



Branch Live

October 2008

Havant Friends of the Earth

News from FoE covering Havant and East Hants. Edited by Richard Jannaway

www.havantfoe.org.uk

Havant FoE's new horizons

Since our launch in 2002, the group has been active on a wide front. We have drummed up local support for national campaigns against pesticides, airport expansion and climate change. On local issues, we have spoken up for open spaces, better bus services and recycling facilities, small local shops and sustainable development. Group members have given presentations to schools, residents associations and at public meetings and engaged fully with sister groups across Hampshire. Local papers and media have covered many of our campaigns. But this is not a moment to rest on our laurels.

The new Climate Bill everybody has worked for is the start of a new era. As ever, its success depends on action being taken at all levels and that includes local action from councils, businesses, us and everyone. We must target our limited resources to areas where we can make a real difference. That's why a short survey is included with this newsletter. Please complete the survey to share your views and ideas on Havant FoE's future direction. We're at our most effective when we work as a team and completing the survey will help us on the way.

Ray Cobbett

Sue's column

Great news that the government is now going for an 80% reduction in emissions in the Climate Change Bill. Good to see that all the hard work we did sending off over 200 postcards during the campaign is working.

Sadly the government looks like achieving the new targets partly by expanding nuclear energy. Money that would otherwise be spent on renewables will get sucked into the nuclear monster. That's why we will be in West Street, Havant on 1st November to give out leaflets and sign postcards to send on via David Willetts to the Energy and Climate Minister Ed Milliband.

Further details from Ray, Tim or me.

Sue Holt



Greening Hampshire Campaign

Terina Plowright from the East Hants Sustainability Centre has launched a campaign to promote environmental action among communities. The campaign centres around schools, resident and voluntary groups within East Hants and other districts and consist of workshops, event, information exchange and, most of all, action by everybody. Activists are encouraged to place a decal in the windows of their houses affirming their commitment to adopt a sustainable life style. Terina told a meeting in Petersfield, that people want to feel included and powerful and part of the story. They want simple, cheap actions which they can achieve and to feel part of a community - not isolated by the huge challenge of tackling climate change. Through small steps, she said, people really can start to make a difference. As a result of the campaign so far in Petersfield some 23 tonnes of carbon has been saved.

More information from www.greening-campaign.co.uk

Havant FoE Emsworth Show success



There was abundant evidence of the wetter summers to come at this year's Emsworth Horticultural Show. Our water resistant tent, organised by Richard Jannaway, looked quite magnificent topped off by four FoE pennants. This year's theme focused on energy and how to save it. With gas and electricity prices going through the roof there was no shortage of interest from the dozens of visitors who dropped in to raise a host of questions about loft insulation, solar heating, water conservation, renewable energy sources and eco homes. There was plenty for younger visitors to do and think about too including a test for measuring carbon footprints. Many thanks to the members who helped out during the day.

We are (solar) sailing

Few pleasures are more restful than drifting around Chichester Harbour on a sunny day—even better on a boat powered partly by solar energy.

Solar Heritage began life working on a Swiss lake. Nowadays it earns its living with the Chichester Conservancy taking up to 60 people around our AONB harbour. It is electrically driven and gets its power from two sources, the batteries are charged by solar cells on the roof supplemented by an overnight charge from the mains in cloudy weather. Members from Portsmouth and Havant FoE teamed up for a tour of the Harbour earlier in the year. And the verdict: a quiet, efficient and highly appropriate way of enjoying one of Havant's greatest pleasures.



National Conference

This conference marked the changeover from Tony Juniper, who had served 10 years, to our new Executive Director, Andy Atkins. Andy has joined us from the Tear Fund. It was good to hear their reflective and prospective views on the work of Friends of the Earth. Tony Juniper pointed out that SSSI's had been established, acid rain reduced, ozone depletion checked and recycling raised to 25% nationally but he also recognised the big challenges of the threat of climate change, loss of biodiversity and the importance of sustainable environmental, social and economic development. Andy Atkins looked forward to the establishment of a low carbon economy within 5 years.

There was an opportunity to update on the development of the Renewables Directive – the target for the use of biofuels for transport has been reduced to 5% (from 10%) and a day of action for renewables has been set for Saturday 25th October.

How can local groups get involved? Through days of action and by being leaders in our local communities. There were many ways of taking part. Being a member of a Friends of the Earth Local Group or a Campaign Champion, who would concentrate on one campaign at a time by Networking with other FoE or Environmental Groups.

Taken from a report by Gosport & Fareham FoE. Havant FoE was not able to send any delegates to the national conference this year.

South East Plan

Response to the Proposed Change to the South East Plan Consultation

FoE South East has submitted a detailed objection to the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to the South East Plan. They point out that these changes will make it unsustainable. In particular, the new minimum levels of housing figures and the focus on economic growth will increase the environmental impacts of the Plan rendering it unsound and not fit for purpose.

Sustainable development as defined in national strategies and policies is not at the heart of the Plan. The text of the Proposed Changes recognises that economic and community benefits will occur alongside "significant environmental costs" (para 16.2.4)

It is important for the Plan to be able to set out requirements that go beyond national guidance in terms of water and energy efficiency. The proposed changes take away the distinctive, strategic lead that the draft Plan had adopted in this regard.

The objection was circulated as widely as possible and many members wrote in endorsing the document.

The full FoE objection can be read on our website.

Portsmouth gets greener

Portsmouth Sustainability Action Group moved up a gear at a special workshop for local groups and councillors in Portsmouth Civic Centre. Ray Cobbett and Sue Holt representing Havant FoE were joined by colleagues from Portsmouth to hammer out options for reducing the city's carbon footprint by 100,000 tonnes by the year 2012. Transport and industry were identified as major improvement opportunities as delegates were reminded by council experts how vulnerable Portsmouth is to a changing climate and higher sea levels.

Greening your Home

Passive Solar

New houses can and should be designed to take advantage of solar energy in the placement of windows, conservatories, etc. This can be done, for example, by putting most windows on the south side and designing airflow to promote natural cooling in the summer. These are known as passive solar designs

On many existing houses the opportunities are more limited but glazed porches and careful planning of ventilation can make a considerable difference.

Heating

The answer to the question "What heat source is best?" is never easy because circumstances vary so much.

Efficient Use of Gas

Most people still have little choice but to use gas for heating. Here efficiency is the keyword. Replacing an old boiler with a modern condensing boiler will greatly improve efficiency. As the current lifespan of a boiler is around 15 years, choosing a heating system with a high efficiency condensing boiler with the correct heating controls can make a huge difference to your heating bills over time.

Boilers account for around 60% of the carbon dioxide emissions in a gas heated home. By fitting a new high efficiency condensing boiler with full heating controls, you will significantly cut your home's carbon dioxide emissions and could save as much as £270 a year on your heating bill.

Generating your own Electricity

Photovoltaic (PV) panels can produce a significant amount of power. However, PV panels are still expensive and only affordable if you can get a large grant. Current types also use large amounts of silicon and contain considerable 'embodied energy' that is energy used in their manufacture. New 'thin film' systems are being rapidly developed and the cost is set to fall dramatically in the next few years.

Wind power is not really viable in a suburban domestic

situation, but it can be in a rural environment where there is space for a free-standing tower and few obstructions to cause turbulence.

Micro Hydro If you are lucky enough to have a river or even quite a small stream, provided it has sufficient 'head', flowing through your land then 'micro hydro' is definitely viable. Even at £4000 plus it will be in profit in a few years.

Grid Linking

All these can be grid linked so surplus electricity can be sold to the power company and bought back when needed.

Solar Thermal

Solar water heating has become enormously more efficient and affordable over the last few years and evacuated tubes are already appearing on many roofs in our area.

A relatively modest system can provide all your hot water for more than six months of the year and contribute significantly the rest of the time.

Heat Recovery

Hot moist air from kitchens and bathrooms can be ducted to a heat exchanger in the loft where it is used to warm incoming ventilation air before being safely exhausted to the outside.

Wood burning stoves and sources of wood

Traditionally wood has been used for heating and if used efficiently, in a modern stove is a sustainable resource.

Whilst it is not possible for everybody to install a wood burner and there would not be enough wood to go round if they did, there is a vast amount of wood that is wasted. Enterprising collection from local builders and neighbours, coupled with a modern efficient stove could save an enormous amount of CO₂. Firewood is sometimes offered through freecycle but you usually need facilities to collect and cut it up, as well as somewhere to dry and store it. Any wood which is not painted or saturated with creosote can be burned in a wood burning stove provided it is dry.

Unsustainable Open fires,

Whether wood or coal, open fires are extremely inefficient and wasteful of resources even to the point of making the room colder in some cases. Score some minus points on your carbon footprint chart if you have an open fire.

Richard Jannaway

Where does all the power go?

Current UK power production releases around 0.6Kg CO₂ into the atmosphere for every KWH of electricity delivered to your home. So if your electricity bill is £30 a month (£360 a year), you are using 3200 KWH a year and responsible for the release of 1.92 metric tons of CO₂.

Even if you buy only green electricity, wasting it still adds to CO₂ release because the more of your green power you use, the more fossil fuel power someone else uses. So it is still important to minimise your electricity consumption.

Lighting

Low energy bulbs should be used almost everywhere. Where a really bright light is needed, halogen spots are a reasonable halfway house. A 20 watt bulb gives the equivalent of a 40watt standard bulb. But they are only really good for task lighting.

Avoid ceiling downlighters. Lighting the whole room in this way is very wasteful. In addition, because halogens get so hot they are a fire risk set into your ceiling. If you must use them, protect them with proper fireproof guards.

LED bulbs are just beginning to become bright and cheap enough to be practical and are probably the future as they use far less power for the same light than even fluorescent low energy bulbs. Up until now they are only really effective as spotlights but they are developing very fast.

Standby

A count up of appliances in my house with small transformers which are usually left on, came to a shocking total of sixteen.

As well as the obvious ones, such as computers, printers and TV boxes, there were three low voltage lamps, a bedside radio, and a mobile phone charger which a visitor left behind switched on. The annual usage for these gadgets came to an amazing 350 KWH or 210kg of CO₂ released just for standby. The only 'standbys' we now keep on, are the modem/set-top box and DVD recorder. Neither work properly if powered down for any length of time.

Richard Jannaway

More detailed versions of the articles on this page are available on our website including a number of web links .

Weathercocks and Signposts

Sustainability turns up everywhere nowadays so it's refreshing to find an organisation-South East Forum for Sustainability (SEFS)- that has been on the case for 10 years.

SEFS' aim is to help promote and achieve sustainable development in the South East. It works with regional government to ensure that environmental issues are central in all decision-making processes. Members include RSPB, National Trust, various Wildlife Trusts in the South East, Friends of the Earth groups, Woodland Trust, WWF and CPRE. A member of the Stakeholders' Group in the South East England Regional Assembly, SEFS has policy influence where it counts.

This year's AGM, attended by Havant FoE and other Hampshire groups, featured keynote speaker, Dr Caroline Lucas, a Green MEP for South East and Leader of the Green Party. Dr Lucas urged environmental campaigners to read the WWF's latest thoughts on behavioural change, *Weathercocks and Signposts*.

The paper argues that personal motivation is at the heart of making more lasting, environmentally friendly choices. Present behaviour change strategy is based on marketing, where the consumer remains sovereign, but the underlying

motivations remain unchanged and the strategy does not work. A more persuasive case was to reach people's inner values and make the link between sustainable behaviour and a richer, more fulfilled and less materialistic life. Scaring people with the end of the world just stripped them of power thus making this approach ineffective as a change driver.

Lucas praised the new 'transition towns' concept as an example of people empowering themselves.

MEPs were under constant pressure from lobbyists whose clients included energy companies and car makers. Some member states wanted to row back from EU carbon targets while others thought the challenge could be met using developing countries while the EU did nothing.

New technologies like carbon storage capture (CCS) had yet to be proven. Meanwhile, the British government had approved bigger airports at Stanstead and Manston and was poised to give a new coal-fired power station at Kingsnorth the go-ahead and then there was Heathrow expansion. The new homes agenda was driven mainly by economic considerations especially the south east, the engine of UK growth. Brown land, empty homes and affordability need to be re-looked at.

Ray Cobbett

more info http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/weathercocks_summary2.pdf

Dates and Events

Havant FoE Meetings are now on variable Wednesdays in the month. Please check in the newsletter, on the website or check your email to get the correct day.

November

1 Nov - Havant FoE, Renewables Campaign stall, West Street, Havant, 10.30 – 2.00 pm.

19 Nov - Havant FoE meeting at Nineveh. Members meeting at 7.00pm followed by Tracey Viney of Portsmouth Water at 7.30. (see box-right)

29 Nov - Hants. FoE Network meeting, Southampton, pm. – contact Ray for details.

December

6 Dec - National Climate March, London, alliances and supporters,

Details www.campaigncc.org

17 Dec - Havant FoE social, watch this space.

Havant Thicket Winter Storage Reservoir

Assuming planning permission is obtained by 2011 the detailed design and enabling works will begin shortly afterwards with the reservoir construction starting in 2015.

It is anticipated that it will take three years to build the reservoir and pipelines and a further two years to fill it. The overall cost is expected to be almost £40m.

On Wednesday 19 November Tracey Viney will give us a presentation on the ecology and environment issues of the proposed reservoir at Havant Thicket. (see Dates and Events) www.havantthicketreservoir.co.uk



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