

Change your world

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

Leading change

Generating the
energy to move
forward

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**Friends of
the Earth**





Energy for change

Energy is in everyone's thoughts at the moment. But for campaigners, energy should mean more than electricity and heating.

By the time you read this issue we'll have launched Final Demand – the first part of a campaign to revolutionise our relationship with energy in the UK (more on page 4). The public debate is focussed on powering the country. But campaigners have long known that energy – whether our own, or that of our groups – is as precious a resource as money or time.

Smart campaigners know that energy is something we can't afford to run out of. So while we're campaigning for the Government to take a more responsible and sustainable view of the UK's energy system, it would do us all good to bear in mind that our own energy levels need treating with care too.

Howard Whitehead, Editor

Diary

NOVEMBER 2011

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

26 Re-energise Hertfordshire

Training event in St Albans 10am-1pm.

tom.wright@foe.co.uk 020 7566 1673

JANUARY 2012

21 East Midlands Regional Gathering Nottingham

tim.atkinson@foe.co.uk

0121 643 7456

FEBRUARY 2012

4 Greater South East Regional Gathering London

tom.wright@foe.co.uk 020 7566 1673

4 West Midlands Regional Gathering Birmingham

tim.atkinson@foe.co.uk

0121 643 7456



WHERE NEXT FOR CHANGE YOUR WORLD?

With a new strategy, and a new brand identity coming soon, it's a good point to take some time out and look at how we can improve *Change Your World* for the future.

So we're taking a short break. *Change Your World* will return, more inspirational than ever, in early 2012.

Tell us how you'd like to see it improved.

Email: cyw@foe.co.uk



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

Campaign Hubs

In September Friends of the Earth launched Campaign Hubs, a new way for activists to join forces on campaigns and projects. Rachel Gibbons, coordinator of the Youth and Education network, has been involved with the project for two years.



What was your role in the development of the Hubs project?

I fed in lots of ideas about what the Youth and Education network does and what would be useful to us.

What excites you most about the new Hubs?

We'll be able to talk to each other and help each other quickly and easily. At the moment people email me and I forward this to people I think are interested – it's slow and clunky, and if I'm away, people don't get answers quickly.

Now if people need assembly ideas or want to know how to approach a school they just need to visit the Campaign Hub and ask. There'll always be people to help, and discuss things without needing to organise a phone conference. And if people add their education resources we can share those too.

How will Hubs change the way you campaign?

It will be quicker to organise things, more people will be involved in the planning and I think our projects will be better because of that.

What tips do you have to help people use Hubs?

Just log on and have a look around! Ask a question about working with young people, start a discussion, or tell people about a successful (or unsuccessful) session you've done in school.

See what all the fuss is about at www.foe.co.uk/campaignhubs



Final demand

We launched the Final Demand campaign this month – check our website at www.foe.co.uk/finaldemand to see how it went.

Our energy system is broken.

Six big companies control 99 per cent of the household energy market – British Gas, EDF, E.ON, npower, Scottish & Southern and Scottish Power – and they're keeping us hooked on ever more expensive fossil fuels, leaving people and the planet out of pocket.

We need your help to take down the power of the Big Six and clear the path for the energy future we really need.

Consumer bills are rocketing – doubling in the past seven years – and energy companies made a profit of nearly £9bn last year.

Less than eight per cent of our electricity is produced from renewable sources. The energy companies are routinely making bumper payments to their shareholders

rather than investing in the new sustainable technologies we so desperately need.

There is a huge opportunity over the next two years to move towards the electricity system we require as the Government puts forward plans to reform the electricity market.

We want to change how we think about energy in the UK. The scale of the challenge means that we're not just calling for the environmental measures we know we need – we must change the very framework in which we're operating.

The Final Demand campaign

The Big Six energy companies have had us over a barrel for too long. We need a public inquiry into their power over consumers and influence over politicians.





We need to make sure the Government doesn't cripple a scheme to support new clean domestic energy generated by small companies, homes, businesses and communities.

The Feed-in tariff is one of the few schemes that has challenged the dominance of the Big Six energy companies. It's also helped kick-start green energy and jobs in the UK. But the Government is threatening to cut the scheme so it would only apply to the very smallest projects – leaving the Big Six unchallenged.

What can I do?

- **Spread the word** Help get as many people as possible to sign our petition calling on David Cameron to launch an inquiry into the Big Six and defend the Feed-in tariff.
- **Bring it home** Get your MP face-to-face with local renewable energy businesses and community projects to persuade them to support our campaign.
- **Mobilise your allies** We need as many diverse groups as possible to call on MPs to break the Big Six stranglehold.
- **Stunts/actions** We launched with a spectacular stunt – saying thanks on behalf of the Big Six for all the cash we've given them. There'll be opportunities for you to do a similar stunt locally.



Solar West

Shedding some light on the matter

- GET INVOLVED**
- Contact your Network Developer or glyn.thomas@foe.co.uk to sign up to the campaign.
 - Visit the new Final Demand campaign hub for more information, ideas and resources.
 - You can also discuss the campaign with other local group members and staff. Sign up now: www.foe.co.uk/campaignhubs

We've launched a fundraising appeal to raise vital income to help us tackle the Big Six. We're asking supporters to consider making a donation to the energy campaign, and for regular donors to consider increasing their monthly gift, so that we have the funds to make this campaign a big success. www.foe.co.uk/appeal

Biodiversity

Bees and Biodiversity: making the connections

Our new strategy recognises that to achieve our vision for a world where everyone is living fairly within environmental limits, people need a greater appreciation of the intrinsic value of nature and the services ecosystems provide – such as access to food, water or recreational space. We're launching a new campaign about bees in the spring that will help people re-connect with biodiversity in their own environment, and globally.

Bees are key pollinators and are essential to our survival. Not only do they pollinate food crops but also wild flowers which provide important wildlife habitat. But bee populations are in serious decline. Pesticide use and habitat loss is affecting bee populations around the world. Our campaign aims to halt this decline and build public understanding of the importance of ecosystems in a way that's easy for people to relate to.



Friends of the Earth

We'd love to hear your ideas for making this campaign resonate with people in your local community. Whether it's wildflower planting, beekeeping or pesticide-free gardening tips, share them by joining Campaign Hubs at www.foe.co.uk/campaignhubs

Resource use

Greener products

This winter we're launching a new campaign to make sure the things we buy and use don't come at the expense of the planet.

Lots of people know that producing something like a pair of jeans leaves a carbon footprint. But when you add the cost to the planet and people – in terms of land, water and materials – consumer choice becomes completely mind-boggling.

We need to shift the bulk of the responsibility away from our shopping habits and onto the wasteful companies who produce our stuff.

In the long term we want a new law to make sure companies make smarter use of the resources that go into products sold in Europe. But first we need your help to put this crucial issue on the map.

Stay tuned to the Greener Products Hub at www.foe.co.uk/campaignhubs



misterstappy

Rights & Justice

Planning disaster

England's planning system is under attack. And there are only a few weeks left to tell your MP to act. Paul de Zylva, Senior Campaigner for our England team, explains.



Sleight of hand

The Government claims its Localism Bill and planning reforms are passing power from Whitehall to local councils and communities.

We support localism. But we're deeply concerned that the proposed changes are instead handing control to developers, in the Government's desire to boost economic growth.



Put your MP in the picture

MPs have had little chance to think about exactly how these changes will play out on the ground in their constituencies.

Before the Localism Bill becomes law this autumn we want people to tell their MP about the real effect the changes will have if the Bill isn't improved – and get MPs asking questions and making amendments.

Our campaign is already giving voice to the growing number of communities worried by the proposals.

Local groups have run stalls, written to and met MPs, and spread the word in their area. In the coming weeks we'll have more online actions and news stories to keep the issue alive.

There are resources available for groups taking part in the campaign.

Go to www.foe.co.uk/localismbill

You can follow [@pauldezylva](https://twitter.com/pauldezylva) on Twitter.

UK Climate

Big step forwards on councils and climate change

Thanks to our Get Serious about CO2 campaign, councils will now get advice on how to cut carbon emissions locally. The Government announced in September that the Committee on Climate Change will provide formal advice to help councils cut emissions.

It's a big step forwards in our campaign.

We'll now be working to ensure the advice makes clear to councils the scale of action needed to meet the targets set out in the Climate Change Act.

International climate

The way to Durban

A lack of willingness by developed countries to take action at the international climate talks has put the world on a dangerous path towards catastrophic climate change.



Robin Saidman/VitalEdgeAid.org

South Africa's poorest can't afford electricity yet industry gets it at a discount

Research by the UN Environment Programme has shown that unless governments act to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, global temperatures could rise by as much as 5°C. This would be catastrophic for developing countries, especially in Africa, where billions of livelihoods and millions of lives would be threatened.

Instead of committing to stronger actions, rich industrialised countries are now trying to quit the legally binding Kyoto Protocol. There's a huge push to replace the Kyoto Protocol with a weak system for emissions reductions, based on pledges instead of commitments.

This is hugely unfair. Although it's weak, the Kyoto Protocol recognises these countries' responsibility for three quarters of the

emissions currently in the atmosphere. 65 per cent of the current emissions reduction pledges are by developing countries – even though they're least at fault.

During the next major summit in Durban, South Africa, Friends of the Earth will be working hard with many other organisations worldwide. We're calling on governments to stick to their legally binding commitment to tackle climate change first and fastest, and take urgent action to make it a reality.

Join our newsletter to stay in the loop and help our work at www.foe.co.uk/globalaction and visit www.foe.co.uk/climatetalks if you wish to read more. To find out how you can take action visit our hub space at www.foe.co.uk/campaignhubs

International climate

Pushing Europe for climate action

In August Young Friends of the Earth activists from across the UK came together to call for tough action on EU emissions.

Activists met at the Ovenden Moor wind farm in Yorkshire to demand that the EU commit to an immediate 30 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, as a step towards the minimum 40 per cent domestic emissions cut required by 2020.

Young Friends of the Earth activist, Helen Wright said, “Clean technologies like wind turbines will play an exciting role in building a green future. They’re desperately needed in the current environment where so many young people are suffering from unemployment.”

Young Friends of the Earth will continue the campaign with the One Penny action – which calls on people from across Europe to send a symbolic donation to ask EU governments for immediate action on climate change.

GET INVOLVED IN THE PUSH

Take action now at

<http://bit.ly/push1penny>

Or find out more at www.youngfoe.org.uk or www.facebook.com/pusheurope



Adela Nistora/Young Friends of the Earth

Cymru

Wales bags a new tax

Wales is the first country in the UK to introduce a new 5p charge for every single-use plastic bag a shopper uses.

Friends of the Earth local groups in Wales have been at the forefront of campaigns to reduce plastic bag use in their towns and cities, and have done a lot to raise awareness of the issue.

The Abergavenny and Crickhowell group produced a Fairtrade organic cotton bag to sell to shoppers. The proceeds are used to pay for fruit trees for local schools. In Caerphilly 10,000 Fairtrade cotton bags have been given to local school children and residents.

And in Llangollen enough money was raised to give every household a reusable bag.

Money raised from the new plastic bag tax in Wales will be distributed to charities, and we’re working to make sure Friends of the Earth benefits from this.



Conference

2011



Conference 2011 was a whirlwind of inspiring talks, informative workshops and slightly questionable dancing. We kept up with your highlights via our [#foecon](#) twitter hashtag...



ColetteHumphrey

At [#foecon](#) about to hear from the last four exec directors, can't wait to hear what they all have to say!

10 Sept



AlexAnansi

Excellent talk from Craig Bennett - excited about the new campaigns

[#foecon](#)

10 Sept



mortimerabi Abigail Mortimer

[#foecon](#) absolutely fascinating talk by [@profKEPickett](#). Really glad these issues are being highlighted at conference

11 Sept





Friends of the Earth Rugby

rugbyfoe Rugby FoE
@LocaliseWM great workshop on **#Common-Cause** t.co/abc5Y2l at **#foecon** Very thought provoking. Just what [@www.foecouk](http://www.foecouk) needs at 40 yr
09 Sept



deniswalker
In the big yurt at **#foecon** It's raining outside, but we're having fun in here!
<http://lockerz.com/s/137588670>
10 Sept



Bham_FOE
Woohoo! We've won our first Earthmovers award ever!!! For this photo: **#foecon**:
<http://bit.ly/qFE1Qh>
10 Sept



stuartpoore
Congrats to all the winners at this years **#foecon**. Have noted and learnt some inspiring stuff!
10 Sept



Friends of the Earth Harwich

harwichfoe
Thanks to all who took part in the **#solidarityaction** at **#foecon** against plans to clear cut the Mabira Forest in Uganda <http://yfrog.com/mnvtstj>
11 Sept

Grassroots news

Fisheries campaign shows Admiral qualities

Marinet, the local group-led marine network, is campaigning for the reform of the European Common Fisheries Policy and the rebuilding of fish stocks. Local campaigners including Hull Friends of the Earth are writing to their MEPs and MPs to get this message across.

Hull Friends of the Earth's Coordinator, Sue Joliffe said, "One MEP in particular was supportive and a member of the progressive Fish for the Future cross-party group. If we can count on their support then we will really make a difference".

To support the campaign, the group has also met local MP Diana Johnson and written comment pieces for the local paper. At Hull's Sea Shanty Festival, they even won support from a passing Admiral Nelson (pictured).

For more information, please see Marinet's website at www.marinet.org.uk/rocfp.html
For campaign resources, contact Stephen Eades on stephen.marinet@btinternet.com



**Admiral Nelson with campaigner
Haris Livas-Dawes**

Rutland group launches national poetry competition

Rutland Friends of the Earth has several poets in the group, and decided to celebrate Friends of the Earth's 40th anniversary by producing a book of poems about being a friend of the Earth.

Group Coordinator Gabrielle Maughan said "Help us – please create a poem, illustration or photograph about what it means to be a friend of the Earth and send it to us."

Judges include broadcaster Clive Anderson, National Poet of Wales Gillian Clarke and writer John Canter. The competition closes on 30 June 2012. Successful entries could win up to £150.

For more information on the competition visit www.foe.co.uk/rutland



Connecting the dots in Cumbria with social media

Friends of the Earth's Cumbria Network is leading the way in using social media to network and campaign. The Network launched in October 2010 to connect and encourage environmental activism across the county.

Less than a year later, it has 74 followers on Facebook, 84 on Twitter, and about 480 visits a month to its webpage. The Network has hosted online petitions and helped local campaigns and events reach a wider audience.

Amy Southcott coordinates the Network's social media. She shares her top tips:

- People expect social media to be current, so update your pages every couple of days.
- Encourage people to interact with your pages – reply to posts on your Facebook page, ask questions on Twitter, and put polls up on your website.
- Videos are fantastic at getting people's attention, so link to them whenever you can.

Check out www.facebook.com/foecumbria, www.twitter.com/foecumbria and www.louder.org.uk/foecumbria



A Tribute to Carolyn Dyer Hammersmith and Fulham Friends of the Earth

It's with great sadness that we report the death of Carolyn Dyer, a long-standing and active member of Hammersmith and Fulham Friends of the Earth. Carolyn joined the group over 20 years ago and maintained her involvement ever since, even through increasing ill health over the last few years.

She was always happy to be involved in our wide range of campaigns, always reliable and

ready to take actions and run stalls at any time and in any weather.

Carolyn particularly enjoyed organising social events. And her friendly nature meant they always went with a swing. She was always willing to offer her home for meetings and social events and last year she hosted a meeting with local General Election candidates. Carolyn will be greatly missed.

In the saddle

Our top five cycling tips

The big
green
bike ride

Whether you're training for the Big Green Bike Ride, or simply wanting to get out and explore, these tips will help you on your way.

1) Set up your bike

Everyone is different, so your bike should also be unique. Visit a specialist bike shop and get your bike adjusted to your body.

2) Lighten the load

It's easier to carry things on your bike than on your body, so invest in panniers, a handlebar bag or seat-pack. You'll be amazed by the difference it will make.

3) Get the kit

Some items, such as a helmet, are essential. But there are other items that will make your ride easier and more enjoyable – like chafe-free cycling shorts, sunglasses and a basic tool kit. For ultimate efficiency get some toe-clips. These enable pulling up, as well as pushing down on the pedals.

4) Keep well stocked

Stay energised with snacks that are easy to carry, like energy bars and dried fruit. You also need to drink lots of fluids. By the time you feel thirsty you'll already be dehydrated, so drink small, frequent amounts.

5) Get practicing

Get out on the road. Vary your rides between long weekly outings and short fast sessions. This will increase your endurance and improve your efficiency.

Need motivation?

Set yourself a challenge and take part in Friends of the Earth's Big Green Bike Ride. Cycle 500 miles from London to Edinburgh, or join for a single day along the route. It's in May 2012, so there's plenty of time to train. www.biggreenbikeride.com



Friends of the Earth meets...

Francesca Martinez

Actress turned comedian Francesca Martinez is one of the latest fabulous additions to the line up for our upcoming comedy gig. We caught up with her shortly after her hit Edinburgh show.



What made you want to move from acting to comedy?

My dad, Alex, is a writer and he wrote me a film script when I was about 15. He made my character a comedian and I remember saying, 'Dad, I love the script but I could never be a comedian. It's far too terrifying!' So I reluctantly joined a comedy workshop in an attempt at research.

I sat there for six weeks without saying a word and then finally plucked up the courage to perform (very badly) my first ever routine. Even though I was shaking with nerves I felt a powerful sense of 'Wow, this is it!' I totally forgot about researching the film role, and I began to gig as many nights a week as I could. A year later, I won an award in Edinburgh for the best new comedian of 2000. So it's all down to my dad.

What should people expect from you if they've not seen your comedy before?

I like to think my comedy is as honest as possible so I hope people go away thinking they've spent time with the 'real me'. I like to tackle taboo subjects and I love the way comedy allows you to find laughs in so-called serious issues and lets you connect with strangers in a very powerful way.

Why are you taking part in Laugh or the Polar Bear Gets It?

I'm a real supporter of the Green movement. The survival of the planet is the most pressing issue facing us today. I'm honoured to be supporting such an important cause.



Catch Francesca and our other fantastic comedians at: Laugh or the Polar Bear Gets It, 18 November at the HMV Hammersmith Apollo. Tickets from £19.50, visit www.foe.co.uk/polarbear

STOP PRESS

Musical comedian **Tim Minchin** and compere **Greg Davies** have been added to our all-star line up.

Action recipe



Communicating cleverly

According to a much quoted study, only 7 per cent of the message we give when communicating is due to the words we speak. The rest is in the way that we say it. Here are some handy hints for getting your message across positively.

Face

Do: Be animated, smile and make eye contact.

Don't: Look glum or unresponsive.

Head Movement

Do: Tilt your head slightly when listening so that people can see you're paying attention. Use eye contact.

Don't: Lower your chin to people. It's hard to make eye contact and looks confrontational.

Gestures

Do: Be expressive with your gestures but don't overdo it with big arm movements. Keep your arms below chin level and above waist level. Open palms are a sign of honesty. Emphasise the rhythm of key words with strong hand gestures.

Don't: Cross your arms.

Posture

Do: Lean forward when listening and stand up straight when talking.

Don't: Slouch when talking.

Personal Space

Do: Stand far enough away so that you can see the person's feet when you shake hands, then you can move reasonably into their personal space.

Don't: If the person takes a step back then don't move closer.

Mirror

Do: If someone does something positive then be positive back. Mirroring the speed, tone and pitch of a person's voice can also be effective.

Don't: Mirror absolutely everything a person does (that would be weird).

Get support from your regional staff at www.foe.co.uk/community/local_groups/staff_support.html

Editor: Howard Whitehead
Editorial team: Tim Atkinson,
Jess Dolan, Vicki Felgate,
Jill Andrews

Design: Deborah Thompson

Picture research: Amelia Collins

Friends of the Earth
26-28 Underwood Street

London N1 7JQ
Tel: 020 7490 1555
Fax: 020 7490 0881

Website: www.foe.co.uk

Friends of the Earth Cymru:
www.foecymru.co.uk

Friends of the Earth
Northern Ireland:
www.foe.co.uk/northern_ireland



Friends of
the Earth

Making life better for people by inspiring solutions to environmental problems

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