

Save Cash and Save the Planet Workshop

An introduction to Friends of the Earth's new book and www.savecashsaveplanet.org (also <http://www.foe.co.uk/living/>) and how they can help you and your group to:

- recruit new people
- provide 'lifestyle' or user-friendly information
- help people make the right environmental decision.

Aim of workshop: To help you make environmental issues more accessible, so that you can attract more interest and more new recruits to your local group.

Ways to engage new people in what your local group does, by providing information to help them make environmental choices in their everyday lives

- Ways you already engage the public – think about how you can use SCSP, or the ideas in it, here (stalls, actions, public speaking, schools, letters to press).
- New ways to engage people - see sections below re: tools, events, groups:

Tools: i.e. resources your local group can use at meetings, on stalls, at events etc to attract new people and get them interested in environmental issues:

- Quiz <http://www.foe.co.uk/living/quiz/>
- Tips <http://www.foe.co.uk/living/tips/> - print them out, link from your website, email them to friends etc
- Raffle/competition prizes - offer a copy of the book as prize, or offer to do a 'Green audit' for a raffle/competition prize (eg you visit someone's home and suggest ways they could save money/be greener)

Events: to promote environmental ideas and encourage new people to your local group:

- Hold a Clothes Swap Party (Plant Swap, Book Swap, Video Swap, etc) – anyone can organise this kind of event, at home/in a public venue, as a way of demonstrating that reducing waste/reusing items can be fun and save money.
- Nicola Baird, co-author of 'Save cash & save the planet' can come and give a talk to your local group, and you can use this as an opportunity to publicise/attract new people.
- Your local group could start a specific initiative/campaign which helps engage members of the public, e.g. Portsmouth FOE started a Real Nappy project.
- Alter the time/venue of your meetings, or have additional meetings to attract different types of people, e.g. Lancaster Family Friendly group meet late morning on a week day to encourage mums and toddlers to come.
- Organic school money raiser (see p409 of the book) – use your existing networks as a way to raise awareness about environmental matters and raise money for your local group.
- South Cheshire FOE run open days on mini allotment plots – very social, sell food, demonstrate composting etc.

Groups: ideas for ‘groups’, ‘clubs’ etc that your local group, or individual members, could consider setting up, as a way of attracting new people via specific interests:

- Book swap club, eg anything with a ‘swap’ element is good at encouraging people to think about reducing waste/reusing and recycling.
- Toy library for mums and toddlers, as above – a ‘library’ reduces waste by avoiding the need for each individual to buy toys.
- Roof garden club e.g. at work
- ‘Green drinks’ – www.greendrinks.org or hold the occasional LG meetings in pub and publicise it as ‘open invite’ for anyone to come along
- Greener workplace group – see SCSP for plenty of ideas about greening your workplace and encouraging your employer to take action too.
- Talks or events with other community groups, e.g. Allotment Society, WI, church, mother & toddler group

Overcoming challenges & problems – what might stop you using ‘softer’ or more accessible ‘lifestyle’ environmental information to attract new people to your local group?

What challenges do you face?

- Lack of time – enlist help, focus on 1 thing that will make a difference
- Lack of people power – enlist help/advice
- Lack of ideas – post a message on discussion forum on our websites to get other ideas about how other local groups have attracted new members/the public?
 - <http://www.foe.co.uk/living/forum/> - Living site gives ‘green lifestyle’ advice and is aimed at anyone interested in green issues.
 - http://community.foe.co.uk/quote_unquote/ - Community site aims to provide advice specifically for local groups, campaigners and activists
 - Ask Naomi Hunt, Local campaigns information officer – naomih@foe.co.uk
- Lack of confidence – buddy up with someone from this workshop; keep in touch with us in the Publications team (nicolaba@foe.co.uk, ritam@foe.co.uk)