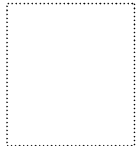


Friends of the Earth

Bromley

February 2010 No. 266 Newsletter

Bromley FoE: inquiries to Birch House, Grays Road, Westerham TN16 2JB
email: raywatson@iclway.co.uk; website: www.bromleyfoe.co.uk



February Meeting

Friends Meeting House,
Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

Ewa Prokop

Bromley's Countryside Projects Officer

**Biodiversity in Bromley
(How is Bromley doing in this Year of Biodiversity)**

Tuesday 2nd February

7.30pm.

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by
SUNDAY 14TH FEBRUARY. Contact details inside front cover.

Contributions Wanted – Contact Newsletter Editor at address on page 2

Diary dates:

February 2nd (Tues)

Bromley FoE's February meeting: Ewa Prokop on How Bromley is doing in the Year of Biodiversity

February 11th (Thurs)

Planning meeting: at John and Sue Bocock's house – 48 Seward Road, Bromley

February 27th (Sat)

Joint FoE / Greenpeace stall in Bromley High Street, outside Caffè Nero from 2 to 4pm

March 2nd (Tues)

Bromley FoE's March meeting – Local action in St Mary Cray

March 20th (Sat)

Bromley FoE's "Get Serious" stall in Bromley High Street

Visit to the Closed Loop Recycling Centre in Dagenham

Saturday 13th February 2010

This is one of only two recycling centres in the UK which specialise in recycling plastics.

Meet at Bromley South station at 9.30am. The site tour will start at 11.30am and will last between an hour and an hour and a half.

Bring a drink and a packed lunch. Please wear "sensible" shoes – no high heels allowed for health and safety reasons.

There's also the possibility of a visit to a nearby nature reserve, time and weather permitting.

More info from John and Sue Bocock on 020-8464-5990.

Contributions Wanted for the Newsletter

Please send contributions, up to 450 words, to the editor at the address below.

Next Newsletter - copy details:

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor **by SUNDAY 14TH FEBRUARY**

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

January meeting report, Ray Watson

Take a derelict, 120-year-old townhouse. Tear it apart from almost roof to basement. Insist on good environmental practice when it comes to all building work and selection of fittings. And what do you have? One of the finest eco houses in the country.

Our speaker, Chris Mead, told the story of the Southwark house from a special standpoint – he and his partner bought the house, ran the project and now live in the property. He was justly proud of all the eco-friendly steps they had taken to achieve their aim – and had done so without the house losing its Victorian character. Plus, they vastly reduced the cost of running the house. And they cut emissions by 80 per cent.

It is now one of London's greenest homes, winning awards and being featured on TV and radio.

They bought the house from Southwark Council in an auction and spent a year taking it apart and putting it together again to their environmental standards. It had been empty 10 years and every main service – from water to electricity – needed attention. The roof was leaking, floorboards rotted, plaster blown and almost everything else you could think of was wrong with it.

But they did their research, set a budget, and got to work. They did some of the labour but hired builders for much of the project. But, Chris warned, they found it necessary to hire only builders who would work to their environmental standards – much of the construction industry was just not 'green' in its working methods. For

instance, they did not understand the need to harvest rainwater, calling it an expensive option, or why high standards of insulation were required.

He emphasised that a major aspect of retro-fitting a house was to discover what environmentally sound products were on the market. This required a great deal of time to research, especially as they were keeping to a tight budget. They also had always to keep in mind the objective of ensuring that they used products that yielded a reasonable payback time.

Chris gave examples of work that saved energy and money. For instance, sheep's wool was used for part of the insulation – more expensive than just glass fibre padding but it gave such a saving in heating costs that it produced a quicker payback time of three and a half years.

Underfloor insulation to lag paperwork cost £100 but saved £50 annually, while attaching second-hand plaster board to exterior walls gave a saving of £470 in heating and a payback of just six months.

However, they rejected using double glazing for the windows because that would have spoiled the character of the house. Instead, they ensured that the windows were draught-proof.

Another objective was to cut water usage – normally about 150 litres per person per day. This was achieved by installing a water meter so they could monitor use, but primarily by installing

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Speeding on the wrong track?

There has been a lot of talk recently on proposals to build high-speed rail lines to connect our main cities – which sounds glamorous and eco-friendly. But some are querying both the need and the cost.

Among the virtues of new lines would be the ability to reduce domestic flights, thus helping aviation to meet its carbon-reduction targets. Others argue that demand is not there and that it would merely be a case of a few rich people travelling in comfort at a cost of billions. Some estimate that just one north-south link would cost £34 billion to construct, with £11 billion of that coming from public funds.

Indeed, even the carbon reduction argument is doubted by those who point to the emissions caused by building the rail line and operating it.

Professor John Whitelegg of York University has said: ‘This is a very large and expensive sledgehammer to crack a modestly-sized nut’. He counters claims that the project would create jobs by saying that for the same price we could create jobs by insulating 20 million homes; making every house a micro-generating station; improving local commuter lines around the country; bolstering international rail links and building 10,000kms of segregated cycle paths to connect every school, hospital and other public buildings.

He declares that if there is a demand for extra capacity on main line trains, then we should adopt the Swiss and German models of building double-

deck trains, and also re-open some of the lines closed in the 1960s.

So, although a high-speed rail project seems sexy and innovative, the argument is not clear cut. FoE will need to have a view on this because in a matter of weeks plans are to be put forward to the Government. It should be a lively argument.

US goes into reverse gear

This column has said before that the credit crunch and recession would also bring the occasional booster for the green cause. The latest example has come from – of all places – the USA, where the car is even more loved than in Britain.

Figures for 2008 show that for the first time since World War II more cars were scrapped than new ones came onto the roads. Fourteen million were taken off the road against the appearance of four million new ones. Mind you, that still left a whacking 246 million emitting greenhouse gases.

Of course, consumers reduced their buying through worries about their job – even in the face of deep discounts by troubled manufacturers. Meanwhile, the President’s scrappage bait of £3000 a vehicle saw 700,000 older cars and trucks taken to the knacker’s yard.

It is worth noting too, that the four million new cars made in 2008 compares with the 17 million that were made annually from 1999 and 2007. Is that love affair beginning to cool?

/continued on next page

January meeting report, *continued* + Transport info, *continued*

January report, continued

a large underground tank in the garden. This harvested rainwater for use in the toilets and washing machine. The cost of this was £2000 but the payback time was 5.7 years, which emphasised the point that some costs were heavier than they might have been, but one had to see the project as a long-term venture.

This was also part of the thinking in installing some roof solar heating panels and an air source heat pump to provide hot water for domestic use and for space heating. The pump cost £5100 but that and the panels used renewable energy and therefore met the environmental criteria they had set up and it also measured up well against installing a gas boiler using finite fuel.

Overall, said Chris, the decision to go for an eco house should be seen as an investment over 25 years. Plus: 'We don't just own the home we feel that we also own the fabric of it and also that we are closer to the environment'.

In answering many questions of the details of the project, Chris said help for those who wanted to embark on eco-friendly changes to their home – even if not as extensive as his project – could be found at the one-stop web site ReadySteadyEco.com.

AGM elections

The annual general meeting that followed saw the re-election of all current officers and the approval of the accounts. It was also agreed to send a donation to national FoE. Thanks were

offered to all those who help in ways big and small, to keep BFoE running smoothly thus ensuring that our campaigning could achieve its objectives. Two new campaigners had volunteered: Annette takes on waste and recycling and Jonathan energy and renewables.

Transport info, continued

Gatwick, mega polluter

Figures that incriminate Gatwick Airport as a major polluter are absolutely reliable – they come from the airport itself.

In a survey of its emissions, the airport calculates that CO2 emitted by aircraft taxi-ing, landing or taking off amounted to 4.4million tonnes in 2005. This calculation covered aircraft flying only up to 1000ft; who is responsible for emissions above that height is not explained.

Also, the 4.4million figure should be doubled to 8.8million because it is recognised that CO2 is twice as damaging at high altitude.

So, what does all that mean? It means that Gatwick emissions are 10 times those caused by all activities of Crawley, more than that of the proposed Kingsnorth power station and more than a whole country such as Ghana.

Helping out by email at the Copenhagen conference, *Graham Heminaton*

Before the conference I was asked by Underwood Street to stand by for action to help during the Conference. What I did (mainly email) I thought might be of interest to Bromley members.

During the conference, I sent emails, including suggestions from FoE, to:

Ed Milliband to stand firm on emission targets, without off-setting – see Earth Matters, issue 74, Autumn 2009.

Gordon Brown to keep the 40% reduction target, not 30% which he was suggesting.

Mr Harper, Canadian Prime Minister, objecting to the high environmental impacts of the extraction of oil from tar sands.

The Conference secretary (Danish) challenging her underhand moves, attempting to get agreement with only some (richer) nations.

The Danish Prime Minister, who took over from the Conference secretary, also challenging his attempts to get agreement with the richer nations.

Todd Stern (USA team): “It seems unfair for you to want the poorest subsistence farmer in Africa to have the same responsibility for tackling climate change as an American with a private jet. Rich countries must cut their emissions first and fast. Developing countries need public money to adapt to climate change. Please do not threaten President Obama’s chances of getting a satisfactory deal.”

UN Executive Secretary: stop barring FoE members from the conference.

Mr Turessan, Swedish Prime Minister and currently President of the EU Council. “As President of the EU Council, Sweden speaks on behalf of Europe. As such it is entirely irresponsible for the Swedish delegation to:

- undermine the role of developing countries at the negotiations
- block negotiations on fair Kyoto protocol targets
- push for an EU target of 20% cut in emissions when the EU position is for 30% cut, if others do the same.

“Climate science states that we need emission cuts of at least 40% on 1990 levels by 2020, yet Europe has not even agreed a 30% reduction target. There should be no mention of a mere 20% reduction in the ongoing negotiations, especially under the guise of the EU Council President.

“Please stop standing in the way of a fair deal at the Copenhagen climate talks. The World is Watching!”

Chairman of African countries: I am writing to tell you that I support the great efforts being made by African nations to secure a climate change agreement in Copenhagen that:

- keeps global temperature increase to less than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels
- ensures that adequate finance is provided to African nations from dependable sources

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Helping Copenhagen by email, *continued*

- ensures that rich countries cut their emissions by at least 40% by 2020 from 1990 levels, without off-setting.

I am appalled by reports that some of the rich countries are arm-twisting, bullying and threatening developing countries into accepting a deal which is neither scientifically sound nor based on justice, and which will have devastating impacts on people in Africa.

I urge you to stand firm against the bullying. I support the call of African people for a strong and fair climate change agreement.

Gordon Brown – by telephone: After registering my wish to talk to Mr Brown about climate change, I was put through to his room, where a chairman chose the names of some of those, like me, who waiting on line to talk to him. Unfortunately, I was not chosen but I listened to others' questions and Gordon Brown's excellent replies for over 45 minutes. Luckily the cost of the call was at local rates.

After the Conference –

Emails to:

Ed Milliband: I have read that you worked tirelessly to try to get an appropriate outcome at Copenhagen. But I am also aware that the final outcome is dreadfully weak, namely, voluntary agreement rather than a binding one, cuts in emissions offered by rich countries, including the UK, are far from enough to stop global temperatures exceeding 2°C and the

money on the table for developing countries is too little and is uncertain.

The failure of the UK, the EU and the USA to offer adequate emissions cuts and finance poisoned the negotiations. Rich countries have failed to show leadership despite having caused climate change over the past 100 years.

However, it is not too late. I shall not give up demanding a strong climate agreement that protects our planet and the lives of millions of people, especially the poorest.

I want you to:

- unilaterally commit the UK to cut its emissions by at least 40% on 1990 levels by 2020
- put new money on the table for developing countries, rather than money that has been previously announced
- negotiate with governments from developing countries on an equal basis rather than conducting discussions in secret and bullying them to accept the outcomes.

In short, I demand that you begin showing real leadership.

Bromley Times: Despite a weak outcome to the Conference, the intention is to carry on the fight to get an acceptable climate change agreement.

The Copenhagen Accord

Despite the disappointments of the UN Climate Conference at Copenhagen in terms of getting a legally binding agreement, it is important to see that some progress was made in achieving the signing of an accord.

For the first time it enshrines the recognition of all the world's countries that we should be working together to keep the global temperature from rising more than 2 degrees above the level pertaining before the industrial revolution about 200 years ago. Two degrees has come to be regarded as a sort of safety threshold.

The accord also formally engages the developing countries for the first time, which includes China and India, to seriously committing themselves to reducing emissions. The developed countries have on the other hand been legally bound by Kyoto Protocol of 1997 up till now, which began the long, complex process of emissions reduction. However, many of the developed countries have not acted decisively enough and have not met their targets, which has been a poor example and rightly criticised by the developing countries.

Copenhagen was always bound to be an enormous challenge and to many environmental groups was highly frustrating in view of the urgency of climate change. Although China was one of the main stumbling blocks at least they did agree to have an emissions target as part of the international agreement.

One of the main achievements was a new deal on climate finance. There will be \$30bn of 'fast start' funding over the next 3 years to help developing countries reduce their emissions, plus a promise from developed countries to 'mobilise' a climate fund for them of \$100bn a year by 2020.

To most of us this is all too slow, and the provision of the accord not remotely adequate, but at least complete collapse of the negotiations was prevented. Gordon Brown certainly played a pivotal part in arriving a day ahead of other world leaders and in getting a completely new text drafted that they could sign on the spot.

Meanwhile commitment for us individually and as a group means doing our bit by continuing to pressurise our government, and of course our local council through the 'Get Serious' campaign, so get the cards signed and support our stall on March 20th from 2.00 - 4.00 pm outside Caffè Nero in Bromley!

Bromley FoE Stall dates

February 27th

Joint stall with Greenpeace, Bromley High Street 2pm

March 20th

Get Serious campaign
Bromley High Street 2pm

Unwanted CDs / Powered by sea water / FoE on recycling rates

Recycling of unwanted CDs

Peter Gandolfi writes: A charity I am involved in, the Bromley talking newspaper for the blind, has gone digital, and now also produces the local news on CDs. These cannot be reused like cassette tapes, and results in hundred of CDs being returned to the studio, that seem a shame to throw away. There is a plant in the Midlands that recycles the plastic from these, and avoids these ending up in landfill, that I know some other talking newspapers use, but there is a problem in getting them there.

I have now found (thanks Tamara) a recycling company in East London which collects these and sends off in batches to the Midlands plant, and have arranged to deliver the thousands of CDs that we get sent back, in regular batches to this plant. So if any of you have old CDs to be recycled, please let me know, or bring these to a monthly meeting, and I will add to our stock.

Power from Seawater

Peter Gandolfi writes: The world's first prototype power station using the osmosis of sea water started producing power recently. Osmosis is the effect of the spontaneous passage of water from a dilute solution to a more concentrated solution, through a membrane separating two solutions of different concentrations. This produces a pressure difference that can be used to generate power.

The plant in Norway at present only produces a few kilowatts, and there are a number of potential problems in scaling the system up, but the

potential is enormous with all river estuaries where fresh water flows into the sea, capable of producing a continuous source of power. The world's potential of producing energy by this means has been estimated to be in thousands of terawatt/hours/year.

FoE - Select Committee calls for higher recycling rates -

Commenting on a report launched by the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee on Defra's Waste Strategy today, FoE's resource use campaigner Julian Kirby said:

"The Committee is right to call for higher recycling rates from households and businesses but we must be more ambitious - the Belgian region of Flanders is already recycling over 70 per cent of its waste.

"Friends of the Earth's research shows the UK is throwing away over £650 million each year by dumping and incinerating waste. Recycling it instead could save 19 million tonnes of greenhouse gases annually - the same as taking six million cars off the roads.

"The Government should ban the landfill and incineration of recyclable material, stop funding wasteful incineration schemes and provide support instead to expanding recycling and food waste collections.

"This, alongside tougher recycling targets for household and business waste, will help slash carbon emissions and allow the UK reap the financial benefits of making better use of precious natural resources."

FoE says – Green light form major offshore wind expansion in UK

Today's green light for a major expansion in UK offshore wind development has been welcomed by FoE, but the group says that the Government must do more to ensure that the UK maximises the benefits from its huge green energy potential.

The Crown Estate today announced which firms had been given licences to develop thousands of offshore turbines which could generate an extra 32GW of electricity and power around 24 million homes.

FoE's renewable energy campaigner Nick Rau said:

"Plans to build thousands of offshore turbines are fantastic news - but the Government must do more to develop the UK's vast wind energy potential and ensure that Britain reaps the benefits of creating thousands of new green jobs.

"This country could be at the forefront of the green energy revolution, which will also slash emissions and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, but Ministers must develop a detailed and comprehensive strategy to make this safe, clean and prosperous future a reality."

FoE is calling on the Government to:

- *Set more ambitious targets for developing the UK's green energy potential:*

Successful bids to Round 3 have suggested that 32GW could be delivered. But FoE says that Government could still be even more ambitious, and ensure this potential is

fully exploited as soon as possible to meet our 2020 renewable energy targets and move to a low-carbon energy future.

- *Ensure the development of a UK supply chain so that British firms and workers reap the benefits:*

Government intervention is needed to ensure the development of a UK supply chain. An industrial strategy is needed to increase support for UK businesses to encourage them to make the most of this opportunity. There is huge employment potential, yet jobs are going abroad because UK firms can't supply.

- *Ensure adequate funding through the introduction of a green investment bank*

Delivering the intended 32GW of offshore wind power is likely to require an investment of £100 billion. A Government-backed financial institution could provide direct investment, loans and guarantees to drive forward renewable energy and energy saving schemes and ensure the UK is at the forefront of efforts to tackle climate change.

- *Fast track plans for a North Sea electricity Supergrid*

North Sea nations have acknowledged the need for cooperation in constructing a North Sea electricity grid. This would enable countries to share green energy from a variety of renewable sources such as wave and wind power. This could also form part of a larger European Supergrid, which would allow access to huge solar power resources from the Mediterranean.

FoE say - Green groups welcome proposals to allow greater access to environmental justice

Leading environmental campaign groups have today welcomed proposals by Lord Justice Jackson for changes to the legal system to improve access to justice in environmental protection cases and have called on the Government to act urgently to make the necessary changes to the costs rules.

The Coalition for Access to Justice for the Environment (CAJE), will now write to the Government urging it to act swiftly to take forward recommendations in the review of legal costs.

Environmentalists have long argued that current court rules make access to justice unaffordable for people and groups who want to use the law to protect the environment.

Current rules mean that environmental campaigners who take their case to the Courts can expect to be ordered to pay tens of thousands of pounds to the other side - usually the Government - if they lose.

The Jackson Report highlights the importance of environmental laws but concludes that all judicial review cases should be given the same protection. The Report recommends that claimants in all judicial review cases should not normally be at risk of having to pay the other side's costs.

Carol Hatton, solicitor at WWF-UK said:

"We welcome many of the findings in the report and call on Ministers to take

urgent action to change the costs rules. If the Government refuses to act on these recommendations it may find itself called to account in the European Court of Justice."

Phil Michaels, Head of Legal at Friends of the Earth said:

"The Government has known for years that the present costs system was preventing access to justice. The Jackson Report advocates a solution to part of the problem. There is no longer any excuse for inaction - a fairer system must be introduced as quickly as possible."

European Commission research has shown that the UK has one of the worst cost regimes for access to justice in environmental matters, and that the current costs rules represent a "significant obstacle to access to justice in the United Kingdom."

As a result of a complaint lodged by CAJE in 2005, the European Commission is currently considering taking legal proceedings against the UK on the basis that legal action is prohibitively expensive for most individuals and organisations.

A committee of the United Nations is also currently considering a number of complaints against the UK because the nature of its court cost rules means that the UK cannot comply with its international obligations to ensure that access to justice in environmental matters is "not prohibitively expensive."

FoE's Change Your World - Activism and the future, Neil Kingsnorth

There's a new name for the Capacity Building team and a new Head of Activism. So what does that mean for the future of activism?

I've worked at Friends of the Earth for five years, always directly with local groups, in what used to be called the Capacity Building team. Now that team has a new name, the Activism team, and I have a new role as Head of Activism. These changes are part of wider restructuring within Friends of the Earth.

As a staff member who is also active in local groups, I know that the network is incredible: powerful, committed, informed and passionate. The work that's done at the local level on the issues that matter in your communities is central to what groups are about. Likewise, the work we do when the network joins major campaigns delivers phenomenal change; change that often just couldn't occur otherwise.

Activism is at the core of Friends of the Earth's work. Lots of different people in different teams have key roles to play supporting it. The role of the Activism team is to ensure that activism at all levels is as empowering and powerful as possible.

That means supporting and strengthening groups and the groups' network through training; resources; events; information and powerful, coordinated campaigns. The team works to ensure that the groups' network is as strong as it can be to tackle issues locally and support the major campaigns that the organisation runs.

Your Network Developer is the front line of that work, working with others in the team to develop campaigns, support and resources. The team also works to develop ways for individuals to take action and increase the impact of our campaigns.

Looking ahead, we have issues to tackle together. We must ensure that groups get the support and information they need for campaigning and offer that assistance in the format that best suits local groups; we need to improve access to campaign opportunities when they arise and to the staff who are best placed to help.

We need to provide the right resources at the right times and make sure that plans for big campaigns work even more effectively for you; we also need to identify more and better ways to bring your knowledge and skills together so that you can strengthen each other.

This coming year is our opportunity to do all of that together. But of course there are real-world challenges we have to meet, too. As a unique network working to confront environmental issues and promote genuine solutions, both locally and globally, we're well placed to build on some incredible successes together.

Here's to 2010.

FoE's CYW - A serious year of action

What a year it has been for the Get Serious About CO2 campaign. Groups across the country have done a fantastic job of getting to grips with what is one of the most complicated campaigns we've ever run. The challenge has been great, but our efforts are starting to pay off.

The Get Serious About CO2 campaign is about reducing carbon emissions across the UK by the amount that science says we need to cut to prevent runaway climate change.

But it's also a vision for the future. One that engages local people and local councils in creating a truly low-carbon landscape; that helps us meet the challenge of climate change but also makes our cities and villages pleasanter, with less traffic and more green spaces. To top it all, this vision will also make our towns more prosperous, with bustling local economies.

Birmingham FoE has done a fantastic job of adapting this vision for their city. Their Get Serious Manifesto outlines low-carbon policies for Birmingham taking in homes, energy and transport, and calls for measurable targets for 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2025 that will show how the council will reach their target of 60 per cent cuts by 2026.

Leeds FoE caught the public eye with a Serious Stand-Off at their stall. Passers-by were asked how long they could stay serious about climate change: contestants donned wigs and other silly headwear, and were challenged to stare each other down for as long as they could without

smiling. The resulting laughter drew a crowd and the group managed to get more than 70 postcards signed, despite the pouring rain.

For a round up of all your seriously creative stunts from 2009, see www.foe.co.uk/community/campaignsicimat/e/round_up_21974.

Serious successes

Harrogate and Manchester Councils have both released action plans detailing how they will meet a target of 40 per cent by 2020, while Haringey has committed to meeting 40 per cent and will begin putting a plan together this month.

Tim Root from Haringey Friends of the Earth said: "We had good contacts with Labour councillors, but we also targeted the Lib Dem group with postcards and presented the campaign to them. When the council debated the motion for a 40 per cent target the Lib Dems put down a strengthening amendment which ensured that the leader would be firmly responsible for meeting the target - both parties agreed and the motion passed unanimously."

As the year draws to a close, many groups are preparing to lobby their council, build alliances, celebrate successes and establish firm action plans for 2010. Look out for extra training days in the early part of the year, plus a tool to help you assess your action plans.

For more information contact donna.hume@foe.co.uk or 020 7566 4088.

FoE Campaign update – Healthy Planet (from CYW)

Reducing resource use across Europe

Our new report *Gone to Waste* shows that we waste £650mn every year by dumping and incinerating rubbish which, if recycled, could save 19mn tonnes of greenhouse gases annually - equivalent to taking around six million cars off the roads: (www.foe.co.uk/press/ourreports/gone_to_waste.pdf).

We're using the report to make the case to EU decision makers that our resource use is too high and needs to be measured and reduced.

The means by which Europe should measure its resource use is currently being decided by the European Union (through the Thematic Strategy on Natural Resources). We've been building a coalition of Friends of the Earth Europe groups and other NGOs to influence this process, and to ensure that the best resource use indicators are used — including material use, water use, land use and greenhouse gas emissions.

In the longer run, we'll be working with activists and local groups to push for targets to reduce our resource use and for EU and UK policies that will make this reduction in resource use possible.

Recycling across the UK

Recycling has been increasing in the UK in recent years. Some councils have even achieved 70% recycling rates. Another exemplary area is Somerset, where more than 50% of household waste is recycled. The Somerset Waste Partnership uses a range of great techniques to achieve this, including collecting recycling

materials separately at the kerbside, composting food waste, and operating effective local waste recycling centres that handle as many materials as possible.

However, many councils aren't using these best-practice systems and don't have high enough aspirations for their recycling activities. Lack of ambition and the danger of over-investment in residual waste treatment capacity means we are at serious risk of wasting recyclable resources.

We're hearing that demand for waste for an incinerator in Kent is preventing the extension of furniture reuse, while in Hampshire incineration over-capacity is stopping food waste collections from being introduced.

Join our network

If you are fighting an incinerator proposal, why not use ready-made resources? For resources of the UK Without Incineration Network (UKWIN) see www.ukwin.org.uk.

For relevant materials, including our new briefing outlining the key risks of signing up to a long waste contract, plus 10 key questions to ask if your council is considering doing so, see www.foe.co.uk/community/campaigns/incineration_index.html

Many groups are campaigning successfully against proposals all over the country. Recently, People Against Incineration (PAIN) campaigner Shlomo Downen, coordinator of UKWIN, won a landmark High Court case with the help of our Rights and Justice team.

Bromley Friends of the Earth - List of Contacts

Co-ordinators:

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

Campaigns Organiser:

Ann Garrett 020-8460-1295

Secretary:

Ray Watson 01959-571566
email – raywatson@iclway.co.uk

Treasurer:

Ivy Smith 01689-872642

Press Officer:

vacant

Programme Organiser:

Sheila Brown 01689-851605

Outings organisers:

John & Sue Boccock 020-8464-5990
email – johnboccock@hotmail.com

Newsletter Editor:

John Street 020-8460-1078
email - 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

Energy and Renewables

Jonathan Stanley
jjstanley171@hotmail.com

Waste and Recycling

Annette Rose
annetterose1@ntlworld.com

Bromley FoE web site:

www.bromleyfoe.co.uk

Peter Gandolfi
famgando@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!

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 raywatson@iclway.co.uk.

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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