

Notes from the PACE Manningtree Earth Festival Meeting 3 December

35 PACE Supporters joined the discussion in The Red Lion.

The Manningtree Earth Festival 2023 was one of the great PACE events which helped us win The King's Award for Voluntary Service – so we started with a rousing three cheers to celebrate this success.

Rachael Hurst, a PACE Trustee, explained that a small group have done some initial groundwork:

When will MEF25 be? Sunday 15 June 2025 from 12noon to 5pm.

Overarching ideas –

- we think MEF 25 should be a bit smaller than previous years to make organisation more manageable - previously we needed 120 volunteers to run the Festival.
- we want MEF 25 to increase awareness and understanding, and to lead to changes in behaviour and actions.
- we think fewer themes which better support current PACE priorities:

Food and Drink because these are major contributors to greenhouse gasses and everybody needs them;

Water - because the Stour Estuary is a major focus for Manningtree and there are big issues with pollution;

Waste - because all of us and a Festival produce Waste and we must manage this more responsibly

Education - because engaging schools and people of all ages is so crucial;

Music - because a Festival needs good music and we have some superb local musicians.

Aims of MEF 2025

1. To inspire local people, local schools, local businesses and the three local councils so that they are more aware of the impacts of the changing climate and biodiversity loss.
2. To inspire and encourage local people to make changes to their ways of living and working such that our community becomes progressively more resilient in the face of climate disruption and threats to the natural world.
3. To increase the number of local people who are interested in PACE and its initiatives.
4. To create a fun and enjoyable Festival.

We discussed ways that we can measure how effective the Festival can be in achieving these aims.

Halford Hewitt, Vice-Chair of PACE, ran group discussions on the Main Tasks which are needed to ensure a successful Festival.

We need people who are good organisers before the Festival, and we need a lot of good volunteers on the day. There were very lively discussions in the groups with a lot of energy in the room. We then pulled the tasks together on to large Flip Charts (summary Mind Map attached) so that we all get a good idea of what is involved.

Bonny Williams, a PACE Trustee, asked those present to think about where and how they could help.

It was very encouraging that 32 volunteers present filled in the Volunteer form to offer their help. 16 Volunteers joined the Manningtree Earth Festival Organisers (MEFO)

which is fantastic: and everybody offered to help on the Day of the Festival 15 June 2025 and joined a WhatsApp Group so that we can communicate with them.

John Hall, Chair of PACE Trustees summed up

Thanks for the tremendous support received this evening. If you know of other people who would like to help with the Earth Festival (not everyone could come this evening) then please encourage them to come forward and offer their volunteer help. The Organisers will have their Organising Meeting on 14 January 7.30pm and will be looking through the offers of help to make sure each volunteer gets a task which suits them well.

Next full PACE meeting will be on Tuesday 7 January 7.30pm in The Red Lion for **THE BIG GREEN QUIZ** – a fun evening for teams of 4 to 6 (you can join a team on the night) – the Quizmasters will test your team's knowledge on wildlife and environment both local and global – Great Prizes, including a big Wooden Spoon!