ACTION Manchester Friends of the Earth Winter 06/07

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Member Interview

How long have you been in the group? Just over a year. I started turning up to campaigns meetings in October 2005.

What campaigns are you involved in? Mainly the climate change and Big Ask campaign, but I like to keep a broad overview of what's going on in all the campaigns that the group runs.



Paul Waring

What environmental issues are most important to you? At the moment climate change is the most imporant issue because it's not something that we can put off, but the area of corporate responsibility is also important to me.

Manchester Friends of the Earth is an award-winning campaign group working on issues relating to the environment and to 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, waste and recycling.



Manchester FoE's campaigns centre is located in the basement of the Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount Street, behind Central Library. To find the campaigns centre, take Bootle Street, which is down the left side of the Friends Meeting House. The campaigns centre is run entirely by volunteers, so it is not always open. Please phone in advance.

Meetings: We hold full group meetings at 7pm on the 2nd Tuesday of each month in our campaigns centre. We also hold campaign sub-group meetings throughout the month - please check our website for details.

As a member you get not only this newsletter but also:

- 4 free issues of "Earthmatters", the magazine from national FoE (new members only)
- 25% off a meal at Earth Cafe
- 10% off selected purchases at Harry Hall Cycles
- 10% off food and drink at Misty's Cafe
- 5% off all decorating and floor-sanding jobs at Eco-Interiors
- 15% off food and drink at the Nectar Cafe in Hale
- 10% off selected purchases at Ken Foster's Cycle Logic
- 10% off main meals and hot drinks at Titchy Coffee Co
- 10% off all orders over £10 at Fetish for Food in Prestwich

Gift Memberships Also Available: See Back Cover...

Contributors to this issue: Dan, Dawn, Dave, Graeme, Megan, Kerstin, Paul D, Paul W, Vicky.

Tesco Sent Packing

How the multinational food giant was sent packing...

F or the last eight months Manchester Friends of the Earth (MFoE), together with Unicorn Grocery, Action for Sustainable Living, Trafford Council and local businesses & residents have been campaigning against a proposal for a gigantic Tesco in Trafford. Tesco aimed to turn a playing field open to the public into a superstore of over 8000 square meters. Local businesses and residents were clear that the proposed superstore would damage businesses in the existing town centres, increase traffic, and remove an important community resource and green space.

We are delighted to announce that the superstore proposal has been turned down at Public Inquiry. Paul D'Ambra, food campaigner with MFoE said:

"The planning system can seem confusing and difficult to understand so fighting a company as big as Tesco felt like David and Goliath and we all worried that we were just making a gesture. This result shows just how important it is that people stand up for themselves and their communities."

Tesco pushed the issue to a public inquiry, which took place on 26th September 2006. More than 2,070 signatures were handed in opposing the development. A local councillor, a consultant from Action for Sustainable Living, a representative for John Leech MP and a representative of Unicorn Grocery spoke at the inquiry.

MFoE have for the last year been surveying the impacts of a Tesco store that recently opened in Burnage in South Manchester and presented their findings to the inquiry. According to the Inspector, our evidence was "persuasive." He said that the study provided "worthwhile empirical evidence of the effects on small neighbourhood shops on the opening of the superstore."



Debbie Clarke of Unicorn Grocery said:

" Even though it does seem a bit daunting there is a real opportunity to make our voices heard in these cases."

The fight isn't over yet as Tesco still have permission for a smaller store on the site but campaigners are now even more committed to telling Tesco to B.O.G.O.F. You can learn more about this campaign and about the Burnage Survey on our website

www.manchesterfoe.org.uk. Paul D'Ambra and Janice Smith deliver the petition to Trafford Town Hall.



Nectar

14 Victoria Road, Hale, Cheshire WA15 9AD 0161 928 3000

- Organic Produce
- Local Produce
- Natural Produce
- GM Free
- Fair Trade Foodstuffs

For Everything Good in Life

Dreaming of a Green Christmas

Some ideas for a Christmas that doesn't cost the Earth...

hristmas is almost upon us and, while I've always loved the festive season, the cost not only to our wallets, but to the planet as well can be huge. Don't despair though: there are plenty of things we can all do to help and make this a Green Christmas.

Bags of Ideas

Plastic carrier bags are offered to us every time we enter a shop, and in the UK that equates to a staggering 8 billion bags a year[i], so why not take a bag Christmas shopping with you and say "no thanks" to the carrier that the shop assistant offers. Or why not get away from all that excess packaging we use each year and make or bake a present for your nearest and dearest - in Britain alone in 2001 there was almost 1.7 million tonnes of waste plastic packaging[ii].

Extend Your Family

If you're not feeling too creative, or are pressed for time, why not look in the Oxfam Unwrapped catalogue - gifts range from text-books for school kids, training for a farmer or planting mango saplings. You'll get a warm gooey feeling knowing you've given a really unusual gift that can help people to help themselves out of poverty. Even better - yes OK, I am slightly biased promoting this idea - why not buy a gift subscription to Manchester Friends of the Earth? Check the back cover for more details!

Under Wraps

And why not wrap your present in recycled or reused wrapping paper this year, or reuse one of the dozens of gift bags you have lying around - and to finish it off use the pictures from the front of last year's Christmas cards to make gift cards. Talking of cards, have you thought of sending e-cards this year instead of...well card ones! There are plenty of sites on the Internet that allow you to send e-cards for free (see www.foe.co.uk/cards for

[i]http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/topics/plastics.

[ii]DEFRA -

http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/topics/plastics.htm

[iii]http://www.wasteconnect.co.uk/ or http://www.recyclenow.com/

example), and the money you would have used on cards and postage could be donated to a good cause (yes I suggest Manchester FoE!!!). If you are sending cards, why not hand deliver them on your bike or as part of a walk.

Trees

If you plan to have a Christmas tree, you can now buy one taken from a sustainable forest, and once Christmas is over, your tree can be recycled at you local household waste recycling facility[iii], along with the extra glass, plastic, etc. from the Christmas season festivities. Alternatively, why not decorate a plant or potted tree that you already own - using last year's decorations for good measure! Finally, and not just to make this Christmas green but to keep your home safe, don't forget to turn off the lights when you're out and once you've gone to bed! Have a blessed and merry season everyone.



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

All tea and coffee is Fair Trade

All ingredients are ethically sources 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.

10% discount on hot drinks and main meals for MFoE members.

Vegan Christmas Dinner An animal friendly Christmas meal...

hese recipes are for two people – adjust amounts accordingly.

Starter: White bean and Mushroom soup

Ingredients:

200g of Lima Beans One medium sized onion 10 – 12 regular sized mushrooms 6-10 Garlic cloves 2 Bay leaves Salt and pepper Sage and/or rosemary (fresh or dried)

Method: Soak beans overnight, drain and put in a large pot. Cover with plenty of water (top up as it evaporates). Chop onions and mushrooms (rough is fine). Leave garlic whole. Throw in the pot with bay leaves, salt and pepper and hot chilli to taste. Bring to gentle boil, simmer on medium heat stirring regularly. Cook until beans are creamy. When thick and creamy, top with more chopped fresh sage and serve.

Main Course: Roasted Mixed Vegetables Vegetables:

2 lg potatoes, 1 swede or turnip

2 parsnips, 1 carrot (large), 1 onion (larger the better) cut in quarters

Method: Cut veg into largish chunks (swedes smaller) Toss with a little olive oil, salt and pepper, rosemary and a little paprika. Place in a large baking pan (one layer) and roast.

Mushroom Gravy - Use veg boullion cubes or veg stock, add sliced mushrooms & white pepper simmer till reduced and mushies are cooked, add a little soy sauce or Braggs aminos, then flour or cornstarch to thicken. Don't use self raising flour! Sift the flour a bit first as it makes for fewer lumps and less whisking.

Garbanzo Mix - Ingredients:

Garbanzo beans (chick peas) 200g TVP (one cup reconstituted) Large onion sliced, 1 courgette cubed 1 aubergine peeled and cubed (not too big), 1 lg tomato chopped, chopped garlic, salt and pepper, spices of your choice, fresh thyme, fresh parsley.

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Garbanzo Mix Method: Soak beans overnight, drain, simmer till soft (not mushy). Heat a large frying pan, add olive oil - fry onions and garlic till browning and soft, add salt and pepper, add cooked garbanzos (you don't need all of it, weigh it up by eye as to what looks right) and sauté till they get little brown bits, add TVP, courgette and aubergine, sauté till cooked, add a little cumin powder and fresh thyme or herbs to taste. Near the end, add tomatoes and parsley and stir. Serve in a casserole dish. Add some flax seeds for texture if you like.

A side dish of steamed vegetables such as broccoli, brussel sprouts and green beans will go well. When they are done, toss in a little honey or vegan sweetener.



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Office Move and Makeover

In June, after many years, we moved from our old "cupboard" into a new bigger office in the Friends Meeting House – as you would expect we decided to test just how green and sustainable decorating and furnishing our new meeting space could be. We aimed to source furniture and materials locally, use environmentally friendly materials, and where we had to use large shops, select both product and shop with Ethical Consumer ratings and environmental impacts at the forefront of our minds.

We adopted the "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" approach. Our new meeting room was badly in need of redecoration - this required working on scaffolding, so we had this done professionally by Eco Interiors (www.ecointeriors.co.uk) using environmentally friendly paint and materials. Next we wanted to reduce our consumption by reusing what we already had. We repainted our old filing cabinets and for the first time in 20 years of use they actually match! Next, we had a look at what we could reuse from others. We came up with a small whiteboard and 30 ex-school chairs completely free recycled from www.freecycle.org from "New and Used Office Equipment" in Old Trafford and we came up with an excellent second hand document cabinet, a big office cupboard, and a massive whiteboard for our campaign calendar,

Life with Shell

Friends of the Earth (FoE) have been at the forefront of campaigning against Shell's environmental abuses on behalf of communities living on the "fenceline" of Shell installations and suffering the environmental consequences. On October 20th representatives of two of those communities spoke at Manchester's Friends Meeting House at a public meeting organised by Manchester FoE - Desmond D'Sa, from Durban, South Africa and Terry Clancey from County Mayo, Ireland.

Desmond painted a bleak picture of life for Shell's neighbours in South Durban - home to South Africa's largest refinery. There have been several leaks over the last few years, causing a variety of health problems. The refinery belches toxic clouds causing epidemic levels of asthma. Desmond made the point that he had visited Shell installations in

all "almost new" for less than £250! We got a "slight-second" desk cupboard from Ikea (reduced to £18) that we repaired ourselves and cut the shelves to size from a huge plywood off-cut at B&Q. Because of our need to use the space flexibly, we opted for a table system that we could build up or break down as required. With no suitable second-hand solution, we bought a Forest Stewardship Council accredited table system from IKEA. We then finished the office off with a 2nd hand kick-step, and Ikea work-lamp with low energy bulbs (£25)

Total expenditure: less than £850 to redecorate and equip an office and meeting space for up to 30 people - and with minimal environmental impact.



Ali leads a meeting in the new office.

Europe and found neighbouring communities protected by a high level of health and safety provisions. Why if Shell can implement these procedures in Europe do they not do so in South Africa? Sadly, Shell seems to value the lives of South Africans less than the lives of Europeans – putting profit before people.

Terry described the dangers to residents in County Mayo from the construction of a gas pipeline and concerns over pollution from the proposed refinery. Local residents and activists blockaded the construction site for fifteen months until November 10th this year, when police baton charges broke the blockade. Terry reflected it's not only in the Third World that Shell's activities have provoked violent confrontation. More on the County Mayo campaign at www.corribsos.com.

Teaching a Lesson to 4x4 Drivers

E arly on Monday 16th October, we gathered outside Hale Preparatory School in Cheshire notorious for the excessive numbers of parents driving 4x4s. Campaigners, dressed as schoolmasters in robes and mortarboards, handed out school reports giving bad grades for vehicle

choice, while other campaigners dressed as lollipop ladies carried "Stop Urban 4x4s" lollipops. The day was a great success. We had support from parents who had walked to the school - and from locals who live on the road, fed up with the 4x4s. Although a few didn't appreciate the message, we were successful in engaging with 4x4 drivers - several said they would reconsider their vehicle choice. We also had great media attention from BBC Radio Manchester, BBC North West Tonight, Channel M, the Manchester Evening News and an ITV crew filming a documentary on the subject - helping us get the

message out to more people and raising the profile of the group at the same time.

Previous actions on 4x4s have included a "Mudwash" and a mock parking ticket event - for details see the transport section of our website. You can find out more about the Alliance Against Urban 4x4s at www.stopurban4x4s.org.uk.



Airport Plans Irresponsible

anchester Airport aims to double passenger numbers by 2030. The predicted growth in air travel in the UK will make it almost impossible, experts have said, for the government to meet its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels, particularly since the release of greenhouse gases from aircraft is roughly three times as damaging as the same emissions released at ground level.



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Manchester FoE has been monitoring the developments in the Airport's Master Plan, opposing runway extension proposals and campaigning for more sustainable air travel and alternatives. On 29th September, a group of representatives from Stockport FoE, the Environment Network for Manchester, the Green Party, Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Transport Pools, the Ramblers Association, SERA, the Greater Manchester Council for Voluntary Organisation and local resident Michael Gibson, joined members of Manchester FoE to hand in their individual concerns in response to the Master Plan. Individuals were interviewed by Wythenshawe FM, a station in a community which is affected by noise and pollution from the airport. An article in The Manchester Evening News covered the event and stated the groups' various reasons for attending, including the implications for climate change and road congestion, the disadvantage to local businesses and noise and air pollution.

A Year in the Life of Manchester FoE

Another busy year, and one to be proud of...

2006 has been another excellent year for the group, we have achieved so much that this review can unfortunately only focus on the highlights of the last twelve months. The fact that we have been so successful that we haven't got room to mention everything is cause for celebration in itself! I apologise in advance for anything I may have left out but I could have easily filled several pages with our successes this year.

Membership

Our membership has continued to increase steadily, and we have recently broken through the one hundred paid-up members mark. Attendance at meetings is not only high but steady, with campaigns meetings consistently having over fifteen members present, even during times of the year when enthusiasm sometimes generally wanes.

Media appearances

The group has appeared in the media over 80 times throughout the year, with dozens of letters across local newspapers and appearances on local radio stations. We have had a range of successful events that have attracted a lot of mainstream media attention, particularly the recent 4x4 action that was filmed by both the BBC and ITV.

Food campaign

As part of our food campaign, last year we received National Lottery funding to hold a monthly stall at the Fairly Traded Market, this has been used very effectively to promote our campaigns (particularly food) to the wider public and has also been a good way to get hundreds of postcards signed. Our Real Food Guide website has also continued to increase



the number of businesses it covers in Manchester, providing an invaluable source of information for people looking to buy organic, fair trade and GM-free food from local producers. And we have successfully fought off a planning application for a new Tesco superstore in Trafford (see page three for more details).

Transport Campaign

The major success of our transport group was the launch of the Love Your Bike campaign (see www.loveyourbike.org for full details). Thanks to a grant from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, we were able to publicise this campaign in a much bigger way than our usual limited resources allow, and in conjunction with Creative Concern (a public relations firm) we created a fantastic website as well as adverts on major bus routes throughout Manchester. Love Your Bike has gained press coverage across the UK and even had some international mentions in countries as far away as Brazil! The campaign also won the group an award at the annual Friends of the Earth conference and a national 'Green Award', which are great achievements.

Corporates and trade campaign

Our corporates and trade campaign has also accomplished a great deal, particularly in working with other groups, such as the Trade Justice Movement. We have staged a number of high-profile actions, including dressing as orang-utans to raise awareness of the unsustainable sourcing of palm oil for use in supermarket products. The group has also focused a lot of campaigning on the Company Law Reform Bill, which aims to force companies to take into account their social and environmental impacts rather than just maximising shareholders' wealth (which is their only overriding legal obligation at the moment).



Act!on Manchester Friends of the Earth

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Waste and recycling campaign

Just before Christmas last year the waste and recycling campaign ran a plastic bag action to raise awareness of the huge waste problem caused by so many bags being used once and then thrown away. Several of our campaigners dressed up in fetching plastic bags outfits in order to draw attention to the issue! We have also used our stalls in the city centre to encourage the general public to respond

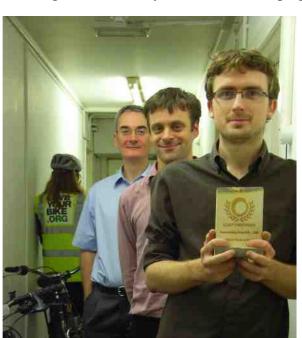


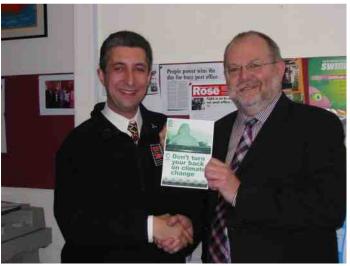
to the Government's Waste Strategy Review, a campaign that was supported by Tony Lloyd, MP for Manchester Central.

Climate change campaign

We had another big success this year with the inclusion of the climate change bill in the Queen's Speech. As part of FoE's national Big Ask campaign, we have lobbied over thirty MPs in our area and got thousands of postcards signed to demonstrate to the government that this is an issue that the public feel strongly about.

Looking back over the year, all of our campaign







groups have been incredibly successful in their individual areas, and the Manchester FoE group as a whole has had a superb 2006. With a larger membership at the end of this year, we hope that 2007 will build on this work and create even more successes in the months to come.

p8 left, Cllr Neil Swannick at the launch of Love Your Bike; p8 right John Leech supporting our corporates campaign; p9 top John Leech supports Big Ask; middle left Tony Lloyd supporting our waste campaign; middle right David Heyes MP supporting the Big Ask; bottom left the Love Your Bike team with their Earthmovers award; bottom right Dave speaks to Channel M about 4x4s

Chaos on the Streets of Manchester...

I wonder to myself, would life ever be sane again... (said the Smiths, sort of). The bus wars are back on local newspapers' front pages. They are responsible for massive traffic jams in Manchester city centre and regularly bring traffic, including Metrolink, to a standstill. In September, UK North began running an additional 12 services an hour on the City Centre to Chorlton route, which was already served by 18 Stagecoach services. As a result, 30 buses tried to cram into the same bus stop every hour, causing severe tailbacks and effectively bringing the city centre to a standstill.

How has this crazy situation come about? Buses were deregulated in 1986, allowing bus operators to introduce new services as long as they give 42 days notice. Neither the Greater Manchester Public Transport Authority (GMPTA), the Council or the North West traffic commissioner has the power to stop them. The traffic commissioner has the power to forbid companies to stop at certain bus stops for road safety reasons, but the ongoing problems show that this is not an effective measure. Bus wars are not just bad news for public transport users and the environment but also for businesses, whose employees and deliveries are late. And unless legislation is changed this will continue. The past two decades have shown that the benefit that

competition can bring to certain sectors does not hold for buses. When public transport in Manchester is compared to London, where the buses are not deregulated, it is quite obvious that a franchise system is more successful than unregulated competition. A number of Manchester MPs have publicly spoken in favour of bus reregulation and a leaked memo from Transport Secretary Douglas Alexander suggests that some sort of regulation might come into force within the next two years. The current situation is clearly unacceptable and we support the idea that more power be given to the Council and GMPTE to ensure that public transport in Manchester is affordable, safe and reliable.



Love Your "Love Your Bike"

anchester FoE has been awarded a Green Award for its Love Your Bike campaign. The award, presented at a prestigious ceremony at London Guildhall, is intended to highlight creativity in sustainability. We won the category 'best integrated campaign under £100k', beating off stiff competition from the Greater London Authority and the Marine Stewardship Council.. This is the second national



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award that the campaign has won, after its 'Communicating Powerfully' award at FoE's local groups conference in September.

The campaign continues with some diverse activities. On the last Friday of every month, cyclists meet at 8:15 at Withington Library to cycle into the city centre as a group and highlight the role of cycling as a safe and quick way to get into work. We're busy analysing the information collected through the website www.loveyourbike.org and plan to produce a report to mark the one year anniversary of the launch of the campaign in March.

Act!on Manchester Friends of the Earth

A year in the life of a planet...

The environment in the news in 2006.

February 1st President George W. Bush admitted the USA "is addicted to oil."

March Scientists recorded an unexpected increase in the number of "glacial earthquakes" in Greenland - dramatic new evidence of the speed of climate change which scientists fear is causing huge volumes of ice to melt far faster than predicted.

April 26th The 20th Anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster.

June Sweden's Commission on Oil Independence published a report detailing a comprehensive programme to break the country's dependency on oil by 2020.

June 6th Lloyd's of London urged its members to start taking global warming more seriously or be "swept away" in a sea of future financial claims.

July UK temperatures reached 100F (37.8C) for only the second time in Britain's history - but also the second time in under three years - researchers said the unusual heat was entirely consistent with predictions of climate change

July 11th. The Government publishes its Energy Review: nuclear power is "back on the agenda with a vengeance" - the proportion of electricity generated from renewables is set to increase to 20%, a five-fold increase from current levels.

August Al Gore's 'An Inconvenient Truth' released in the UK to critical acclaim.

August 2nd Last of the major UK supermarkets joined the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil - a major victory following a two-year campaign by FoE and Co-operative Insurance to highlight the threat to the rain forest posed by the crop.

September 12th FoE's "Big Ask Big Month Big Lobby" campaign launched to lobby MPs to back a Climate Change Bill introducing annual targets for cuts in carbon emissions. Leading climatologist Jim Hansen, said, "We have a very brief window of opportunity to deal with climate change – no longer than a decade at most."

September 30th Protestors converged on the Drax power station - the largest single emitter of greenhouse gases in the UK - for the Camp for

Climate Change Action.

October 30th. The Stern report on the costs of climate change argues it will cost the world up to £3.68 trillion unless climate change is tackled within a decade.

November 4th The Stop Climate Chaos march in London saw 20,000 converge on Trafalgar Square to demand action from the world's governments. Demonstrations took place in over 40 countries.

November 6th The United Nations Climate Change Conference opened in Nairobi. The two-week conference is the twelfth Conference of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the second meeting of the Kyoto Protocol.

November 15th We did it! The Climate Change Bill is included in the Queen's Speech, proposing an independent Carbon Committee and 5 year targets. Onwards and upwards...

November 29th Campaigners delighted by Uttlesford Council's decision to turn down BAA's planning application to increase Stansted passenger numbers to 35m a year. Among the reasons given for this decision: climate change. The economic benefits, they stated, had not been demonstrated to be strong enough to outweigh all other factors.



Protests against planned expansion of Stansted Airport. photo: Peter Riding / Stop Stansted Expansion

Take Action

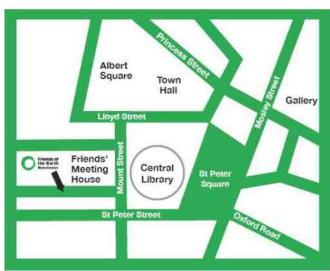
Mon 25th Dec - Merry Christmas!

Sun 1st Jan - Happy New Year!

Sat 7th Jan - Stall at Fairly Traded Market, Piccadilly Gardens

Tue 10th Jan - Campaigns Meeting, MFoE Office, Friends Meeting House

Fri 26th Jan - Critical Commute. Meet 8:15 Withington Library. And every last Friday of the month. Bring your bike!



Time to Save the Planet...

Recycle Your Specs!

Around 10 million pairs of perfectly usable glasses are thrown away every year. They can be donated by visiting www.vao.org.uk or www.uniteforsight.org.

Try Organic Milk

It takes over three times as much energy to produce a litre of nonorganic milk than a litre of organic milk. Try to get a locally produced pint...

Have a Candle Lit Dinner!

Try using vegetable-based or beeswax candles, which are better for the environment than paraffin candles and also better for your health

www.uniteforsight.org.	produced pint	health.			
Manchester FoE Membership Form (where did you pick up this newsletter?					
Please complete the form below and post it to Manchester Friends of the Earth, 6 Mount Street, Manchester, M2					
5NS. Pay by standing order and receive three months free membership! To do this, fill in sections 1 and 2, setting					
the first payment date three months into the future, not forgetting to sign and date the form.					
1. Your Details					
Name:	Address:				
Phone:					
E-mail:	Post Coc	le			
Membership type (please tick one box): □Armchair □Active (includes regular updates by email)					
Membership rate (please tick one box): □£4 unwaged □ £8 low waged □ £18 waged □ £30 household					
☐ Tick here if you prefer to receive our newsletter by email rather than through the post.					
□Tick here to receive four free issues of the FoE magazine, Earthmatters (new members only).					
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99, bank address: The Co-operative Bank Plc, PO Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester, M60 4EP.					
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