



# Green Centre News

## Latest News

- Saturday, 1st September the Green Centre will be displaying a range of electric bikes. Bring yours along between 10.00am and 2.00pm if you have one.
- Volunteers needed to man the Green Centre on Saturdays. Many of the usual suspects are going to be at the Royal Show or away during August, so if you fancy a stint manning the Green centre please come on down next Saturday.

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Volume 5, Issue 3

July 2012

## IOM FOE in Haworth, Yorkshire - again! *By Phil Corlett*

It's probably getting to be a bit of a habit now but the youth hostel where the Northern Gathering is held, certainly is impressive and ideal for the workshops, talks & entertainment that takes place at these do's as its set in Bronte country and has large grounds of its own. I'd recommend you booking in there if you're in the area as it's an historic place and quite beautiful.

Over the years I've attended these gatherings in The Lakes, York and Manchester so there's been plenty of venues and many different types of learning techniques used by FoE from street campaigning in Manchester (Big Ask postcard signing) and mass signage displays in parks to dipping your hands in ink and slapping them on a banner saying 'No to Tar Sands'.

The staff work hard to come up with new ideas to inspire FoE group members in their campaigning and for me it has helped with keeping up to date on current campaigns and who in the organisation to contact about them.

This year the workshop 'Visual Communications' gave me a great link to a book called Information is Beautiful which is packed with highly colourful pictures showing how differently you can portray info, just 'Search' the name on the internet for a real treat.

There are so many workshops to choose from I can't mention them all here but one or two



All the FoE Bee Garden helpers

memorable ones were The Bee Cause and saving the bees with a mention about a new film called Queen of the Sun – watch the trailer - <http://www.queenofthesun.com/>, other good news is there will be 60 wildflower meadows created for the Queens Jubilee.

The second one was all about gas fracking & its dangers and the propaganda being put out about 'how it will be the answer to all our fossil fuel problems' – it won't!.... It's highly environmentally damaging, leaves huge amounts of polluted water, already proven to cause earthquakes in Blackpool – the company there (Cuadrillo) has already inspired a new saying " Cuadrillo makes Blackpool rock"

## Oh drat, they've found more oil! - by George Fincher MEAC

We finished the weekend off by digging over the hostel garden adding their own compost (made from their kitchen waste) and planting and sowing a bee friendly wildflower area which if I must say so myself, looked pretty good!

As a 'crew member' I'd arrived on the Friday to help set up (& save IoM FoE costs) so also helped cleaning up at the end of Sunday and managed to cadge a lift off Rachel & Carla to Leeds, bargain!

One of the main stays of the need to push hard for renewables has suffered a major blow. The idea that Peak oil was happening anytime around now has been scuppered by a new oil find according to an article by George Monbiot in the Guardian – see <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/jul/02/peak-oil-we-we-wrong> for the full article.

Actually this is not a new find in the true sense of the term. Rather it is the latest oil and gas drilling techniques that is allowing a well-known source of oil to be capable of being exploited. The drilling technique is fracking and the oil source is shale oil (not to be confused with oil shale the other environmental disaster happening in the Canadian tar sands).

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## My Trip to Australia *By Muriel Garland*

Phil Corlett who helps out at the Green Centre every Saturday is such a model green citizen pedalling everywhere on his bike and growing his own vegetables that I didn't feel guilty using up some of his accumulated 'carbon ration' and flying off to Australia recently to see our daughter Christina who lives in Sydney. Leaving Gatwick, which always seems to be undergoing building renovations, we arrived at Singapore airport to find it immaculately tidy and enhanced by displays of orchids. The whole building was so clean that nobody would dare to spoil it by dropping litter. At the end of the flight our newspapers were collected for recycling and the airport had several collection points for paper, cans and plastic.



*An immaculately tidy Singapore Airport*

***“At the end of the flight our newspapers were collected for recycling and the airport had several collection points for paper, cans and plastic. “***

We stayed in Darling Harbour within walking distance of our daughter's house and often used public transport to get round the city. They have a similar system to London's Oyster Card where you can buy tickets in advance at newsagents and swipe them on the bus. This means you don't have to waste time paying the driver for each individual journey. They also have a free shuttle bus down to Circular Quay where locals and visitors can travel by ferry across Sydney harbour.

Christina lives in a terrace house in Glebe suburb and the local authority provides two small wheelie bins- one for all recyclables (glass, plastic and cardboard packaging plus newspapers) and one for garbage. A third bin for green garden waste is collected monthly. All householders seem to

participate because recycling is made easy. Aussies also have an informal system of leaving items they don't want outside their back gates so that anybody can take small items of furniture such as shelves or

bookcases. While we were in Sydney the local amenity site had an e-amnesty when householders could dispose of small electrical items free.

Besides spending time with our daughter Jeff and I had pre-purchased 20 tickets so we could see 10 films at the Sydney Film Festival. A few years ago we saw 'An Inconvenient Truth' at the Film Festival and I still remember the stunned silence as the audience sat through the credits of that remarkable film. This year we saw the Australian premiere of 'Last Call At The Oasis' produced by the same team. This time the subject is the world's most valuable resource-water. Among other things we learnt that some of Singapore's water is NEWater recovered from the stuff that goes down drains and toilets. Interestingly similar projects in Australia have failed to win public support because of the 'yuck factor' even though recycled water achieves higher purity levels than the World Health Authority requires.

'Last Call At The Oasis' is an important film for raising awareness about water and pollution. I hope we will be able to show it on the island soon. You can see details here- <http://www.lastcallattheoasis.com>

### Waste & Recycling made easy



## Ethical Meat *by Sarah Calverley*

In the news recently was an article about cruelty to pigs by English pig farmers (see link <http://www.bbc.co.uk/go/em/fr/-/news/uk-england-norfolk-19002945>).

The RSPCA prosecuted only having been informed of this incident by film shot covertly and presented to the RSPCA by an animal 'rights' group.

There seems to be no official policing, in England, of farms and institutions where animals are at the mercy of the mankind (or in this case man un-kind). When I went on holiday to Cornwall (Scilly Isles) in 2009 I picked up a local newspaper and saw a similar story, this time of cruelty to pigs in an abattoir. Again it was covert video film brought to the RSPCA's attention which prompted that prosecution.

These were two articles I came across purely by chance, without looking for them. It makes me think that this modus operandi may be quite prevalent.

If it is against the law to be cruel to farm animals in England – why is it not being properly policed and upheld. Why does it take volunteers to form groups and persuade the RSPCA to prosecute?

We import this meat into the Isle of Man. We import meat from England, we are party to this:-

We, in the Manx Nation, fund cruelty going on in England.

We are not cruel here in our farming.

Yes, it is costly to maintain standards.

We are funding England to be cruel, and to undercut our own ethically produced product.

The economic term for producing cheap product and using that as an advantage over competitors is 'dumping'. I suspect it may be illegal within the EU. Do you agree that England, by disregarding animal welfare laws so as to produce cheap product, and dumping it on the Isle of Man, where our farmers have no inclination to be cruel for the sake of profit, may be 'dumping' on us?

And I find it very sad personally and get upset to see the cruelty. I find it puts me off going into certain supermarkets. I prefer the Co-Op, I trust them more than others.

And, having said that, I also would not purchase make-up or household products which have been tested on animals. Happily for me, many of the products which are produced without cruelty are also cost effective:

I use 'Easy' brand of washing up liquid and soap powder, which I get from Shoprite. Superdrug sells Original Source a Vegan shower gel and shampoo range which is fantastic stuff.

Most of the own-label products e.g. Superdrug, Marks and Spencer state on them that they are cruelty free.

For a treat or for a present for someone the Body Shop produces great stuff.

If in doubt – I use the Co-op. I trust the Co-op more than any other brand as it is their ethical stance which they have built their business upon.

So come on, support cruelty free, and support Manx.

If you buy English meat you are funding Animal Cruelty (and may get Mad Cow Disease for your karma!).

Support Manx and you support good healthy, cruelty free, natural products, good for the soul as well as the body.

## **Oh drat they've found more oil!** *continued from front page*

Shale oil is similar to shale gas. Shale gas is where gas is trapped in the shale and it takes complex drilling (including horizontal drilling) and high pressure pumping of water and chemicals to force open the pores of the rock to allow the gas to escape. This is the technique known as fracking and you are likely to have heard of it as it is happening around Blackpool right now.

Either gas or oil is formed depending on whether it is forest material or sea creatures that are trapped and decay. So it is not too surprising that shale oil is present in various places on earth. In fact it has been known about for over half a century and is already being exploited in North Dakota, USA and has been for a few years now. It seems that shale oil is rather common and present in very large quantities. It therefore seems to have changed the date of peak oil very significantly, as it is now possible to extract this difficult source of oil.

It is possible to extract shale oil because of the technology of fracking techniques developed for shale gas (and also enhanced geo thermal energy). It is the high price of crude oil that makes it worth extracting.

There are two environmental problems with shale oil. It is energy intensive, and an environmentally damaging process to extract the oil. It needs deep drilling and lots of water and (nasty) chemicals for the fracking process. It also uses a lot of flaring to 'loose' the gas that is released whilst getting the oil. The second environmental issue is the CO2 released by burning all this extra oil.

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**We're on the Web**  
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[www.foe.org.im](http://www.foe.org.im)

### Electric car needs a new home

The Trabant electric car is looking for a good home.

This is an electrical conversion of a normal Trabant car, but it needs some significant work to allow it to be used again, and then it needs to be put through the Manx test before it can be used on the roads.

If it is of interest to you please get in touch with MEAC's George Fincher on 851482 for more details.

## Campaigning for the Island's environment

### Electric bikes top 100mph lap speed at TT *by Andrew Jessopp*

For those of us who advocated the introduction of a 'zero' emission class of bike in the TT, sometimes in the face of both hostility and skepticism from diehard petrol-head traditionalists, this year's race result delivered a massive boost to the initiative.

In just three years of racing on the world famous Mountain Course the battery powered, electric motor driven bikes have passed a milestone it took petrol powered bikes nearly 50 years to achieve.

Although the number of starters and finishers in the 2012 race was disappointing, the fact three of the four finishers exceeded 100mph average lap speeds shows how the performance of the bikes has improved in such a short space of time.

Although no change to the race format for TT 2013 has yet been announced, surely the next challenge is to get the bikes to complete a three lap race, thereby putting them firmly on a par with their petrol driven cousins.

The development and success of the race bikes, particularly with the involvement of a Honda associated company, is sure to mean the technology will soon start to filter through to a range of road bikes; although they may attract a premium price.

Battery power and price has been one of the limiting factors so far but it is interesting to see that Toyota, a Honda competitor, at least in car technology, is developing hybrid race cars using super capacitors rather than batteries. Perhaps this is a technology that could be transferred into the bike world thus providing, sooner rather than later, a more viable alternative for storing energy than a battery.

### Oh drat, they've found more oil! *continued from page 3*

On the financial side, having shale oil means countries like the USA are capable of being an oil powered nation again, no longer having to rely on imported oil. It is this same driver that is causing the shale gas around Blackpool to be explored with Government encouragement. With these financial drivers it is likely that governments around the world will push hard to get the shale oil extracted.

So it looks like its business as usual to trash the earth.

See the next newsletter for a much more positive technology.

### Cardboard now collected for recycling at ECAS

We are pleased to report that you can now deposit cardboard for recycling at the Eastern Civic Amenity site in Middle River.

Paddy Lewis of Ask Buck, who operates from the Balthane trading estate at Ballasalla, now provides two large bins there.

The bins can accommodate large pieces of cardboard packaging. So if you take delivery of new white goods you can now fold it up and dispose of

cardboard packaging easily at the amenity site.

And don't forget you can also take batteries, plastic bottles, glass and paper there too for recycling.

There is also a collection point for clothes and textiles and you can leave books and small items of furniture in the re-use sheds.

The site is operated by Douglas Corporation on behalf of the Corporation, Onchan, Braddan, Santon, Laxey and Lonan



*Brown corrugated type cardboard can now be deposited at the ECAS for recycling.*