

# 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)

## Mercury rising

Things are  
hotting up



**Friends of  
the Earth**

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## A summer of exciting opportunities

As I write this, the sun is shining. It's making me think of picnics, meadows and summer festivals. Things really are hotting up.

September will be a key time for us, with our 40th anniversary Conference (p10-11) and the launch of a major new energy campaign (p4). But there's lots to do before then too.

There are regional gatherings to attend (dates below), a wealth of campaign activities (p4-9), and stories from around the network to savour (p12-13). Get your teeth into new fundraising opportunities (p14-15) and start thinking about

how you can help us celebrate creatively at Conference (p10-11).

There's also time to reflect on what we can learn from a green energy revolution in California (p5) and start planning our own Big Energy Conversation back home (p4 and p16).

Enjoy it – there's something for everyone.

Jill Andrews, Editor

## Diary

### JUNE

**10-12 Island Gathering, County Down**  
niall.bakewell@foe.co.uk or 028 9089 7592

**17-19 South West Gathering**  
katie.higgins@foe.co.uk or 020 7566 1660

**25 East Midlands Gathering**  
tim.atkinson@foe.co.uk or 0121 643 7456

**25 Greater South East Gathering**  
tom.wright@foe.co.uk or 020 7566 1673

### JULY

**1-3 Power Up, London**  
[www.foe.co.uk/news/power\\_up\\_27151.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/news/power_up_27151.html)

**2 West Midlands Gathering**  
tim.atkinson@foe.co.uk or 0121 643 7456

**2-3 Northern Gathering**  
rachel.hubbard@foe.co.uk or 0113 242 8151

### SEPTEMBER

**9-11 Conference, Nottingham**  
[www.foe.co.uk/conference](http://www.foe.co.uk/conference)

## SAVE THE DATE

### GREEN OPERA

Friends of the Earth has joined forces with The Opera Group to create a new street opera – **Save the Diva**. It focuses on climate change and consumerism and is a great way for local groups to engage new audiences. There's also a full-length opera, **Seven Angels**, based on Milton's Paradise Lost.

### Save the Diva

Birmingham	4 June
Brighton	12 June
Glasgow	18 June
London	13 July

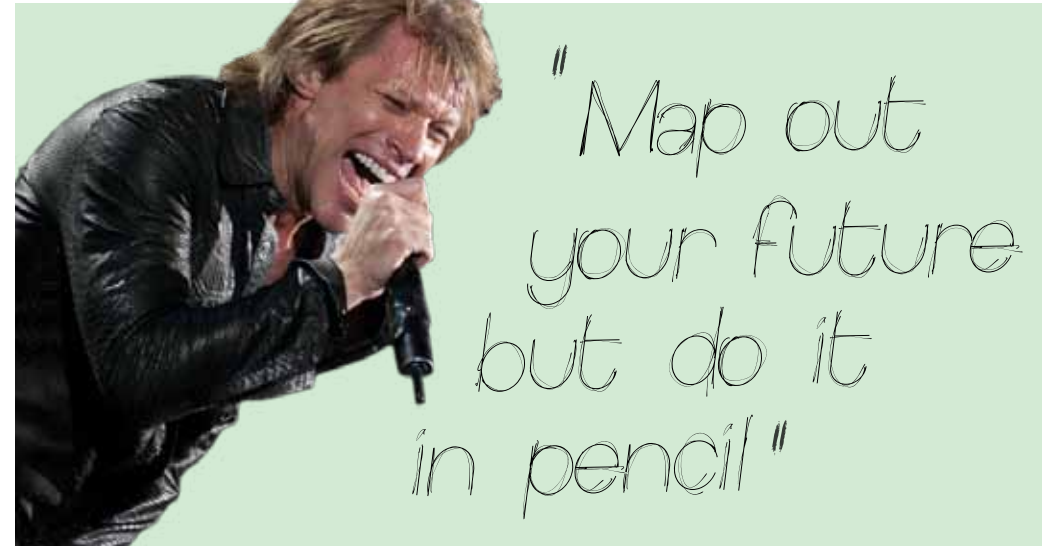
### Seven Angels

Birmingham	17/18 June
Cardiff	20 June
Glasgow	28/29 June
Brighton	3 July
Oxford	8 July
London	12/14/15 July

More information at [www.foe.co.uk/news/the\\_opera\\_group\\_30506.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/news/the_opera_group_30506.html)

## Pencilling in new possibilities

There are few opportunities at Friends of the Earth to quote the wisdom of early 90's musicians. But Jon Bon Jovi's insight "map out your future but do it in pencil" strikes a chord with me, writes Senior Activism Coordinator, Jess Dolan.



McZany Photography

This quote speaks to me of a future carefully considered but not set in stone. All the thinking and planning we've been doing over the last few months is now yielding exciting possibilities for our campaigns and activism. There are loads of ways for individuals and groups to get involved, and an emphasis on choice so that you can match what you do with your availability and interests.

In June and July we'll be running events across England and Northern Ireland, including a new weekend residential event for activists in the South West (see opposite). You'll also be able to share your campaign successes and learn more about our new plans at Conference (p10-11).

Lots of groups are planning summer activities, from getting involved with festivals to joining forces with The Opera Group to bring music and activism to life locally (see opposite). And if you fancy working up a sweat for a good cause, why not sign up for the Big Green Bike Ride, our new fundraising challenge (p15)?

I'm also looking forward to the events we don't know about yet – the things that just bubble up and happen because the right idea comes along at the right time.

Keep an eye on [www.foe.co.uk/actlocal](http://www.foe.co.uk/actlocal) for news on what's happening across the network this summer.

## UK Climate

### Big Energy Conversation

**This summer we're kicking off a Big Energy Conversation before the launch of our exciting new energy campaign in September. We want a future of clean energy that will cut carbon, create jobs, and free us from the control of big power companies and our addiction to pricey fossil fuels.**

With rising oil prices and nuclear power in the spotlight again, it's crazy that clean energy is at risk. But it is. The feed-in tariff scheme, which pays people to generate their own green energy, is under threat. And the Government is limiting the amount of green energy projects it supports, whilst also planning to invest in a new generation of nuclear power stations.

But the UK has enough renewable energy resources to meet virtually all our energy needs. We need to change our energy supply to a combination of big projects such as offshore wind, mixed with homes, schools and businesses run as mini-power stations. We also need massive energy efficiency improvements, particularly in our homes.

So this summer we need your help to tackle the urgent threat to community energy – and to build the case for massive investment in new wind, wave and tidal technology.

We're asking you to start gathering evidence of the impact of the Government's indecision on its commitment to renewable energy. You'll also have an opportunity to assess the local potential for renewable energy generation (see back page for top tips on identifying allies). Together we can use this research to show just



**Just like this London primary school's energy roof, many buildings have the potential to generate their own renewable energy.**

how many people are interested in a clean, green energy future.

If you haven't signed up yet, you need to let us know as soon as possible that you'd like to be involved.

Contact your Network Developer now to register for your Big Energy Conversation resource pack.

Find their details at [www.foe.co.uk/community/local\\_groups/staff\\_support.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/local_groups/staff_support.html)



### Energy Bill update

Local groups have been holding public meetings across the country, putting pressure on MPs to deliver a strong Energy Bill that will eradicate fuel poverty and ensure local councils take action to cut emissions. See [www.foe.co.uk/community/energybill](http://www.foe.co.uk/community/energybill)

There's still time (just) to lobby your MP before the Bill becomes law. Download our action guide at [www.foe.co.uk/resource/action\\_guides/energy\\_bill\\_lobbying.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/action_guides/energy_bill_lobbying.pdf). Or see if there's anything already planned in your area at [www.foe.co.uk/bigconnection](http://www.foe.co.uk/bigconnection)

### High Speed Rail must cut carbon

The Government is consulting on plans to build a 400 kph High Speed Rail line from London to Birmingham. We urgently need improvements to our rail network, but a high speed line will only cut carbon emissions if it's part of a wider transport strategy designed to shift people away from cars and planes.

We need people to change their short journey habits first – walking, cycling, car-sharing or using public transport. Tell the Government we urgently need to prioritise cutting emissions from these trips at [www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/climate/press\\_for\\_change/hsr\\_consultation\\_30412.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/climate/press_for_change/hsr_consultation_30412.html)

## Resource Use

### We're still talking half as much rubbish

**With the help of many local groups, our campaign calling for the Government to commit to reduce England's black bag waste has been picking up pace.**

To spread the word and up the pressure, we put adverts in national newspapers and launched a viral video online. The local group Day of Action got lots of great press coverage and over 4,000 people emailed David Cameron supporting the campaign.

Eric Pickles MP won our Talking Rubbish Awards for spreading myths about recycling. We held a spoof award ceremony outside Parliament, and handed in more than 5,000 postcards asking the Government to work with



**The Hackney & Tower Hamlets local group show passers-by that David Cameron needs to slash waste**

councils and business to reduce waste and boost recycling and reuse.

For more information and our response to the Waste Review see [www.foe.co.uk/recycling](http://www.foe.co.uk/recycling)

## Green Economy

### An American revolution

**Economics Campaigner Donna Hume is just back from San Francisco. She tells us about the revolutionary work underway to increase green energy and create green jobs.**



We rightly think of the United States (US) as being behind on tackling climate change, but it has pockets of innovation that are steps ahead. During my visit, California's new Governor signed a law to increase its green energy target to a third by 2020.

And a member of San Francisco's City Government told me that his goal was to "make California the centre of the green economy not just for the US but for the world".

So how did they get here? From the groups I met, like Apollo Alliance and Emerald Cities, the answer seemed clear. They unite all those with an interest in a clean energy future. For communities, this means a grassroots campaign focusing on the health benefits of a better environment. Trade unions lobby on the potential for new green jobs (which is powerful in a recession), and clean technology industries and small businesses push for strong climate policies that provide them the certainty they need to grow.

All of these groups also came together last year to fight off an attack on the State's Climate Law by Texan oil companies. With renewables under threat in the UK, we must follow this example. Sign up to get involved in the Big Energy Conversation now (see p4).



Training solar electricians is one way new green jobs are being created in San Francisco.

### FEED-IN TARIFFS: YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Our new free colour booklet explains how the feed-in tariff helps you generate clean energy, reduce your carbon footprint, cut your bills and make money. Find out which is the most suitable technology for you, and then learn the costs, payback time and annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings for each one.

Download *Feed-in tariffs: your questions answered* at [www.foe.co.uk/shop](http://www.foe.co.uk/shop)



## Food Chain

### Paraguay trip sparks new campaign ideas

**Striking images of the human and environmental impact of soy production in Paraguay stimulated lively discussion at the recent Food Campaign training day.**

Campaigner Glyn Thomas used images from his recent trip to highlight the devastating effect of the soy industry. Using examples of community action in Paraguay and campaigns against the expansion of supermarkets and factory farms in the UK, participants explored methods to oppose destructive developments and unjust systems.

The group discussed how to promote positive solutions to the current food market and production system, such as setting up food co-operatives and getting local councils on board.

Want to find out more? Join the Food Network. Sign up at [http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/food\\_net/](http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/food_net/) or email [louise.rigby@foe.co.uk](mailto:louise.rigby@foe.co.uk)



Temporary roadside shacks are now home for Paraguayans displaced from their land by soy production.

## Rights & Justice

### Massive objection to Merthyr's monster incinerator

**Thanks to an amazing grassroots campaign, over 10,000 objections were made to Covanta's proposed incinerator in Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales.**



Local campaigner, Chris Austin, shows where the incinerator is to be built.

The new fast-track planning process puts the developer in charge of consultation and makes it much harder for local people to challenge decisions. However, strong community action, spear-headed by Merthyr Tydfil Friends of the Earth, resulted in packed meetings held night after night during the consultation period.

150 residents descended on the offices of the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) to deliver the objection forms. The IPC will examine Covanta's plans over the summer.

Find out more about this incredible community action at [www.foe.co.uk/merthyr](http://www.foe.co.uk/merthyr)

## Rights & Justice

### Planning for sustainable development

**The Government's Localism Bill and proposed changes to the planning system prioritise growth over sustainable development and developers over local people. We're acting to change this.**

Planning is all about ensuring that we get the right type of development in the right place. The current system has safeguards to make sure this happens – like the need for developers to submit planning applications. But the Government is proposing drastic reforms which will remove these safeguards in England (see opposite for the situation in Northern Ireland).

#### Growth at any cost?

The Government's Plan For Growth states that there will be "a powerful new presumption in favour of sustainable development, but the default answer to development will be yes". Local authorities are told to prioritise economic growth and jobs when granting planning consents. We believe this makes a mockery of sustainable development and are campaigning to get a legal definition of it included in the Localism Bill.

We're also concerned that the Government says its new National Planning Policy Framework, which guides local authorities on planning, will be "pro-growth". The guidance will be put out for consultation this summer and we'll be calling for the Government to set



www.solartory.co.uk

**Planning law must prioritise community needs and sustainable development to enable buildings like Derby Quad Arts Centre.**

out how the planning system can deliver a low carbon future, rather than growth at any cost.

#### Give local communities a voice

Under the Government's proposals, businesses will be allowed to write the neighbourhood plans for a local area, meaning that they could grant themselves planning permission. We are lobbying the Government to introduce a requirement for all plans to deliver on climate change and take into account the needs of the community. We also believe local people should be given the right to be heard.

### TAKE ACTION

Support our rights and equality amendment to the Localism Bill to make sure that developers aren't given more power than local people and that poorer communities aren't excluded.

Email your MP at [www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/fair\\_future/press\\_for\\_change/your\\_voice\\_your\\_plan\\_30306.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/fair_future/press_for_change/your_voice_your_plan_30306.html)

Or join our campaigner network by emailing [localism@foe.co.uk](mailto:localism@foe.co.uk)

## Northern Ireland

### What are they planning?

**The Northern Ireland team has launched a new campaign to put democratic participation and sustainable development into the heart of the nation's planning system.**

The What Are They Planning? campaign aims to transform the Northern Irish planning system into a leading example of sustainable development delivery.

We're asking members of the public to recount their experiences of the system and will use this information to give a broad picture of the current problems people face. Set alongside a vision of a system that promotes sustainability, transparency and resolutely defends the public interest, we'll have the tools to turn our vision into reality.

We'll be recruiting activists to lobby the Department of the Environment (it's responsible for planning in Northern Ireland). The Department is known for being weak and submissive, approving most planning applications and bowing easily to developer pressure.

Recent planning reforms have liberalised the system in favour of developers and introduced more chaos and confusion. Much like the situation in England, a newly proposed Northern Irish planning policy statement is likely to make economic considerations the determining factor in all significant applications. Sustainable development will be pushed to one side.

At the same time, planning powers are being devolved to local councils. But we're



Simon Brown

**Planning permission for a new housing development will cause damage to ancient woodland at Prehen, Derry.**

concerned that councillors are not qualified to make good planning decisions and are likely to err on the side of developers.

Our campaign is a must for the future of sustainable development in Northern Ireland. If you would like more information or to get involved please email [niall.bakewell@foe.co.uk](mailto:niall.bakewell@foe.co.uk)

## The insider: Conference

# Journey to 2050: The next 40 years

We're deep in party-planning mode for Friends of the Earth's 40th anniversary Conference. Here's a sneak preview of what's on offer.

To celebrate the last 40 years, ex-Directors Jonathon Porritt, Tony Juniper, Charles Secrett and Tom Burke will share some favourite stories from their time at Friends of the Earth. We're also hosting the premiere of a specially commissioned photo exhibition and a 40th birthday party on the Saturday night.

But it's not all about looking back. We'll focus on how we can steer the world along a more sustainable course over the next 40 years. We'll hear from present-day Friends of the Earth Director, Andy Atkins, who will share a first taste of our next big campaign, and Nimmo Bassey, Chair of Friends of the Earth International.

### Getting intimate

Many Conference-goers tell us how much they enjoy the smaller seminars with leading experts on environmental issues. This year's seminars will include an insider's guide to the international climate negotiations, a look at the realities of renewable energy and an examination of strategies of social change.

The programme will also feature some of the best training workshops available, including the psychology of effective communication, choosing the right tactics for your campaign, making activist videos and using social media effectively.

### Time to celebrate

Conference 2011 will also be an opportunity to celebrate the brilliant work that Friends of the Earth activists are doing today. The Earthmover awards are always uplifting and we have no doubt that they will be just as

special this year. We're adding an extra twist too. For the first time, Conference delegates will be able to vote for the 'Friend of the Earth' Earthmover award. We'll also give a prize to the person who brings the most unusual piece of Friends of the Earth memorabilia.

### How you can help

While Friends of the Earth staff prepare for Conference months in advance, it's the people that attend who make it successful. If your group wants to run a session, bring a creative stall for our green fair, or propose a seminar, please mention it on the booking form. Please make sure you book **before 15 August**. Places are limited so look out for the booking form coming your way very shortly.



A small-group Conference session taking place at Nottingham's light-filled atrium in 2009.



### Your first stop to 2050:

East Midlands Conference Centre,  
Nottingham University  
9 – 11 September 2011

#### Confirmed speakers

**Nimmo Bassey**

(Chair: Friends of the Earth International)

**Kate Pickett**

(Author: *The Spirit Level*)

**Jonathon Porritt, Tony Juniper  
Charles Secrett, Tom Burke**

(Former directors: Friends of the Earth)

#### Cost

Weekend delegate rate: **£30**  
Accommodation available from **£63.60**  
for two nights B&B (inc. VAT, standard room)

#### Media Partner

New Internationalist

For more information visit:

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



**New Internationalist**  
www.newint.org

## Grassroots news

### Energy Union rocks Brighton and Hove

In March Brighton and Hove Friends of the Earth welcomed the European Energy Union Tour. The tour promotes intelligent energy through debate, music and club nights.

The group ran a stall and organised a lively debate attended by over 70 people. A panel of local councillors and environmentalists discussed a range of issues from energy use and food waste to green spaces and sustainable transport.

The tour finished in Brighton with a sell-out gig. Read more at <http://bhfoe.org/2011/02/24/our-city-our-future/>



Brighton students make an intelligent energy suggestion at the Tour's club night.

### Fruitful news for Alnwick

More than two years ago Alnwick Area Friends of the Earth launched a project, Fruit and Nuts for Alnwick, to encourage local people to grow more fruit and nut trees. At the heart of this project was their plan for a community orchard.

Since then, the group (pictured) has raised over £5,500, gained council support and worked together with the community to develop plans for the orchard. This spring their hard work paid off and they secured a 99 year lease for the orchard site.

The group jumped into action with their first planting day and now hold regular work days. They hope to involve people from across the community in growing and harvesting their own food.

Read about the group's work at <http://alnwickfoe.blogspot.com>



For more information on how to set up your own local food project, join the Friends of the Earth Food Network (see p7).

### Youth and Education: can you rise to the challenge?

What would you do if you received this email? "I was taken out of one of my GCSE lessons... and forced to participate in the BP Maths Challenge. They made it sound like oil was the only option and that reducing our carbon emissions would be a bad thing. I was wondering if you could come in, so that we get a balanced view [of the issues]."

A pupil sent this request to a member of Friends of the Earth's Youth and Education Network, proving how great the need is for their work.

"We need to ensure young people are inspired about a sustainable future, not about making money and polluting the world" explains Rachel Gibbons, member of the Youth and Education Network's coordination group.

The network is recruiting more educators to respond to requests like this. Can you rise to the challenge?

Join a Youth and Education training day to help you pick up ideas, share skills and learn about working with young people. Email [education@foe.co.uk](mailto:education@foe.co.uk) for more information or to book a place in London (11 June), Alnwick (18 June) or Exeter (23 July).

### 6 Billion Ways

More than 1,700 activists gathered together in London's East End for a brilliant day of debate, discussion, art and film.

All five venues were packed from morning to evening. Egyptian democracy activists, Bolivia's UN climate negotiator and Palestinian human rights campaigners shared their insights into how we move forwards under the banner of global justice.

Authors of *The Spirit Level*, Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson, explained why equality is better for everyone. And during the final rally, the Chair of Friends of the Earth International, Nnimmo Bassey, inspired everyone to work towards a better world.



As activists, it's important that we unite to tackle local and global issues. Watch out for updates on [www.6billionways.org.uk](http://www.6billionways.org.uk) as we continue to harness our collective energy to build a progressive movement for change.

## Fundraising opportunities

### An environmental gift

**Adrian Foster-Fletcher is a long-term activist and supporter of Friends of the Earth. He coordinates the Newbury group. Adrian spoke to one of our fundraisers about why he's chosen to leave Friends of the Earth a gift in his will.**



"I began supporting Friends of the Earth over 22 years ago as I was inspired by their campaigns. Seven years later, I decided to join my local group and try to make a difference myself. At that time Friends of the Earth was heavily involved in organising the Newbury Bypass protest. It was incredibly motivating and felt great to be active within an organisation with such positive aims.

Our local group's biggest achievement was the greening of Vodafone (its HQ is in Newbury). Following a question I posed at an AGM, they appointed a global Vice President of the Environment. I also questioned their phone recycling policies and discovered in the previous year not a single phone had been recycled. Consequently around 1 million phones were recycled last year.

What's kept me a loyal supporter and campaigner for over 20 years is that I trust every policy and issue Friends of the Earth fights for. This led me to leave a gift in my will. It wasn't a hard decision to make. My children feel passionate about the environment too and also belong to Friends of the Earth, so I know they will be proud of what I've done.

To know that I am leaving a small legacy to a hard-working and valuable organisation feels great. Knowing it will be used to promote a safer, cleaner and better environment is truly reassuring. So if you're reading this, please think about the future and the difference you could make by pledging a gift in your will, no matter how big or small."

**“What’s kept me a loyal supporter and campaigner for over 20 years is that I trust every policy and issue Friends of the Earth fights for.”**



**Mighty oaks from little acorns grow.**

For more information on leaving a gift in your will, please contact Candice on **020 7566 1606** or **C.Demille-Knight@foe.co.uk**.

## The big green bike ride



### How far will you go?

**Registration for The Big Green Bike Ride is now open. Join Friends of the Earth on a 500 mile journey from London to Edinburgh in 2012 and help raise vital money for our campaigns.**

The ride will take us through some of the most breathtaking scenery the UK has to offer. And the good news is you don't have to be super-fit to take part – if you're not up for six days in the saddle you can join for a day as we ride from London to Cambridge. Or as we make our way further north.

"We'd love local groups to get involved" says Tracey Pritchard, Head of Fundraising (pictured). "It would be great if you want to take part in the ride. But we also need help promoting the event and support in the stopover villages en route. We want to share the benefits of this event, so groups that help sign-up riders will receive 20 per cent of the net sponsorship raised by those riders."

To find out more visit [www.biggreenbikeride.co.uk](http://www.biggreenbikeride.co.uk) or to help out during the event email [beth.dawson@foe.co.uk](mailto:beth.dawson@foe.co.uk)

To secure a place you'll have to pay a registration fee and raise a minimum sponsorship amount. Register now and you'll be entered into our early bird prize draw for cycling goodies.

#### The route

6 May	65 miles	London to Cambridge
7 May	85 miles	Cambridge to Grantham
8 May	90 miles	Grantham to Beverley
9 May	90 miles	Beverley to Great Stainton
10 May	75 miles	Great Stainton to Alnwick
11 May	85 miles	Alnwick to Edinburgh

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RAFFLE WINNER

John Binford won £3,000 in our recent Green Raffle. "Saying 'thank you' is a bit of an understatement. Having never won anything in a raffle... and then being told I'd won £3,000 came as quite a shock. I had to double-check that the letter was actually addressed to me. Then my reaction was 'Wow, fantastic!'" Look out for our summer raffle coming soon for another chance to win.

# Action recipe



## Identifying allies for the Big Energy Conversation

This summer local groups will be interviewing and building alliances with people involved in local renewable energy projects, and scoping out potential institutions that might want renewables but haven't got them yet. Here's an action recipe for how to get started identifying your allies.

### Ingredients

1 large piece of paper  
Pens

### Method

1. Make a list of local renewable energy projects. Look in old newspapers and search online – type 'renewable energy' and the name of your town into an internet search engine.
2. Make a list of local institutions (eg. schools and libraries) that you think might be interested in running renewable energy projects.
3. Look at the two lists and circle all the projects and institutions that the group has a direct connection with (eg. if a group member knows someone who works at one of the schools or has a friend that helped set up one of the projects).
4. Go through the lists again, and in a different colour, circle all the projects and institutions where a group member knows someone who knows someone involved with it.
5. As a group, decide which are the most interesting to approach and prioritise these. Resolve to take on between three and six depending on your capacity. Can't decide? Ask each person to vote for their top three – then tot up the votes to find the three most popular.

(See page 4 for more information on the Big Energy Conversation campaign.)

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

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Friends of  
the Earth

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

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