



# Hull E C



Hull's environmental newsletter. Published by Hull Friends of the Earth [www.hfoe.org.uk](http://www.hfoe.org.uk)

Issue 22: July 2008

## Diary Dates

### Saturday 19 July

Driffeld Green Fair

Details: 01377 200357 or 07947 511 153

### Thursday 31 July

7.30 at 170 Victoria Ave

HFoE Discussion Group on FoE Sierra Leone: how we can help.

### Tuesday 5 August

7.30 upstairs Pier Luigi, Princes Ave

HFoE meeting

### Sat 23 August

HFoE stall at Freedom Festival Family Funday

12 noon onwards at Freedom Centre Preston Road

### Thurs 28 August

7.30 170 Victoria Ave

HFoE Discussion Group

### Tues 2nd September

7.30 upstairs Pier Luigi, Princes Ave

HFoE meeting

### Fri 12 Sept-Sun 14 September

FoE National Conference at Loughborough

### Sun 21 September

2-4 pm Barbeque on the HFoE Wildlife allotment, Manvers St, Newland Ave

Plus guided tour. All welcome; bring food to share

### Thurs 25 September

7.30 170 Victoria Ave

HFoE Discussion Group

### Tues 7 October

7.30 upstairs Pier Luigi, Princes Ave

HFoE meeting

### Thurs 30 October

7.30 170 Victoria Ave

HFoE Discussion Group

### Saturday 22 November

[NB not last Sat in Nov this year]

Green Fair at Spring Bank Community Centre.

Contact Hilary August onwards re stall bookings

### Sunday 30 November

1-2 pm Stepney Lane/Barmston Drain.

Tree planting

## Can we make the change?

### Hull now has a fledgling Transition Initiative!

Stephen Hall—who also happens to be East Riding's Community Composting Officer—came to our May meeting to talk to us about **Transition Towns** and the possibility of starting our own.

The best description of a Transition Town comes from the Transition Handbook itself.

'Given that oil and gas are depleting resources, and that we urgently need extreme cuts in CO<sup>2</sup> emissions even to the extent that our daily lives sequester more carbon than they produce, Transition Initiatives ask **what would such a world actually look like? How would we live? Where would our food come from?**

...The Transition process offers a positive solutions-focused approach that draws together the various elements of a community to address this common challenge and **sees much of the solution as coming from within, through a process of unlocking what is already there**, rather than from experts and consultants coming in from the outside.'

We are now in the process of setting up an official group to take on the challenge of beginning this awesome process. Ten people were present at the first meeting, six of whom were FoE members.

On 20 June we introduced a showing of 'A Crude Awakening' at Hull Screen. About 50 people came along and despite two fire alarms

where we had to leave the building, everyone stuck it out to the end. A brief discussion followed and nine people left contact details.

There are plans to show 'The End of Suburbia' in the near future.

For more details, email: [transitionhull@yahoo.com](mailto:transitionhull@yahoo.com) or call Stephen Hall on **07946 220086**. Please contact us if this exciting project interests you.

We have now got a new website (blog really) to keep people up to date with film showings and meeting times, etc. We've just started it so it's a little brief as yet.

<http://transitionhull.blogspot.com/>

### For more information on Transition Towns go to

[www.transitiontowns.org](http://www.transitiontowns.org) or <http://transitionculture.org/>

### Lee-Ann

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## Fuel and food...

### **Biofuels - our postcard campaign**

Politicians are starting to respond to evidence that the rush to meet biofuels targets is causing environmental damage and soaring food prices here and abroad. We ought to be pushing at an open door, therefore, with our postcard campaign to persuade MEPs to vote against EU targets to increase the proportion of biofuels in petrol to 10% by 2020.

**Please send off the enclosed postcard to any of your MEPs [see [www.europarl.org.uk](http://www.europarl.org.uk)], or give it to Sue or Hilary [addresses on the back of ECO].**

We will be handing them over in person to Diana Wallis MEP. A letter explaining why you are concerned is, of course, even better.

You could quote Leeds based firm Viridas as an example of the way firms are rushing to exploit opportunities to invest in biofuels. As reported in the Yorkshire Post Business section 18 June 2008, the firm has withdrawn from all their other businesses, which ranged from garden furniture to underwear, in order to invest in growing jatropha trees on 250,000 hectares of Brazilian rainforest. Jatropha trees produce an inedible fruit which is said to produce higher oil yields than other plants. Apparently the firm considers Brazil to be an ideal country to grow jatropha because of its 'large tracts of available idle land'.

Even closer to home at Saltend, as reported in the previous ECO, BP and others are developing a plant to produce bioethanol from wheat. I've not heard that rapidly rising wheat prices have yet made them think again.

**STOP PRESS: 138 postcards were signed at the HFoE stall during Avenues Open Gardens**

## The true cost of food?

The rise in food prices is said to be causing people to turn from Tescos and Sainsburys to the cheaper supermarkets. This might not be good news for some organic producers. On the other hand, small shopkeepers on Hessle Road are reporting an upturn in sales. Perhaps it's the rise in fuel costs that is making people 'shop local', or perhaps they are discovering that this was where the bargains were all along.

It would be a great pity if people were to economise by not buying Fairtrade items, however. 'The Great African Scandal' was a series of programmes made for Channel 4 which showed how the shopping decisions we make have a profound effect on the way of life of people in Ghana.

They were screened as the introduction to a discussion organised by the Coop at Hull College on Wednesday 25 June. David Westwood [Christian Aid], Chris Church [One World Shop] and Hilary Byers [Hull FoE] were on the panel. We learnt how heavily subsidised American rice imported into Ghana is forcing Ghanaian rice farmers into poverty, and how cocoa produced under Fairtrade conditions cannot find enough buyers and ends up being mixed in with cocoa produced by child slave labour. The event deserved to be better publicised by the Coop. And in a Fairtrade City, Hull College ought to equip their lecture theatres with coffee facilities other than those Kenco machines which are not Fairtrade and produce a load of plastic waste.

At one point in the discussion I did suggest that we all might consume less, which probably wasn't what either the Coop or One World Shop wanted to hear. Come to think of it, it might not be what Ghanaian farmers would want either, at least in the short term.

But now we have the Prime Minister telling us all we should avoid 'three for the price of two' offers and cut down on waste. Well I try, but I can't help feeling that the increase in meals eaten out must be contributing a great deal of hidden waste. Anyway, I'll have to cut back on the rubbish we throw out because my partner is complaining that now we refuse plastic bags at the checkout he has nothing to put the rubbish in!

Never was shopping and eating so ethically complicated! And I haven't touched on GM! Of course the allotment holders will be telling us they had the answer all along; grow your own. Well Chrys, Lee-Ann and I are trying in a tiny way in the Hull FoE raised beds.

Hilary



Photo: Chrys Bayey

Hilary prepares the first raised bed with compost from our CARGO bins

# Council consulting opportunities

There seem to have been many opportunities to take part in Council consultations in recent months—Hull FoE have contributed as a group to at least two.

These are quite awesome at first sight—although the Hull Council planning website does try to make it easier by enabling you to do it online with specific question to prompt answers and space to put in unprompted comments. This is at: <http://hullcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal> for all the consultations—so it's a good place to keep an eye on.

For the first one, we split up the response from Hull FoE, with various volunteers drafting up responses to each section which were then collated, circulated for comment and then submitted. Was this a good way of working it? Seemed to work well and made the task less onerous on any one individual.

## 1 Hull Development Framework Sustainable Development Consultation

This was an opportunity to provide evidence and comment at the early stage of a document that will provide details on how to make sure that new developments in the city are sustainable and it supplements existing planning policies. It covered:

- 1 Local context
- 2 The Built Form
- 3 Energy
- 4 Water management
- 5 Movement
- 6 Waste & Recycling
- 7 Biodiversity & Natural Habitats
- 8 Heritage, Landscape and a sense of place.

Hull FoE input was submitted on time—thanks to all those who helped and we are now just waiting to hear a response!

## 2 Draft Joint Waste Development Plan Hull & East Riding Consultation

This is a consultation on the drafting of the plan on how to deal with waste in this area for the next 15-20 years. The document, which you can view at <http://hullcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal>, when finalised, will be the basis of planning decisions so it was important that we influenced at this early stage.

The timetable for consultations is:

- 1 **Issues and Options** stage by 22 May
- 2 **Preferred Options** which will have taken into account the feedback from the issues and options stage November/December 2008
- 3 **Final** is when the JWDPD is submitted to the Secretary of State in 2009.

Hull FoE submission was submitted on the first Issues and Options stage—thanks for all those that contributed comments.

Some points of interest on this one are:

- Still working to a 45% recycling target...when other authorities are already achieving up to 55%!
- Predictions of the tonnages of waste seem to be highly variable and eg the document also gives tonnages of waste predictions until 2021—where for some categories eg municipal waste a 20% increase is predicted! Recent predictions in other documents have predicted no change and DEFRA's national figures predict a decrease...
- The plan includes the incinerator being up and running by 2010—so clearly there is some work to do on the strategy and we trust our comments will be considered.

There's sure to be more consultations—so we will be looking for help again and also monitoring if any effective influencing is achieved by completing them!

Ian & Sue



## Reuse and Repair your household goods

The East Riding Council has launched a new Reuse and Repair register. It lists businesses that repair white goods, clothing, shoes, household items etc.

It also lists charities that will take furniture, white goods etc for distribution to those in need.

**Click on [www.target45plus.org.uk](http://www.target45plus.org.uk), then "Reuse and repair register" or contact John Kelly, on 01482 391716**

# Bill goes to the Environment Fair

The Deep 7-8 June 2008



Photo of Bill: Lee-Ann Williams

I took my son Bill to the Environment Fair on the Saturday. Bill has a habit of running off every 5 minutes and only stands still when he's engrossed in something. His vote went for the bird box building organised by the council where he actually had a part in making one. Every time he shot off I would find him there studying the action. He played the giant 'coastal wildlife' snakes and ladders game and spent some time staring at the amazing 'sculptures' made out of shopping trolleys. He insisted I took a photo of him with the can-people—East Riding's recycling mascots—hung around Dolphin Watch for a little while to find out about dolphin's noses and the

longest time he was still was when he drew a picture using one of Green PC's environmentally friendly computers. He wanted herbs from Ashkeys plant stand (we got him a curry plant and garlic chives), bought some organic chocolate from White Rabbit chocolate stall and made a jellyfish hat!

Not bad going for a restless five year old!

I helped out on the FoE stall on the Sunday (minus Bill) and came away with 30 plants that were being given away! I harvested my first fennel this evening.

## KITCHEN CABINETS FROM RECYCLED YOGHURT POTS!

Finally someone has managed to combine the need to find a use for waste plastics and the need for sustainable kitchen units! Milestone Design had a stall opposite ours at the Environment Fair and we all spent time fawning over the products. They have an incredible range of unique products made from recycled wood, plastic and glass including recycled beach glass jewellery, beautifully crafted chopping boards and flood-proof kitchen units!

Their stall was laid out with smooth marble effect tabletops glittering with

recycled glass and flecked surfaces made from vending machine cups. Their breakthrough concepts challenge the idea that people want recycled products to look 'just as good' as the mass produced rubbish and they actually found that the more obviously the design looked like it came from recycled materials the more people liked it. They have produced a complete kitchen project from recycled content.

Check out their website at [www.milestone.uk.net](http://www.milestone.uk.net)



They are very happy to do demonstrations if we can find a few people interested in Hull. Contact [leeann@ethos.uk.net](mailto:leeann@ethos.uk.net) or ring 01482 440043 if you would like to know more.

Lee-Ann

# Cycling saves fuel + keeps you fit!

Saturday 14 June 2008 was the start of **National Cycle Week**, marked by a display in Queen Victoria Square. The Community Wardens were postcoding, the repair man was adjusting, the police cycle squad was attending and I was arguing.

The event was organised by Allan Davidson, project development engineer with the city council, aided by the CHEF "Bussit" group, which provided useful shelter in the showers.

There's a lot going on to encourage cycling in the city with more cycle paths, the Active Lifestyle campaign in East and West Parks, the cycle training given in junior schools and the new cycle map,



Adam Fowler, CHEF

Photo: Lee-Ann Williams

which is a mine of useful information, but there is still a lot to do.

## The arguments.

My reply to the usual moan about cyclists on pavements is "How many cyclists are killed or injured on the roads?" That's the root of the problem.

Then, of course, all cyclists are potential muggers, but some might be travelling quickly without using fossil fuels and hoping to keep fit as well.

I've made a few compromises: high visibility vest, modern frame with brakes that work in the wet and even allowed other cyclists to overtake.

So keep on cycling for the remaining 51 weeks of the year.

David

# Our Water Walk—10 May 2008



The Water Walk organized by FoE to help the world's poorest and most disadvantaged people was a great success. Twenty persons plus two dogs met at Pearson Park, and we walked for 6 hours to bring the message to the people of Hull that every day thousands die from lack of water or from diseases caused by dirty water. T carried our Water Walk sign and along the way people stopped us to ask what we were doing and then felt they wanted to contribute. David L was our leader and along with Hilary gave most interesting mini-lectures at each of our stops, which were areas of water either now or in the past in Hull. We asked participants for £2 per person and collected £162 which we divided between Samaritan's Purse and Practical Action. Both these organizations do

the same thing: help African villages to make hand-dug wells, create access to a borehole, protect springs to provide safe water, provide families with water filters, and provide latrines to improve sanitation and prevent disease. We have received appreciative letters from these organizations thanking us for our support. And Dave C has provided photos of our walk to Practical Action to use in their literature.

One of our goals was to try to carry a 15 litre plastic bottle of water for some of the average four mile distance (although some walk up to 33 miles daily!) that women and children in Africa have to walk every day to find and carry home water for their daily needs. We stopped for lunch by the river and filled a container and then found that we

needed two people to carry it even short distances, although African women carry the bottle on their heads. One of our members actually did manage to get it onto his head, but then couldn't walk with it. We were joined by people who are not FoE members so this was a good public relations event, as was our participation in the Beverley Green Fair where we gave out information about the walk and the tragic shortage of water in Africa. All our literature disappeared before the end of the fair and a lot was taken for use in schools, so we have also contributed to awareness-raising. The project was to support one of FoE's goals which is Social Justice.

Haris

## MARINET update on Marine Reserves Bill

As Lobbying Officer for Marinet and our goal of making certain a strong Marine Bill, 1 organized a meeting between Marinet and the Marine Conservation Society at their headquarters in Ross-on-Wye.

Attended by myself and 2 other officials on our side, we, along with the three top officers of the Marine Conservation Society, forged an alliance

to fight for the same goal: A duty on the Secretary of State to establish an ecologically coherent network of Highly Protected Marine Reserves covering 30% of our seas and reaching out to 200 nautical miles.

If you haven't already asked your MP to sign Early Day Motion 1141, please do, as this calls for exactly that.

Highly Protected Marine Reserves are **no-take zones** which allow no exploitative activities: no fishing, no aggregate dredging, no trawling—and are the only way to save our seas which are now in a completely degraded and unsustainable position.

Haris

# Wildlife Notes

A wet evening on Newland and four visitors for the discussion. The rain got rid of any talk of a picnic, though there was muttering about fish and chips.

Down to business. A review of the various activities. The compost scheme generated some heat, in me at least, and a way forward was proposed. I remain doubtful.

The NHS orchard was a surprise to some. Give it a few more years then look for it on Google-earth. The difference between hay, straw and silage was slipped in here and the value of uncut margins for wildlife was covered. Have



you noticed the increasing numbers of such grass margins around the city? This did produce at least one question for discussion, "Can I have some hay?"

A quick walk through the YWT tree nursery and Hull FoE wildlife area made sure that every part was evenly damp. Willow weaving was never a goer, wrong season, but plans to collect wildflower seeds and some scythe work, "SWING THOSE HIPS!" would have been possible, given dry weather. I was looking forward to that. Pity.

Meanwhile, there is much talk of Transition Towns and I'm still trying to understand what it means. I suspect it's

nothing to do with the Periodic Table. I do have some serious worries that allotments may be rationed and skips will be left empty. Maybe not. Also there is a debate whether Peak Oil is more important than Climate Change? Is this the case of the drowning man wondering whether he should have worn clean underwear or cancelled the papers?

David L



PS What was the milk float doing on the cycle path between Sculcoates and Stepney Lanes in April?



## Tree planting

Same place, on Sunday 30 November 2008 at 1.00 to 2.00 pm.



## CARGO through the keyhole

Last weekend, I was reading the Independent on Sunday magazine, and was struck by gardening guru Emma Townshend's report on the Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. She was much taken with the garden of a charity called Send a Cow. Set up in 1988 by a group of West Country farmers who wanted to help people in Uganda, they helped the African farmers to reject chemicals and pesticides, encouraging the sustainable use of animal manure instead.

The charity's people have been thinking up ingenious solutions to the problems of reduced soil fertility and lack of horticultural know-how.

Emma Townshend mentions in particular the keyhole garden.

This is a raised bed with a built-in compost heap. This is what our CARGO compost bins project was aiming to achieve (although we hadn't heard the term "keyhole gardening" at the time).



The Independent describes a "circular" raised bed, with a compost heap built into the centre. On our allotment, we have about 12 small ready-made rectangular beds (glass containers) already filled with compost/mulch which has been rotting down for the past year or two. It should be straightforward to cover these small beds with soil and plant some vegetables. I did this as an experiment in three of the little bins in 2005, planting 2 sorts of spinach, rocket and chervil. All the seeds germinated—as you can see in the photo above (October 2005). This is rocket, but the spinach was very vigorous, too.

One drawback is that the pallet/bins have gaps between the planks and various people have warned that soil will fall out. However, that was not a problem in my experiment. I agree the gaps are not ideal, but they can be filled in several ways.

Hilary and I started the HFoE vegetable project this week (10 July). We cleared the weeds and rubbish from the small bins, checked out the compost levels, topped 4 bins up, and got stuck in, sowing two sorts of beans, and planting tomatoes and courgettes that had been sitting in Hilary's greenhouse. Happily, the next day it poured with rain!

Lee-Ann and I will have some beds reserved strictly for organic gardening. We all hope that other HFoE members will be interested in joining our venture. There are beds to spare...

Chrys

Read more about keyhole gardening and see videos at: [www.cowfiles.com/african-gardens/keyhole-gardens](http://www.cowfiles.com/african-gardens/keyhole-gardens)

# An interview with **Matthew Thomas of Chance Café,** **Chanterlands Avenue**

***As well as being a regular at Hull FoE meetings, Matthew runs an organic and Fair trade café and shop on Chanterlands Avenue. Hilary popped in to ask a few questions.***

*What first gave you the idea of setting up an organic café and shop, Matt?*

I always fancied opening my own café and when I was made redundant from my last job I thought it was the perfect opportunity. I'm a big believer in organic food and the importance it has on the environment and couldn't imagine running the café any other way. As there is no where else in the area that is entirely organic I thought that it should be a shop as well so that everyone has the chance of buying a full range of organic products locally.

*What have been the best aspects of running the business so far?*

I love being my own boss but it is lovely meeting people everyday who share my beliefs and love for good food.

*Are there any drawbacks?*

Just the long hours.

*What first attracted you to Hull FoE?*

I have been a supporter of Friends of the Earth for a long time and I just thought I should see what happens in the



Photo: Hilary Byers

local group and if there is any support I can give.

*Had you been involved in environmental activities before?*

I have always been a supporter of environmental campaigns and tried to do my own little bit but I haven't really got very active. I have always been aware of the responsibility we all have to protect the environment and reduce our own impact but I haven't been involved in group activities before.

*What were your first impressions of Hull FoE when you started coming to meetings?*

I was very impressed how welcoming and well organised the meetings were and just how many campaigns and activities the group is involved in but the formal structure was a little intimidating

to start with. But with the amount that has to be squeezed in it soon becomes apparent why it is like that.

*Which of our campaigns and activities do you feel most drawn towards?*

Because of my love and support of organic food I have always been against the genetic modification of foods so the campaign against GM crops in Hedon was very important to me. I am also a big believer in the responsibility we all have to live a more sustainable lifestyle so anything to do with recycling and of course shopping locally is very close to my heart.

*With our 'Kitchen team' you organised our Café at the Green Fair, a bit of a busman's holiday! Did you enjoy it?*

I did enjoy it and it was great to see how willing and hardworking everyone was, especially on the day.

*What would you like to see Hull FoE giving priority to in the coming year?*

There are so many campaigns that are really important at the moment but keeping the continued awareness about GM is of great importance. I also think that the group should also look at promoting locally produced foods and their importance to the environment.

*Thankyou, Matt, and I'll have an Americana and one of your delicious carrot cakes!*

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**The Green Fair** this year is on Saturday 22 November at the Spring Bank Community Centre. We are especially wanting to have stalls and music from **local ethnic communities**, so if you know any ethnic groups which are doing environmental activities, or produce on a small scale crafts, jewellery, music or possibly food let us know as soon as possible [**contact Hilary, see back page**]. Food will need to be vegetarian and fit in with our kitchen arrangements.

**Hull ECO** deserves a wider readership! We can let you have spare copies to sell at meetings, events etc, or give to people who are interested in joining. **We would love to have more new members.** Don't forget to tell them that we have discussions, lively email conversations, tree planting, work on the allotment, stalls at fairs etc as well as meetings and campaigns—anything 'ECO' anyone wants to do really... Contact Sue or Hilary [details back page].

**And renew your own membership; do it now! [See back page].**



# Hull Friends of the Earth Membership

To renew membership or to join/support Hull Friends of the Earth, please fill in the following form:		<b>Payment</b>	
<b>Name</b> (Mr/Mrs/Ms)		I enclose:	
<b>Address</b>		Membership fee (£5 waged, £2 unwaged)	£
		Donation	£
<b>Postcode</b>		<b>Total</b>	£
<b>Telephone</b>		<i>Please make cheques payable to Hull Friends of the Earth</i>	
<b>Email</b>			

<b>Standing Order Mandate</b>		<b>Happy to help?</b>
<p><b>Hull Friends of the Earth</b>          Standing Order Mandate <b>OR</b> (delete one or the other as appropriate)          Amendment cancelling any previous instructions to pay money to Hull Friends of the Earth.          (Please fill in the details of your own account and the bank where it is held.)</p>		<p>Volunteers are always needed. If you might be able to help, please underline what you would be able to help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Street collections</b></li> <li>▶ <b>Stalls</b></li> <li>▶ <b>Demos</b></li> <li>▶ <b>Letter writing</b></li> <li>▶ <b>Delivering newsletters</b></li> <li>▶ <b>Other ways</b> (please specify)</li> </ul>
Your account name		
Your account number		
Your bank		
Bank branch		
Bank address		
Bank postcode		
<p>Upon receipt of this order and then every year following on or about the _____ day of _____ (month) until otherwise instructed, please pay to Hull Friends of the Earth Yorkshire Bank plc, 38 Prince's Avenue, Hull HU5 3QQ          Account number: 27534801 Branch sort code: 05 05 25          the sum of TWO POUNDS (unwaged) or FIVE POUNDS (waged) or _____          (delete and/or fill in as required - donations over the minimum amount are welcome)          mentioning the reference _____          (your own name or something short we can identify you by on the bank statements!)</p> <p>Signed _____          Date _____</p> <p><i>Please return to the Membership Secretary, Sue Jolliffe, 47 Kingsway, Cottingham, HU16 5BB</i></p>		

<b>Hull Friends of the Earth: Contacts</b>		
<b>Coordinator:</b>	Sue Jolliffe, 47 Kingsway, Cottingham, HU16 5BB	Tel: 845958 Email: sue@jolliffe.karoo.co.uk
<b>Newsletter:</b>	Hilary Byers, 170 Victoria Avenue, Hull HU5 3DY	Tel: 445747 Email: hilary@amskaya.karoo.co.uk
<b>Web:</b>	Ian White	Email: hullfriendsoftheearth@yahoo.co.uk Web: www.hfoe.org.uk

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