



## Friends of the Earth

### VISITS TO ECO DEVELOPMENTS NEAR BATH

Last Autumn Chris Benson suggested that I should take some BANES councillors to visit an eco-development in Langport, near Taunton. While I contacted Charles Couzens of South West Eco Homes, Jane Wildblood (officer for sustainability with BANES Council) got a list of officers and councillors interested in visiting the site. By the time June 20th rolled around she had gathered 5 councillors and 10 officers and we had a second venue in Portishead in the afternoon.

Great Bow Yard in Langport was impressive because the concept of sustainability touched on every part of the build and did not stop at the front door. The location and its implications for local shopping, the need for car clubbing, the use of low energy, and low toxic products as standard throughout the build gave a sense of unified purpose. The development consists of 12 units: 5 for families, with small gardens, south facing sunspaces and solar panels, and 7 townhouse units with less obvious features but with such high levels of insulation and airtightness that very little heating will be required. Interestingly, Charles Couzens indicated that the 5 dwellings with more eco features sold first; given the choice buyers do want a home that doesn't cost the earth.

With plenty of natural daylight, use of recycled products, non-toxic paint, non-PVC guttering and wiring, there was plenty to inspect. The townhouses all are wired

to have photovoltaics should the owners wish to install them later. Imbedding the possibility of future improvement is a crucial step; renewable technologies are all changing at a rapid rate, leaving open options for change later sets these homes up to weather the upcoming shocks of gas and electricity price rises.

existing business community. The high street is between 500 and 800 metres from the development and there is a large Waitrose just before the high street.

My, perhaps naive, impression was that town planning involved a certain amount of decisions based on what is good for the



Photo: S.Morrison

**Councillor Gail Coleshill greets a friend while visiting Great Bow Yard**

The afternoon excursion at Portishead, though impressive, left me with a serious question of whether we were looking at part of the solution or part of the problem. Kedrick Davies from North Somerset Council was keen to talk about the BRE (Building research establishment) rating, but failed to demonstrate any sense of community that would begin to mould the beginnings of an even partially sustainable society. My overall impression was that we had visited the building of a large commuter satellite for Bristol, and while the style of the seafront properties encouraged pedestrian shopping to some extent, the ethos in the Ashlands section (north of the canal) was clearly to pop into the car for all purposes.

The Southern section was particularly useful for Bath planners, as the development was done by Crest Nicholson (Bath Western Riverside). The canal frontage had several 9 or 10 story apartment blocks and gave a reasonable sense of what we might expect from the tallest buildings at Western Riverside. The mixture of these densely populated dwellings with 2 and 3 storey dwellings each with unique architectural features was quite intriguing. The difficulty with the project lay with the fact that although large (certainly on a scale with Western Riverside) that there was no café, pub, shop, or office within its perimeter: all such activity had been excluded by the

community rather than being dictated by the high street businesses. Similarly, it was stated that the majority (how was this opinion achieved as few have moved in yet?) of Ashland residents didn't want a local shop. So how will you ever get them out of their cars if there are no shops? How do you begin community (so that someone might share a ride to North Bristol or even take care of someone's pets) without common areas to congregate. This northern section of the Portishead project looked like a housing project not for Portishead, but for commuters. Portishead may have some housing shortage but not on this scale. No matter what rating you might get from BRE this kind of building is desperately unsustainable, as I would guess from inception it has been more about the needs of the work force in North Bristol rather than anything to do with the needs of Portishead

In fairness, the afternoon outing was probably the more educational in terms of Bath Western Riverside. The height of the buildings was not the main problem, nor was the quality of architecture. How does the new build fit in with the existing community, how possible is a sense of community within the development, and how do the residents travel to shop and work? These seem the crucial questions, and these questions, while considered

while getting a BRE accreditation (in the new 2006 version), would seem to trump "very good" and "excellent" simply in terms of build alone.

Scott

## KENSINGTON MEADOWS WILDSpace

How about some wildlife monitoring and conservation work, learning about the problems of a natural wetland and the effects of climate change?

Kensington Meadows Local Nature Reserve, between the highly polluting London Road and the River Avon, is Bath's only urban wetland but it has been drying out in recent years.

The lower Meadow, which floods (or used to), is being taken over by nettles and brambles. We would like to keep them under control allowing more space for the large range of plants on the site.



Photo: R. Bridger

What a lotta nettles!

Community events at the Meadows were funded by the Council and English Nature until earlier this year. The Council continues to give some support. This autumn there will be a Bat Walk, path clearance, litter picking and a tree event in National Tree Week 22 November to 3 December (a long week with two weekends!) – see Diary p 8.

I have just sent a grant application off to the Big Lottery Fund/BBC Springwatch Breathing Places programme to expand on these activities next year, especially to set up regular monitoring of flora and fauna, and pay for ecologist advice on our ideas for developing public use of the site in harmony with nature, prior to putting those ideas into action.

I will know in October if we have got the money. Whether we are successful or not, I will apply for the next round of Lottery grants in October, and maybe look for some other funding.

In the meantime I am looking for people who would like to get involved in wildlife monitoring and organising events. If you are, please phone me on 01225 339861 or email me at [susan.trail@talktalk.net](mailto:susan.trail@talktalk.net)

Susan

## CATCHING UP WITH BRISTOL FOE

Bristol's Big Bike Ride on Sunday 30th June afforded the FOE Bristol group yet another opportunity to drum up more support for their key campaigns. Chris from FOE Bath volunteered to take a shift at the stall and catch up on the details...

Appropriately for a day of mass cycling, the FOE stall presented two transport campaigns to members of the public: 1. the Stop Bristol Airport Expansion (SBAE) campaign; and 2. a walk and cycle ride along the proposed route for the south Bristol ring road.

Related to transport, the stall collected signatures to express concern about the planned 92,000 homes to be built in the sub-region, and also signatures to local MPs requesting their support for the national FOE Big Ask (Climate Change Bill) campaign.

So, here's a brief summary on the SBAE status. Since the Big Bike Ride stall, a public meeting was held at Bristol City Council House on 13th July. Organised by the SBAE coalition of FOE Bristol, CPRE and PCAA, the discussion included a presentation by FOE Bristol's Jeremy Birch which can be downloaded from their website, [www.bristolfoe.org.uk](http://www.bristolfoe.org.uk). The site also has a link to a follow-on press release of the Evening Post, and a presentation paper given by Ian Ross of Bristol University.

Jeremy's presentation illustrated the fundamental arguments against expansion of the airport. These include the true projection of negative economic consequences for the sub-region with an increasing tourism deficit paralleled by the increasing rise in passenger flights. And equally if not more important(!), serious climate change consequences will be compounded by the aviation industry which represents one of the fastest growing sources of ghg emissions. BIA expansion will come hand-in-hand with a huge increase in road traffic, up to 900 extra cars per day in the airport vicinity by 2015, with knock-on road congestion and air and noise pollution creeping relentlessly into North Somerset and B&NES and across the skies.



Photo: C Benson

Bikes galore at the Big Bike Ride

The south Bristol ring road plans have not yet been finalised although the likely route is available to view. The FOE Bristol walk and cycle ride to be held on Sunday 24th September will follow the route as closely as possible with allowances made for the fact that the road will have to pass through countryside fields. For more details or to register your interest in the walk or ride, contact Pip at FOE Bristol.

The 92,000 new homes planned for the area are part of the larger parcel of new housing allocations to the sub-region. Planners intend to increase the population of Bristol by around 40% by 2026 – a huge increase within a mere twenty years!

If all the obvious implications of that rapid growth alone are not enough, about 40% of the new houses will have to be erected upon greenbelt – the very land that was originally intended to curtail the negative effects of urban sprawl. South Gloucestershire FOE have produced a leaflet in conjunction with FOE Bristol and FOE Bath, and this can be downloaded in pdf format from our websites.

Chris

## BATHFORD VILLAGE SHOP

Anyone who has read the recent Chronicle article on the village shop in Steeple Ashton will have an idea how crucial the village store can be to the soul of a village. Take away the pub, the café, the post office and the store and there is no longer any central focus and villages become commuting dormitories for the nearest town. Indeed, village shops can make the notion of a sustainable community possible.

When the owners of the post office and village store in Bathford told the community that they could no longer afford to stay open, the villagers responded by banding together to attempt to run the shop as a co-op staffed primarily by volunteers. Nearly 4 years in the making, this past week they had their grand re-opening. Staffed by many volunteers, Paul Faulkner is the manager and the only paid employee. The shop is striving to procure ethically and locally: vegetables from Batheaston, bread from Hobbs House, cakes from Marshfield Bakery. Local organic milk is for sale, as is soy milk, and fairtrade teas and coffee. Because it is staffed by the people who buy there, what is on sale fits neatly into what the consumer wants.

Even in the setting up of the store a sense of community was re-vitalised. Already in the first few days, hoards of school children come in after school raiding the sweet counter, people who live at opposite

ends of the village suddenly have the chance to meet. When I was invited as a Friends of the Earth representative to talk in a Radio Bristol spot on the store, the enthusiasm from all those involved was evident. The post office is still operating. Because the store is no longer a financial burden, the post office has remained viable.



BBC Radio interview at Village Shop

The shop works as a corner stone for sustainability in its procurement policies, but also by its very existence as it saves car journeys down the London Road into Morrisons or into Batheaston. As the school is nearby and a few offices are tucked into adjacent buildings you have the beginnings of the give and take necessary for people reconnecting in a host of ways: sharing rides, helping those elderly or disabled get what they need, going to supper with new friends nearby, sharing problems in the village. Indeed, there are a couple of tables in the store where you can sit and catch up with a friend while you sip a cup of fairtrade coffee and nibble a Marshfield cake.

Because the villagers of Bathford are "relatively affluent" and not far enough from Bath to be "rural" they have had little access to funding. It certainly is in the interests of Bath and other towns choked with congestion to encourage enterprise that will stimulate this sense of community and find a way to throw off the domination of the automobile and the out of town shopping centre. If all the villages surrounding Bath could find a similar heart, both the villagers and Bath would be the better for it and in a small way we would be contributing to the healing of the planet.

Scott

## Wwoof:

**An exchange based on trust, and goodwill; A way to enjoy countryside and learn new skills.**

The word Wwoofing may yet find its way into a dictionary, as it's a term used to describe an activity which implies working on the land in exchange for your bed and board, in a place which is loosely called an 'organic farm'. The idea arose in the early 70's when the organic movement was in its infancy. A young London secretary called Sue Coppard (now living in

Bradford on Avon) initiated the idea of Working Weekends on Organic Farms. The movement burgeoned and the concept of giving free labour for your keep spread to other countries. A new name was arrived at to reflect its flexibility and in many places it is still known as Willing Workers on Organic Farms. However, the formal term is now World-Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms.

The 'farm' is sometimes no more than a large herb garden, or the walled garden in an old mansion's grounds. It can be a smallholding, a croft, a series of paddocks, woods and vegetable plots, a place in remote countryside or on the edge of a town. We have come to use a term: 'the organic mind-set', which describes the like-minded people who have a concern for the good of the planet, for growing healthy food and rearing happy animals. It values recycling, using ingenuity and living simply. It's a manifestation of the new age of environmental awareness; it's a fun way to spend a holiday, and for some, it's a lifestyle. It's economic entertaining and instructive. The idea is that skills are shared and everybody benefits. The friendships that ensue are a bonus.

A simple membership of £15 per annum gets you started. [but note that Wwind has a separate £15 fee.] Arrangements are made between hosts and visitors and the membership booklet has full descriptions of the places on offer. Wwoof Independents are online if you choose to receive the list that way. Within the UK the annual host list comes in a quirky little illustrated book, and there are supplements through the year, plus a newsletter every two months. Wwindynews is an online newsletter for WWIND\*.

People of all ages can be Wwoofers, not just those who consider themselves young and strong! Mature Wwoofers are increasingly common and their skills are just as valuable. Tasks are so variable that every stay is an adventure. Just choose what suits your inclinations. I love picking produce - it's so satisfying; I like planting, or setting seeds. I enjoy the process of potting up; I'm good at sorting. I really like a painting job, preserving something that is at risk from the elements. I was surprised to find how much I like sawing wood. I've made jam, and designed posters, helped with house work and learned how to keep a fire in. Coppiced, and pruned, carded and scythed. And oh, yes, I've weeded, and weeded!

I find that it engages my mind as well as my body, the talk can be stimulating and reading from host's bookshelves extends my range. I wax lyrical about Wwoofing, the beautiful places, the feeling of flow in my work, the friendships. It gives us the

chance to discover skills that are dormant, and to find new ways of being. It can allow a period of re-assessment for people wanting to change lifestyle.

I urge you to spread the Wwoofing word or to try it for yourself.

Look up [www.wwoof.org](http://www.wwoof.org) or e-mail [hello@wwoof.org](mailto:hello@wwoof.org) Send an s.a.e. to P.O.BOX 2675, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1RB.

\*WWIND This is a branch administered from the UK Office but called Wwoof Independents to cater for those countries without as yet their own internal organisation. There are about 46 of these to date and it's a growing number. Countries range from Belize and Brazil to Kenya or Ghana in Africa to India to Europe. Look up [www.wwoof.org](http://www.wwoof.org) to find Wwoof Independents.

If you want to follow this up with a chat then e-mail [verona\\_bass@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:verona_bass@yahoo.co.uk) I've undertaken to act as an informal liaison for people interested in setting up a co-housing venture or interested in the move towards eco-villages.

Verona Bass

## @ KEEP IN TOUCH BY E-MAIL

Please send us your e-mail details. Even if you prefer to receive your paper copy of the newsletter, we want to keep you up-to-date on occasional events such as Green Light lectures & it costs us nothing to send you an occasional email. We won't pass your address on to anyone & if you change your mind, we can take you off the list. It's the easiest way for us to keep you informed!

So email us your details at [coordinator@bath-foe.org.uk](mailto:coordinator@bath-foe.org.uk)

## INSPIRATION FROM MICHAEL MEACHER

Michael Meacher, former environment minister and also great supporter of Friends of the Earth, gave a talk at the BRLSI in Queen's Square on 22 June on the subject of climate change. I was impressed by his blazing honesty and utter lack of 'spin'. He gave a frightening account of the perils of global warming - backed up by many figures, and talked of his disillusionment with the Labour Party

having moved so far to the right. He also answered my question on the issue of radioactive waste emissions from nuclear power stations in great detail – talking about the special committee he set up, CERRIE, to provide a forum for both sides of the argument, and talked freely of the cancer clusters around all nuclear installations, thus bringing the information to a new audience - of about 120 people, who would otherwise have been unlikely to have been aware of the issue.

Richard Carder



## RECYCLING GROUP ROUND - UP

Bath FoE have adopted recycling and transport as two issues on which we will conduct our own local campaigns this year. The recycling group includes a member of the London Road Partnership, Keith Williams. I am also a member of LRP.

We have several strands to the recycling campaign:

- 1) Getting individuals to recycle more
- 2) Getting shops to reduce the number of plastic bags they give out
- 3) Getting businesses, especially small businesses, to recycle more
- 4) Working towards zero waste with the Council, B&NES residents, community groups (such as LRP), and businesses

This is an ambitious programme but it is coming together. We have the chance to make a big difference.

The B&NES waste and recycling collection contracts are up for grabs this year, with same day collection of both planned for 2007. We will lobby to keep the contract with ECT, a social enterprise, rather than see it go to a large profit-oriented company, which will charge the taxpayer more.



Photo: S Morrison

Vicky checks out crushed and baled aluminium on a visit to ECT's Bath depot

The Council is committed to a zero waste policy and is making Herculean efforts to get households to recycle more. B&NES remains the best in the UK for household waste recycling, 37% now exceeding its own target of 36%. But if it does not tackle

business waste, there is no way it can achieve zero waste.

We have told the Executive Member for the Environment Cllr Gerry Curran, Chair of the Environment Scrutiny Panel Cllr David Dixon, and Sarah Raban the Council's Recycling Campaigns officer that it would be a good idea for B&NES to offer kerbside recycling collection for small businesses, who find it difficult to interest commercial recyclers. It seems the Council might be willing to provide such a service at cost. We will follow up on this at the September Scrutiny Panel.

### Clearer Council information

The Council is redrafting its information to households for the new collection contract, so this is a good moment to send your moans about Council recycling and waste information to:

Waste Services, Keynsham Town Hall,  
Temple Street, Keynsham, BS31 1ED  
Waste\_Services@Bathnes.gov.uk  
Tel: 01225 394041

The Council is planning some simpler information on posters, fridge magnets and other items. They would welcome suggestions.

### Recycling stall at Morrisons 24 Sep

Our first action to raise public awareness will be a stall at Morrisons car park on Sunday 24 September. This is, strictly speaking, an LRP action with thanks due to LRP Chairman Alex Schlesinger who wrote to Morrisons and the Council. But it is a Bath FoE action too as we have contributed ideas, knowledge and momentum.

We are drafting a questionnaire for the stall and Morrisons manager Jeff Gardner said we could return and get more people to fill it in on another occasion. I offered to put together some publicity on Morrisons own recycling for the stall, as an example of good practice.

Morrisons has a mini recycling centre in the car park, which it is expanding to include plastic bags and plastics. We will encourage people to use this.



Typical waste sent to landfill

We will have a whole host of things on display at the stall, from plastic bag couture (fashion by our very own carparkwalk model!) to Morrisons' own recycling, Morrisons packaging and a quiz on how it can be reduced, and a cut-away wheely bin showing typical dry rubbish going to landfill, and what could have been recycled out of this.

We will have our own 10 Top Tips for Recycling, adapted from national FoE's 50, which we think might be a bit much for the unconverted. We will have those too, just in case!

Keith Williams is designing the quiz, which will probably be our competition. Jeff Gardner has offered a prize equivalent to two bottles of wine. Wine is only suitable for adults. Other prize suggestions so far include chocolate, biscuits and cake.

The Council will provide information and a feedback form for how the Council could improve its recycling and waste services, a children's game, mugs, pens, pencil cases and other items made from recycled materials and a compost bin.

We will have a lot of information from the stall to encourage Morrisons to reduce its packaging and its use of plastic bags, and perhaps to up its own recycling. Jeff Gardner is generally positive and he will probably do more if he has customer endorsement.

### Zero Waste

In October the Council's Zero Waste Challenge will ask households to achieve one week without generating rubbish for landfill. Volunteers?

We hope to visit Chew Magna Zero Waste project to see how the village scenario could be adapted for town.

### Action

- To join the recycling group, for more information on recycling and visits, or to send ideas, contact Susan on 01225 339861 or email [susan.trail@talktalk.net](mailto:susan.trail@talktalk.net)
- Come to the stall Sunday 24 September 9.45 am to 4 pm at Morrisons car park, London Road
- To give feedback on Council information, contact Council services (details above)
- To take part in the October Zero Waste Challenge email Sarah Raban [sarah\\_raban@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:sarah_raban@bathnes.gov.uk)

Susan



# BATH FOE SUBS BY STANDING ORDER

Time spent checking and obtaining subs is time that could be better spent campaigning!

Therefore if people could pay their subs by standing order it would be a huge help to us and would mean that you don't have to worry about sending a cheque every year. (We have increased the amount – see page 7 for further details.)

Just fill out the form below, send to your bank and let Mike Gordon know on 334516 or mike@goodbuybooks.co.uk

Thanks, Dave Searby

## Bath FOE Standing Order Mandate

To: .....Bank Plc (your bank)

Branch Address:.....

Account Number:.....(your account number)

Sort code:..... : ..... : .....

Please pay: Co-operative Bank plc, PO Box 250, Delf House, Southway, SKELMERSDALE, WN8 6WT

Sort Code 08-92-99 for the credit of: Bath FOE –

Account No. 6514 0497 the sum of £.....

(in words: .....)

(£10/year individual, £5/year unwaged)

on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 200... (insert year) and at yearly intervals thereafter, until notified by me in writing.

Please debit my/our account accordingly.

Please quote my name .....on each remittance.

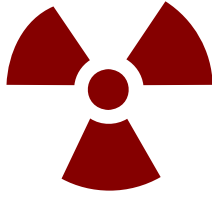
This mandate amends any previous mandate in favour of Bath FOE. Please adjust any payments that have been made under any previous mandate in favour of Bath FOE when making the first payment under this mandate.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Please cancel my previous annual standing order to Bath FOE account named above:  
Sort Code 08-92-99 Account No. 6514 0497

Signed: ..... Date: .....

## NUCLEAR NEWS



After a gap of 2 years, a new volume of *Radioactive Times* has been published, giving the uncensored account of what went on in CERRIE, The Government's *Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters*, which was set up by the excellent but ex-Environment Minister, Michael Meacher, before he was sacked by Tony Blair. CERRIE could not agree on a joint final report, so the Low Level Radiation Campaign have had to produce their own minority report, which is available to campaigners at the special price of £5, from LLRC, The Knoll, Montpelier Park, Llandindrod Wells, LD1 5LW. LLRC is also asking people to contact MPs & MEPs about the EU proposal to dispose of nuclear waste by diluting it with non-radioactive material and using it to manufacture goods – e.g. kitchen utensils, children's toys etc.....!

### Kilve Beach

When his two dogs suddenly died of stomach-cancer last summer, after routine walks at Kilve – famous for its fascinating rock formations - a local man bought a Geiger counter and measured an overall reading of 40-times background radiation, with a smaller area measuring 100-times background. He alerted the Environment Agency who took over five weeks to get there, by which time the radiation had dispersed. Kilve is just two miles from Hinckley Point and shows the dangers inherent in the daily releases into water and air from Nuclear Power Stations of these deadly radioactive poisons.

### Oldbury

Information obtained under Freedom of Information law about the corroded reactor-core at Oldbury led to two damning documentaries by BBC & ITV. A new request for information about the cracked core at Hinckley has now been blocked for 6 weeks by the NII while they consider the 'sensitive nature' of the material. – Censorship?

## Co-ordinator?

Jim Duffy, who has done such an excellent job for many years, is moving to London soon, so a new person is needed to take on his job at Stop Hinckley. A small fee, plus expenses are payable. Please e-mail [stophinckley@aol.com](mailto:stophinckley@aol.com)

## Cancer cover-up

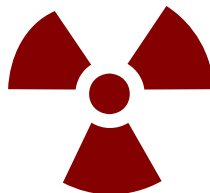
The Low Level Radiation Campaign has exposed a huge error in calculations by the Welsh Cancer Registry, who managed to eliminate the apparent leukaemia cluster in the Menai Straights by over-estimating the population there by a factor of 3. It is hard to believe that such a basic blunder could be accidental. The LLRC has produced its own report with correct figures. Neither are they amused by the Horizon programme on BBC2 recently which claimed that radiation in small doses might be good for us! Please visit [www.llrc.org](http://www.llrc.org) and [www.stophinckley.org](http://www.stophinckley.org).

## Nuclear Safety

The Nuclear Safety Directorate (NSD) has issued warnings about cracks in the gas-cooled reactors, which could inhibit the movement of control rods - very dangerous in an emergency, as it would prevent cooling. Then - hey presto! - on 15th July Hinckley B was forced to shut down after problems with moving a control rod!

## Book

I've just received the 250pp book, 'Chernobyl: 20 Years On', produced by the European Committee on Radiation Risk (ECRR) - a group of independent scientists set up in 1997 to monitor radiation risks. This includes a lot of evidence from Russia & Ukraine, which has been suppressed by the authorities, and led to the jailing of several scientists in Belarus for telling the truth. I can lend this to anyone interested.



Richard C

## GM CONTAMINATION BACK ON THE AGENDA

The WTO delivered a contaminated ruling in the European Union v USA, Argentina and Canada dispute over GM crops and food. Despite the EU's scientific concern over the safety of GMs, used in its WTO defence, commercial growing of GM crops will go ahead after the public consultation on the coexistence between GM and non-GM crops, which takes 0.9% as the acceptable level of contamination.

Key points of the UK consultation paper are two statutory measures:

- Defra's management scheme for coexistence
- Specific measures for maize, beet, potatoes and oilseed rape including separation distances and notification to other farmers within the separation distances of intention to grow GM crops. Past experience has shown that official separation distances were ridiculously small and could end at the GM farmer's boundary.

and four non-statutory measures, which will be subject to a voluntary code of good conduct:

- Organic crops: 0.1% to 0.9% contamination. We want to keep the present EU law that organic food must be 100% GM-free.
- Polluter pays: compensation of non-GM farmers by GM farmers. Pigs may fly.
- Public register of GM crops giving precise locations.
- Guidance to farmers who want to establish a GM-free zone.

Practices under the voluntary code would be reviewed by Defra every 2-3 years, plenty enough time for Monsanto to launch theft of patented product legal action against non-GM farmers contaminated with its GM seed, as it did in North America.

Not for discussion is the safety for the environment and human health of GM crops. Yet on 18 July the European Ombudsman ruled the EU Commission guilty of "maladministration" in hiding the safety data of its WTO defence from Friends of the Earth Europe. Despite these concerns, the results of the coexistence consultation here and in other EU states will pave the way for commercial growing of GM crops.

Defra says that will not happen here before 2009 at the earliest, because the GM farm trials showed there are no suitable GM crops for the UK as yet. But this apparently cautious approach should be taken with a pinch of salt.

Bear in mind that this government has allowed the "experimental" planting of GM trees in the British countryside, all kept quiet, exact locations and any results of these experiments still not known. These trees are for paper production. Why couldn't we reduce the use of paper rather than destroy the natural ecology of trees?

In the WTO ruling, the EU's GM labelling laws were accepted as not a barrier to free trade, but GM-free zones were rejected, and the WTO criticised the EU for delaying decisions over GM crops and food. This was not the outright victory the US government claimed in its disinformation in February.

But FoE challenges the right of the unelected secretive WTO to dictate what people should eat or buy.

#### Action

- From the FoE website send an email the Trade and Environment Ministers urging them to stand up to the WTO for British citizens' rights

[http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/global\\_trade/press\\_for\\_change/bite\\_back/index.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/global_trade/press_for_change/bite_back/index.html)

- Respond to Defra's consultation paper by 20 October 2006

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/latest/2006/farm-0721.htm>



Photo: S Trill

#### Now where are those GM trees?

Susan



## BOOK REVIEW

### Climate Change Begins at Home

#### Life in the two-way street of global warming

By Dave Reay

Published by Macmillan 2005;

ISBN: 0230007546

I really enjoyed this book. I was looking for something that would give me lots of science-based facts about climate change but would be compelling to read. A tall order, maybe, but this book delivers.

Recommended in the Friends of the Earth *Earth Matters* magazine, Reay sets out to de-mystify the root causes of climate change and bring home the harsh facts, plain and simple. He does this rather ingeniously by creating a fictional Amercian family (the Carbones), and calculating their energy-decadent lifestyle. This is set this against a broader political and global picture including the failed Kyoto agreement, and natural climate disasters of recent times. However, Reay's passion for change is infectious.

He draws us into the world of the Carbone family and takes us on their journey of living a more climate-friendly lifestyle. For example, how they go about cutting their travel emissions is analysed in detail, with occasional graphs, and with wit and clarity. This is really part of the book's appeal. Reay manages to tackle big topics such as the impact of our travel, domestic energy use, food, rubbish, burial and also business wastage in an extremely down-to-earth way, given that he is a scientist! The story of the Carbones is a vehicle for him to advocate change on a personal level so we can reduce emissions by 60%. How we live matters, how we can change our habits even more. It's motivating and

funny, so have no doubts about buying this book for your friends and family.

Yvonne



## OPEN SPACES

Helen has been busy championing the Open Spaces cause in Bath, with key issues including Green Belt and AONB; greening of the City Centre; Lambridge Park and Ride; 'Open Spaces tax'; Green corridors; the fight to save allotment lands; privatisation by stealth of public footpaths. There's still much to be done to protect and increase our green spaces and any help that you could give Helen - even just the odd hour - would be much appreciated. This could be anything from attending meetings, reading planning documents, research or publicity. If you're interested in helping out, please contact Scott on 01225 463555 or e-mail [info@bath-foe.org.uk](mailto:info@bath-foe.org.uk).

### SMALL INCREASE IN SUBSCRIPTIONS

Due to an increase in costs and the fact that the subs have been at the same rates for many years now, we have decided to increase them to £10 per year (or £5 if unwaged.) We value your continued support and hope you'll agree that this still represents good value for all the work and campaigning we're able to carry out in Bath, not to mention this highly entertaining and informative newsletter!

# DIARY 2006

## August

- Wed 19<sup>th</sup> Recycle your Sundays , Wednesday evening ride, Bath Abbey, 6 pm. Saltford, 12miles. Meet Green Drinkers and cyclists from Bristol at Jolly Sailor.
- Sun 27<sup>th</sup> Recycle your Sundays, 8.45 start at A36/Beckford Road entrance to canal towpath. For further info, call Hazel 01225 469199
- Sun 27<sup>th</sup> Bristol Cycling Campaign weekend- in Appley on Somerset/Devon border. FFI call Simon Carpenter on 01373 474086 or e-mail [simonccarpenter@yahoo.com](mailto:simonccarpenter@yahoo.com)
- Tue 29th Bath FoE monthly meeting 7.30pm. Stillpoint (next to YMCA) Broad Street – venue may change if weather is hot. Call Scott on 463555 to confirm.**

## September

- Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> Resole your Saturdays: New Forest Walk. FFI call Simon Carpenter on 01373 474086 or e-mail [simonccarpenter@yahoo.com](mailto:simonccarpenter@yahoo.com).
- Mon 11th Greenpeace monthly meeting. 7.30pm. Stillpoint (next to YMCA) Broad Street. FFI call 07736 678586 or email [greenpeace@hotmail.com](mailto:greenpeace@hotmail.com)
- Weds 13th Green Drinks, upstairs at The Rummer 8.30 pm
- Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> Bat walk, Kensington Meadows. Meet 7pm Morrison's car park (riverside entrance)
- Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> LRP with Bath FoE Recycling day of action at Morrison's, 9.45 – 4 pm**
- Mon 25<sup>th</sup> Bath Cycling Campaign, 7.30. Upstairs at The Raven
- Bath FoE monthly meeting 7.30pm. Stillpoint (next to YMCA) Broad Street**

**Tues  
26th**

## October

- Sat 7<sup>th</sup> Conservation afternoon, Kensington Meadows. Meet 1pm, Grosvenor Bridge entrance
- Mon 9<sup>th</sup> Greenpeace monthly meeting. 7.30pm. Stillpoint (next to YMCA) Broad Street. FFI call 07736 678586 or email [greenpeace@hotmail.com](mailto:greenpeace@hotmail.com)
- Tues 10<sup>th</sup> ICE Seminar – The case for personal carbon allowances – Dr Tina Fawcett, Oxford University. 4.30 pm, University of Bath. FFI call 01225 386156
- Weds 11th Green Drinks, upstairs at The Rummer 8.30 pm
- Sun 15th Fungi Foray, Kensington Meadows, 10am – to be confirmed
- Tues 24<sup>th</sup> ICE Seminar – Protecting UK wildlife from chemicals: the harsh reality – Prof. John Sumpter, Brunel University. . 4.30 pm, University of Bath. FFI call 01225 386156
- Mon 30th Bath Cycling Campaign, 7.30. Upstairs at The Raven
- Tues 31st ICE Seminar – learning AS sustainability – Mr John Foster, Lancaster University. 4.30 pm, University of Bath. FFI call 01225 386156

## Who Does What

Group Coordinator	Scott Morrison	463555
Membership Secretary & Treasurer	Mike Gordon	334516
Webmaster	David Beasley	425200
Spokesperson and Press liaison	Sue Board	335962
Newsletter Editor	Vicky Stone	460688

## Campaign Group / Activists

Local Government	David Searby	312770
Waste	Andy Nelmes	338742
Toxics	Richard Carder	313531
Real Food and GM	Susan Trill	339861
Transport	Vacant – contact co-ordinator if interested	
Biodiversity, Habitats and Open Spaces	Sue Board	335962
Climate & Energy	Helen Woodley	
	Vacant – contact co-ordinator if interested	

Bath FoE meets on the last Tuesday of each month at Stillpoint (next to the YMCA) Broad Street Place (Between the Fine Cheese Company and Pax Marice you take the steps and it's on your right) All are welcome.

General enquiries: Scott Morrison 01225 463555  
Email [info@bath-foe.org.uk](mailto:info@bath-foe.org.uk) website [www.bath-foe.org.uk](http://www.bath-foe.org.uk)  
Subscriptions See standing order form in this issue or send cheque payable to "Bath FoE".  
Contact Mike Gordon, 3 Raglan Street, Bath, BA1 6HP.

**When you join Bath FoE you get  
free membership of National FoE for 1 year  
(Tell your friends)**

**Please check your address label to see if your subs are due**

This newsletter is produced quarterly. Send items to Vicky, preferably by email or disk as **plain text**. Include photos/images

For occasional news updates between newsletters please email a request to [info@bath-foe.org.uk](mailto:info@bath-foe.org.uk)

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