

## Wendy Burkett Memorial Debate

**Nigel Tay**

GFFOE organised a lively event at St Vincent on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March, when students from Fareham and St Vincent colleges competed in an early evening of debates on key environmental issues. The event pitched four-a-side teams from each college against each other to debate two motions. Although, the subject of each motion was known a couple of weeks in advance, giving time for the participants to research, they only found out two minutes before the start whether they would be arguing for or against the motion!

Following initial “for” and “against” presentations, there was an opportunity for the teams to challenge each other across the floor. This produced lively and passionate argument from both sides and was still going strong when the allowed time ran out. After final summaries, the audience were asked to vote on the motion. The vote was combined with that of the judges to decide the outcome of the competition. The overall standard of the debate was very high, and it was difficult for the judges to pick a winner. Indeed, for both motions, the chair was called upon to use her casting vote.

The overall winner, receiving a cheque for £100 and the tenure of the trophy for a year, was the Fareham College team arguing against the motion “Growth and economic development is more important than protecting the environment”. The very close runner-up was the St Vincent team who argued against “Technology will provide all the answers to climate change”. They received a cheque for £50.

After a short refreshment break, three students from each college formed a panel for a “Question Time” style session, fielding questions on current environmental issues from the audience. This proved a very lively session, particularly on the issue of nuclear energy. Time, unfortunately, ran out well before the flow of questions.

The event was made possible by the legacy of Wendy Burkett, a long-time member of FOE and active campaigner on environmental issues, the

fight against poverty and equal rights for women and the disabled.

Thanks were due to Terena Plowright, Director of the Greening Campaign, who chaired the debates admirably, and to the judges - Nigel Duncan (Fareham College), Colin Farmery (St Vincent) and Tim Pratt (FoE). However, most thanks must go to the participating students of the two colleges who put so much effort into the evening.

We are planning to run these debates on an annual basis. We hope that Bay House Sixth Form will wish to join us



**There is no economy on a dead planet**  
**Stuart Hobbs**

The proposed housing developments within the Borough of Fareham or bordering on it but within areas controlled by Winchester City Council comprise around 7500 in North Fareham, 3500 in land between Fareham and Stubbington and about 3000 in Whiteley. All of these developments involve the destruction of good agricultural land at a time when in the order of one billion people our planet are starving or going hungry every day. Both food prices and transport costs are increasing. Food security is becoming an urgent issue in the minds of many people who believe that national food production should be increased and that DEFRA's policy of maintaining resilience by increasing the number of countries from which produce is sourced is no longer sufficient.

Large scale housing developments will radically alter Fareham and undoubtedly involve large infrastructure projects. It is unclear where the economic activity to provide employment for such a large increase in the workforce will come from. A survey in 2010 for Hampshire County Council showed that Fareham has an employment self-contained rate of 46%, or in other words 54% of the resident workforce work outside the Borough. To what extent is it sustainable or desirable for Fareham to become even more of a dormitory town?

National housing data shows that in November 2011 in England alone 720,2000 stood empty and of these 279,000 were classified as long term empty as they had stood empty for more than six months, and for the United Kingdom as a whole the

figure was 920,000 with 350,000 long term empty. Homes that are in very poor order are excluded from council tax and not included in the figures. Data is not available to show how many such properties exist nationally although recent research in Bradford showed that there were 5000 such properties in that city alone, so nationally the figure is likely to be many times that number. Homes that are due for demolition are not included and currently number about 40,000. Many flats above shops have no residential planning permission and are charged under business rates, so are not included in these figures. A report carried out in 2004 showed that there were 300,000 flats in England alone. By including all of the above, many of which could again be made suitable for occupation, a total in the order of one million properties stand empty.

The above figures bring into question whether the proposed developments are based on lingering 20th century thinking about the prospects for growth and where employment will be found for such a large increase in the local population. It does seem quite extraordinary to promote the building of new homes on good agricultural land when one million homes are already standing empty.

According to the WWF, mankind is already consuming about 40% more each year than nature can replenish, so we are not only consuming the yield of our capital but the capital itself. The American ecological economist Professor Herman Edward Daly put it thus: "There is something fundamentally wrong in treating the Earth as if it is a business in liquidation".



One of the fields which could be lost if the proposed housing developments take place.

**In brief**

**Membership Subscription**

Membership subscriptions for 2012 are now due. The Annual Subscription is £5.00 Single, £3.00 Unwaged, £8.00 Family Membership. Any additional donations will be gratefully received.

To Pay:

By Hand: cash or cheque to Dilys, Esme or Oriana

**Or**

Send a cheque made payable to **Gosport and Fareham Friends of the Earth** to:

Membership Secretary  
Gosport & Fareham Friends of the Earth,  
132 Redlands Lane,  
Fareham, Hants, PO14 1HF

**Summer Celebrations**

The RSPCA, Marine Conservation Society, the Soil Association, the RSPB and the Farmers Union are all asking the public to think twice, while celebrating the Jubilee and Olympics, before setting off fireworks, releasing balloons and lighting Chinese lanterns. These supposedly innocent celebrations could cause more harm to animals during the summer as it is in the middle of the breeding season. There are plenty of ways to celebrate which will not harm wildlife. Why not make and wave a homemade flag, fly a kite or organise a plastic duck race instead?



## Networking Day – 17 March 2012

### Norman Pasley

Organised by Nikki Packham, Network Developer for the South East, people from many Hampshire FoE groups converged on The Crown Hotel in Emsworth for a stimulating day of talks and information.

Nikki chaired the event and Ray Cobbett, of Havant group, welcomed us to Emsworth. Sessions included the feed-in-tariff, wind energy, the Final Demand Phase 2 update, Lightning Talks (groups saying what they do) and the Bee Cause.

FoE would like to see a special higher feed-in-tariff for community projects. Callie Lister said, 'solar energy for community buildings would make us a lot of friends; we have 20 priority target MPs.' She suggested we raised the subject with our MPs. Nikki informed us that Final Demand Phase 2 launches on 23 April. It is about CBE (Clean British Energy). 'People want it, we are moving away from coal and gas. We are working with Caroline Lucas, our favourite MP; local media coverage is the oxygen MPs want.' We have two local wind projects which need our support: the Isle of Wight and Navitus Bay Wind Farms. These are controversial; there is a big anti-wind brigade.

Bee numbers are declining and bees need our help. They pollinate our food, and indicate the health of our biodiversity. The Bee Cause launches on 21 April.

More details on all these topics are contained in Nikki's email to all groups dated 21 March, including her PowerPoint presentation.

Lastly, it was agreed that the next meeting of the Network should be in October, to be organised by network members. Nikki writes: 'please do speak to your group and volunteer to host, so people can put the date in their diary asap!' GFFoE are we up for it?

## Are you Wild about Plants in your parish?

Plantlife is the charity which is concerned with the nation's wild plants. Plantlife undertakes practical conservation work, manages nature reserves, influences policy and legislation and runs events to promote the importance of local wild plants to people. Wild plants are essential to life. They clean our air and water, provide food and shelter for our insects (including bees), birds and animals and are critical in the fight against climate change. They would like our help with the following initiative.

Plantlife is interested in your wild plant memories, foraging tales and recipes to find out just how connected our lives still are to wild plants and whether they continue to be important to communities and individuals today. You can write in to the Wild About Plants team with their memories, poems and photographs which will be added to a plant anthology on the website, [www.wildaboutplants.org.uk](http://www.wildaboutplants.org.uk)

If you have more time available, it would be great if you could complete a parish record form, which as well as asking about how local people use wild plants, also asks you to record whether certain wild plants grow in your parish. A parish record form can be downloaded from :

<http://tinyurl.com/d57znbt>

Plant enthusiasts can also subscribe to a lovely free quarterly newsletter called Pioneer which aims to inspire the amateur botanist and nature lover with useful tips, facts and plant ID help – readers are encouraged to provide content and feedback regularly making for a real hands on friendly and fun newsletter! Email: [wildaboutplants@plantlife.org.uk](mailto:wildaboutplants@plantlife.org.uk) to sign up!

## Healthy Planet Shop

Transition Fareham are setting up a temporary shop at 128 West Street Fareham (in the former Kall Kwik print shop, which has been empty for over 5 years). The aim of the shop is to promote Transition Fareham and associated groups that share the same vision. A large section of the shop will be used for Healthy Planet's "Books for Free" initiative. This project redistributes unwanted books which would otherwise be destined for landfill, pulping or incineration.

The shop will be opening from Wednesday 30th May. The opening times are Monday to Saturday 10am to 3pm. Please pop into the shop to see what it looks like and take a book if you wish. If you would like to help in the shop please contact John Vivian [john.vivian@ntlworld.com](mailto:john.vivian@ntlworld.com) or pop into the shop.

There is an outside possibility that this could lead to an Environment and Information centre with workshops on different things but a bit of work needs to be done to enable this part of the vision to happen.

## GFFoE 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Celebration

All past and present members are invited to join us at our stall at Portchester Gala, in the grounds of Portchester Castle on Saturday 16th June at any time between 12.00noon and 4.00pm for a chat, a soft drink, and some 21st birthday cake.



## Dates

- Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> May 7.30pm**  
La Saletta, Fareham  
**Green Drinks (Transition Fareham)**
- Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June 10.00am-4.00pm**  
Castle Grounds, Portchester  
**Portchester Gala**
- Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June 4.00pm-6.30pm**  
Castle Grounds, Portchester  
**21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Celebration Walk for past & present members**
- Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June 6.30 pm**  
Cob & Pen, Fareham  
**21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Celebration for past & present members**
- Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June 7.30pm**  
La Saletta, Fareham  
**Green Drinks (Transition Fareham)**
- Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June 12.00-5.00pm**  
Pauline Hamilton Community Garden, Lee-on-the-Solent  
**JubiLEE on the Solent**
- Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July 9.45am**  
La Saletta, Fareham  
**Monthly group meeting**
- Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July 1.30pm**  
Wallington Water Meadows  
**Wallington Village Fete**
- Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> July 8.00am-3.00pm**  
Walpole Park, Gosport  
**Gosport Summer Fayre**
- Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> July 7.30pm**  
La Saletta, Fareham  
**Green Drinks (Transition Fareham)**
- Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> August 9.45am**  
La Saletta, Fareham  
**Monthly group meeting**
- Monday 27<sup>th</sup> August 10.30am-5.30pm**  
Stubbington Recreation Ground  
**Stubbington Fayre**
- Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> September 9.45am**  
La Saletta, Fareham  
**Monthly group meeting**

### Greening Tip

Buy used products whenever possible. This will save you money and is more environmentally friendly. Good sources for second-hand goods include charity shops, car boot sales, Ebay, Freecycle, second-hand shops (especially good for furniture) and classified ads in newspapers.

## Contact us

### Where

Gosport and Fareham Friends of the Earth  
132 Redlands Lane  
Fareham  
Hants, PO14 1HF

[enquiries@gffoe.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@gffoe.co.uk)

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

### Who

Co-ordinator <a href="mailto:coordinator@gffoe.co.uk">coordinator@gffoe.co.uk</a>	<b>Tim Pratt</b>
Treasurer <a href="mailto:treasurer@gffoe.co.uk">treasurer@gffoe.co.uk</a>	<b>Oriana Taylor</b>
Secretary <a href="mailto:secretary@gffoe.co.uk">secretary@gffoe.co.uk</a>	<b>Dilys Harrison</b>
Membership <a href="mailto:membership@gffoe.co.uk">membership@gffoe.co.uk</a>	<b>Dilys Harrison</b>
Media <a href="mailto:media@gffoe.co.uk">media@gffoe.co.uk</a>	<b>Norman Pasley</b>
Newsletter <a href="mailto:greenlight@gffoe.co.uk">greenlight@gffoe.co.uk</a>	<b>Jane Tay</b>
Website Administrator <a href="mailto:website@gffoe.co.uk">website@gffoe.co.uk</a>	<b>Nigel Tay</b>
Public meetings <a href="mailto:meetings@gffoe.co.uk">meetings@gffoe.co.uk</a>	<b>Dilys Harrison</b>

If you are unsure who would be best able to answer your query, please contact the Co-ordinator who will be happy to help you.

Articles for the next issue of Greenlight would be very welcome. Please forward to the newsletter contact by 18<sup>th</sup> August.