



# BRANCHLINE

SPRING  
2012

## Havant Friends of the Earth

WWW.HAVANTFOE.ORG.UK

News & Views from Havant's Green Campaigners

Edited By Ray Cobbett

### David vs Goliath tussle over new homes site

Traffic noise dominated a Public Inquiry in Bedhampton over 92 new homes beside the A3M motorway. Last year Havant councillors refused an application on the grounds of noise from house builders, Crayfern, to insert the homes on a strip of land at the end of Scratchface Lane.

The Inquiry brought together for the developers a team of specialist led by a top QC and for the council another QC and FOE member, Jim Graham and members of his local residents' association. Havant council officers turned up to check the paperwork and at the end, one member of the committee that made the decision to throw it out. Among the active opposition were two local councillors, including FOE member, Ann Buckley.

Ann referred to the World Health Organisation reports that noise was the second biggest environmental hazard after air pollution responsible for a range of disorders. Other concerns covered flooding, inadequate sewage infrastructure and traffic.

The developer's view was that the houses were needed, the site itself was fit for housing and that it would not be any noisier for the new residents than it was now for the existing ones living next door. The case highlights just how challenging taking on a major developer can be for local people. It was left to a concerned group of active residents effectively to present the council's case without any professional support other than some advice from Planning Aid. Opposition is not likely to get easier as the government moves towards announcing the conclusions of its consultation on the new free-for-all planning guidance with a default option to permit development that FOE, RSPB and National Trust have



### Save our Trees



Trees featured in three campaigns recently involving Havant FOE members working with the tree warden network.

Two trees were thought by the management of Havant Leisure Centre to be obscuring their signs. Their answer and the council's Cabinet was to chop them down. Pressure from back-benchers and campaigners reversed the decision. Next, two yew trees on the eastern gateway to Havant almost met their end after an application to fell them came from the County Council. More protests quickly followed and the request was cancelled

Lastly, a more serious story, focused on Stoke Common Wood, Hayling Island. Purchased privately 2 years ago by unnamed bidders against local residents, the woods have seen a hive of recent activity, most of it unwelcome and the council has issued a warning to the owners. FOE helped to identify the real owners, a plant and investment company up north. The fight goes on but there is evidence that development is being planned on or near the site although no planning application has yet been submitted. These three cases show that being green means staying alert and being ready to take action.

**Havant Goes Greener**  
Havant's Greenest Summer Show 18-23 June  
[www.havantgoesgreener.org.uk](http://www.havantgoesgreener.org.uk)

# Prepare for the drought to come

2012 looks like becoming the worst drought to hit south east England for 30 years. The Environment Agency are reporting dying fish in Hampshire rivers as farmers worry about crop yields and the impact on food prices. Two dry winters have drained reservoirs and boreholes and the government has declared the south and east drought areas. Hose pipe bans are inevitable.

It will come as no surprise to environmentalist that water shortage is one of mankind's greatest threats. Millions of people throughout the world have very little. Even in the UK there is less water available per head than many much hotter countries. Climate change is expected to complicate matters still more with drier summers and wetter winters.

Locally Portsmouth Water wants to build a 8700 million litres capacity winter storage reservoir to the north of Havant filled with water pumped up from Bedhampton Springs. Last year the government called in the project for review as part of a 25-year plan. MORE INFORMATION <http://www.portsmouthwater.co.uk/news/default2.aspx?id=9070>

## Portsmouth Water Drought Garden

This garden has been designed to be drought tolerant, easily maintained and can take some wear and tear. The planting reflects the changing seasons with something of interest all year. None of the plants are difficult to grow, and are easily obtainable. The illustration has been included to help with identification, the plants will flower at different times. Some plants will take longer to mature than others.

### Plant List

1	Cornus alba 'Elegantissima'	WS, GE, SP	1	Scilla 'Iceberg'	EG, SJ
2	Hibiscus 'Vernicea'	EG, SU	2	Litsea 'Havenly Blue'	9A, EG
3	Claytonia virginica	EG, SP	3	Rosa 'Iceberg'	9A, GF
4	Crataegus whiteanaea	SU, AC	4	Pennisetum 'Blue Spire'	9A, SE, GF
5	Lambert 'Hidiscoe'	EG, SU, SC, SP	5	Sidaea 'Herbstgold'	GE, SU, WF
6	Berberis 'Hortensii' 'Rose Glow'	AC, SP	6	Thalictrum aquilegifolium	EG, SU, SC
7	Viburnum tinus 'Greenball'	EG, WS, SP	7	Lonicera nitida 'Baginbun Gold'	EG, GF
8	Syringa fortunei 'Silver Queen'	EG, GF	8	Clematis x Lutea 'Doronicum'	SU
9	Geranium sanguineum striatum	SU, AC			

### Key

EG	Evergreen	AC	Autumn Colour
SU	Summer Flowers	GF	Good Foliage
SP	Spring Flowers	SC	Scented Flowers
WS	Winter Flowers	SP	Scented Foliage
WS	Winter Stems	WF	Winter Flowerheads
WH	Hips in Winter		

If you would like more information on how to make your own drought garden visit our website.

[www.portsmouthwater.co.uk](http://www.portsmouthwater.co.uk)



### Best Ways to Save Water

- Boil just enough for a drink
- Don't leave the tap running
- Capture and store rain water
- Don't hose the car
- Take shorter showers
- Fit low-flow valves to taps
- Install a water meter
- Plant drought tolerant plants
- Fix leaky taps



## What next on solar panels?

The battles over solar panel subsidies continue as the government appeals to the Supreme Court. Friends of the Earth have urged ministers to stop wasting money on court cases. In December FOE and industry representatives won an action over premature cuts to solar panel subsidies or FITS. In January the government lost again on appeal. Now, this month, they are making a last-ditch plea to the Supreme Court. MORE INFORMATION: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-16721328>

## Fracking fears move to Hants

Green groups and residents in Hampshire are alarmed that fracking-deep rock drilling-could begin on the county's chalk uplands. A geological survey has indicated substantial deposits of shale rock, a source of natural gas. Fracking is a technique for extracting gas from deep underground sources. The drilling, having reached the deposits, is turned 90 degrees to penetrate the rock layer horizontally. After drilling a toxic mixture of chemical and water is pressure fed down the hole to force the gas out of the shale back up to the surface. In the US fracking has been linked with ground tremors and contamination of ground water sources. A minor earthquake in Lancashire last year, it was conceded by the drillers, Cuadrilla, was most likely caused by their operations. The

FOE says it's time to stop taking serious risks to feed the addiction to fossil fuels. Estimates of world reserves of gas and oil vary widely with some claiming they peaked years ago and others putting them around 2020.



# Going greener saves money and helps the planet

Everybody is telling us to go greener There's a show in June being run by the Havant Council, FOE and Transition Network aimed at turning the whole borough a bit greener So what's all the fuss about, how green are we now and how much greener can we get?.

Being green, in a nutshell, is living within our means and the means of the planet to replace the materials we use. We've not done very well so far. Virtually all of Earth's non-replaceable resources are stressed e.g. oil and gas, water, fish, most minerals, timber and more. Species too are disappearing faster than ever.

If our lifestyle was adopted by everybody we would need five Planet Earths. We can either shut our eyes or look at what we do and decide to change the way we do it. After all there is no Planet B. The scientists say we're slowly cooking our planet by releasing too much greenhouse gas, mostly carbon. The Governments have set targets to reduce emissions 80% by 2050 (excluding shipping and aviation).

It's not just about carbon. There's conservation, working with nature, making ourselves healthier and fulfilled and ensuring there's enough to meet everybody's needs-that's all 7 billion of us. The word most often used by politicians is sustainability. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the UK on average are about 9 metric tons per person, in the US double that and in China about 4 tons. The UK's would be greater if we included the goods we use that are made made in China

Generally the wealthier people are the greater their emissions. The average in Havant is lower than Winchester and slightly less than Portsmouth. So what causes the emissions? Almost two thirds comes from creating energy, a fifth from transport and the rest from agriculture (cows) and industry. It follows switching these activities to low carbon benefits everybody.

We can all play a part starting with energy. Swapping a 50 watt down lighter for a 6 watt LED saves £4 over its life. Most bulbs are compact fluorescent that also save money. Good Insulation can save a fortune. Many more ways will be found on the Energy Savings Trust and Insulate Hampshire websites. Buying 100% green energy from suppliers like Good Energy helps too .

Transport offers numerous options. Walking or cycling to the local shops saves fuel and parking charges. Longer distances are better by train or bus . Driving a bit slower and greener can save up to 10% in petrol consumption.

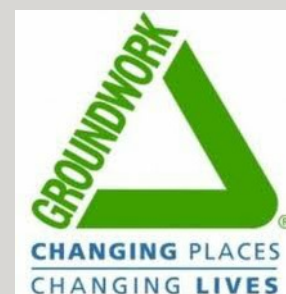
Up to 60% of the content of the average dustbin could be composted and 70% less energy is needed to recycle paper than making it from pulp. 16% of the cost of purchases is for packaging. Aluminium worth £36m is thrown into the general waste stream each year. We bin 10% of the food we buy. Eating 10% less meat reduces methane and makes us all healthier.

Whatever your reason, going green or saving money, the results are often the same.

## Helping to green how we live



Material change for a better environment





# Do superstores create new jobs?

One of the more cherished myths, put about by promoters of new superstores and politicians, is that they create new jobs. It's a gotcha tactic because hardly anybody likes to be seen as not in favour of new jobs. But is it true or corporate spin to impress local planning decisions? Many of the new jobs are simply recycled from competitor companies or small firms whose trade is hit by the new boys on the block. New business has to come from somewhere in a fairly static market. When asked the question the supermarkets claim they compete with each other and not with small shops. And yet not a week goes by when dozens more small shops go to the wall turning high streets into ghost towns. Locally, Havant Town centre and Leigh Park are examples.

Small shops employ more people relative to turnover than superstores and often buy local. More of the turnover stays in the local economy to create benefits elsewhere in a community. They also keep choice alive and prevent a whole area from becoming a Tescotown. Many people who work for supermarkets are paid the minimum wage rather than a living wage and so depend on tax credits to survive. These are paid out of general taxation which means the jobs are often subsidised by the state. A more accurate response to the new jobs question is to work out how many net new jobs were created that takes into full account all movement in the local labour market after the opening of a new store but that's a different story.

## Plastic or paper

The once great debate on plastic bags appears to be over. At one time a movement started in a tiny town in Devon (Modbury) and spread everywhere including, not least, Emsworth. Green big store owners responded with biodegradable bags that decay in the sun breaking into tiny fragments.

Then somebody thought of using starch instead of oil but they take more energy to produce. It's time for paper to make a comeback. It emerged that paper takes 70% more energy to make than plastic bags as well as massively more water than plastic. But they are de-gradable and mostly made from recycled paper.

Where does that leave us? How about on the side of jute or cotton, strong, durable, made from natural materials, some with a slogan of your choice.



## Hampshire FOE Network Day

17th March  
11am-4pm

Representatives from Hampshire's ten FOE Groups meet at the **Crown Hotel, Emsworth** on 17th March The agenda will include updates and briefings on national and regional campaigns, information of future events and what is going on in Hampshire's FOE network.  
**All members welcome**

The Earth  
needs  
all the  
Friends  
it can get!



## JOIN US TODAY

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### Websites

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[www.havantgoesgreener.org.uk](http://www.havantgoesgreener.org.uk)