

# Minutes of GREN Members' Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016 at Bike Kitchen

**Version – draft\_v2 – 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016.**

## 1. Welcome, introductions, and apologies:

Meeting was quorate with more than six members, including at least three Committee members, present.

GREN Committee members: Peter Chan (PC) (Chair); John Booth (JB) (Secretary); Tony Cowling (AC) (Treasurer); Tanja Rebel (TR); Tricia Marcouse (TM); Will Alliston (WA).

GREN members: Jackie Oversby; Chris Burden; John Hoggett;

Apologies: Ornella Trevisan; John Oversby; Steve Goodman.

## 2. Last member meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2016

### **Minutes:**

- [http://www.gren.org.uk/resources/160523\\_GREN\\_Members\\_Minutes.pdf](http://www.gren.org.uk/resources/160523_GREN_Members_Minutes.pdf)
- Agreed correct

### **Matters Arising:**

Waste Recycling Statistics. TM responded to query in minutes on the EU target for 50% of household waste to be prepared for re-use or recycling: material composted counted towards the target.

Definitions are complex and controversial – official statistics are at

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/547427/UK\\_Statistics\\_on\\_Waste\\_statistical\\_notice\\_25\\_08\\_16\\_update\\_2\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/547427/UK_Statistics_on_Waste_statistical_notice_25_08_16_update_2_.pdf)

## 3. Updates from GREN Officers and Committee:

- Chair – PC – no issues to report.
- Treasurer – AC  
Current balance (having paid room hire for this meeting) was £51-30p. Over £200 was expected to be received from Reading Climate Change Partnership (RCCP) to cover costs of first series of 'Reading Climate Forum' but JB had not completed reports on meetings so application had not yet been made.

GREN had applied for Skipton Building Society 'Grassroots Giving' £500 grant but had not made the shortlist.

- Secretary – JB  
GREN Membership:
  - Website – in May was 208 registered – now 213
  - Website Groups – in May was 29 registered – now 32 although a few may have folded.
  - Facebook – in May was 228 – now 228.

## 4. Updates from GREN representatives on other bodies:

- Cycling Forum – TR  
Had met on 7<sup>th</sup> June and discussed:
  - improvements to links to Napier Road tunnel

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- proposals for NCN Route 422 along the Bath Road.
- planned improvements for cyclists using the Cow Lane underpass.

TR still pressing for a dedicated budget and major investment as originally requested by Rob White but with no success. GREN members commented that other towns seem to have budgets (Edinburgh) and better facilities (Swansea) and expressed the hope that Olympic Medals for cycling might justify more money for infrastructure for cyclists.

Due to cuts, there will only be two **Cycle Forums** this year. The next one is 19th of October.

JB commented that there was a Council consultation (open to end September) on proposal to close the **Readybikes** scheme from 14th June 2017 because of lack of sponsorship funding.  
[https://consult.reading.gov.uk/css/readybike/consult\\_view](https://consult.reading.gov.uk/css/readybike/consult_view).

GREN members commented that better infrastructure and lower prices, and perhaps lighter-weight machines might make the Readybikes more popular. Noted that only 20% of cyclists were women. Thought should be seasonally popular for tourism. Wondered if scheme had surveyed users to establish what people used them for. Suggestion that if the scheme folds it might be possible to replace it with a community-based bike hire scheme.

- Reading Climate Change Partnership – RCCP – JB

Board had met on 8<sup>th</sup> July and agreed grant for autumn Reading Climate Forum series. Grant-aid for other climate projects continues to be available.

Still working out how to cope with reduction in support from RBC. Summreen helping out with the website voluntarily. Proposing to fund admin. support from RCCP income from solar panels.

Reports on progress with the Climate Change Strategy Action Plan to March 2016 are in preparation – going to RBC Committee in November – but some Themes did not have Theme Leads.

- Social Value in Public Commissioning Project

TM had been nominated by GREN to work on this government-backed collaborative project which had closed in September 2015. No further action.

### 5. Reading Climate Forum

These events were now being collectively billed as 'Reading Climate Forum' to imply scope for discussion/debate. A 'steering group' consisting of GREN Committee plus Rayner Mayer (UoR, Sciotech) and Chris Beales (from RCCP Board) had been established.

First series of 4 meetings had been held between March and June 2016 – arranged by GREN and funded by RCAN/RCCP. Attendance had been between 20 and 30 and they seemed to be reaching a few 'new' people.

There had been some, but not much, press coverage and it was suggested that a paid advertisement should be considered. It would be useful to build up a collection of photos of GREN activities for media use. Press coverage more likely in context of protest or controversy – suggested involving Age UK and seeking images of people suffering from cold and taking photos with relevant banners.

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Five meetings arranged for second series, September to November, were noted – see Note 1 below.

It was suggested that attendees should be asked to write down suggested topics for future events.

Members agreed not to immediately plan for another series of events in 2017.

### 6. Air Quality

Previous meeting had agreed that GREN should address this topic.

JB circulated John Oversby's report [http://www.gren.org.uk/resources/GREN\\_AQ\\_Briefing.pdf](http://www.gren.org.uk/resources/GREN_AQ_Briefing.pdf) which identified PM2.5 as key risk to be investigated in Reading.

WHO Global Database [http://www.who.int/phe/health\\_topics/outdoorair/databases/cities/en/](http://www.who.int/phe/health_topics/outdoorair/databases/cities/en/) shows that in 2013 for annual average measurements Reading was on 16 ug/m<sup>3</sup> for PM10 and on 10 ug/m<sup>3</sup> for PM2.5 – so OK for PM10 and just on limit for PM2.5.

JB said that he expected to receive portable equipment capable of measuring PM2.5 from Friends of the Earth on 23<sup>rd</sup> September on loan for a few weeks:

- All we can do is get snapshots of air quality and use them to raise awareness.
- Because EU and WHO standards for ambient air quality are for annual averages and 24 hour means we won't be able to generate valid data for such long periods.
- So cannot say standards have been exceeded but can perhaps say we measure levels above the relevant thresholds (if we do). But can also say experts think no safe level ...

Locations for taking measurements were discussed – E P Collier School and Palmer Park were suggested.

Agreed to set up a working group of JB, AC, TM, WA, John Oversby, Enrico Petrucco, Chris Burden and John Hoggett to take this forward.

Agreed to approach Dr. Tim Chatterton as possible keynote speaker on Air Quality for GREN AGM in November and to seek contacts with RBH on health risks which include cardio-vascular as well as respiratory problems.

### 7. Reading and Wokingham Local Plans

Reading's Issues and Options consultation had passed. Wokingham's is open to 30<sup>th</sup> September.

Reading Climate Forum meeting on 'Influencing the Local Plan Process' is on 5<sup>th</sup> October and TM has obtained agreement to submit GREN comments to Wokingham after that meeting.

TM said Prof. Parker was willing to run further meetings to provide guidance on topics such as 'Neighbourhood Planning' and 'objecting to planning applications' if there was demand.

Tilehurst in West Berkshire has a Neighbourhood Plan in preparation, and Shinfield in Wokingham is also trying to do the same. Neighbourhood Plans can be useful but must correspond to local authority's Local Plan which can lead to conflict.

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### 8. Members' Forum – Networking Opportunity

- AC said the **Reading Community Energy Society** was a 'Community Benefit Society', had raised funds, and was rushing to install solar panels on local community buildings before the end of September deadline for the Feed In Tariff.
- **Crafted Waste:** Ornella Trevisan has now created a Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/craftedwaste/> and has been holding stalls at events, workshops, courses, all with a focus on raising awareness about waste issues in a deeply broad sense. She has been invited to give a talk and a workshop to a Guides group where her activity proposal has been received enthusiastically.

It was agreed that Crafted Waste should be invited to register as a 'Group Member' of GREN and that future applications for group membership would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

- TR discussed progress with the campaign for **Warm-White LED Lighting**. Reading and other Councils, including Bracknell, were refusing to budge on their choice of 4,000K Correlated Colour Temperature (CCT) LEDs when evidence was building for 'warm white' with CCT of 3,000K or ideally 2,700K.
- JB said Jasmine Lail had raised the issue of a car park replacing a **garden area at E P Collier Primary School**. She would like at least some of the area reclaimed for wildlife and/or food growing. Members suggested that growth in numbers of pupils had led to growth in numbers of teachers. Suggested she could contact Food4Families, The Bell Tower Community Association, and whoever had been previously running the garden.
- JB said that a non-party '**Boot the Route (again)**' group had been set up by Newtown residents to oppose plans for Park and Ride and Mass Rapid Transit in Kennet Mouth area. Prime contacts appear to be Green Councillors Rob White and Brenda McGonigle.
- JB said the '**Smart M4**' proposal for 'All Lane Running' had been approved by the Secretary of State despite opposition from Reading FoE, FoE, Campaign for Better Transport and some local politicians. However media coverage had been quite good with Chris Burden appearing on South Today and 'getreading' publishing a list of readers' comments hostile to the scheme.
- AC said the **Reading Sustainability Centre** proposal for hydro power was working its way through the planning process. A novel turbine technology was being investigated which might substantially improve the rate of return on the scheme. The group was making good progress planning a display on sustainability for Reading Museum for 2017.
- PC said **Southcote GrowAllot** were running a series of food-sharing meals 'Big Lunches'

### 9. GREN's future activities – what else should we be doing?

A shared stall at **Reading Town Meal** on 1<sup>st</sup> October had been agreed with Transition Town Reading. AC said he could supply a gazebo. People would be needed to staff the stall. WA said he was running a Fermented Foods workshop at 13:30.

### 10. A.O.B.

None

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**11. Date and location of next meeting.**

Proposed AGM dates of Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November or Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November were noted.

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**Note 1: Reading Climate Forum planned events**

*(Steering group: GREN Committee plus Rayner Mayer and Chris Beales)*

**1. Warm Homes – Don't Lose Heat!**

Tony Cowling and Ian Gough –Monday 26th September at RISC

**2/. Influencing the Local Plan Process**

Prof. Gavin Parker and Kat Salter – Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October at Bicycle Kitchen

**3. Warm Homes – Cool Planet” – Low-Carbon Energy Techniques**

Dr. Rayner Mayer on heat pumps; Dr. Sue Roberts on Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery; Lee Webster (Business Development Director, Anesco) giving an industry view. Monday 17th October 7:30 at RISC in London Street.

**4. "Reading's Water Supply in a Changing World"**

Michael Bright and Chris Beales - Friday 4th November

**5. "The effect that Architecture and Urban design has on new buildings and refurbishments to achieve low environmental impact"**

Prof. Farrelly will host a meeting on London Road campus on 17th November as part of a programme of events run by the School of Architecture.

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