

# Change your world

Friends of the Earth's magazine  
for local groups and activists  
[www.foe.co.uk/community](http://www.foe.co.uk/community)

**Turning points**  
**The future of  
activism**  
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**Friends of  
the Earth**

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# Turning over a new leaf?



2009 is drawing to a close with climate change top of the agenda as the talks in Copenhagen focus international attention to environmental, human rights and biodiversity issues.

High profile activist events such as the Wave in London and Belfast on December 5, and the Flood in Copenhagen itself have all emphasized the important role of ordinary people coming together to campaign and to put pressure on the world's decision makers. Check out page 5 for an update on the Demand Climate *Change* campaign. Also featured are round-ups of the year for Food Chain and Get Serious About CO<sub>2</sub>

(pages 6 - 9) and there are updates on some of the year's great legal work (page 10) and on the Europe-wide resource use campaign (page 11). We're also looking ahead to 2010 with tips for making the most of New Year's resolutions on page 16.

The next issue of *Change your world* (80) will be dropping in early February 2010. *CYW 80* will only cover February and will be a slimmer, less colourful version than usual. We've had to do this as a result of capacity issues and prioritizing the development of the January regional gathering events (page 15). *CYW* will be back to normal for March/April (issue 81).

Meanwhile send your comments and inspirations to [cyw@foe.co.uk](mailto:cyw@foe.co.uk) **Jess**

## Diary

### DECEMBER

**5 The Wave, London** starting at Grosvenor Square, London [www.foe.co.uk/community/news/the\\_wave\\_19955.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/news/the_wave_19955.html)

**7-18 Copenhagen climate talks** [www.demandclimatechange.com](http://www.demandclimatechange.com)

### JANUARY

**16 Greater South East Regional Gathering, London**

Contact Katie Higgins: [katie.higgins@foe.co.uk](mailto:katie.higgins@foe.co.uk) or 020 7566 1660

**16 West Midlands Regional Gathering, Birmingham**

Contact tim.atkinson@foe.co.uk or 0121 643 7456

**16 North West Regional Gathering, Preston**

Contact rachel.hubbard@foe.co.uk or 0113 2428151

**16 North East Regional Gathering, Newcastle.**

Contact carla.doran@foe.co.uk or 0796 0018 257

**23 East Midlands Regional Gathering, Derby.**

Contact tim.atkinson@foe.co.uk or 0121 643 7456

**23 South West Regional Gathering, Exeter.**

Contact katie.higgins@foe.co.uk or 020 7566 1660

**23 Yorkshire and the Humber Regional Gathering, Leeds.**

Contact carla.doran@foe.co.uk or 0796 0018 257

**28 Public Meeting - Infrastructure Planning Commission & Energy in Wales (tbc). Cardiff**

Contact bleddyn.lake@foe.co.uk or 029 20229643

**30 Power Up Wales – date tbc.**

Contact bleddyn.lake@foe.co.uk or 029 20229643

### FEBRUARY

**Various dates/locations Demand Climate Change post Copenhagen meetings: Wales**

Contact bleddyn.lake@foe.co.uk or 029 20229643

### MAY

**8-9 Northern Gathering, Howarth Youth Hostel, Keighley, Yorkshire.**

Contact rachel.hubbard@foe.co.uk or 0113 2428151

**21 Friends of the Earth Cymru annual local groups conference 2010**

Contact: bleddyn.lake@foe.co.uk or 029 20229643

### HIGHLIGHTED EVENT

**JANUARY Regional Gatherings**



# Activism and the future **Neil Kingsnorth**

**There's a new name for the Capacity Building team and a new Head of Activism. So what does that mean for the future of activism?**



I've worked at Friends of the Earth for five years, always directly with local groups, in what used to be called the Capacity Building team. Now that team has a new name, the Activism team, and I have a new role as Head of Activism. These changes are part of wider restructuring within Friends of the Earth.

As a staff member who is also active in local groups, I know that the network is incredible: powerful, committed, informed and passionate. The work that's done at the local level on the issues that matter in your communities is central to what groups are about. Likewise, the work we do when the network joins major campaigns delivers phenomenal change; change that often just couldn't occur otherwise.

Activism is at the core of Friends of the Earth's work. Lots of different people in different teams have key roles to play supporting it. The role of the Activism team is to ensure that

activism at all levels is as empowering and powerful as possible. That means supporting and strengthening groups and the groups' network through training; resources; events; information and powerful, coordinated campaigns. The team works to ensure that the groups' network is as strong as it can be to tackle issues locally and support the major campaigns that the organisation runs. Your Network Developer is the front line of that work, working with others in the team to develop campaigns, support and resources. The team also works to develop ways for individuals to take action and increase the impact of our campaigns.

Looking ahead, we have issues to tackle together. We must ensure that groups get the support and information they need for campaigning and offer that assistance in the format that best suits local groups; we need to improve access to campaign opportunities when they arise and to the staff who are best placed to help. We need to provide the right resources at the right times and make sure that plans for big campaigns work even more effectively for you; we also need to identify more and better ways to bring your knowledge and skills together so that you can strengthen each other.

This coming year is our opportunity to do all of that together. But of course there are real-world challenges we have to meet, too. As a unique network working to confront environmental issues and promote genuine solutions, both locally and globally, we're well placed to build on some incredible successes together.

**Here's to 2010.**

## Noticeboard **Key updates, events and opportunities**

Got something to share? Email [cyw@foe.co.uk](mailto:cyw@foe.co.uk) and let us know what's on your mind.

### Why should I come to a regional gathering?

The January gatherings are a brilliant opportunity for groups in your region to meet and find out more about Friends of the Earth's national campaigns in 2010 – as well as a chance to share news on how your local campaigns are progressing. There will be talks, workshops and opportunities to get to know other group members in your area. Check the Diary on page 2 for details of your nearest gathering. Alternatively, contact your Network Developer for more information.

### Planning early for Board Elections in 2010

Cymru, Northern Ireland and each of the regions elect a Board member to sit on the Boards of Friends of the Earth Limited and Trust for a three-year term. For 2010, elections will be held in the North West, South East and Midlands regions. We encourage every local group member in these regions to consider standing. It's a great opportunity to help steer the work of Friends of the Earth. Find out more at: [www.foe.co.uk/events/conference/board\\_elections.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/events/conference/board_elections.html)

### Local group insurance cover

Our Public & Products and Employer's Liability insurance policies for all licensed local groups were renewed in November. Find updated documents at: [www.foe.co.uk/community/local\\_groups/resource/insurance.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/local_groups/resource/insurance.html)

### Look out for your Partnership Agreement renewal

All groups should expect to receive their renewal forms in February or March and all paperwork must be returned by 1 May 2010. The Partnership Agreement comes with lots of useful documents, such as data protection guidance and a list of current resources and support. You can download all documents here: [www.foe.co.uk/community/local\\_groups/resource/partnership\\_agreement.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/local_groups/resource/partnership_agreement.html)

### Activism and regional staff changes

Following internal staffing changes at Friends of the Earth, you can identify the Network Developer and Local & Regional Campaigner responsible for your region at [www.foe.co.uk/community/local\\_groups/staff\\_support.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/local_groups/staff_support.html). Thank you for your patience as we make these changes.

## Campaigner Networks Review update

Following Conference and the local groups' consultation, we've been working on taking forward some of your ideas for improving campaigner networks. We also held a successful local groups' focus-group meeting in October. You'll find the latest updates and ways to get involved on our webpage [www.foe.co.uk/community/local\\_groups/feedback/cn\\_review\\_20493.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/local_groups/feedback/cn_review_20493.html). Also keep an eye out for further updates in *Change your world*.

# A wave of change

DEMAND CLIMATE CHANGE

**As *Change your world* arrives on your doorstep, the Copenhagen climate talks are drawing to a close. Campaigners from the International Climate team have been working hard with our international colleagues to ensure that these talks live up to expectations.**

In the past few days the International Climate Team, along with hundreds of activists from the UK, have been taking part in The Flood. This march through Copenhagen reached its spectacular conclusion in one of the city's main squares, with marchers becoming a living banner spelling out a message to world leaders.

This was preceded by The Wave, a huge event which saw thousands of people gather in London on 5 December for the UK's biggest-ever demonstration for action on climate change. By encircling Parliament we aimed to inspire the Government to quit dirty coal projects, build a green economy and protect the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities – all on the weekend before climate talks started in Copenhagen.

Prior to that was our Climate Justice Now! speaker tour in November, which brought international speakers to the UK to explain why we need an effective global climate agreement that delivers justice for the global south. The tour visited cities across the UK and featured first-hand accounts of how climate change is affecting highly vulnerable communities.

Md Shamsuddoha, for example, leads a rights-based NGO alliance called Equity and Justice Working Group Bangladesh (Equity Bangladesh). He spoke about Equity Bangladesh's vision of a society with equity and

justice based on human rights and democratic values.

With climate talks still in progress, it's impossible for us to predict what the outcome will be. But to find out what's happening right now at the talks, and for up-to-date commentary from Andy Atkins and our friends at Friends of the Earth International, visit the Demand Climate Change blog at: [www.foe.co.uk/climatetalks/blog.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/climatetalks/blog.html)



Telling it like it is: FOEI and BUND

**We will have more opportunities for you to take action on our international climate campaign in the New Year. See our Safe Climate pages: [www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/climate/news/index](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/climate/news/index).**

Send your letters and emails for publication to [cyw@foe.co.uk](mailto:cyw@foe.co.uk) or to Friends of the Earth, 26-28 Underwood Street, London, N1 7JQ

# A serious year of action

**What a year it has been for the Get Serious About CO<sub>2</sub> campaign. Groups across the country have done a fantastic job of getting to grips with what is one of the most complicated campaigns we've ever run. The challenge has been great, but our efforts are starting to pay off.**

The Get Serious About CO<sub>2</sub> campaign is about reducing carbon emissions across the UK by the amount that science says we need to cut to prevent runaway climate change. But it's also a vision for the future. One that engages local people and local councils in creating a truly low-carbon landscape; that helps us meet the challenge of climate change but also makes our cities and villages pleasanter, with less traffic and more green spaces. To top it all, this vision will also make our towns more prosperous, with bustling local economies.

Birmingham Friends of the Earth has done a fantastic job of adapting this vision for their city. Their Get Serious Manifesto outlines low-carbon policies for Birmingham taking in homes, energy and transport, and calls for measurable targets for 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2025 that will show how the council will reach their target of 60 per cent cuts by 2026.

Leeds Friends of the Earth caught the public eye with a Serious Stand-Off at their stall. Passers-by were asked how long they could stay serious about climate change: contestants donned wigs and other silly headwear, and were challenged to stare each other down for as long as they could without smiling. The resulting laughter drew a crowd and the group managed to get more than 70 postcards signed, despite the pouring rain. For a round up of all your seriously creative stunts from 2009, see Community [www.foe.co.uk/community/campaigns/climate/round\\_up\\_21974](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/campaigns/climate/round_up_21974).

## Serious successes

Harrogate and Manchester Councils have both released action plans detailing how they will



Gosport & Fareham Friends of the Earth

## Doing the business: Gosport & Fareham Friends of the Earth

meet a target of 40 per cent by 2020, while Haringey has committed to meeting 40 per cent and will begin putting a plan together this month. Tim Root from Haringey Friends of the Earth said:

“We had good contacts with Labour councillors, but we also targeted the Lib Dem group with postcards and presented the campaign to them. When the council debated the motion for a 40 per cent target the Lib Dems put down a strengthening amendment which ensured that the leader would be firmly responsible for meeting the target – both parties agreed and the motion passed unanimously.”

As the year draws to a close, many groups are preparing to lobby their council, build alliances, celebrate successes and establish firm action plans for 2010. Look out for extra training days in the early part of the year, plus a tool to help you assess your action plans.

There are great resources available at [www.foe.co.uk/community/campaigns/climate/community\\_engagement\\_21594.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/campaigns/climate/community_engagement_21594.html)



Picture: The Press, York

## Spelling it out: York & Ryedale Friends of the Earth

Also, don't forget to sign up to come to your regional gathering to find out more about all the major campaign plans for 2010 (see Diary on page 2).

## National action in 2010

Nationally we'll be persuading the Government to ensure all councils take action on climate – by setting a minimum level of action that all local authorities must take, and by providing proper funding for councils to retrofit poorly insulated homes to energy-efficient standards.

Thanks to your campaigning, all three major political parties are now considering how to roll out the Climate Change Act to councils. We want to make sure that this is done properly. Your help, as ever, will make all the difference.

For more information contact [donna.hume@foe.co.uk](mailto:donna.hume@foe.co.uk) or 020 7566 4088



Leeds Friends of the Earth

## Serious standoff: Leeds Friends of the Earth

# Chain reaction

From the smallest rural groups to activism in big cities, 2009 has been a year of innovative and creative Food Chain campaigning across the country.



Swansea Friends of the Earth

You've done a brilliant job of putting big international issues like deforestation and climate change onto the agenda, showing how everyone can play their part in fixing the food chain. This issue of *Change your world* puts the spotlight on just a couple of your local campaigns to reveal the quality of campaigning on this issue:

## Picnic in St Pancras

Camden Friends of the Earth took their Food Chain picnic to St Pancras station, complete with their egg piñata and home-made goodies. Local Green councillor Maya de Souza joined the picnic to highlight the need for planet-friendly farming. The picnic attracted lots of interest including a great writeup in the local press – see more at [www.camdenfoe.org.uk/campaigns/fix-the-food-chain/](http://www.camdenfoe.org.uk/campaigns/fix-the-food-chain/)

## The Food Chain Campaign in 2010

There's no denying that 2009 has been a strong start for the Food Chain Campaign. Well over 30,000 people took action, we exceeded our target number of signatures for EDM 845, and our food activists are more involved in Friends of the Earth's food campaign than ever before.



Hull Friends of the Earth



James Mockett

Now that we've done the hard work of waking politicians up to the issue, we've got the equally important job of making sure they act. The Food Chain Fortnight was the start of this, and hopefully we'll see some of our solutions in the political parties' election manifestos.

There are going to be lots more opportunities for you to campaign in 2010. Building strong relationships with parliamentary candidates will be key to success after the election – as will closer ties with farmers and other key players in your communities.

But it's not all going to be about parliamentary processes. Next year we want to do more to show people how they fit into the food chain themselves, and what that means for them and their families. So it's going to be a busy year. After a fantastic 2009, we hope it will be another successful one.

For further information and to let us know how fixing the Food Chain is working for you, email [Richard.hines@foe.co.uk](mailto:Richard.hines@foe.co.uk) and sign up to: [www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/biodiversity/press\\_for\\_change/join\\_list\\_index.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/biodiversity/press_for_change/join_list_index.html)

## DRESSING THE PART



Newcastle-Gateshead Friends of the Earth

Newcastle-Gateshead Friends of the Earth took the campaign to the streets of the North East with the help of a hired chicken costume. With flocks of passers-by stopping to have their photo taken with the chicken, the group got loads of postcards signed.

Meanwhile, Bromley Friends of the Earth showed creativity by proving you don't have to go the whole hog and hire a costume to dress up effectively. With just some coloured paper, glue and a piece of string, they made some really eye-catching animal masks. Kids loved them at a talk the group did at a local primary school.

**Friends of the Earth groups get cracking**  
from left to right: Swansea, Hull, Camden, Birmingham, Lambeth



Birmingham Friends of the Earth



Lambeth Friends of the Earth

## Fair future

### Latest legal successes from the Rights and Justice Centre

The Rights and Justice Centre won a landmark judgment in the High Court on behalf of local waste campaign hero Shlomo Downen, who came along to Power Up 2009. Shlomo wanted Nottinghamshire County Council to give him details of their £850 million contract with giant waste company Veolia. Veolia took out an injunction against the Council to stop them giving Shlomo the information, but their case was thrown out by the High Court.

This judgment sets an important precedent for local authorities and for people seeking information from their councils about how their money is being spent.

#### Further cases

Our lawyers are also acting on behalf of Fight the Flights, a community group opposing expansion of London City Airport. They're taking Newham Council to court for failing to consult residents in affected boroughs.

We also filed a legal challenge against the Environment Agency on behalf of HOTI, a

**“This legal challenge aims to give local people a voice on big decisions happening in their area.”**

Lawyer Gita Parihar

community campaign group based in Hull. HOTI are opposing a big new incinerator in their area and are promoting sustainable waste technology alternatives.

This case raises important questions about the UK's compliance with laws on organic pollutants and about consultation requirements with regard to environmental impacts.

Our lawyer Laura Gyte also took the case to the European Commission to complain about how the contract was granted, and as a result Government funding for the project has been scrapped. This means that the incinerator is unlikely to go ahead as originally planned.

Sign up for more updates on our legal cases [www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/fair\\_future/press\\_for\\_change/join\\_list\\_index.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/fair_future/press_for_change/join_list_index.html)

### Major infrastructure must deliver climate change targets

The New Planning Act 2008 sets out the system for approving major infrastructure projects like roads, airports and power stations.

There will be National Policy Statements (NPS) on major energy and transport, plus a new unaccountable decisionmaking body known as the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC).

Our concern is that these policy statements don't take climate change properly into account.

We need to make sure that decisions will help us to reach climate change targets by:

- assessing the carbon emissions impact of each National Policy Statement
- providing strong guidance for decisionmakers on carbon emissions
- ensuring that there is a link between National Policy Statements and national Carbon Budgets

Take part in our Press for Change Action at: [www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/fair\\_future/press\\_for\\_change/index.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/fair_future/press_for_change/index.html)

## Healthy planet

### Reducing resource use across Europe

Our new report *Gone to Waste* shows that we waste £650 million every year by dumping and incinerating rubbish which, if recycled, could save 19 million tonnes of greenhouse gases annually – equivalent to taking around six million cars off the roads ([www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/gone\\_to\\_waste.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/gone_to_waste.pdf)). We're using the report to make the case to EU decisionmakers that our resource use is too high and needs to be measured and reduced.

The means by which Europe should measure its resource use is currently being decided by the European Union (through the Thematic Strategy on Natural Resources). We've been building a coalition of Friends of the Earth Europe groups and other NGOs to influence this process, and to ensure that the best resource use indicators are used – including material use, water use, land use and greenhouse gas emissions.

In the longer run, we'll be working with activists and local groups to push for targets to reduce our resource use and for EU and UK policies, such as higher recycling rates, that will make this reduction in resource use possible.

### Join our network

**If you are fighting an incinerator proposal, why not use ready-made resources?**

For resources of the UK Without Incineration Network (UKWIN) see [www.ukwin.org.uk](http://www.ukwin.org.uk)

For relevant materials, including our new briefing outlining the key risks of signing up to a long waste contract, plus 10 key questions to ask if your council is considering doing so,

#### Recycling across the UK

Recycling has been increasing in the UK in recent years. Some councils, like South Oxfordshire, have even achieved 70 per cent recycling rates. Another exemplary area is Somerset, where more than 50 per cent of household waste is recycled. The Somerset Waste Partnership uses a range of great techniques to achieve this, including collecting recycling materials separately at the kerbside, composting food waste, and operating effective local waste recycling centres that handle as many materials as possible.

However, many councils aren't using these best-practice systems and don't have high enough aspirations for their recycling activities. Lack of ambition and the danger of over-investment in residual waste treatment capacity means we are at serious risk of wasting recyclable resources and increasing our detrimental impact on the climate.

We're hearing that demand for waste for an incinerator in Kent is preventing the extension of furniture reuse, while in Hampshire incineration over-capacity is stopping food waste collections from being introduced.

see [www.foe.co.uk/community/campaigns/incineration\\_index.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/campaigns/incineration_index.html)

Many groups are campaigning successfully against proposals all over the country. Recently, People Against Incineration (PAIN) campaigner Shlomo Downen, coordinator of UKWIN, won a landmark High Court case with the help of our Rights and Justice team. See page 10.



# Grassroots news

## Welcome back, Durham group!

In October, the Durham group had their first meeting since they decided to take some time out in March. New coordinator Richard Harkness was at the forefront of the group's relaunch.

### So, how did they do it?

#### ★ Creating and maintaining a dialogue

The group set up an online forum where members could share ideas.

#### ★ Raising their local profile

Durham made an effort to build links with other environmental groups in the area. They used these links to organise a screening of *Age of Stupid*, where they recruited new members.

#### ★ Taking action

After the screening Richard and members of other local green groups gave a talk on how to take action locally, inspiring a large proportion of the audience to sign up to the 10:10 campaign. Having built momentum, the next step was to book a meeting space and start advertising their relaunch meeting.

In early October, after much effort, Durham Friends of the Earth reaped the rewards: nine people attended the meeting, including five new members. They discussed new directions for the group and importantly they all left with an action to complete for the next meeting in November. The evening ended with a well-earned pint. [www.durhamfoe.org.uk](http://www.durhamfoe.org.uk)

## Birmingham: Car-free day

In October, Birmingham Friends of the Earth promoted an In Town Without My Car day.

The group challenged Birmingham's so-called "Power 50" – a group of prominent local business people, politicians and celebrities – to do without a car for a day. One local councillor, Salma Yaqoob, took up the challenge and allowed group members to accompany her for a car-free day. See more at: [www.birminghamfoe.blogspot.com](http://www.birminghamfoe.blogspot.com)



www.greensnapperphotography.com

## South Cheshire: Cooking up a Food Chain buzz

South Cheshire Friends of the Earth created a buzz at the Nantwich Food & Drink Festival.

Taking a creative approach to promoting the Food Chain Campaign and the benefits of local food, they organised ethical cookery demonstrations with well-known local food writer Jenny Brule.

[www.foesouthcheshire.org.uk](http://www.foesouthcheshire.org.uk)



South Cheshire Friends of the Earth

## Bude: Beach survey and clean



Bude Friends of the Earth

The all-new Bude group took part in the Marine Conservation Society's annual beach survey and cleanup in September.

Members spent three hours surveying the high water mark of two beaches and then collected more than 2,500 non-natural items that had been washed ashore.

[www.foe.co.uk/groups/bude](http://www.foe.co.uk/groups/bude)

## Oxford: Livestock gig

Rocky the campaigning chicken hosted the Oxford group's Food Chain Campaign fundraising gig, which raised nearly £300 for the group.

[www.oxfoe.co.uk](http://www.oxfoe.co.uk)



Oxford Friends of the Earth

## Walsall: 21 years of campaigning



Walsall Friends of the Earth

The Walsall group celebrated their 21st anniversary with a meal and an inspirational, interactive talk for new and old members.

[www.foe.co.uk/groups/walsall](http://www.foe.co.uk/groups/walsall)

## Spotlight on...

### Milieudedefensie (Friends of the Earth Netherlands)

If there's one thing local group campaigners in the Netherlands really like to do, it's dress up for photo stunts. *Change your world* caught up with our friends at Milieudedefensie to learn about how they do it...

#### Tell us about one of your favourite stunts

One of the most successful photo stunts was "Miss Piggy". In 2006, we started a campaign on industrial farming. The goal of this campaign was to have a debate in our parliament about three issues: animal welfare, the environmental damage caused by soy production in South America and local pollution, such as manure. In order to put this subject (literally) on the agenda of the parliament we had to collect 40,000 signatures. In the Netherlands this number of signatures gives you the opportunity to ask for a debate through a "citizen's initiative".

The Miss Piggies became a symbol of the campaign. Local group members could dress up (the office supplied the costumes and piggy noses) as Miss Piggy while collecting signatures. They also took photos of people who signed posing with Miss Piggy and holding up a sign with a message to

politicians. This generated lots of useful press coverage.

#### Why do you do photo stunts?

Photo stunts are a fun thing to do for campaigners and for the public. In the Netherlands most people are bored by "ordinary" stands with a couple of flyers, but a photo stunt can really catch the interest of the audience and the press. Photo stunts can give a face to anonymous signature lists: you can show the faces of the people who support your campaign on your website. People often ask to have their picture sent to them by email and so afterwards you can ask them if they want to subscribe to your email list or invite them to take part in other events.

#### Have there been any times where the photo stunt hasn't worked as well as you hoped?

Pop festivals are a very good place to do a photo stunt but only during the daytime. In the evening there's too many people who've had a pint too many and they can react a little strangely to Miss Piggies.

#### What advice would you give to local groups in EWNl in terms of planning photo stunts?

Choose an image that is recognisable as a part of a bigger campaign. A local photo stunt has extra value when people have seen that particular image in the newspapers, the web or TV. Always try to combine a photo stunt with an email list and features on your website so people can be informed about future actions, make donations and so on.

[www.milieudedefensie.nl](http://www.milieudedefensie.nl)



Miss Piggies on Parade

## The Insider

### Regional gatherings – get networked, stay passionate!

The Friends of the Earth calendar is full of highlights throughout the year. Some of these highlights are hard to predict; campaign wins, new members joining, great meetings taking place with key decision-makers. However some highlights you can definitely plan for; regional gatherings come into this latter category

**Every year in January and May, Friends of the Earth holds a series of gatherings for local group members in up to seven locations in the England as well as in Cymru and Northern Ireland.**

These gatherings are great opportunities to meet members of other local groups, hear about upcoming national campaigns, share updates on your own local campaigns and take part in skillshares and training. They are also good for recharging your activist batteries. Where else outside of Conference can you hear about the inspirational work of other local groups at first hand and celebrate our triumphs together?

#### Updates on Demand Climate Change

Since the January gatherings will take place in the wake of the Copenhagen climate summit, this is also your opportunity to learn more about the way ahead for the global struggle against climate change.

For newer local group members, the gatherings are a tailor-made introduction to the wider world of Friends of the Earth. We hope that first timers come away armed with skills to help them take action as well as a new-found passion for activism. Do you know of any members of your group who might benefit from the "regional gathering effect"? If so, make sure you encourage them to attend your local gathering in January.

The gatherings also allow longer-standing local group members to share knowledge and experience with others and pass on seasoned advice. Coordinators can pick up

“ I went along to my first regional gathering in Birmingham back in January this year. It was an ideal introduction to Friends of the Earth and the idea of a local group linking into a wider national network. This is reassuring when you're getting involved in environmental campaigning for the first time.

The new Food Chain and Get Serious About CO<sub>2</sub> campaigns were previewed at the gathering and we also heard success stories from some of the other local groups. It was a great opportunity to meet experienced campaigners from other parts of the West Midlands. The mix of presentations and small-group work was just right! ”

**Niall Kealey,  
Solihull Friends of the Earth**

the latest group development resources, while campaigners can connect with like-minded activists and equip themselves with the latest news on their campaign area.

#### Find out more

See the Diary on page 2 for details of your nearest regional gathering and contact your Network Developer for updates on the agenda and plans for the day.

**Make sure group is represented at your regional gathering. Looking forward to seeing you in January.**

Send in your views and reviews to [cyw@foe.co.uk](mailto:cyw@foe.co.uk)

# Activist toolkit

It's time to crack open that new diary and to get planning for the year ahead. Here's a selection of hints and resources to help you on your way to a great year of campaigning action.

## 🔧 Coordinators Corner now online

Whether you are the coordinator of your local group or just interested in knowing a bit more about the role, the Coordinators Corner is a great place to start. There's lots of background information, a calendar to help you plan your events and loads of other resources. Take a look at: [www.foe.co.uk/community/local\\_groups/resource/coordinators\\_20437.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/local_groups/resource/coordinators_20437.html).

## 🔧 Get together to plan

You might be working on one campaign or several, or thinking about putting on a big event this year – whatever your situation, putting some time aside to form a plan always pays off in the long run. This guide can help you through the process: [www.foe.co.uk/resource/how\\_tos/cyw\\_70\\_plan\\_ahead.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/how_tos/cyw_70_plan_ahead.pdf). Once you've got plans in place don't forget to update your group website so readers can get those key dates in their diaries.

## 🔧 Resolve to volunteer

This time of year is a great opportunity to encourage people to volunteer with Friends of the Earth, either as part of your local group or by taking action through [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk). Why not ask people to make activism resolutions at your next stall? If you need to provide some incentives, this article describes the benefits of volunteering from the fun-factor to economic gains: [www.intelligentgiving.com/the\\_best\\_new\\_years\\_resolution\\_ever\\_0](http://www.intelligentgiving.com/the_best_new_years_resolution_ever_0).

Get support from your regional staff at: [www.foe.co.uk/community/local\\_groups/regional\\_staffing\\_21394.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/local_groups/regional_staffing_21394.html)



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**Friends of the Earth**

**Making life better for people by inspiring solutions to environmental problems**

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