

- Organic Gardening Talk
- Environmental Vision for Edinburgh
- Keep Bruntsfield Vibrant

- Decentralising UK Energy
- Trams Moving Forward
- Stop the M74

June - July Issue

Organic Gardening

On 29th June at our last public meeting until autumn, Mark McKay, Managing Director of Eden Garden Management, will talk about his experiences in organic gardening. His know-how has been gained through both personal practice and working with his company. As well as discussing the aims of Eden Garden Management, Mark will present a short introduction to the history and principles of organic gardening. With personal tips and time for questions, there will also be an opportunity to improve your own organic gardening skills.

Mark has been interested in horticulture from an early age but he originally trained as an electronics

and electrical engineer and then worked in the institutional investment business. However, some years ago he realised that “being outdoors with hands in the muck” is a much more enjoyable pursuit. This led to the founding of Eden Garden Management with his two brothers (both trained in landscaping). As they have all always been interested in wildlife and the environment, organic gardening was the only choice - chemical gardening is anathema to them!

Public meeting: 29th June, 7.30pm, Friends Meeting House, Victoria Terrace.



Coordinator's Comments

Welcome to the summer edition of INFOE, the newsletter for Friends of the Earth Edinburgh. We've had a couple of very interesting meetings since I last wrote, with our first Saturday afternoon public meeting to discuss our environmental Vision for Edinburgh over the next 4 years on 29th April, and a fascinating presentation and discussion by Sytze Dijkstra on decentralised energy on 1st June. See this newsletter for reports on these meetings. As a result of our Vision day we now have fledgling campaign groups working on greenspace & development and also on food issues, so get in touch with us if you'd like to join the groups.

For those of you with gardens, allotments or even just window boxes, no doubt you'll now be enjoying the fruits of your labours over the past months – as long as the slugs and greenfly haven't eaten everything. It can be hard to garden organically, especially when the shelves of garden centres are groaning under the weight of chemical repellents and improvers,



which all promise predator-free gardens. So why not come along to our last public meeting of the summer on 29th June and get a few tips from Mark Mackay from Eden Garden Management as he talks about organic gardening? There'll still be time to put his ideas into practice.

Edinburgh and the Borders look set to be linked by rail again, as the Waverley Line bill made its way safely through Parliament on 14th June.

That day also saw the launch of the parliamentary bill for the rebuilding of the railway line between Airdrie and Bathgate. This will eventually provide a new link between Edinburgh and Glasgow for those communities along the route. However, the fate of Edinburgh's trams is looking less clear, with another concerted effort by the Edinburgh Evening News to derail the project. The latest news is outlined in these pages by tie, the council's arms-length company in charge of delivering these tramlines. Having lived in Manchester and Budapest, cities where trams are an integral part of the public transport system, I personally can't wait for Edinburgh to get this fast and reliable means of transport running around the city. If you agree, why not write a letter to the newspaper in support of the tramlines?

After our next meeting on 29th June, we will be taking a bit of a break over the next couple of months, until Thursday 28th September. Please note that there will not be a public meeting in July, as was advertised in the last newsletter. Have a good summer!

M74: Emergency Legal Defence Fund - Can You Help?

In an unprecedented move Friends of the Earth Scotland has just launched an emergency Legal Defence Fund appeal. The launch of the Defence Fund forms part of Friends of the Earth's attempt to halt Britain's biggest motorway

building project - the £500 million Glasgow M74 Northern Extension.

Friends of the Earth is taking the Scottish Executive to court to challenge their decision to build the M74 extension - despite the scheme being roundly rejected by an independent public inquiry.

That court hearing will begin on 27 June. Next week!!!



www.STOPtheM74.org

Friends of the Earth urgently needs to secure at least £25,000 in donations or loans. The Legal Defence Fund is needed because the group could face a massive legal

bill if the case is lost, putting jobs and important environmental and community projects at risk.

Please give your support at www.STOPtheM74.org

Environmental Vision for Edinburgh

At our meeting on 29th April, our draft environmental manifesto for Edinburgh was launched and participants discussed the details, giving much useful input. Topics covered by the manifesto are Development, Resources, Energy, Food and Transport. We hope to print a finalised version in July and will be using this manifesto to press candidates at Edinburgh's local elections next May on their environmental credentials. Edinburgh is facing many increased pressures in the wake of recent economic and population growth, and much effort will be needed to ensure the city remains a pleasant, leafy and dynamic place in which to live.

Following the meeting, a campaign group has been formed to discuss development and greenspace issues, and is currently working on a response to the council's local and structure plan consultations. A further group on food has just been set up. If you'd like to join the groups, please email Helen Todd on HTodd@foe-edinburgh.org.uk. Alternatively, perhaps you'd be interested in starting up a new group to cover one of the other topics?

Keep Bruntsfield Vibrant

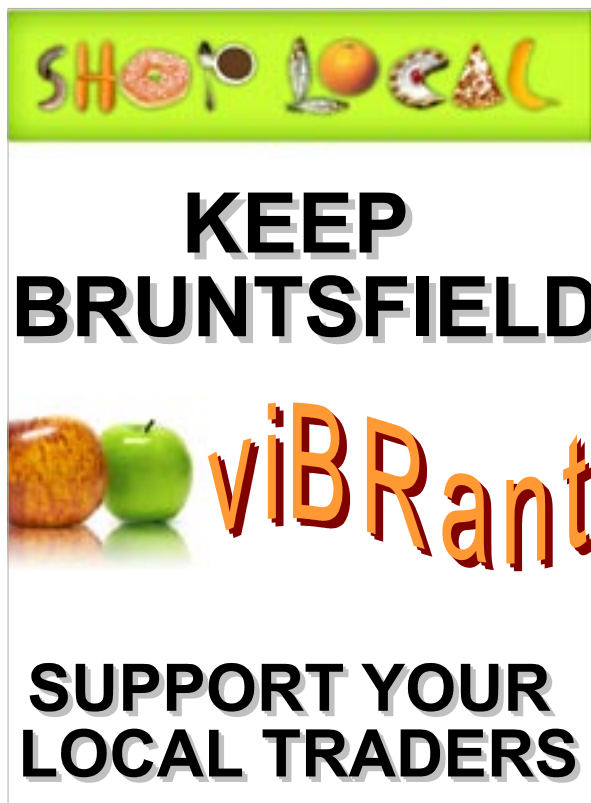
The glass and white plastic frontage, and the concrete paving stones extend alarmingly onto Colinton Road. Welcome to Tescoworld, Holy Corner, Edinburgh, which opened in May 2006. If you haven't yet spotted it, nothing will prepare you for the visual intrusion of this building on a beautiful and well loved part of Edinburgh South. For many local residents who have become increasingly alarmed as this development extended ever more outwards and upwards, the irony of its location is obvious.

The effect on local traders is inevitable, and in order to address our concerns, a few locals arranged a meeting prior to the opening. Joanna Blythman kindly agreed to speak about the impact on an area like this, and among other pieces of information, we learnt that in her opinion this stretch of shops, from Tollcross to Morningside, and in particular Bruntsfield, was almost unique in Britain, for its diversity of

independent shops. Our campaign, we agreed would be positive, and 'Keep Bruntsfield Vibrant' is our slogan. Around 25-30 attended this initial meeting.

We have had much support from Mr Ahmad, from the local fruit and vegetable shop, and had several more smaller meetings. We have tried to question most of the traders, on their perceptions of the impact of Tesco. Currently we have a poster, website (some sections still under development), www.keepbruntsfieldvibrant.co.uk and various other ideas afoot. The Green Party has shared with us its campaigning expertise. Anecdotal information from traders suggests a noticeable reduction on trade. We will try to monitor the situation, including parking and pedestrian safety issues.

Morag Jones,
Keep Bruntsfield Vibrant



Decentralising UK Energy

For our public meeting on 1st June, Sytze Dijkstra of WADE proposed how the UK could decentralise its energy supply. Here he explains his ideas.

The UK faces a number of important choices with respect to its energy supply. Firstly, climate change has made it imperative to reduce carbon emissions. Recognising this, the UK has taken on its Kyoto commitments. This has led to the question of whether we can do this with renewables only, or if we need new nuclear power stations. Secondly, fuel prices and electricity prices have been rising, affecting all consumers, but particularly those on low incomes and the fuel-poor. Thirdly, increasing prices and dwindling North Sea gas supplies have raised concerns about 'energy security', and dependence on imports from continental Europe. Finally, a less well-known problem is the ageing of the electricity grid. Most of the UK's electricity network was built in the 60s and 70s, and needs to be replaced within the next 10 to 20 years. This requires large investment, but it is still unclear where the money will come from.

There are different ways of dealing with these issues. Improving energy efficiency is clearly essential, renewables have a part to play, and some suggest replacing retiring nuclear power stations. WADE sees decentralised energy (DE) as a cost-effective way to address these challenges. Decentralised Energy is energy generation at the point of

use, including technologies such as combined heat and power and on-site renewables like photo-voltaics. To analyse the impact of a more decentralised approach to power generation, WADE has developed the WADE Economic Model. This computer model compares centralised generation (CG) with decentralised energy on the basis of costs, CO₂ emissions and fuel use.

This year WADE and Greenpeace UK applied the Economic Model to the UK. This application compared a centralised baseline scenario with a decentralised alternative. In the centralised baseline, future electricity demand was met through traditional gas-fired power plants, new nuclear power plants, and large-scale renewables. The decentralised scenario combined gas-fired combined heat and power (CHP) with wind-energy, biomass and micro-renewables.

The results of the WADE model application, launched in London on the 7th March, showed that DE can meet future UK electricity demand at lower cost than traditional centralised generation (CG) (Figure 1). The reasons for this are: that DE reduces transmission and distribution (T&D) network costs, while avoiding power losses in the network; and that decentralised CHP systems have a higher overall efficiency than CG because of waste-heat utilisation

The WADE model also indicated that decentralising the electricity supply system offers a cheaper and

more effective way to reduce CO₂ emissions than nuclear power. The decentralised scenario reduced emissions in 2023 by 17% more than the centralised case (Figure 2). Furthermore, gas use in the DE case was 14% lower. Demand growth was the single most important factor influencing these results: lowering demand growth reduced costs, emissions and fuel-use significantly.

The results of the WADE model application to the UK show the advantages of more decentralised, local power generation. They suggest DE can make an important contribution to addressing the main issues facing the UK energy supply. It can cut CO₂ emissions from the power sector, reduce costs for users, and limit the amount of electricity generation from gas. The outcome also highlights the importance of improving energy efficiency and reducing overall demand, as this is the most effective way of reducing the impacts of energy use.

The WADE model report for the UK is available from the WADE website www.localpower.org, or contact Sytze Dijkstra at WADE sytze.dijkstra@localpower.org.

The World Alliance for Decentralised Energy (WADE) is an Edinburgh-based promotion and research organisation, which aims to accelerate the deployment of decentralised energy systems worldwide. Sytze Dijkstra joined them after doing an MSc in Environmental Sustainability at Edinburgh University.

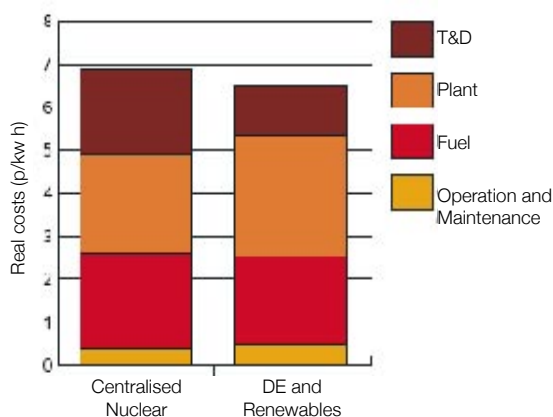


Figure 1. WADE Model: Delivered electricity costs in 2023 for the UK.

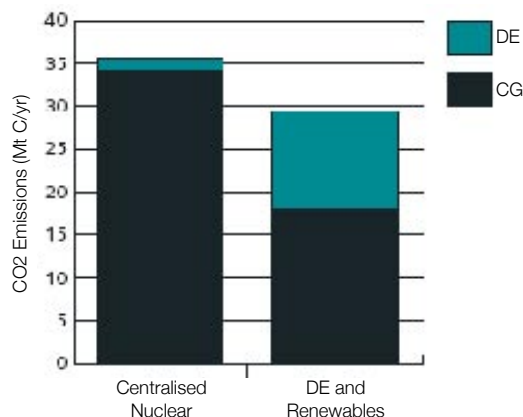


Figure 2. WADE Model: CO2 emissions in 2023 for the UK

Trams Moving Forward

The countdown to the introduction of Edinburgh's world class tram network continues. The project has completed its final Parliamentary hurdle, and Royal Assent has been granted to both Tram Line Bills.

A big thank you to all the individuals and organisations that took part in the consultation process and made their views known.

What happens next?

Work is continuing on a number of fronts, preparing in particular for the submission of the Business Case to the City of Edinburgh Council and Scottish Executive in late 2006. As part of this process, tenders will be finalised for a number of contracts, including those for the supply of tram vehicles and the diversion of underground cables and pipes. On approval of the Business Case, the relocation of the underground cables and pipes will begin, followed by construction of the tram network itself.

Protecting the urban and natural environment is a priority for the team developing the Edinburgh tram project. Research and surveys are taking place to assess the impact of trams and to design measures that can be put in place to protect habitat well before construction starts.

John Darbyshire is a badger expert and ecologist involved with the Edinburgh tram project and is working to protect the city's thriving badger population along the route.

"Badgers live in social groups of about six and have territories of about 0.6 sq km. We need to maintain the badger landscape and ensure they can interact with other social groups and easily get to food. The links will be maintained by special tunnels and underpasses so there is no interruption to the badgers' routine once the tram is constructed, and they have access to clean water with a good food supply. These measures will be introduced as part of the Edinburgh tram project so that there will be minimal impact on the wildlife and the populations can continue to thrive in safe environments."

Stay Informed & Show Your Support

If you would like to receive regular newsletters and updates, please supply us with your name, postal address, e-mail address and state your preference to be contacted by post or e-mail (using block capital letters please) and send it (no stamp required) to:

tramtime
 Freepost NATN466
 Edinburgh
 EH1 0BR

Updated information is always available at www.tramtime.com.

If you want to show that you're behind the Edinburgh Tram network, you could write letters to newspapers, local politicians and talk to your friends and colleagues.

Barry Cross,
 Director of External Affairs, tie ltd



TM001

Friends of the Earth Scotland's Elephant Roadshow

The Friends of the Earth Scotland (FoES) road show 2006 kicked off on a slightly stormy morning outside the Scottish Parliament on the 26th April. This date was chosen as it was the 20th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident and our giant 14 ft inflatable white elephant marked the start of FoES' Nuclear White Elephant Campaign and the White Elephant Road Show Tour.

The Nuclear White Elephant Campaign aims to highlight the many problems associated with nuclear power and provide more sensible solutions in the fight against climate change. The white elephant road show is on tour this summer visiting city centres, summer fairs and festivals across Scotland, raising support for the campaign and for FoES.

Since April the elephant has managed to visit Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, East Lothian and Elgin and a good number of events in Edinburgh, including The May Day festival in the Meadows, The Great

Edinburgh Run, a date with Billy Bragg and most recently in glorious weather, Treefest. This was all made possible by much appreciated support from local group members.

So far we have collected over 5,000 signatures for the One Million Europeans Against Nuclear petition to be submitted to the European parliament and have recently begun collecting postcards from members of the public to their local MSPs calling on them to say No to Nuclear!

We have only just begun! Please visit www.foe-scotland.org.uk/elephant to find out where we are going next and we hope to see you there.

If you are interested in helping out at any of these events then please get in touch with me at jbrotchie@foe-scotland.org.uk or on 0131 554 9977.

Jenny Brotchie,
Friends of the Earth Scotland

So why the white elephant?

In Thailand white elephants are sacred and cannot be put to work. They are expensive to keep but ultimately worthless, and only the very rich can afford to own one. (In some tales the rich give the gift of a white elephant to their enemies, who forced to maintain them, but unable to pay for their upkeep eventually go bankrupt). Our inflatable white elephant is an appropriate symbol for much that is wrong with a new generation of nuclear power stations. She is also rather friendly looking and a good crowd puller at summer festivals.



Update on Ship-to-Ship Oil Transfers

In our March meeting, we learnt about the proposal to allow ship-to-ship oil transfers off the coast of Fife. Here's an update of what's been happening since.

The campaign against proposed ship-to-ship (STS) transfer of oil in the Firth of Forth, led by Green MSPs from Lothian, East Lothian & Fife, continues to attract high profile debate. Local authorities, politicians, communities, environment agencies and many others (including WWF, RSPB, MCS, FoES, KIMO) have all joined the Greens in opposing the scheme. The proposal, jointly promoted by Forth Ports plc and Melbourne Marine Services Ltd, would bring huge risk of pollution to the area.

In a massive conflict of interests, Forth Ports is both the promoter of the STS proposal AND the regulatory body charged with assessing the likely environmental impact on protected wildlife sites - the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area (SPA), the Forth Islands SPA and the Isle of May Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

The Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) consultation on the oil spill contingency plans is due to report in late June/ early July and we hope to see the results of Forth Ports' environmental impact assessment then too.

Meanwhile, legal opinion is divided on who has the final say – is it the Scottish Executive, Westminster or Brussels? Greens met with Deputy Environment Minister Rhona Brankin recently to press her on this, only to be told that the Executive is “still exploring its role”. Let us hope that a negative environmental impact assessment will see a more assertive “no” to the plans.

Cara Gillespie, Co- Convenor
Edinburgh & Midlothian Greens

Abbie Marland, Co- Convenor, East
Lothian Greens

Dates for Diaries

Thursday 29th June

Friends of the Earth Edinburgh

Public Meeting, 7.30-9.00pm, all welcome

Topic: Organic Gardening, with speaker Mark McKay, Managing Director, Eden Garden Management Ltd

Friends Meeting House, Victoria Terrace

Saturday 1st July

Edinburgh World Justice Festival

Public meeting, 11.00am-4.00pm

One year on from Make Poverty History, there will be talks, discussions and stalls.

This event is organised with support from World Development Movement, Jubilee Scotland, Friends of the Earth Scotland, Greenpeace and others.

Augustine United Church, 41 George IV Bridge

Tel: 07989 587920 or email kathsevar@yahoo.co.uk for more information

Thursday 28th September

Friends of the Earth Edinburgh

Public meeting, 7.30-9.00pm, all welcome

Topic: TBA

Friends Meeting House, Victoria Terrace

Thursday 26th October

Friends of the Earth Edinburgh

Public meeting, 7.30-9.00pm, all welcome

Topic: TBA

Friends Meeting House, Victoria Terrace

Thursday 30th November

Friends of the Earth Edinburgh

Public meeting, 7.30-9.00pm, all welcome

Topic: TBA

Friends Meeting House, Victoria Terrace

Would you like to help us out with the next newsletter?

FoE Edinburgh is looking for a volunteer newsletter editor. Duties would entail commissioning articles, chasing up and editing copy, publishing and distributing the newsletter. Editions go out five times a year, and would involve around five hours' work each time. FoE Edinburgh committee members would give support. Contact Helen Todd for more information on 0131 553 6869 or email HTodd@foe-edinburgh.org.uk