

## **Brief account of UKWIN's 2010 AGM event to accompany the Minutes**

Minutes of the 2010 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of United Kingdom Without Incineration Network (UKWIN), held on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March in Chesterfield is available from UKWIN's website. A brief "Membership Report" was delivered on behalf of the outgoing Membership Secretary. At the 2010 AGM membership of UKWIN stood at 120. UKWIN's accounts were presented to members and approved. The AGM thanked the outgoing Directors and appointed new Directors. Those assembled also endorsed a further five onto the Steering Group.

The formal business of the AGM was limited to the first hour, and was followed by a full programme of presentations, discussions and campaign updates. This programme was kicked off by keynote speaker Alan Watson, Director of Public Interest Consultants and someone who has lived much of the history of the UK's anti-incineration movement about which he spoke.

Alan delivered an engaging and informative presentation, honouring many of those who, over the past several decades, have given so much to the cause. Our attention was drawn to the industry's fear of the "I" word and the way that incinerators are known by many names, and how anti-incineration campaigners have been successful in owning the word "incineration" (providing a useful search term), as well as in forcing greater air emissions controls. We all had fun identifying existing incinerators from around the world. Some had burnt down, while one French incinerator was still in the process of burning itself down as we met.

We all learned something new about campaigning, about dioxins, flue gas and associated health arguments, about climate change (and the importance of considering carbon sequestration and the One Planning Living goal when comparing waste management options). Alan spoke about 19<sup>th</sup> century protests against incinerators, also known as "destructors". Fast forward to 1988 and Paul Connett was recording "Waste Management As If The Future Mattered", now available from <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-1913237587001014916#> Watch it to see bottom ash, including un-burnt vegetables to readable pieces of newspaper. Alan paid a moving tribute to Greenpeace activists Richard Watson and Mark Strutt. Plenty of praise also fell on current campaigners from around the world, including those who publicised the dangers of dioxins, leading to the Stockholm Convention commitment to eliminate dioxins.

Jeff Meehan told those assembled about the efforts of Halton Action Group Against the Incinerator (HAGATI), who have been co-operating with the Health Protection Agency and Lancaster University to commission a study on the downwind health effects of incinerators. Further details, and an appeal for donations to fund this research, are available from <http://ukwin.org.uk/2010/04/07/hagati-research-funding-plea/>

The issue of biogenic carbon was also explored by Alan Watson. The recent Rivenhall Inquiry decision is unhelpful. Simon Woolf shared an encounter with Ed Milliband who acknowledged (off the record) the climate harm caused by incineration. Even when biogenic carbon is excluded, incineration compares unfavourably in terms of their contribution to climate change now and in the future (in relation to future sources of renewable energy to be "displaced" by incineration). So don't allow incinerator operators get away with assuming (in their Life Cycle Assessment Carbon Balance Analysis) that incinerators will displace carbon equivalent to the 2006 electricity mix throughout their 30+ year lifespan. Also note the modelling that suggests the biogenic carbon content of residual waste will fall (as more paper is recycled and more food waste is sent for anaerobic digestion) from roughly 66% to around only 30%. This paints incineration in an increasingly less favourable light, as incineration begins to compete with renewable forms of low carbon energy.

After enjoying a refreshing and sociable lunch, kindly provided by our hosts – the various Chesterfield, Derby and Derbyshire groups, we received succinct campaign updates, including updates from Julie Harrington of Chesterfield Against Incineration (CAI); Duncan Kurr, Green Party parliamentary candidate for Chesterfield; Simon Bacon of Sinfin, Spondon Against Incineration (SSAIN); Dorothy Skrytek of Derby & South Derbyshire Friends of the Earth; David Andrews of the Dalton Incinerator Steering Committee (DISC); HAGATI's Jeff Meehan; Shlomo Downen on behalf of People Against Incineration (PAIN) re: the Sherwood Forest incinerator proposal; Miriam Walton of Sate Waste in Shropshire (SWiS); and Norman Biggs resident of Worksop.

These informative campaign updates were followed by a presentation from Keith Kondakor on the use of waste data. Facts show that over the past decade waste arising ceased to grow after 2004/05, the year of “peak waste”. Keith's graphs (soon to be made available on the UKWIN website) show that waste is NOT going up. Defra and Environment Agency data demonstrate that waste sent to landfill has fallen so much that building rubble is being sent to household landfill sites. Recycling is increasing. Waste per household has been falling every year since 2002/03. Local data, such as National Indicators (NI) 191, 192 and 193 can also be helpful. Further information is available Companies House and via the Audit Commission Act for 20 days per year (usually sometime between June – August). Visit to Orchard News Bureau website to check the dates for your local authorities at: <http://www.orchardnews.com/accounts.htm>

Public inspection of the accounts is regulated by the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003. Any interested person can inspect and take copies (including by digital camera) of the accounts for the year that is subject to audit, including all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts (e.g. relating to waste management) underlying the accounts for the year under inspection. You may then wish to raise any questions with the District Auditor.

Keith also explained the difference between LATS and Landfill Tax.

UKWIN members also explored various options for raising funds, including increasing membership fees (from the current £0). This will be further considered by Directors and by the Steering Group. Attendees generally supported the notion of charging a nominal annual fee for Group Membership of UKWIN, although no fee was set.

David Andrews (DISC) spoke about lobbying for an increase in the taxes levied for landfilling incineration bottom ash (IBA). IBA is currently taxed as “inactive” waste, at £2.50 per tonne. Banks (potential investors) will be concerned if costs rise, e.g. by requiring expensive testing, IBA taxed at higher rate, etc. IBA should be treated as hazardous waste (including for tax purposes and for disposal) by default. Currently IBA is considered hazardous if lead, zinc or aluminium compounds are 0.25%. This is not tested by the Environment Agency, but is left for industry to be self-regulated, despite concerns raised. A UKWIN working group is emerging to take this forward. Local groups should take part in current and forthcoming consultations<sup>1</sup> and write to parliamentary candidates.

Stephen Eades thanked everyone for attending, calling the meeting to a close shortly after 5 PM.

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<sup>1</sup> Sadly the Government has decided not to follow the lead option of increasing the tax on IBA and will include a new rating criteria in the Finance Bill which includes “low potential for greenhouse gas generation” it is not clear whether this is then and/or “low polluting potential in the landfill environment”. On the plus side the grossly misleading ‘inactive’ label will go – and there is some potential for lobbying in relation to the Finance Bill 2010 to try to reverse the decision/reduce the damage. Also coming up will be the Stockholm listing of certain PBDEs as POPs and the recent findings of high levels of PBDEs in bottom ash.