

# Reading Friends of the Earth

## Newsletter Sept/Oct 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 September 12th** – 8:00 pm at RISC – **General meeting** – detailed planning for September events (see below) including children's activities for Town Meal, publicising Reading International Festival (RIF), etc....

**Wednesday October 10th** - 8:00 pm at RISC – **General meeting** – topics by e-mail later, final publicity for October events.

### Other Activities with Reading FoE:

**Saturday September 15th** – something different with Reading FoE! Country walk in Wokingham's **Dinton Pastures Country Park** with stops at café and pub - time t.b.d. (and subject to weather!) — see overleaf for details.

**Saturday September 22nd** – Chris Packham's '**People's Walk for Wildlife**' – London. Hyde Park to Whitehall. The event is to bring people together in their shared love of wildlife to create a unified, stronger and louder voice for making the changes so urgently required. National FoE are running a stall at start in Hyde Park. Let's arrange to travel together – leave around 10:30? <http://www.chrispackham.co.uk/the-peoples-walk-for-wildlife>

**Saturday September 29th** – RFoE stall at **Reading Town Meal** – Forbury Gardens 12:00 to 16:00 – free food, bands and workshops. Please volunteer to help on our stall. <http://www.readingtowntmeal.org.uk/>

**Friday October 26<sup>th</sup>** – 20:00 to 01:00 - **Pirate Party - Halloween Fancy Dress Party** – RISC hall - joint with Berkshire Greenpeace. *Featuring: Limpopo Groove, Dolly and the Clothespegs, All About Frank, Tape It Shut, and Horse Rock.* £6 adv / £8 door (concessionary £6). Come and party – in a good cause!

**Monday October 29<sup>th</sup>** – 19:30 at RISC - '**Winning Climate Justice: Africa, Development, and the Paris climate talks**' – Reading FoE-sponsored event at RIF – see next page for details.

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

**Saturday September 22<sup>nd</sup>** – 11:00 to 13:00 - workshop on campaigning for **diversification from fossil fuels** – Quaker Meeting House, Reading. <https://www.facebook.com/events/2613145225578189/>

**24<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> September** – **Recycle Week** – visit Smallmead to see MRF in Action! Registration essential. <https://en-gb.facebook.com/events/2074958342514681/> Evening sessions on Monday and Tuesday.

**Monday October 1st** – 7:30 Maiden Earley LNR - talk and walk to see **Bats** – Earley Environmental Group <http://www.earleyenvironmentalgroup.co.uk/Events/EventsUpdate.asp?EventID=550>

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October** - Oxford p.m. - **BBOWT conference on Rewilding** – Prof. Alastair Driver and Isabella Tree - <http://www.bbowl.org.uk/events/2018/10/13/future-wilder-britain-bbowt-annual-conference-agm-2018>

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October** – Newbury - **Towards a Zero-Carbon West Berkshire** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/towards-a-zero-carbon-west-berkshire-tickets-49645559204>

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October** – UoR 19:30 - **Our changing climate: Past, present and future** – Prof. Ed Hawkins, Lead Author for the forthcoming IPCC 6th Assessment Report. Register at: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/publiclectures/>

**Wednesday October 24<sup>th</sup>** – 7:30 at RISC – '**Borders: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly**' – talk for Global Justice Now by Ruben Andersson, Associate Professor of Migration and Development at Oxford University.

**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>

### Visiting Dinton Pastures – September 15th:

We had planned a summer excursion instead of our meeting on July 11th but changed plans several times, so now propose a Saturday visit to a local Country Park just across the border in Wokingham <https://www.dinton-pastures.co.uk/> ... to walk and talk for about 3 miles in the open air, and visit The George at Loddon Bridge ... and to review local transport and development issues including the road and rail river crossings and the abandoned Winnersh P&R site. The George is on the site that used to be a toll house for the toll bridge over the river Loddon.

Proposal is to meet at the Museum of Berkshire Aviation car park off Mohawk Way (about half hour from Reading using #14 or #13 bus to 'Herald Way' stop <https://www.reading-buses.co.uk/services> ) walk along the Loddon to look for wildlife at Lea Farm private hide (800m) and Lavell's Lake <http://berksoc.org.uk/county-sites/dinton-pastures-and-lea-farm/> and then past Black Swan Lake to the Dragonfly Cafe (1,200m) <https://www.dinton-pastures.co.uk/plan-your-visit/dragonfly-cafe/>. Then via the Loddon to The George at Loddon Bridge (which is served by various buses.) (1,800m).

Some preference for a c. 14:00 start with tea at the café and late afternoon refreshments at The George, but alternatively could start at c. 11:00 and have lunch at the café (or bring sandwiches) and get to The George mid-afternoon. If you're interested please e-mail [info@readingfoe.org.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.org.uk) and say whether you would only manage a morning or an afternoon start time or if you would come to either but have a preference, and we'll get back to you with final arrangements. We plan to take at least one car so a lift from the A329 corridor can be arranged.

### READING INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL 15 – 31 OCTOBER

The theme this year is '**UNITE AND ACT FOR HUMAN SURVIVAL**' - Let us unite to create:

- A world where we live in peace, without divisions and violence
- A world that protects, repairs and stops the destruction of our planet
- A world that protects all human rights
- An equitable world where resources are shared and used responsibly

Programmes should be available from RISC, Reading FoE and many other sources shortly – check [www.risc.org.uk](http://www.risc.org.uk) or search on-line for full programme. If you can distribute some programmes please let us know.

**'Winning Climate Justice: Africa, Development, and the Paris climate talks'** (see front page for time and date)

Chris has set up this meeting for Reading FoE as part of the Reading International Festival. While informed by global climate science the speaker brings a very different perspective compared with UK-centric discussion of the issues.

Selam Abebe, an environmental lawyer and UN climate talks negotiator from Ethiopia, speaks about the challenge climate change poses for Africa and for Africans.

She will give an 'insider's view' of the Paris UN climate talks and explain her research on Principles of Equitable Access to measure sustainable development and climate justice, and sees where the research might lead.

She is a Leverhulme Doctoral Scholar at the Centre for Climate and Justice <https://www.reading.ac.uk/climate-justice/>

### Places for Pollinators:

Chris collected signatures on our petition cards at a Café Scientifique meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> July and we added more at Earley Green Fair on 4<sup>th</sup> August. FoE say the petition is going well so we will be continuing with this at Town Meal and expect FoE to collate responses (probably in October) to produce a report to be presented to the Councils.

At the Green Fair we also collected more signatures on the petition against the **Oxford-Cambridge Expressway**, which is continuing – see [www.expresswayactiongroup.com](http://www.expresswayactiongroup.com) Petition <https://www.change.org/p/the-secretary-of-state-for-transport-chris-grayling-mp-cancel-the-oxford-to-cambridge-expressway>

### East Reading 'Mass Rapid Transit'

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 said it will change the plans to meet Wokingham's objections. **New consultation exhibition 12<sup>th</sup> September – Riverside Centre – 13:00 to 19:00.**

It is hard to see what significant changes can be made. One of the two beautiful Weeping Willows by the Kennet (both listed by Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association) and many of the attractive line of Hawthorn trees by the tow-path, and much of the open space, must surely be lost. In the last set of changes to 'save' the other Willow the proposal seemed to be to remove half its crown, completely disfiguring it. People living in one of the most densely populated areas of East Reading will be most affected – this is their 'green lung'.

The new application is expected to be submitted in the autumn, with another period of public consultation, before it goes before both Wokingham's and Reading's planning committees in the spring.

Save Our Ancient Riverside (SOAR) have launched a new website: [www.saveourancientriverside.co.uk](http://www.saveourancientriverside.co.uk) which addresses the arguments and details Dr. John Walker's proposal for demand management - to create roadspace for buses at less than 1% of the capital cost of the MRT – to be investigated and tried.

See also SOAR Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SaveOurAncientRiverside/>

### **Less Traffic – Better Towns:**

On the 16 July 2018 RBC published a report titled *NEW LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN AND BOROUGH-WIDE CAR PARKING & AIR QUALITY STRATEGY*. <http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/9102/Item-12/pdf/item12.pdf> This is a proposal to update the Local Transport Plan (to 'LTP4') and includes the vision "to support healthy lifestyle choices, improve quality of life and facilitate economic growth by reducing congestion, improving air quality and promoting sustainable transport options for local journeys or as part of longer journeys" and to investigate "demand management measures, such as Road User Charging, Workplace Parking Levy, Clean Air Zone or Low Emission Zone". This has been met with ill-informed criticism in the media.

Income generated would be spent on transport initiatives including "Major Schemes – development and implementation of schemes such as park and ride, MRT, and the feasibility of larger schemes including preparation of a full business case for a third Thames crossing" – so not all welcome from an environmental perspective.

Our press release called for urgent research and trials – not waiting until 2020 to introduce measures. Stockholm, being one of the nearest comparable examples to Reading, found significant public acceptance only after a trial and achieved a sustained >20% traffic reduction, 6% public transport increase, 6% increased retailer trade, and €50million annual revenue." See great TED talk [https://www.ted.com/talks/jonas\\_eliasson\\_how\\_to\\_solve\\_traffic\\_jams](https://www.ted.com/talks/jonas_eliasson_how_to_solve_traffic_jams)

John did a 'Drive Time' interview (how appropriate!) on Radio Berkshire on 7<sup>th</sup> August on the topic of congestion charging. Time allowed was very short.

### **Heathrow and Fracking – Legal Appeals:**

Friends of the Earth has launched legal action against the government:

- **On Heathrow Expansion:** FoE claims the decision by the government to allow the building of a third runway at Heathrow Airport is unlawful as it fails to address the UK's climate change obligations. See <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/climate-change/friends-earth-launches-high-court-legal-challenge-heathrow-expansion>
- **On fracking and fossil fuel exploitation:** FoE calls for a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the revision of the National Planning Policy Framework. The NPPF makes it "virtually impossible" for councils to refuse local fracking schemes, fails to rule out future coal developments, and introduces harsh new rules for wind energy schemes. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/sep/04/government-faces-court-action-over-illegal-planning-policy>

### **Biofuel Watch:**

This group of environmental campaigners have welcomed a new Government decision to rule out future subsidies for new biomass power stations with greenhouse gas emissions above 29kg CO2 per megawatt hour, a dramatic 85% reduction from the current limit, which cannot be met by burning imported wood pellets. However, they urge the government to review the subsidies already granted for burning millions of tonnes of pellets imported in UK power stations – see <http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/2018/cfd-press-release/>

### **M4 Smart Motorway – delays possible until March 2022:**

Despite our efforts and government 'austerity' the M4 'upgrade' to a smart motorway between Junction 12 (Theale) and Junction 3 (Hayes) is starting. Sections where work is in progress will often be run as three narrow lanes with reduced speed restrictions. Different sections will be worked on at different times – completion in March 2022? <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/m4-junctions-3-12-smart-motorway/#news>

### **Climate Change:**

**Heatwave:** We all know we had a heatwave – but it turns out it was the joint warmest summer on record for the UK and the hottest ever for England. Review of stats. at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-45399134>

**Transport:** The UK Committee on Climate Change says transport is now the largest-emitting sector of the UK economy accounting for 28 per cent of UK greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in 2017. <http://bettertransport.org.uk/blog/better-transport/getting-transport-carbon-budget-back-on-track> .

**'The Road to Zero'** – the Government's proposals to reduce emissions has been published – and found wanting. <https://eciu.net/blog/2018/the-pot-holed-road-to-zero>

**National Adaptation Plan** published by government says Defra intend to develop 14 local natural capital plans by bringing together key local partnerships and organisations whose actions impact on the environment to prioritise local environmental opportunities and issues and identify actions to address these. Stakeholder engagement will begin in autumn 2018 to flesh out what a local natural capital plan will look like.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/727252/national-adaptation-programme-2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/727252/national-adaptation-programme-2018.pdf)

**Reading Climate Change Partnership** will be at the Town Meal on 29<sup>th</sup> September and will be launching their new website and revised Strategy documents. Follow them on Twitter @ClimateRDG .

**FoE petition on climate change** ... in case you haven't already signed it ... is at: <https://act.friendsoftheearth.uk/act/feeling-heat-lets-tackle-climate-change>

## 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.