

## Recent Events:

- Toured Onyx's blue bin recycling centre.
- New transport group has been formed.
- Members attended the FoE Northern Day out in Leeds
- Climate and Car Club letters sent to the Star.
- Purchased a Gazebo and a digital camera.
- Commented on Local Transport Plans.
- Discussed the Parkwood Landfill site at one of our meetings.
- Held a Ecological Footprint workshop.
- Attended the Mayfest and Green Fair festivals.
- Attended the Make Poverty History Demonstration.
- Spoke on Radio Sheffield about recycling.
- James attended a candle lit vigil for the Make Poverty History campaign.
- Attended a pro-wind farm rally.
- Invited the Green Party councilor to talk about changes to the planning system

## Inside this issue:

<b>SFoE Pictures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Transport</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Climate</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Parkwood</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>News</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Power Solutions</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Air Travel &amp; Diary</b>	<b>6</b>

Autumn 2005

The newsletter of Sheffield Friends of the Earth

## The Big Ask Climate Campaign

Is the Government doing enough about climate change?

The Big Ask is Friends of the Earth's priority climate change campaign. It's about empowering people to ask the Government to do more about climate change by committing to annual carbon dioxide emission reductions.

The national launch of the campaign took place on 25th May. It was marked by a press conference attended by Friends of the Earth's special representative - Radiohead's Thom Yorke - and cross party MP support including Michael Meacher, John Gummer and Norman Baker.

The campaign also witnessed the launch of the Climate Change Bill on the 13th July in the House of Commons. The Bill is supported by former environment Ministers from both Labour (Michael Meacher MP) and the Conservatives (John Gummer MP) and the current Lib Dem environment spokesman (Norman Baker MP). The Bill would:

- Set a legally binding target to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by three per cent every year.
- Compel the Prime Minister to report annually to Parliament on progress towards meeting the target.
- Introduce a series of measures to get emission cuts back on track if they do not meet the three per cent target report. This would include: requirements on ministers to introduce new policies; greater powers for Select Committees; and ultimately symbolic pay cuts for the Ministers failing to cut emissions.

A coalition of organisations are

working for this new climate law – including Help the Aged, the Association for the Conservation of Energy, Christian Aid and WWF-UK.

Sheffield Friends of the Earth is one of over 125 groups that signed up to the Big Ask day of action. We used the stall at the Sheffield Green Fair to collect lots of signed postcards to be sent to local MPs. So far we know that the local MPs to sign up are Clive Betts (Labour) and Nick Clegg (Lib Dems).

At a national level, nearly 250 MPs have said they will support our Climate Change Bill. But we still need more MPs to sign up. Please help by asking five of your friends or family to take action at [www.thebigask.com](http://www.thebigask.com)



find out more about the campaign. Although the advert will not be displayed at any cinemas in Sheffield it can be viewed online at [www.TheBigAsk.com](http://www.TheBigAsk.com)

If you have any ideas of

*"This seems to be the first sane, reasoned way out of what is basically an international emergency. Any person out there who has any concern about global warming in this country, who feels powerless like I did, should think about getting involved in The Big Ask."*  
*Thom Yorke, Radiohead 25.5.05*

To further the message of the Big Ask, Friends of the Earth has produced a 60 second cinema advert which aims to get people thinking about climate change. It features young children expressing their fears, feelings and understanding of climate change, as spoken thoughts. It's based on the principal that climate change will affect our children more than it affects us but that we are the ones that need to do something about it now, for them. The advert directs viewers to [www.thebigask.com](http://www.thebigask.com) where they can write to their MP and

screening opportunities for the ad, then please do contact Claire Martin at national Friends of the Earth ([clairem@foe.co.uk](mailto:clairem@foe.co.uk)) to share your ideas. Please let us know too.

## FoE Snap up Camera

Sheffield Friends of the Earth received £100 from head office in London to purchase a camera to record our campaigning work. The camera will also be useful for sending quality pictures to the media and for improving our web site. Budding photographers in the group have been busy taking photos with the new camera at our stalls and other events we have attended.



The Sheffield Green Fair—July 2005



Make Poverty History



The Sheffield Mayfest—May 2005



July meeting at the Red Deer pub.

## Climate News

The final message on climate change from the G8 was disappointing – but not entirely surprising. Both the communiqué and the action plan are mostly revised statements of the countries' past positions. We were successful in cutting through the spin from the White House and No. 10, to ensure balanced reporting. The US Administration had in fact weakened earlier drafts of the communiqué, so that it offered nothing new, with no commitment to firm action agreed. This is despite many states taking action to reduce their emissions, with over 150 city mayors adopting Kyoto-style reduction targets. Even Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor of California, has asked for Governments everywhere to tackle climate change.

New figures show that UK carbon dioxide emissions are set to rise again this year, despite the Government's commitment to taking action to tackle climate change. Government figures show that UK emissions of carbon dioxide for the first five months of this year are almost two per cent higher than last year. If the trend continues, the UK's contribution to climate change for 2005 could be the worst since 1992.

Using the latest figures released by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Friends of the Earth has calculated that carbon dioxide emissions from January to May increased by 1.79 per cent. Using the Government's weather-adjusted figures, emissions in fact rose by 2.52 per cent.

Even at the lower rise of 1.79 per cent, carbon emissions for the year as a whole look set to increase to 161.2 MtC (mega tonnes of carbon) - an increase of 4.7 per cent since Labour came to power. The Government has said it will cut emissions by 20 per cent by 2010 but emissions have now risen for the last four years.

Friends of the Earth is calling on the Government to introduce new legislation to create a framework for cutting carbon dioxide emissions year-on-year, with government departments set clear targets for the cuts they must achieve. The call is part of Friends of the Earth's climate change campaign, The Big Ask (see page 1).

## Transport News

In June 2005, Transport Secretary Alistair Darling started a national debate by reaffirming Government plans to introduce a nationwide system of road pricing to help tackle congestion. He believes that unless we take a radical step we face LA-style congestion problems. He wants a per mile charge varying by time of day and degree of congestion, but leaves it unclear how the charge would be imposed. He doesn't want it to be on top of existing fuel and road tax, but doesn't say whether road charges would replace the other two taxes.

Road pricing won't happen nationwide for ten years, although there will be a regional trial by the end of the decade. Friends of the Earth supports the principle of road pricing, and believes it could be part of the answer to our transport problems. However, the scheme must aim to cut climate change emissions as well as congestion; and the charges must be set to raise the overall cost of motoring, so drivers are not given money back through cutting fuel tax.

Sheffield Friends of the Earth's new transport group was formed in early 2005. So far the group has sent in four responses to the Council's Local Transport Plans. We have requested, amongst other things, more support for car clubs, electric vehicles, bus lanes, cycling and the need to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Shaun sent a letter to the Sheffield Star explaining the benefits of car clubs.

Rebecca has been busy looking at bus quality corridors and also First's pricing policy.

Other areas the group will be looking at during the next year are:

- Bus Quality Corridors
- Real time information systems
- Tram gate cameras
- Station based cycle hire scheme and better cycle parking at the station.
- M1 Widening

## Stalls & Fairs

On bank holiday Monday 30th May 2005 around 20,000 people attended Mayfest in Hillsborough Park, Sheffield's largest outdoor festival. Live music was performed by Chesney Hawkes, Lemar and other groups. Paddy McGuinness from Max and Paddy's Road to Nowhere also attended. Other events included mega minis, the James Bond Aston Martin Car, fair ground rides, animal tents, market stalls and of course the Sheffield Friends of the Earth stall.

The Sheffield Friends of the Earth stall featuring Maureen's electric car appeared to attract more attention than Bond's Aston Martin parked next to us! We also used the stall to hand out about two-hundred energy saving light bulbs, a few hundred water saving bags, and many information leaflets on climate change, recycling and GM foods. Onyx also displayed recycling and composting displays at the festival.



**The Sheffield Friends of the Earth stall at Mayfest**

Sheffield Friends of the Earth also attended the 20th Green Fair at St Mary's Community Centre on Bramall lane in July. The event attracted around 60 stalls which ranged from information stalls, renewable energy displays, electric bikes, and plenty of activities for the kids. It was estimated that over one-thousand visitors passed through the gates.

## Parkwood Landfill Campaign

I'm writing to you on behalf of a group of local tenants, residents and businesses starting to feel and see the environmental impacts that landfill has on people, wildlife and industry. Parkwood Springs Landfill Site is one of the largest landfill sites in Europe, situated near the heart of Sheffield, where large amounts of household and industrial wastes are deposited. Local people complained so much about dust, odours, nuisance and health issues that a health survey was commissioned, though this is still not finished and many of the previously reported problems still keep reoccurring.

With all the aforementioned information we were astonished to learn, the Environment Agency granted a new permit allowing 650,000 tonnes of inert and active waste (incinerator ash and fine dust compounds, which can be treated toxic wastes) to be deposited per annum totalling 8,910,000 cubic metres. This will produce a huge mountain of waste, which according to one spokesperson for Viridor the operators of Parkwood Springs Landfill Site will result in gas being released until 2046.

Viridor have two planning applications 05/00956/FUL and 05/00959/FUL these are for a gas utilisation plant, leachate treatment plant (leachate is created when water runs through a landfill site) and expansion plans. So far, we have collected over 2500 signatures, names and numerous objections and most are lodged with Mr V Faulkner at Howden House.

We know people want a reduction in landfill, so we must find alternatives for this to become reality and we are beginning a Green and Organic Waste Awareness Campaign. 30% of household waste is green and organic, so if every household recycles these types of waste in the many ways available that would mark a huge turnaround in attitudes and move a step closer towards making landfill and incineration redundant.

Many local authorities provide community-recycling points, though some go further by providing green bins or bags, for each household. High quality compost can easily be made from green and organic waste, so people could start their own recycling scheme with the added benefits of lush gardens. Compost bins can be purchased from most DIY stores and filled with: grass cuttings, leaves, cardboard, paper, fruit and vegetable peel, tea bags, rabbit and hamster droppings... Maintenance is very low just requiring turning with a garden fork once a week and adding water if the heap appears dry. There are a few items, which must not be added such as fish and meat, cooked foods, cat and dog droppings, exceptionally woody plants and oils. The next time you have a cup of tea or portion of vegetables please consider where the waste goes and encourage recycling.

Our web site offers more tips so please visit <http://mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk/pctrbg>

Best wishes and please email if you support our Green and Organic Waste Awareness Campaign.

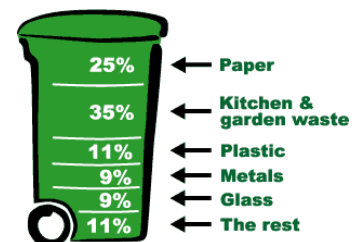
Paul Antcliffe,  
Parkwood Concerned Tenants, Residents and Businesses Group  
paul@paulantcliffe.wanadoo.co.uk



**Parkwood Landfill site— home to another 650,000 tonnes of waste per year**



**30-35% of household waste is organic and suitable for composting.**



**Most household waste is recyclable as the above bin shows.**



## Round up of Local, National & International News



**In internal report for the American motor industry reported that 4x4s “tend to be bought by people who are insecure, vain, self-centred and self absorbed, who are frequently nervous about their marriages and who lack confidence in their driving skills”**

**The European Safety Council has estimated that 2,000 people die and 18,000 are seriously injured because of bull bars. In Britain more than 600,000 vehicles have them fitted. (Independent 29/03/05)**



**The National Consumer Council suggests turning recycling into a lottery by writing your name and address on the empties. A winner is then chosen at random. In Norway such a scheme increased recycling rates of drink cartons from 30% to 70%. (Star 30/3/05)**



**In Japan, energy use in industry has remained unchanged since 1973, even as its output has tripled. (Ecologist July-August 2005)**

### Transport

Local Lib Dem MP Nick Clegg has given his support to calls for the introduction of green fuels across the UK. (Star 10/08/05)

Plans have been approved to build a park and ride site at the Malin Bridge tram stop. (Star 26/05/05)

South Yorkshire Police is apparently running 100 police cars on a mixture of bio-diesel and normal fuel.

To drivers who moan about the high cost of petrol, road tax and insurance, it will come as something of a shock: the cost of motoring in Britain is now lower than it was 30 years ago, while rail and bus fares have soared to record levels over the same period. New government figures reveal that the cost of owning a car for Britain's 24.5 million motorists has fallen by 11 per cent in real terms since 1975, while rail and bus fares have climbed 70 and 66 % respectively. (Guardian 27/02/05)

A £1.6 million package was revealed to encourage more freight on to the waterways (Star 11/05/05)

### Food

A Sheffield Green Food map has been launched showing locations of organic, eco-friendly, and locally produced food. See the website at: [www.greenfoodmap.com](http://www.greenfoodmap.com).

Organic farms are better for wildlife than those run conventionally, according to a study covering 180 farms from Cornwall to Cumbria. The organic farms were found to contain 85% more plant species, 33% more bats, 17% more spiders and 5% more birds. Other key differences found on the organic farms

included smaller fields, more grasslands and hedges that are taller, thicker and longer. Less than 3% of English farmland is organic. (BBC Web Site)

The co-op is reported to be stocking cress on peat-free compost (Star)

Flying 1kg of asparagus from California to the UK uses 900 times more energy than the home grown variety. (Independent 28/05/05)

### Waste

Onyx have launched a textile recycling service to around 6,000 homes (Star 29/04/05)

Onyx will trial a recycling service for aluminium and steel cans in 12,000 homes across the city. (Star 19/07/05)

Sheffield's recycling figure now stands at 17% (Star 29/06/05)

### Energy & Climate

A wind turbine saving 4.5 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, a heat pump and a water harvesting device has been given the go-ahead at a farm in Stannington. (Sheffield Journal 22/4/05)

A small hydro plant will be built on the Thames to power one-third of Windsor Castle. (Star 25/07/05)

One million tons of greenhouse gasses are pumped into the atmosphere every year by appliances left on standby. (independent 23/06/05)

The National Trust suggest that 60% of its 702 miles of coastline could be affected by erosion as a result of sea level rise. (Star 28/04/05)

The protective ozone layer over the Arctic has thinned this winter to the lowest levels since records began. Research

by Cambridge University shows that it is not increased pollution but a side effect of climate change that is making ozone depletion worse. (Guardian 27/04/05)

A leading Russian scientist has claimed that the sarcophagus entombing Chernobyl's broken nuclear reactor is dangerously degraded and he warned that its collapse could cause a catastrophe on the same scale as the original accident almost 20 years ago. (Independent 28/04/05)

A leak of highly radioactive nuclear fuel dissolved in concentrated nitric acid, enough to half fill an Olympic-size swimming pool, has forced the closure of Sellafield's Thorp reprocessing plant. The highly dangerous mixture, containing about 20 tonnes of uranium and plutonium fuel, has leaked through a fractured pipe into a huge stainless steel chamber which is so radioactive that it is impossible to enter. (Guardian 09/05/05)

A plan to build the world's biggest solar energy power station, covering about 250 hectares and capable of sustaining 130,000 households, has been unveiled in Portugal. It will have a 116 megawatt output. (Guardian 06/05/05)

### Forests

Arnold Laver has gained accreditation from the Forest Stewardship Council FSC (Star 17/05/05)

## Solutions—Decentralised Power Generation could cut CO<sup>2</sup> Gasses

Electricity production in the UK is responsible for a third of our carbon emissions. This is the UK's single greatest contribution to climate change. It need not be so. Our centralised model of production and transmission wastes an astonishing two-thirds of primary energy inputs, requiring us to burn far more fuel and emit far more carbon dioxide than necessary. It is hard to imagine a more wasteful and inefficient model than that which currently services the economies of the 'developed' world. In our existing system, electricity is produced in a small number of large power stations, and then distributed to where it is needed. Because the power stations are generally far from centres of demand, much of the heat which is produced when fossil fuels are burnt is not used, but vented up chimneys or discharged to rivers. This heat loss alone represents a wastage of over sixty percent of the total energy released by burning the fossil fuels. Further losses occur as the electricity travels along the wires of the transmission and distribution systems.

In total, the energy wasted at the power station and on the wires is equal to the entire water and space heating demands of all buildings in the UK – industrial, commercial, public and domestic. This is a nonsensical way to run our economy and power our lives. But there is an alternative. In a decentralised energy (DE) system, electricity would be generated close to or at the point of use. Buildings, instead of being passive consumers of energy, would become power stations, constituent parts of local energy networks. They would have solar photovoltaic panels, solar water heaters, micro wind turbines, heat pumps for extracting energy from the earth. They might

also be linked to commercial or domestic operated combined heat and power systems. The massive expansion in renewable capacity that this would represent, and the fact that when fossil fuels were burnt the heat would be captured and used, would lead to dramatic reductions in overall carbon emissions – at least half of all emissions from the power sector, or 15% of total UK emissions. This radical transformation of our energy system sounds attractive but expensive. But in fact decentralising our energy sources, instead of replacing our current centralised system, may actually save money in the long run. A centralised network of cables is an old technology – and a phenomenally expensive one at that. New low-carbon technologies dictate a different infrastructure. According to the International Energy Agency, the European Union will spend \$648 billion on modernising and replacing the transmission and distribution networks. The opportunity to avoid many of these costs means that decentralised energy makes economic as well as environmental sense. DE also offers a way forward for developing nations and for the emerging economic giants like China and India. It is sometimes claimed, fatalistically, that efforts to stabilise the climate will be overwhelmed by China burning its coal reserves. But developing a decentralised energy system in response to its growth in demand for power would enable China to reduce associated carbon emissions by 56% as compared to the centralised scenario – and costs would be reduced by 40% as well. Unfortunately, the debate in the UK has

focused more on whether we need a new generation of nuclear power stations. Nuclear power is the epitome of centralised, outdated electricity generation. Replacing existing nuclear stations with new ones would perpetuate the centralised system, entrenching all the costs and inefficiencies that implies. Such inefficiencies currently waste three times as much energy as would be contributed by new nuclear power stations. It is only because of technological apathy – failure by government and industry to invest in real innovative alternatives – that nuclear power is given any serious consideration.

Decentralising energy offers a compelling alternative vision, in which we can both combat climate change and roll back the nuclear threat. To give just one example of the potential, if half the houses in the UK were provided with domestic combined heat and power units, which is technically feasible, then the electricity generated would replace the entire nuclear capacity we have today.

This article has been taken from the Greenpeace report called **Decentralising power: an energy revolution for the 21st century**.

See [www.greenpeace.org.uk](http://www.greenpeace.org.uk) for more details and to read the full report.



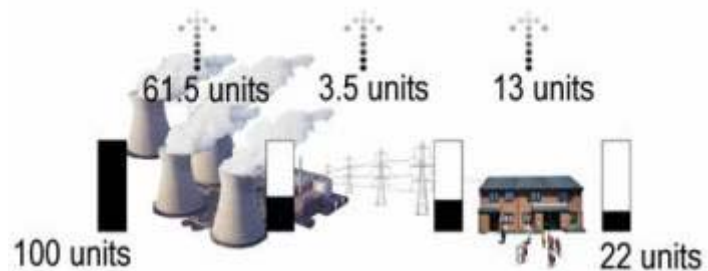
**Two thirds of energy is wasted from centralised power stations. Decentralising power generation such as using solar roofs could drastically cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.**

(Picture: [www.solarcentury.co.uk](http://www.solarcentury.co.uk))



**London's Vauxhall Cross Bus/Tube Interchange with its own solar panels help to power the building.**

(Picture: Paul Hallam)



**Out of 100 units of fuel, the power station wastes 61.5%. The transmission lines waste a further 3.5% and homes account for 13%. Just 22% of the energy put in to the system is actually used.**

(Picture: Greenpeace)

**Address**

Sheffield FoE  
Voluntary Action House  
Division Street  
Sheffield

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

**Co-ordinator**

Steve Goodacre  
0114 267 0508  
[steveg@doctors.org.uk](mailto:steveg@doctors.org.uk)

**Treasurer**

Liddy Goyder  
0114 267 0508  
[e.goyder@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:e.goyder@sheffield.ac.uk)

**Web & Newsletters**

Shaun Rumbelow  
0114 296 2335  
[shaun.rumbelow@sth.nhs.uk](mailto:shaun.rumbelow@sth.nhs.uk)

**Waste**

Maureen Edwards  
[maureen@med9.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:maureen@med9.fsnet.co.uk)

**Local Groups' Web**

Leeds Friends of the Earth  
[www.leedsfoe.demon.co.uk](http://www.leedsfoe.demon.co.uk)

Hull Friends of the Earth  
[beehive.thisishull.co.uk/hullfoe](http://beehive.thisishull.co.uk/hullfoe)

Yorks & Humber FoE  
[www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/local\\_groups\\_and\\_campaigns/yandh.htm](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/local_groups_and_campaigns/yandh.htm)

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

If you find a membership renewal form inside your newsletter it means that your subscriptions are due. Please send your subscriptions to the postal address given above.

Thank you for your support

**Sheffield FoE What's on Guide (see web site for latest details)**

DATE AND TIME	EVENT DETAILS
Monday October 17 2004	General Meeting - see map below for location and details
Monday November 21 2005	General Meeting - see map below for location and details
Monday December 19 2005	General Meeting - see map below for location and details
Monday January 16 2005	General Meeting - see map below for location and details
Monday February 20 2005	General Meeting - see map below for location and details
Monday March 20 2005	General Meeting - see map below for location and details
Every 4th Sunday in the month	Sheffield Farmers' Market on the Moor. <a href="http://www.sheffieldfarmersmarket.co.uk">www.sheffieldfarmersmarket.co.uk</a>

Many more events are listed on our web site. Go to [www.sheffieldfoe.co.uk](http://www.sheffieldfoe.co.uk) or phone us



Sheffield Friends of the Earth meetings are usually held at 8 p.m. at the Red Deer pub, 18 Pitt Street. This is near to the University of Sheffield just off West Street (see map opposite). Please phone a co-ordinator if you require more details or want to check that a meeting is taking place.

**Friends of the Earth Flying into Air Travel Criticism**

Friends of the Earth was criticised by the Sheffield Star recently for its view on air travel. The Star claimed, "Friends of the Earth are no fans of aviation, believing air travel is the worst culprit in the rise in pollution which accompanies transportation trends and regularly opposed airport expansions. Now they warn the proliferation of airports in regions such as ours actually saps money out of local incomes than pumps into them. However, the environmental campaign group, in attacking the symptoms of the problem rather than the cause, should be honest and tell us that we should give up short breaks in foreign countries, and spend holiday pay at home. Then we wonder, what would they say to the hundreds of thousands whose jobs rely on air travel – and how would they explain to some of the poorer countries which have embraced the concept of tourism that the British holidaymaker has become an insular isolationist group. This is just the kind of extremist clutching of straws which does little credit to an organisation which ought to be carefully, considerately and consistently earning the respect of the general public."

In response to this, the local Sheffield group responded with the letter below:

*Friends of the Earth's concerns about aviation are not based on belief, but established science. Aviation is the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions. There is an overwhelming scientific consensus that these are responsible for climate change. We therefore have no problem in justifying our stance to smaller countries. The economic damage associated with climate change will be huge and will fall most heavily upon the developing world. Unfortunately cheap flights are costing us the earth. This may be an unpopular message, but it is true.*

**Did you Know?**

Air travel produces 19 times the greenhouse gas emissions of trains and 190 times that of a ship.

One return flight to Florida produces the equivalent CO<sub>2</sub> of a year's average motoring.  
Independent (28/05/05)