Act!on



News April 2011

Making Cycling Count

Transport campaigners make their contribution to the region's Local Transport Plan, reports Graeme

Our November Bike Friday ride kicked off our involvement with Local Transport Plan 3. This plan sets the priorities for transport in Greater Manchester for the next 25 years, and naturally this was something Manchester FoE's transport group wanted input into.

While the official consultation was not set to finish until Christmas Eve, we felt it was important to input early into wider discussions as we knew that the ten Greater Manchester local authorities would also be considering what to write in their responses.

Bike Friday participants presented a letter to Cllr Keith Whitmore, the vice-chair of the Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Authority (GMITA), setting out what we wanted in terms of a sustainable transport system for the conurbation. The letter is available at http://tinyurl.com/686oald. We followed this letter up with a 41-page document (available at http://tinyurl.com/6al62lm) with more detail and supporting research, and an email lobbying campaign using a web interface to enable people to send messages to GMITA and the councillor with responsibility for transport in their borough. This generated over 300 responses, which is around a third of all the consultation responses that GMITA received. The next stage in the process is the formation of Local Implementation Plans, which the individual councils need to produce. We are organising email lobbying actions for each of these.

In February we coordinated a special Bike Friday for National Heart Month on the British Heart



The Make Cycling Count team get their message across to Clir Ian Macdonald, chair of GMITA

Foundation's 'Wear Red Day' in which participants wore red and raised money to help the BHF's work. Katy launched her new Bike Fabulous blog on Valentine's Day with some stylish 'wear red' ideas. Alongside the blog and Twitter feed, we'll be seeing more Bike Fabulous events this year. We have secured funding to promote Bike Friday across Greater Manchester, and to research the potential for establishing core cycle routes across the conurbation using interactive mapping. We're also continuing to finalise our cycling manifesto. Our pedal-powered smoothie maker has been a hit at events, raising awareness and funds. To get involved with the transport campaign, which includes the Love Your Bike campaign, email Graeme at Graeme@manchesterfoe.org.uk.

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New Energy Bill, Lower Fuel Bills?

FoE's climate campaign in 2011 focuses on getting people out of fuel poverty, says Damian

In 2011, Friends of the Earth's climate campaigning will be focusing on getting a serious commitment to address fuel poverty into the Government's Energy Bill, as well as continuing our existing campaign on Local Carbon Budgets. People are defined as being in fuel poverty when they spend more than one tenth of their disposable income on heating. The latest figures show that between 11 and 23 per cent of households across England are in fuel poverty, which leads to an increased risk of illness and a rise in death rates during the winter months.

The Energy Bill is intended to provide energy efficient measures for homes and businesses, as well as boosting low carbon energy supplies. However, so far the Bill does not contain commitments to improve the energy efficiency of private rented accommodation, which has the lowest energy ratings and the highest carbon emissions of all types of property. Friends of the Earth are now calling on the Government to amend the Bill so private landlords will be unable to let the most energy-inefficient properties until they have taken steps to improve their energy rating. There should be government funding to bring this about and a minimum standard for energy efficiency before a property can be let.

South Manchester residents recently had the opportunity to quiz a panel about this and other climate issues. Withington MP John Leech came to a meeting in Chorlton, along with FoE's Dave Timms and Katie Brandon of SNAG, to answer questions about whether the Coalition can live up to its pledge to be 'the greenest government ever'. John said the Coalition needed to be very ambitious on climate change, and was hopeful regarding its commitment to rail. He was personally opposed to more nuclear power and reductions in fuel duty – he believed this would just lead to higher oil company profits. For more information, and for tips on putting pressure on your MP to push for a change in the Bill, see http://www.foe.co.uk/what we do/warm homes 25659.html

Waste Not, Want Not in Monton

Volunteers in Salford set up community project to reduce waste, says Monton resident Joy Woods

Monton Village Community Association (MVCA) is pleased to announce that it has recently secured £2,470 from the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority Community Waste Fund to set up a waste reduction project. Receiving this funding is fantastic news – it will be used to help Monton residents, businesses, schools and church groups reduce, reuse and recycle more waste than they do at present. The project will encourage local businesses to be waste aware, increase community knowledge on waste minimisation and the waste hierarchy and also provide volunteering opportunities. Its aims are as follows:

Reduction

- Promoting the 'Love Food Hate Waste' campaign via posters, door drop media and the MVCA website
- Holding a Cooking with Waste session
- Asking shops to encourage customers to reuse shopping bags

Reuse

- Setting up a dedicated reuse web page on the MVCA website, where people can offer items for donation
- Promoting the benefits of compost bins/wormeries to residents and businesses and holding a composting workshop in the hall or on Monton Green
- Holding swap shops in a local church or hall to swap items such as clothes, electrical items, toys and books

Recycling

- Promoting the uptake of Local Authority recycling bins (garden, mixed, paper) and increased recycling (and reduction in recycling contamination) where people already have these bins
- Promoting and encouraging business waste recycling, investigating business waste services with the council
- Increasing the range of materials collected in public recycling bins

MVCA will be running information stalls on this campaign at festivals, as well as asking local church groups and schools to support the campaign and take action themselves. MVCA is also looking for volunteers to develop a website and promote the campaign via local community radio, advertisement boards and the local press.

If you are a keen greenie, or love recycling, and want to lend a hand then please contact Joy Woods at joy.dent@ntlworld.com to find out more. Any time you can give, even if just a few hours, would be greatly appreciated.

New Year Gathering

Nuala Todd reports on the 2011 North West New Year Gathering at the People's History Museum

On Saturday 5th February, around 70 FoE supporters from across the North West braved the torrential rain to head to the People's History Museum in Manchester for the North West New Year Gathering. The event aimed to inspire, inform and connect the campaigning of FoE groups around the North West for 2011, and the Museum was the perfect venue to get us in an inspired frame of mind for campaigning.

As a new member this was my first ever FoE event and, as I apprehensively entered the room not knowing anyone there, I had no idea what to expect. I soon discovered I had nothing to worry about, being greeted by friendly faces and a Welcome stand with all the information I could possibly want. After revealing that I lived in the city centre I was quickly introduced to several members of Manchester FoE and felt like part of the gang within minutes.

The day began with an overview of the 2011 campaigns, before we split into groups for the workshop sessions. All the sessions sounded interesting but thankfully other Manchester FoE members were there to help me choose, and the group split up so at least one member attended each session. I chose the workshop on local campaigns to transform communities, which proved to be an ideal introduction into the projects campaigners get involved in.



FoE's planning co-ordinator Naomi explains all about the Localism Bill at the North West Gathering

I was inspired by the 'Incredible Edible Todmorden' campaign where volunteers have planted community herb and vegetable gardens around the town. Another workshop that sounded particularly interesting was Practical Skills for Broadcast Media where we learnt how to promote our campaigns on the radio and TV.

After a delicious lunch of vegetarian sandwiches and cake we were refreshed and ready for the afternoon to begin. It kicked off with an informative talk on the international climate negotiations, then brief 'lightning' talks on several other issues. For the final workshop of the day I chose to learn more about Manchester FoE's own work for the Meat Free Monday campaign. Although I have been vegetarian for years I had no idea of the full environmental impact of eating meat or the difference going meat-free for just one day a week could make. I resolved to encourage all my friends to get involved!

By the end of the day I had met staff and volunteers from groups all around the North West. One thing they all had in common was their friendly, welcoming attitude – joining FoE is not only a chance to help change the world, but also a great way to make new friends. I was impressed by the dedication of the members and the amount of their own time that volunteers give up. The Gathering was a great way of getting everyone together to share ideas and learn from each other's experiences. I left feeling inspired and I'm already looking forward to getting involved and attending my next FoE event!

Meat Free Monday

Our campaign to highlight the benefits of the UK reducing meat consumption is on its way to Westminster, reports Al Clark

Meat Free Monday is a campaign to highlight the benefits of reducing UK meat consumption from the current unsustainable levels. With the nation gripped by an obesity epidemic, and extreme weather events driven by climate change already threatening food supplies, we are fortunate to have a simple solution to both problems at hand: cutting down on meat.

A growing number of people are waking up to the impact meat and dairy production has. For a start it is responsible for 18% of global greenhouse gas emissions. The meat supply chain causes problems both in producing feed for animals – which drives deforestation in the Amazon – and at intensive farms that create a lot of pollution. To have a sustainable meat industry we need to reduce the demand for meat.



The need for change couldn't be clearer. If everyone in the UK went meat-free on Mondays we would save the carbon equivalent of taking 5 million cars off the road. It is therefore evident that to reduce the impact of climate change we need to tackle one of the biggest causes of increasing greenhouse gas emissions. A meat-free day can also help reduce your chance of getting heart disease, because foods such as beans, peas, nuts and seeds contain little or no saturated fat.

Local MP John Leech is taking our campaign to Westminster. He's tabled an Early Day Motion (EDM 669) calling on Parliament to go meat-free on Mondays. We need as many MPs as possible to sign this EDM. Ask your MP to join in! To find your MP visit www.theyworkforyou.com or for more information on the EDM, and a template letter for you to send to your MP, see www.call4.org/campaigns/meat-free-monday

Did you know?

- Producing one kilogram of beef results in more CO₂ emissions than going for a three-hour drive while leaving all the lights on at home.
- Around 634 gallons of water is required to make a 147g beef burger – the equivalent of running a shower for four hours.
- Raising animals for the production of meat is also responsible for 64 per cent of global ammonia emissions, affecting biodiversity.
- Every year, 17 million hectares of tropical rainforest is destroyed. Seventy per cent of cleared land in the Amazon is used as pasture for cattle, and much of the remainder to grow animal feed for use in factory farms. Forests play a key role in mitigating climate change. Apart from storing carbon, they store water, generate rainfall and stabilise the soil. By clearing forests, soil becomes exposed and releases methane into the atmosphere, increasing the impact of climate change.

Some health facts:

- Fat in meat boosts the amount of cholesterol in the blood, leading to an increased risk of heart disease.
- In 2007, a World Cancer Research Fund report recommended limiting the consumption of red meat because of a 'convincing' link with colorectal cancer.
- Studies have shown that heavy metals and pesticides have been found in animal tissues. These toxins are stored in human body fat and can remain there for years.



To find out more about the national campaign visit www.supportmfm.org

Recipe - Pumpkin, Courgette and **Green Lentil Pie and Mash**

A real filling treat from the Cornucopia vegetarian restaurant in Dublin, courtesy of Cait Patrick

Ingredients

For the base:

- 2 onions
- 2 carrots
- 3 cloves of garlic
- ½ medium pumpkin (or 1 medium butternut squash, about 700g)
- 3 courgettes
- 300g green or Puy lentils
- 4 bay leaves (2 for lentils, 2 for sauce)
- A few sprigs of fresh thyme (dried thyme is fine too)
- 2 heaped tsp paprika
- 150ml vegetarian red wine
- 2 tbsp tomato puree
- 300ml vegetable stock
- 4 tbsp (60ml) tamari or soy sauce
- Olive oil

For the mash:

- 6 large floury potatoes, such as Roosters - about 1.6kg
- 25g (small bunch) fresh dill
- 1–2 tbsp wholegrain mustard
- Pinch of ground nutmeg
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 200°C. Chop the onions, carrots and garlic very finely and set aside. Chop the pumpkin/squash into medium-sized cubes, toss in olive oil, salt and pepper and roast in oven for 30 minutes or until soft, turning once. When cooked, reduce oven temperature to 180°C and set pumpkin aside. Meanwhile, slice the courgettes into rounds ½ inch thick. Heat a little olive oil in a pan over a medium heat and brown courgettes on each side, in batches if needed. Set aside.

Add 2 bay leaves and the lentils to a small pot of boiling salted water, then reduce heat to simmer.

Stir occasionally, cover with lid and cook for 15-20 minutes until lentils are tender but not mushy. Rinse well under cold water, drain, remove bay leaves and set aside.

Coat the base of a large pot generously with olive oil and place over a medium heat. Add the carrots, onions and garlic as well as 2 bay leaves and the thyme. Stir briefly, cover with a lid, turn heat to low and sweat the veg for 15 minutes. Next add the paprika and red wine and, when most of the liquid has reduced, add the tomato puree, tamari or soy sauce and vegetable stock. Simmer the sauce until well reduced and all the vegetables are cooked – about 15 minutes. When the sauce is ready, stir in the pumpkin, courgette and lentils. Check the seasoning - a bit of pepper is usually nice but because of the tamari no additional salt may be needed.

While the sauce is cooking, peel and quarter the potatoes, place them in a large pot of salted water and boil. Reduce to a low heat, cover and simmer till soft. Drain and then return the potatoes to the same pot over a very low heat to release as much moisture as possible. Remove from heat and mash. Place the mustard, dill, nutmed and about 75-100ml of olive oil into a small container and blend till smooth – a stick blender works well for this. Pour this mixture over the mashed potato and mash until well mixed. Season with salt and pepper.

Now place the lentil and roast vegetable sauce into the base of a large, deep ovenproof dish. Spoon the mash on top and smooth over with a spatula. Use the back of a knife to mark out a lattice on the smooth surface (or simply crumble mash potato over the base with your hands). Place the pie in the preheated oven for about 30 minutes, or until mash is crispy and light brown in colour and the juice is bubbling around the edges. Serve with lightly cooked winter greens.

(This keeps well in the fridge for easy reheated meals during the week if you make it at the weekend!)

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Manchester Friends of the Earth Veg Out at Fundraising Event

Manchester has a great night out fundraising to fight climate change, says Rebecca Stacey

Did you go to the Manchester FoE event of the year? If you did, what a fab evening! If you didn't, bad luck...maybe next time? Manchester FoE's fundraiser Dine Out Veg Out, held at Kro Piccadilly, was not only informative, but also entertaining – that's no mean feat. The aim? To launch the group's Meat Free Monday campaign, which aims to have a significant positive impact on lowering carbon emissions in the UK.

Charismatic local comedienne Kerry Leigh acted as compère, managing the evening smoothly with a good helping of humour between courses. The evening kicked off with introductions by Manchester FoE food campaigners Al and Rachel, then Lib Dem councillor Paul Ankers was first guest speaker, providing the audience

with plenty of reasons to get on board the MFM campaign. Helen Rimmer, food campaigner for national FoE, gave an uplifting speech, closely followed by several beautiful tunes from the very talented Blackpool singer/songwriter Rae Morris. http://www.myspace.com/raemorrismusic/shows.

Colette, co-ordinator of Manchester FoE, remarked 'I don't recognise half of the people', a positive sign that the message had extended beyond 'the converted'. I sat with a couple of friends who had never attended a FoE event before, but the concept of going meat-free one day of the week had piqued their interest. Lively debate was the order of the day with lots of information on hand to answer questions.

If you want to get involved in this campaign, contact <u>al@manchesterfoe.org.uk</u> or come along to the campaigns meeting at Green Fish on the last Thursday of each month.

More pumpkin pie, anyone??



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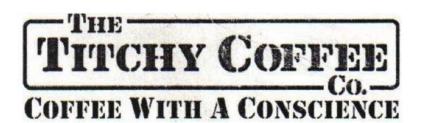
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Please note that Dojo will be closed during May.

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A range of hot and cold beverages, snacks and light meals including great tasting home-made soups, jacket potatoes, sandwiches and paninis.

All tea and coffee is Fair Trade. All ingredients are ethically sourced from small local companies.

No GM food, no additives.

Lower ground floor of the Triangle (the old Corn Exchange) on Exchange Square, Corporation Street, M14 3TR.

Coming Up

Ongoing till Sunday 8th May

Tarnished Earth street gallery, Spinningfields, off Deansgate, central Manchester.

The Co-operative presents Tarnished Earth, a free exhibition of photographs telling the story of the Alberta tar sands, one of the world's greatest ecological disasters.

Saturday 16th April

Big Green Festival, St Clement's Church, Edge Lane, Chorlton, M21 9JF.
South Manchester's annual celebration of sustainable living – this year's theme will be Bike To The Future. Workshops, stalls, live music, a bike parade, ceilidh and much more. From 11am onwards. Free entry.

Saturday 7th May

Amaretti Chamber Orchestra fundraising concert to raise money for national FoE, in conjunction with Stockport FoE. Music by Purcell, Walter Leigh, Handel, Walters, Holst and Piazzolla. 7.30pm at St Andrew's Church, Cheadle Road, Cheadle Hulme, SK8 5ET. Tickets £7, accompanied children free.

Regular Events

Second Tuesday of the month 6.45 for 7pm. Full group meeting. Green Fish Resource Centre, 46–50 Oldham Street. New members very welcome to come along and find out more about the group!

Last Thursday of the month 6.45 for 7pm.

Campaigns meeting. Green Fish Resource Centre, 46–50 Oldham Street. All welcome. We split into groups to focus on our main campaign areas: Fix the Food Chain, Get Serious About CO₂, Meat Free Mondays and Transport.

Last Friday of the month (except April)

Bike Friday. Rides from a range of locations in Greater Manchester to work, college or university. Starting points are Worsley (Worsley Road/Chatsworth Road), Stretford Mall, Chorlton Library, Withington Library, Levenshulme Station and Prestwich (Bury New Road/Scholes Lane). www.bikefriday.org

Manchester Friends of the Earth Coordinators and Officers 2011

At our Annual General Meeting on Monday 6th December, elections were held to fill the positions of Group Co-ordinators and Officers for 2011.

The results were as follows:

Group Co-ordinators

Colette Humphrey, Cat Thomson and Alex Lee

Treasurer

Dave Coleman

Newsletter Editor

Damian Cross

We will let you know as soon as we have a new Membership Officer in place, as Jonathan Berens (who was elected) is no longer with the group.

Contact details for the Group Co-ordinators are:

alex@manchesterfoe.org.uk
cat@manchesterfoe.org.uk
and
colette@manchesterfoe.org.uk

Many thanks to all the contributors to the April 2011 issue. Please email me if you have any contributions or ideas for future articles (newsletter@manchesterfoe.org.uk).

Thanks a lot! Damian

Manchester FoE is an award-winning campaign group working on issues relating to the environment and social justice. We campaign on issues with a local connection and also lobby for policy changes at local, regional, national and international levels. We work on a diverse range of issues including climate change, corporate responsibility, real food, trade justice, sustainable transport and aviation, and waste and recycling.

For more information about Manchester FoE and our campaigns, see www.manchesterfoe.org.uk