

NEWS

# Call to increase recycling to 70%

## FRIENDS OF THE EARTH: Campaigners target council leader

By HUGH FORT

ENVIRONMENTAL campaigners in Bracknell are urging council bosses to nearly double recycling in the borough.

Bracknell Friends of the Earth (FOE) is hoping to push Bracknell Forest Council to increase its recycling target to 70 per cent.

The borough has some of the best recycling rates in the country, but FOE wants the council to up its current target of 40 per cent.

The group will be campaigning in Bracknell town centre and going to meetings of the council's Climate Change Partnership.

Members have also been lobbying Bracknell MP Dr Phillip Lee to support a tough line on the new Energy Bill, which is currently

going through Parliament.

Group director John Halladay said: "As it stands we do not do enough to combat the threat of climate change. That is why we are lobbying Phillip Lee to take a tough line in Parliament. Our homes are responsible for around a third of the UK's CO2 emissions. Poor insulation in homes results in higher fuel bills and as a result the number of households in fuel poverty has grown from 1.2 million in 2004 to 4.6 million in 2010."

He said the group had been working with 40 council leaders to launch a petition for strong carbon budgets in councils.

The group wants councils to produce plans to reduce carbon emissions by up to 40 per cent by 2020. But Bracknell council has declined to sign the petition.

A letter from council leader Councillor Paul Bettison said the council had an action plan in place to reduce carbon emissions by 25 per cent, but could not commit to the petition because of an unclear national strategy.

The letter says: "If the Government produces a viable system of local carbon budgets, I will be pleased to support it."

John said: "We will continue to try to persuade Cllr Bettison that locally co-ordinated action to tackle climate change would boost the local economy, slash people's energy bills and create certainty for business investment."

"Local carbon budgets would mean local people could be involved in shaping their own future low carbon community."