Act!on



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 nonrecyclable 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 restaurants and 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 <u>www.manchesterclimate.com</u> 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.

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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 15th and 16th 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-themusic 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".

Meat Free Monday

Our campaign to highlight the benefits of the UK reducing meat consumption is on its way to Westminster, reports AI 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 meatfree 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 <u>www.theyworkforyou.com</u> or for more information on the EDM, and a template letter for you to send to your MP, see <u>www.call4.org/campaigns/meat-free-monday</u>

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 <u>www.supportmfm.org</u>

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 an informative evening, but also entertaining – that's no mean feat.

The aim? To launch the group's Meat Free Monday (MFM) campaign, which, as part of the campaign of the same name nationwide, aims to have a significant positive impact on lowering the contribution of meat production to carbon emissions in the UK.

Through pressing for Parliament to adopt this policy in-house, a positive example can be set for the rest of the country. As an easily achieved practical step, it should have a wide appeal. Manchester Withington MP John Leech's Early Day Motion on this topic has already been signed by over 30 other MPs.

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, hinting at what lay in store for us.

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, one of the co-ordinators 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



Rae Morris in the middle of her set at Dine Out Veg Out

FoE's food campaigners ready 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??

Talking of pumpkins, here's another way with that versatile fruit (yes, it's really a fruit, just like the tomato!) from Liliya Mircheva, participant and fundraiser at Dine Out Veg Out...

Pumpkin (or squash) as a dessert

- Chop the pumpkin into even chunks, leaving the skin on. Scoop out the seeds.
- Layer the chunks upside down (skin upwards) in a cooking pot and add a little water (3 inches/7.5 cm deep); alternatively, place them on a rack and let them steam.
- Remove when soft and place on a baking tray (skin down), sprinkle with sugar or honey and coat with little pieces of chopped walnut.
- Bake until the crust is golden this should take 10 to 15 minutes and enjoy!

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, byproducts 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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Please note that Dojo will be closed during May.



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 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

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

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).

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**