



Friends of the Earth

Bromley

August 2013 No. 308 Newsletter

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August Meeting

Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

Jess Gold's Big Green Machine

followed by

**Paul de Zylva,
Friends of the Earth Nature Campaigner**

Tuesday 6th August - 7.30pm

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

***** SUNDAY 18TH AUGUST *****

Contact details inside front cover.

A double bill for the August meeting – more info on page 2

Diary dates:

Aug 6 (Tue)

Bromley FoE's August Meeting

- Speakers are Jess Gold and Paul de Zylva
Cudham Fete, Bromley FoE Stall

Aug 26 (Mon)

Sept 3 (Tue)

Bromley FoE's September meeting

- Speaker on Fracking

Our August meeting is a double bill

Jess Gold's Big Green Machine

As a FoE member and board member, Jess began to write songs about green issues and decided to create her perfect career combining her passions for education, music and environmental campaigning and will launch the first ever UK multi-media scheme of work for sustainability in primary schools this September.

followed by

Paul de Zylva – Nature Campaigner, Friends of the Earth

Victory for our bees! Celebrate the success of The Bee Cause campaign in persuading the Government to prepare a National Bee and Pollinators' Strategy. Hear how it was done and what happens next.

Bromley FoE's Facebook Page

Rob Clark writes: Leaping headlong into the twenty first century Bromley FoE have set up a page on Facebook! To try and raise our profile this seemed like a good and fairly easy way of getting our name out and about and a method of publishing details and pictures from our current campaigns and events.

So if you're a Facebook user then please do a search for Bromley Friends of the Earth and 'like' us. Even if this isn't your thing, as I know it isn't for a good proportion of the public, do let your friends and family know about the page and ask them to have a look.

Disclaimer: *Please note that any opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of Bromley Friends of the Earth nor Friends of the Earth*

Next Newsletter - copy details:

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor by ***** SUNDAY 18TH 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.

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

July meeting report: Duncan Law from Biofuelwatch UK

This report is a joint effort by Anne Clarke and Sheila Brown.

John introduced Duncan Law and 'George' a toy Orang-Utan, the real version being worryingly displaced when de-forestation for Palm Oil and other plantations to fuel 'biomass' continued to be a worry.

Duncan mentioned that he had previously been a 'climate' campaigner but was now so concerned about matters going in the wrong direction, had formed Biofuelwatch.

He explained the terms 'biomass' and 'biofuels', biomass being anything that was once living that we use for fuel (mass = solid) wood, straw and sugar cane, whereas biofuels refer to liquid fuels made from vegetable oil & seed oils such as Palm oil.

Why use Biofuels?

It seemed a good idea because:

- We have all heard of 'peak oil' and resource depletion
- Our 'civilisation' needs lots of cheap fuel to keep going
- We need to cut carbon emissions
- Recently released carbon is easily absorbed by trees

but it's not proved a good idea in practice, with crops being grown for fuel rather than food; last year half the US maize crop finished up in our petrol tanks.

Is it physically possible? There has been lots of interest in being able to extract fuel from plants. Do we have enough land? No, because it means taking away from food production and

ruining wild ecosystems which are 'sinks' for carbon and losing wild areas. Disturbing a rain forest by 'merely' putting a road through it breaks the natural cycle, stops it working properly and causes changes to weather patterns.

The EU wants 10% of fuel for transport to come from plants (original target was 15%). In the US this is 40% of what goes into petrol tanks. Here at the moment it is 5% but set to rise with increasing impact on the environment. The result of all this is deforestation.

- Carbon emission from disturbing the soil
- Where there is peat, this often catches fire
- Indonesia has fast moved into third place behind the US and China in their land clearance
- Monoculture crops impoverish the soil, so much so that the agriculture has to be moved on elsewhere after about five years, by which time the forest is no longer there to be used as a 'sink'.

Even grasslands, which tend not to be so highly regarded, have a huge carbon store which is released when they are disturbed. Biofuels tend to be grown on grassland and marginal land, but this is where people live and it disturbs populations.

Food crops have now become 'cornmoditised' in the energy market so the price goes up out of the reach of local people, just to end up in fuel

/continued on next page

July meeting report - continued

tanks in the USA. In South America, there have already been 'corn riots' because people don't have enough food.

Land is being grabbed, thought to be 203 million hectares; 71 million has been verified. Now woody crops being used too. No biofuels are beneficial to the climate — they all have a worse effect than the fuels they replace. Added to this the fact of land displacement: It is all not a good idea.

This is being driven by government subsidies — huge expansion in Indonesia. Impact on human rights and impact on food availability. There is no overall control authority, and biofuels which cause this huge damage have been certified as 'sustainable' in the EU.

It's inefficient and *There is no spare land*. Marginal land is regarded as having no-one there, but people depend on it and people become displaced and become migrants and can finish up as slave labour.

Duncan showed a chart showing the land footprint impact of many different fuels. The worst was from Soya which needed 800 km² to generate 1,000 million kw, and the least impacting was Solar at 15 km² to generate the same.

There are many emerging areas being used for biofuel use, using biomass for power generation. Conversion to biomass would meet EU emissions targets — on paper but with huge impact as described.

Of particular concern is the DRAX power station. £100 million is being

invested to convert it to use 50% of its capacity to biomass, burning 8-16 million tonnes a year, this being imported from South America, Canada and South Africa. Seven further power stations have been granted permission to do this, which would mean 5 times this amount.

These emissions are worse than those of coal, but under Kyoto they count as 'Zero Carbon' and the government is subsidising this. There is going to be a supply crunch and this could lead to the use of very high carbon emitting trees and logs, the bark being particularly bad.

Duncan then moved on to the campaign to fight Battersea Power Station becoming a heat and power plant fuelled by biofuels, it now being owned by Sine Darby, the world's largest producer of Palm oil.

Of further concern is particulate emission from biofuels (similar to diesel) penetrating the skin, the cells and even getting through to the brain.

FoE nationally are monitoring the owners but they just grab. Biofuelwatch has three co-directors, three campaigners plus volunteers.

Duncan mentioned plans in Scotland by Forth Energy to burn 3 million tons of biofuels: There is also a move towards GM eucalyptus. But land will run out as needed for housing and food. Are we thinking of our next generation?

You can get involved by visiting www.biofuelwatch.org.uk.

Bee News – SUCCESS !!! - from Judy Palmer

THANK YOU from Friends of the Earth

The group received a phone call from FoE recently thanking us for all the hard work we have done in promoting the Bee Campaign and contributing towards its successful conclusion.

So thank you to everyone who has taken part in helping create our Bee World, going on our Bee Walk and supporting our endeavours and signing the post cards or making a phone call, it all helps and it makes a difference!

Bee Campaign - national pollinator strategy

We won! We received the news on 28th June that the Government will go ahead with creating a national pollinator strategy, which is their name for a national bee action plan, so all the hard work which has gone into urging the Government to do so was totally worth it.

FoE's Bee campaigners are working now on how to take the campaign forward, so by next month we will have more information.

It is worth noting that pesticide manufacturers have begun to use other pesticides in their products; for instance Bayer has reformulated their bug-killer 'Provado' and it is being marketed alongside 'bee-friendly seeds'.

Bayer's reformulation means that it now contains *thiacloprid* - an active ingredient which is **not** covered by the European Commission's temporary and partial restriction on some uses of

three neonics, which is due to come into force on 1 December 2013. And you can find it in store now. (Don't you just love cynical marketing!)

FoE have talked to some of the stores about this, but they are unlikely to remove it from shelves until the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has reviewed it. And EFSA have to be asked by the EU to examine an issue before they can do anything. So FoE are on the case and are asking the EU to clarify how it will prepare for the neonic restriction and what other work it will ask EFSA to carry out.

Local Geophysical survey

Peter Gandolfi writes: Many of you will be aware of the Geophysical study that has been undertaken in the Orpington / Chelsfield area recently. A company TESLA, has been undertaking a study in Kent looking for gas and oil strata in the ground beneath us.

A large vehicle travels slowly along the route, every so often lowering a large pad onto the road surface and vibrating the ground. These vibrations are then picked up with a string of detectors every half metre or so along miles of cable. Some householders have found their house being shaken with some minor damage!

The teams have been looking for evidence of the oil / gas field along the north downs that has been found so far elsewhere in the Reigate area.

When asked, the team said that gas strata had been found.

Letter sent to David Cameron as part of the (successful) Bee Campaign

Bromley FoE sent this letter to the Prime Minister as part of the Bee Campaign:

It was a real pleasure to learn recently of your interest in and deep concern for bees. You said 'If we do not look after our bee populations, very serious consequences will follow'.

We could not agree more. Over the past year, since the launch of Friends of the Earth's Bee Cause campaign, we have been doing everything we can to reverse the extremely worrying decline in British bee numbers. In the borough of Bromley we've been creating a Bee World, giving talks, meeting the public and going on a Bee Walk to help publicise how badly the bees need our help. But now we urgently need **your** help.

Bee decline has now gone from a serious problem to a crisis. Figures published by the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) last week show that a third of all honey bee colonies in England were lost over the winter of 2012/2013 – the worst figures since records began and double the losses of the previous year. A further 47 species of bee are vulnerable or endangered in the UK and many more of our treasured British solitary and bumble bees are being found in ever smaller areas of the country.

The Bee Cause campaign has met with an overwhelming response; people really want to see action to save our bees. More than 70,000 people have signed a petition asking you and your Government to put in place an urgent Bee Action Plan. In addition, organisations such as the

Wildlife Trusts and the Women's Institute and many beekeeping associations, companies such as B&Q and the Cooperative Group and more than 200 MPs have signed the Bee Action Plan statement.

The proposal for a Bee Action Plan goes way beyond the pesticides issue. Though it is important and we welcome the two-year ban on neonicotinoid insecticides, the loss of habitat in urban and rural areas and the lack of monitoring and stewardship of our vital wild bees are at least as important as factors in their decline; hence the need for a holistic, comprehensive plan.

Bees therefore need your intervention. At the Bee Summit on 28 June, which Friends of the Earth will host jointly with the Women's' Institute, Waitrose and the Cooperative Group, a new group will be launched, including farmers, beekeepers, retailers, growers, scientists and conservation organisations, as well as government officials, to take forward work on a Bee Action Plan. Soon thereafter, it will begin work on a UK-wide, comprehensive Bee Action Plan.

When Lord de Mauley takes to the podium during the Summit, he will be presented with the greatest possible opportunity to launch a government-led Bee Action Plan. Your support for a government Bee Action Plan prior to our summit would send a clear and irresistible signal to all those involved to move from discussion to action.

We urge you to step in. Bees need you and they need a government-driven Bee Action Plan.

Buzzing with activity – This appeared in the Bromley Times recently

Bee campaigner Judy Palmer on the group's work

Bromley Friends of the Earth is run entirely by volunteers with the aim of promoting environmental issues and understanding in the borough of Bromley. We are affiliated to the national Friends of the Earth organisation but completely independent of it.

The group has been going strong for 36 years and is as active as ever. Current local activities include fighting inappropriate development proposals and defending the green belt, lobbying MPs and councillors and getting involved in issues such as road congestion, lack of public transport and opposing Biggin Hill Airport's expansion.

We are also delighted to hear the news that bees minister Lord de Mauley has announced that the government will launch a bee action plan (national pollinator strategy). According to the British Beekeepers Association, one in three mouthfuls of food we eat is dependent on pollination by bees. It is a growing concern that Britain's bees have been dwindling from 50 native species in the 1950s down to just 25 at present.

We'd like to thank the many Bromley residents who gave their support to this important national campaign with more than 20,000 petition signatures.

Along with the campaigning, we are very pleased that the work we have been doing in Bromley for our "Bee World Site", to protect an area of

Tugmutton Common for bees and other pollinators, is the sort of thing the government now agrees needs to be done. The site on Tugmutton Common, in Locksbottom, is a local project to transform part of the area into a wildflower haven for bees.

Bromley FoE and the Friends of Tugmutton teamed up earlier this year to prepare the site and sow wild seeds. Just a few months on and the site is flourishing with wild flowers. We are really pleased we can show how it is possible, with a little teamwork, to bring back essential wild flowers that the bees desperately need to survive.

Hewitts Farm introduce a box scheme

Hewitts Farm in Chelsfield has introduced a fresh fruit and vegetable Box System. You can have your fresh produce delivered directly to your door either on a one off, or a regular basis.

At Hewitts they are offering a "Design Your Own Unique Box", or simply a good selection of whatever is seasonal and fresh at that particular time of year.

If you would like to find out more please phone 07768 105669 or email: hewittsfarmorders@gmail.com.

Of course, if you wish to personally select your own produce, the farm shop, at the farm, is open seven days a week for personal shoppers.

Campaigns, Climate and Energy – Ann Garrett

Shale Gas tax row

Energy companies are to be handed huge tax breaks in the hope that it sparks shale gas in Britain. They will have to pay just 30% of tax on production - half the previous 62 % rate. The move hailed as the most generous government tax regime of its kind in the world, is to encourage controversial fracking techniques to tap into gas reserves.

Environmental groups are outraged by this proposal saying it will lead to gas-flaring in the Home Counties, and a stream of contaminated trucks running down country lanes.

Andrew Pendleton from FoE has stated: "Promising tax hand-outs to polluting energy companies that threaten our communities and environment, when everyone else is being told to tighten their belts, is a disgrace."

The government see it as a way of creating jobs, reducing energy imports and cutting energy bills. But this is at great cost, when the reality of the fracking process begins to pollute water beds and cause methane poisoning to rise in the air.

Lawrence Carter of Greenpeace, said "We are likely to see the industrialisation of large tracks of the English countryside."

Our group will learn about opposition actions and more technicalities of the fracking business, from our speaker Darren Ollerton from the Brighton anti-fracking group, in September.

The Trashcatchers Ball

An interesting 'happening' has been taking place at Morley College where I teach drama, involving volunteers in a process of creating artefacts, costumes, puppets, and musical instruments from waste cans, glass, paper, cardboard, and even shopping trolleys and fridges.

Morley College in partnership with four artists in residence and a youth organisation Phakama have staged a two week sustainable arts project examining the issues of waste and consumerism. The idea was to create beauty from rubbish in preparation for an evening of party and performance (The Trashcatchers Ball), and to raise awareness and have fun at the same time. Funding was provided the Lottery, Youth in Action, the Arts Council, and Queen Mary University.

Climate Change and Evolution

Despite the fact that species have adapted to climate change conditions over many years, their rate of change is turning out to be painfully slow at present according to a study by Professor John Wiens of the University of Arizona.

The results show that most land animals will not be able to evolve quickly enough to adapt to the dramatically warming climate expected by 2100.

Many species are facing extinction, and global temperatures are expected to rise by about 4 degrees over the next 100 years according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The study is generally critical of climate change deniers, many of whom are policy makers.

Red Kite seen over Chelsfield – Peter Gandolfi reports

There have been sightings in May, (one of these was during the FoE visit to Court Lodge Farm recently), of red kites seen hunting over the Chelsfield area. These magnificent birds of prey are distinctive because of their forked tail and striking colour - predominantly chestnut red with white patches under the wings and a pale grey head.

They have a wingspan of nearly two metres (about five-and-a-half-feet), but a relatively small body weight, making the bird very agile, and allowing it to stay in the air for many hours with hardly a beat of its wings.

Although common in the past, the bird was perceived as a threat to expanding agriculture. And was persecuted to the extent that by the late 18th Century, Red Kites had bred for the last time in England and Scotland.



Only in rural Mid Wales did Red Kites hang on, their numbers down to just a few pairs, but now a reintroduction scheme has brought them back to many parts of England and Scotland,

and their numbers are increasing. They are now quite commonly seen when travelling along the M4 or M40 through the Chilterns, and they are now being sighted as far away as Kent.

Red Kites are neither particularly strong nor aggressive despite being large birds. Primarily a scavenger Red Kites are however predators and take a wide variety of live prey, ranging from earthworms to small mammals, amphibians and birds.

Plastic bags to cost 5p each

Annette Rose reports: The Scottish Government has announced that shoppers will pay 5p per single-use bag from October next year.

Scottish Environment Secretary, Richard Lochhead said 'We are taking decisive action. Discarded carrier bags highlight our throwaway society. A small charge should encourage us all to stop and think about what we discard and what can be reused.'

This means that England is now the only part of Britain with no charge for plastic bags. In Wales, the 5p levy in 2011 prompted a fall of up to 90% in the number given out and has raised tens of thousands for good causes.

Keep Britain Tidy's Andy Walker said 'England is fast being left behind when it comes to measures to reduce plastic bag litter.'

Western black rhino declared extinct, from Judy Palmer

Africa's western black rhino is now officially extinct according to the latest review of animals and plants by the world's largest conservation network.

The subspecies of the black rhino - which is classified as "critically endangered" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species - was last seen in western Africa in 2006. The IUCN warns that other rhinos could follow saying Africa's northern white rhino is "teetering on the brink of extinction" while Asia's Javan rhino is "making its last stand" due to continued poaching and lack of conservation.

"In the case of the western black rhino and the northern white rhino the situation could have had very different results if the suggested conservation measures had been implemented," Simon Stuart, chair of the IUCN species survival commission said.

Stuart added: "The IUCN points to conservation efforts which have paid off for the southern white rhino subspecies which have seen populations rise from less than 100 at the end of the 19th century to an estimated wild population of 20,000 today."

The latest update to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species reviews more than 60,000 species, concluding that 25% of mammals on the list are at risk of extinction.

Many plants are also under threat, say the IUCN. Populations of Chinese fir, a conifer which was once widespread

throughout China and Vietnam, is being threatened by the expansion of intensive agriculture according to the IUCN.

A type of yew tree (*taxus contorta*) found in Asia which is used to produce Taxol (a chemotherapy drug) has been reclassified from "vulnerable" to "endangered" on the IUCN Red List, as has the Coco de Mer -- a palm tree found in the Seychelles islands -- which is at risk from fires and illegal harvesting of its kernels.

Recent studies of 79 tropical plants in the Indian Ocean archipelago revealed that more than three quarters of them were at risk of extinction.

In the oceans, the IUCN reports that five out of eight tuna species are now "threatened" or "near threatened," while 26 recently-discovered amphibians have been added to the Red List including the "blessed poison frog" (classified as vulnerable) while the "summers' poison frog" is endangered.

"This update offers both good and bad news on the status of many species around the world," Jane Smart, director of IUCN's global species program said in a statement. "We have the knowledge that conservation works if executed in a timely manner, yet, without strong political will in combination with targeted efforts and resources, the wonders of nature and the services it provides can be lost forever."

This info came from FoE's biodiversity email list.

FoE slams Government planning guidance on fracking

New planning guidance for local authorities on fracking, announced by the Government, has been slammed by Friends of the Earth.

The environment charity says the planning guidance will ride roughshod over local concerns about shale gas exploration and extraction, with little regard for its impact on the wellbeing of local people or the environment. Friends of the Earth also hit out at the Government's refusal to consult the public on its plans, taking away the voice of local people.

Friends of the Earth Head of Campaigns Andrew Pendleton said: "These 'guidelines' are little more than a carte blanche to dispatch dirty energy companies into the British countryside to start sinking thousands of new fracking wells - and without any consultation. This could threaten communities' quality of life and will mean more climate-changing pollution being pumped into our atmosphere - and despite all the hype, there's plenty of evidence that it won't lead to cheaper fuel bills. These damaging proposals should be ripped up and replaced with planning guidelines that safeguard the long-term future of people and the planet."

Friends of the Earth says the Government's planning guidance for local authorities on fracking is not fit for purpose because:

- It undermines UK commitments ' to help secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions' - as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012

- It fails to ensure that groundwater pollution is prevented
- It doesn't specify that comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessments are conducted for all applications
- The plans are not subject to public consultation.

Notes to editors:

1. The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (national planning guidance for England) says (paragraph 93) 'Planning plays a key role in helping shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions'.
2. The EU Water Framework Directive says that the presumption in relation to groundwater should broadly be that it should not be polluted at all - and takes what is essentially a precautionary approach to ensure this happens. It comprises a prohibition on direct discharges to groundwater, and (to cover indirect discharges) a requirement to monitor groundwater bodies so as to detect changes in chemical composition, and to reverse any anthropogenically induced upward pollution trend. Taken together, these should ensure the protection of groundwater from all contamination, according to the principle of minimum anthropogenic impact.
3. Last week the Environment Committee of the European Parliament called for comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessments for all fracking applications.

RWE npower halts Tilbury biomass development

This comes from Biofuelwatch via Ann Garrett

RWE npower has suspended development of a dedicated biomass power plant at Tilbury Power Station blaming lack of detail in the Energy Bill and difficult market conditions. The company announced the move in a statement released yesterday, confirming work would be halted while "options on project feasibility are assessed and reviewed".

The former coal plant was due to close this year due to the EU's Large Combustion Plant Directive (LCPD), which mandates polluting facilities to shut after 20,000 hours of operation or by the end of 2015. RWE npower began work to convert the plant to biomass in 2011, in a move designed to develop what would have been the largest biomass power station in the world.

But a spokeswoman said RWE's company-wide cost reduction programme had impacted the level of capital available for the project, while lack of policy clarity meant making an investment decision at this point was impossible.

The plant will now close on 31 October and unless the company decides to recommence work on the conversion project it will then be decommissioned. However, RWE npower is still going ahead with the planning process and the company has not ruled out reviving the project in the future or even selling the plant, the spokeswoman said.

In the statement, Roger Miesen, chief technical officer at RWE Generation, added: "This decision has not been taken lightly. Tilbury remains a good site for future power generation. RWE still believes that biomass has a role to play in future power generation and will continue to progress options at strategic sites."

The news comes after the government last week released details of guaranteed payments for electricity generated from green sources, known as strike prices, which included values of £105 per megawatt hour for biomass conversion plants of between 1.2GW and 4GW of capacity.

However, the industry expressed concern that details for dedicated biomass were not revealed and the planned award of Final Investment Decision (FID) contracts designed to encourage earlier investment in certain clean energy projects have been pushed back to March 2014.

However, a spokesperson for the Renewable Energy Association said it was "very disappointing that the world's largest 100 per cent biomass power station is going to close, particularly as npower themselves described it as "a success both commercially and technically"".

"Biomass is a key technology for bridging the looming capacity gap with flexible, quick-to-build, low carbon plant, and has a valuable role to play balancing out intermittent generation from other renewables," they added.

CAAT says – Stop The Arms Fair

Not welcome here

A massive arms fair is planned to take place in the UK in September 2013. The UK government plans to invite human rights abusing regimes, such as Algeria, Bahrain, Columbia, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam to the London arms fair to court them and sell weapons.

Hundreds of companies will be there - and there are few limits on who is welcome. Assad's Russian arms suppliers, Israeli companies displaying "battle-tested" weapons and the companies supplying teargas used in Turkey, Brazil and Bahrain have all booked to attend.

Instead of condemning this event, the UK government will be there promoting and supporting it: with our money, and with civil servants, representatives of the armed forces and Government ministers.

The deals that begin here fuel the arms trade the world over. Death, injury, fear and repression are exported from the arms companies on our doorstep. This shouldn't be happening. Help us stop it.

We can make a difference

Our actions are making it harder for the arms trade to operate. By speaking out together last year we put an end to the National Gallery's sponsorship by an arms company. This year Guildford Cathedral cancelled an arms trade dinner and BAE moved its AGM out of London - but we still took over the meeting with tough questioning and creative action.

Now the Government's arms sales unit is trying to keep the location of its events secret, claiming protests would make arms companies less likely to attend. A concerted campaign in Australia stopped their arms fair in 2008. Can you help do the same here?

The arms fair may take place in London, but the exhibitors are located at hundreds of sites across the UK. Our map of the arms trade can help you find your nearest arms company. Visit www.caat.org.uk/on-our-doorstep.

What next?

Alert your local paper: John Warren contacted his local paper when he discovered a St Albans- based firm had been granted licences to supply weapons to Bahrain, where democracy protesters have been killed, tortured and imprisoned. So far, the paper has run two stories and an anonymous warehouse site has been exposed as arming repressive regimes.

Arms not their main business? For some of the companies that exhibit at the arms fair, military sales are not their main business. This inspired one CAAT supporter to write to all the exhibitors in Northamptonshire encouraging them not to taint their reputation by attending the arms fair.

Plan an action: During the last arms fair, people in Hastings blockaded General Dynamics; earlier this year students occupied another of their offices too. A photo stunt can help raise awareness, and step up the pressure on the arms fair. Get in touch with us to order an action pack!

Make it Better Campaign Update, Annette Rose

Annette Rose found this on FoE's website

Apple's statement on Bangka

For 6 months Apple has responded with public silence to evidence of child labour and environmental destruction in its supply chains. But is it finally crumbling?

At last Apple has released a statement about Bangka Island on www.apple.com:

'Recent concerns about the illegal mining of tin from this region prompted Apple to lead a fact-finding visit to learn more....we are helping to fund a new study on mining in the region so we can better understand the situation.'

It's great news that Friends of the Earth supporters have forced Apple to reconsider its stance on Bangka tin mining. This proves that all your emails, press releases and our stunts in Apple stores around the country are making a difference.

But this statement is far from enough.

Tin is used in iPhones, iPads and many other electronics as tin-rich solder. Allegations of child labour in Bangka's unregulated unofficial mining sector are common. We don't believe Apple is fully committed to helping these children until it admits that it gets tin from the island. Apple needs to come clean about its supply chains.

Recycle Your Old Electrical Equipment, from Peter Gandolfi

A bit out of date now – but there was a Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment (WEEE) recycling bank at Chelsfield Primary School from Monday 1 July until Friday 5 July and all were welcome to recycle their old electrical items.

The school was taking part in WEEE Free Week, with the chance of winning £500, as well as the collection being of benefits to residents.

Save the Royal Bell

John Street writes: Bromley Arts and Community Initiative is a group set up to try to save the Royal Bell in Bromley High Street and convert it into a community pub / café and arts venue.

Currently the Royal Bell is standing empty and is gradually deteriorating through lack of attention.

Bromley Arts and Community Initiative is in the process of organising a public meeting for Wednesday 4th September at Bromley Civic Centre in an attempt to gain public support for what's ahead.

You can read more about this initiative on the web at:

<http://bromleyartsandcommunity.blogspot.co.uk/>

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Bee Cause

Judy Palmer, *judy.palmer@talk21.com*

Monthly Meeting reporters:

Sue Bocock, Anne Clark, Graham Hemington, Annette Rose and Ray Watson

Merchandising:

Anne Clark 020-8289-8483

Teas:

Anne Clark / Ivy Smith

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.

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!

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.

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.

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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