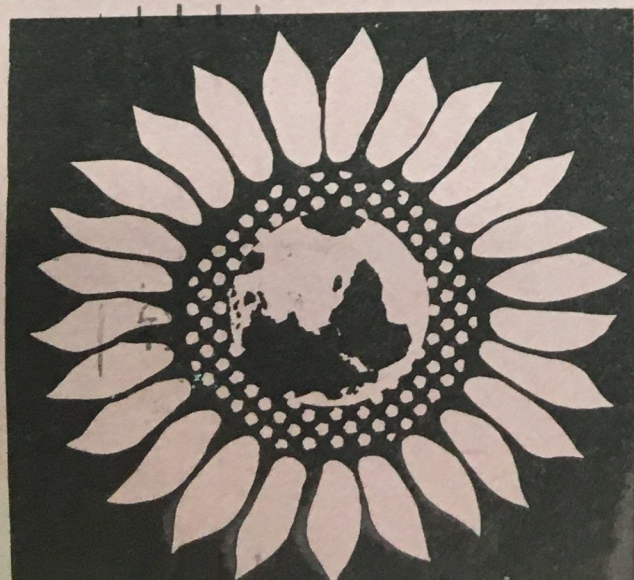


C-I-T-Y *GREEN*



JULY
1991

Manchester-Periodicals A-Z



City Green July 1991

Welcome to the June issue of City Green. Summer is upon us. Or is it the manifestation of the greenhouse effect? Whatever your theory we hope you will join in with the fundraising ideas that MGP has got lined up. Without the active participation of its members MGP cannot progress.

Also for one of the co-editors of City Green there will only be one more issue before his 'retirement', so if anyone would like to take over and join a small but friendly production team then phone Teresa.

COPY DATE:- 10th August

Elections : Chorlton and the future

Brian Candeland comments,

I was surprised that the Analysis of our Election Results in the last issue of City Green did not highlight the Chorlton result; in Chorlton we polled 751 votes, the highest ever in a Manchester council ward, and came a third of the way to being elected. The result was helped somewhat by the fact that there were two seats being contested (hence the lower percentage figure), but was still very encouraging.

A big thank you to everyone who helped in the Local Election campaign in any way, whether leafletting, canvassing, standing as candidates, or whatever.

The best is yet to come.....

It's easy to lose heart just now looking at our low opinion poll rating, lack of media coverage etc. However I believe that our fortunes will improve over the next few years, if only for the following reason.

Support for reform of the electoral system is growing, recent opinion polls have shown a clear majority in favour of such a change even if it means 'coalition' government, and even the Labour Party is slowly moving in that direction for some levels of government at least.

A change in the electoral system is vital - our policies stem from a unique philosophical base; no other party can argue for a sustainable and truly Green society and we must have the opportunity to express our views and influence policy at all levels of government.

It is important that we campaign for a change in the system and that we work with those in other parties to bring this about. I am a signatory of Charter 88 - a pressure group seeking a range

of constitutional and electoral reforms - an would urge other Greens to sign and support this campaign. I think there is a tendency in the Green Party to be too insular, as if we might be contaminated by too much contact with our dreaded political rivals. We need allies.

If anyone would like to know more about Charter 88, please contact Brian Candeland on 881 0510. A Charter 88/Green Party public meeting in Manchester is planned with Jean Lambert as guest speaker, probably on Thursday 31st October.

Do we want the Olympics?

Once again Manchester has been selected to bid for the Olympic Games, this time in the year 2000.

What should our response be?

Does the thought of this unique spectacle happening in our City fill us with pride, something which will earn Manchester its rightful place as one of the World's great cities, as well as providing many local jobs?

Or do we see it as years of disruption and environmental damage just for a 3 week orgy of competitive insanity? Is it safe to assume that the Olympics will never come to this litter-strewn dump of a place anyway?

We should have a view on this matter; we may be the only party opposed to the idea (if indeed we are opposed). Already there is talk of a large stadium being built on Hough End Fields between Withington and Chorlton (Manchester's bid for the 1996 Olympics centred on Dimplington near Davyhulme sewage works, the location for the next bid still up for grabs).

We would be interested to hear people's views - please write - and we may discuss the matter at a future meeting.

Brian Candeland

Interactivity

Liaison Report-back

Since we launched our liaison scheme two months ago (see *City Green*, May 1991), quite a lot has happened in several areas:

1. Empowering Disabled People

Good progress is being made on discussing with appropriate groups the needs and rights of people with disabilities. This will lead to the formulation of an extremely well-informed policy which will form the basis of a campaign to persuade Manchester City Council to take disability more seriously - ultimately to end the serious discrimination which faces disabled people. Here is an issue vital to the Green cause, on which we can achieve results *before* we get elected; so if anybody wants to assist with the admin, with discussions, or with policy formulation, please let us know.

2. Environmental Activism

One of our chief allies in the greening of society is **Friends of the Earth**. FoE campaigns on numerous national *and local* issues, where we perhaps lack the time, the money, the expertise or the people-power. Getting involved with Manchester FoE is not only a way to help protect the environment, it also provides MGP members with education, access to information - and some fairly serious fun. MGP now has representation on several FoE sub-groups:

- * Rainforests.
- * Air Pollution.
- * Toxic Wastes.
- * Recycling.

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Pollution, profits and privatisation

The water companies have just shared out £225.4 million to shareholders, and 417 sewage works have polluted British rivers.

This scandal has been documented in Green File 3 by our Campaigns Department. They point out, for example, that Anglian H Owners bathed in a cool £30 million while ninety-nine of their sewage works broke the law. North West was actually one of the better ones - they 'only' failed the test at 18 sites, while splashing out £37.3 million.

It gets worse: 142 sewage works had their 'consents' (the amount of pollution they are allowed to discharge) relaxed prior to privatisation, to help sell off our water service.

And worse: the water companies are not being made to answer for their sins. Most councils approached by Campaigns Department didn't even know they had the power to prosecute the companies who have polluted. They thought it was up to the National Rivers Authority.

Meanwhile the National Rivers Authority simply hasn't got the means of carrying out the necessary testing. It costs them a lot of money, in a lot of places.

What can be done?

If you are at all bothered about this, you could try the following action:

1. Get hold of Green File 3 - ask Juliet, Brian or Spencer, or better still send 37p to Campaigns Department.

2. Write to Brian Alexander, Managing Director, NWW, Dawson House, Great Sankey, Warrington, WA5 3LW - tell him what you think of his policy of putting profits before health and environmental protection; ask him why it happened; ask him what he's going to do about his 18 polluting sites; ask him for assurances that NWW will prevent pollution in future; ask him to let you know when NWW's clean-up programme is complete; tell him if they don't get their act together you'll be writing to the council, your MP, the National Rivers Authority, the press; or whatever else you think is the best approach.

3. Write to your MP and ask him to investigate why so many sewage works were allowed to cause so much pollution, and what his party intends to do about it.

4. Write to Douglas Matthews, Department of the Environment, Romney House, 43 Marsham Street, London SW1P 3PY; and also HM Inspectorate of Pollution (same address) expressing your dismay etc.

5. Ask the NRA, 30-34 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TL how so many polluters have been allowed to get away with it.

6. Ask the National Society for Clean Air and Environmental Protection, 136 North Street, Brighton BN1 1RG if they have made appropriate complaints.

7. Write to your local paper with a few well-chosen facts from Green File.

8. Ask Manchester City Council if any of the polluters were in their jurisdiction, and if they intend to prosecute or at least warn NWW.

Please send copies of any answers you get to Spencer - there may be scope for a concerted lobby on this issue - or if anyone has a particular interest in water, and would like to be MGP's expert on the subject, let us know!

FUNDRAISING

On Wednesday 12th June MGP held a Fundraising meeting to concretise a number of schemes to raise bits of cash for the party. In the past such events have been highly successful but too sporadic. However, this summer we are embarking on a rolling programme of fundraising events, at least one every six weeks. On the 6th July, a Saturday, there will be a jumble sale at Withington community centre.

On Sunday, 6th August there will be a sponsored bike ride - see sponsorship forms enclosed. A gentle 35 mile cycle ride preceded by a bicycle maintenance workshop the day before at Juliet's and Paul's (21 Meade Grove, Longsight).

Later in the summer there will be sports event with other campaign groups, an on-going sweepstake, a sponsored hitch, a green fayre, and numerous other fun-days.

For this get-rich-quick approach to succeed I need inspirational ideas, as well as commitment from other members to help put these ideas into practice. If you think you can meet this need then 'phone me, Rob Goater, 448 1709

And a recent FoE day of action (against the British Gas eco-vandalism in the Ecuadorean rainforests) was carried out by more MGP people than FoE themselves provided!
FoE, MGP and you the individual will get a lot out of this sort of activity, so if it sounds appealing and you can spare the time, talk to our liaison co-ordinators.

3. City Environment Forum

The council is setting up a green forum involving all sections of the community - a chance to influence council performance on environmental issues? (MGP is the only political party on it.)

4. Cancel the Debt Campaign

A nationwide campaign to persuade the banks and Northern governments to cancel the third world debt is building up to a carnival and demonstration in London on 13 July. These debts make a significant contribution to some of the world's greater evils, such as:

a) 'Austerity measures' forced on poor countries, which translates into reduced health care etc.

b) The destructive exploitation of resources (e.g. Ivory Coast has been losing 15% of its rainforest *every year*) in order to try and keep up with repayments.

c) Death and disease on a massive scale: 27 million Africans are about to starve to death in this year's famine, and our "aid" amounts to a fraction of what we take from Africa in debt repayments etc.

Let me say that again: 27 million Africans are going to starve to death this year, and more will follow them next year and the year after; and it isn't only Africans either. Can any Green really just shrug and say "what a shame", and fail to do something cons-

tructive to help? Cancelling the debt won't solve the whole problem, but it will undoubtedly save millions of lives.

There are several things you could do with minimal effort, such as come to the public meeting and social to be held on Friday 5th July. (MGP will have a stall at the social, and we'd be very grateful for help with running it. This would allow you a short break from drinking beer.) Details from Spencer.

So we've made a good start in boosting 'interactivity', and more opportunities are coming up. Would you like to help with any of the above, or to establish links with any other groups? Are any of our 50% female membership interested in forming a Green women's group? Would anyone like to help organise next year's Green education conference in conjunction with Friends of the Earth and Greater Manchester Environment Network? Or anything else?.....

Phone Ann Salter or Spencer Fitz-Gibbon on 225 1539

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