

# Reading Friends of the Earth

## Newsletter May-June 2025

For more info our 'new' website is at: [www.readingfoe.co.uk](http://www.readingfoe.co.uk) \* ...

or Facebook [Reading Friends of the Earth | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ReadingFriendsOfTheEarth) ...

or email [info@readingfoe.co.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.co.uk) \*\* ... or 'phone 07503626167.

\* Our original web-page – which contains some outdated information but may also sometimes be up-dated - is now at <http://www.anjoro.plus.com/RFOE/>

\*\* Our former e-mail address [info@readingfoe.org.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.org.uk) has been discontinued.



**General Meetings:** Reading FoE aim to meet every month - usually in person but occasionally on Zoom. Often in a pub or in Room One upstairs at RISC, 35-39 London Street (access to RISC from London Street is via a passage to the right of the shop-front). Most meetings at RISC will be 'hybrid' and we are investigating options for other venues - please request a Zoom link if you have not received one. Most meetings discuss plans and general topics - some have a particular focus or guest speakers.

### **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 7:30 pm. Room 1 at RISC and streamed to Zoom: Will a Heat Pump Work for Me?**

Two local residents – Andrew Nind and Marc Adams - will describe how their heat pumps are performing for them – in a 1920s semi and a 1960s detached – and share their experiences of purchase and installation.

Heat pumps can deliver about three to four units of heat energy for every unit of electricity used so are key to affordably decarbonising home heating. Government is giving installation grants and electricity companies are offering 'heat pump tariffs'.

Meeting will also address the impact on carbon emissions and energy security, and measures the government could take to encourage uptake.

If Zoom link has not been received register at –

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/will-a-heat-pump-work-for-me-tickets-1361408181519> - for link.

*Outside Unit:*



*Indoor Unit:*



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### **Future Events and Opportunities with Reading FoE, National FoE, and others:**

*Please e-mail us or post to Facebook if there are other events we should know about!*

### **Reading Climate Festival – 7<sup>th</sup> June to 21<sup>st</sup> June**

See <https://readingcan.org.uk/festival25/> Events still seem to be being added, so you have to scroll down and click on "View the READING CLIMATE FESTIVAL 2025 PROGRAMME here" to get the latest version.

**Lots of attractive events** – most free but many require pre-registration – highlighting a few in first week:

- **Grants and tips** for running a healthy, cost-effective & climate-friendly home – online 5:30 on 9<sup>th</sup> June
- **Launch of new Reading Climate Emergency Plan** – 5 pm 10<sup>th</sup> June - in person in Council Chamber
- **Climate Law in the Age of Misinformation** - 7 pm in Town Hall and on-line
- **Reading Community Energy Summit** – morning of Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June. It might be good to have a representative at this event if anyone is available and would like to apply.

Reading Climate Action Network say: We will be posting about the Festival from ReadingCAN Facebook, Instagram and X accounts. Please follow us there and repost, comment and like our posts, and add them to your stories. And please tag us in yours so we can share yours too. Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/readingcan/> X: <https://x.com/ReadingCAN> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ReadingClimateActionNetwork>

### **Climate Coalition – ‘Act Now – Change Forever’**

The main event is at **Westminster on 9<sup>th</sup> July** so let us know if you're going, but local groups Reading Friends of the Earth and Berkshire Greenpeace (link on Page 4) also hope to be collaborating **planning local events to meet our MPs** around that time. Contact [info@readingfoe.co.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.co.uk) or check websites.

Climate Coalition say “On **Wednesday 9th July 2025**, thousands of people from every corner of the UK will come to Westminster to tell our MPs: this is a moment for leadership that protects what matters most — our health, our nature, our communities, our climate, and our future.” Ideas, information and sign-up: <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/act-now-change-forever>

National FoE is running a webinar of ‘on line training’ – with emphasis on the recent ‘**Fairness Test**’ report - on 10<sup>th</sup> June at 18:00. FoE link is <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/get-ready-for-the-climate-coalitions-mass-lobby-with-friends-of-the-earth-tickets-1311587506539>

**The Fairness Test: a mandate for bold climate policy** – To reduce political backlash the UK must meet its climate targets while making sure everyone benefits, with no one left behind. The report sets out what the government should be doing in key areas:

- Access to transport
- Warm homes
- Transition for workers changing jobs
- How the plan should be developed
- Funding the transition

A link to the report is at <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/climate/fairness-test-mandate-bold-climate-policy>

### **Other National FoE events and training:**

- Saturday June 14<sup>th</sup> – ‘South East Action Summer Gathering’ in London – 10:00 to 17:00. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/south-east-summer-action-gathering-2025-tickets-1310038673939?aff=oddtcreator>
- Planet over Profit summer action webinar, Thursday 5 June, 7pm to 8.15pm. [Save your spot.](#)
- Skillshare: How to influence your mayor on climate and nature. Wednesday 18 June. 7pm to 8:30pm. [Save your spot.](#)
- United for Warm Homes: group meet up. Tuesday 1 July 6pm to 7.15pm. [Save your Spot.](#)

### **Reading FoE Summertime Events:**

We have often had stalls – but have not yet booked for 2025 - at **East Reading Festival** (22<sup>nd</sup> June - <http://www.eastreadingfestival.co.uk/>) ...and ...

**Reading Waterfest** (28<sup>th</sup> June - <https://www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/things-to-do/events/water-fest/> but can be expensive). Please offer to manage either or both, and/or help on the day.

We have booked a stall at Earley Green Fair on 2<sup>nd</sup> August. Again, assistance will be welcome.

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### **Updates:**

**Reading Borough Local Plan Partial Update** has been submitted for government scrutiny. The next stage is that an independent Inspector will be appointed to hold an Examination into the documents to consider whether they are ‘sound’ More information on the Examination process, as well as the Submission Draft and all supporting documents are available on the Council's website: [Local plan examination - Reading Borough Council](#). Our last consultation response is at <http://www.anjoro.plus.com/RFOE/Documents/Reading Local Plan Response December 2024.pdf>

**Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update:** After receipt of the documents the Planning Inspectors have written to the council with ‘particular concerns about the delivery of housing’ as detailed by the Local Plan.

They have already asked when infrastructure projects described as ‘critical’ or ‘essential’ for the ‘Hall Farm/Loddon Garden Village’ housing development will be delivered when they all will cost more than £10 million to complete.

These include a bridge over the M4 motorway, a bridge over the River Loddon, a pedestrian bridge, a dual carriageway connection to Meldreth Way roundabout and capacity upgrades to Arborfield Primary sub-station.” <https://wokingham.today/planning-inspectors-raise-concerns-about-delivery-of-400-homes-known-as-loddon-valley-garden-village/> and <https://www.green4grow.org/>

## Planning and Infrastructure Bill – “Pay Cash to Trash Nature”?

Government says: “The Planning and Infrastructure Bill is central to the government’s plan to get Britain building again and deliver economic growth. The Bill will speed up and streamline the delivery of new homes and critical infrastructure, supporting delivery of the government’s Plan for Change milestones of building 1.5 million safe and decent homes in England and fast-tracking 150 planning decisions on major economic infrastructure projects by the end of this Parliament. It will also support delivery of the government’s Clean Power 2030 target by ensuring that key clean energy projects are built as quickly as possible”.

There are continuing critiques of likely impacts on wildlife and sustainable development of this government initiative to rush for growth by reducing and simplifying environmental assessments. Particular concerns:

- Allowing financial compensation for damage to wildlife with no requirement that key types of habitat will be retained. Particular local emphasis on chalk streams here:  
<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/14/attempt-to-protect-englands-rare-chalk-streams-in-planning-bill-rejected-by-labour-mps> and <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/may/17/planning-bill-will-push-public-towards-reform-labour-chris-hinchliff-nature>
- Removing all statutory consultees, such as the Environment Agency, from the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) pre-application process. So detailed objections will only be received after a project is approved in principle – leading to errors which may either be expensive or impossible to correct.  
<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/news/government-amendment-planning-bill-threatens-nature-and-infrastructure-delivery>

If you meet any Labour politicians (or know anyone in the House of Lords?!) please bring this up!

## Clean Air and Safer Transport Forum 1<sup>st</sup> April.

John Sharpe, and John Booth attended this RBC meeting.

- We called for:commercially installed EV charging prices to be a benchmark % above household electricity costs, phasing over time. The Council did not indicate how they would regulate electricity pricing or require profits to be shared.
- We called for EV charging suppliers to commit to levels of availability. Council said they would be asked to achieve a KPI on this.
- Bonfires on allotments will be forbidden in months April to September
- More electric buses delayed because SSE did not have capacity at sub-station.
- Reading Council is subsidising park and ride from Winnersh by providing parking and bus fare for £1, this has resulted in 1200 fewer journeys.
- An ‘Active Travel Task and Finish Group’ has been set up by Council – John Sharpe has submitted a response to their questionnaire on behalf of RfOE,
- We questioned Council proposals for ‘Emissions Based Parking Charges. Councillor Ennis said that emissions needed to be cut and that this was one way of doing so.

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## Other up-coming activities (not run by Reading FoE so check for changes):

### Global Justice meeting on Climate Change, Women’s Health, and Aid.

What can save trees, reduce carbon emissions & help the poorest? 28<sup>th</sup> May, 7:30 pm at RISC

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1043766970938124>

**Green Drinks** – usually on the first Tuesday of every month in the Castle Tap – see [Reading Green Drinks | Facebook](#)

**People Planet Pint:** an informal social meet up, primarily aimed at people involved in sustainability. Reading will now have its own PPP on the second Thursday of the month. Milk Bar, 8 Merchants Place, Reading RG1 1DT.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/reading-small99s-people-planet-pinttm-sustainability-meetup-tickets-923173094577>

**Kidical Mass Reading** – “Making space for the next generation, one bike ride at a time!” - are holding a number of rides for children in the coming months - see [www.kidicalmassreading.co.uk](http://www.kidicalmassreading.co.uk) or on Twitter @KidicalMassRead

**Reading Critical Mass** cycle ride. ... Rides on the last Friday of the month. Leave at 19:30 from the Civic Offices in Bridge Street. Leisurely ride for about an hour and a half finishing at pub. Not sure if still happening. Check before you go! <https://criticalmassreading.wordpress.com/> doesn’t seem to be updated ???

**XR Reading** hold meetings and events – see <https://www.facebook.com/groups/XRRdg/>

**Reading Cycle Campaign** – has regular monthly meetings and other activities. <https://readingcyclecampaign.org.uk/>

**Repair Cafe** – usually third weekend of month - <http://www.transitionreading.org.uk/projects/reading-repair-cafe/>

**Reading Bicycle Kitchen** – regular sessions – see <https://www.readingbicyclekitchen.org/>

## **Administrative matters:**

### **Website Management:**

Paolo has created our new website using WordPress. He would welcome any help maintaining, improving and expanding it, and can share the credentials to access the account.

### **Newsletter curating and contributions:**

It would be great to have more people contributing to our newsletter – perhaps changing format or contact – please get in touch.

### **E-mail lists:**

We have three e-mail lists: newsletter; frequent e-mails; and our public [info@readingfoe.co.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.co.uk) email address (currently goes to five people who help run the group). Please let us know if you would like to be on a different list or to get more involved.

## **Useful Links and General Information:**

Friends of the Earth 'England, Wales and Northern Ireland' <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/>

– Policy and Insight <https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/>

GREN - Greater Reading Environmental Network <http://www.gren.org.uk/>. Also [Greater Reading Environment Network | Facebook](#)

Reading Climate Action Network - <https://readingcan.org.uk>

Extinction Rebellion, Reading: <https://www.facebook.com/xrReading/>

Transition Reading - Reading's Transition Town movement <http://www.transitionreading.org.uk>

Newbury Friends of the Earth – Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/755866711218545/>

Berkshire Greenpeace - [https://greenwire.greenpeace.org.uk/s/group/0F94H000000CHksSAG/greenpeace-berkshire?language=en\\_GB](https://greenwire.greenpeace.org.uk/s/group/0F94H000000CHksSAG/greenpeace-berkshire?language=en_GB)

### **Reading FoE Officers etc.**

Our 2025 AGM on April 7<sup>th</sup> elected Enrico Petrucco to continue in the post of Co-ordinator and Paolo Turati to continue in the post of Treasurer.

### **Reading FoE e-mail communications**

If you would like to become a supporter on our mailing list and receive and join in our day-to-day communications please send an email to [info@readingfoe.co.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.co.uk) to request our GDPR Consent form. We have separate lists for people who only want to receive our newsletters (currently 6 per year) and information about important events and actions, and for people who want to be more involved and communicate directly with other active supporters.

### **Reading FoE Subscriptions:**

A subscription/donation would be welcome from supporters but is not required. We're much happier to have an extra pair of hands doing the important stuff. We aim to provide a regular free of charge newsletter to keep members up to date with the group's activities. We need funds to cover meeting room hire, zoom licence, website costs, and campaign expenses. Contributions of perhaps £10 a year would be greatly appreciated.

To contribute please:

- if you use PayPal go to <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/readingfoe>
- to pay by bank transfer request our bank account details by e-mail to [info@readingfoe.co.uk](mailto:info@readingfoe.co.uk)
- or pay cash or cheque at a meeting or event