



**Friends of the Earth**

**Bromley**

# August 2012 No. 296 Newsletter

Bromley FoE: inquiries to Birch House, Grays Road, Westerham TN16 2JB  
email: [r.watson865@btinternet.com](mailto:r.watson865@btinternet.com); website: [www.bromleyfoe.co.uk](http://www.bromleyfoe.co.uk)



## August Meeting

*Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley*

### **Lifting the Lid on Water**

**Richard Aylard CVO,  
Director of Sustainability at Thames Water**

*The future of water supplies - How much water  
will we need and where will it come from?*

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> August - 7.30pm.**

Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

**SUNDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST.**

Contact details inside front cover.

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***Still time to book your place at FoE Conference – see page 2 and [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk)***

### Diary dates:

**Aug 7<sup>th</sup> (Tues)**      **Bromley FoE's August meeting** – Richard Aylard, CVO,  
Director of Sustainability at Thames Water  
Aug 27<sup>th</sup> (Mon)      Cudham Fete – Bromley FoE stall  
Sept 4<sup>th</sup> (Tues)      **Bromley FoE's September meeting**  
**Sept 14/16**      **FoE local groups conference**, Imperial College, London. See  
below and [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk) for more info

### FoE Conference 2012 – Sept 14/16, Imperial College, London

Book now. This year's event promises to be the biggest and best ever.

**Weekend ticket** (local groups) - A ticket for the weekend costs £30, and gives you:

- Over 15 inspiring speakers including Britain's first Green MP Caroline Lucas, Liz Jensen, author of *The Rapture* and Satish Kumar, editor of *Resurgence*
- Our ever-inspiring Earthmover Awards
- Motions/ 3D Proposals debate
- Master class workshops including stunt design with cartoonist Polyp
- The very latest on The Bee Cause and Clean British Energy campaigns
- Hands-on renewable energy workshop
- Biodiversity walks in West London

### Open Day

For the first time at Conference Saturday is open for all. A day ticket for £10 will get you:

- Caroline Lucas, Britain's first Green MP
- Vivienne Westwood, fashion designer
- Lidy Nacpil, Coordinator, Jubilee South
- Liz Jensen, author of *The Rapture*
- Fred Pearce, journalist and author of *The Land Grabbers*
- Danny Chivers, poet and author of *The No Nonsense Guide to Climate Change*
- Practical workshops including upcycling, the nuts and bolts of renewable energy and storytelling

**Book via FoE's website, [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk).**

### Next Newsletter - copy details:

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor **by SUNDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST:**

**by post** to John Street, 82 Babbacombe Road, Bromley, BR1 3LS

**by phone** to: 020-8460-1078, **by email** to: [johnstreet@gn.apc.org](mailto:johnstreet@gn.apc.org).

The editor reserves the right to shorten contributions for space, or other, reasons

## July meeting report, Ray Watson

An excellent turnout was fascinated to learn about the work being put in by Marinet, a sub-group of FoE specialising in all things about the oceans and the dangers they are in – dangers like overfishing and pollution that affect everyone.

Our speaker, John Bassendine, secretary of Marinet and a Sevenoaks FoE member, said that Marinet attempts to influence the UK government and the EU, the latter being the main driving force behind European fisheries policy.

He revealed that the EU was in the process of reviewing the current Common Fisheries Policy and had put forward some encouraging proposals to ministers of member countries, but who were now facing huge pressure from the vested interests in the industry. A large number of amendments to the revision proposals had been put forward with the result that the review had been delayed; it would now not reach the European parliament until the autumn.

John said that the EU set the quota for each type of fish that could be caught as a means of preventing overfishing and a percentage of this was allocated to each member country. In the case of the UK, only six per cent of this figure went to small inshore fishermen, the rest to large companies. He forecast that in a few years these inshore fishermen, such as those found working off Hastings or Cornwall, would be out of business; they just could not survive against the big operations.

He also reminded us of the waste caused by discards – when fishermen netted more than their quota of a certain type of fish they were obliged to throw them back into the sea, many of them dead. This accounted for half of the catch in European waters.

As regards overfishing, he pointed out that much went on outside of EU waters. There was evidence that large factory ships were decimating the seas off the west Africa coast. Some of this fishing was illegal while some African nations were selling licences because they needed the money and others were accepting bribes for licenses.

Fishing aside, Marinet is also involved in promoting conservation issues to protect the British coastline, like, for example monitoring sea pollution – and he reminded us that many popular British resorts do not meet European standards. Also in its sights were dredging operations that left the coast vulnerable to erosion and often disturbed fish breeding grounds.

Energy too, comes into Marinet's orbit in that it monitors the effect of offshore wind farms which frequently have a positive effect by creating a de facto conservation area because they form barriers to shipping. However, he was disappointed at the slow growth of renewable energy, such as wind turbines, caused by energy companies playing politics in order to get a better financial deal from the government.

Such was the wide territory that John covered that he faced many questions from the group – and won deserved applause for his presentation.

## Questions for Thames Water

Thames Water, who are providing a speaker for BFoE's August meeting, have warned customers that water levels are still low, despite the large amount of rainfall in recent weeks.

In a note sent to customers, Thames says the hosepipe ban imposed earlier this year brought savings of 100 million litres a day during the hot spell in May. It adds: With groundwater levels still low and the possibility of a third successive dry winter, we still need to be careful and use water wisely.

Although we have had record spring rainfall and our reservoirs are full, water levels in many of the natural storage basins deep below ground remain low.

At this stage of the year with plants and trees growing and sucking up much of the moisture, groundwater levels are not expected to recover fully until there is sustained winter rainfall that seeps into the ground.

The company admits that it has much to do to end leaks, claiming a reduction of 300 million litres a day from the peak in 2004.

It appeals to customers to continue to implement water saving in the home – things like using butts for harvesting rainwater and taking shorter showers.

BFoE members are invited to bring questions for Thames Water to answer at the group's August 7 meeting.

## Historic buildings and sustainable service to the community



**Judy Palmer writes -**

This is Bateman's, Rudyard Kipling's home for many years.

It's a National Trust property, built in 1634, nestling in the heart of the East Sussex countryside. It still has a working mill which produces wholemeal flour & the wild flower meadow helps the bees produce local honey from the Bateman hives.

A question – are there historic buildings within the Borough which still provide some form of sustainable service to our local community?

### **Be on your guard!**

When it comes to aviation matters environmentalists need to be on their guard at all times. Take the Heathrow expansion argument for instance: it is now once more coming to the forefront of government thinking, merely a year or two since the green lobby thought the battle was won for all time.

Before the election David Cameron firmly pledged not to permit another runway at Heathrow. But now his Chancellor and other government ministers are re-opening the discussion with carefully-placed stories in several newspapers, while the prime Minister himself has hinted that the proposal should be on the table again. This is highly embarrassing for Transport Minister Justine Greening who also opposes expansion – unsurprisingly, given that her constituency is right below the landing flightpath.

The split in the government ranks is probably the reason that the newly-released paper on airport capacity in the South East offers little in the way of concrete proposals. Indeed, opponents of expansion at Gatwick airport labelled it 'riddled with indecision'.

It is also worth noting these other arguments which will be crucial in the coming battle over whether Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and Luton – all considered to be airports serving London – will be allowed to expand:

- Heathrow is actually expanding because today's larger aircraft, like the 500-seat A380s, are bringing in a greater number of

passengers. The airport currently turns over 69 million passengers a year but once the terminals are redeveloped this will rise to a staggering 90 million passengers annually.

- Stansted is operating far below capacity – about 60 -70 percent – and in addition has newly lost business to Southend Airport following easyJet's decision to move some European flights there
- Tourism to the UK is down because of the global turnaround, adding to the tourism deficit – the fact that Britons spend more money abroad than comes in from tourists. And that damages the country's economy
- While policy-makers tend to concentrate on Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted, Luton cannot be ignored. In fact, there is likely to be a planning application later this year calling for an uplift of 40 per cent in flights with passenger throughput reaching 16 million

Now, why no mention in all this of the infamous 'Boris Island' Thames estuary airport being pushed by mayor of London Boris Johnson? The reason: his ideas become more and more odd and do not merit discussion. His latest madcap idea is to build a new runway at Stansted while the estuary airport is being approved and built. Just note the Stansted reference above. Even British Airways boss Willie Walsh has said: 'Boris Island will never happen'.

### **Tracking the future**

The government has recently promised to spend vast sums of /continued on page 7

### **Keston Countryside Day Campaign Stall**

We managed to do well in between the showers on July 8th and actually had quite a lot of sun as well as the plastic ducks game to help things along! A big thank you to all who helped and to Anne Clark for bringing the gazebo. The Morris dancers performed and even if some things were cancelled, it was good for networking as usual. People wore the official FoE bee costumes, and we collected a number of signatures for the Bee Cause and Clean British Energy campaigns.

It was good that the Biggin Hill News had published our photo and press statement for the street stall we held on June 16th, and the Bromley Times our letter, but a shame that the Chelsfield Fair had to be cancelled due to a water-logged field. The next stall will be at Cudham on August 27th.

### **Queens Gardens Planning Application**

People will be pleased to hear that Development Control Committee rejected the plan for 5 restaurants in Queens Gardens on June 28th by 10 votes to 7. We had written objecting to this and helped deliver hundreds of leaflets to nearby houses as supporting members of Bromley Civic Society. The developers are likely to go to appeal though, so the campaign isn't over yet.

### **Rio + 20 Conference**

The UN Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro in June was the biggest summit the UN has organised. It was attended by some 40,000 environmentalists and 10,000

government officials. 190 nations were represented in total.

It ended with an unambitious non-binding statement which made few advances on what was agreed 20 years ago in Rio. It has been criticised as being 'a failure, weak and insipid'. Angela Merkel, David Cameron and Barack Obama didn't even bother to turn up. When we know how serious the growing effects of Climate Change are, this is extremely worrying.

However, there were some positive outcomes. The signposts to a greener future were to be found in more than 3,000 fringe events. Many of these were innovators focused on small-scale technology solutions. Others were private companies, which see sustainable development not as some corporate responsibility PR stunt but as integral to enhancing their productivity and competitiveness. If this helps the planet all well and good. The fact remains though that there need to be legally-binding agreements.

Two developing countries - Guatemala and Columbia came up with new sustainable development goals as a successor to the millennium development goals which expire in 2015. These aimed to halve world poverty with specific targets on health, education and child mortality, and are proving useful yardsticks at least.

### **Japanese Nuclear News**

Japan's Ohi No 3 nuclear power plant was switched on again on July 1<sup>st</sup>, and tens of thousands of people

*/continued on page 7*

## Hurray for Thorium – Ivy Smith

I was really interested to read Peter Gandolfi's article on this and to me it seems to be the answer to the nuclear power debate. Thorium seems to tick all the boxes for me - although I don't pretend to understand all the scientific details.

1. It does not produce bomb making material. (I find it unbelievable that the powers that were in the 1970s did not go for it partly for that reason.)
2. It seems able to use some of the high level waste from other nuclear reactors, thus converting the present and future stockpile into safer, less radioactive material.
3. To learn that it is actually more available than uranium and safer to use. I feel we often forget that the poor souls who mine and work on the production of uranium suffer horrible deaths at times.

As Peter says "what is there not to like?" Regretfully it seems we will need something more than just renewables to keep the lights on - although we need to use both and also learn to conserve and use less energy.

Can we urge FoE to encourage the Government and scientists to look into the use of Thorium? Please!

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**Transport info – cont'd from page 5** money on the railways, including more electrification to replace environmentally unfriendly diesel locomotives. As a boost to public transport this is to be welcomed. However, do not get too excited: not much will happen for three years.

Meanwhile, it is likely that fares will increase soon as a means of the government collecting cash to help pay for it all.

### **Cutting the road toll**

Bromley benefits from having great green areas in the borough, excellent for walks, horse riding and other attractions. So, the recent Department of Transport announcement that it intends to give councils more powers to reduce speeds on country roads to 40 mph is to be approved, given that road deaths are far more frequent on country roads than in built-up areas.

Laudable that may be, surely it would make more sense to reduce the limit to 30 or 20 mph, especially as the latter figure has proved a success when used in urban areas.

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**Campaigns info – cont'd from page 6** demonstrated against this saying 'no to nuclear restarts'. All 50 of the Japan's nuclear reactors were turned off after the earthquake there, but the government has been carrying out new safety tests, and claims that No 3 and 4 are safe for restart.

The eventual cost of the Fukushima nuclear disaster has been estimated at about £100 billion. Electricity prices are likely to rise by 10%. Tepco the main energy company has been nationalised which will raise £8 billion, bringing government support to prevent the company's collapse to at least £24 billion. There's no doubt that tough decisions have to be made in Japan at the moment, but there's growing awareness of the dangers of nuclear power.

## Solar fuels and artificial photosynthesis – removing the fossil from our fuel

### **Peter Gandolfi writes:**

The notes and thoughts below are all factual and were initiated from a recent lecture by Nathan Lewis, director of the joint centre for Artificial Photosynthesis at Caltech. I find some of the statistics involved here are quite scary:

The world presently uses about 15 terawatts of energy, or the equivalent of 15,000 typical nuclear power stations, and shows no evidence for wanting to use less.

Global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are 9 gigatonnes a year – that's 9 billion metric tonnes, and Lewis says "we need to produce as much or more carbon free power within our lifetimes as all the oil, coal, gas and nuclear power on our planet today"

Of all the renewable sources, such as biomass, hydro, geothermal, wind and ocean, solar energy has the most potential to meet our future needs. The sun delivers more energy to the earth in one hour than we currently use from all other sources in a year.

"The sun, the big nuclear power plant in the sky, gives us 120,000 terawatts." That's 8000 times the world's present total power consumption.

While there is great enthusiasm in solar development in terms of converting the captured light energy, as in PV panels generating electricity, routes for making use of carbon – as plants do, are still few and far between. This is probably due to the fact that the chemistry involved is hard, really hard. So it is easy to understand why we still keep burning fossil fuels, even with the

knowledge of their environmental damage.

Fossil fuel is not going to run out tomorrow, but we cannot wait for this to happen, and must take action now. Some of the problems with using solar power directly (as in PV panels producing electricity) is that the sun does not always shine (especially where we are), and it is difficult to imagine how we could undertake certain forms of transport, such as fly, on battery power.

What can be done? We obviously need to continue to improve solar cells and their related work, but above all we need to work on carbon dioxide and its conversion into a liquid fuel to use in a similar way as we use hydrocarbon fossil fuels at present. Plants do this difficult chemistry all at room temperature using sunlight! If we could produce our present fuels from our waste CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, using solar energy, it would give us the power we need as well as lower our level of greenhouse gases.

This work is being undertaken at present by disparate groups, what we need is to bring these diverse groups together and fund them for the longer term.

The Apollo project got us to the moon in under 10 years; a similar project on artificial photosynthesis could do the same for our moving away from fossil fuels (if only the billions we spent on rescuing our banks had been spent on this!)

*/continued on page 11*

## Visit to the South London Botanical Institute – *Mary Stirling*

Early on in the year Sue Bocock and her husband John kindly organised a visit to the South London Botanical Institute. About a dozen of the Bromley FOE group went along and most people travelled by train followed by a 20 minute walk to the Institute from West Dulwich station. It is also about 5 minutes from Tulse Hill Station.

The purpose of this Institute is to share an understanding of plants with local people and it was set up just over 100 years ago by Allan Octavian Hume. Since its inception in 1910, the Institute has enabled many to develop a satisfying and absorbing interest, become better botanists, pursue their own studies, share their knowledge with like-minded individuals and contribute to our natural heritage.

Members include amateur and professional botanists, gardeners, artists, photographers, writers, ecologists, campaigners and teachers and all those who are keen to develop their knowledge of the plant kingdom.

Roy Vickery, the curator, showed us a most interesting herbarium where over a hundred thousand samples of plants, lichens, bryophytes, algae and fungi from Britain and Europe are kept. They are maintained by a small group of volunteers.

We then went to the library where it is possible to study plants of all descriptions. We were then able to visit the small lovely botanical garden with collections of ferns, wild flowers, mediaeval and modern medicinal plants with even some poisonous plants.

There are plants used in both pharmaceutical and popular herbal remedies, including *Artemisia annua*, currently being developed as a new treatment against malaria.

There is also a selection of plants recorded by John Gerard of Holborn in his 'Herball' of 1596. Herbalists were the GPs of the day, prescribing these plants for a number of Tudor ailments, recommending the ingestion of the root of *Angelica archangelica*, a remedy against poison, the plague and all infections taken by evil and corrupt air.

Plants from Australasia and South Africa, including *Muehlenbeckia astonii*, an endangered coastal shrub from New Zealand and *Eucomis Comosa* (Pineapple flower) from the Eastern Cape can be seen. British natives, ferns, scented plants, drought tolerant plants, monocots and unusual vegetables are also represented.

Unusual trees create an ideal environment for shade loving plants. *Sophora tetraptera* (Kowhai) from New Zealand with yellow pea flowers, delicate foliage and bead-like seed pods thrives and *Azara serrata*, an evergreen from Chile, fills the April garden with vanilla perfume from its fluffy yellow flowers.

At the heart of the garden is the pond supporting native wetland plants and providing a home for frogs and newts.

*/continued on page 11*

## **Boris's Estuary Airport – from Airportwatch via Sheila Brown**

Charles Dickens' great-great-grandson has spoken out against plans for an estuary airport, which would ruin the marshlands and countryside made famous his ancestor. This area provided the setting for Great Expectations - one of Dickens' greatest novels. He is horrified by the plans to build on the marshland, bordering the area of Kent where Dickens lived and died.

This year is the bicentenary of Dickens' birth, with a festival all weekend in celebration in north Kent of his life and work. In the opening scene of Great Expectations, Dickens describes the marshes as a "dark, flat, wilderness... intersected with dykes and mounds and gates, with scattered cattle feeding on it." Dickens loved this part of Kent, he lived and died in Higham, he took his honeymoon in Chalk and he often walked across the Marshes for inspiration.

If approved, the plan, which has been heavily backed by Boris Johnson, will construct a four runway airport at the Isle of Grain in north Kent. The plans come amid fears that the capital will lose out to competition from Paris, Amsterdam and Frankfurt if it fails to increase its capacity for air travellers in the south east.

The Isle of Grain forms part of a small outcrop of land in north Kent called the Hoo Peninsula, where the north Kent marshes are also based. The area is a unique wetland habitat, which provides a home to 300,000 migrating wildfowl and other birds annually.

Local campaigners say an airport on the scale proposed would see the whole of north Kent being concreted at a cost of up to £70 billion. Airline industry experts, including the outspoken Willie Walsh, agree the airport would be on the wrong side of London and come at too high a cost to much to make it worthwhile.

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### **Grow Heathrow**

This grassroots initiative (see March Newsletter) where a group took over and cleared derelict land in the Sipson area which had been threatened by the proposed third runway at Heathrow and turned it into a community market-garden project is now itself threatened with eviction.

This would be tragic, if the area, from which 30 tonnes of rubbish were cleared by volunteers, once again became a dumping ground. A high court hearing resulted in a stay of execution. Grow Heathrow is supported by eminent groups such as Greenpeace. See Transition Heathrow's website for more details.

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## New Urban Park / Re-User Column / Continuations

### **Solar Fuels – cont'd from page 8**

Perhaps large organizations, pension funds or insurance companies would consider long term investing; new technologies would be worth trillions both in terms of direct energy costs.

A decent investment in solar could offer us a one degree global temperature increase, against the expected three degree rise expected. To me this potential investment sounds a good bet, saving us from having a less violent climate system, loss of biodiversity, crop failure, water scarcity etc.

Perhaps we can turn one of the greatest issues facing humanity, into one of the biggest possible investments – and take the fossil out of fuel!

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### **South London Botanical Institute visit – cont'd from page 9**

Mr Vickery suggested that the best way to help the institute is by providing publicity about their events and adult education courses and the conference to mark the centenary of their founder.

This can be found on the website [www.slbi.org.uk](http://www.slbi.org.uk). Also they are hoping with their neighbours to make the surrounding roads a conservation area to maintain and enhance its architectural heritage, gardens and biodiversity. If anyone has any experience of getting places designated as conservation areas Mr Vickery would be pleased to hear from them He can be contacted on [info@slbi.org.uk](mailto:info@slbi.org.uk).

The afternoon finished with tea and biscuits and a chance to ask questions. A most interesting afternoon

Many thanks to Sue and John.

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### **New Urban Park created**

*Judy Palmer writes:*

Even though the Olympics are now taking centre stage, one item not usually talked about is that the event has created the largest new urban park in the UK for over 100 years – about 250 acres in the Olympic Park.

So London will have a new habitat of: thousands of trees, hundreds of thousands of wetland plants, flowers & bulbs, reed beds in a wetland bowl which was formerly a landfill site, new habitats for varying species and even hanging gardens from a footbridge all to look forward to long after the athletes have left.

### **Reuser Column [2] Don't throw it away - Reuse It!**

Computer table  
Needs to be collected.  
3' 4" wide x 2'1" deep x 2'1" high

Walking boots – size 8 – New  
Unisex, waterproof, lightweight leather  
and fabric  
Donations to Bromley FoE

**Contact Anne Clark, 020-8289-8483**

## FoE press releases

### **Bees invoice Govt for £1.8 billion per year**

Giant bees descended on Whitehall) to call for Government protection in return for the huge contribution they make to the UK economy.

The giant bees, part of Friends of the Earth's The Bee Cause campaign, presented Government economic advisors, who are meeting today in Whitehall, with an invoice for £1.8 billion for their annual pollination services to British agriculture.

The advisors, the Natural Capital Committee, have been asked by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to provide independent expert advice on how the Government can properly value our natural environment when making decisions and forming policy.

Earlier this week a committee of MPs criticised the Government for failing to set out clear plans to deliver on its commitment to ensure Government decision-making fully values the services nature provides such as pollination of crops.

Friends of the Earth is calling on the Government to save British bees - and save the nation billions of pounds - by committing to a British Bee action plan.

Friends of the Earth's Nature Campaigner, Paul de Zylva said: "Bees aren't just valuable for the environment, they enrich our economy too - research shows that pollinating crops by hand would cost economy at least £1.8 billion each year. Unless urgent action is taken to tackle the decline in bee populations, farmers

and consumers will be left to pick up an enormous bill. The Government must take steps to protect these crucial natural pollinators - a British Bee Action Plan is needed now."

### **Government delays announcement on renewable energy subsidies**

Commenting on the Government's decision to delay an announcement on subsidies for different renewable energy technologies, Friends of the Earth Energy Campaigner Guy Shrubsole said:

"This delay is just the latest in a long list of Government shambles that puts low-carbon investors off Britain. Renewable energy firms need to know the rug isn't about to be pulled from under their feet so that they can plan for the future. Clean British energy could be the powerhouse of our economy and create thousands of jobs - the Treasury must give it full backing."

### **Government invests in railways - but electrification is only as green as the energy**

Commenting on reports today (Monday 16 July 2012) that the Government is investing £9.4 billion in a package of measures to upgrade Britain's railways Friends of the Earth's Energy Campaigner Guy Shrubsole said:

"Improving our railways is exactly the kind of investment we need to boost our economy, create jobs and persuade more people to use low-carbon transport. But electric rail lines

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## FoE's Change Your World – The BEE cause is flying high

Our new campaign — The Bee Cause — has sprung into life all over the UK. Find out what's created the buzz.

We started with a stunt. Early one April morning, the grey concrete walkways of London's South Bank were transformed into a wildflower meadow. As the sun rose, the bees found the meadow — as did the media and bemused commuters. And they all loved it.

The next day our 10,000 free packets of bee-friendly wildflower seeds were snapped up in less than 24 hours. Since then people have taken 40,000 actions on our Bee Cause website: signing our petition to David Cameron calling on him to help protect British bees; taking the quiz to discover amazing bee facts; and spreading the word through email, Facebook and Twitter.

We've also had over 100 pieces of media coverage — from national breakfast TV and radio to local news. Many quoted our research, which shows it'll cost the UK economy £1.8 billion a year if we have to farm without the help of British bees.

### **Get the buzz going locally**

The Bee Cause is a great campaign to have fun with locally this summer and autumn. And there are lots of ways that you can show your local community how important bees and other pollinators are to our economy, farmers and nature.

Many of you have already attended our Bee Prepared training days. At these we've discussed how to make

the campaign work locally — read more on the Bees Hub at [www.foe.co.uk/campaignhubs](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaignhubs)

Ideas for imaginative bee walks include planning the route to:

- go from a town centre outwards, helping people explore new places off the beaten track
- stop off at familiar local sights
- map sites between councillors' homes and the town hall.

And lots of you are planning bee breakfasts to show the poor food we'd have on our tables in a world without bees.

**What could you do?** Share ideas and ask us questions via the Bees Hub at [www.foe.co.uk/campaignhubs](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaignhubs) and use The Bee Cause action guide to help you plan buzz-creating activities.

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### **Gov't invests in railways – cont'd** *from previous page*

are only as green as the electricity used to power them - and with the Big Six energy firms relying on gas and coal to supply a massive three quarters of our electricity, we need to make big changes and soon. The Energy Bill is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to end Britain's dependence on increasingly costly fossil fuels and secure affordable energy for the future using clean British energy from our wind, sun and sea."

## **Jubilee Debt Campaign – Some great and unexpected news: for once a vulture fund has lost in court.**

We've been tracking the case of vulture fund FG Hemisphere in Jersey since 2010. The New York-based fund has been trying to claim \$100 million from the Democratic Republic of Congo, for a debt it bought up for just \$3 million. In May we protested outside the Privy Council in Westminster - Jersey's highest court of appeal - when the case went to its final hearing.

Now the court has found that the state-owned mining company being targeted in Jersey was not eligible to pay this debt. The verdict means FG Hemisphere has lost this round in its attempt to profiteer from Congo's debt, and there's a chance it will have to pay the other side's legal costs too.

Impoverished countries shouldn't have to put up big money to defend themselves against these speculative lawsuits – and doubly so when the debts originate from odious loans such as those to former dictator General Mobutu in this case. Last year the UK became the first country to pass a vulture funds law, protecting 40 impoverished countries in UK courts. We want to see vulture fund activity targeting heavily indebted countries banned across the world.

Over the last year thousands of you have asked the Government of Jersey to pass a vulture funds law - and earlier this year it pledged to do so. Now we need to make sure that Jersey, and other British overseas territories where the UK law doesn't apply, follow through. Jersey also has questions to answer as to why Congo's mining wealth is being fought over in a faraway tax haven.

Here's a reminder of the key moments in this campaign so far:

*Feb 2007:* Zambia vulture case exposed in High Court in London.

*May 2009:* First proposals to tackle vulture funds debated in Parliament.

*Nov 2009:* Vulture funds targeting Liberia for \$20m revealed on Channel 4 News.

*Dec 2009:* Andrew Gwynne MP tables backbench bill.

*Apr 2010:* One-year Vulture Fund Law passed on eve of general election, saving impoverished countries estimated £145m.

*Nov 2010:* Congo vulture case emerges in Jersey, as Liberia reaches settlement thanks to law, saving over \$40m.

*Mar 2011:* UK Government announces law will be made permanent.

*Mar 2012:* Exposure of how vulture funds have turned attention to Greece, following debt writedown and emergency bailout loans.

*Jun 2012:* Government of Jersey pledges to introduce Vulture Funds Law in October.

*TODAY:* FG Hemisphere loses on appeal.

With your continued support we can make sure that this isn't the last setback for those who seek to profiteer from heavily indebted countries in the courts.

*Thanks a lot for all your support*

*Jonathan Stevenson Jubilee Debt Campaign*

## Bromley Friends of the Earth - List of Contacts

### Co-ordinators:

Sheila Brown 01689-851605  
*email – sheilabrown336@msn.com*  
Ann Garrett 020-8460-1295  
*anncgarrett@yahoo.com*

### Campaigns Organiser:

Ann Garrett 020-8460-1295

### Secretary:

Ray Watson 01959-571566  
*r.watson865@btinternet.com*

### Treasurer:

Debbie Witherick  
*debbie.witherick@sky.com*

### Press Officer:

vacant

### Programme Organiser:

Sheila Brown 01689-851605

### Outings organisers:

John & Sue Bocock 020-8464-5990  
*johnbocock@hotmail.com*

### Newsletter Editor:

John Street 020-8460-1078  
*johnstreet@gn.apc.org*

### Membership Secretary:

Dan Sloan 01689-838819

### Merchandising:

Anne Clark 020-8289-8483

### Teas:

Anne Clark / Ivy Smith

### Campaigns –

### Transport:

Ray Watson 01959-571566

### Climate and Energy:

Ann Garrett 020-8460-1295

### Food and Ethical Farming:

Peter Gandolfi details below

### Planning and development:

Tamara Galloway 01689-855352  
*tamaragalloway@yahoo.com*

### Waste and Recycling

Annette Rose  
*annette.rose1@ntlworld.com*

### Bromley FoE web site:

**[www.bromleyfoe.co.uk](http://www.bromleyfoe.co.uk)**  
Peter Gandolfi  
*petergandolfi@hotmail.com*

### Letters to the Editor

Why not write us a letter if you have a strong opinion on something or just want to share your thoughts. Send them in and perhaps even start a discussion - who knows.

### Need a lift to meetings?

If you require a lift to Bromley FoE meetings, please contact Ray Watson or Sheila Brown on the numbers shown above.

### Disclaimer

Please note that any opinion expressed in this Newsletter is not necessarily that of Bromley Friends of the Earth or Friends of the Earth.

**Reuser Column**  
**Don't throw It away - Reuse It!**

If you have any items to sell, or anything that you require, please send details to the Editor. Items will be displayed for three months, the number in brackets after an item indicating for how long it has appeared. Could you please contact us if an item has been sold/obtained, so that it can be removed from the newsletter.

Any donations to Bromley FoE generated from this column gratefully received!

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**Non-members' Section**

If you are not a member of Bromley Friends of the Earth, BFoE, then hello. We are an active local group affiliated to national Friends of the Earth concerned with promoting the understanding of environmental issues. We also campaign on these issues at a local, national and international level.

If you would like to know more about who we are and what we do please contact either of our co-ordinators, Sheila Brown (01689-851605) or Ann Garrett (020-8460-1295); their email addresses are on the previous page. Alternatively, you can come along to one of our free monthly meetings held on the first Tuesday of every month at the Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley (that's towards the bottom of the High Street and on the right going south). If you would like to join us then please fill in and send us the form below.

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**Membership Application/Renewal\* Form** (\*please delete as appropriate.)

Please return this form to: **Bromley FoE, 2 Bucks Cross Cottages, Chelsfield Village, Orpington, Kent, BR6 7RN**. Other enquiries regarding the group should be sent to: Birch House, Grays Road, Westerham, Kent, TN16 2JB; phone 01959-571566, email [r.watson865@btinternet.com](mailto:r.watson865@btinternet.com).

I wish to support Bromley Friends of the Earth and enclose my £8 annual subscription. I also enclose a donation (optional) of ..... To help towards the cost of producing and distributing the monthly Newsletter.

Name.....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Email Address.....

Do you have any hobbies or interests that may be of use to the group?

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