

PRESS RELEASE

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Top Eco Journalist Points Way for Town High Street Survival

One of this country's leading ecological journalists and activists will be discussing the threats to the traditional 'High Street' from major out of town chains as part of the Llangollen Fringe's first ever 'Eco Day' on Saturday, July 26th in conjunction with the Friends of the Earth.

Paul Kingsworth is the former Deputy Editor of the Ecologist and has written for or contributed to the Guardian, Independent, Daily Telegraph, Daily Express, Le Monde, New Statesman, New Internationalist, Big Issue, Adbusters, BBC Wildlife, openDemocracy, BBC Radio 4, BBC Radio 2, BBC4, ITV and Resonance FM.

He is visiting the Fringe to talk about his new book, 'Real England: The battle against the bland', which investigates the domination of high street and out of town chains, the effect on the high street landscape and the towns that are creatively and stubbornly fighting back and refusing to become bland. The book has been serialised in the Daily Mail and the Guardian.

"My new book explores the impact of breakneck globalisation on the cultures and landscapes of my own country, England. It explores the homogenising of the landscape, the death of the small, the local and the individual, and the people fighting for a different kind of future.

Over the years Paul has worked in an orang utan rehabilitation centre in Borneo, as a peace observer in the rebel Zapatista villages of Mexico, as a floor-sweeper in McDonalds and as an assistant lock-keeper on the river Thames. He studied history at Oxford University between 1991 and 1994, was arrested during the Twyford Down road protests of 1993 and was named one of Britain's 'top ten troublemakers' by the New Statesman magazine in 2001.

'Llangollen is a town with a distinctive sense of place and a wealth of independent shops, and a thriving community of which residents are rightly proud, but like all things of value this needs protecting. So it is the perfect place to welcome Paul Kingsnorth and we hope people will come and be inspired at what can be achieved at the local level', said Michael Hughes, Co-ordinator of Llangollen Friends of the Earth and a director with the Fringe.

Other speakers on the day include Neil Crumpton, Energy Campaigner for Friends of the Earth Cymru; Jude Wright of Garth Organic Hillside Garden and

Dave Green of the Lightfoot Household Energy Service. The day will be closed by the female duo Ember, who have also recently played at the International Eisteddfod.

Tickets £5 advance, £6 on the door. Available from the Llangollen Fringe website, www.llangollenfringe.co.uk, by calling 01978 860600 (between 11am and 4pm) or from Llangollen Wholefood Co-op, Oak Street.

Released on behalf of the Llangollen Fringe Festival. For further information contact Nigel Davies on 07974 228575.