



**Friends of the Earth**

# Reading Friends of the Earth

## Newsletter May/June 2010

For more information see <http://www.foe.co.uk/reading>  
email [info@readingfoe.org.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.org.uk) or 'phone 0118 9868260.

### Diary:

**General Meetings:** Reading FoE usually meets on the second Wednesday of each month, upstairs at RISC, 35-39 London Street, at 8:00 p.m.

**May 12th:** – 8:00 p.m. at RISC – **General meeting** – topics to include progress of campaigns on Waste and on Green Development in South Reading. Plan for Waterfest stall.

**June 9th:** - 8:00 p.m. at RISC – **Waste and Resources** - a campaigner from FoE's national Resource Use Team will visit to give an update on Waste campaigning and discuss options for suitable local campaigns.

### Other FoE Activities:

**Saturday June 5th – Regional Gathering** – London - [www.foe.co.uk/community/news/gserg\\_jun10\\_23252.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/news/gserg_jun10_23252.html)  
bookings deadline is 18 May.

**Saturday June 19th – Reading Waterfest** – Forbury Gardens – 11:00 to 17:00. This year combined with 'Forbury Fever' <http://www.reading.gov.uk/news/whatson/event.asp?id= SX9452-A783E653> Help needed to create and staff a suitable stall – ideally with activities for children – perhaps on a 'Waste' theme?

### Other Activities and Meetings:

**Saturday June 5th – A Sustainable Reading: what's your vision?** 10 am – 1pm, RISC  
GREN the Greater Reading Environmental Network invites its members, and representatives from other 'green' groups, to develop a shared vision for truly sustainable communities in Reading. [www.gren.org.uk](http://www.gren.org.uk)

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### Get Serious Postcards Presented

- The 'Get Serious about Climate Change' postcards ask Councillors to:
- Commit to carbon emission cuts in the local area of at least 40% by 2020
  - Back FoE's campaign for more money and less hassle for councils to do things like improve public transport, insulate more homes and install green energy
  - Support a call for a new duty on councils that fail to act on climate change.

By late April 2010 we had about 170 cards signed by the public to present to Councillors and we met with the Lead Councillor for the Environment, Paul Gittings, to involve him in the campaign before sending the cards to the Councillors.

Councillor Gittings said the Council was 'Serious about Climate Change'. It already has a climate change strategy and a team of officers working on sustainability and has begun implementing actions to improve home insulation for residents with the Heatseekers program.

Enrico commented "We are pleased to see the positive actions that Reading Borough Council is already taking towards a more sustainable Reading."

"There are some good opportunities around the corner for the expansion of sustainable energy in Reading. We welcome any steps that the council is willing to take to actively encourage sustainable development."



*Chris Burden, Cllr. Paul Gittings, Enrico Petrucco*

## **Parliamentary Election Hustings – East and West Reading**

John and Enrico helped GREN, the Greater Reading Environmental Network, to hold 'Hustings' meetings for parliamentary candidates in both West and East Reading.

In general all candidates (or their representatives – two candidates did not attend in person) seemed quite well-briefed and supportive on climate change issues.

The Greens and Lib Dems were opposed to nuclear power and replacement of Trident nuclear missiles, and saw limits to growth in the Reading area.

In Reading West all candidates opposed development of Pincents Hill – and the Conservative candidate said a Conservative government would change the planning system to prevent it.

In Reading East the Labour candidate said more houses should be built to meet housing need.

The Conservative representative said development could be shifted to the north – Reading could only build upwards – gardens were precious assets.



*Reading West: Ricky Duveen (L-D), Naz Sarkar (Lab), The Bishop of Reading (Chair), Adrian Windisch (Gr), Alok Sharma (Con)*

## **Waste Issues**

A campaigner from the national FoE Resource Use Team will come to our June meeting to give us an update on Friends of the Earth's own waste campaigning activities and to identify synergies with our local issues. There are at least three promising areas for local activity:

Enrico heard from the last re3 stakeholders' meeting (<http://www.re3.org.uk/>) that re3 seem keen to work with community groups and individuals to appoint 'Recycling Champions' to encourage better public information on recycling opportunities – and how collections of recyclables can be damaged by inclusion of materials such as plastic bags in paper collections. This should tie in with proposals from our members to start to campaign to improve public take-up of recycling

Then there is the question of energy from waste at the Colnbrook incinerator - Reading has just increased the amount it sends there by 10,000 tonnes per annum

[http://www.getreading.co.uk/news/s/2068022\\_waste\\_deal\\_is\\_rubbished\\_by\\_lib\\_dems](http://www.getreading.co.uk/news/s/2068022_waste_deal_is_rubbished_by_lib_dems)

And finally the question of collection strategies - Reading currently has alternate weekly collections for recyclables and general waste, and there have been a lot of local complaints.

## **Green Development in South Reading?**

The national FoE organisation gave us a grant to enable us to sponsor supervision of work on regeneration by students of planning at Reading University. Two separate teams have looked at the "Courage Brewery" site (operations closing in 2010) and the old "Digital Pyramids" site between the old A33 and the A33 Relief Road (already empty). Both are interesting because of proximity to the M4 – what 'green' options are there for a site with excellent motorway access?

The reports on the two sites are complete, we have had a number of meetings of group members, and John and Chris had a good meeting with Council Officers Mark Worringham and Andrew Clugg. We have now responded to the Borough's consultation on its Sites and Policies. <http://www.anjoro.plus.com/downloads/southreading.doc>

We have also contacted Tony Page, the lead Councillor on Planning, and the relevant parliamentary candidates. We will wait until after the local elections to contact other local councillors.

## **GREN Website Goes Live**

GREN, the Greater Reading Environmental Network, has launched a new website (to replace its Yahoo web presence). This is intended to be a comprehensive portal to all environmental groups in the area – allowing us to list activities and add news items. Reading FoE should soon be listed there and we will be posting details of meetings. Everyone is encouraged to register and to use the site to post news, events, references etc. [www.gren.org.uk](http://www.gren.org.uk)

## Useful Websites etc.:

[www.greenlink-berkshire.org.uk](http://www.greenlink-berkshire.org.uk)  
[www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk)

**GREN** - Greater Reading Environmental Network <http://www.gren.org.uk> – see above. See also <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ReadingEnvNetwork/>

Doorstep collection of WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) service in Reading being offered by Midex Reverse Technologies <http://www.midex-rt.com/>

True Food Co-op: [www.truefood.coop](http://www.truefood.coop) now with new shop in Emmer Green!

Reading Borough Council Waste and Recycling:  
<http://www.reading.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/wasteandrecycling/>

South East Forum for Sustainability: <http://www.sefs.org.uk>

Citizens Committee on Oil Peak And Decline (COPAD) [www.copad.org](http://www.copad.org)

<http://www.fishonline.org/> gives info on over-fishing, fish to avoid, etc.

[www.ejfoundation.org](http://www.ejfoundation.org) (Environmental Justice Foundation)

Local Food Directory, with links: [http://www.greenlink-berkshire.org.uk/Local\\_Economy.htm](http://www.greenlink-berkshire.org.uk/Local_Economy.htm)

RISC <http://www.risc.org.uk/readingfairtrade/>

## Reading FoE Officers

At our 2010 AGM on April 14<sup>th</sup> Enrico Petrucco and John Booth were elected to the posts of Co-ordinator and Treasurer respectively.

## Reading FoE e-mail communications

If you would like to be on our main mailing list and join in our day-to-day communications please email [info@readingfoe.org.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.org.uk).

Alternatively we have a separate list for people who only want to receive our newsletter and information about important events and actions.

## Reading FoE Subscriptions – Subscribe NOW for 2010/11

To join or renew, just fill in the slip below and send it off with your subscription. We aim to provide a regular newsletter to keep members up to date with the group's activities. Our subscriptions run from April to March and are set at £7.00 / £4.00 (waged / unwaged) to cover newsletter costs, meeting room hire and campaign expenses. Further contributions would be greatly appreciated. Even if you don't have time to take an active part, your support is welcome and allows us to demonstrate more local support.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick  if you are able to take an active part in our campaigns. We may contact you by phone.

I heard about the group from: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your cheque payable to Reading Friends of the Earth, and return to the Reading FoE Treasurer, c/o 27 Instow Road, Earley, Reading RG6 5QH.