



**Friends of
the Earth**

How to: gear up for work on climate in 2005

This pull-out reminds us of the environmental and human threats posed by climate change. It outlines the work to be carried out in 2005, and reviews some of the good work done by local groups on climate change in 2004. Political co-ordinator Mike Childs reports

In the first half of the year the Government is reviewing its Climate Change Policy. This critical document will indicate whether the Government is willing to deliver real cuts in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions.

In July the G8 Summit will be in Scotland, an event where the heads of the richest countries get together and at which Tony Blair has promised to make climate change and poverty top agenda items.

For the second half of the year the UK holds the presidency of the European Union. It will lead negotiations for the EU at the crucial First Meeting

of the Parties of the Kyoto Protocol in November, a meeting at which negotiations begin in earnest on longer-term and, hopefully, equitable future cuts in greenhouse gases.

For these reasons Friends of the Earth is making climate change its priority campaign for 2005.

The unanimous support given to a motion to prioritise climate change in the motions debate at Conference in 2004, together with feedback from groups to a consultation in September 2004, confirm to us that local groups support us in this.

Key dates in 2005

March

Launch of Climate Change Bill that aims to make it a legal requirement for the Government to deliver sustained cuts in carbon dioxide emissions. We will need help from local groups and supporters to get the support needed from MPs.

Friends of the Earth award ceremony for local groups who have taken part in the Climate Challenge (see p13) and launch of our climate work in 2005 and beyond.

If you would like to take part, please contact Karine Pellaumail on karinep@foe.co.uk or phone 020 7566 1686.

May

General Election

Launch of high profile public awareness campaign to reach new audiences

June

UK takes up Presidency of European Union

Friends of the Earth Cymru conference

July

Leaders of eight richest countries meet at G8 meeting in Scotland

9-11 Sept

Local Groups Conference

Nov

First ministerial meeting of the ratified Kyoto Protocol where negotiations on deeper and longer-term cuts in greenhouse gases start in earnest.

What we will do in 2005

We will:

- talk to groups living near big coal-fired power stations (major sources of carbon dioxide) to discuss how we can campaign together to accelerate the close-down of these carbon dinosaurs and replace them with cleaner alternatives.
- respond to the Government's Climate Change Policy review and publish research showing how year-on-year emissions reductions can be achieved.
- work with our international colleagues to influence the preparations and outcomes of the First Meetings of Parties of the Kyoto Protocol in November.
- provide advice, guidance and support for local groups wanting to influence local or regional decision-makers on climate change or wanting to raise awareness amongst local people about the threats and solutions of climate change.

What you can do in 2005



Support the Climate Change Bill

Groups are obviously free to devise and adapt their existing campaigns to get across to the public the importance of climate change. Nationally we will concentrate on the Climate Change Bill and on reducing emissions from the major carbon dioxide emitters.

You can help us gain support from MPs for a new Bill. Some MPs will willingly sign up to support the Bill because they understand the need for reductions in CO₂ emissions. Others need more persuasion. Groups can lobby their MP to support the Bill, and increase pressure by organising public meetings and recruiting the support of other sympathetic groups (church groups, local development groups, other green groups). The greater the number of MPs supporting it, the greater the chance of the Bill being passed. The run-up to the general election is an ideal opportunity to lobby your MP as they are particularly interested in supporting constituents at this time.

Lobby regional bodies, your Local Authority and local businesses to reduce emissions



Lobbying local authorities and local businesses to reduce emissions is a very useful contribution in the fight against climate change. The 2004 Climate Challenge provided some groups with experience on this and we will share this experience across the network.



Oppose coal-fired power stations & airport expansions

If your group is based near a giant coal-fired power station, you'll be hearing from us. These monsters release huge amounts of carbon dioxide and produce energy very inefficiently. If the UK is to begin to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide quickly, we must target these sources. We want to explore with groups how to win the support of local people for the plants to be phased-out and sustainable alternatives put in place.

If you are near a proposed airport expansion, Richard Dyer in our transport team is keen to work with you. Although aviation is a small part of current UK greenhouse gas emissions it is growing rapidly and needs to be restrained.



Raise the profile of climate change locally

Research consistently tells us that although the public understand that climate change is happening, they do not understand its causes or how it may impact on them. Raising the public understanding of climate change is therefore an important priority for environment groups. Nationally we'll be organising an advertising campaign to increase the profile of climate change. Street stalls, leaflet drops and giving presentations to other groups meetings are also good tried and tested methods for increasing understanding of environmental issues. Public opinion matters to politicians; they need to know that they can take action without being punished in the polls.

Climate challenge 2004

Over 40 local groups took part in the climate challenge in 2004, each group registering one or more challenges



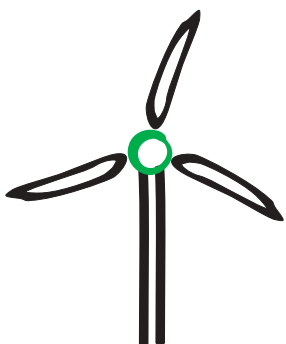
1▶ The most popular challenge by far was the **green electricity challenge**, taken up by 24 local groups. Groups generally tried to get between 50 and 200 people to switch to green electricity. Most publicised green electricity through giving leaflets at stalls; some groups used

articles in the local press. One of the difficulties encountered by local groups has been how to keep track of the number of people signed. Some groups got round this by asking people to sign a pledge or by organising the energy supplier switching on behalf of interested people.



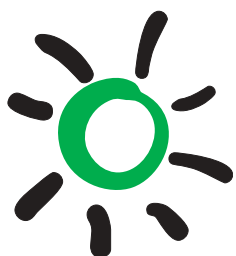
2▶ The second most popular challenge was to **persuade your Local Authority to ensure that all large developments must include renewables**; this was taken up by 11 local groups. For instance, ARROW (affiliate of Ormskirk Friends of the Earth) succeeded in getting their Parish Council to include points on renewables and energy efficiency in their response to the District Council consultation

on local development plan. Maidenhead Friends of the Earth asked their Local Authority to incorporate in their planning guidelines the requirement that “all large new developments be designed to meet at least 10 per cent of their energy needs from renewable sources”. The Planning Department said they would look into incorporating the requirement into the Local Development Framework.



3▶ The challenge to **help a proposed renewables project through planning** was also popular, with eight groups registered. Reading, Wokingham and Maidenhead joined forces in writing letters to the relevant planning department in support of a wind farm in Green Park, Reading, which was proposed by Ecotricity. And in July 2004, Wokingham District Council Planning Committee passed the application by six votes to five, in spite of strong opposition from a local Parish Council and

the Council for the Protection of Rural England. Jill Perry and other members of Friends of the Earth West Cumbria attended public meetings, presented evidence to public inquiries and wrote letters supporting wind farms to newspapers and the local authority. In all, they supported 11 wind farms of various sizes, on and offshore, in rural and semi-urban areas. Of those, five have gone ahead and two are consented but not yet built.



4▶ Camel Friends of the Earth in North Cornwall has been an inspiration for the challenge to **install your own renewables**. Its Energy Campaigner Mike Grigg designed his own solar-heated house. The house has a south-facing conservatory and a glazed roof to collect

solar energy. Its floors and walls have also been designed to store heat and release it when the sun is not shining. Consequently, space and water heating costs are very low, in the region of £50 per year.

“ The challenge represents joined-up thinking between local and global issues. It offers a real chance for people to solve big problems by doing many small things together.”
Jeremy Doyle, Bath Friends of the Earth

“ Climate challenge gave us a flexible menu to work with, an open time-frame, and lots of good ideas!”
Quentin Given, Tottenham & Wood Green Friends of the Earth

Why is climate change an organisational priority?

A year ago the Government seemed set to maintain its position as a world leader on climate change, with its manifesto commitment to reduce CO₂ emissions by 20 per cent by 2010 from 1990 levels and a promise within the 2003 Energy White Paper to reduce emissions by 60 per cent by 2050. Over the past 12 months, however, the Government has made three significant decisions that completely undermine the UK's leading position on climate change.

- The National Allocation Plan which grants industry permits to release carbon dioxide under the EU Emissions Trading Regime will only reduce emissions from industry by a tiny amount over the next couple of years.
- The Transport White Paper, published in July 2004, announced that the Government was going to allow carbon dioxide emissions from road traffic to increase until 2010.
- The Aviation White Paper, published in December 2003, revealed that the Government had decided to allow the expansion of a number of airports, leading to a dramatic increase in greenhouse emissions.

In addition to these political failings a number of research reports have been published which identify the impacts of changing weather patterns and suggest future impacts.

- In early 2004 a research report in *Nature* suggested that a million species could be at risk of extinction because the habitats they live in will change as a result of higher temperatures.

- The summer of 2004 saw a near complete breeding failure among the seabirds which nest on the northern coasts of Britain. The skuas, auks, guillemots, terns and gulls arrived on the Orkney and Shetland Isles as usual in spring, but failed to breed. Some 170,000 pairs of guillemots produced no young at all while skuas turned to cannibalism. The reason was lack of food. These birds rely on sand eels to rear chicks, but there were no sand eels because warmer seas had driven the sand eels further north.
- A research report in late 2004 by the UK Metrological Office suggested that the heat wave of 2003, which killed tens of thousands of people across Europe and ruined crops, will become the norm by the middle of the century.

Climate change is our priority over the next year, as suggested by groups at Conference. It cuts across a number of existing campaign areas, such as transport, energy and economics.

It enables us to show that:

- we are an international organisation that believes in taking local to global action to solve the world's biggest problems, which tend to hit the poorest hardest;
- our work is based on quality science, with scientists from across the globe sounding the alarm bells and warning of limits to the amount of greenhouse gases we can release;
- solving environmental problems is as much an issue for the Treasury as it is the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

We have a powerpoint presentation (.ppt) and a document with notes (.pdf) on Community to show your local group:

http://community.foe.co.uk/resource/event_presentations/climate_change_campaign_2005.ppt

http://community.foe.co.uk/resource/event_presentations/climate_change_campaign_2005.pdf



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Bear necessities: changing weather patterns can impact adversely on the habitats of endangered species.