

# Reading Friends of the Earth

## Newsletter Nov/Dec 2018

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



### Diary:

**General Meetings:** Reading FoE usually meets on the **second Wednesday of each month** in Room 1 upstairs at RISC, 35-39 London Street, at 8:00 p.m. Most meetings include discussion of general topics – some have a particular focus or guest speakers. Meetings are open to all.

**Wednesday November 14th** – 8:00 pm at RISC – **General meeting** – report from Railfutures conference, responses to new planning application for East Reading Mass Rapid Transit, plans to join Climate Change march in London on December 1st ... etc.

**Wednesday December 12th** - 8:00 pm at RISC – **General meeting** – topics by e-mail later.

### **Other Activities (not run by Reading FoE so check for changes):**

**Monday November 19<sup>th</sup>** – 19:30 - **SOLAR ENERGY** - Talk to Earley Environmental Group by Rolf Oldach, Technical Director of Photon Energy, covering photovoltaics & battery storage. <http://www.earleyenvironmentalgroup.co.uk/>

**Tuesday November 20<sup>th</sup>** – 19:45 - **British Bats** – Rose-Ann Movsovic for RDNHS & BBOWT - Pangbourne village hall – with live Bats! [http://rdnhs.org.uk/blog/?page\\_id=6](http://rdnhs.org.uk/blog/?page_id=6)

**Thursday November 29<sup>th</sup>** – 18:00 - Future Health and Quality of Life in Reading (Dr William Bird, Intelligent Health). Reading 2050. London Road Campus UoR. <https://www.reading.ac.uk/architecture/architecture-public-lectures.aspx>

**Saturday December 1st** – 12:00 to 16:00 – London - **“Together for Climate Justice”** protest to mark Conference of Parties in Poland - organised by Campaign Against Climate Change – see <https://www.campaigncc.org/together>

**Wednesday December 5<sup>th</sup>** – 19:30 RISC - **E-pocalypse Now** – Global Justice Now - Jackie Oversby leading a discussion on global justice and the e-commerce trade agenda <https://www.facebook.com/events/919604418233192/>

**Wednesday December 19<sup>th</sup>** – 19:30 – Room 3 at RISC - **Transition Town Reading** invite us to their Christmas event. Details not settled yet – likely to include a film on permaculture and sharing refreshments – expect more details later on <http://www.transitionreading.org.uk/>

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

**Reading Bicycle Kitchen** – ‘pop-up’ events in various locations – see <http://www.readingbicyclekitchen.org/>

**Green Drinks at RISC** – usually on the first Tuesday of every month. Come along to the Global Café from 6.30 to 8.30 p.m. to meet like-minded people for a chat over a drink or two. <http://www.greendrinks.org/berkshire/reading>

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### **Images from September and October – more details overleaf:**

**“People’s Walk for Wildlife”** –  
London - 22<sup>nd</sup> September



Photo: Charlotte Allchin

**“Winning Climate Justice”**

Selam Abebe’s presentation to our meeting at Reading International Festival – 29<sup>th</sup> October.



### **People's Walk for Wildlife**

Eventually only three of us from Reading FoE travelled together to this event in London, with a new friend from Berkshire Greenpeace. There were about 10,000 people there so we only saw a couple of the many other people from Reading who we now know were also on the march from Hyde Park to Downing Street.

It was a joyful and determined occasion – most notable for the chorus of birdsong played from mobile phones as we marched along! Images at <https://www.chrispackham.co.uk/the-peoples-walk-for-wildlife>

Chris Packham and colleagues had prepared 'A People's Manifesto for Wildlife' - a series of essays by 18 'Ministers' – which they delivered to 10 Downing Street. <https://www.chrispackham.co.uk/a-peoples-manifesto-for-wildlife> . It reviews the dire state of British wildlife and calls for an independent public service body to be established to oversee all conservation and environmental care and that it should receive significant, long-term, ring-fenced funding, so that it is independent from the whims of party politics and different periods of government. That body – **LIFE UK** – would address issues from climate change, biodiversity loss, landscape and conservation management through to wildlife crime.

### **'Winning Climate Justice: Africa, Development, and the Paris climate talks'**

Selam Abebe, an environmental lawyer and former UN climate talks negotiator for Ethiopia at COP21, spoke about the challenge climate change poses for Africa and for Africans on 29<sup>th</sup> October. She is a Leverhulme Doctoral Scholar at the Centre for Climate and Justice <https://www.reading.ac.uk/climate-justice/>

She said Africa is among the most vulnerable regions in the world. The impacts range across food insecurity, increase in conflicts over natural resources due to climate change and climate-related extremes, human health issues such as heat waves, frequent droughts, floods, cyclones, and wildfires.

She outlined the history of international negotiations from 1992 when the UN Framework Convention of Climate Change was adopted to the Conference of the Parties in Paris in 2015 which reached the 'Paris Agreement' under which nations agreed to try to keep warming below 2°C by agreeing 'Nationally Determined Contributions' to future emissions and related programmes.

Before Paris the USA and China had reached a prior agreement that there would be a positive outcome – to ensure Obama's Legacy. There were various negotiating blocs including: African Group; Less Developed Countries; Association of Small Independent States ... in contrast with the Umbrella Group of developed nations, and the EU.

Principles of Equity, 'Common but Differentiated Responsibilities', and Climate Justice were debated in Paris. The aims were agreed, including that developed countries should provide financial support to developing countries, but they don't go far enough and are not binding.

She cited this report <https://www.earth-syst-dynam.net/7/327/2016/esd-7-327-2016.pdf> which explores the difference in impacts between 1.5°C and 2.0°C average warming "Our results reveal substantial differences in impacts between a 1.5°C and 2°C warming that are highly relevant for the assessment of dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. For heat-related extremes, the additional 0.5°C increase in global-mean temperature marks the difference between events at the upper limit of present-day natural variability and a new climate regime, particularly in tropical regions." "differences in climate impacts between 1.5°C and 2°C are most pronounced for particularly vulnerable regions and societal groupings with limited adaptive capacity". The details can't be summarised – we all need to read them.

Her presentation ended with this youtube clip "**Climate Negotiations in 81 seconds**" <https://youtu.be/B11kASPFyXy> which emphasises the importance of getting the rich, major nations to take action. Thanks to Selam for her presentation, to Enrico for providing Ethiopian food, and to Chris for setting up this meeting for Reading FoE as part of the Reading International Festival.

### **Also in September/October:**

We visited Dinton Pastures Country Park on 15<sup>th</sup> September – a fine day for a walk around seeing people and wildlife enjoying the former gravel pits and the River Loddon – we found Hops, had tea and cake at the café, and beer later.

Our stall at Reading Town Meal enjoyed good weather and public interest – we collected signatures on 'Places for Pollinators' petition cards and on the petition against the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway.

John spoke at four sessions of the Examination of the Reading Plan - covering insulation standards in buildings, air quality, and transport (focussed on the Mass Rapid Transit). <http://www.reading.gov.uk/localplanexamination>

Berkshire Greenpeace/Reading FoE Pirate Party was on 26<sup>th</sup> October – thanks to everyone who made it happen.

### **East Reading 'Mass Rapid Transit' – Please Object Again!**

After Reading's proposed 'Mass Rapid Transit' bridge for a bus-lane over the River Kennet was rejected by Wokingham Council's Planning Committee on Landscape grounds Reading has altered the plans. "The proposed scheme now includes the addition of planters beside the viaduct parapets containing ivy, or a similar plant, to spill over the deck to provide 'greening' of the upper deck of the structure" – i.e. no significant change.

The revised plans have been submitted to both Wokingham and Reading, so it will be easy to send the same objection to both. Save Our Ancient Riverside (SOAR) have a new website: [www.saveourancientriverside.co.uk](http://www.saveourancientriverside.co.uk) which addresses the arguments and details and advises how to object and how to lobby Wokingham Councillors. SOAR assumes that Reading will again pass its own application but it is important to show opposition continues.

Essentially there is almost no difference from the previous plans so if you objected before you can probably cut'n'paste everything but the application number. To see plans and to make your objections (to Wokingham by 19<sup>th</sup> November): Wokingham: <http://planning.wokingham.gov.uk/FastWebPL/welcome.asp> use application number 182892.

Reading: [http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb\\_PL/welcome.asp](http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb_PL/welcome.asp) use application number 181822.

We propose to revise and re-submit Reading FoE's Objections on Transport, Open Space, and Clean Air.

See also SOAR Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SaveOurAncientRiverside/> - SOAR has just run a full page advertisement in the Wokingham Paper and is appealing to raise funds to do the same in other papers.

### **RBC Clean Air Saga:**

The Government had required Reading and 32 other 'third tier' authorities to submit by end of July their proposals to reduce NO2 concentrations on critical roads 'as soon as possible'.

RBC took the opportunity to add 20 local road links of interest (where monitoring indicated NO2 above the legal limit) to the model. Of these additional 20 road links, 8 were in non-compliance in 2017 according to the local model. In total, 4 were in non-compliance in 2018 with annual average levels up to 49 ug/m<sup>3</sup> when the legal limit is 40 ug/m<sup>3</sup>. It is interesting that the road links the government had identified were all along the IDR, but the more detailed modelling said the IDR would be legally compliant by 2019.

On 5<sup>th</sup> October the Government response was published:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/746100/air-quality-no2-plan-supplement.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/746100/air-quality-no2-plan-supplement.pdf) (Reading-specific information on pages 18 and 29). The government has directed RBC to retrofit approximately 140 buses to Euro VI standard – the Council estimates that this could be implemented by the end of 2019. The local modelling sets out that bus retrofit could have the following impact:

- Bring forward compliance on Friar Street from 2021 to 2019
- Bring forward compliance on London Road from 2022 to 2021
- Bring forward compliance on Kings Road/Wokingham Road from 2022 to 2020
- Bring forward compliance on Chatham Street from 2022 to 2021

So we have to wait another 3 years for legal compliance on NO2 – which is not a safe limit – and the change will do little or nothing to address incidence of micro-particles PM2.5.

### **Climate Change:**

#### ***“Together for Climate Justice”***

Some of us intend to go to London on 1<sup>st</sup> December to join this protest to mark the start of the next 'Conference of Parties' in Poland. This is organised by Campaign Against Climate Change – see <https://www.campaigncc.org/together> if you'd like to join a group going to this event please get in touch – info@readingfoe.org.uk .

#### ***Reading Climate Action Network (RCAN – aka RCCP):***

Has a new website <https://readingcan.org.uk/> which includes a summary of the IPCC report on 1.5°C warming which was released in October <https://readingcan.org.uk/ipcc-special-report-15-global-warming-of-1-5degc>

RCAN are now recruiting a Support Officer (2 days/week) which should help them take a more active part in local issues <http://ww2.reading.gov.uk/kiosks/recruitment/ENV0884%20JD.pdf>

Follow them on Twitter @ClimateRDG

#### ***Extinction Rebellion:***

This is a group – seems to be evolving from Rising Up! - committed to non-violent protest <https://rebellion.earth/>

It has a 'shared vision of change' – “Creating a world that is fit for the next 7 generations to live in” etc. Aim is “To support and encourage a citizens' uprising in the UK (of about 2 million people) involving low level and higher risk acts of civil disobedience by some (with others willing to support those that take actions). When ready, create a participatory, democratic process that shapes the change – a Citizens Assembly.”

Seems to operate via Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ExtinctionRebellion/> and Twitter:

[https://twitter.com/ExtinctionR?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/ExtinctionR?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)

#### **Oxford-Cambridge Expressway:**

BBOWT has launched a legal challenge against the Government's plans for a major new road

<https://www.bbwt.org.uk/news/bbowt-launches-legal-challenge-against-governments-oxford-cambridge-expressway-proposal>

## Useful Websites etc.:

Friends of the Earth 'England, Wales and Northern Ireland' <http://www.foe.co.uk>

GREN - Greater Reading Environmental Network <http://www.gren.org.uk/>.

Reading Climate Action Network - <http://www.readingclimateaction.org.uk/>

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

Reading Sustainability Centre - <http://readingsustainabilitycentre.co.uk/>

Action AWE (Atomic Weapons Eradication) is a grassroots campaign of nonviolent actions dedicated to halting nuclear weapons production at the Atomic Weapons Establishment factories at Aldermaston and Burghfield.

<http://actionawe.org/>

Greenlink Berkshire [www.greenlink-berkshire.org.uk](http://www.greenlink-berkshire.org.uk)

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

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)

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

## Reading FoE Officers

At our AGM on April 11<sup>th</sup> 2018 Enrico Petrucco and John Booth were re-elected to the posts of Co-ordinator and Treasurer respectively. A draft Privacy Policy was approved.

## Reading FoE e-mail communications

If you would like to be on our main mailing list and receive and join in our day-to-day communications please send an email to [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 2018/19

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 £8.00 / £5.00 (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.