magazine:

Permaculture is working with nature to make a better world for all. By observing the natural world we can see that there are a set of principles at work. Permaculture design uses these principles to develop integrated systems to provide for our needs of food, water, shelter, energy and community in ways that are healthy and efficient. Through permaculture design we can improve the quality and productivity of our individual lives, our society and our environment.

Permaculture has an ethical basis: .Earthcare -enabling all life systems to continue and increase.

.Peoplecare -enabling access to the resources people need for a good quality of life.

.Limits to population and consumption -to share resources for *Earlhcare* and *Peoplecare*.

Permaculture is a global initiative reflecting and enhancing the diversity of cultures across the world. Permaculture encourages people to think and act both globally and locally, recognising that we are all citizens of Earth with responsibility for the creation of value within our locality.

There are permaculture projects and networks in over 100 countries, fostering a positive transition to sustainability, through practical design. With the application of ecological principles people are able to integrate themselves, their buildings and their landscape through 'beneficial associations'. These living systems are capable of supporting and regenerating themselves.

Permaculture design is applicable to any scale, from window box to bioregion, and to any system, from household through Industry to economy. Because permaculture principles are generic, they can be used in any climatic or cultural context.

*"Permaculture is the conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally productive ecosystems which have the diversity stability and resilience of natural ecosystems. It is the harmonious integration of landscape and people providing their food, energy shelter and other material needs in a sustainable way. Permaculture design is a system of assembling conceptual, material and strategic components in a pattern which functions to benefit life in all its forms.*

Bill Mollison\*

*"The philosophy behind permaculture is one of working with, rather than against nature, of looking at systems in all their functions, rather than just asking one yield of them, and of allowing systems to demonstrate their own evolutions. "* David Holmgren\*

## CONTACTS

### Officers

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