

HA U3A Sustainability Group

Meeting no. 39
At Grimtsyke Room, Harrow Arts Centre
On 6 June 2011
Present Heli Collie, Fran Dickens, Evelyn Donald, Mathilde Kaplan, Dan and Riva Marder, Richard Maylan, Fred Mitzman, Brian Murphy, Jean Murphy, Helen Riley, John Scotland, Brian Tyers
Apologies Henry Rockwell, Matthew Room
cc Mike Allen, Georgina Butcher, Katherine Eames, Tony Law, Glenys Tuersley, Susan Woolf, Gwen Wright

1 Future events

1.1 Visit to BRE, Watford, on Monday 4 July

BRE is expecting us at 10.30 for about 2 hours. Dan will go direct from Bushey, the rest of us will meet in HAC car park at 9.50 to car-share, leaving at 10am.

offering lifts: Heli, Fred, Matthew, Helen and Richard

needing lifts: Fran, Evelyn, Mathilde, John, two Brians

tba: Tony, Susan

1.2 Meetings in 2011-12

we agreed on the following dates for our meetings next academic year:

2011 5 Sept, 3 Oct, 7 Nov, 5 Dec

2012 9 Jan, 6 Feb, 5 March, 2 April; 14 May, 11 June, 2 July

1.3 Topics

we brainstormed ideas for future topics and came up with these [what have I missed out?]:

nuclear power – revisit

palm oil

paper recycling

Bracknell Met Office – visit

water scarcity

cow farms

atmospheric water vapour

Millennium Seed Bank at Kew – visit

The London Plan – update before Mayoral elections in May

Help/support for the rest of Harrow U3A – ideas meeting

population

the economic value of the environment

big business and food production

We settled on these for next term:

Sept paper recycling Helen

Oct support for Harrow U3A – ideas Richard

Nov water vapour Brian T

Dec nuclear power update John

Further ideas welcome!

2 Short reports

- 2.1 Brian T attended Harrow Council's Major Development Panel on 26 May. Main item was Land Securities's proposals for the Kodak site, updated following the earlier public consultations; they will be exhibited in public later this summer.

- 2.2 John has viewed HA21's video on waste plastic and found it informative until it cut out. Richard will contact HA21 to get a fault-free version that we can all see
- 3 Consultations
- 3.1 Met line extension
several members had heard of proposals to re-route and extend the Metropolitan line in Watford to connect up with Watford High Street via the disused branch line to Croxley Green. A public consultation runs until 18 August, see www.croxleyrailink.com
- 3.2 Harrow DPDs
Harrow Council is consulting residents on three new draft Development Plan Documents. One of them is one the Harrow & Wealdstone Area Action Plan, the other two apply to other parts of the borough and deal with site allocations and development management policies. Public events are taking place around the borough to explain these DPDs and invite questions, see http://www.harrow.gov.uk/info/856/local_development_framework_policy/1996/local_development_framework_policy/4 for the locations and dates. The consultations are open until 24 June, details can be found via http://www.harrow.gov.uk/info/856/local_development_framework_policy/1996/local_development_framework_policy . Richard has read part of the H&WAAP, he saw scope for improvements.
- 3.3 Evelyn went to a roadshow in Wendover on HS2 [High Speed Rail], we discussed this again.
- 4 Topic: Fair Trade
Evelyn took us back to the beginnings of the Fair Trade movement in the 1980s in Holland and the USA. There are now two main organizations promoting Fair Trade internationally: the Fair Trade Foundation [?] and the Rainforest Alliance. The FTF's main aim is to channel more income to the producers on the ground in poor countries, cutting out middlemen and often guaranteeing prices for tea, coffee, cocoa etc. The RA's starting point is stewardship of forests, extending to plantations and eco-tourism in rainforest areas, with ecologically sustainable production as the goal; the RA does not guarantee prices to producers. Both organizations offer certification schemes to brand owners and retailers who manage their supply chains appropriately; the FTF's standards often appear more rigorous and demanding. We discussed the ideas and practicalities of Fair Trade for a while; some of us were sceptical as to whether retailers or their suppliers could be influenced by ethical considerations, but we note that more and more stores are offering FT produce because a proportion of their customers want them. Fred queried whether unfair trade barriers and protectionism in developed countries are bigger causes of third-world agricultural poverty; we felt that removing these barriers and expanding FT are both important ethical matters. Thankyou Evelyn.
- 5 Public lecture
At the LSE on 21 June, Prof. Stephen Nickell will talk on: Too many people in Britain? Immigration and the housing problem. Full details at <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/publicEvents/events/2011/20110621t1830vSZT.aspx>

Next meeting Monday 4 July BRE visit, see paragraph 1.1