

Green Matters



The newsletter of Manchester Friends of the Earth. www.manchesterfoe.org.uk

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Flying into the future – lessons from the past?

The Government is expected to publish its Aviation White Paper in December, setting out plans for the next 30 years. That's exactly 100 years since the first powered flight. The Government received a record number of responses to the consultation and has told the Industry lobby group 'Freedom to Fly' that they should stop going on about environmental arguments because they have already lost them. We need to keep up the pressure while we are being listened to.

Until 20 November MPs can sign an Early Day Motion (EDM) and tell the Government that we do not need

any new airports or runways if the aviation industry would pay its costs. At the moment it gets away with not paying billions of pounds of tax. So far 78 MPs have signed the EDM (see page 3) but none of them are from Manchester.

Send the enclosed letter to your MP.

If you aren't sure who your MP is you can go to www.locata.co.uk/commons/ and enter your postcode. Please fill in your MP's name, your name and address, sign the letter and send it off.

Go and visit your MP.

The Aviation Campaign and the

Carbon Dinosaurs Campaign are going to join forces and approach MPs personally. If you are happy to talk to your MP about aviation or the most polluting power stations, please let us know!

Action Day

On 1 November at St. Ann's Square, 11-2pm. The aim of this day is to send as many letters to Manchester MPs as possible and to inform the public and press of the truth about aviation. For more info or to get involved, visit www.manchesterfoe.org.uk/plane-truth/ (cont. page 3)

Kerstin Moritz –
Aviation Campaigner



LONGSIGHT PROJECT LAUNCH. Gerald Kaufman MP, Councillor Aftab Ahmed, Barry Johnson, Councillor Roger Jones (Chairman of GMPTE), Graeme Sherriff at the launch of the Longsight project. See page 4.

INSPIRATIONAL VOICE AWARD

Graeme Sherriff, Manchester FoE's co-ordinator, accepted the Earth Movers award on behalf of the group at FoE national conference in September this year. The award is primarily for the work that the group has done in Longsight. Piloting a new approach to campaigning, the group has shown that it is possible to work with the communities directly affected by environmental issues, in this case transport.

See page 4 for more on this current campaign.

Real Food Campaign

GM Nation

Together with Unicorn Grocery, we staged a debate on genetically modified (GM) food in Manchester on Wednesday 16th July, as part of a nationwide consultation process called GM Nation.

The Chair, Lance Crooks of the Manchester Green Party, started proceedings at 7pm by playing a video provided by the GM Public Debate Steering Board outlining the main issues surrounding GM food to the audience of around 130. He introduced a panel of speakers:

- * Jonathan from Corporate Watch, spoke against the commercial growing of GM crops;

- * Sue Meyer of GeneWatch UK, took a neutral stance;

- * Beth Knowles of the Unicorn Grocery, spoke in favour of the commercial growing of GM crops. Beth is not personally in favour of the technology, but we found it impossible to find an advocate prepared to speak despite approaching many organisations who are pro-GM.

After a debate, the audience voted overwhelmingly in favour of calling for the UK government to halt all production of genetically modified crops until such a time that it can be proven that it is safe to do so.

We also collected 109 completed questionnaires that we forwarded to the organisers of the national GM Nation debate. Watch this space for plans to take our results to local decision makers.

Graeme Sherriff

It's time for Real Food. It's time to rethink of artificial fertilizers and pesticides, and the wasteful transportation of produce across the world. Above all its time for a fair deal for consumers, producers and the environment. Real Food is GM free, organic and where possible locally sourced.



**Friends of
the Earth
Manchester**

Real Food Guide

As well as successfully staging a debate on genetically modified food in July, we have also been planning an update to the Manchester Real Food Guide.

Work has begun on a new web-based guide to replace the printed guide we produced last year. The new site will give visitors the opportunity to explore the issues surrounding real food, as well as providing an up-to-date directory of real food outlets in the Manchester area. Having the guide online will make it easier for our readers to send in details of any outlets we don't know about, and help us to ensure that the information in the guide is kept up-to-date.

We're hoping to have the new site ready in the autumn, so keep an eye out for it at www.realfoodguide.org.uk.

Ali Abbas

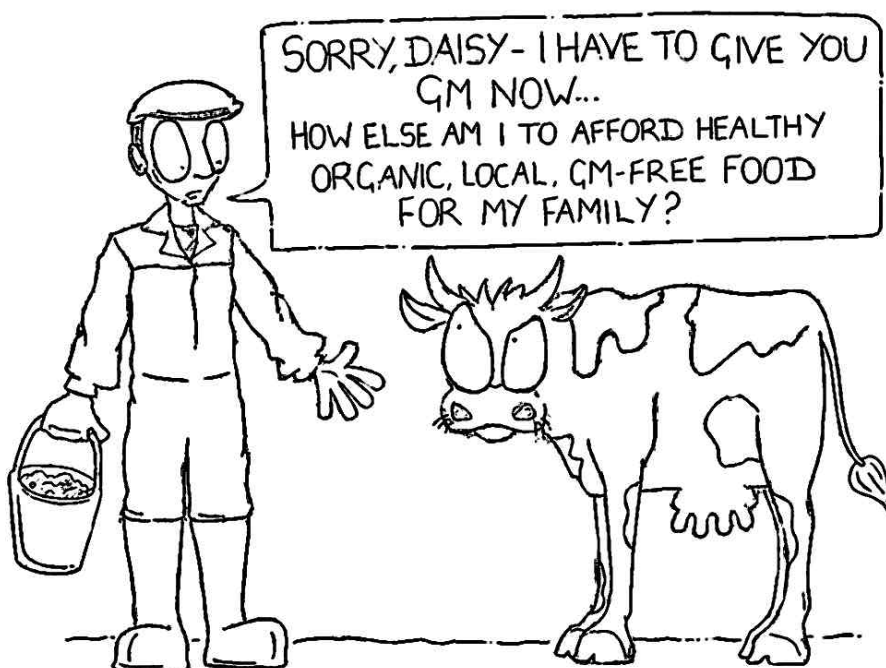


Illustration by Kate Simmons

Annual General Meeting and Christmas Social

7pm Tuesday 2nd December is the group's AGM. Come along to the Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, hear about what we've achieved in the past year and vote (only members of Manchester FoE can vote) for the officers and co-ordinators who will take the group forward in 2004. Afterwards we'll be going for a meal and a drink or two. Details to be confirmed, so just get in contact if you'd like to come.

Climate Campaign

We continue to pursue an unsustainable energy supply based mainly on fossil fuels, despite there being many feasible alternatives. Fossil fuels produce carbon dioxide which is instrumental in causing global change. We need to switch to greener fuels and use energy more efficiently.

Carbon Dinosaurs

You may not have realised it but you have a Dinosaur in your backyard. Not a snarling biting monster but a smoking polluting one.

Of the UK's sixteen coal-burning power stations, 15 are more than 30 years old and using very old technology to burn coal to generate electricity. As a result, they emit more Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) contributing to climate change. For each unit of electricity generated these old coal burning power stations produce almost three times as much CO₂ as the latest gas powered stations. Fourth most polluting on the list of sixteen, and closest to us in Manchester, is Fidler's Ferry power station in Cheshire.

In the next six months the government will decide on the structure of the market for electricity generation for the next decade. The Carbon Dinosaurs Campaign is about getting these outdated technological Dinosaurs closed, so that more of our electricity generation comes from cleaner coal and gas burning stations and from renewable sources of energy such as wind and wave which produce no CO₂ emissions.

Over the next few months we will be lobbying our local MPs to campaign for ambitious national targets for reduced CO₂ emissions and to encourage government to close Fidler's Ferry and the other Carbon Dinosaur power stations. If you would like to help by letter-writing, speaking with your local MP or getting more involved in other ways, please contact us.

For more information on the Carbon Dinosaurs campaign nationally see: www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/climate/press_for_change/carbon_dinosaurs/index.htm

Dave Coleman

Flying into the Future (continued from front page)

Here is the text of Early Day Motion (EDM) 1688 – Aviation Air Pollution, Sustainability and Climate Change in full: That this House calls on the Secretary of State for Transport to develop an aviation policy that accords with national air pollution sustainability and climate change targets and pays its full external costs; further calls on him to work at a national, European and international level to reduce and eliminate the tax concessions received by the aviation industry in the form of tax-free fuel and VAT -exempt products; believes that he should ensure that the countryside biodiversity and heritage are safeguarded, that aircraft noise does not erode rural tranquillity and does not continue to annoy significant communities both day and night; and further calls on him to explore the potential of high-speed rail as an alternative to short-haul flights.

Did you know?

Fruit and vegetables is now the largest category of all air freight by weight!

Even on a cloudy day in Britain, a solar roof can generate enough electricity to play 70 episodes of Coronation Street and make 35 cups of tea!

Source: FoE



Transport Campaign

A shift towards more sustainable modes of transport is good news for our health, communities and the environment, both locally and globally. Manchester Friends of the Earth campaigns for cycling, walking, alternative fuels and quality public transport to be at the heart of the way we get around.

Longsight Project: Report launched and Campaign kicks-off

The long-awaited report 'Better Buses and Safer Streets' from our year of community research in Longsight is now available. See the project website for full details and a copy of the report to download. The report was launched with a colourful tri-lingual exhibition at Longsight Library. Over the course of a long weekend, Longsight residents could pop in and read all about our work and what the community had identified as the priorities for improvement: cleaner buses, more reliable buses (particularly the 53), more CCTV on buses, more safe routes to school and more pedestrian crossings, to name a few. More importantly visitors to the exhibition were given two opportunities to get involved in the campaign over the coming months. And readers of this newsletter who live in Longsight can get involved too:

1) Keep a bus diary. We're encouraging bus users in Longsight, particularly of the 53 bus, to keep a record of reliability and quality of service. We aim to use this as a lobbying tool to encourage the bus operators and the authorities to take these issues seriously.

2) Join the working group. We're setting up a local team in Longsight to push the issues raised in the report.

If you'd like to take part in either or both of the above please contact Graeme:

graeme@manchesterfoe.org.uk

www.manchesterfoe.org.uk/longsight



In Town Without My Car Day

Monday 22 September was "In Town Without My Car" Day; a day where local authorities were encouraged to close roads and launch new initiatives to promote alternatives to the car. Councils in Greater Manchester joined over 1,000 towns and cities across Europe who took part in the day, attempting to persuade people to leave their cars behind and make better use of public transport took part.

In Manchester, on the afternoon of Sunday 21st the City Council closed Deansgate and held an arts and crafts fair, with the occasional "green" stall. The sun shone and many shoppers milled around enjoying the event. The following day, plans were to close the road around Albert Square and have eateries serving people seated on the deserted streets, with street entertainment and some stalls. Unfortunately, the heavens opened and the event was called off after 30 minutes.

Manchester FoE would like to see the principles espoused in the weekend's events to become mainstream policy. In particular they want: the provision of a safe, consistent and well-maintained network of dedicated cycle routes and secure cycle storage points; the councils to ensure safety for pedestrians and developing walking routes away from busy traffic; Manchester businesses to promote walking, cycling and public transport use for their workers' journeys to, from and during work; and active development of the idea of City Centre congestion charging and testing its feasibility in Greater Manchester.



"There are not enough buses on this line, but it's better than Iraq"

Iraqi man at Longsight library talking to Manchester FoE about the 53 bus.

"If the bus service was better that would make a real difference to our lives"

Woman in Longsight talking to Manchester FoE

Positive Action

Sixty Second Interview with Graeme Sherriff

Role in MFoE: Co-ordinator and Transport Campaigner

Why did you join?

I wanted to make a difference when I moved to Manchester and FoE was the organisation I was most familiar with.

What is your ambition? To be bilingual

What are you frightened of? Walls

Likes: Music, cycling, films, beer

Favourite book: Norwegian Wood

Favourite films: Fight Club

Favorite word: Giraffe

Favourite place in the world: Manchester

Favourite drink: Anything with an umlaut

What was your immediate reaction when you found out that you had one the Earth Movers award?

Surprise, but certainly a pleasant one

Do you think these awards are important?

Yes, campaigning can be very unrewarding most of the time and they also provide a focus at conference to allow FoE to celebrate its achievements throughout the year

Do you think the awards motivate people to work harder to achieve results in foe work?

Hard to say considering getting an award was the last thing I was thinking of while campaigning.

What does this award mean to you?

It makes me feel valued as part of the national organisation, but really it is an award that I'm accepting on behalf of Manchester FoE not just me.

What do you find most difficult about campaigning?

Having the patience to appreciate that we are working for long-term solutions. And pronouncing the word 'carcinogenic' on 7:15am radio interviews.

Why transport?

Transport affects us all: we all use it and we all have to breathe in its fumes. It is a major contributor to climate change and if it is not done properly it can stop people from being able to access basic needs.

Launch of New Membership Card

Manchester Friends of the Earth is pleased to announce the launch of our new Membership Scheme. With this newsletter, existing members will already have received their first official membership card. Not only do our members receive our newsletter and national FoE magazine Earth Matters, but now also a range of discounts from Manchester shops and businesses.

At the time of writing these include:

- * 50% off a meal at Earth Café;
- * 10% off selected purchases at Harry Hall Cycles;
- * 10% off food and drink at Misty's Café;
- * 10% off purchases at the Manchester branches of Field and Trek and The Outdoor Shop;

To take advantage of these offers, simply present your Manchester Friends of the Earth membership card at the till.

These offers will change over time and we will be adding new organisations to the list. So for full details and the latest list of membership offers check out our website at www.manchesterfoe.org.uk/members.

If you aren't already a paid up member JOIN US using the form in this newsletter.

With these offers your membership could pay for itself the first time you use your card!

Note: These businesses are all supporting us by offering these discounts and we are grateful for their support. In the unlikely case of any dispute, the decision of the organisation offering the discount will be final.



MFoE's Graeme Sherriff (left) in action in Longsight

Party for the Planet



Penumbra Derry



In case you didn't hear, Party For the Planet was a very successful event, which raised much needed funds for Manchester FoE, despite all the minor and major hitches that are always inevitable. For those of you who didn't go here's the craic.

On Saturday 27th September, Big Hands on Oxford Road was handed over to Manchester Friends for a fundraising party. The night kicked off at 8:30 with newly signed Pierre Hall. Pierre grabbed people's attention with his extraordinary talent and set the mood for a fantastic night.

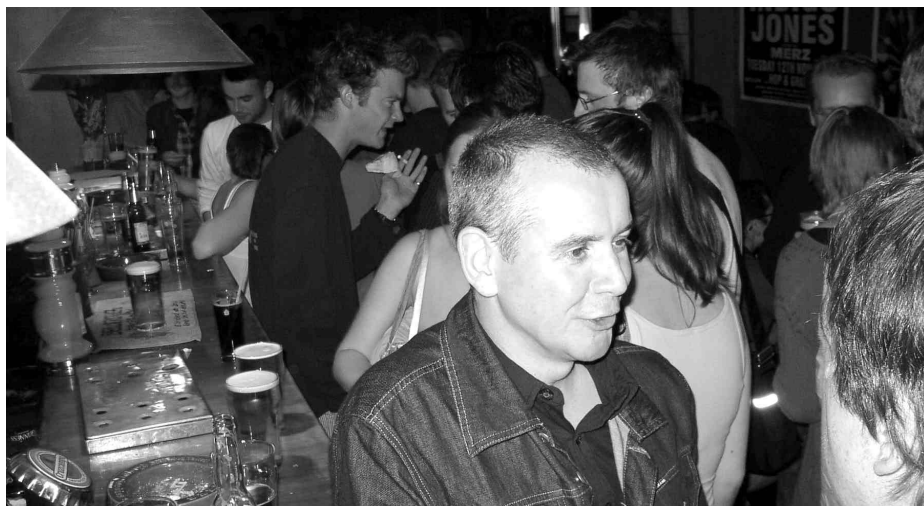
The evening was compered by Tom Smith, a local stand-up comedian, and DJ Tall Tim kept music in the air all night.

All the music of the evening was designed to connect one act after the other building up the atmosphere until its electric ending. These carefully selected bands were all local 'up and coming' new Manchester sounds: Love Panda, The Invincible Counter Offensive, The Exports and Penumbra Derry whose finale left the audience pleading for more.

Mike Sutherland, half of the acoustic duo Love Panda, summed up the feelings of the bands that took part: "We're always happy to give our time and effort to support charities and organisations which are concerned with the preservation of our planet's resources and the well-being of its inhabitants."

Manchester Friends of the Earth would like to thank the following people for helping the night run smoothly. Alan (bar manager at Big Hands), the bouncers and bar staff, Jay Walker, Robin, Jason Bordman, Tall Tim, Tom Smith, Scott (for donating the venue), Nog (thanks for the sound system), Kate Bowen, John Pichford, Jemma Chambers, Louise Rainbow, Becky Day, and not forgetting: Pierre Hall, The Exports, Love Panda, Invincible Counter Offensive and Penumbra Derry. Last but not least, the Sound Engineer Robin. Robin's technical skill made sure that each band was heard crystal clear.

Jayne Colquhoun



The crowd at Big Hands enjoying Party for the Planet

Comment: Generation Gap

Wind turbines. It depends, often literally, on someone's point of view. They might be demonic eyesores that spoil the natural beauty of the countryside. Or they are clean, majestic doves bringing us the green energy we need. And whilst they sometimes have local environmental impacts, they have a global benefit in terms of reducing CO₂ output.

Climate change is serious and it could already be here. I am writing this just after the most extended period of dry weather across Europe since records began. The Met office predicts a rise of 2 to 4 degrees C over this century, which would be enough to knock ecosystems (including food production) out of sync, trigger an increase in the kind of storms that have caused such havoc across Europe in recent years and make it likely that new diseases will enter the UK. Low-lying countries such as Bangladesh could really feel the impact of sea-level rise.

Renewable energy - that is, energy that comes from a source that replenishes itself, unlike fossil fuels - comes in many forms. In the UK there is potential for onshore wind, offshore wind, energy crops, solar power, wave power and tidal power.

The government has announced a bold programme of offshore turbine installation, enough to power 15 per cent of UK homes. Britain is the windiest country in Europe and is surrounded by coast, so we have a major opportunity to develop this source of energy. It's clean and local, and also brings employment. The current round of offshore development is estimated to create 20,000 jobs. Importantly, it doesn't create the waste and safety risks that come with nuclear.

There are also plans for more onshore turbines and these have sparked controversy because of the intrusion into the countryside and the local implications of these are being debated. Should we be worried the impact of wind turbines? Certainly, each installation needs to be assessed on its own grounds.

Potential impact upon wildlife is important. In these new rounds of developments the RSPB are happy that the most sensitive sites have been avoided. Noise impact is also important, but modern turbines are not loud. In fact, the noise of the winds can drown out the sound of the turbine anyway.

And the view? Environmental pressure groups seem to agree that these developments should not happen in designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the like. After that it comes down to taste.

Communities should have the right to influence local planning decisions. They are the ones that have to live with them. But they must make their decisions in the knowledge that they will have regional, national, even global repercussions. Indeed, flooding and storm damage as a result of climate change could bring this reality to the very back yard that they want to protect.

So, a plea. Look at the turbines as symbols of a modern sustainable economy. A world in which we live within natural limits and in which we accept the costs of our energy-hungry lives. And accept that that cost has to be borne across the board, whether you live downwind of a power station, on the coast or by a particularly windy hillside. And where everyone tries to reduce their energy use so as to minimise the impact of its generation.

Research has shown that people living near a wind farm are more likely to be supportive about wind energy than those who do not. I don't want to see the countryside smothered in white turbines but, sensitively placed, I quite like them.

References: 'Planning' 18th July 2003, Guardian 6th August 2003,
British Wind Energy: www.britishwindenergy.co.uk

Graeme Sherriff

Recycling Update

Every Household to have recycling collected, but Manchester languishes at the bottom of the league table.

In a major victory for residents both in Manchester and all over the UK, Friends of the Earth has successfully steered the Household Waste Recycling Bill through Parliament. This means that from 2010 at the latest, every household in Britain will have a doorstep recycling service available to them, provided by their local council.

Drafted by Friends of the Earth and, sponsored by Joan Ruddock MP, the bill would never have passed without the widespread lobbying of local MPs by concerned individuals and groups such as Manchester Friends of the Earth; clear evidence of the power of personal action, and that working together we can make our voices heard.

The Bill provides for collection of a minimum of 2 waste streams (e.g. glass and paper) and now that Councils will be putting in place systems to collect 2 types of recycling, it makes economic sense to collect more. However in Manchester it isn't all good news. We currently languish at the foot of the national recycling league 9th from bottom out of 393 local authorities. Our council recycles only 3% of domestic waste against a North-West average of 8.9% and a national average of 12.4%. This compares with a Government target of 25% of domestic waste to be recycled by 2005! Clearly we have a long way to go.



Be A Friend of the Earth

To join Manchester FoE, please complete the details on the form below and post to Manchester Friends of the Earth, 6 Mount Street, Manchester, M2 5NS. Financially, it helps if you can take out a standing order – this means you pay a fixed amount on a regular basis, either monthly or annually. Standing orders mean that we can predict how much money is coming in and plan better. To take out a standing order, fill in your name and address, complete the standing order section, sign and date it, and return to us at the above address.

Thank you for your support.

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone Number:

Please tick an appropriate rate:

£3 unwaged _____ £10 waged _____

£6 low-waged _____ £20 groups _____

I enclose an additional donation of £ _____

For standing orders:

Your bank account number:

The name on the account:

Branch sort code:

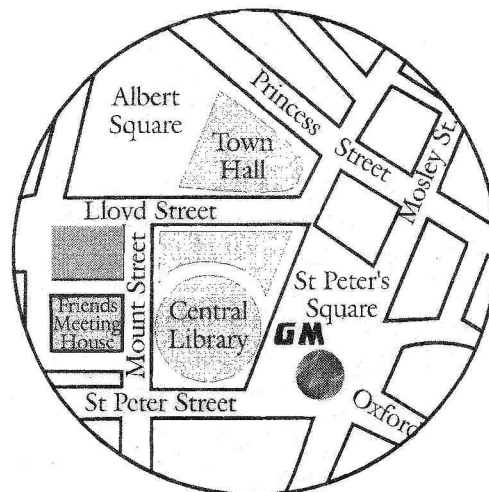
Branch name and address:

Instructions to the bank:

Please pay the sum of £ _____ on the _____ (day/date) of each month/year (delete as appropriate) until further notice to 'Manchester Friends of the Earth' account number 27187308, sort code 72-00-01, bank address Girobank, 62 Hagley Road B16 8PE.

Signed:

Dated:



How to Find Us

Manchester FoE's Campaigns Centre is located in the basement of the Friends' Meeting House, The Quaker's Building, 6 Mount Street, behind Central Library. To find the Campaigns Centre, take Bootle Street which is down the side of the Friends' Meeting House on the left as you at it. Ring the MFoE bell if the door is locked or enter and go down the corridor, turn left then immediate right and we're on the left.

The Campaigns Centre is run totally by volunteers, so it is not always open. Please ring us on 0161 834 8221 in advance if you wish to see someone.

Meetings: 7pm on the second Tuesday of the month in the Friends' Meeting House, generally in room 5.

Manchester FoE, 6 Mount Street, Manchester. M2 5NS.

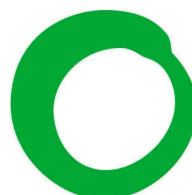
Telephone: 0161 834 8221.

Email: office@manchesterfoe.org.uk.

Website: www.manchesterfoe.org.uk



Dave, Kerstin, Graeme, Ali and Jayne at the FoE National Conference in September 2003.



**Friends of
the Earth
Manchester**