

## HA21 Where Are We Now?

Come and find out on

Tuesday, 12 April 2011  
8 – 10pm

Committee Room 5  
Civic Centre, Harrow, HA1 2UH

**Now we are one year into our three year programme.  
What have we done? What do we need to do?**

Last year HA21 held a meeting in March and we asked members “What difference would we like to see HA21 make in Harrow over the coming three years, in terms of social, economic and environmental sustainability?”

The aims we agreed were:

- Raised awareness and understanding of sustainability
- More sustainable behaviour by people of all ages
- Less waste
- People motivated to participate in local decision making
- Encouragement of local energy generation
- Enhanced natural habitats
- Residents helped to save money and reduce CO2 emissions and fuel poverty
- A more pleasant built environment

**Members you are all needed!** Do come along and bring anyone who is interested in taking action on the environment. Learn what we have done and find out what you can do to achieve these aims and make Harrow a greener place.

Light refreshments will be served.

As we need to know numbers, please contact Eve Swabe 020 3114 6020  
or email [admin@harrowagenda21.org](mailto:admin@harrowagenda21.org)

## Harrow's Affordable Warmth/Fuel Poverty Strategy

HA21 have submitted comments on this consultation, but the topic came up earlier in an article in *Mature Times* in December. Their article referred to an appeal by the National Pensioners' Convention for winter fuel payments to be maintained at their present level, a statement that one in three of pensioners' homes fails the "decent-home standard" and referred to the situation in Sweden and Finland.

Mick O's response read: "In Britain each winter we hear this concern about heating bills, the incidence of hypothermia among the old and the poor and whether winter heating supplements on pensions are adequate. The Arctic Circle passes through Finland, yet they have no such concerns. They recognise the difficulty their situation presents and insulate their buildings well.

Historically the standard of insulation in British buildings has been poor, and it is only recently that this situation has started to improve. The consequences of badly insulated buildings are a high use of energy, high expense and possibly debt for those who have to use it – they are in effect heating the universe.

In 1950 there was some emphasis on improving the insulation of buildings. This was intended to prevent condensation and avoid the need for premature redecoration, but the far-sighted recognised the waste of energy that was involved:

"The expense of redecorating ceilings, especially in large buildings, is sufficient to warrant some care in avoiding the trouble. . . (but this is) evidence of a considerable heat loss and therefore of a waste of fuel which would justify the use of additional heat insulation."

British Standard 5250: *Code for the control of condensation* had a section in 1975 on investigating complaints which shows an awareness that heating might have been unaffordable then:

"An early step in an investigation will often be to hear what the occupants have to say. . . . . Sometimes the information may be influenced by an unwillingness to disclose how they live, eg that heating has been insufficient due to a need to economise."

There may be some short-term merit in winter heating payments or adjustments to fuel pricing, but we have had these short-term measures for many years. There is little point in concentrating our efforts on these if we ignore the long term benefits of the Scandinavian experience.

A relief charity once had a slogan: 'Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him to fish and you feed him for life.'

Can we draw the parallel? 'Give people a winter heating payment and you heat them for a heating season, insulate their home and you heat them for life.'

## CONSUMER GROUP UPDATE.....

Laura Gil was to have been the new chair of the Consumer Action Group, but unfortunately a change in her personal circumstances meant she was no longer able to take on this role.

Before stepping down, she did write a piece for HA21 on Harrow Council's webpage for Fairtrade Fortnight, 28 February – 13 March.

*"Laura Gil, Harrow Agenda 21 is also backing the borough's efforts: We are supporting Harrow during Fairtrade Fortnight and in becoming a Fairtrade borough. We want to help raise awareness, educate and provide solutions so that Harrow's residents and businesses can make positive consumer decisions and take actions that promote environmental, social and economic well-being for everyone.*

## Brick and Yoghurt Pot Experiment



The photo above shows how a 10g polypropylene yoghurt pot can support a 2.7kg brick, ie 270 times its own weight. It can continue to do this long-term, not just for the time the photo takes.

Polypropylene is a strong, light and chemically-resistant material, easily processed, with many uses in transport and building. A lot of ingenuity has gone into producing the polymer and the products made from it.

It carries recycling code 5, so does not get separated by Harrow's procedures, does not get separated at MRFs, is not used at Closed Loop, and is not collected in Midlothian (see the McCalmans's song). Biffa's plant gives some hope of improving this situation, but until this technology becomes the norm all that can happen to this useful material is that it will be considered "too difficult to recycle" and only fit for "energy from waste" by incineration – a process that does not recover all the carbon footprint used to produce it.

An offence against sustainability!

## Early Day Motions 644 and 1101

If they are selected to do so, Members of Parliament can put forward Private Members' Bills. A preliminary part of the process is that they can seek support by proposing Early Day Motions. HA21 have asked Harrow's three MPs to support Early Day Motions on two environmental topics:

EDM 644 points out statements by both the present and the previous Government which support energy efficiency, and it questions the current strategy of expanding our energy infrastructure without evaluating the contribution energy efficiency can make.

EDM 1101 considers that recycling has poor credibility as the destination of recycled material is uncertain, and proposes to improve this by requiring a complete audit trail to its final destination. It draws attention to Somerset's procedures, which have influenced the policies which Barnet have adopted.

## Let's Recycle

A song by the McCalmans based on a Midlothian recycling leaflet. Listen to it on their CD "The Greentrax Years" or read the words on [www.themccalmans.com/lyrics/lyrics-Lets-Recycle.htm](http://www.themccalmans.com/lyrics/lyrics-Lets-Recycle.htm)

- but note in particular - "Plastic items must be saved, but only those marked 1 and 2"
- and - "In the brown bin place your grass, no nappies, stones or things like that, no syringes, ancient fridges, nuclear waste or lumps of fat"
- and see the other items in *In Contact* on Biffa's plant and Somalia – they thought their comment on nuclear waste was in jest – the reality is more serious!

**HA21 WELCOMES.....New Individual Members - Neela Patel, Laura Gil and Suzanne Sedgeman**

## ACTION GROUP MEETING DATES.....

### Education Group

Thursday, 24 March 2011,  
4 - 6pm Open meeting at  
Veolia Environment Centre,  
Clay Lane, Bushey, WD23 1NW

### Waste & Recycling Group

Wednesday, 30 March 2011,  
7pm, Committee Room 3,  
Harrow Civic Centre

## HA21 CONTACTS.....

Mick Oliver, Chairman & Waste Chair

[chair@harrowagenda21.org](mailto:chair@harrowagenda21.org) or  
[micksheila67@hotmail.com](mailto:micksheila67@hotmail.com)

Mick Campbell – Vice Chair

[emcampbell@talktalk.net](mailto:emcampbell@talktalk.net)

Marilyn Raymond – Education Chair

[marilyn.raymond@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:marilyn.raymond@tiscali.co.uk)

Marion Garner-Patel – Planning Chair

[mariongarnerpatel@gmail.com](mailto:mariongarnerpatel@gmail.com)

Eve Swabe – Administrator / *In*

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

*Contact* Editor

## EDUCATION GROUP UPDATE..... Marilyn Raymond, Education Group Chair writes

We invite teachers and interested people to join us at in our Climate Week meeting at Veolia Environment Centre, Bushey on **Thursday, 24 March at 4pm**. We will be making some small raised bed constructions, bird boxes &/or mini beast hotels – all to take away.

You will only pay for materials used; there will also be the incentive of some free plants and seeds to help your school get started! The raised beds could be completed in sections to take away, dependent on car size. The session will cover gardening ideas and links to the curriculum. All tools will be provided. Safety gloves and goggles will be available.

Places are limited and of course teachers have preference. Contact Marilyn Raymond 020 8954 3329 or email [marilyn.raymond@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:marilyn.raymond@tiscali.co.uk)



Raised beds

### Costs: (wood, screws, other materials and use of tools)

#### Raised beds:

60 cm x 60 cm x 12 cm	deluxe	£12.00	60 cm x 60 cm x 24 cm	deluxe	£25.00
60 cm x 60 cm x 15 cm	basic	£10.00	60 cm x 60 cm x 30 cm	basic	£20.00
120 cm x 60 cm x 12 cm	deluxe	£20.00	120 cm x 60 cm x 24 cm	deluxe	£35.00
120 cm x 60 cm x 15 cm	basic	£15.00	120 cm x 60 cm x 30 cm	basic	£30.00

*Deluxe – wood 4.5 cm x 12 cm tanalised*

*Basic – wood 2.5 cm x 15 cm tanalised*

Bird box - £8.00

Minibeast hotel - £8.00

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Update on The Earth Project - the 'Shaw Trust' proposal for the site has been accepted, there is now the 'paperwork' to complete, and we hope that it once again becomes available for Harrow schools to become involved and use.

## WASTE GROUP NEWS.....

**Mick Campbell writes.....**The video on plastics recycling has been completed at last. The first showing (World Premier) was given at the Christmas Party and was well received. I like to think so anyway. Some requests for showings have been made and these will be followed up as soon as permission has been obtained from the Materials Recovery Facilities who have provided DVDs of their operations. The purpose of this short presentation is to help promote a better understanding of the recycling process. It is to be hoped that the video will be widely used by schools, residents associations, faith groups and other local organisations. Now that this project has been completed other ideas are in the pipeline. Bollywood here we come!

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The consultation period for the West London Waste Plan Proposed Sites and Policies Document has now commenced and runs from 9 February to 25 March 2011.

This document can be accessed in public libraries on [www.wlwp.net](http://www.wlwp.net) or on a CD which is in the HA21 office. Mick O plans to send the Waste Group's comments. If you would like to make comments through the group, please let him have your comments by March 23rd.

Or please feel free to make your comments independently.

## NEWSROUND - by Mick Oliver

During March HA21's people have some interesting commitments – we hope to report these in more detail in the next *In Contact* or on the website.

Mick O and Mick C are visiting Ecobuild at ExCel. Ecobuild has stands from suppliers of sustainable and recycled materials, energy-efficient materials, techniques and equipment, seminars, demonstrations, etc., and we expect to learn a lot.

Separately, Mick O is attending an Inter-faith seminar on environment and sustainability at Lambeth Palace. Harrow is a particularly diverse borough, but all faiths are in pretty good accord on their attitudes to the environment and their responsibilities toward it. HA21 has already endorsed the Earth Charter – there is more we can do together and this event could stimulate us to do so.

And Mick O is visiting the launch of Biffa Polymers' PRF at Redcar. This prototype plant is able to separate the different plastic polymers from mixed plastic waste – the norm is for MRFs to separate the bottle plastics (with recycling codes 1 & 2) but to leave the rest (3 to 9) unsorted – this technology promises that all our plastic waste can be used effectively to replace new plastics from virgin raw materials, and is long overdue.

## SOME DEFINITIONS YOU MIGHT NEED TO KNOW?.....

**Fuel Poverty** - A household needing to spend more than 10 % of its income on energy

**MRF Material Reclamation Facility** - A plant which separates mixed recycled waste into its separate components

**PRF Plastic Reclamation Facility** - A plant which separates mixed recycled plastic waste into its separate plastics

**Transport Poverty** - A person needing to spend more than 10 % of his income on travel to work

*A Sittingbourne Civil Servant reported being in this position. Few Harrow commuters travel 40 miles each way, but we seem to accept these current patterns of employment which require substantial travel and cost. Shouldn't we aspire to organise our society differently, and work and socialise nearer to our homes?*

**Zero Waste** - The reduction in the use of raw materials, sustainable design of products, preventing waste, recovering value from products and materials at the end of their lives through recycling, composting or energy recovery

*Taken from the Scottish Government's Consultative Paper which established their Zero Waste policy*

## African thoughts



Mick O's sister-in-law visited Tutankhamun's tomb and brought back a chocolate souvenir. This was of Belgian chocolate, processed in America, and packed in a tin manufactured in China. The cocoa the chocolate was made from was no doubt from Africa. How many food (and material) miles does this represent? An example of globalisation, but what a trivial use of resources!

**Mick Oliver writes**.....January's *In Contact* included an article on the damage that western fishing practices are doing to Somali fishing grounds, which has driven the fishermen there to piracy. A *Sunday Telegraph* article by Mark Nicholson shows the situation is worse – he reports that Somalia's fishing grounds have lost £100,000,000 of revenue, caused both by western fishing and by illegal dumping of toxic and radioactive wastes at sea, in a corrupt deal between local warlords and two European companies.

**NATIONAL EVENTS.....UK Aware 2011 Friday, 25 & Saturday 26 March at London Olympia on the last two days of Climate Week.** UK Aware is the UK's only annual green and ethical lifestyle exhibition and it is run by an excellent team, many voluntary. Check it out at [www.ukaware.com](http://www.ukaware.com)

### LOCAL EVENTS.....

#### Harrow Nature Conservation Forum Working Parties

Roxbourne Rough - 10am, Sat.19

March & Sun.17 April

Stanmore Common - 10.30-1pm,

Sat. 2 & 23 April

Bentley Old Vicarage - 10am, Sat. 2

April

#### Butterflies & Bluebells

Stanmore Country Park - 10.30-1pm, Sat. 16 April

#### Contact and Meeting Details

##### Reserve

Bentley Old Vicarage

Roxbourne Rough

Stanmore Common

Stanmore Country Park

##### Warden

Stephen Bolsover

Dave Bolton

Simon Braidman

John Hollingdale

##### Phone No.

8933-2823

8868-9517

8386-2502

8863-2077

##### Meeting Point

Bentley Day Centre

Beside 2, Stirling Ave  
off Cannon Lane

Warren Lane Car Park

Dennis Lane entrance

### FOR YOUR INFORMATION.....HARROW LETS (Local Exchange Trading Scheme)

Jenny Hunt who has been involved with LETS for many years has decided to stand down and has handed over the reins of co-ordinator to Dilys Gustafson with Jane Skelly as chair. For more information on LETS you can contact Dilys (on 020 8426 9294, e-mail [bob-dilys.gustafson@ntlworld.com](mailto:bob-dilys.gustafson@ntlworld.com)) or Jane (on 020 8863 9714 or 079 3121 8704, e-mail [jvskelly@yahoo.com](mailto:jvskelly@yahoo.com))

### BOOKS TO READ.....

HA21 has these and any members can borrow them:

- Julie Hill – *The Secret Life of Stuff* – light-hearted reading, but deals with the adverse consequences of our prodigal use of resources and suggests how we could avoid them
- Edited by Tim Cooper – *Longer Lasting Products (Alternatives to the throw-away society)* – not such an easy read but a detailed treatment of the same theme

On the subject of books, have any of you read any relevant books that you would recommend to other HA21 members? Please let us know and what attracted you to them, why you found them useful, etc.



**Still the most common  
piece of litter in Harrow  
and in Britain!**

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

