

# Act!on



**Friends of  
the Earth  
Manchester**

News June 2011

## It's Time to Talk Rubbish

*Campaigners urge David Cameron to make sure we can recycle more 'black bin' waste, reports Colette*

After a period of very little campaigning on waste and recycling issues, we were eager to take the opportunity to join in a Friends of the Earth campaigning day of action taking place nationwide. The Government's waste review of English waste policy is due to be published soon, setting goals for 2014–2020. FoE saw this as an opportunity to tell the Prime Minister what we want him to include in the Review – urging him to keep his promise of leading 'the greenest Government ever'.

We set out ready for a media stunt in Albert Square, using the Town Hall as backdrop for our photos. With one campaigner dressed as David Cameron and several others in FoE t-shirts, we had lots of fun with the props ensuring the photos sent a clear message. Rather than the usual focus on increasing recycling targets, this action focused on residual 'black bag' waste, calling on the Government to halve the amount of non-recyclable rubbish by 2020. This will reward waste prevention, reuse and recycling and reduce councils' spending on expensive incineration and landfill.

People in Greater Manchester are keen to get the rubbish out of their bins – and we're all frustrated at having to bin unnecessary packaging and the stuff that the council doesn't recycle. More recycling is not only better for the environment, it will also mean hundreds of new jobs across Greater Manchester and lower waste disposal costs for our cash-strapped councils. We want local authorities to be able to recycle and reuse more of our household waste, and for more products to be designed to be easy to reuse and recycle.



### *Our very own David Cameron lookalike gets stuck in to addressing Manchester's waste issues*

It was a campaign by FoE that brought the Household Waste Recycling Act into law in 2003. This law means that we can all recycle from our doorsteps now – but there are still vast differences in the materials that we can recycle, depending on our postcode. According to the 2009/10 figures from Defra, Greater Manchester currently recycles just over a third (33.8%) of rubbish and the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority runs a reuse service for furniture and other household items. The best recycling rates currently being achieved in Europe are 70+% – so we've a long way to go...

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## Climate Campaign Update – Manchester: A Certain Future

*Manchester Friends of the Earth have devised lots of ways to boost the city's Action Plan, says Dave*



From previous newsletters you'll probably already be aware of Manchester: A Certain Future (M: ACF). This is Manchester's climate change Action Plan, to which Manchester FoE made a substantial contribution. The plan was launched on behalf of the city at our public meeting with Ed Miliband in December 2009.

The plan is made up of a host of actions, supporting the two key aims: a 41% emissions reduction by 2020 and changing our culture in Manchester so that we can achieve the much bigger and harder emissions cuts we need by 2050.

Since the launch, people and organisations across the city have been taking action, and a whole series of new networks and groups of households, businesses and organisations have been set up and are doing their bit.

In fact one of the challenges is that it's not obvious just how much action is taking place! Our climate campaign group is continuing to work on our lobbying in support of the Energy Bill and later in the year we are planning some specific work on energy efficiency in the rented sector, but in the meantime we think that one of the best uses of our time is making sure that other groups and individuals find out more about M: ACF and how much is going on.

As a result we've agreed a series of actions that we will take to spread the word about the plan, what's in it and what each and all of us can do to 'do our bit'. Some of this includes:

- Promoting it via our quarterly newsletter (quarterly articles, regular updates)
- Promoting it via our website (article and hopefully in due course some kind of logo)
- Promoting it via our public stalls - approximately 30 this year - encouraging people to get their employers involved in endorsing the plan via the website and making them aware of the Environmental

Business Pledge, and hopefully distributing M: ACF leaflets and resources when available;

- Linking M: ACF into our existing campaigns, and referencing M: ACF in our press releases and media and public facing work; and
- Using our existing business contacts to talk and engage organisations in M: ACF:
  - Membership scheme sponsors
  - Real Food Guide
  - Ethical Shopping Guide
  - Love Your Bike
  - Newsletter advertisers
  - Meat Free Monday restaurantsand by direct contact – calling into businesses when distributing our newsletters and flyers.

In the medium term we hope to engage other green groups in promoting M: ACF and talk about links to M: ACF when doing Meat Free Monday work in schools.

But you can read more by checking the map at [www.manchesterclimate.com](http://www.manchesterclimate.com) and tapping the MFoE pin. We'll write more in future issues about how we (and the rest of the city) are doing. And a bit more about what you can do to help too...

*This action plan for Manchester is a plan for the entire city. Everyone has their part to play and its successful delivery will rely on us all working together, whether that's homeowners, community groups, businesses or public agencies.*

*There are over 150 actions in Manchester: A Certain Future! Some are actions for businesses, some are small changes we can all make to our everyday lives - in short there's something for everyone! Choose from the options available at*

<http://www.manchesterclimate.com/actions/themes>

*to find out which actions are most relevant to yourself, your family or your workplace.*

## Alive with Pedal Power

*Manchester Arndale was alive with the sound of pedal-powered music, writes Jonathan*

Manchester Friends of the Earth volunteers spent Friday and Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> April running the Love Your Bike stall, providing encouragement to the general public to make cycling a healthy, desirable part of their daily lives. Manchester Arndale kindly invited MFoE to hold this stall in a prime location in the Food Court, facing the main entrance, as part of their 'Think Green' event – showcasing how everyone can do their bit towards helping the environment. Other exhibitors at the event included the National Academy of Cycling, EMERGE and BikeRight!, as well as a stall by Manchester Arndale themselves drawing attention to their own sustainability initiatives. Retailers pledged to do their bit by encouraging the use of paper, biodegradable plastic and 'bags for life' over the course of the two-day event.

Centre of attention in the sun-lit mall was Love Your Bike's bicycle-powered sound system, which many members of the public, young and old, took great delight in pedalling to keep the music strong! Cycle route maps, brochures for cycle training and other initiatives, as well as friendly information were all on offer, though the information flow was not just one-way – a great many people completed Love Your Bike's survey on cycling in Greater Manchester, thereby qualifying themselves for the chance to win a brand-new mountain bike.

From a volunteer's point of view, the event was very interesting. The general public's level of enthusiasm for cycling surprised us – we talked to a great number of people, from a variety of ages and backgrounds, who extolled the virtues of cycling TO US! In particular, because most of MFoE's volunteers are from south Manchester, it was good to engage with people from the north of Manchester, including many from up Rochdale way!

Of the people we spoke to, many cycled (or were interested in cycling) for leisure and a good many cycled to work.



*Katy keeping the music going with our sound system!*

Among the benefits people shared with us were the financial advantages (commenting on the cost of petrol was popular), the handiness of being able to stop at the shops on the way home (which the bus/train does not offer), the health benefits and many other virtues.



*Visitors to the Love Your Bike stall at the Arndale*

For me, the highlights were the young teenagers who seemed addicted to cycling-to-provide-the-music and the gentleman who told us that two years ago the doctor had given him a serious warning to lose weight, so he had taken up cycling two miles to work each day. Not only had he lost four stone in weight, he had also already outlived his father who had faced similar warnings. When I asked him if, now he had got himself to a healthy weight, he would carry on with cycling, he said (and this was a common theme that day): "I wouldn't want to be without the freedom that my bike offers me".





## Say No to Tar Sands – Keep Dirty Oil out of Europe

Manchester FoE join the International Day of Action against the Tar Sands, reports Damian

Are you aware of the world's largest on-going environmental disaster? Do you know what is the most carbon-intensive project currently under way? If you think of Canada as a country of vast wilderness and lakes, the north-eastern part of Alberta lives up to the billing, only here the wilderness is man-made and the lakes are huge ponds of toxic waste visible from space, by-products of the Tar Sands industry.

As part of International Day of Action against the Tar Sands, Manchester FoE took a big maple leaf design along to the Envirolution event in Platt Fields Park so visitors to the event (of all ages) could symbolically cover the leaf with handprints in black paint.



Manchester FoE's maple leaf slowly vanishing under a tide of black handprints

With European ministers due to decide on whether to let Tar Sands oil into Europe, we also invited everyone to sign a little maple-leaf postcard to send in to UK Transport Minister Norman Baker, urging him to stand firm against lobbying on behalf of big petrochemical businesses and keep oil from the Tar Sands out of the European Union.



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Exchange Square, Corporation Street, M14 3TR.

## Coming Up

### Sunday 3rd July

Beech Road Festival, Beech Road, Beech Road Park and Chorlton Green, M21

A fantastic range of food, drink and local entertainment, not to mention Manchester FoE's stall where we will be launching an exciting new campaign aimed at engaging the public to discuss our energy future.

### Thursday 21st July

Feeding Manchester, Yard Theatre, 41 Old Birley Street, Hulme, M15 5RF

A gathering of Manchester's sustainable food movement organised by the Kindling Trust. Hear about inspiring food projects and explore opportunities to promote sustainable food at this year's Food and Drink Festival.

### Saturday 23rd July

Heatons Energy Event, Heaton Moor Scout Hut, St Paul's Road, Heaton Moor, SK4 4RY  
Come along to this free event and find more about how you can save energy and money! The event will exhibit renewable technologies, products and services to help communities and homeowners.

## 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: Manchester: A Certain Future, Energy Bill, Meat Free Mondays and Transport.

### Last Friday of the month

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](http://www.bikefriday.org)

## The Friends of the Earth Local Groups Conference 2011

*will be held at*

**East Midlands Conference Centre  
Nottingham**

**Friday 9–Sunday 11 September**  
*featuring*

Nnimmo Bassey, chair of FoE International  
Kate Pickett, author, 'The Spirit Level'  
plus the last four directors of national FoE

Book now at [www.foe.co.uk/conference](http://www.foe.co.uk/conference)

## Local Groups in Greater Manchester

Even if you don't live in the City of Manchester, there may be a FoE group active in your area; check out

Bolton:

<http://www.foe.co.uk/groups/bolton/>

Salford:

<http://www.foe.co.uk/groups/salford/522.htm>

and Stockport:

<http://www.stockportfoe.co.uk/>

Many thanks to all the contributors to the June 2011 issue. Please email me if you have any contributions or ideas for future articles ([newsletter@manchesterfoe.org.uk](mailto: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](http://www.manchesterfoe.org.uk)