

Stockport Friends of the Earth meetings are held at

The Arden Arms, Millgate, Stockport.

Upcoming Events	13.11.10	Christmas Meal
	17.01.11	Stockport Friends of the Earth meeting
	07.05.11	Amaretti Chamber Orchestra fundraising concert
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The photo on the front cover was taken at
**The Greenest Government Ever:
Starts Here in Stockport?**
A Public Meeting held at Marple Senior
Citizens Hall on 30th October 2010.

Stockport Friends of the Earth is just one of the many local groups of Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Friends of the Earth Europe campaigns for sustainable and just societies and for the protection of the environment, unites more than 30 national organisations with thousands of local groups and is part of the world's largest grassroots environmental network, Friends of the Earth International.



STOCKPORT MATTERS



A newsletter from Friends of the Earth featuring . . .

The Greenest Government Ever: Starts Here in Stockport?

A detailed report on the Public Meeting held at Marple Senior Citizens Hall by Chris Eldridge and Helen Rimmer, FoE

. . . along with all our upcoming events

Winter edition 2010
www.stockportfoe.org.uk
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The Greenest Government Ever: Starts Here in Stockport?

The Audience

Over 60 people filled the Marple Senior Citizens Hall on Saturday afternoon to ask Andrew Stunell MP Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Communities and Local Government, what his department was doing to champion action on climate change?

Friends of the Earth speaker...

Mike Childs, Head of Climate Change at Friends of the Earth, opened the discussion and spoke of the challenge of delivery on climate change - and that it must happen in communities. Local Authorities must be at the centre of action on climate change - for example on transport, energy - and there are many examples of leadership - but many are doing nothing. Every authority must take decisive action.

Andrew Stunell MP speaker...

Andrew outlined his ministerial responsibility for the sustainability of new buildings, and the Private Member's Bill on the subject that he steered through Parliament, the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Act 2004.

He spoke about being one of the four Lib Dems negotiating the coalition agreement and the commitment to the 'greenest Government ever' with a strong green section in the agreement.

When asked what the Government was doing to live up to its promise of being the greenest ever, he compared the Coalition Government's 5 year term in office to a football match ...

'of the 90 minutes, we're only 9 minutes in so far'.



Andrew Stunell MP (above) speaking about...

Government action so far

Increased energy efficiency requirements in buildings - 25% increase from 2006 standards

Feed in Tariffs confirmed.

£60m port development - for assembling offshore turbines - 3 ports job creation and carbon reduction.

Every department must decrease carbon emissions by 10% from May 2010 to May 2011.

What next?

Announced Renewable Heat Incentive (a FIT-like payment for generating heat from renewable sources)

Green Investment Bank with £1bn topped up by sales of Government assets.

All new homes zero carbon by 2016 with interim step at 2013.

Green deal on retrofitting.

The Green deal on retrofitting is the Coalition Government's initiative to support the implementation of energy efficiency measures to households and businesses without needing to meet any upfront costs.

Local Carbon Frameworks - Greater Manchester a pilot - hope to see good progress to inform the rest of the country

Coming soon...

Natural Environment White Paper

Rail electrification in NW (Manchester, Liverpool, Blackpool, Preston etc)

Big Society - is about not needing central Government permission, and having local discretion.

A bill will be published in November - there will be fewer occasions when Whitehall says 'need to do this' - so won't be telling people what to do, initiatives will be community-led instead.

'The campaigning shoe is on your foot'.

The Chair

Rev Graham Hawley of Marple Energy Saving Strategy was excellent and kept the discussion and Q and A moving really well...

Questions and Answers...

Questions asked were on a wide variety of social justice and environmental issues including spending cuts to bus and train subsidies, the absence of many British manufacturers of solar panels, and the extent to which the Big Society was inclusive. A précis of answers detailed below...

On cuts/green government commitment - 'every day Government is borrowing £400m - don't have a choice about cutting spending'

Building regulations are not enforced - only 12 prosecutions for not doing Part L in last 5 years - must ensure this is enforced.

Localism Bill will give local communities the right to buy assets.

Changing planning system and giving more emphasis to neighbourhood plans - so would be up to Marple Community to push for tough energy standards - but there will be a National Planning Framework with a duty on sustainability included in the planning system which will have to feed into any local plan.

Responding to a question on mandatory targets - 'we've spent last 6 months tearing up inspection regime which employs lots of people doing nothing useful' Manchester has 41% target because it chose to not because Government told it to. Too many targets results in sending info to Whitehall and not delivering services. Targets must be related to local area e.g. Ellesmere Port is very different in context to Stockport.

Big Society is about involving, supporting and encouraging creativity in all sections of the community - giving everyone in the country the opportunity to have what Marple has.

Shares same goal with Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, of passing power and decision-making out of Whitehall but 'sustainability isn't our department's lead responsibility', apart from on new buildings.

On Local Enterprise Partnerships - there is a requirement to work with small businesses, and 'the intention is not that the community and voluntary sector will be squeezed out'

Final word

'This Government is saying it's your choice if you want to take action on climate change'