

# In Contact

September 2010  
Issue 26



[www.harrowagenda21.org](http://www.harrowagenda21.org)

## A MESSAGE FROM MICK OLIVER.....

It was both a pleasure and an honour to be elected as HA21's Chair in July. At the time I was on a Welsh holiday – during this I visited the Centre for Alternative Technology in Machynlleth. It has much to teach us – beginning life in the 1970s as an adventurous venture by environmental activists who wished to develop alternatives to the prodigal lifestyle which most people unthinkingly adopted then.

Today Machynlleth is still adventurous, but its activities are no longer a minority pursuit. On its site is the Welsh Institute for Sustainable Education (WISE) – at Machynlleth sustainability has become a mainstream activity.

Similarly in Harrow the environment is a mainstream activity. The principle of Local Agenda 21 was established at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. It placed great

emphasis on the need for all parts of society to be involved in sustainable development. It recognised that while there may be tasks that only national and local government can do, there are other tasks that community groups, businesses, faith groups and individuals can do, and if government sees its citizens are taking the environment seriously then they will also do so. Harrow Agenda 21 was set up on the initiative of Harrow Council and today it still has the support of the Council and all parties in it. It is through HA21 that Harrow's citizens, businesses and voluntary organisations can show how their environmental concerns are important and cooperate with the Council to progress them.

In December 1997 HA21 produced its Action Plan - 200 or so people took part in preparing this and I was among them. A year ago I chaired a group which

carried out a 12-year review of what HA21 had achieved, where it had failed, and where other organisations had picked up the tasks it had defined. This review showed HA21 had made substantial progress towards fulfilling its stated aims, but circumstances can change, governments and councils and their policies can change, possibly on population, planning and land use, new materials may appear or old ones may come into short supply or become suspect, so our task can never be considered complete. We still need an active HA21 with the full active participation of its members. HA21 had 200 or so midwives – it would be wonderful if we could have the same support or more as it becomes a teenager.

I am looking forward to my time as Chair and to all we can hope to do together

## RETIRING AND NEW TRUSTEES...

*Mick Oliver writes*

At the AGM, four long-serving members resigned as trustees, and I would like to thank them for their long and dedicated service to HA21 in this role. Caroline served two terms as Chair and chaired the planning group; Linda Robinson was a long-serving Secretary; Sarah Kersey also a former Chair, chairing the Consumer Group until recently. Madan Badale, a founder member,

our first secretary and a long-term trustee. A substantial record of service and HA21 is very grateful to them all.

We also welcome new trustees, Himesh Chavda, a member of the Waste & Recycling Group and now Minutes Secretary to the Executive; Marion Garner Patel, now Chair of our Planning Group and Shivakuru Selvathurai, whose interests

include Age Concern.

Councillor Susan Hall joined our Executive after the May Council elections, but has found it difficult to continue. In her place we also welcome Councillor Ramji Chauhan to our Executive. We thank Susan for her short period of service, but are confident we will continue to cooperate with her at Greener Harrow's meetings.

**WHAT'S THE BUZZ.....LIZ BINNEY'S OPEN HOUSE EVENT** - on 4, 5 and 6 October she will be opening her house for trading Fair Trade Christmas cards, crafts, fashion and jewelry. A great time to buy an ethical Christmas prezzie! For her address and times please mail her at [elizabeth\\_binney@hotmail.com](mailto:elizabeth_binney@hotmail.com)



## IT TAKES TWO!® by Councillor Nana Asante, Chairperson, Harrow Fair Trade Campaign

Harrow has an ambition to become a Fair Trade borough in March next year and is working actively towards this. Although the Council passed a resolution at Full Council in October 2005, moving towards being a Fair Trade borough stalled until May 2010 when Labour took control of the Council. It is a manifesto commitment that Harrow should become a Fair Trade borough within the first year.

Involving Councillors in an Action Group is a direct response to the failure to keep up the momentum of 2005. A cross-party group of Councillors met on 2 August 2010 to set up the framework for the campaign

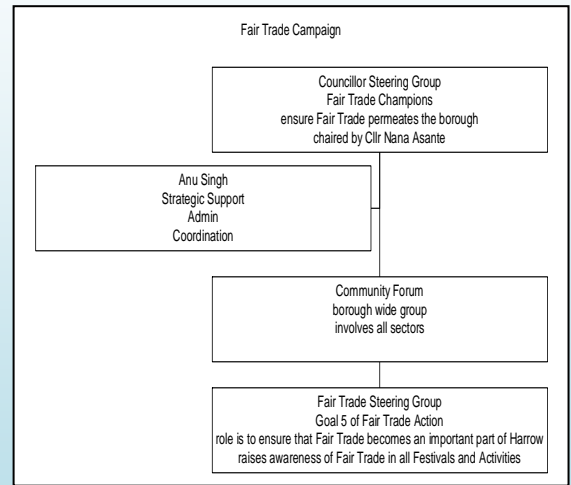
Choose products with this mark!

One of the great ideas to emerge from this group is that each Ward should strive to become a Fair Trade Ward bearing in mind that for any retailer to count as a Fair Trade outlet, it needs to stock two different Fair Trade products. It is important to remember that it takes two, just two product lines so ask your corner shop to become Fair Trade!

On 24 September at 10am, a fundraising event will be held in the Members' Lounge at the Civic Centre for Macmillan Nurses and Ovarian Cancer Action, the Mayor of Harrow's charity. Please support this. Fair Trade refreshments will be served and this will spearhead the Harrow campaign. In October, a Community forum will be held so that all who are interested in fair Trade can meet and network at the Civic Centre, sampling the wide range of Fair Trade products available. A Steering Group will be recruited from the Forum and will help Harrow meet its 5 goals:

Resolution passed at full Council.....32 retailers;16 establishments.....A flagship employer.....Media coverage.....Local Fair Trade Steering Group is convened to ensure that Fair Trade Borough Campaign continues to develop and gain new support.

**Do remember it takes two, you and the Council, for Harrow to become a Fair Trade borough!**



## HA21 VISIT TO WEST LONDON COMPOSTING - Damien O'Bierne (Education Group) reports

See photos taken by Marilyn Raymond at West London Composting on page 4

At the beginning of August, Mick Oliver organised a visit to the West London Compositing site in Harefield. The site takes mixed organic waste from the boroughs of Harrow, Hillingdon and Brent. The majority of the waste is garden cuttings and food. In Harrow this is the contents of the brown bins.

The site was originally a livestock farm and as with many small farms, the owners needed to diversify. They have a license to process 50,000 tons of waste per year. This makes it the largest in-vessel facility of its kind in Europe for bulk composting. It copes easily with the waste from the three local boroughs.

The process takes approximately twelve weeks to complete.

- On arrival the trucks disgorge their load in an enclosed area where it is immediately assessed and obvious over-sized pieces, such as tree trunks and non-compostable material removed. Contamination of waste is a constant problem,

especially as other boroughs still collect cardboard and paper with the organic material. The material is put through a chipper, and water re-used from other parts of the site, is added to help start the composting process.

- The material is transferred to one of sixteen vessels where it is kept for two weeks. Each vessel has a capacity of 220 tons. During this time the composting process generates heat. Probes record the temperatures which have to reach 60°C for two consecutive days, which ensures that any bugs, such as salmonella from foods, are killed.

After two weeks the material is mixed and moved to a second vessel where the same process is repeated. The material is then transferred to an open maturing site where it stays for a further eight weeks.

- The compost is then graded into 25mm and 10mm finished products. The 25mm compost is mostly bought

by commercial growers and farmers for spreading on fields. The 10mm compost is mainly for domestic customers as a soil improver.

Having heard a variety of rumours about the destination of brown bin contents, it was interesting to see the process in action, confirming that the waste does go to a local site for composting and producing a useful product.

The visit also highlighted the importance of keeping non-organic matter out of the brown bin collections – including the so-called biodegradable plastic bags.

The soil improver is available for purchase directly from the site at £3 per 40 litre bag. If you would like several bags they appreciate a phone call to prepare your order as it is bagged as necessary by hand.

Schools and other groups are welcome to visit by prior arrangement. Full site and contact details are on their website at [www.wlcompost.co.uk](http://www.wlcompost.co.uk).

## NEWSROUND -by Mick Oliver

### Transport

Harrow Council are making road improvements in Central Harrow - TfL propose altering the bus routes there when works are complete and conducted a consultation during August and September. TfL's proposals are to remove all services from Greenhill Way and Sheepcote Road and to introduce two-way working in Station Road and College Road

The Harrow Passenger Transport Users' Association ((HPTUA), which has given advice on public transport matters to Harrow Council for 20 years) and Harrow Council had earlier expressed their preference that one service from Wealdstone should continue to serve Greenhill Way in both directions, and that 114 and 183 buses should serve Sheepcote Road. The HPTUA held a meeting on 2 September 2010 with guests from TfL, who explained their proposals and invited responses to the consultation. I attended this meeting for HA21, found HPTUA's case convincing and replied to the consultation to support their position.

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Single-decker bus route 324 will start on October 25 and will run from Stanmore Station along Old Church Lane, Abercorn Road, St. Andrew's Drive, Culver Grove, Streatfield Road and Honey Pot Lane, to reach Kingsbury, Hendon and Brent Cross. This will pass close to Park High School and Stanmore College, which will have a bus service for the first time, will give an additional service to Stanburn and Whitchurch Schools, and will be ¼ mile from St. John's Schools.

A great help for the schools with their School Travel Plans!

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### Health

Harrow LINK has alerted us to proposals to change the Health Service, which aim to make it more responsive to the needs of its patients. The consultation runs until October 11th, and an Easy Read description of it is on the Harrow LINK website

[www.harrowlink.org.uk](http://www.harrowlink.org.uk) or can be obtained from the Department of Health website or Dept. of Health Publications Tel: 0300 123 1002

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### All Saints', Harrow Weald

Congratulations to All Saints' Church, Harrow Weald, who were awarded the Green Corners "Sacred Spaces" award in June. Green Corners is a new award scheme run by the Conservation Foundation and sponsored by Natural England, and the monthly winners will go forward to a grand final next spring.

The churchyard includes pollarded horse chestnuts, an ancient yew, a remnant of Middlesex meadow land, primroses, anemones, violets and celandines in spring, and a common spotted orchid. The way it is managed encourages biodiversity and the grassland is not mown till July to encourage wild flowers to set their seed. Seven species of butterfly have been seen there, and a Muntjac fawn was born in the uncut grass.

All Saints', on Uxbridge Road, is served by 340, H12 and H18/19 buses, and is close to routes 182 and 258. They are happy to host a visit from HA21 – please let me know if you are interested in joining this.

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If you have some news to share, email [admin@harrowagenda21.org](mailto:admin@harrowagenda21.org)

## ACTION GROUP MEETING DATES 2010

### Education Group

Thursday, 14 October, 4 - 6pm  
Committee/Open meeting at  
Veolia Environment Centre, Clay Lane, Bushey

### Waste & Recycling Group

Wednesday, 29 September,  
7pm, Civic Centre, Committee  
Room 3

Wednesday, 24 November,  
7pm, Civic Centre, Committee  
Room 6

### Ethical Consumer Group

Tuesday, 9 November, 6.30pm  
Meeting Room, Community  
Premises, 27 Northolt Road,  
South Harrow

## EDUCATION GROUP UPDATE

Marilyn Raymond, Education  
Group Chair writes

The winner of the Anne Swain  
Award for 2009/10 is Roxbourne  
Middle School Garden Club –

### **Well Done!**

Start work on your entries for the  
2010/11 competition NOW

For more information contact  
[marilyn.raymond@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:marilyn.raymond@tiscali.co.uk)

## SOS.....

Due to her work commitments,  
Sarah Kersey can no longer  
chair the Ethical Consumer  
Group.

We hope there is someone who  
can take her place, other-wise  
this thriving and active group  
may have to fold.

Contact:

[consumergroup@harrowagenda21.org](mailto:consumergroup@harrowagenda21.org)

## HA21 WELCOMES.....

Our new Individual Members  
Himesh Chavda  
Akil Dhalla,  
Kalpi Shah  
Russell Sutcliffe

## Now It's Up To You!

### Food leftovers competition

The June issue of *In Contact* described British households' shameful habits with food waste, throwing away food with a value of £12 billion each year, twin problems of a waste of resources in a hungry world, and the methane which results as it decomposes in a landfill.

We ran a competition which invited recipes to show how food that is past its best can still be used and organised prizes. Many thanks to Evelyn Donald for her great help over this. We received just one entry and felt obliged to cancel the competition.

The BBC, however, think the issue is important and their programme "The Great British Food Waste Scandal" on 25 August featured their own

competition for four gourmet chefs to produce a small meal for four judges, using food that households, markets and supermarkets intended to discard. Not food that had gone off – food that was edible and fresh, which passed the scrutiny of a food hygiene expert. They then scaled it up to produce a banquet for 60 guests, which they sourced from the supply end of the food industry, farms, fisheries, slaughter-houses and warehouses, again with their food hygiene expert's approval.

Supermarkets were invited to send guests to the banquet, and Morrison's and the Co-op did so. The Co-op speaker was particularly keen on the idea of an "Eat Today" stand in stores, to enable stock approaching its "sell-by" or "display until" dates to be sold to shoppers who were keen to use it promptly, and to avoid it going to waste.

Would HA21 members like to see if they have introduced this idea in Harrow? Or if any other supermarket has done so?

The programme showed that the food industry has a lot to answer for, but some of their activities are their response to our preferences – if we were not bothered about the size and shape of products and minor blemishes, then maybe the suppliers would respond. But the largest culprit in the waste scandal is the home, or us. We buy too much (bread is a particular example), do not consider what we may already have in stock, do not use it imaginatively and end up binning it despite it still being fit to eat. The programme's slogan was "Save our Scraps" – could we resolve to do this?

*Mick Oliver*

## "MEET UP GROUP"

*John Palmer writes*

The aim of this new group is to make Northwick Park Hospital and Westminster University's Harrow campus more sustainable.

We'd welcome input from local residents and community groups

A Yoga Taster session will take place on 29 September at 12.15pm at Northwick Park Hospital Social Club.

On 10 October, we'll be recruiting staff, patients, students and visitors to the 10:10 campaign to encourage people to cut their carbon emissions by 10% in a year.

If you want to join these events, please go to our website <http://www.meetup.com/Green-Champions-NWLH/> and get involved. We'd love to hear from you.



### WEST LONDON COMPOSTING



*"In Contact"* Editor – Eve Swabe  
[admin@harrowagenda21.org](mailto:admin@harrowagenda21.org)

## NATIONAL EVENT

The 2012 Olympics will soon be upon us, so now's your chance to become involved, but if it's not you, then why not pass this information to friends, organisations, etc.

[www.london2012.com](http://www.london2012.com)

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION... Environmental Sustainability in the Workplace

Date: Thursday 28 October 2010

Time: 10am – 4pm

Place: St Ethelburga's,  
78 Bishopsgate,  
London EC2N 4AG

For further information visit  
[www.talkaction.org](http://www.talkaction.org) or contact  
Corinna Luther on 020 734  
4774 ([corinna@talkaction.org](mailto:corinna@talkaction.org))

## CONTACT US

HA21's office is open  
Mondays, 10.30am–1pm  
Room 3, Community Premises,  
27 Northolt Road,  
South Harrow, HA2 0LH  
020 3114 6020