

Change your world

Friends of the Earth's magazine
for local groups and activists
www.foe.co.uk/community

Stepping forwards

The next 40 years



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Friends of
the Earth

David Thompson/Friends of the Earth



The start of something new

Friends of the Earth is 40 this year. And with a new strategy and three exciting campaigns, we're getting the next 40 years off to a great start.

As a campaigning organisation, I feel we're called to be the very best of pioneers. We need to be looking ahead, spotting challenges and tackling them with innovative solutions. But we also know that good pioneers need to build on the lessons of the past. And I believe the milestone of our 40th birthday has given us a valuable reminder to look back and learn.

Looking back but stepping forwards is exactly what we've been doing over the last few

months as we've worked with you all to draft our new strategy, our route-map for the next 40 years. All this hard work has run hand-in-hand with dreaming up our new campaigns.

In this issue, we highlight the start of this new phase and celebrate all the amazing campaigning already happening around the country. Exciting times are ahead – read on to step forwards.

Jill Andrews, Editor

Diary

AUGUST

16 Teleconference on the new strategy

Put your questions to Executive Director Andy Atkins and Board Member Tania Sayer (7pm).

Email neil.kingsnorth@foe.co.uk to book.

SEPTEMBER

9-11 Conference, Nottingham

Find out more and book your place at www.foe.co.uk/conference

NOVEMBER

18 Laugh or the Polar Bear Gets It, London

Friends of the Earth's comedy event at the HMV Hammersmith Apollo.

Buy tickets at www.foe.co.uk/polarbear

We'd like to apologise for the misleading picture on p8 in issue 88. Apparently by the time Derby Quad Arts Centre was actually constructed, many of the eco-features had been dropped. Thank you to Derby & South Derbyshire Friends of the Earth for pointing this out.

40TH PICTURE GALLERY

We've created a picture gallery to celebrate our 40th anniversary. Photos like the ones on the cover (Bonn climate talks, 2001) and below, highlight the inspiring people and campaigns that make up our history.

View the gallery at www.foe.co.uk/forty



Friends of the Earth's first campaign action, promoting reuse of Schweppes bottles in 1971

Press Association

Starting off on the right foot



With the theme "Journey to 2050: The next 40 years", Conference 2011 will mark the start of a new phase for Friends of the Earth. Joe Jenkins, Director of Fundraising, Communications and Activism, shares his excitement.

I experienced my first Friends of the Earth Conference last September – just two months into my job. It was the best induction a Director of Activism could hope for – challenging, thought-provoking, energetic and hilarious all at the same time. But looking at the agenda for this year's 40th Anniversary Conference, I suspect last year's experience will prove to be pretty tame in comparison.

Conference is a time when people from across the whole network come together in one place to share ideas, examine our thinking and ensure we're all heading together in the right direction. With a new strategy and campaigns to discuss, I'm excited that this year's event will embrace this purpose wholeheartedly.

We'll kick off with a panel of Ex-Directors who will join Andy Atkins to reflect on our first four decades and look ahead to the next four. The Saturday will be jam-packed with sessions exploring everything from the big picture of our new strategy and campaigns to the detail of how our innovative online campaign hubs will work. And all of this will lead us up to the event I'm most eagerly anticipating – our anniversary party on the Saturday night. But we'll have to pace ourselves, as there's still lots more to enjoy on the Sunday.

Whether it's your 40th Conference or your



first, I'm sure you'll have a fantastic weekend. And together we'll make sure Friends of the Earth starts this exciting new phase on the right foot.

I can't wait to see you there.

LAST CHANCE TO BOOK FOR CONFERENCE

Booking for Conference closes on 9 August. Visit www.foe.co.uk/conference to book your place and join us at the most inspiring activist event of the year (9-11 September, Nottingham).

For all the latest events visit: www.foe.co.uk/events

Responding to the planetary emergency:

Over the past few months, we've been talking about the planetary emergency and how Friends of the Earth should respond. Out of this we've created three major new campaigns. Senior Activism Coordinator Jenny Thatcher tells us more.

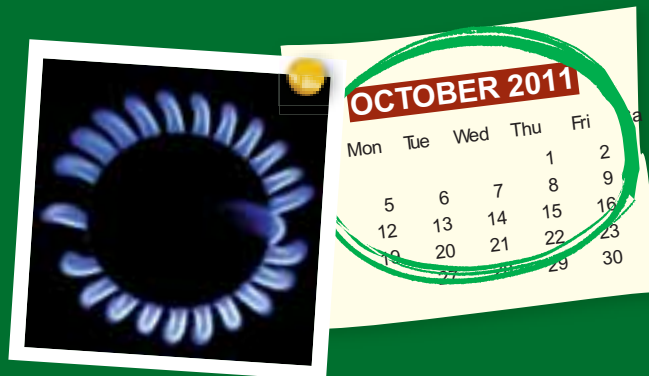
New campaigns

We'll be launching our three new campaigns over the next six months. We're still working on the detail, but each one will have exciting and

varied ways for you to take part. Here's a taste of what to expect and when:

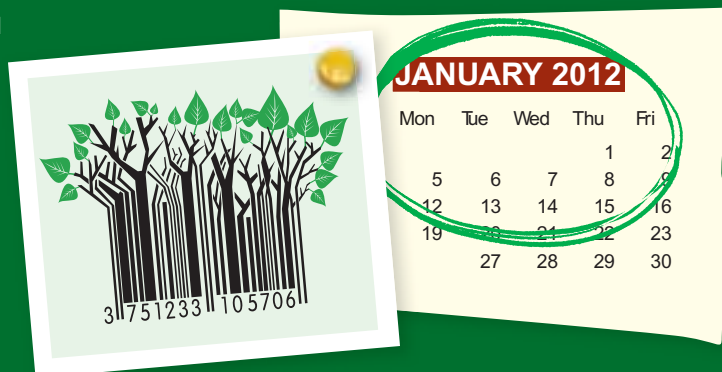
Energy

Many of you have already started the Big Energy Conversation ahead of the launch of the first major campaign – on Energy – this autumn. This exciting new campaign will aim to change how people think and feel about energy. See p6 for more details.



Greener products

Our new campaign will aim to reduce the environmental impact of the things we buy. Producing them uses up finite land, water and materials, and creates carbon emissions. We'll examine specific products to highlight the problem and look at sustainable solutions. We'll be calling on the EU to measure the resources used to make all products sold in Europe. Look out for more information coming soon.



our new campaigns

New programmes to guide all of our campaigning

Our campaigning work will be guided by a set of key programmes that together tackle the major drivers of environmental destruction and highlight environmental limits. These programmes will also provide a focus for building our expertise, policy tracking and research over the coming years.

The programmes are:

- Climate and energy security
- Nature and ecosystem security
- Land use, food and water security

- Economics and resource use
- Fair and planned transition.

Read more about each programme area in the new strategy. Download a full or summary version of the strategy at www.foe.co.uk/community/strategic_plan

We'll phase the roll-out of the programmes (starting with Climate and energy security) to enable us to build our expertise and capacity to work on all of these issues.

Bees

The bee is integral to our food and farming systems and is a key player in maintaining ecosystems and biodiversity in the UK and around the world. Bee numbers are in serious decline and bees have become a powerful symbol of the loss of our biodiversity. We're planning to run a campaign to help protect bees – we'll use it to help highlight the broader issues around biodiversity loss in the UK.



FIND OUT MORE

We'll send you information on all of the new campaigns as soon as we have more detail. You can also read more about the Energy campaign now on page 6.

Don't forget to come to Conference to find out more and to quiz campaigns staff for the latest updates – www.foe.co.uk/conference

UK Climate

Our new Energy Campaign

Friends of the Earth is launching an exciting new campaign this Autumn, aiming to change how people think and feel about energy.



The new campaign will see us all working together to develop a local approach that helps deliver national goals. It's a bit different to the recent Energy Bill campaign but will build on the momentum you've already created. Here's what we can tell you:

- **We'll influence people as well as policy.** Energy has a massive impact on everyone's lives. But most people feel confused and powerless when it comes to rocketing bills and our addiction to fossil fuels. And public indifference is one of the biggest barriers to securing the political leadership we urgently need for a clean-energy future for the UK.

Our new campaign will lift the lid on key issues affecting ordinary people. We'll make a big splash with hard-hitting media stories and we'll involve people on the ground. We'll show how a clean-energy future will benefit people.

- **Creative new campaign tactics.** To reach a greater range of people we'll need fresh

campaign tactics – like forming imaginative partnerships with everyone from local businesses to energy pioneers and using digital tools like Twitter and Facebook to create a buzz online.

- **Building on the Big Energy Conversation.** Many of you have taken to the streets to find out what local people think about energy, building up valuable contacts and media stories. This next stage will see more work to influence local opinion directly and via the media.
- **Showing what's possible locally and nationally** when it comes to renewable energy. By working with local communities around the country, we'll build a picture of the energy revolution that's already underway and show people and politicians that low-carbon energy is possible and popular.

UK Climate

Crucial vote on Energy Bill

The House of Commons will vote on the Energy Bill in September. Friends of the Earth activists have already put a tremendous amount of pressure on MPs across the country to improve the Bill.

We've been calling for three key amendments to strengthen the Bill:

- local council action on climate change;
- action on cold rented homes; and
- a comprehensive energy-efficiency strategy.

A committee of 19 MPs debated the Bill in June, exploring many proposed improvements, including our own tabled amendments. We

kept the pressure on. Hundreds of local group members organised and attended key public meetings, reinforcing the call for a stronger Bill. Many more activists lobbied and emailed MPs and ministers individually. Thank you for all your support.

To see the latest news visit:
www.foe.co.uk/community/energybill

Rights & Justice

Tall stories in Merthyr

The Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) launched its second planning examination under the new fast-track process, looking at the proposed Merthyr incinerator. Fast action by Friends of the Earth ensured that local people didn't lose their chance to be heard when the developer started telling tall stories.

The communities surrounding Merthyr, including the Friends of the Earth local group, are collaborating under the United Valleys Action Group to oppose the monster incinerator application.

On the day of the first meeting, the developer (Covanta) revealed it had altered its application, making the proposed incinerator taller. This information was not given to the community or the local authority in advance and valuable time was wasted whilst Covanta discussed the amendment with the officials. Many local people had no choice but to return home, losing their opportunity to speak at the meeting and say how they would like the examination to be run.

Friends of the Earth wrote to the IPC requesting another opportunity for members of the local community to present their case.

The IPC has now scheduled another meeting and extended the planning examination by two months.

Go to www.foe.co.uk/merthyr to get involved or to watch Burned, our film of this inspirational community action.



Resource use

Disappointing waste

The Government has now published its new waste policy for England, with mixed results.

There are some good bits – like no return to weekly rubbish collections and its support for anaerobic digestion. But in other areas, the policy is vague and unambitious. Without the crucial work of Friends of the Earth activists, the outcome could have been much worse. Read more at www.foe.co.uk/waste

If you want to take more action locally, why not ask your council to improve recycling services



Calisthenes

A love story in milk. Watch our film charting the journey of two milk bottles from factory to fridge and beyond: www.foe.co.uk/lovestory

or collect food waste separately? For more ideas visit www.foe.co.uk/recycling

Food Chain

Super-size sausages

Local activists are joining together to campaign against a proposed mega pig-farm, which threatens the community and small farmers nationwide.

The proposed pig farm in Foston, Derbyshire, would be Britain's largest ever, holding up to 25,000 pigs. It would be around four times bigger than the average large-scale pig farm.

If approved, intensive farming on this scale could have serious impacts on the local community, such as a significant increase in traffic, a greater risk of human and animal disease, and smell, noise and waste pollution.

We're also worried it would undermine the viability of small farmers unable to compete, changing the face of pig farming in Britain forever.

Action group, Pig Business, recently held a meeting for local residents and environmental campaigners to discuss concerns and develop an action plan. Actor Dominic West, otherwise known as Jimmy McNulty from *The Wire*, is supporting the campaign, helping to boost its profile.

We're working with Pig Business to oppose this application. For more information or to submit an objection, go to www.pigbusiness.co.uk or contact louise.rigby@foe.co.uk



Photolibrary

Cymru

A big thank you

After nearly 40 years with Friends of the Earth, Cymru Director Gordon James is retiring in September.

Gordon's interest in Friends of the Earth was sparked by the anti-nuclear campaigns of the 1970s and in 1987 he started a local group in Pembrokeshire. Since then, he's been involved in many successful campaigns – including acid rain in the 1980s, the Sea Empress oil spill in the 90s, and roads, renewable energy and climate change in recent years.

But of all these successes, it's the GM-free Wales campaign in the late 1990s that he's most proud of. "It was our campaign that showed the Assembly could do things differently from Westminster," says Gordon. "The example we set has been followed throughout Europe, and is still strong today."

Thankfully, campaigners such as Gordon never just fade away, and we look forward to

continuing to benefit from his expertise as he remains an active member of the Pembrokeshire group.

Gareth Clubb, previously Director of the Snowdonia Society, will take over from Gordon as the new Director of Friends of the Earth Cymru. He's looking forward to it.

"There is no more important role in Wales than that undertaken by Friends of the Earth Cymru," he says. "They've been a beacon of light over the past 25 years."



Gareth Clubb

Northern Ireland

Island gathering

Local group members, individual activists and financial supporters from across Ireland came together to discuss the future of activism north and south of the border.

The annual event is jointly hosted by Friends of the Earth Ireland and Friends of the Earth Northern Ireland. Delegates included a contingent from Young Friends of the Earth Ireland, members of an anti-incinerator campaign group, representatives of Transition Town initiatives, and guest of honour, Andy Atkins, our Executive Director.

Participants shared experiences and discussed together the nature of campaigning locally and nationally. The inspiring mix of ideas generated will now help both organisations shape the future of activism throughout the island.



Declan Allison

Our new strategy

Signed and sealed

Friends of the Earth's new strategy is in the bag. It was signed off by the Board in June after lots of valuable input from local groups and others across the Friends of the Earth family.

The strategy plots the course for Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland for the foreseeable future. In a break from previous plans, we're looking ahead 40 years and setting in place the milestones and structure to get us there.

So what's going to change?

At the heart of the strategy is the ambition to transform people's relationship with the environment on which we all depend. And to do that, over the coming years we need to be a more agile and responsive organisation, growing in confidence, size and clout – both on the national stage and at a local level.

Our first step under the new strategy is to launch a major new national campaign this autumn to decarbonise Britain's energy system (p6), underpinned by (among other things) the relaunch of our campaign networks as interactive online hubs (see opposite). Hot on their heels will be a greater range of eye-catching ways for the public to hear about Friends of the Earth, get involved and support us – from the comedy gig in November to the Big Green Bike Ride next May (p15).

You can download a full or summary version of the new strategy at www.foe.co.uk/community/strategic_plan. We'll also be discussing the strategy at Conference, so make sure you book your place to join us: www.foe.co.uk/conference



"I'm really excited and heartened by this strategy and grateful to everyone who's played a part in shaping it. It sets a

long-term direction for the work of this incredible organisation, gives us clarity and focus and, above all, the best possible chance of meeting the enormous challenges that we all know are just around the corner. Now to get on and do it."

Andy Atkins, Executive Director

A REFRESHED BRAND FOR A NEW STRATEGY

Our work to revitalise the way we communicate about ourselves has entered an exciting phase. In June we tested the big idea behind our refreshed brand with current audiences, including donors, local group members and other activists, and with people new to our organisation, and got a really warm reception for the ideas and some helpful feedback. We are now working to build on the idea behind our refreshed brand, apply it to our visual identity (font, colour scheme and so on) and come up with exciting publicity tactics to cause a splash. We plan to launch in March 2012.

Campaigning community

A new way of networking

Conference 2011 will mark the launch of the long-awaited info-sharing and networking community for local groups and activists. Here's a sneak preview of what this new online tool for campaign hubs will offer.

Contagious ideas – how the new campaign hubs might work



What you'll be able to do

Every campaign network will have its own secure online hub, hosted by the Friends of the Earth website. As a member, you will be able to:

1. Create your own profile page – and search for other members with particular skills.
2. Browse, use and upload documents, photos, videos and other resources to the hub library.

3. Message other members directly and conduct online discussions with people working on the same issues as you.

4. Keep track of your hub memberships – you can leave and join hubs with one click.

Each hub will have space for information, event listings, membership details and news, as well as online discussions and its own library.

"One of the best features about the website is that you can search for other campaign hub members with particular skills. The online search tool makes it really easy."

Campaigner Network Advisory Group member.

Grassroots news

All the fun of the green fair

Brent Friends of the Earth's Green Fair proved a real hit with local residents. Several hundred people attended the event in Willesden with over twenty stalls from local environmental groups, green businesses and charities.

The Fair featured vegetarian food stalls, a green magician and other children's activities, as well as practical advice on things like gardening, cycling and energy efficiency. Residents also quizzed local politicians in a Green Question Time and debated with local councillors on how to make the area a more sustainable place to live.

Read more about the event at www.brentfoe.com/node/114



Dawn Butler, the former MP for Brent South, tries out the bicycle-powered smoothie maker

Youthful plans

Do you think young people would bring new energy to your campaigns? Would you like more ways to engage with young people?

The Youth and Education Network has been developing exciting new angles for working with young people. Members will share their plans at Conference in September.

To find out more, come to the AGM at Conference or email education@foe.co.uk

You can also sign up to the newsletter via email.

Creative props, like this "pin the solar panel on the house" game (right), help young people grasp new ideas



REGIONAL GATHERINGS ROUND-UP

Hundreds of you attended the recent regional gatherings to learn, network and plan with other activists, staff and volunteers. If you missed out or want to read more, find reports, resources and photos at: www.foe.co.uk/events/regional_national_gatherings.html

Everybody needs good neighbours

Members from three neighbouring Friends of the Earth groups all turned out to support Richmond & Twickenham's Big Climate Reconnection public meeting.

During the packed meeting, over 150 people voted in favour of councils becoming local leaders in the race to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions – an overwhelming majority.

Local MPs Zac Goldsmith (centre) and Vince Cable (right) finished the meeting in no doubt of the huge support amongst their constituents for a strong Energy Bill.

If you've got an event coming up, why not invite neighbouring groups to join with you? Find their details at www.foe.co.uk/findagroup



Zac Goldsmith MP and Vince Cable MP faced a tough grilling on their Energy Bill commitments

Local issues matter

Public meetings are a great way to raise awareness and hold locally-elected decision makers to account. We saw this with the fantastic string of events organised around the country on the recent Energy Bill – and many other locally-relevant issues hold the same draw.

Bristol Friends of the Earth hosted a series of open meetings bringing together speakers and experts on a variety of topics. From being the first 'Cycling City' to a designated 'Green Capital', residents had the chance to explore the issues and quiz decision makers. Following positive feedback, the group has decided to organise another series in the autumn.

West Cornwall Friends of the Earth held a successful meeting on the impacts of badger

culling with a leading research scientist. The issue is a big concern for many people living in Cornwall and the event was well attended. Another locally relevant theme – maritime issues – is next on the event agenda.

See our top tips for organising a perfect public meeting in *Change your world* issue 87: www.foe.co.uk/community/local_groups/resource/change_your_world.html

Spotlight on...

Border hopping

A few adventurous Friends of the Earth local group members made their way to the Netherlands in May to attend an activists' fringe event in the build-up to Friends of the Earth Europe's AGM.

Their mission? To meet fellow activists. To share ideas and experiences about being a campaigner. And to come away inspired.

Beatrice (Sheffield group), Neil (Swansea) and Hilary, Joe and baby Fred (Birmingham) headed to the Dutch resort of Wijk an See for the event – organised by Friends of the Earth Netherlands.

Part of the big debate

Our border-hopping activists also attended the first day of the AGM. They joined Friends of the Earth staff from around Europe and beyond to discuss how we can connect the North and South in a united struggle for a sustainable world.

Find out more

Read a short report from the weekend at www.foe.co.uk/news/a_dutch_story_31230.html – or enjoy a more detailed three-part story by Joe about the trip on Birmingham Friends of the Earth's blog at <http://bit.ly/m9bRtm>

“We hope to keep up the contacts made through this event and keep learning from all the incredibly knowledgeable and devoted people in the European network of Friends of the Earth.”

Joe Peacock, Birmingham Friends of the Earth



Joe Peacock

The sun's too hot to handle for our activists



Joe Peacock

Sharing European experiences in the shade is a better idea



Friends of the Earth

Hilary, Joe and baby Fred opt for the cool of the bar instead

Giggle or pedal: two exciting events

Comedy event of the year



If you love a laugh, then listen up – the comedy event of the year is back. **Laugh or the Polar Bear Gets It** hits London's HMV Hammersmith Apollo on Friday 18 November for a night of top comedy.

We've got some great acts lined up, including Dan Antopolski, Simon Day, Justin Edwards as Jeremy Lion, Richard Herring, Josie Long, Lucy Porter and Rob Rouse with music from

special guest Badly Drawn Boy. And we'll be adding more names to the line-up, so keep an eye out. For the latest news and how to buy tickets visit www.foe.co.uk/polarbear



The Big Green Bike Ride

Have you registered for the Big Green Bike Ride yet? Did you know that local groups can receive 20 per cent of the sponsorship money for every cyclist they recruit to take part?

Registration is now open and you've still got plenty of time to train, fundraise or recruit riders before it all kicks off in May 2012.

You can ride for all six days or join for a day along the route. Join hundreds of others on the first leg from London to Cambridge or choose a quieter section as we travel 500 miles up the country towards Edinburgh.

The big
green
bike ride

Sponsors Green Oil will also be providing free biodegradable palm-oil-free bike products to all participants.

To find out more and register, visit www.biggreenbikeride.co.uk

Action recipe



Get featured in the media

Ingredients

A great local angle

Case studies of local people

A local paper and a specific journalist

A group member to be interviewed

Good snaps and photo opportunities

Contact details for everyone involved



Preparation time

About three weeks to come up with your story, contact your local paper and pull the information together.

Getting a feature is a bit trickier than getting a simple news story, so you'll need to be more proactive.

Method

- 1 Package your story into an appealing proposal for a feature. Bring together different stories, photos, quotes, and stats, ready for a journalist to make into a double-page spread.
- 2 Prepare summaries of the local case studies, like an exciting community energy project or a family struggling to pay rocketing energy bills.
- 3 Comb your local press and previous cuttings for contacts. Find out who's responsible for the green pages, or speak to a journalist you know.
- 4 Use the TRUTH model for judging your story's appeal. Is it Timely, Relevant, Unusual, involving some Trouble, and with Human interest?
- 5 Take off your environmental hat and imagine being a not-so-green member of the public. If they don't care, you still have some work to do!
- 6 Prepare your key messages and quotes using simple, clear language.
- 7 Phone the journalist and pitch your feature to them directly. Know your story well and refer to related stories they've written to help your case.
- 8 If the journalist is interested, send your proposal to them. Stay in touch while your feature is put together.

Get support from your regional staff at 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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