

# Reading Friends of the Earth



## Newsletter March-April 2025

For more info our 'new' website is at: [www.readingfoe.co.uk](http://www.readingfoe.co.uk) \* ... or Facebook [Reading Friends of the Earth | Facebook](#) ... or email [info@readingfoe.co.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.co.uk) \*\* ... or 'phone 07503626167.

\* Our original web-page – which contains some outdated information but may also still be up-dated - is now at <http://www.anjoro.plus.com/RFOE/>

\*\* Our former e-mail address [info@readingfoe.org.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.org.uk) has been discontinued.

**General Meetings:** Reading FoE aim to meet every month - usually in person but occasionally on Zoom. Often in a pub or in Room One upstairs at RISC, 35-39 London Street (access to RISC from London Street is via a passage to the right of the shop-front). Most meetings at RISC will be 'hybrid' and we are investigating options for other venues - please request a Zoom link if you have not received one. Most meetings discuss plans and general topics - some have a particular focus or guest speakers.

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March** 7:30 pm. Back room, Castle Tap, 120 Castle Street, RG1 7RJ <https://thecastletap.co.uk/> We will discuss issues and make plans for the next few months including lobbying MPs on climate change (see below), and Reading's proposed Emissions-Based Parking pricing.

**Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April** 7:30 pm. Back room, Castle Tap. Brief **annual general meeting** with review of year and group finances and strategy, and election (or re-election) of Treasurer and Co-ordinator in accordance with our Constitution <https://readingfoe.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/rfoeconstitution.pdf>. Followed by discussion of plans for summer events and stalls.

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### **Future Events and Opportunities with Reading FoE, National FoE, and others:**

*Please e-mail us or post to Facebook if there are other events we should know about!*

### **National FoE: Campaign for 'Big Climate Plan' – The Fairness Test - report to be published 19<sup>th</sup> March**

After legal action by national FoE and others the government is required to produce a revised plan by early May 2025.

In October we met with 'our' three local MPs to promote FoE's 'Big Climate Plan' - see our November Newsletter [http://www.anjoro.plus.com/RFOE/Documents/Newsletter/readingfoe\\_news\\_nov\\_24.pdf](http://www.anjoro.plus.com/RFOE/Documents/Newsletter/readingfoe_news_nov_24.pdf) and the plan proposals at <https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/insight/what-we-need-big-climate-plan-thats-bolder-and-fairer>

On Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March FoE are launching a new report – **The Fairness Test: a mandate for bold climate policy** – which they would like us to promote to our MPs – ideally the following Friday or weekend. To reduce political backlash the UK must meet its climate targets while making sure everyone benefits, with no one left behind.

The report will set out what the government should be doing in key areas:

- Access to transport
- Warm homes
- Transition for workers changing jobs
- How the plan should be developed
- Funding the transition

We can discuss on 19<sup>th</sup> March when a hard copy should be available, but it is important to set up meetings with MPs beforehand so please let us know if you're interested so we can make arrangements in each constituency. There is more information in this [template email](#) which should be sent by our group.

FoE also suggest we prompt our MPs to attend the Parliamentary launch meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> and have provided information and a template e-mail you can use here [this template](#) with more information above it.

**Gaza: parliamentary lobby March 24<sup>th</sup>** FoE and others say they plan solidarity action with PENGON/Palestine Friends of the Earth. "So, get involved in our [lobby day in parliament on March 24](#), keep sharing our [arms embargo action](#) or get in touch for more things you can do."

**Nature Recovery Strategy for Berkshire:** This aims to map key sites of wildlife value and risk to guide progress to be made with local authority and developer funding. Final Consultation finishes on 24<sup>th</sup> March. The draft strategy is available online together with a survey for completion and the opportunity to add species and important locations to the interactive map. All information is available at [Berkshire LNRS Public Consultation Page | RBWM Together](#) Please take a look and add any missing locations for important species and habitats.

**Consultation on ‘Emissions – Based Charging for Pay and Display’** – RBC proposal for vehicle parking. Respond by 30<sup>th</sup> March - something to discuss at our meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> March. <https://reading.govocal.com/en-GB/projects/emissions-based-charging> ...

**Reading Clean Air and Safer Transport Forum 1<sup>st</sup> April**

RBC meeting in Civic Offices at 6:30. Agenda not yet published but if you are not on their mailing list and would like to be involved please let us know. Chris, John Sharpe, and John Booth attended the November meeting where a wide range of topics were covered with officers, councillors and campaigners. See [http://www.anjoro.plus.com/RFOE/Documents/Newsletter/readingfoe\\_news\\_jan\\_25.pdf](http://www.anjoro.plus.com/RFOE/Documents/Newsletter/readingfoe_news_jan_25.pdf)

**Beanpole Day – Saturday April 26th**



Annual event in Caversham Court Gardens run by Econet <https://www.econetreading.org.uk/index.html> where we usually have a stall.

John Booth can't run it this year but can make gazebo and tables and display boards available – but displays will require prior revision and updating – ideally with some gardening/wildlife related content. Please offer to run it or to help on the day so we can reserve a place.

Photo shows Graham and Chris in 2024 with ‘Compost’ and ‘Warm Homes’ displays.

**Other National FoE events and training:**

- Tuesday 11 March – Skillshare: how to persuade your mayor to act on climate and nature. Online, 7pm to 8:30pm. [Save your spot.](#)
- Thursday 13 March – Welcome to Friends of the Earth. Online, 6pm to 7:15pm. [Save your spot.](#)
- Thursday 27 March – The Growth Agenda: what will new planning laws mean for climate and nature? Online, 7pm to 8:15pm. [Save your spot.](#)
- Wednesday 30 April – Antiracism follow-up and coaching session. Online, 6pm to 7:30pm. [Save your spot.](#)

**Planet over Profit:**

FoE say they will be ramping up this campaign soon, starting with a launch webinar in April. Currently focussing on Forests with an ‘international day of action’ on 21<sup>st</sup> March, and a longer term aim of a new UK law with a petition at <https://action.friendsoftheearth.uk/target/tell-your-mp-stop-corporate-abuse> . See also <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/nature/planet-over-profit-end-exploitation-big-business>

**Summertime:** we often have stalls at East Reading Festival (22<sup>nd</sup> June - <http://www.eastreadingfestival.co.uk/> ) and Reading Waterfest (28<sup>th</sup> June - <https://www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/things-to-do/events/water-fest/> but can be expensive). Please offer to manage either or both, and/or help on the day.

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**Recent Activities with Reading FoE:**

**“Sustainable Allotments”** – a talk by John Sharpe.

Our February monthly meeting was held on **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup>** in Room 3 at RISC at 7:30. The presentation was very much appreciated and was attended by about 50 people of whom about half live-streamed on Zoom. It was followed by a ‘Seed Swap’ with Karen Blakeman from Reading Food Growing Network.

Allotments can provide good locally produced food but traditional methods of horticulture, as in farming, have often ignored their environmental impact. John described his two organic allotments at Bulmershe where he uses the Vegan Organic Growing method. The presentation addressed compost preparation and use, crop rotation, growing mixes, mulching, and the benefits of allotments for mental health. His slide set cannot be shared but he has produced a comprehensive set of notes based on his presentation which may be available on request.

**Administrative matters:**

**Website Management:**

Paolo has created our new website using WordPress. He would welcome any help on maintaining, improving and expanding it, and can share the credentials to access the account.

### **Newsletter curating and contributions:**

It would be great to have other people contributing to our newsletter – perhaps changing format or contact – please get in touch.

### **E-mail lists:**

We have three e-mail lists: newsletter; frequent e-mails; and our public [info@readingfoe.co.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.co.uk) email address for people who want to help run the group. Please let us know if you would like to be on a different list to do get more involved.

### **Other up-coming activities (not run by Reading FoE so check for changes):**

**Earley Environmental Group** meeting on "Water, How we use and abuse it" by Jane Sellwood - 11<sup>th</sup> March  
<http://www.earleyenvironmentalgroup.co.uk/Events/EventsUpdate.asp?EventID=626>

**Green Drinks** – usually on the first Tuesday of every month in the Castle Tap – see [Reading Green Drinks | Facebook](#)

**People Planet Pint:** an informal social meet up, primarily aimed at people involved in sustainability. Reading will now have its own PPP on the second Thursday of the month. Milk Bar, 8 Merchants Place, Reading RG1 1DT.  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/reading-small99s-people-planet-pinttm-sustainability-meetup-tickets-923173094577>

**Kidical Mass Reading** – “Making space for the next generation, one bike ride at a time!” - are holding a number of rides for children in the coming months - see [www.kidicalmassreading.co.uk](http://www.kidicalmassreading.co.uk) or on Twitter @KidicalMassRead

**Reading Critical Mass** cycle ride. ... Rides on the last Friday of the month. Leave at 19:30 from the Civic Offices in Bridge Street. Leisurely ride for about an hour and a half finishing at pub. Not sure if still happening. Check before you go! <https://criticalmassreading.wordpress.com/> doesn't seem to be updated ???

**XR Reading** hold meetings and events – see <https://www.facebook.com/groups/XRRdg/>

**Reading Cycle Campaign** – has regular monthly meetings and other activities. <https://readingcyclecampaign.org.uk/>

**Repair Cafe** – usually third weekend of month - <http://www.transitionreading.org.uk/projects/reading-repair-cafe/>

**Reading Bicycle Kitchen** – regular sessions – see <https://www.readingbicyclekitchen.org/>

### **Useful Links and General Information:**

Friends of the Earth 'England, Wales and Northern Ireland' <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/>  
– Policy and Insight <https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/>

GREN - Greater Reading Environmental Network <http://www.gren.org.uk/>. Also [Greater Reading Environment Network | Facebook](#)

Reading Climate Action Network - <https://readingcan.org.uk>

Extinction Rebellion, Reading: <https://www.facebook.com/xrReading/>

Transition Reading - Reading's Transition Town movement <http://www.transitionreading.org.uk>

Newbury Friends of the Earth – Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/755866711218545/>

### **Reading FoE Officers etc.**

Our 2024 AGM on April 10<sup>th</sup> elected Enrico Petrucco to continue in the post of Co-ordinator and Paolo Turati to continue in the post of Treasurer.

### **Reading FoE e-mail communications**

If you would like to become a supporter on our mailing list and receive and join in our day-to-day communications please send an email to [info@readingfoe.co.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.co.uk) to request our GDPR Consent form. We have separate lists for people who only want to receive our newsletters (currently 6 per year) and information about important events and actions, and for people who want to be more involved and communicate directly with other active supporters.

### **Reading FoE Subscriptions:**

A subscription/donation would be welcome from supporters but is not required. We're much happier to have an extra pair of hands doing the important stuff. We aim to provide a regular free of charge newsletter to keep members up to date with the group's activities. We need funds to cover meeting room hire, zoom licence, website costs, and campaign expenses. Contributions of perhaps £10 a year would be greatly appreciated.

To contribute please:

- if you use PayPal go to <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/readingfoe>
- to pay by bank transfer request our bank account details by e-mail to [info@readingfoe.co.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.co.uk)
- or pay cash or cheque at a meeting or event