

# Chester World Development Forum



## Minutes of Forum Meeting held on

**Tuesday 10 September 2019 at The Unity Centre**

**1. Welcome** Terry Green chaired the meeting.

**Present:** Terry Green, Bernard Payne (St Columba's Third World Group), Lindsay Cussons (Baha'i), Margaret Lord (Baha'i), Elizabeth Bott, Mark Rideal, Katy Rowe (Christian Aid), Brian Rowe (Chester Friends of Palestine), Stewart Shuttleworth (Jamie's Fund), Alex Wallis (Trust for Conservation Volunteers), Sue Bownas (Cafod), Sarah Potter, Vicki Jenner, Annie McCarthy.

From Ellesmere Port Justice & Peace Group: Tony Walsh, Margaret Mathershaw, Tom Ormiston

From Friends of Countess of Chester Country Park (FoCCCP): Andy Scargill, Christian Dunn, Morag Scargill, Nicola Perrins,

**Apologies:** Gill Miller, John Tacon, Linda Shuttleworth, Pam Price.

**2. Minutes/notes of Forum Meetings and Matters Arising:**

**Forum of 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019** (*previously circulated, including note of Linda & Stewart Shuttleworth's talk on Apathy about Climate Change*) – no matters arising.

**Chair to report on key issues covered in Committee meetings held on 5<sup>th</sup> August and 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019:**

Terry reported that Forum members met with Chris Matheson MP on July 20<sup>th</sup> regarding the Climate Emergency.

John Tacon continues to be our representative on the Sustainability Forum, which has a forthcoming meeting.

Terry attended an anti-fracking meeting on September 2<sup>nd</sup> at which the possibility of forming an Extinction Rebellion group in Chester was discussed.

The Committee has secured speakers for our next 2 Forum meetings, and further suggestions for future meetings were welcomed. Andy Scargill suggested "Supertrees" Steve Hughes as a good person to approach.

**3. Treasurer's Report** submitted by John Tacon: £308.56 in Bank, less the room booking fee for meeting = £278.56. £19.19 in cash.

**4. "The Brexit Election"** – to consider if CWDF should attempt to hold a hustings event (as we have with several previous elections):

BP referred to an email today from Ken Walker regarding the traditional practice of the local Churches Together group chairing a more broadly-themed hustings. In the current situation he is not certain this would be arranged.

SB emphasised the value of the international focus of the CWDF hustings.

There was a general consensus that we should bide our time, but arranging a hustings event is worth thinking about.

**5. Arrangements for forthcoming events/relevant activities, including:**

**Forum Tuesday November 12<sup>th</sup>** Speaker Natalia Jancewicz from Transition Chester on "Degrowth".

**Forum/University Joint Meeting Wednesday November 27<sup>th</sup>** Speaker Dr Jane Fisher on “The Centre for Alternative Technology” – responding to imperatives of climate change.

Consideration of further CWDF **Diary** listings – version of 10.09.19 was circulated.

**6. Any further events/activities from “around the table”:**

1. Christian Dunn and Helen Tandy (Chester Friends of the Earth) are creating Eco Communities, setting it up as a Community Interest Company (CIC) with an aim of promoting all eco events and initiatives in the region. It is intended to draw together all the environment and sustainable living interest groups in Chester, such as 10 x Greener, Incredible Edible, etc. It will showcase Chester regarding working together on these issues and there are plans for a website hub, information packs for schools, etc. The Forum received this news with enthusiasm. CWDF involvement will be considered further by our Committee.

2. Stewart Shuttleworth reported that Linda is soon to travel to Uganda for over a fortnight to work with mental health services on behalf of the charity Jamie's Fund. The Forum wishes her well ... and wonders whether she might speak about it at a later date – with the March 2020 Forum being suggested.

3. Alex Wallis described his work for The Conservation Volunteers, which he has undertaken for 1 year during his University studies. One of his current assignments is the Wetlands Projects at the Countess of Chester Country Park.

4. Sue Bownas attended a meeting of Chester Fairtrade Steering Group on September 9<sup>th</sup>. It is noted that Traidcraft is 40 years old this year, the Fairtrade Mark is 25 years old and Chester Fair Trading has its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. There will be celebrations, but no dates yet!

5. Annie McCarthy highlighted the issue of Investor State Dispute Settlements (ISDS), by which big corporations can sue whole countries. The government seems keen on supporting ISDS again – Annie had a few Traidcraft postcards to sign and will send for more supplies.

6. Annie McCarthy highlighted Jubilee Debt Campaign's information on “The Climate Debt Spiral”. Countries are forced to borrow money following a major climate-related event and are then charged impossible interest rates as they are trying to re-establish. Visit their website [jubileedebt.org.uk](http://jubileedebt.org.uk) for further information.

7. Ellesmere Port Justice & Peace Group announced that its Cafod Quiz starts its new season on Friday September 13<sup>th</sup>, in aid of Columbia.

8. Katy Rowe publicised a Christian Aid Fundraising Coffee Morning on Saturday September 14<sup>th</sup>, 10.30am at Hoole Road URC.

9. Terry Green raised concerns about the International Seabed Authority and has read that it is issuing permits to exploit rather than protect. It is neither independent nor verified. It is tasked with regulating deep sea mining activities in international waters but, according to Greenpeace, far from protecting our oceans, it is busy selling rights to greedy industries that want to plunder our ocean floors for profit. Current international law focuses more on rights to exploit marine resources than on any duty to protect them.