

population
matters

for a
sustainable
future



Population Matters Magazine

Issue 20 February 2012

“ For a Sustainable Future ”



“All environmental problems become harder - and ultimately impossible - to solve with ever more people.” Patron: Sir David Attenborough

Population Matters campaigns on issues relating to population and its impact on environmental sustainability - find out more:

www.populationmatters.org



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About Population Matters

Population Matters campaigns for environmentally sustainable populations in the UK and the world. We advocate gender equality, poverty alleviation, access to reproductive health services, balanced migration and smaller families.

We are a charity whose activities comprise education, research and policy promotion. We are funded entirely by our members and by donations and grants. We receive no funding from official or commercial bodies.

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You can become a member of Population Matters for a minimum of £20 per annum (£5 per annum for those who are under 25, unwaged or pensioners), although we are grateful to those who contribute higher membership fees, donations or legacies.

All members can participate in our activities and receive the monthly Newsletter and the bi-annual Magazine and Journal.

Active Members can apply to become Guarantor Members, they can then vote at the AGM and stand for election as trustees. Contact the administrator, or visit the website for further details.

Magazine

Members are welcome to contribute articles, reviews and letters for consideration. Contributions should be brief, informative and related to population concern; they may be edited for length and the editor's decision is final. Deadlines are end June and end December.

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From the Chair

Roger Martin



Seven Billion Day came and went, and business continued as usual. Nonetheless, the tide continues to flow our way, though at a frustratingly sluggish speed. We are pushing at an opening door. The big question is, will it open? Will attitudes and policies change, money flow, growth slow, stop and reverse fast enough?

The simple fact I find myself repeating most often at conferences and meetings with sceptics is that, on our finite planet, growth in everything physical – consumption and population - will definitely stop at some point. The important thing is when, and how. And the only alternatives for population are sooner by fewer births, or later by more deaths - the nice way or the nasty way.

In the Sahel, alas, the die seems already cast. I returned from the African Population Conference in Ouagadougou before Christmas, where I presented two papers on Climate Change and Conflict, deeply depressed by what appears an almost unstoppable slow tragedy taking shape in the region. Population growth rates are among the highest in the world. Without urgent action, they could rise from 100 million to 300 million by 2050. Meanwhile, rapidly growing numbers of herdsmen, with ever-growing herds, are moving south ahead of the Sahara (advancing at up to 5 miles a year), and meeting rapidly growing numbers of farmers still cultivating the marginal lands.

Conflicts, mostly unreported, are steadily increasing, as people compete for dwindling amounts of soil, water and vegetation. In discussion in my session, a Ghanaian commented that he'd heard of a routine fatal clash in Northern Ghana just two weeks before. Meanwhile the climate scientists expect that the hottest temperatures today will be normal in 2050; and the sporadic rains will fall increasingly in cataclysmic torrents, washing away the fragile soils.

I see no way that the population could reach 300 million. It seems fated to stabilize the nasty way; and it is potentially a microcosm of a grim global future. This makes our task ever more urgent.

So we must do what we can. The good news is that we're doing a lot more than a couple of years ago, more effectively. My thanks to you all for helping to make this happen; and best wishes for all of us, and our poor planet, for 2012.

Review of 2011

Simon Ross, Population Matters Chief Executive



2011 has been a year of achievement for Population Matters. In just twelve months, we have changed our name, re-launched our website and represented the case for population concern during the Year of Seven Billion.

Highlights included our participation in the Population Footprints symposium, where we continued to establish ourselves as Britain's largest and most outspoken population concern group and forty people signed up at our stall. We rebranded our materials with the new name and logo and introduced new ones such as car stickers, bookmarks and

the ever popular branded condoms. The new website was well received and resulted in a significantly higher level of traffic. Our patrons were joined by broadcaster Chris Packham, author Lionel Shriver and Baroness Shreela Flather.

During the Day of Seven Billion, we ran our first 'mass market' advertising campaign on London Underground, distributed specially designed information cards, appeared on a wide range of radio, TV and press outlets, while chair Roger Martin and others spoke at a number of events. Local Population Groups and members conducted activity throughout the UK including town centre stalls, leaflet drops and local media interviews. We now have a YouTube channel and the Newswatch news monitoring service is available by email. We have not forgotten member communications, increasing newsletter frequency from quarterly to monthly, while the new update goes to non-members who sign up on the website. Internationally, we are strengthening links with population concern groups abroad, particularly in Europe, the Commonwealth and the United States.

We raised the issue of population in relation to scarce resources as the world became increasingly concerned with food and energy security. We also established our presence in the world of non-governmental organizations, where we were accepted for membership by a series of NGO alliances, greatly increasing our access to information for lobbying purposes while raising our profile and putting us "inside the tent" of campaigning within the UK. In the political world, we attended several events at the Houses of Parliament, becoming a regular fixture and developing links with key politicians and other campaigners. We also responded to government consultations covering everything from planning to sex education.

Looking ahead to 2012

Looking ahead to 2012, our goal is to build on this auspicious re-launch to establish a solid basis of day to day campaigning. At national level, we will be taking a more systematic approach to advocacy while continuing to strengthen our political links. We also plan to increase our research output. For our public profile, we will have to work harder to get media coverage without the help of the seven billion milestone. However, population should continue to have a high UK profile, given our relatively high population growth and the forthcoming Royal Society study on population.

With the Trust's increasing numbers, it will be easier for members to establish local groups. Such groups makes it much easier to recruit new members and for members to be

active. It is interesting that the groups are taking different approaches from each other, from staffing street stalls to having a presence at local green fairs to hosting public meetings to engaging with planning officers to speaking at local schools and colleges. This shows the potential for more activities as groups grow and can take on a wider range of tasks.

Finally, increased activity means increased costs and we have to ensure income rises broadly in line with expenditure. We are particularly grateful to those members who become life members, add a donation to their membership fees, or include a percentage for Population Matters in their will.

Population Matters Scotland Activities 2011

From Penny McKee, secretary



2011 has seen much Population Matters action but as always not as much as wished. As always, we need more activists and members. Our main difficulty is one of geography, with members spread throughout the whole of Scotland. From Aberdeen in the North to Glasgow and Edinburgh and the Borders in the South.

We have an active committee of four of whom two live in Edinburgh, one in Glasgow, and one in the Borders. The result is that most of our committee meetings are by telephone communication. Unfortunately our Secretary Clive Dyson had to withdraw during the year due to pressure of work. His drive and energy and IT skills are missed.

Some of us are Population Matters voting members, and two attended the AGM, I also attended the London University College course Population Footprints. Colin Gallagher, our Chair, is a Population Matters Trustee. Colin attended the annual British Society for Population Studies conference at York University. Brian, a committee member addressed an Edinburgh Festival Fringe event.

Prof Emeritus Aubrey Manning, an Edinburgh based Patron of Population Matters has been active too. He has been involved in debates around the UK and on TV/ Radio. In particular he contributed to a major debate in the Edinburgh University Science Festival in April. He was also an invited lecturer for the 'Enlightenment' series

of public lectures, to commemorate the tri-centenary of the Edinburgh Enlightenment philosopher David Hume. His lecture can be accessed via the Edinburgh University website. While the course organisers did acknowledge that climate change is anthropogenic, no part of the unit is researching how to encourage people to have fewer children or promote the use of contraception. I was however permitted to hand out David Attenborough Population Matters cards to all 300 attendees and am glad to say it was also the first power point slide that Aubrey displayed in his most engaging talk!

Contact has been made with the Edinburgh University People and Planet student environmental group, with Colin presenting the lecture and joining in the discussion one meeting. Working with Population Matters HQ we are hoping to establish a network of University groups.

Several members are part of the Population Matters Letter Writing Group, achieving letters published in major nationals, but also trying to engage local MSPs, MEPs and MPs and Scottish branches of environmental groups.

A few members, including Aubrey Manning, demonstrated outside the Scottish Parliament on 31st October- to mark 7 Billion Day. One brave MSP, Gordon MacDonald, came out to be photographed with us (now on MSP website). One result was an article written by Colin Gallagher in the next day's *Scotsman* newspaper. Unclear was the article a result of Gordon McDonald appearing in the photo? I'm assuming it was. An open letter addressed to the First Minister of Scotland was handed in, expressing concern at the public health emergency that faces us all. The reply from the Public Health Minister for Scotland does not mention or acknowledge population growth, but does state the Government 'aims to reduce all unplanned pregnancies' but also states 'the government believes in individual choice.. and will not limit family size... and the government does not have a role in restricting this choice'.

The overseas department has offered to see us if we wish, even if the Scottish Government has no direct powers over international policy.

Official figures released this year for Scotland show that the Scottish population is rising by about 24,000 per year, of which 4,000 or so were births over deaths. It is estimated that by 2030, the population of Scotland will have risen from the current about 5.5m up to 7m (the equivalent of 2 cities the size of Birmingham). Some local population drift took place from area to area, particularly towards Edinburgh. This population increase is modest by English standards, but is significant because of the very unusual Scottish topography: Despite having a very large

land mass, Scotland has relatively little arable land. In fact the rise in population is actually welcomed by economic thinkers such as much of the ruling SNP party.

Scotland has a hugely ambitious green energy program targets. During the loud and successful environmental protests against the development of a new coal burning power station at Hunterston it was out that more people would increase the demand for power, making any targets more difficult to reach.

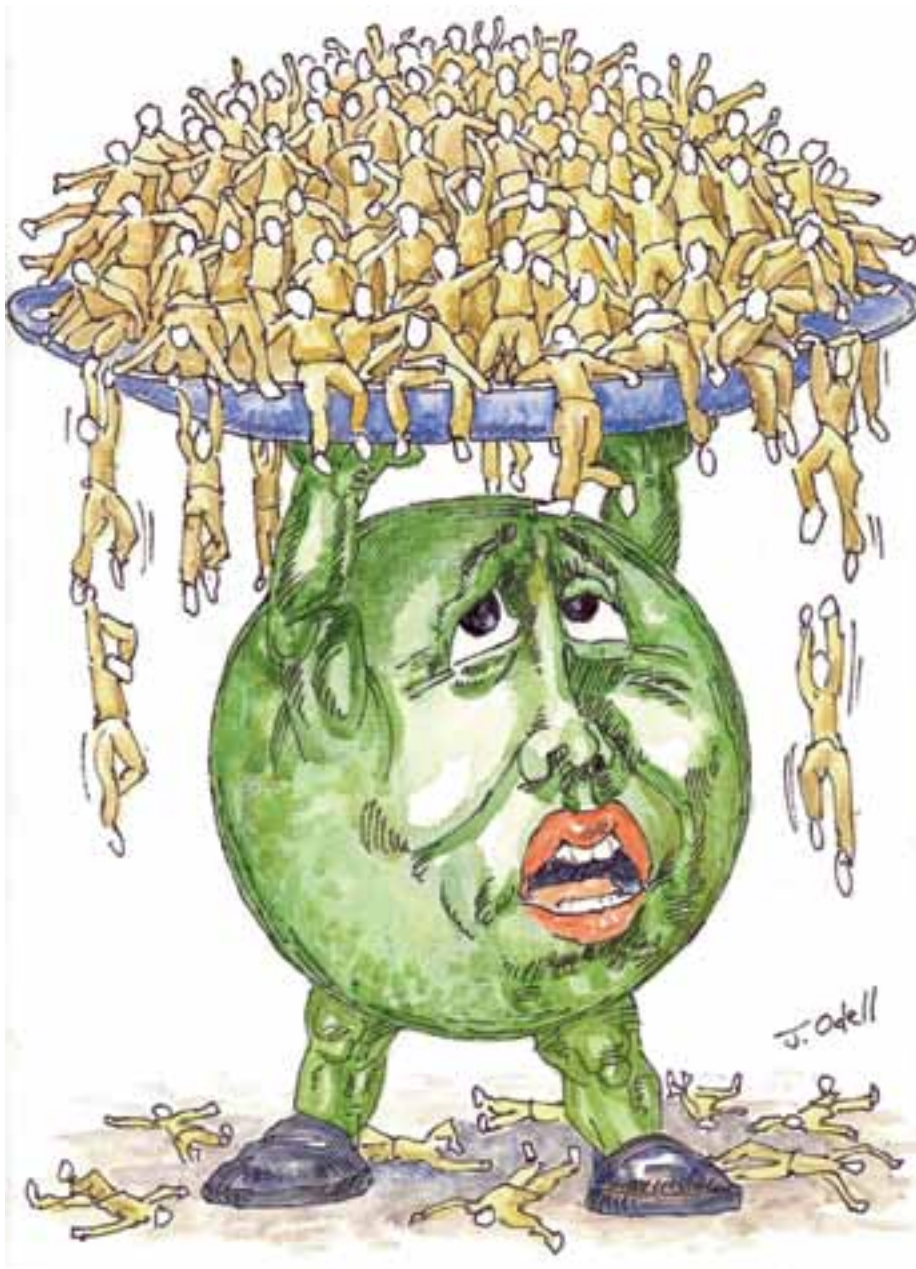
As in most of the UK, many residents in Scotland seem very content not to consider population growth, and news about new oil discoveries add to this feeling of security. There are however many others who are minded that population is a major problem; a silent group who seem reluctant to join Population Matters, or act (one notable exception being Prof Ian Wilmut of Dolly the Sheep fame) who wrote convincingly in the Scotsman national paper.

Scotland does not appear to be any different from the rest of the UK with about 40% unplanned pregnancies, which I view as quite unacceptable, pockets of high teenage pregnancy and an increasing rich/poor divide which will surely contribute to lower use of contraception. The Catholic Bishops are very influential and vocal in Scotland, attempting to influence government thinking at every opportunity.

We welcome contact from all members and thank David Hepper for feeding us encouraging copies of what goes on in the much-to-be-admired Guildford group, as well as thanking the London office for all the support.

Penny McKee (acting secretary, Scottish Group of Population Matters)

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Roger Martin Re-visits PopOffsets



The world's only carbon offset scheme, which channels funds directly into family planning, 'PopOffsets', has been going for two years now.

We launched it on the back of our 2009 report by LSE Masters student Tom Wire, "Fewer Emitters, Lower Emissions, Less Cost". This made a strong *prima facie* case that investing in family planning, as a complement to (in no way a substitute for) the mainstream UN Climate Talks, was more cost-effective per carbon ton abated than any renewable energy technology. Preventing the unwanted conception and birth of an additional person clearly prevents an entire lifetime of carbon emissions for a single, modest one-off cost. (We did not factor in the emissions of all that non-existent person's non-existent descendants in perpetuity – though the case would have been valid).

There was some criticism of the methodology of our report; and we agreed that the only figures available for costs, from family planning programmes in developing countries, were possibly inappropriate for developed countries. In these everyone has access to contraception already and the tonnage of emissions per person is much higher. But figures for the cost of the necessary culture shift to reduce unintended pregnancies do not exist. No developed country has yet attempted to stabilize and then reduce its numbers, despite the crying need for most of them to do so on sustainability grounds.

In launching PopOffsets, we naively expected that helping disempowered women to take control of their own fertility was so obviously desirable as to be attack-proof. We were thus taken aback to be attacked in the press by among others Oxfam and George Monbiot, who – grotesquely – saw it as rich old white men continuing to trash the planet, while tossing a little conscience money to young poor black women, while 'blaming' them for climate change!

We all have misgivings about the principle of carbon offsets (akin in some eyes to the mediaeval sale of indulgences by the church) and we have always stressed that our first duty is

to reduce our carbon footprint as much as possible anyway, with offsets as only a back-up [compensation]. At the same time, the fact remains that offsets are a multi-billion dollar global industry; and when total world aid for family planning is only 10% of Goldman Sachs' bonus pot – thanks to those PC zealots who for years have successfully marginalized the huge global 'Population' problem as purely an issue of sexual and reproductive health and women's rights (SRHR) – we thought anything that added to the funding was worth trying.

We adopted the principle that our grants would be divided 50/50 between developed and developing countries – to show how important it is to tackle population growth among the rich. The project always had an educational as well as a practical aim, simply to get population growth recognized as a climate change issue. But the early criticism made us scale down our marketing, and PopOffsets has only been modestly supported so far as a result. The Durban climate conference may, however, prove a turning point. Our Australian colleagues had a stall there and marketed a number of our policy papers, including a colour postcard promoting PopOffsets; and there has been a welcome recent upturn in funds. Following on from '7 Billion Day', the profile is rising; and harder marketing (if we had a suitable volunteer to do the work) would doubtless accelerate this. It should be 'an idea whose time has arrived'.

The projects we have supported so far include: a marine conservation and family planning project serving three coastal villages in Madagascar, where the women used to have to walk 50 kms through spiny forest to get their regular Depo jabs, but where we now provide contraceptives on the spot, to their great relief; a grant to the Brook Institute in the UK, to fund the production of a leaflet "Roll with it", encouraging teenagers to use condoms; and a website for our partner, the Population and Climate Change African Forum (PACCAF), formed in Kampala a year ago by NGOs from nine East African countries, desperate for more help to tackle soaring rates of population growth in their own countries. They have promoted our draft texts at all the last year's climate talks.

Meanwhile, if any member contributes to any other carbon offset scheme, we would encourage them to switch to www.popoffsets.com.

Why Population Matters

In this occasional column we ask an active Population Matters member, why they joined.

Population Matters' Member Norman Pasley explains why he became an active volunteer

Have you noticed how the world is changing? Have you noticed, in your lifetime, how new housing developments are springing up in and around older towns and villages? Have you noticed (and perhaps tried to ignore) increasing congestion on the roads, in trains, in supermarkets, at airports? Have you noticed the ever-increasing demand for school places, university places, jobs, taxes, health services, crime detection, prisons, waste disposal, and landfill? And the factory farming of chickens, turkeys, pigs, cows and fish to keep us in meat and milk? And the fishing to extinction. And the rising demand for energy from gas, oil, coal, nuclear, wind, solar and tidal power? And the rising price of food and fuel?

Is any of this a problem? Where is the demand coming from? It's coming from us – people. No other species needs any of these things. And we humans are getting ever more numerous. Why does that matter? It matters because our home – the planet – has finite resources and can no longer cope.

In the last 200 years or so, we have burned the planet's most easily reached fossil fuels. Very soon demand for oil will exceed the supply. In desperation, we have started risky deep water drilling for oil. Deep water drilling is now taking place in the Arctic Ocean. Remember the spill in the Gulf of Mexico; what would be the consequences of a similar oil spill in the Arctic? Fairly recently we have awoken to a sensible substitute to fossil fuels: Renewable energy.

Of course most people want more possessions, more wealth, more of everything. But that is no longer realistic. Planet Earth can't cope with the ever-increasing demands of humans, particularly those living in the developed world. Carbon dioxide emissions are warming the planet and changing weather patterns. Our consuming lifestyle is destroying forests and wetlands and polluting lakes, rivers and oceans and causing an unprecedented mass extinction of animals and plants.



Do we want to leave a sustainable world to our grandchildren, and their grandchildren? If so, what can we do today to help?

I suggest two things are needed urgently: One: all of us need to think about and reduce our personal consumption of resources (our carbon footprint). And two: we must not let our population continue to spiral. Historically, population growth has either been ignored or encouraged, to provide labour, influence or power for family, tribe, nation,

or religious group. Population growth is still widely regarded as 'not for discussion'.

In 1801, 10.5 million people lived in the UK; we are now 62 million. The population forecast for 2050 – only 40 years away – is 77 million. That is another 15 million people, or about two more Londons! That's a seven-fold increase in 250 years. Similar statistics apply to just about every country in the world. The world increase for the same period has been nine fold, 1 billion to 9 billion (data from UN population statistics).

In my view, we need global conversations about population policy. In the UK, and elsewhere, we could put more resources into family planning; and make greater efforts to reduce teenage pregnancy and child marriage. There would be education, not coercion. While we have human rights, it could also be argued we have human duties, including reproduction responsibilities.

The result is that population would stop rising or, better still, start falling. The need for housing would slow down; congestion, the demand for food, services and energy would be reduced. There would be less pressure for economic growth and fewer people needing employment. Other species would have a greater chance of survival and, in my opinion, we would become more civilized. If you share this vision, why not become an active volunteer or local group member.

Population Matters Chair Shares a letter.....

Countering Deniers; a Letter to David Satterthwaite



As Population Matters chair I am often invited to take part in debates about whether population growth is a problem. It's a frustrating business, because the answer is obvious, and I'd rather discuss the more challenging question of what to do about it. The deniers always tend to come up with similar points, which one tries to counter in later discussion. Steve Bown and I encountered a typical case at the Oxford Students' Union recently, where David Satterthwaite – a long-standing opponent who in the past has even accused us of racism – followed me. Next day, I sent him the following email, listing my view of the basic defects in his case.

- The familiar false 'either/or' dichotomy - "The problem is not population, it's consumption etc" when it's obviously both (and many more besides), in different ratios for different contexts, multiplied by each other - different shaped 'rectangles';
- The correct assertion that the poor consume and emit very little at present, while ignoring the fact that if they get rich, they will consume and emit much more - apparently assuming that they'll stay poor for ever (i.e. that the entire development industry will fail);
- The accusation that the population concern movement is 'blaming the poor', and ignoring or diverting attention from over-consumption by the rich. We and our international partners constantly stress the need to help the poor get richer (by empowering poor women to take control of their own fertility and thus improve their families' health and per capita income), and the need to reduce both consumption and population in rich countries – 'contraction and convergence';
- The global extrapolations from the population density of Kensington or Manhattan - "We could all fit on the Isle of Wight" etc - ignoring the immense ecologically productive hinterland cities need to sustain them;
- The failure to distinguish between natural capital, which we are rapidly depleting, and natural income;
- Ignoring the structural decline in energy return on energy invested (EROEI);
- Ignoring all the global trends in rapid environmental degradation, while stressing only a few exceptional examples of partial mitigation;
- Agreeing that it would be desirable to meet the rising 'unmet need' of 215 million women for family planning, and to reduce the number of unwanted births, while ignoring the fact that this does not happen 'automatically' without priority, resources and effort; ignoring the massive failure over the 17 years since the 1994 Cairo conference to raise those resources; and actively contributing to the continuation of that failure by constantly repeating that population growth is not really a problem;
- In short, denying the obvious fact that stable populations are a necessary, though far from sufficient, condition of ecological sustainability.
- It looked as if, being one of the 'taboo' generation, you started from the unquestioned assumption that population concern is wrong, and then constructed your case to prove it. In the process, you reduce at the margin my little grand-daughter's chances of a decent life.

Dr Stephen P Leonard calls for education and action

It is the end of May in the High Arctic. I am skiing alone out towards the edge of the sea ice in the Murchison Sound, north-west Greenland. A skirl of Kittiwakes overhead breaks the silence. The lure of the uncircumscribed wilderness and grammarless landscape draws me further towards what seems like my ineluctable destiny. My only wish is that the sea ice will continue, taking me deeper into the icy, Arctic nothingness. Out here, the only evidence of human life is the partially hidden tracks of hunters' sledges. The thrill of going beyond the human horizon is powerful and emotional, taking me back to a former age of simplicity and equilibrium when there was an innate correspondence between man and nature. Here, the overwhelming whiteness and loss of distinction promises the bliss of transcendence. To get mentally lost in the wilderness in this way has now surely become impossibility in twenty-first century Europe. We have lost something special, broken a fundamental relationship which once informed us what it is to be human.

Whenever I would ask the Polar Eskimos or Inugguit of north-west Greenland whether they could consider living in Europe, the response was invariably the same: 'na'aa, kiaktorrauaq augda inupaggiit!' 'No, it is so hot and there are so many people!' After having spent a year living in the Arctic wilderness where just 770 people occupy an area the size of Germany, I came to understand and appreciate their view of life in the West. The Polar Eskimos' bond with the wilderness is such that the majority of them could not even consider living in the capital of Greenland (Nuuk) with its 16,000 inhabitants as they know this would mean a fundamental change in the way they related to the natural environment.

The people of the Polar North believe that overcrowding in the rest of the world has meant that man has severed his ties with nature and has become part of a detached, urbanised cocoon. 'Nature' is a vague notion for many of these urban dwellers whose lives are built on concepts of 'enclosure' in the form of vehicles, walled gardens and private property. We have traded freedom and wilderness for the lie of material happiness and imprisoned reality.

When I told the Polar Eskimos how many people lived in the UK, they would screw up their faces and shake their heads. With over 60 million people crammed on one small island, it is no longer possible to live in harmony with nature, even if we still knew what that means. As the population increases, we stand to lose first and foremost the last remaining scraps of the English countryside. If you care about the green fields being lost to soulless, ugly housing estates and shopping centres, then you have to care about population. Population matters here in England and in most parts of our fragile world.

As the world's population continues to grow exponentially, life for its billions of inhabitants will become distinctly less pleasant. The population of the world increases by approximately one quarter of a million people every single day or, to put it differently, daily population growth on the planet is equivalent to five times that of the population of Greenland or more than the entire population of other primates on Earth.

Life might become less congenial for us, but the animal kingdom is simply being 'crowded out'. The numbers are terrifying. With dwindling finite energy resources, surely anybody can see that the explosive growth in the world's population over the last 50 years is utterly unsustainable. And yet, the taboo of talking about the 'biggest issue' remains. For the sake of the future of the planet, that has to change. Those who wish to live in blissful ignorance, those who think it will all somehow miraculously 'sort itself out', those who think that population activists are some kind of Nazi supremacists must be now tackled head-on. The argument must be won and common sense must not be sacrificed.

I do not believe it is possible to persuade the majority of the people in the West to live more simply. The consumerist culture is too ingrained and there is every reason to believe that developing economies will follow our patterns of consumption. If that is the case, countries around the world need to urgently put in place population growth policies and implement linked taxation measures. Instead of doing the sensible thing, countries in Western Europe talk about the problem of falling birth rates. The idea that we need constantly more young people to look after an ageing population is the logic of an ecological Ponzi scheme, as David Attenborough so elegantly put it. At what point is the penny going to drop? We cannot grow forever, in numbers of humans or in terms of economic development.

The real answer to the problem lies in education, but it is not easy to educate people about the problem if the topic is controversial and taboo. The longer we leave it and do nothing, the less pleasant become the solutions. That is why we must act now.

Mike Freedman, Director and Producer, talks to Population Matters about his forthcoming film **Critical Mass**



Q How did you 'get into' film making?

A I always loved film from an early age and I was lucky that my family had both the time and the inclination to go to the cinema and to have family video nights. On one of those family video nights, when I was 12 years old, we watched "Inherit The Wind". It was such a powerful film; moving, uplifting, political, satirical, comedic, visual. After I saw it I knew that was what I wanted to do, to externally realise that endless interior world.

Q You're currently working on a documentary focusing on population issues, can you tell us more?

A I've always been a fan of documentaries, and I watch a lot of environmental documentaries in particular. It was a constant source of frustration to me that otherwise well-researched, well-executed films consistently failed to raise the exponential growth of human population as a contributing factor to environmental issues. It seemed disingenuous to list the ways in which the planet is being adversely affected by us without at least mentioning that

greater human numbers lead to greater impact. This film came about out of that desire to address what I saw as the fundamental issue of the environmental, social and political crises we can see converging upon us now. However, it isn't enough to merely describe the impact of people on the planet and thereby equate more feet with more of a footprint. It is absolutely essential to account for the human experience, for the quality of life, which is inextricably linked to how many of us there are. Critical Mass, which is the film I've made, is about drawing that crucial link between the impact of human numbers on natural systems and the impact of human numbers on our psychology. To that end, the film is the story of a series of experiments with rodents carried out over the course of almost thirty years by a man named John B. Calhoun. As the film's narrative unfolds, we draw connections between the findings of the experiments and the trajectory of the human story from antiquity to the present day.

Q When is it released?

A The film should be fit for human consumption by the end of January 2012, and then, after a year and a half making it, we begin the genuine hard work of finding a distributor who can help us bring it to the widest audience possible. As yet, we don't have a deal in place, but we've been having meetings and, considering that we haven't been out there knocking on doors, the number of companies approaching us directly has been very encouraging.

Q Would you describe yourself as a producer, director...or both?

A I'm a director. Working independently, as I have on this film, requires the wearing of many hats. Each task has its rewards, but given the choice, I'd direct and leave the really hard work to other people.

Q Do you think feature length documentaries will continue to be part of our media landscape...or is the future 5 minute movies on you tube?

A The future is what we make it. If the media establishment wants to target the short form, YouTube audience then the consequence of that will be a redirection of resources to that end. Despite all claims to the contrary, there is a limit to how much information, story or emotion can be packed into

CRITICAL MASS



the short form. There will always be a need to transmit larger volumes of information and emotion than the short form allows, and therefore there will always be long form work. How widespread the long form is in the future will be dictated as much by the economic priorities of the producers as by the desires of the audience. Digital film-making is now pretty much the norm because it is cheaper than film, full stop. If it was a straight artistic choice without financial constraints, I think film would be used far more. YouTube is a free distribution platform, like Vimeo, and as such it offers a voice to people with marginal financial resources. However, it is also a much more crowded platform, so it is naturally harder to find your audience. There are pros and cons with every outlet and every format. Personally, I enjoy putting time aside to sit down and experience somebody's ideas for a couple of hours, either at the cinema or at home. If it becomes socially or economically difficult for people to put that time aside, we may see the short form begin to take precedence over the long form. I think it is telling, however, that while cinema receipts have been increasing consistently, so has the average running time of a film. The average length of a film is now longer than it was in the 1970s or the 1990s. In the worldwide top 20 (in terms of box office takings), the top five films are all well over two hours long. Three out of the top five are pushing three hours in length. That doesn't seem like a signal that people don't want to spend more than five minutes watching something.

Q Do you feel that organisations such as PM can use film to convey our message?

A I not only feel that they can, I believe that they must. We are living in an increasingly visual and technological world. My niece does her maths homework online; my wife's mother used chalk and a slate. Everything is an interface now; there is an illusion of continuous feedback for the user which, while not entirely real, gives them an expectation of participation. That expectation can be satisfied in a number of ways, through online forums, events, apps etc. Producing clear, concise, visually striking media which invite comment and interaction from the viewer is not only an important way for any organisation to reach out to the public; it is increasingly becoming the only way. They have to know that you exist and they have to understand what you are about. Film is one of those complete forms that allows the use of all other mediums of expression - it can be music, dance, theatre, speech, all at the same time. That's a very versatile and powerful instrument for opening channels of communication.

Q Finally the question for every film maker...What's your favourite movie?

A The Blues Brothers. Hands down.

An inspirational tale from Stateside



Our Sierra Club population activists have long deplored the lack of mention of population in environmental studies or other subjects in schools across the nation. Some good materials exist to teach about population for high school and college students, but they are not used enough, and almost no one even thinks about educating younger students about the effects of human population growth - until now.

We discovered a seventh grade history teacher, not in supposedly forward-thinking California, nor in liberal New York City, but in middle America - Des Moines, Iowa - who seized on National Geographic's January 2011 article, "Population 7 Billion," and used that article for lessons on population and the environment. To briefly summarize the article: it provides a history of looking at the numbers, the exponential growth, and the reasons behind these phenomena. It discusses the rise and decline of birthrates in different parts of the world. (World population hasn't fallen since the Black Death of the 14th century.) It touches on the effects on the environment and on people such as through poverty and wars. And it links the issue to over-consumption in the developed world as well. Malthus, Paul Ehrlich and others are quoted in discussion of debates and what direction growth will take in the future and what needs to be done. When National Geographic published another article in the series, dealing with consumption of resources, the teacher assigned that article for students to read as well.

Stephen Loew, this innovative educator, said that "... the reading can be tough on some, but the discussion was fantastic."

He did conscientious preparation: "I sent an email to parents to let them know what the plan was. Every response I received was positive. Parents understand that this is the world that their kids will grow up in, a world they will have to deal with. They

appreciated the effort. Once we got into the discussion, I was worried that some of the [more controversial] topics would lead to some parental complaints, but there were none. I was very glad that this unit was well received by students, parents, and staff."

With a dearth of material for that age level (12-13 year olds), Stephen developed very age-appropriate guided reading assignments to help them get through it.

He also posed reflection questions that were used to guide post-reading discussion. "The only materials I have are self-created. I take what I can find and 'middleschoolize' it!

"I cannot quote anything specifically from memory, but middle school kids are a funny bunch and have definite opinions, yet are free enough to change them as they gain a better understanding of the world around them. We had great conversations about female literacy rate and how it will affect population. Also, the topic of sterilization practices being used in India was a hot topic for them.

"In Spring of 2011, we were only able to get through those two articles. Population questions continued throughout the year though, and the great discussions followed every time someone brought it up.

"My school is very diverse in regard to socio-economic status and race. Having students listen to the opinions of peers outside of their social group was good for everyone involved."

Stephen plans to do this again, and bring in the new articles as they are published. No one has given him "trouble on this ...yet"

Our Population Committee members believe population/environment could be incorporated into many social studies and other classes. Stephen's "class is actually called Global Studies. The curriculum is the Eastern Hemisphere. We break regions down into geography, history and culture. We also try to look at current issues...along with population; we also look at AIDS in Africa, human rights throughout the eastern world, and global economy."

We believe there are other classes where population could be brought up, for instance, math teachers could use it to discuss the concept of exponential population growth. Science and environmental studies classes, of course, are also appropriate. We welcome any suggestions on how to get the message across: Too many people – the root cause of environmental crises.

**Audrey Bernstein with Katherine Schwarz
Audrey chairs the Population Committee
New York City Group, Sierra Club
Kathy is Co-Chair, Population Committee
Atlantic Chapter, Sierra Club**

New Patron Baroness Shreela Flather



Baroness Shreela Flather has become Population Matters newest Patron. The Baroness has joined Lionel Shriver, Chris Packham and Sir David Attenborough in supporting the work of Population Matters. Baroness Shreela Flather is a cross bench member of the House of Lords and is notable as its first Asian women member.

She has served as Deputy Mayor and as Mayor for the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and was chosen as Asian Who's Who Asian of the Year 1996. More recently she has written 'Women: Acceptable Exploitation for Profit' in which she argues that women must be central to every initiative, business project and political goal rather than being merely after-thoughts or decoration. She is a Board member and Trustee of Marie Stopes International.

Upon becoming a patron the Baroness told Population Matters "With the global population reaching the milestone of seven billion, population size is starting to get the attention it deserves. I endorse the work of Population Matters in raising the role of population in the environmental and sustainability challenges humanity faces. One of the most effective contributions to solving these problems would be to enable women worldwide to decide their own family size and timing through funding universal access to family planning and through enabling them to exercise their social and economic rights."

Population Matters Chair Roger Martin welcomed the Baroness "We are delighted to welcome Baroness Flather. She is one of the few politicians who see clearly the three-way connection between population stabilisation as an essential condition of environmental sustainability, and the crucial role of empowering women. She speaks for many environmentalists, and very many women, both in the UK and the Asian sub-continent".



Getting to know Population Matters Trustees



Being a trustee can be hard work. The trustees have the ultimate responsibility for running a charity, for its finances and the employment of staff or volunteers.

Population Matters has trustees that give their time and expertise, voluntarily, to help our organisation.

But, who are they? Here, they introduce themselves.

Maggie Avison

Maggie has been involved in the charity sector since 2003, working at two international animal welfare organisations and volunteering for several other charities during this time. She is currently taking time out to study for a postgraduate degree.

The unsustainable growth in human population is an issue that concerns her greatly; 'not least due to the impact it is having upon the natural environment and on other species'. The skills and experience Maggie brings to the position of trustee are a thorough understanding of charity best practice across a range of functions. Maggie told this magazine 'I would like to see Population Matters grow in recognition and membership over the next year, and I hope I could contribute towards achieving this'.

of whom are passionate about environmental issues, in [Population Matters]. In each of the last two years, he has co-supervised a student project at the LSE on the implications of an expanding and ageing UK population and the relative importance of over population and over consumption in increasing UK energy consumption.

Stephen says that his personal challenge is to present verifiable facts in a way that cannot be ignored, is relevant to the lives of the audience, but which is as far as possible non-controversial. He believes it is essential to work closely with other environmental organizations, sharing as many ideas as possible with them, while still stressing that "Population Matters". His aim is to persuade those denying the need for a change in attitudes to face up to the facts and either justify their approach or accept the need to think again.

Stephen G Bown

MD, FRCP

Stephen is a part-retired Professor of Laser Medicine at UCL and, when not at work, focuses his time researching environmental problems, particularly overpopulation. He has many years of international research experience and lecturing and is in a strong position to present material to raise the awareness of overpopulation to scientific groups, environmental organizations, the general public and government organizations and politicians who have the power to make the key decisions.

With continuing links with UCL and other universities, Stephen also hopes to involve younger people, so many

Venetia Caine

Retired from a varied working life which included H M Treasury (Whitehall), music management, personnel management in the John Lewis Partnership, and probation services at main-grade and management level, Venetia recently returned to the UK having lived for 17 years in France, where she taught English to science students in her local university.

Music-making has been a life-long passion (singing in and directing vocal ensembles) for Venetia but this has not prevented her from being heavily involved in campaigning work at national level, especially in the criminal justice and penal reform fields, with a particular focus on mediation in both civil and criminal spheres.

It was while she was teaching that her latent interest in wildlife developed, extending after retirement into geology. These perspectives, particularly loss of habitat, led to her concerns about the impact of growing human population on biodiversity. She joined the OPT a few years ago, and also became a member of the nascent Démographie Responsable in France. An active member of our Letter Writers Group, Venetia has just finished a two-year stint as editor of Newswatch, our email and online news service.

As a trustee, Venetia says that her particular interest is in exploiting 'in the nicest sense' the enthusiasm of members, particularly in local groups and voluntary work, having developed a degree of expertise in this last area when she was responsible for volunteer training and deployment in the probation service.

Nina Clarke

(Vice Chair)

Nina believes that addressing the population issue now is the best way to give this and the next generations a chance of an acceptable quality of life. She has held this view from the age of 14, but it is only since she recently took semi retirement that she has been able to do something about it. She joined Population Matters four years ago and has been a trustee since July 2011. Before joining she had been both a trainer and later on a Director of a small private training organisation, where she trained business people and professionals both in the UK and abroad to communicate better in the English language, to give their presentations impact, to negotiate more effectively and to deal sensitively with other cultures.

In addition to her duties as a trustee, in April 2011 Nina set up a local group in West London, where she lives. Since then she and her group members have run stands at local summer festivals, contacted their local MPs both in writing and in person and run a number of speaking engagements. The most successful of these so far has been a meeting open to the public which she organised in conjunction with the local Friends of the Earth. This attracted nearly 50 people and added to our membership. She presented at this meeting and has also given speaker training to Population Matters staff and local groups. For the coming year she plans to expand the group's activities along the same lines.

As a trustee she wishes to assist in the campaign to get David Attenborough's message, that fewer people mean a better environment for all, accepted and acted on by all members of society, in the UK and worldwide.

Harry Cripps

MA MSc DMS CEng CEnv MEI
FIChemE

Harry's career as an energy efficiency engineer and applied scientist gives him in-depth understanding of the physical challenges caused by increasingly large and affluent human populations. This has convinced him that it is irresponsible to rely on unknown or unproven advances in technology to provide an acceptable quality of life for ever increasing numbers of people. We are already outstripping the natural resources required to sustain us. As a Chartered Environmentalist, he is acutely aware that pressure of human numbers is wreaking havoc on the natural environment, eliminating other species with which we share the planet and ultimately destroying the ecological services on which we all depend for survival.

Population/sustainability is one of humanity's most pressing problems and Population Matters is one of the very few organisations addressing it in an integrated manner. Our approach necessarily covers the combined effect of individual consumption levels, environmentally inappropriate and inefficient technology, and population numbers. "I see all three main strands of our activity as urgent and critically important: to increase public awareness of population/sustainability issues, to persuade UK and world policy makers to address them, and to catalyse better understanding of the environmental, economic and ethical implications of this vital issue."

As a long-standing member of the team, Harry provides continuity on the board, whilst Population Matters steers its way through a period of significant change in the public, business and political perception of population/sustainability. He continues to contribute actively, taking part in major decisions and in on-going development of material for our website. He hopes to have time to pick up on hitherto neglected issues, including a strategic look at our research objectives and fostering more links with the academic, technical and professional institutions we need as allies and partners in solving practical problems of adapting to the sustainable population paradigm.

Colin Gallagher

Colin worked as an engineer in industry then as an academic, he researched, and

published on, both engineering and regional economics. He is now retired and is an Emeritus Professor at Newcastle University. Colin told PM magazine 'I am still professionally active as a director of a small Newcastle based regional economics consultancy company. I live in the Scottish Borders and have been a Population Matters member for four years and a trustee and board member for one year'.

With others, Colin started the Population Matters Scotland group, and is currently its chair. To the board of our organisation Colin brings a vast knowledge about population issues, a business and academic background, and thorough understanding of research, policy development, finance and accounting.

Pip Hayes MD

Pip is a full time GP living in Devon and has, amongst other things, focused on raising Population as an issue within the medical profession. Pip's skills and experience are those of a health professional who interacts with people from all backgrounds on a daily basis. She understands the issues which affect a woman's decision to have children or terminate unplanned pregnancies and whether they are ultimately happy about this. As a Doctor Pip provides all forms of family planning, including long-acting reversible methods.

Pip has been a Population Matters member for nine years and a trustee for seven. In this time, she has attended all AGMs and regularly contributes to the boards email

discussions. Pip has written in the BMJ, spoken at medical and local environmental

meetings and, for the past two years, organised a Population Matters stand at the Glastonbury festival. Pip told PM Magazine 'I believe Population is a health issue, impacting on mental health, food security and nutrition, pollution and its associated health problems, as well as numerous social problems. I hope to continue to raise awareness of Population as a health issue. I will be at the stall at the Royal College of GPs Annual Conference and am in communication with the Director of the NHS Sustainable Development Unit. For Population Matters as a whole, I would like to see a big increase in engagement with young people'.

Roger Martin (Chair)

Roger has had two careers: as a diplomat (in Africa, Asia, the UN, and Middle East, resigning as a Deputy High Commissioner); and an environmentalist (Director of the Somerset Wildlife Trust). Roger is, or has been, involved with countless regional and national Governments and NGOs, 'green' bodies on biodiversity, planning, water, agriculture, pollution, transport, energy, waste, etc), and has chaired many committees in both.

Roger joined OPT/Population Matters in the early '90s, having started pointing out that population growth exacerbates all environmental problems, and encountered the 'mad taboo'. Roger explained to PM magazine 'I worry about the world my son and grandchildren will inherit. I was elected to the Board in 2008 and to the chair in 2009. I've long taken any opportunity to raise the missing population element in environmental debate, tabling papers in, for instance, two Environment agency committees and as a Trustee of VSO and CPRE'.

As chair of Population Matters, Roger has put the main focus on campaigning, supported by research and education, and has increased the number our contacts and the profile of our Patrons. He has spoken at conferences and meetings in ten countries, and many more in the UK, and undertaken many interviews and broadcasts on behalf of Population Matters.

Over the next year, Roger hopes to increase Population Matters' public profile further, and persuade more eNGOs and politicians to speak out on the population/sustainability link. In a recent speech he said 'I just want to break the 'mad taboo', with population accepted as a key national and global issue alongside consumption and technology, and stabilisation/reduction an accepted goal'.

Nick Reeves (Treasure)

OBE, BA, CEnv, DMS, FRSA,
HonFCIWEM, HonFSE, FIHort, FRGS, FLS

Nick is currently the Executive Director of the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM). In the past, he has held senior management positions in public, private and not for profit sector organisations. Nick is also a Science Council Board Member, Honorary Fellow & Board Member of the Society for the Environment, Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, Fellow of the Linnean Society, and a Liveryman and Court Assistant of the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators. He received the OBE for services to the environment in the 2011 New Year's Honours List.

The skills and experience Nick brings to the Population Matters board are principally derived from his background of leadership and senior management. His broad experience of working within the environmental sector is also highly relevant. Nick has been a member for a number of years and has served on the Advisory Council. He was instrumental in ensuring that CIWEM adopted a population policy and covered population issues in its magazine. Since becoming a trustee last year he has accepted the position of Treasurer, given guidance on best practice finance and governance practices and provided articles for this magazine, as well as facilitating meetings between the chair and third parties. Nick told PM magazine, 'for Population Matters as a whole, I would like to see the organisation continue to strengthen its governance and management approaches in line with best practice.

Population Matters Trustee, Venetia Caine Reviews “Man Swarm and the Killing of Wildlife”

By Dave Forman. Published by
Raven’s Eye Press

Written by Dave Foreman of the
Rewilding Institute, Albuquerque, Man
Swarm’s primary concern is the sixth
great extinction event, brought about
through ‘Seven Ecological Wounds’ by
one species, *Homo sapiens*, and how to
put the brakes on it.



This wide but quite brief survey not only reviews the Earth’s carrying capacity, why the population explosion is happening, and its effect on wildlife, but also looks at the beliefs of ‘Cornucopians’ of both the left and the right, and of those who place their faith in technology, and then goes on to discuss how human population might be frozen and then lowered. (The author’s preferred total is to two

billion). It looks at discussions of population over 2500 years, starting with Herodotus, ‘Man stalks across the landscape, and deserts following his footsteps’, and examines why, as from the 1970s, ‘overpopulation worry is kicked into the corner and shunned like an old, smelly dog’. Just before that time Oxfam and Greenpeace were actually calling for population restraint.

The book uses language familiar to PM members, and indeed the Optimum Population Trust is much quoted and commended. The IPAT formula (Impact = Population x Affluence x Technology) is used throughout, and Foreman devotes a chapter to why those who place their faith uniquely in developing technology are wrong.

He discusses Jevon’s Paradox – that cutting down on consumption only releases wealth to be spent elsewhere - and concludes that the way out of that is to freeze population. He does not shy away from the ‘bugbear’ of immigration, and he is hard-hitting about what the US should do about it.

He concludes with a general chapter on ‘What do we do?’ including three pages on ‘What you can do’.

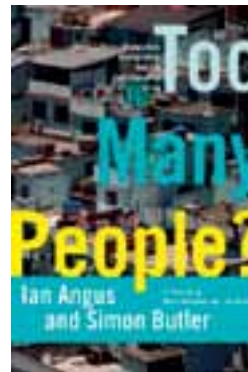
Although targeting the US market, with slight exceptions this book is just as relevant and interesting to all ‘wealthy’ nations. It could serve both as a useful handbook for those already concerned about overpopulation – and a very readable introduction to the subject for those yet to be convinced.

We have a signed copy of *Man Swarm* to give away. Just send an email, to matt.williams@populationmatters.org giving your name and address to be entered into a draw. Winner will be announced in the Population Matters Newsletter.

Françoise Brindle reviews “Too Many People? Population, Immigration and the Environmental Crisis”

By Ian Angus and Simon Butler.
Published by Haymarket Books

This book purports to find the real causes
of the current environmental crisis.



From the start, it acknowledges both its gravity and the scale. It agrees with the “undisputable biological fact” that a larger population ‘will eat more food, wear more clothes, occupy more shelter, and generate more excrement than a smaller one’. So one might think that there is very little room left for debate or analysis... However, the book’s real agenda lies elsewhere.

Angus and Butler are in fact on a mission, to reveal that the only cause of the crisis is global capitalism, and hence disproving the validity of the population control arguments. They focus all their energy on attacking what they refer to as “the populationist” movement, accusing them of a variety of evils ranging from holding reactionary anti-immigration agendas, to a desire to oppress poor women worldwide and deprive them of their rights.

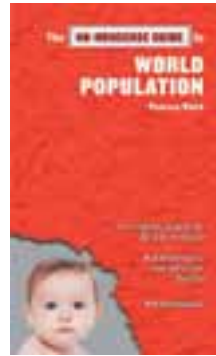
The book acknowledges that populationists do not actually voice these opinions but it conveniently puts this down to either naivety or craftiness.

The authors have no qualms in using a wide range of (sometimes age-old) rhetorical devices. They make a show of asking key questions, which they use as chapter headings but are left largely unanswered. Tortuous logic is used to disprove obvious facts e.g. they reject the link between overpopulation and environmental destruction as “correlation” and not “causation” and computer modelling as invalid. Linguistic tricks are also recurrent: populationists are often labelled as wealthy liberals, as opposed to the “poor, oppressed immigrants” whom they are supposed to want to coerce. Rhetorical choices are also used: populationism and the fight for a more equitable, less wasteful world are presented outright as mutually exclusive.

On the whole, despite its apparently analytical approach, the book feels disingenuous. This makes it a painful, unconvincing read.

Françoise Brindle reviews “The No-nonsense Guide to World Population”

By Vanessa Baird. Published by The New Internationalist



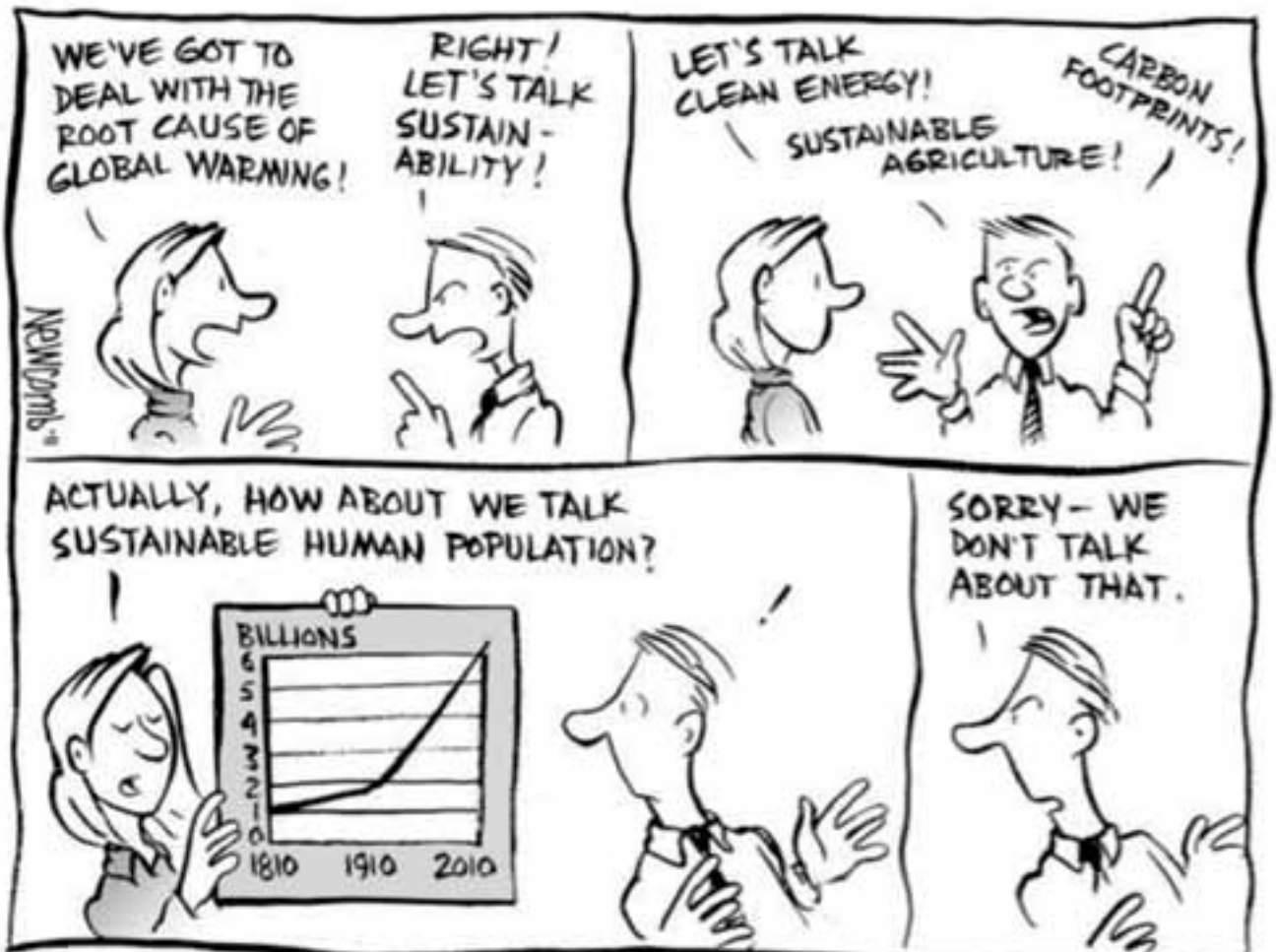
The issue of womens’ reproductive rights is given prominence, highlighting unacceptable past coercive programs. All in all the book has a cosy, reassuring tone, which soothes away worries linked to population growth such as famine, droughts and above all destruction of wildlife with a few handy tips such as building community projects, growing vertical gardens such as in Kibera, or using the expanding workforce to build terraces as in Machakos.

This is an easily read survey of the issues linked to global population. It is entirely predictable in its outlook: Her account of the various population control movements worldwide focuses on their historical links to eugenics, racism, anti-feminism and imperialism.

Although the author reprints a full unedited speech by Jonathan Porritt, she offers no comment to the point he makes that pursuing the population issue need not detract from fighting all the issues.

Her solution to population ageing is probably the most sensible suggestion in her book as she rightly advocates changes in employment patterns.

In fact this guide is honest and straightforward enough to give a clear picture of many aspects of the population issue although it never really takes them on board. More equality and less waste are to her the only answers, but sadly not, even as an add-on, population stabilisation in any of its forms.





Competition!

One of our younger supporters, Imogen Hartmann, has been working to persuade her school friends that the future sustainability of the planet will very much depend on how many people it will need to support. Imogen came to us about a poster competition that would help her, and people like her, in persuading friends -and schools-that population concern should be something talked about.

This has led to us running a national competition, for which the prizes will be Amazon vouchers (first prize in each age group £40, second £25 and third £10) and an Art Pack including pens, pencils, paints and paper - and the overall winning poster will be printed and used as part of our schools projects.

Why not see if you're children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, god-children or your friends' kids want to enter, win the great prizes and help Population Matters.

There are three age categories. Up to 7, 8 to 11 and 12 to 16. All you need to do is send in your poster on an A4

or A3 sheet to Population Matters, 135-137 Station Road, London E4 6AG. Give your name, age, address and phone number. Or email it to competitions@populationmatters.org, putting 'PM Comp' in the subject bar and again including your name, age, address and phone number. Closing date is April 30th 2012.

The judges will be Population Matters Chair Roger Martin, Imogen Hartmann and Matt Williams, Population Matters Marketing Manager. Judging will take place in May. The winners will be informed by post. Good luck.

David Hepper remembers Mary Exley

Mary Exley, a founder member of our group and professionally known as Mary Lobjoit, passed away on Christmas Eve.

Mary, with her extensive experience in further education and medicine, especially family planning and with campaigning organisations going back to the Conservation Society of the 1960s, her quick wit and the twinkling eyes that quite belied her age, has been an inspiration to our group. She provided transport to other members, support for our speaking engagements and tenacity in seeking out speaking opportunities in her home area of Midhurst.

'Mary will be greatly missed and I'm sure you will join me in passing on our condolences to her husband and family'.



Promotional items

LEAFLETS - Free

How many is too many?
Population Matters
David Attenborough Mini Flyer NEW!

BRIEFING SHEETS - 10p

- 01 Climate Change and Population
- 02 Desertification and Migration
- 03 A Population-Based Climate Strategy
- 04 The sustainability of human populations
- 05 What population policy should we have?
- 06 Why the UK Needs a Population Policy
- 07 Is there a "right" to have children?
- 08 The green gains from smaller families
- 09 Population, Environment, Migration

BADGES, POSTERS AND STICKERS

Lapel Badges – stylishly enamelled with PM logo.
Button Badges – with logo 50p
Envelope Stickers – with logo, 50p per sheet of 24.
Posters – A4 £1.00; A3 £1.75
Data discs – currently with full range of posters (approx 50)
and selected Powerpoint presentations £2.50 incl. P & P.

OTHER ITEMS

Car window stickers (updated) - Free

Pens – with logo 50p

T-Shirts – with logo £7.50 incl. P & P white, quality cotton, with blue print logos and website addresses: Front 'For a sustainable future', Back 'A smaller family is a sustainable family', Sizes: S, M, L, XL

Your order should include: a receiving address, a day-time telephone number, quantity per item, itemised costs (p&p is included in stated costs) and a cheque for the total amount made out to Population Matters. Items may be despatched separately.

If you require items by a specific date, please allow at least 5 working days from receipt of your request; guaranteed next-day delivery is expensive and guaranteed next-day Saturday delivery is exorbitant!

Send your order to:
Edmund Davey, 68 Croxall Road,
Tamworth, B79 9JE.

Enquiries to
edmund.davey@populationmatters.org
or 01827 383 437



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sustainable
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