

# infoe

SPRING 2008 **FREE**

 **Friends of  
the Earth Bristol**



## SEVERN BARRAGE

**The Government has proposed putting a barrage across the Severn estuary as a way of harnessing its tidal energy. Friends of the Earth want the Government to keep our options open, and to include technologies such as tidal lagoons in their 2-year feasibility study.**

Tidal energy in the Severn Estuary could provide 5% of UK electricity, however FoE are keen to ensure that any impacts on the unique habitat conditions that it provides are kept to a minimum. FoE are campaigning to ensure that solutions which may have a lower impact (such as tidal lagoons) are considered and that strong weighting is given to 'environmental impact' in the Government's conclusions. Lagoons would make little difference to the tidal range or the estuary's fish and bird populations, whereas a barrage as proposed would radically alter the nature of the area, by halving the upstream tidal range (although no areas would be newly flooded, and the barrage could provide a measure of flood defence).

Tidal energy is an important part of the mix needed to provide real sustainable renewable

energy for the UK into the future. The Severn estuary is the best location in the UK to place a barrage due to its large tidal range, although other estuaries could also be used. The amount of electricity a Severn barrage could provide is very significant: it would double the current installed renewable capacity and provide electricity for the whole region, but this needs to be balanced against any negative impacts on habitats, or which might arise from a barrage plus road crossing-type scheme.

Campaigning activity in Bristol FOE so far, has been mainly behind the scenes: engaging with political parties and networking with interested groups. We will be working mainly to get across the message that this is not just a 'barrage or no barrage' debate – there are other options to consider. There is popular local support for the barrage – 71% in favour according to an Evening Post recent poll – but maybe smaller-scale, less headline-grabbing solutions offer us a better way forward.

For more information:

<http://www.bristolfoe.org.uk/dynamicweb/?campaign=severn>

# Carbon Reduction Campaign

The Carbon Reduction Campaign's main focus is the promotion of the use of a carbon calculator for individuals, with the aim of finding out their personal carbon consumption.

In the last quarter the campaign goal was for everyone in the CRC to take a quarterly reading of their own emissions with the aim of reducing their emissions to a suggested target of four tonnes per year- this was inclusive of all emissions caused by domestic life (consumption of gas and electric etc) and transport used (including to and from work). It does not however include emissions produced whilst at work due to a lack of personal control over them. A first reading was taken on December 1st and a second on March 1st and this will continue throughout the year. The CRC have already been surprised by the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> they are producing.

The aim for the next quarter is to put together a CRC website, with the goal of encouraging others to join the group and use the calculator. The group is currently discussing further promotion ideas such as setting up stalls at the Festival of Nature and Bristol Harbour Festival.

The CRC meet in the upstairs room of the Cornubia Pub on the last Thursday of every month, and always welcomes new members. The next meeting is June 26th, 7.30pm.

The group can also be contacted via their page on the BFOE website:  
<http://www.bristolfoe.org.uk/dynamicweb/?campaign=lowcarb>

The carbon calculator can be found online at: [www.carbonrationing.org.uk](http://www.carbonrationing.org.uk) or visit: <http://actonco2.direct.gov.uk>

## Blackout Bristol

There have been two phases of the Blackout campaign (April and October 2007), both of which invited the public to nominate Worst Offender buildings where lights are left on unnecessarily.

We found that it was comparatively difficult to get nominations for offenders in the second Blackout. On a cycle around town it was discovered that there were very few - if any - large office blocks still leaving their lights on all night, and where it appeared that was happening, it was because there were office staff or construction workers operating in those premises over night. It seemed therefore that the first campaign had been very successful, and

as such the second Blackout was re-designated as a celebration of the first, with support by high profile institutions across the city and active participation by Bristol City Council and the Suspension Bridge, who both staged "switch-offs" to mark the event.

On the whole the campaign has served its purpose very well, but seems to have run its course, however it may be that the Blackout title could remain as a rubric under which other local energy and emission issues could be highlighted.

If you would be interested in developing the campaign further, please email [info@bristolfoe.org.uk](mailto:info@bristolfoe.org.uk)



## Bristol Friends of the Earth's transport campaign

Bristol Friends of the Earth's transport campaigning is carried out via the Transport for Greater Bristol Alliance.

The Transport Alliance is currently focused upon three main areas. Firstly there is the 'Transport for Greater Bristol' Campaign. 25 local community, environmental and transport groups support the Alliance. A green transport manifesto has been produced and the primary aim is now to persuade Bristol City Council and other West of England (WOE) Councils to vote for the creation of a Greater Bristol Transport Authority.

For further information or to support the campaign please visit the website <http://www.tfgb.org.uk/>

The second area of campaigning has been focused upon persuading WOE partnership to examine a light rail alternative to a proposed bus rapid transit bus route on Emersons Green to Long Ashton Park and Ride site. It would run along the Long Ashton to city centre section with an extension to Temple Meads and Cabot Circus. We oppose the use of the

*We oppose the use of the Bristol to Bath Railway Path as part of the Emersons Green to the city centre section.*

Bristol to Bath Railway Path as part of the Emersons Green to the city centre section. This should be enhanced as a cycle path/footway with links to it from neighboring areas. For details of our alternative proposal for the entire route please visit the website.

Thirdly the Transport Alliance is focused upon Cycling England's national competition to select the UK's first Cycling Demonstration City and ten new Cycling Demonstration Towns. The campaign supports the current bid by Bristol City Council for Bristol to become the UK's first Cycling Demonstration City. For more information please visit:

[www.cyclingengland.co.uk/demotowns.php](http://www.cyclingengland.co.uk/demotowns.php)



# Unanimous!



**On May 14th, Members of North Somerset Council's south area Committee agreed unanimously that Bristol International Airport's planned walkway is not 'permitted development' and agreed with Stop Bristol Airport Expansion's claim that they should apply for planning permission.**

Bristol International Airport (BIA) wanted to build a two-storey structure, leading from the terminal to the edge of the runway, without submitting a formal planning application.

They believed they had "permitted development" rights to let them carry out certain works without planning permission. 'Permitted development' plans are generally allowed for the smooth running of an organisation such as BIA rather than to increase capacity.

But Stop Bristol Airport Expansion (SBAE) argued that the walkway scheme was an undercover way of increasing the airport's passenger capacity by allowing passengers to wait in the walkway rather than the present terminal thereby increasing the number of passengers the airport could handle.

SBAE demanded a full planning application to be submitted for the scheme and an environmental impact assessment to be carried out, a view

**SBAE argued that the walkway scheme was an undercover way of increasing the airport's passenger capacity**

that councillors from North Somerset Council's south area committee unanimously agreed with. The verdict from the committee, even those who approved of airport expansion, was that the 'walkway' would inevitably lead to increased throughput of passengers and weren't impressed by BIA's argument that cutting down on bus use between terminal and aircraft would be a green option.

The committee were also puzzled by BIA's need to ask for the 'walkway' under 'permitted development' when they had already signalled plans to make a formal planning application for



*Stop Bristol Airport Expansion have been campaigning hard to raise awareness about the environmental damage caused by BIA's expansion.*

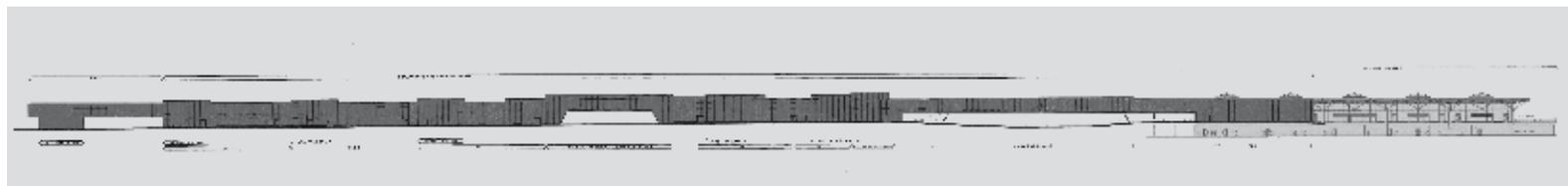
development of the airport in the Autumn. Why not apply for the 'Walkway' then?

Chief executive Paul Kehoe said he was "extremely disappointed" by the decision and referred to SBAE as scoring "An environmental own goal" presumably in reference to the buses that will continue to ferry passengers to their aircraft, a drop in the ocean of course compared to the extra CO<sub>2</sub> produced if expansion continues.



## Spot the difference!

*BIA's terminal as it is now (right) and with the proposed walkway in place (below).*



SBAE spokeswoman Georgie Bigg said: "I am pleased that the council has decided to give local communities the opportunity to have a proper debate about this."

There is no doubt that this has been a setback for the airport and is testimony to the hard work that SBAE has done in pointing out the environmental damage the airport causes, the disruption to local communities and the poor business benefits the airport offers the region.

Visit [www.stopbia.com](http://www.stopbia.com) for more information

## Factfile

- Stop Bristol Airport Expansion is a coalition between Bristol Friends of the Earth, The Campaign to Protect Rural England and The Parish Councils Airport Association.
- Bristol International Airport already produces more than 450,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> which is set to rise to 730,000 tonnes by 2019 if their expansion plans go ahead.
- Aviation is the UK's fastest growing source of CO<sub>2</sub>
- The damaging effects of aviation's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are exaggerated by their release at high altitude. Condensation trails also have an effect on climate change.
- More passengers fly out from BIA than fly in, meaning that more tourism money is spent abroad than locally. This is referred to as the 'Tourism deficit'.

# Friends of the Earth - Local Consultations Group (Parks and Green Spaces).

The Local Consultations group focuses on issues surrounding sustainable housing, and aims to influence the planning laws of Bristol City Council with the hope of them adopting a mandatory minimum amount of energy used by new buildings which would have to come from "on site microgeneration".

This involves energy being generated at the actual location of the building through sustainable technologies such as solar panels, wind turbines, biomass boilers and ground source heat pumps. This idea has already been implemented in the London Borough of Merton where a law has been made that requires 10% of the energy required by new buildings to come from on site microgeneration, this has become known as the 'Merton Rule'.



The integration of solar photovoltaics and a wind turbine into the plant deck on the top floor of the Croydon Centrale shopping centre.

Bristol's local planning laws are being redrafted (the Bristol Framework Core Strategy revision). Bristol FoE has asked that new developments in Bristol should provide 20% of their energy requirements from on site micro generation. This is an increase of 10% on the Merton Rule and would bring Bristol in line with the regional and EU targets of 20% renewable energy supply by 2020.

**For the past year or so, Neil Harrison, a LibDem Councillor, has been trying to get a Merton-style rule discussed by the Council.**

For the past year or so, Neil Harrison, a LibDem Councillor, has been trying to get a Merton-style rule discussed by the Council. Due to the way that Council meetings are structured, a maximum of 3 motions can be discussed at any one meeting, and Neil's motion has run out of time on at least 2 occasions.

Please write to the leader of Bristol City Council - Helen Holland to politely ask the council to create a Merton style policy for planning. Helen.holland@bristol.gov.uk

And/ or your local councillor who can be located at <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Council-Democracy/Elected-Representatives/councillor-finder.en>.

For more information on micro generation: [www.microgeneration.com/](http://www.microgeneration.com/)

# West of England waste campaign

Bristol Friends of the Earth have been working with neighbouring groups to challenge the West of England Partnership's plans for how we deal with our rubbish in the future, in a region that is already heavily reliant upon landfill.

The West of England Partnership after a 2-year process of consultation produced a Joint Residual Waste Strategy for the region. Despite overwhelming feedback from the WoE public consultation that people wanted small-scale flexible waste disposal plants, sited close to where waste is generated. They have proposed one incinerator

with a minimum capacity of 160,000 tonnes p.a. Bristol FoE believe that incineration is the worst choice of waste disposal technology.

In order to fight the WoE proposals, Bristol FoE have co-founded the BAMBI (Bristol Against Mass Burn Incineration) network, with the West of England Liberal Democrats and Bristol South Green Party.

The WoE Partnership has already put in an Expression of Interest to Defra for PFI credits to fund the scheme. If the WoE gets approval to move forward, they will put together a business case for the incinerator by the end of May, with a view to putting the job out to tender in March 2009. The further down this road that the WoE goes, the harder it will be for them to turn round. Please register your opposition NOW, by signing the petition, or by writing to your Councillor.

**Bristol FoE believe that incineration is the worst choice of waste disposal technology.**

To read the Joint Residual Waste Strategy for the region please visit-

■ [http://www.rubbishorresource.co.uk/2007/images//ror\\_strategy\\_march08.pdf](http://www.rubbishorresource.co.uk/2007/images//ror_strategy_march08.pdf)

To sign the e-petition, register as a supporter, and find out more about the campaign please visit-

■ <http://www.bristolfoe.org.uk/dynamicweb/?campaign=waste>

■ <http://www.bambi-network.org.uk/>

■ <http://epetitions.bristol.gov.uk/petition.php?id=180>

## Incineration...

### 1. Encourages more waste

Incinerators need fixed quantities of rubbish. Authorities that have chosen incineration, have correspondingly low recycling rates.

### 2. Generates energy inefficiently

The market is more likely to want to build an electricity-only incinerator, which will operate at around 27% efficiency. Incineration does not generate renewable energy - burning plastic just substitutes one fossil fuel for another.

### 3. Wastes energy

Recycling saves far more energy than is generated by burning waste because it means making fewer new things from raw materials.

### 4. Causes pollution

Smoke, gases and ash from incinerators can contain harmful dioxins which are a cause of cancer.

### 5. Does not make waste go away

Incineration reduces waste to around 40% by weight, 25% by volume. The ash needs to be disposed of to hazardous landfill.

# About Bristol Friends of the Earth

Bristol Friends of the Earth is an active local group of the international environmental organisation Friends of the Earth. We currently run campaigns on Bristol airport expansion, local food, local transport and sustainable housing. We hold a monthly group meeting (visit [www.bristolfoe.org.uk](http://www.bristolfoe.org.uk) for details) plus separate campaign meetings.

If you would like to know more about us, to help us by campaigning or raising money, or want to come to a meeting to see what we do then please get in touch. You can help by volunteering and giving your time, or by joining Bristol Friends of the Earth and helping us financially.

## How do I join?

Membership of Bristol FoE includes a free subscription to InFoE. To join us, just complete

the form below, and return it to the Membership Secretary. Please pay by standing order if you can – it really helps to cut time spend on admin. Subscription rates are:

- Ordinary £15 Unwaged £5 Joint / Family £25

## Contact us

Bristol Friends of the Earth  
10–12 Picton Street, Montpelier, Bristol BS6 5QA  
email: [info@bristolfoe.org.uk](mailto:info@bristolfoe.org.uk)  
voicemail: 0117 911 4084

To join the Bristol Environment email list, which circulates local news of environmental events and campaigns, please email your name and email address to: [bristol\\_environment@bristolfoe.org.uk](mailto:bristol_environment@bristolfoe.org.uk)

To find out about future events or our next monthly meeting visit [www.bristolfoe.org.uk](http://www.bristolfoe.org.uk)

---

## Yes, I'd like to join my local group

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose £\_\_\_\_\_ membership and £\_\_\_\_\_ donation

TOTAL £\_\_\_\_\_

cheques payable to Bristol Friends of the Earth. OR:

I'd like to pay by standing order: \_\_\_\_\_

My bank \_\_\_\_\_

My bank's address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

My account no. \_\_\_\_\_

Sort code \_\_\_\_\_

Account name \_\_\_\_\_

## Standing Order Instruction

Please pay the sum of £\_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / 20\_\_\_\_\_

and thereafter the same amount on the same day each month/year\*

(\*Delete as appropriate. Please make first payment date at least one month from when you fill in this form)

To Co-operative Bank plc, sort code: 08-90-02  
Bristol Friends of the Earth, account no: 50296440

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to: The Membership Secretary,  
Bristol Friends of the Earth, 10–12 Picton Street,  
Montpelier, Bristol BS6 5QA

Your records will be stored on our computer. If you have any objections to this, please contact us.