

Meeting no. 27  
At Grimsdyke Room, Harrow Arts Centre  
On 10 May 2010  
Present Fran Dickens, Alan Klein, Richard Maylan, Jean Murphy, Helen Riley, Henry Rockwell, Matthew Rooum, Brian Tyers  
Apologies Tony Law, Fred Mitzman, Brian Murphy  
cc Rosemary Agg, Georgina Butcher, Evelyn Donald, Jenny Jayamanne, Glenys Tuersley, Gwen Wright, Susan Woolf

- 1 as requested by Harrow U3A, we decided on these meeting dates for academic year 2010-11:  
2010 6 Sept, 4.Oct, 1.Nov, 6.Dec  
2011 3 Jan, 7 Feb, 7 March, 4 April, 9 May, 6 June, 4 July
- 2 we did a quick run-through of forthcoming local events; of note are:  
17 May second meeting of the new London Low Carbon Communities Network  
22 May Bentley Priory open day  
25 May Greener Harrow meeting  
Richard can send details of all these. He will circulate the agenda of the Greener Harrow meeting [main theme: travel and transport] when he receives it.  
Also coming up: on 10 June a public debate on what should be done about rising population. As there was general interest in this, Richard will circulate information to all group members
- 3 the LSE, Gresham College, and the RSA all run public lectures and conferences on sustainability topics. Brian volunteered to collect and collate these and inform members at our meetings [Brian, thankyou – can you email us about the ones taking place before we next meet?]
- 4 News items
  - 4.1 Helen and Richard's friend Benny Dembitzer, who has had a long career working for 3<sup>rd</sup> world development, recently published a paperback "*The Attack on World Poverty*". He now sees a global food famine looming and wrote to Richard about it; R gave copies of the letter to members present, and can send it to anyone who asks. It includes the book details – Benny wants as many people as possible to understand what is happening as events unfurl.
  - 4.2 despite Georgina sending out an appeal, no-one in Harrow U3A has shown interest in chairing Greener Harrow when David Summers steps down
  - 4.3 CASSE [the Centre for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy] is holding a conference in Leeds on 19 June on Working towards an alternative to Economic Growth – see [www.steadystate.org/leeds2010](http://www.steadystate.org/leeds2010)
  - 4.4 Brian updated us on Harrow council's latest consultation\*. The Council's report has strengths and weaknesses. Brian is drafting a response on behalf of the Campaign for a Better Harrow Environment; our group members were interested in possibly endorsing it, so he agreed to circulate his final version among us. Submissions must be in by 24 May.

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\* It's about the scope of the environmental assessment of the implementation plan for Harrow transport, we should find it via [www.harrow.gov.uk](http://www.harrow.gov.uk)

- 5 topic  
 Richard resumed last month's topic on family planning and CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. He gave out summaries of the LSE's study which indicates that investing in meeting the unmet demand for family planning services is by far the most cost-effective way of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions long term – “fewer emitters, lower emissions, less cost.” The study was sponsored by the Optimum Population Trust and is available at <http://www.optimumpopulation.org/reducingemissions.pdf> .  
 Discussion ensued; we realized that many factors not covered by the study affect fertility, but accepted that family planning is more cost-effective than most low-carbon technologies; an effective mix of carbon-reducing methods should include FP as one of the primary methods.  
 Jean drew our attention to the Jan-Feb issue of *New Internationalist* which had population as its main theme. Jean – site for this?  
 The question arose of paying for the desired investment in FP, especially when government money is short. Richard told the meeting about a new scheme called PopOffsets, also sponsored by OPT: it enables individuals and organizations to offset their carbon footprints by funding unmet demand for FP, reproductive health, and sex and relationship education. Everyone thought this a brilliant idea. Details and how to participate: [www.popoffsets.com](http://www.popoffsets.com) .
- 6 we started a short discussion about the London Plan; we foundered through lack of up-to-date information, and uncertainty about how the recent elections will affect things – local government in London has apparently swung left, perhaps weakening BoJo? We postponed discussion, agreeing to keep our eyes open for information, and if possible go to the LLCCN meeting [17 May, see para. 2 above] where the London Plan and the Mayor's Climate Strategy are on the agenda. Ask Richard for meeting details.
- 7 Helen gave us fascinating information from *National Geographic* describing large solar energy schemes in the US and Spain. Europe is ahead of the US in some technologies, imaginative engineering solutions are being found and efficiency is increasing – cause for good cheer, see <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2009/09/solar/johnson-text> . The journal also has back copies available of two relevant special issues on changing climate and on energy, see <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/special-editions/special-editions> .
- 8 also revealing, less cheering: Brian has a pre-election analysis by the LSE's Centre for Economic Performance on how effective the UK has been in taking action on climate change which the parties agree on. Brian or Richard can send this to you.
- 9.1 ?Matthew asked whether anyone had news of Harrow's Local Development Framework – news was expected from the Council after the Nov-Jan consultation. No-one had heard anything, please look out for this
- 9.2 Alan asked what is happening next after Copenhagen; as no-one knew he will see what he can find out

Next meeting Monday 7 June will include topic on Carbon Capture by Matthew

Rm 20 June 2010