

## HA U3A Sustainability Group

Meeting no. 28  
At Grimsdyke Room, Harrow Arts Centre  
On 7 June 2010  
Present Evelyn Donald, Tony Law, Richard Maylan, Fred Mitzman, Brian Murphy, Helen Riley, Matthew Rooum, Brian Tyers  
Apologies Fran Dickens, Alan Klein, Jean Murphy  
cc Rosemary Agg, Mike Allen, Georgina Butcher, Jenny Jayamanne, Henry Rockwell, Glenys Tuersley, Susan Woolf, Gwen Wright

Brian M and Susan have kindly agreed to take enquiries when Helen and Richard are away in September and October. Our January meeting will be on the 10<sup>th</sup> as 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan is a bank holiday.

Richard reported on two recent events:

- 1 the second meeting of the London Low Carbon Communities Network at City Hall on 17 May. This is a fairly informal organization of people in government (central and local) and ngos in London trying to encourage and help lower carbon living. Its value seems to be as a network and source of contacts and ideas. A speaker outlined the need to include diverse communities for low carbon measures to be widely effective. Attenders joined small discussion groups on such as diversity, mapping, funding, behaviour change, the London Plan. Web sites are being developed to map climate change projects in London, see [www.communitymaps.org.uk](http://www.communitymaps.org.uk) and [www.projectdirt.com](http://www.projectdirt.com). Also from our neighbours in Brent [www.brent.gov.uk/sustainabilityforum](http://www.brent.gov.uk/sustainabilityforum). Next LLCCN meeting tba.
- 2 Greener Harrow met on 25 May. The main theme was transport with presentations from Alex Williams (Transport for London's director of Borough Partnerships) and Ann Fine, his counterpart on Harrow Council. The meeting's minutes are now out along with powerpoint presentations, Richard will forward these to group members. GH next meets on 27 July in the Civic Centre, the theme will probably be sustainable development, members of our group can attend.

Forthcoming events:

17 June 6.30pm at LSE Lecture: How big is your footprint? Carbon and the future of business management

Brian T and Richard have previously emailed details of other events in June, please ask Richard if you need a re-send.

Topic: Carbon Capture and Storage Matthew

Carbon capture and storage methods are mainly being developed to reduce the amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from conventional large-scale power generation being released into the atmosphere. The hope is that they will help buy us time while lower-carbon energy production is developed and implemented. There are 3 main CO<sub>2</sub> capture approaches:

- 1 post-combustion capture; the commonest method involves absorbing the CO<sub>2</sub> in amino-solvents, then extracting and compressing it. Other methods

use membranes and refrigeration. Typically 90% of a power plant's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions can be removed.

- 2 Pre-combustion capture: hydrocarbon fuels are chemically split, separating out the hydrogen for clean combustion and the carbon for storage
- 3 Oxy-combustion: burning the fuels in nearly pure oxygen gives a clean H<sub>2</sub>O + CO<sub>2</sub> exhaust which is easily handled. A promising new technique giving high temperatures but requiring costly oxygen

There is little use/demand for the CO<sub>2</sub> so it has to be disposed of safely. The best storage options are underground, in depleted oil-bearing strata or in saline aquifers; in some of these the CO<sub>2</sub> slowly combines with rock minerals and is permanently removed. There are already some pipeline networks safely carrying CO<sub>2</sub> to underground pumping sites, this network may need to grow.

Underground storage started some 30 years ago and has enabled some increased extraction from depleted oil wells. There is plenty of capacity. The main downside is cost, estimated by the US Dept of Energy at \$150/tonne, and losses of efficiency.

We discussed this carbon capture topic and other items raised by group members including

- the cancelling of the proposed wind turbine for the Olympic site – Fred . We had various views on subsidies for the wind industry. Helen mentioned a profitable wind farm (Wern Ddu) in Wales, privately owned and financed, see [www.triodosrenewables.co.uk](http://www.triodosrenewables.co.uk)
- an invitation from the London Sustainable Development Commission for people to join the London Leaders group to help shape a more sustainable way of life in the capital, see [www.londonsdc.org](http://www.londonsdc.org) - spotted by Helen in the *Metro* , 7 June
- tensions between civilization demanding ever more energy, and the finite resources of the planet
- why Helen and Richard decided against solar water heating for their new bathroom

At our July meeting we'll include a discussion about what we want the group to do next academic year. Please bring your thoughts on what you like, what you don't, what we should do differently, ideas for activities, visits....

Next meeting Monday 5 July

Rm 11 June 2010