



Green Centre News

GREEN CENTRE

RECYCLING

REMINDER

Remember—we also collect your old printer cartridges and batteries for recycling.

Please bring them into the Green Centre on a Saturday.

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Craig Bennett, Director—Policy & Campaigns, FoE EW&NI *by Phil Corlett*

Craig Bennett's recent visit gave IoM FoE a chance to pack in a fairly full 3 days of meetings & events. Straight from the plane midday Mon, Carrie & Ian took him to see the storm-damaged sea wall at Castletown, lunch at the Sound then onto DEFA HQ where they met officer Kristian Cowin.

Kristian gave them a comprehensive tour around the attractive wooden state of the art structure, and explained the Isle of Man's current position in relation to Climate Change mitigation and adaptation. (DEFA's Chief Exec said if he had known Craig was at the HQ he'd have met him too.....but at least he came to the public presentation Tuesday night, as did Kristian, so Craig must have made an impression that afternoon.

On Monday night about 10 of us had an enjoyable get together & meal with Craig at the impressive Welbeck Hotel along with Minister Phil Gawne who also joined us. With the round table chats, Craig was to get a crash course in our Island's little 'idiosyncrasies' as so much differed from his experiences with FoE UK & his dealings with the UK Government e.g. one energy company, rather than six or more in the UK, to deal with when promoting renewables.

....So that's alright then!Cartoon sourced by Roy Beale



"Yes, the planet got destroyed. But for a beautiful moment in time we created a lot of value for shareholders."

The Big Tidy Up by Cat Turner



The Big Tidy Up—
an annual
opportunity to
show your town
that you love it!

The Big Tidy Up is
an annual event, so
why not plan to take
part next year—you
could zero in on your
own street or area,
and make it a much
nicer place to live.

Saturday 22nd March was the date of the Big Tidy Up—the day on which the citizens of the island take to the streets to reclaim them from their grubbiness. The event was supported by members of the public, school children, and organisations. As usual, the good folks at the Green Centre took part—donning their fetching lime-green plastic robes and tough rubber gloves, and hoisting their plastic bags in the name of rubbish reduction. Above, you can see Phil Corlett (IoM Friends of the Earth's Co-Ordinator), George Fincher (Co-Ordinator of the Manx Energy Advice Centre), Andrew Jessopp (Zero Waste Mann), Muriel Garland (Zero Waste Mann's Chair), and Tony Garland (Zero Waste Mann). Chris Burton (who wears the twin hats of IoMFoE and MEAC) was behind the camera.

The event's been going for some years now, and should by rights be well-embedded right across the island. To their credit, some people in other towns did turn out—and those good folks at Beach Buddies also got stuck into the job, so plenty of junk did get cleared away. It didn't take the Green Centre team long at all to fill the bags you can see above!

But...but. So much more could be done, with a little more publicity, planning and forethought. From what we could tell, many people weren't even aware the event was taking place, and the turnout certainly seemed lower than it had in other years. We absolutely applaud the efforts of the organisers, in initiating this great project and keeping it alive year after year. But it would be good to see it becoming more ambitious—both in participation, and indeed in regularity. A one-off event each year makes a difference for a short while, and the conversations and publicity it generates may encourage people to be more mindful of how they treat their surroundings. But wouldn't it be great to engage people in this companionable, positive effort more often—say, quarterly? I'd be really happy to see a Big Spring Clean, a Big Summer Sort-Out, an Autumn Tidy-Up and a Tidy Winter Warmer.

And wouldn't it be great to get more publicity going so that everyone—EVERYONE—who lives here can do their little bit? Perhaps a FaceBook page could be set up so that local groups could showcase their ongoing projects, and/or an online resource point where youth clubs, schools, community groups and the like could go to find out where they can borrow kit, how they should plan their tidy-up session and what to do with the rubbish they collect.

This isn't a criticism—it's a plea for more help and resource to give this excellent initiative more legs. It's a great way to rediscover your home town, show it some love and meet likeminded new people.

Craig Bennett *Cont'd from Page 1*

We'd organised a packed day for Tuesday with lots of interviews! First one with Paul Moulton and MTTV outside the Green Centre, then 3FM radio, then onto Manx Radio where all in one place he did three more; one with John Moss, then Ariane of BBC and rounding off with an hour on Talking Heads with Stu Peters. Impressively, Craig didn't seem to flag on any of them and was quite capable of covering anything from scepticism about climate change to doubts about wind turbines and renewables. He took them all in his stride - I wish I was that good! Straight on from Manx Radio, Chris Burton took us in his ace all electric Nissan Leaf car to Peel to meet students at the QEII where they showed us the clothes they had made grown from tea & sugar!?!...even showing Craig 'the blob' they use to start it all off (pic attached). We were also told about how they'd built a cycle shed from plastic bottles,



tree planting to offset car journeys to school and their plans to erect a wind turbine to produce electricity for the school. On the way back from QEII we popped in to have a quick chat with DEFA's bee man, Harry Owens, who has surveyed the island's hives to make sure we have no varoa mite. Harry has exported to the UK (by same day post) one or two of our queen bees because they're from such uncontaminated stock - this was of interest to Craig who has worked on FoE's Bee Cause - the IoM is one of the few places in the world which hasn't got the varoa mite....and long may it stay that way.

Craig got a couple of hours break before being picked up by Pete, Vicky & Cat for the public presentation & talk at Keeyl Darree that night, where we had a pretty good turnout of 60 people. His talk was entitled 'If ex-

treme weather is becoming the new normal - what are we going to do about it?' He had some good slides starting off with the greenhouse effect and cleverly slipping in two that he's taken since arriving here - Castletown's broken sea wall and Douglas's vulnerable Prom - explaining how sea level rises due to CC may well effect the Island. His presentation certainly stimulated good discussion and gave some new ideas for the Island ie switch the Island over to electric cars along with a smart grid to help sell more electricity and also to store it.

We had an early start on Wednesday as Craig wanted to see Laxey Wheel, and whilst down there we popped in to see Bill Snelling (motorcycle historian) to see if he could throw any light on Craig's great grandfather Howard 'Wag' Bennett who raced the early TT along with Bentley (of the cars) in the Indian motorcycle team. Straight from there to the Pulrose Power Station to meet MEA chief executive Phil King and Dr Ken Milne of DED and have a quick tour of the station. We moved to their HQ for some quite heavy discussion including 'the debt', where Phil King was open & honest as to how much of a problem it was. Dr Milne spoke about the marine turbine plans but it was pointed out this didn't provide low carbon electricity for the IoM. The mixture of metering charges which basically acted against microgenerators was admitted by Phil King and he said it was to be reviewed. All in all this was a useful meeting for everyone and as Craig was heading straight from the MEA to meet the politicians at the Barrool Suite, Phil King said he'd follow us down to the presentation - a measure of the level of impression Craig makes on people I'd say, bearing in mind the DEFA chief exec. came to his Keeyl Darree talk as well. The Barrool Suite presentation was all set up by 'the team' when Craig, Chris and I got there and it was hard for us not to grab the sarnies first but we didn't know how many politicians would turn up, so hands off it was. As it happened, come 1pm they came in their droves with nearly a full 'house' barring Alan Bell, Eddie Teare & Chris Robertshaw.

Craig looks the part when he is in his suit and he fits in well with the politicians. He didn't do any slides and gave an unscripted talk about how the island needs to be energy resilient and keeping it 'low carbon', again pushing his idea of a cleaner society via electric cars and smart grid. Summing up the whole three days, I know Craig described it as 'brilliant' and he greatly enjoyed his visit. He and I spent a good few hours sampling local beer even after his full days and I admire his stamina because I was knackered after it all. I found him an intelligent, very likeable guy and I'm sure he raised the profile of IoM FoE.... we've certainly got more members following his trip. Lots of thanks go out to 'the team', Pete & Vicky, Ian & Carrie, Cat, Chris, Muriel - without whose hard work Craig's visit wouldn't have worked so well.

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Sat Only)

10.00am - 2.00pm

(generally open on Sat until
4.00pm and sometimes even
later)

We're on the Web

www.zerowastemann.org

www.manxenergyadvicecentre.org

www.foe.org.im

Next Newsletter
due July 2014—
please let us know if
you've any feedback
on this one at
greencentre@manx.net!

Campaigning for the Island's environment

TIDAL LAGOONS *By George Fincher of MEAC*

You may well have heard of tidal barrages, such as the one proposed for the river Severn. A barrage blocks a river estuary, then allows the tide to flow in or out once adequate 'head' is available—thereby allowing power to be generated by the water flow. These schemes are very large and tend to have a lot of environmental side effects, such as affecting mud flats etc.

Some alternatives to full-blown barrages were proposed for the Severn, in the form of tidal lagoons. These are areas of the tidal estuary, formed as an enclosed lagoon or area of water by a retaining 'wall'. The lagoon would have much the same tidal effect as a barrage but have a lower environmental impact, and a lower cost, though they would not generate as much power overall as would the barrage proposals.

The lower environmental impact comes from the fact that the lagoon does not stop the river flowing past it, so mud flats etc. will still see the same conditions more or less as before the lagoon is built.

To date only a handful of barrages have been built and no lagoons. The barrages work well once in operation, for example world's first tidal power station, located on the estuary of the Rance River, in Brittany.

Lagoons have been the poor relation of tidal energy so far, but this might be about to change. Tidal Lagoon Power Ltd. has submitted an application for the first phase of its proposed 320-MW Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon plant. The £0.75-billion tidal project will be located off the shores of Wales, and it's set to span six miles.

The developers plan to start construction by 2015 and commission the project by 2018. If approved, Tidal Lagoon Power says that it will be the first of five separate lagoons planned to enter U.K. waters by 2023, which will likely supply 10 percent of the U.K.'s domestic electricity needs with more than 7,300 MW of capacity.

Tidal lagoons are created by building a ring-shaped "sand-core breakwater or rock bund," which resembles a harbour wall, typically constructed from mainly sand and rock. Turbines mounted in concrete casing are submerged and lined within the wall.

When the tide moves in and out, the wall holds water back, and once it reaches a certain level, gates are opened and the water flows through the turbines, which creates electricity. As tides are very predictable, so will be the output of a tidal lagoon power plant. This makes tidal lagoon power a potentially highly attractive option in the 'mix' of renewable energy for a territory.