



friends of
the earth
Bromley



Bromley FoE: enquiries:
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August 2017
No. 356

newsletter

August Meeting

CHANGE
OF →
VENUE

*Bromley Parish Church meeting rooms,
Church Road, Bromley, BR2 0EG*

A 'Do-It-Ourselves' Night

*A short summer quiz followed by a little poetry reading
with extra time for campaigning chat
PLUS tea and cake*

Tuesday 1st August – 7.30pm

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

***** SUNDAY 20TH AUGUST *****

Contact details inside front cover.

Diary dates:

Aug 1st (Tue)

Bromley FoE's August meeting: No speaker this time; we're having a 'do-it-yourself' evening with quiz, poetry, campaigning chat plus tea and cake
NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE

Aug 28th (Mon)

Sep 2nd (Sat)

Cudham Village Fete, Cudham Recreation Ground
Progressive Bromley Film Co-op "We the people of Ireland"
Friends Meeting House, 6 pm shared food, 7pm film
(no film during August)

Sep 6th (Tue)

Bromley FoE's September Meeting – Bumblebees
Nikki Gammans

August Meeting – Tuesday 1st August 2017

A relaxed, informal meeting with more time to discuss campaigns, share news, do a quiz and hear some environmental poetry.

NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE

Due to refurbishment work at Friends Meeting House, our August meeting will take place at The Parish Rooms, Bromley Parish Church (behind Primark). There is limited parking but the Hill car park is nearby. Coming from the Market Square, walk along Church Road, keeping the church on your left, and the meeting rooms are at the far end of the church on your left.

Re-User Item [1]:

2 green canvas Bukta hawk 2 person tents. One with fly sheet. Donation to Bromley FoE. Buyer collects.

Chislehurst. E R Greenwood. 01689 897394

Disclaimer: *Please note that any opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of Bromley Friends of the Earth or of 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 20TH 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 – ActionAid – Sheila Brown

James Farndon from ActionAid came to talk to us about tackling Tax Havens and the impact of corporate tax dodging in developing countries, particularly on women and girls.

ActionAid is a leading international charity that was set up over 40 years ago and is active in 45 countries. Their mission is to eradicate poverty. They work with the poorest women and children in the world, wanting to change their lives for good. They demand action at local, national and international level.

ActionAid believe that poverty exists because the global economic system tips the scales against the world's poorest people. Eradicating poverty is not a distant dream, but is achievable by tackling the root causes of poverty, not just the symptoms. They work with communities across the globe and with over 2000 partner organisations, from small community groups to alliances and international networks. They work with over 15 million people, in 45 countries worldwide. Their head office is in South Africa.

Why does tax matter for developing countries? - We constantly hear about big companies like Starbucks, Amazon and Uber avoiding paying tax in the countries where they operate. More recently Chancellor Phillip Hammond warned that the UK may slash taxes and move towards a corporate tax haven model if it's not given the deal the government wants when exiting the EU.

Whether and where taxes are paid matters because it is developing

countries which end up paying the biggest price for tax avoidance. Taxes are the building blocks of society – they pay for essential public services like schools, roads and hospitals. So when they are not paid, it is these countries which suffer.

What is the difference between tax avoidance and tax evasion? Tax avoidance is “legal” but tax evasion is not. In 2007 HSBC was shown to be implicated in supporting clients hiding money in Swiss bank accounts. The bank now faces criminal investigations in the US, France, Belgium and Argentina, but not in the UK, where HSBC is based. The financial conduct authority in the UK decided not to take formal action but instead to “look at practices inside the bank”.

Big companies use tax havens for legally avoiding tax, and this is not secret. Companies and people use them for illegally evading tax, hiding behind anonymous shell companies. Tax evasion is illegal and is seen as deliberately breaking the rules and deceiving the tax authorities.

Amazon set up a ‘holding’ company in Luxembourg – a company whose purpose is to own shares of other companies; so they record their sales in Luxembourg and benefit from low tax rates there and were able to achieve a tax bill of £4.2 million (\$5.86 million) on the back of £4.3 billion (\$6 billion) worth of sales in the UK. That's 0.1%! Due to huge public pressure, Amazon have now started recording their sales in the UK and across

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July meeting report – *continued*

Europe, so after 11 years they've started paying tax in the UK!

What impact does tax avoidance

have? Developing countries are thought to miss out on \$200 billion a year to corporate tax avoidance. This would be enough to

- educate all 59 million children who currently don't go to primary school
- AND provide the agricultural investment (\$42.7 billion) needed to achieve a world free from hunger,
- AND meet international goals to reduce ill health more than twice over (\$58.9 billion).

The global tax system makes the world more unequal; women and children suffer disproportionately. Kenya, for example, has some of the highest maternal and child mortality rates in the world with one in 20 children dying before their fifth birthday.

Education is the key to women's empowerment, but if fees are expensive it will be the girls' education that is sacrificed. Girls often give up on education due to threats to their safety, having to walk in dark areas with fear of attack. Greater tax revenue could enable greater investment in public transport and street lighting, which is fundamental to women's safety.

ActionAid campaigned hard against Barclays to stop promoting Mauritius as a tax haven. This was successful: Barclays withdrew their promotion of Mauritius.

SAB Miller, the huge brewing company which owns Grolsch and Fosters, avoided £20 million tax a year across Africa and India. ActionAid's successful campaign resulted in the African Union introducing transparency legislation to identify when companies are dodging tax.

Leading up to the 2015 General Election ActionAid called on parties to introduce a tax dodging bill if elected; most parties signed up to this – but not the Conservatives. In 2016 they introduced a joint campaign with ActionAid Malawi “**Make Tax Fair. Everywhere**”.

A tax treaty exists between Malawi and the UK, with UK companies operating in Malawi paying no tax to the Malawi government. Malawi is the poorest country in the world and money is desperately needed to pay for vital public services. There does seem to be some real progress with the Government renegotiating the treaty with Malawi and looking at the impacts of similar UK tax treaties with the world's poorest countries.

In 2017 ActionAid has been campaigning not to turn the UK into a tax haven, exerting pressure to make companies reveal profits and amount of taxes they pay and to get UK-linked tax havens to publish a register of real owners of companies and to introduce plans to stop using tax havens. At the G20 it is hoped that countries will reaffirm their commitment to tackle tax dodging and an announcement of a tax havens black list is expected – but will this have any effect?

Hinkley Point

The bill for the controversial Hinkley Point C nuclear power plant has soared by £1.5 billion and faces significant delays as after the consortium leader EDF admitted the work was more complicated than anticipated.

The plant is now expected to cost about £19.6 billion after EDF said it had 'a better understanding' of the project. The completion date of the site could also overrun by up to 15 months past a 2025 deadline, adding £700 billion of costs. The overall case for the project has weakened since it was put forward in 2013.

Fukushima Update

Three former executives with the operator of the destroyed Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant have pleaded not guilty to charges of professional negligence. This is the only criminal action targeting officials since the disaster six years ago.

Prosecutors have alleged that the 3 TEPCO (Tokyo Electric Power Company Organisation) executives had been shown data that suggested that a tsunami more than 10 metres high could cause a power outage and other serious consequences.

Fracking

Bailiffs have moved in to evict anti-fracking campaigners at the Leith Hill, Surrey, site. Brave campaigners had chained themselves together.

Energy exploitation firm Europa Gas and Oil has been granted planning permission to drill for shale gas at

Leith Hill - an area of outstanding natural beauty near Dorking.

Police attended but said they were only there to monitor the situation, and there is still support from local residents.

Climate Change - G20 Summit

The summit has ended without agreement, mainly due to Donald Trump's withdrawal of the US from the Paris Accord. He is still determined to develop the fossil fuel industries on the grounds of jobs. This is proving very frustrating and disappointing for those countries that have a sense of urgency and want to co-operate in reducing CO2 emissions.

The final communiqué placed new emphasis on trade deals being non-discriminatory towards developing countries, protecting free market economics across the board.

Transport News

Delivery giant UPS is to hold trials of radical new delivery tricycles which aim to tackle congestion and clean up London's air.

The electrically- assisted machines will be used for 'last mile' deliveries, taking packages from central stores to customers.

Biggin Hill Airport

Expansion will be aided by a £2.2 million, 60,000 sq ft new hanger for executive jets. Construction is already under way for the steel structure, which will provide parking space for 11 jets alongside office space.
/final para on page 7

Bees & Pesticides

A huge thank you has come down from Friends of the Earth to everyone who took part in this year's Bee Count.

Over 300,000 bees were logged by over 16,000 people and all the counts are now being verified; we will get the official results later in the year. Hopefully lots of you were out there, enjoying the summer and the bees!

The results from a large field trial have been published saying that the use of the **neonic pesticides** does indeed harm honeybees and wild bees. The study comes from the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and is the biggest study of these pesticides in the real world – covering a crop area equivalent to 3,000 football pitches.

So we need to ensure that the ban on their use stays in place permanently. Apparently the new environment minister, Mr Gove, when questioned on this subject recently, said he won't dilute any environmental standards, plus mentioning that the UK needs to enhance protection when we leave the EU. He said that our bees need protecting and he will not compromise on that – amazing news don't you think? We need to make sure he keeps his word!

A bit of good **nature news** coming out from Northern Ireland – dredging of a 'wildlife jewel' Lough Neagh has been legally ordered to be stopped. Apparently up to 2 million tons of sand has been suction-dredged from the bed of the Lough every year without planning permission or other authorisation. The Lough is in a

Special Protection Area, so shame on them! The N. Ireland government now needs to put in place a system to manage the Lough sustainably. This decision also has implications for the protection of all our nature sites.

Watery news

After the recent spell of really dry and hot weather, the WWF have published a report on our river beds drying out due to over-extraction and poor management. The organisation feels that the Government isn't doing enough to protect our rivers from the effects of climate change. Any drought which occurs now will have a devastating knock-on effect to our wildlife and cost the country billions of pounds. The Environment Agency says that it has made changes to abstraction licences and is examining a range of ways to further protect the environment.

Plastics in the Oceans and the RSPB and Sky Ocean Rescue – the RSPB is helping to raise awareness of how badly our marine world is suffering from the excess of plastic in the seas. Would you believe that some experts are saying that by 2050 the amount of plastic in the oceans will outweigh the fish? At an RSPB reserve in W. Sussex the tide comes in twice a day and brings in this plastic detritus which spreads out across the wetlands into the bird's habitats. In fact one of the volunteers has collected 250 bin-bags full of rubbish over 40 days from the reserve.

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Nature News – continued

One suggestion which is being mooted for reducing the amount of plastic we use in our everyday life is for a 'plastic-free aisle' in supermarkets. There are new technologies out there such as bio-plastics, and wax-free paper and card, so there are alternative options to just plastic. One quote I read was that the average length of time single-use plastic is useful is just 11 minutes – but the plastic lives forever.....

The true cost of plastic needs to be totalled up – costs of recycling, landfill,

council costs, plus how about our health when we are exposed to the chemicals used to make plastics in the first place?

Bromley Biodiversity Partnership posters – here is the latest species poster to help raise awareness in the borough of our priority species which are in decline, and it is the swift. If you see one of these migrant birds this year, please let the recorders know by following the instructions on the poster.

Save our Swifts!

Swifts can live up to 19 years and spend most of their lives on the wing, only landing to nest and raise young. They arrive in the UK in May to breed, nesting high on buildings, often under the eaves. They leave in August to return to southern Africa, but the number arriving in the UK declined by 47% 1995-2014 and in Bromley numbers recorded are now very low. Reasons for the decline include loss of nest sites, reduction in insect food, and changing climate. Listen for their screaming cries and look for their crescent shapes as they fly at great speed high above us, feeding on small flying insects and spiders. They often fly in groups. Please let us know if you see one!



E-mail the date, place (postcode or grid reference) and number seen to Bromley Biodiversity Partnership at bromleybiodiversity@gmail.com Your information will enable local targeted habitat improvements

How You Can Help Swifts:

- Put up swift boxes
- Ask for swift bricks to be included in new builds
- Be careful not to disturb existing nests .
- If swifts are present do not work on walls or roofs May-August
- For more information about swifts see: www.swift-conservation.org

Bromley Biodiversity Partnership is a partnership of local groups, organisations and individuals with specific expertise committed to protecting, enhancing and celebrating biodiversity within the London Borough of Bromley.

This is the last poster for this year, and just to re-cap the following species have been featured: bullfinches, hedgehogs, small tortoiseshell butterfly, stag beetles and toads, together with the swift. So, please, should you see one or more of any of these species this year, please let the recorders know! Many thanks.

Final para of Climate, Energy and Transport:

The airport's ambitious growth plans will see it create 2,300 jobs by 2030 in the field of business aviation and technology.

Bromley Council and Divestment – Paul Enock

At the Bromley Council meeting on Monday 26th June, Cllr Vanessa Allen (Lab., Clock House) addressed to the Portfolio Holder for Resources (Cllr Graham Arthur, Con. Hayes & Coney Hall) the following written question:

“As part of the effort to combat global warming and climate change, fossil fuels should stay in the ground and not be exploited. The cost of global warming is often picked up locally, for example in the shape of damage by extreme weather such as storms. Bromley is one of many local authorities investing in companies involved with seeking new fossil fuel resources. As it is possible and indeed almost mainstream nowadays to invest in and make returns from fossil free fuels, please would the Portfolio Holder look into the options and make the appropriate changes.”

This was the last of 15 written questions, and the response to it by the ruling party was exceptional in that no fewer than three Conservative councillors (Cllrs Arthur, Stephen Carr and Simon Fawthrop) stood up to oppose the proposal. Their responses attempted to dismiss disinvestment as financially unsound, against the interests of pension holders and “ideological”, and to discredit the (climatological) science and economics behind it.

Cllr Arthur cited the thrifty record of Bromley’s financial housekeeping, noting that while many councils have to pay interest on their debts, Bromley, with savings of £300 million, is in a position of being able to receive interest. He did not, however, make

explicit in what way this fact was relevant to the question posed – presumably Cllr Arthur wished to imply that divesting from fossil fuel exposure is financially risky or less lucrative than investing in the top 200 fossil-fuel explorers.

However, Cllr Arthur must know that many authoritative voices are currently arguing exactly the opposite case. For example, in their *2017 Emerging Risks Report*, insurers Lloyds of London quote the Governor of the Bank of England, Martin Carney:

“While a given physical manifestation of climate change – a flood or storm – may not directly affect a corporate bond’s value, policy action to promote the transition towards a low-carbon economy could spark a fundamental reassessment.” Stranded Assets, page 04

Similarly, Cllr Fawthrop opined that with the interests of pension holders at stake, “better to take professional advice than to respond to ideological decisions”. Perhaps, then, we should heed the two following statements from ‘professionals’, and join them together in the context of a responsible Council investment policy.

The first statement comes from the same council meeting. Speaking about the Grenfell tower tragedy, his colleague Cllr Carr assured: “The safety of our residents is always our highest priority”.

The second statement is from the 2017 Risk Assessment Report by the /continued on next page

Bromley Council and Divestment – continued

Government's Committee on Climate Change:

"The global climate is changing, with greenhouse gas emissions from human activity the dominant cause. ... New, stronger or different government policies or implementation activities – over and above those already planned – are needed to reduce long-term vulnerability to climate change. ... These [vulnerabilities] include the exposure of interdependent infrastructure networks to multiple, correlated hazards (e.g. flooding and high winds), as well as the vulnerability of certain infrastructure types to specific hazards (e.g. road surfaces to high temperatures). Air quality in both urban and rural areas could deteriorate further through climate change ... There are also uncertain but potentially very significant international risks arising from climate-related human displacement, and the possibility of violent interstate conflict over scarce natural resources." (CCRA Synthesis Report 2017)

The attempts to undermine climate science were equally challengeable.

One argument was that one cannot credit statistics about climate change because reports in the Guardian newspaper had over time given different figures for the amount of oil that is 'unburnable'.

The answer to this objection is, of course, simply that the Guardian is not itself the authority for these figures, but has merely been reporting widely accepted scientific data, such as the following from Christophe McGlade &

Paul Ekins of University College London:

"globally, a third of oil reserves, half of gas reserves and over 80 per cent of current coal reserves should remain unused from 2010 to 2050 in order to meet the target of 2° C."

McGlade & Ekins continue:

"Implementation of this policy commitment would also render unnecessary continued substantial expenditure on fossil fuel exploration, because any new discoveries could not lead to increased aggregate production." (Nature 458, 1158–1162)

Another argument was that even if we don't use it as a fuel, we will still need plenty of oil for making plastics. This is equally easily dismissed: According to the British Plastics Federation, only 4% of current oil production is used in making plastic, and even this amount is not really needed:

"To make plastics we need hydrogen and carbon which are freely available in the atmosphere. Today the most convenient way of accessing them is by taking them out of oil, to provide the hydrocarbons ethylene, propylene, styrene etc. But hydrocarbons can also be made from methane, coal and biomass (e.g. bio-ethanol). Other possible raw materials for plastics are: starch; cellulose; sugars; lactic acid; organic waste; vegetable oils; micro-organisms – even the atmosphere itself!"

http://www.bpf.co.uk/Press/Oil_Consumption.aspx

Food Farming Sustainability – Mary Bassendine, Sevenoaks FoE

What a delicious variety of food we are able to buy now from all over the world. But is this wonderful diet sustainable in the long run? What are the challenges that the UK and food providers face? What is happening in our backyard, in Kent?

Howard Porter and Tonbridge FOE organised a conference at Bore Place bringing together our Kent agricultural college, farmers and producers. This is what I learnt.

THE CHALLENGES: Dr Howard Lee, Lecturer at Hadlow College, Kent

Population - 90% of the UK population now live in towns or cities and this is a worldwide trend. Food is grown outside the city and has to be transported into the city. This demands a complex infrastructure and intense use of energy.

Climate change is happening and is affecting crops. Episodes of climate change have happened before and have resulted in widespread shortages and famine. These include the Year without a Summer 1815, caused by the eruption of Mount Tambora in Indonesia. The freaky weather we are experiencing results from the gradual, but persistent rise in CO2 emissions since the Industrial Revolution and is affecting all parts of the globe. Watch this animated video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gH6fQh9eAQE>

Some resources essential for food production are non-renewable but are being used up at an unsustainable rate

e.g. oil and phosphate, used in fertiliser production.

The frozen chain and chill chain are a vital part of the logistics of our continuous food supply, but they are heavy consumers of energy and are liable to shocks if the electricity supply fails.

Urban/ Rural Balance:

The seismic growth of London makes special demands on food availability and puts pressure on the surrounding rural areas. How do we balance housing need, food production and biodiversity?

Edible Mapping – Mikey Tomkins has developed an edible map of Hackney visualising how food might be grown in 25 hectares of land within the London Borough. See www.mikeytomkins.co.uk

Continuous Productive Urban Landscapes CPUL is a design concept integrating food production into the design of cities and linking these with the countryside.

Brexit: Food Security is not an issue on anyone's agenda.

Large fruit growers are struggling with a shortage of seasonal workers.

Overall there is a need for detailed analysis and planning, with adequate investment and applied research focused on food production. Education needs to focus more on horticulture and agriculture as a career.

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Food Farming Sustainability – *continued*

Many new methods are being piloted, including the use of robots and the development of different crop varieties. (Not GM)

We need to plan for the random, unexpected Black Swan event. Nassim Nicholas Taleb is an academic, statistician and investment adviser who wrote an influential book entitled "The Black Swan" about unexpected events in human life and how humanity might cope with them.

We also need to have an international perspective. Many of our most treasured foods chocolate, coffee, nuts, seeds and grains cannot be grown in the UK. We suffer from a global apartheid, with equatorial countries which emit the least CO2 suffering most from the effects of climate change on their ability to grow food. This in turn drives climate migrants into the cities and refugee camps.

FARMING AND THE

ENVIRONMENT: Charles Tassell, a trustee of the Kent Wildlife Trust, has a 550 acre farm overlooking the Weald of Kent which grows arable crops and top fruit.
www.cfeonline.org.uk/resources/case-studies/case-study-charles-tassell-kent/

He told us about the **Campaign for the Farmed Environment**, a national organisation which encourages farmers and land managers to voluntarily adopt land management practices that will retain and exceed the environmental benefits that used to

be provided by set-aside. Environmental Stewardship schemes are coming to an end, but many farmers are keen to continue supporting wildlife on their farms.

LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming) is a global organisation promoting sustainable agriculture, food and farming. LEAF "helps farmers produce good food, with care and to high environmental standards." You may have seen their leaf logo on food products. They promote Open Farm Sunday and year-round farm visits to demonstration farms.

There are other farmers in Kent who are involved in environmental projects.

Grassland is decreasing in Kent and there needs to be more environmental focus on conserving and promoting rich grassland/meadow habitats to encourage biodiversity.

Find out about fruit-growers G.H. Dean of Sittingbourne, the wildflower meadows of Ranscombe Farm, the re-wilding project at Knepp Castle Estate and the old chalk/new chalk project: explorekent.org/old-chalk-new-downs is also worth a visit.

Fruit-growing has also declined, but more modern methods are rejuvenating production. Cherries are now grown under polytunnels. Different fruit varieties and efficient systems for growing apples and strawberries have been developed. The East Malling Research Station has been instrumental in this
www.emr.ac.uk/.

Supermarket threat to Fairtrade?

At the end of June, the Observer newspaper published an article headed "Move by UK supermarkets threatens to bring Fairtrade crashing down" written by John Vidal. Here's an edited version of that article, the full text of which can be found at

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/jun/24/fairtrade-crashing-down-sainsburys-tesco-tea-growers-nairobi>

When four Sainsbury's executives met farmers from some of Africa's biggest tea-growing co-operatives in a hotel in Nairobi last month it should have been a mutual celebration of Fairtrade, the gold standard of ethical trading and the world's most trusted and best-known food certification scheme.

But instead of backslapping at the Pride hotel, the world's largest retailer of Fairtrade products precipitated the greatest crisis in the scheme's 25-year history by telling the 13 major tea groups and their 228,000 co-operative members that it intended to drop the globally known Fairtrade mark for their produce, and replace it with the phrase "fairly traded".

In place of the strict rules devised by farmers' groups working with independent development experts to guarantee consumers that small-scale farmers are being rewarded with decent pay and bonuses, the £23bn-a-year retailer said it planned to set up its own in-house certification scheme, set new ethical standards and introduce a different way to pay the groups.

To add to the woes of the Fairtrade brand, it was revealed last week that Tesco will move all its own-label coffee from Fairtrade to another ethical certification scheme, the Rainforest Alliance. According to the Grocer, an industry magazine, this is likely to happen in 2018 and follows a similar announcement by the retailer earlier this year that it will do the same with its own-brand tea.

The farmers at the meeting with Sainsbury's, mostly from Malawi, Rwanda and Kenya, were nonplussed. "Why change a system that has worked well for 25 years for both poor farmers and large supermarkets?" asked one. Had not the supermarket reaped tens of millions of pounds' profit and huge moral kudos by pioneering Fairtrade and inviting customers to pay a bit more for their produce?

And in return for meeting Fairtrade's high social, labour and environmental standards, the small farmers have also benefited to the tune of millions of pounds from the British consumer's sense of fair play. "Has not everyone gained?" the tea farmers asked.

Because Sainsbury's is so important for Fairtrade, the company's move could be the beginning of the end of the scheme, and lead to lower social and labour standards, more hardship in developing countries and deep confusion among consumers, say some development and ethical trading groups.

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Supermarket threat to Fairtrade? – *continued*

According to people at the meeting, the more the Sainsbury's chiefs promised them contracts, advice and access to data, and told them the new in-house scheme would match their present income, the more worried they became.

Their fears centred on the "social premium", the money that Fairtrade provides to farmers on top of the guaranteed minimum price they get for their produce. This money, which can be worth many thousands of pounds a year to big producer groups, goes straight to the farmers who agree to spend it on social schemes such as pensions, sick pay or education which they themselves choose and control.

The premium money, it emerged at the meeting, was in future going to have to be approved by a new Sainsbury's foundation.

Sainsbury's insists that its new approach will benefit farmers. But it now faces consumer boycotts and is under heavy fire from African tea producers and international development and trading groups.

A statement signed by Oxfam, Cafod, Christian Aid, the Women's Institute and several major ethical trading and co-operative groups together representing millions of consumers, urged it to rethink its plans.

"The Fairtrade mark has become synonymous with ethical trade and quality for UK consumers. Sainsbury's new scheme risks undermining all that has been achieved over the last 25

years. The standards are unclear, and farmers and producers may no longer be able to decide themselves directly how the money raised is spent to help their communities," said the groups.

Letter to press from Bromley FoE re Sainsburys and Fairtrade

Dear Editor

Bromley Friends of the Earth are extremely concerned that Sainsburys is dropping the Fairtrade certification for tea, and replacing it with their own, calling it 'Fairly Traded'. This will be a move which could lower standards and see fewer rights for local communities in some of the world's poorest countries.

This move could also see the end of Fairtrade altogether. Instead of rigorous standards and independent audits, Sainsburys will set its own criteria.

We are appealing to Sainsburys to stick to its agreement with farmers and keep the Fairtrade labelling. For many people who care about Fairtrade the reputation of Sainsburys could be severely affected by its controversial decision.

We have a responsibility to protect the rights of farmers in less affluent countries than our own.

Sainsburys has always been highly regarded for its ethical standards and support of the arts: this move could endanger its good reputation in the eyes of many of its customers.

Letter to Bromley Council re Library Gardens

Bromley FoE have sent this letter to Bromley's Director of Corporate Services regarding the proposed sell-off of part of Library Gardens:

Bromley Friends of the Earth are extremely concerned that the Notice of Intention proposals are very premature; it is worrying that the Notice of Intention to sell the land to Countryside Properties Ltd was issued on June 20th 2017, before the public consultation on Site G has even started.

With regard to the Intention, Bromley Friends of the Earth object on the following grounds:

- Loss of public open green space; with the increasing building development happening and planned in Bromley, it is more important than ever that we do not lose our valued green places. Bromley Borough has prided itself on being "Clean and Green". It has been proved that people need green places and connection with nature.
- Loss of urban open space; the increased number of inhabitants in Bromley will have a greater need than ever to have open space.
- Any development likely to be harmful to the appearance of the conservation area.
- Threat of the loss of mature cedar tree; trees increase our quality of life by bringing natural elements and wildlife habitats into urban settings. They also provide

shade, which we are seeking during this current hot weather (and more of which we are told is likely to occur). There is an old Persian proverb, "Do not cut down the tree that gives you shade"

Look out for *Xylella Fastidiosa*!

Graham Hemington writes: A new plant and tree disease could devastate UK wildlife: it is *Xylella fastidiosa*. It is currently in Continental Europe and is expected to arrive in the UK in the near future by way of imported plants. Once here, it would be spread by sap-sucking insects. The disease affects plants and trees including oak, ash, sycamore and plane. No official guidance on identification, etc has been issued, as far as I know.

Re-wilding at Knepp Castle Estate

John Bassendine writes: The re-wilding project at Knepp Castle Estate was mentioned at the Food, Farming and Sustainability conference at Bore Place. Half-day safaris in a safari vehicle are £35 per person - there are no public footpaths through the site.

Knepp is a 3,500 acre estate in West Sussex just south of Horsham. The Estate has been owned by the Burrell family for over 220 years. At its heart, overlooking Knepp Lake, is a castle built by the architect John Nash, which remains the family home.

More info at <http://www.knepp.co.uk/>

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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, and 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, and Kent, BR6 7RN**. Other enquiries regarding the group: may be sent by email to *bromleyfoe@gmail.com*, or telephone our co-ordinators at the telephone numbers above.

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..... Telephone Number

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Email Address.....

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

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