

# **WBGE Forum & AGM**

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015 - 8pm- 10pm**  
**Pangbourne Village Hall, Station Road, Pangbourne, RG8 7AN**

**In Attendance:** Richard Foster (Chair), Yvonne Redgrave, Evangeline Wood (Minutes), Robert Pattison, Ken Neal, Richard Marshall, Gareth Beard, Heather Thorne, Robert Hill, Ginny Taylor, Ellie Thorne, Rosa McManners, June Hughes, Jathan Rayner, Bill Ascroft-Leigh, Gill Hall, Nigel Arnell, Peter McManners, Tim Chatterton, Janet Barlow, Jackie Hoskins and Brian Hoskins.

**Apologies:** Maryanne Thomas, Tony Drewer-Trump, Al Budd.

## **Welcome**

Peter McManners welcomed everyone to the PAWS hosted West Berkshire Green Exchange Forum and introduced Richard Foster, Chairman of the West Berkshire Green Exchange.

Richard Foster explained how the Green Exchange had begun as a drive to help all the Greening Campaigns in West Berkshire come together to share ideas and as a link between the groups and the Council. The Green Exchange are a Forum for members to come together, they meet approx 4 times a year, including a summer social, an Annual Conference, Forums and AGM. Richard Foster introduced the Green Exchange Committee.

Richard Foster mentioned that the West Berkshire Council Draft Strategy for now until 2019 was currently out for consultation and urged everyone to read the Strategy and put their comments in by the 16<sup>th</sup> March.

The consultation can be found at <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=30922>

## **Goring & Streatley Hydro Power Project - Tim Chatterton**

The group had recently formed a community benefit company to take a share offer forward later this year. Tim Chatterton was one of the Directors. The project was intended to deliver a 300kw hydro scheme, made up of 3 Archimedes screws and a fish pass.

The Environment Agency (EA) are now happy with the design, there is no change to flood risk. The scheme is designed to have at least a 50 year life span, saving 400 tonnes of carbon in an 'average' year.

There will be a community fund, primarily benefitting Goring and Streatley Parish. Local people will also have priority in share purchase; the minimum investment is likely to be £100.

The original plan was started in 2015 by Dave Holt. Planning permission was submitted 2 years ago but the EA moved the goal posts significantly and it was subsequently withdrawn. The team expect to submit the planning application in the next couple of months; they are currently seeking impoundment licences with the EA.

The group are looking to launch a community share offer in September, with construction hopefully starting early next year. They are also looking at how the power generated will be sold: to a local company or straight to the grid.

So far the group have been financed by a number of grants for early project development and the promise of a loan from the Low Carbon Hub; this will be used to help get everything in order ready for launching the share offer, which will then fund the remainder of the project.

The project team are looking to grow and need your help: they will need more Directors, Trustee's for making decisions over the community fund, professional and operational support, supportive letters once the planning application is submitted, and to buy shares!

Email updates on the project can be signed up to from <http://www.gssg.org.uk/hydro>

The project will cost approximately £1.5 million. Share holders are expected to receive a return of between 5-6% interest.

### **EV-ENT – Richard Foster**

Richard Foster said that electric and hybrid vehicles are at the stage where they work in the real world but there is no real forum for seeing and trying vehicles for the public unless they visit each manufacturer separately. With this in mind the Green Exchange are planning EV-ENT, which will take place on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 10-14:30 at Newbury College.

We are inviting manufacturers and chargepoint suppliers, the idea being that we will have vehicle demos and some presentations. We will likely need help from our members on the day for various jobs including parking marshals, registration clerks etc.

### **PAWS Schools Climate Forum Initiative/PAWS Education workshop - Lady Jackie Hoskins**

The idea of the workshops was to:

- Raise awareness of issues
- Increase understanding of climate change
- Encourage the development of life skills

The sessions started out from the Inter Climate Network's climate talk sessions. The first event was held in Pangbourne with local schools, politicians and experts from Reading University and local environmentalists.

The students had to research their schools allocated country and give an opening statement. Throughout the day there would be discussions, with the countries working towards agreements, talks from experts and presentations on what the schools were doing locally.

After the events, the schools would go back and start doing things to reduce their carbon footprint. Bradfield College now ran energy saving competitions between the boarding houses with the house saving the most getting a financial reward and the school saving a lot of energy. The 2015 workshop will be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> March at Bradfield College, 10am-1pm.

### **Preparing for the General Election**

Richard Foster said that this was really about whether there was a way that the group could leverage the upcoming election to put climate change back on the Agenda.

#### *Proposal from Cold Ash Greening – Richard Marshall*

The Cold Ash Group thought that it may be beneficial to get information from candidates and their parties on UK energy policy in the run up to the elections. They had come up with some general questions, such as what is the party's strategy for energy supply over the next 10 years, and some more specific questions.

Richard Marshall asked if we thought that asking the parliamentary candidates questions around green issues and passing out the answers to our communities was a good idea. The group agreed that it was.

Richard Foster said that the Green Exchange Committee probably couldn't help out as EV-ENT would be taking most of their time in the lead up to the elections.

It was suggested that a hustings could be held, the UN had organised one previously, and perhaps they would again. ***Richard Foster will speak to Graeme Panting, the West Berkshire UN Rep and the Green Exchange Committee will put the subject on the agenda for the next Committee meeting.*** Jackie Hoskins said that she thought GREN were organising something in Reading.

### **Updates from the Groups**

Richard Marshall from Cold Ash Greening group said that they had been working on information sheets e.g. maintaining hedges/ditches (to avoid increasing flood risk), lighting etc. The sheets will go on the Cold Ash Greening group website. They also have a 'lighting rig' showing different light bulbs and their energy use. This resource may be loaned out to groups in the future.

Richard Foster asked, should we be going to Paris in December. Heather Thorne said that there were a number of marches in the run up to the talks. Gareth Beard felt that it was important to be working more locally to raise interest in our own communities. Ken Neal suggested writing to our MP would possibly be more effective.

### **Close**

Richard Foster thanked the speakers and reminded us that the next event is EV-ENT at Newbury College on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May, with a BBQ in July.