

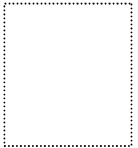


**Friends of the Earth**

**Bromley**

# February 2013 No. 302 Newsletter

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## February Meeting

*Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley*

### **Housing and the Countryside**

House building targets vs countryside protection

*Shaun Spiers, Chief Executive of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England*

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February - 7.30pm.**

Everyone welcome – bring a friend

Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

**\*\*\* SUNDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY \*\*\***

Contact details inside front cover.

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**Watch out for parking restrictions when coming to BFoE meetings – see page 9**

### Diary dates:

<b>Feb 5 (Tue)</b>	<b>Bromley FoE's February Meeting;</b> Shaun Spiers, CEO of Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) ( <i>see below</i> )
Feb 19 <sup>th</sup> (Tue)	Sevenoaks FoE's February meeting. Make It Better: sustainable production of things – general discussion and chance to air your views
<b>Mar 5 (Tue)</b>	<b>Bromley FoE's March Meeting;</b> Michael Warhurst, FoE's Head of Resource Use on the "Make it Better" campaign
Mar 16 (Sat)	Stall in Bromley High Street
<b>Apr 2 (Tue)</b>	<b>Bromley FoE's April Meeting;</b> Dr Nikki Gammans, Bumblebee Project Officer

### Bromley FoE's February meeting - more info

#### HOUSING AND THE COUNTRYSIDE

The country is building many fewer houses than it needs to. CPRE recognises the need for a big increase in house building and that some houses will have to be built on green field land. However, current government plans risk unnecessarily destroying lots of precious countryside in order to build poorly designed and unaffordable new houses. Shaun Spiers will outline the solution.

*Shaun Spiers has been Chief Exec of CPRE since 2004, and was MEP for London South East from 1994 to 1999.*

### The Body Shop and L'Oreal

One of Bromley FoE's members reminds us that the Body Shop is now owned by L'Oreal, "The world's most aggressive user of animal testing" according to Nature-Watch. An EU-wide ban on the sale of animal-tested products is being hampered by lobbying, led by L'Oreal, to postpone it indefinitely, thus allowing the sale of animal-tested products outside the EU. See [www.naturewatch.org](http://www.naturewatch.org) for more information on this.

### Next Newsletter - copy details:

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor by **\*\*\* SUNDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> 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](mailto:johnstreet@gn.apc.org).

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

## January meeting and AGM report, *Graham Hemington and Ray Watson*

Our planned speaker, Bromley's Biodiversity Officer Sue Holland, was unable to come due to illness. Sue has been offering advice re our Bee World site. We hope she will be able to come to us later in the year. We therefore held our official AGM in the first half of the meeting. Paul de Zylva from head office was present and gamely fielded our questions in the second half as well as congratulating the Group on all it is doing.

Reviewing the year, there had been 3 High Street stalls as well as those at Keston and Cudham. We had maintained an interesting variety of speakers and our average attendance at meetings is now 24 – a figure few other organisations can match. Thanks were expressed to our campaigners, to all those who give practical help in so many ways to keep things running smoothly and those who bring things to sell to boost our funds. Especial thanks to John for his invaluable work in editing the Newsletter and to Dan for his work as membership secretary besides printing and distributing the Newsletter.

Thanks to Debbie, our Treasurer for the past two years, who is now stepping down. In the absence of other volunteers, Sheila has volunteered to take on this role. The accounts were presented and approved by the meeting, and a donation of £50 to National FoE was agreed.

Ann and Sheila were proposed and seconded as Joint Co-ordinators and Ray to continue as group Secretary.

Judy summarised the work to be done on the Bee World project: the cultivation at Tugmutton Common to start in early spring this year; proposals for Bee Walks, publicity through articles in local newspapers, a visit by Jo Johnson when the site is officially opened, and enlisting the help of Dr Nikki Gammans, a Bumble Bee Project Officer (speaker at Bromley FoE meeting on 2 April; see also Newsletter January 2013, p 13).

Annette reported that on the Make it Better campaign and the investigations with Samsung re the sourcing of tin in their smartphone manufacture and the pollution of drinking water etc at the Bangka mine. Tamara suggested that the Ethical Consumer website may be of help in the Make it Better campaign.

Graham reported no success, so far, in getting Jo Johnson to write to Ed Davey about including in the Energy Bill a decarbonisation of the electrical generation sector by 2030.

Graham also reported disagreement with Bromley Council over the duty of the Council regarding the Climate Change Act. At a meeting of the Council with Orpington residents (November 2012) Graham asked Colin Smith (Environment) why the Council's obligations under the Act were absent from his list of remits. His reply was that there were more important matters to deal with. A case for our group to pursue further?

*/continued on page 6*

## Campaigns, Climate and Energy, Ann Garrett

### Correction

The poems published in the last newsletter were by Roisin Robertson and not Ann Garrett, although they both read together at the December meeting. Ann, however, has drafted a new poem after seeing a film 'Gasland' about fracking in North America - a very disturbing documentary highlighting the vast acres being polluted.

### Next Campaign Stall

This will be in Bromley Mall precinct on Saturday March 16th from 2.30 - 4.30 pm. We should have more Make It Better materials by then about the content of mobile phones, and we can still carry on with the Clean Energy and Bees campaigns.

### Energy and Climate

#### Effects of Global Warming

Global warming is having a major impact on life in the USA according to a report by US government scientists. The draft version of the US national Climate Assessment, published at the beginning of January, reveals that increasing storm surges, floods, melting glaciers and permafrost, and intensifying droughts are having a large impact on the lives of American people.

Although much of this is known by campaigners the public often don't connect the issues, and it is good to have publicity in the national press, especially from scientists.

The report goes on to cover the damage caused by hurricane Sandy, and stresses that global warming is

due to human activities and particularly the burning of fossil fuels.

#### Wind farm funding problems

The public will be hit with higher electricity bills for the next 20 years due to 'shocking blunders' according to some MPs, in deals to build offshore wind farms. This is a warning from the Public Accounts Committee. Customers will suffer they say because £17 billion of contracts handed to companies to transmit power to the mainland were 'too generous'.

The terms of the transmission licences appear to have been designed almost entirely they state to attract investors at the expense of securing a good deal or consumers. Many of the contracts were set up through PFI initiatives.

The Government hopes that 15 per cent of Britain's power will come from wind power by 2020. This requires £8 billion of investment in equipment such as cables, platforms and substations.

In the end it depends where the Government's priorities lay - whether they are prepared to invest more in green energies to combat global warming.

#### Greenpeace Arctic update report

Ministers have ruled out any moratorium on oil drilling in the Arctic despite calls for such a move by an influential committee of MPs, and despite the grounding of Shell's Kulluck drilling rig off Alaska on the last day of 2012.

*/continued on page 6*

## **BEE BUZZZZZZZ** – new monthly item by Judy Palmer

**Bee friendly plants for the Spring** – these plants flower in the Spring and as the bumblebee season begins in March, they will provide early pollen & nectar for them.

Remember – variety is good, including colour as bees are attracted to yellow, white, purple & blue blooms. Here is a short list of bee favourite diners for the Spring:

Berberis **Bluebell** Bugle  
**Flowering Currant** Lungwort  
**Pussy Willow** Rhododendron  
**Rosemary** Dead-nettle **Heathers**



The photo below is of Ann and Patrick at the Get Fractious climate march rally in Parliament Square last December



**What did you have for breakfast today?** If it was jam with your toast, or of course, honey! Fresh or dried fruit and muesli? Or grilled tomatoes, and not forgetting the coffee or fruit juice!

All brought to you courtesy of the bee. Without bees pollinating our crops, it would cost UK farmers £1.8 billion a year to do it themselves!

So please help spread the word – let your neighbours know, your friends, your boss – bee friendly plants – the latest must-have for the garden! To help save the Bee.

## More Bee Bits

### FoE - 125 MPs back our bees

125 MPs stood up for British bees in Parliament today (January 15<sup>th</sup>) in a cross-party show of support for halting bee decline. Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green, Plaid Cymru, Social Democratic and Labour Party and Scottish National Party politicians all helped create a buzz at the Friends of the Earth photo call.

The MPs posed with a giant cuddly bee and sign saying 'Britain needs its bees'.

The amount of honey produced by UK bees fell by 72% in 2012 compared with the previous year. This is just one sign of a disastrous 12 months for insects vital to many of our favourite foods and which pollinate three-quarters of our plants.

Friends of the Earth's Nature Campaigner Paul de Zylva said: "It's a very welcome first step to see so many MPs recognise the importance of bees to our farmers, food prices and countryside. But they must now act urgently to halt bee decline. The effect of letting bees go the same way as ash trees would be catastrophic."

### Bee-ing kind to struggling Bees

*The Brighton Argus reports:* A haven has been created for beleaguered bees as new research hopes to save the queen bees of the insect world. Brighton and Hove Friends of the Earth and Friends of Hollingbury and Burstead Woods set up the site to create the perfect habitat for the threatened species. The groups

helped to clear the overgrown south facing bank to expose chalky soil, which some bees love.

Monica Jennings of Brighton and Hove Friends of the Earth added: "We hope to encourage a range of solitary bees such as Red Mason Bee, Carpenter Bee and Leafcutter Bee. Solitary bees are important as crop pollinators and we need to ensure they survive."

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### January meeting report, *continued* Proposals to strengthen FoE local groups

There was a full and frank discussion of new proposals to strengthen FoE local groups, bearing in mind that any organisational changes must result in improved action and decision-making by the local groups; also a possible re-organisation of campaigning activities at Underwood Street. Suggestions that the Local Groups' Conference might be radically altered were greeted with some disappointment.

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### Campaigns report, *continued*

That incident though it did not result in an oil spill heightened safety fears about responding to accidents in far northern seas.

Several EU states want a 'response gap' to be recognised which could prevent companies from setting up drilling rigs. The UK disappointingly has sought to water down the EU safety proposals. Ben Stewart of Greenpeace has been very critical of their attitude in supporting Shell.

## Transport info – Ray Watson

### **Redhill Airport alert**

A decision to allow expansion at Redhill Airport is due in a few weeks. The owners want to replace the current three dirt runways with one hard one, thus giving the opportunity to bring in larger aircraft and up to 85,000 passengers a year.

Bromley FoE understands that an objection against the plan has been made by Biggin Hill airport which, like Gatwick, is close to Redhill. Presumably, this is because a busier Redhill would become a rival to Biggin Hill's business traffic.

Redhill put in a planning application for its expansion 18 months again. It was opposed by three local councils and ultimately rejected. A new application was submitted last autumn and opponents say it varies only a little from the original plan. One of the reasons for the rejection was the poor access to Redhill Airport which, in some cases, would mean heavier traffic on minor roads and country lanes – something that is also a problem for Biggin Hill.

### **Night and day**

Various airlines are mounting a campaign to be allowed more night flights on which there are restrictions at present. But opposition is growing, especially as older aircraft and, usually, larger ones like Super Jumbos that are used for freight flights, creating plenty of noise.

Of course, as Gatwick residents said in a statement, in a civilised world there would be no night flights.

Meanwhile, residents in the Southend area are getting their first taste of what it means to suffer from more flights. Expansion there was supported by the local council which also put up funds to improve facilities. Residents were told that noise would not be a problem because aircraft would be routed out to sea.

It has not happened that way and, furthermore, many flights leave immediately after the 7am embargo passes, causing sleep disturbance. And the outlook for residents is bleak because the airport is aiming to handle one million passengers in year one and two million in year two.

### **On the buses**

Passenger Focus, an agency that reflects the views of passengers with the aim of getting the user's voice known by transport companies, has uncovered a great deal of anger from passengers who suffer when weekend or holiday engineering work closes rail lines with passengers forced to use replacement buses.

A survey showed that passengers want to be kept on the train, even if it lengthened the journey time rather than be put on buses. 85 per cent of passengers thought they deserved a discount if they were obliged to use buses. Another major complaint was insufficient well-briefed staff on duty to oversee the change from train to bus. There was also a majority view that they should be warned before buying a ticket that engineering work was affecting services; 55 per cent said they would not travel by train if part of the journey was by bus.

## Bromley North Village Improvements

### **GLA funds for Bromley**

The GLA has allocated Bromley £5.6m from its 2014-15 budget to improve roads and support action plans for the High Street and Bromley North village.

The largest amount of £2m goes towards the development of Bromley North Village and for improvements for 'the public realm'. The sum of £822,000 has been awarded to eliminate traffic congestion 'hotspots' including those at Sevenoaks Way, Orpington, and Bromley and Beckenham town centres.

A further £347,000 will be spent to make cycling safer and £128,000 goes to support the Bromley High Street area action plan.

*Editor's note – The above was taken from a GLA press release.* The News Shopper reports that Bromley Council has approved its funding for the project – see the info below from the papers for Bromley Council's January Executive meeting

### **Reason for report**

1.1 The Executive on 2nd February 2011 as part of the Capital Programme Review approved a capital scheme for Bromley Town Centre improvements consisting of a £1.5m Council contribution based on a Transport for London funding of £3.3m. A further £1.829m has been allocated to the scheme from the Outer London Fund 2012/14 grant settlement.

**The Executive is asked to endorse the overall design and the release of the Council match funding contribution,** subject to the TfL

approval being secured on 14th January 2013. Subject to this confirmation and the written agreement from Design for London that the OLF funding can be paid on the raising of orders, it is proposed to purchase materials in order for these to be charged to the 2012/13 Outer London funding allocation, which may be at risk if not defrayed before the end of March 2013.

and also –

**Bromley North Village (BNV)** has completed its outline design, which was approved by R&R PDS Committee in March 2012. The designs have now progressed through to the detailed design phase whereby traffic and engineering details have been added and final estimates calculated. The scheme design has been amended to take in to account concerns raised by stakeholders such as the Bromley North Village traders, who requested two-way traffic working in the evenings on High Street North. A set of plans detailing the final scheme design objectives and proposals is attached as Appendix 1. The scheme consists of three main components:

**East Street.** This is set to become Bromley's premier restaurant and café precinct through the creation of a new order on East Street. The removal of through running buses has allowed the creation of a shared space which sets the scene for a thriving entertainment zone with opportunity for outdoor dining, an active night time economy and specialist retailers.

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## Bromley FoE meetings and parking restrictions

One of Bromley FoE's members was recently fined for parking in a restricted parking bay when attending a meeting recently.

The member concerned has suggested moving the start of the meeting back to 8pm and this is being discussed by the planning group.

In the meantime, Bromley FoE's very own Sheila Brown carried out an investigation into the parking situation in Ravensbourne Road and here's her report.

In an ideal world, we would all travel to the meetings by public transport, but due to people coming from far-flung parts of the borough, bringing other people or resources and the late finish, many people do travel by car.

One of our members recently incurred a parking fine as there are a number of meter bays near the Friends Meeting House which are "Resident Permit only" between 6.30 pm and 8 pm, and parking wardens frequently can and do come round and issue parking fines.

There are a few meters on the right hand side of the road just outside the meeting venue which are "safe" and also a small amount of parking in the courtyard.

The meters to avoid are those directly opposite (on the left side of the road), those in the extension of Ravensbourne Road beyond the Ringers Road, or at the bottom of Ringers Road or of Ethelbert Road. Further up both these roads, parking is free after 6.30 pm.

So please look very, very carefully before you park and if there is a board saying "Resident Permit only" it is likely to apply to all adjacent parking bays.

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### Bromley North Village improvements, continued

**Market Square.** Securing the Outer London funding has allowed the design treatment to be extended to the whole of the Market Square area. The choice of materials has been rationalised to concentrate on natural granites, centred around a radiating band of black granite that follows the form of the central Market Square buildings. The Market Square will be transformed with the introduction of floor lighting and new market infrastructure, which will activate the space and create improved linkages with Bromley North Village.

**High Street North.** The focus here has been to increase the essential footfall that is needed to stimulate the growth and expansion of important independent businesses. Improved pedestrian crossings to Market Square are proposed along with wider pavements and lighting. Additional car parking and loading spaces will also be created alongside improvements to the pedestrian links to the Hill multi-storey car park.

and also –  
Transport for London have agreed the business case for the project and were due to consider the final design sign off on 14th January 2013.

## Reply from Bob Neill re Clean British Energy campaign

Thank you for taking the time to get in touch about Friends of the Earth's new 'Clean British Energy' campaign.

A green economy will be at the heart of the UK's economic recovery and I am proud that over the past two years we've added more capacity for renewable resources than at any time over the last decade.

Increasing the share of renewable resources in our energy mix isn't just about meeting our legally binding carbon reduction targets, but about reducing our energy imports and insulating the country from spikes in global energy markets. In addition, the CBI has estimated that low-carbon industries could halve the UK's trade deficit by 2014, and reports suggest that the low-carbon sector could employ as many as 250,000 more people by 2030.

The new Energy Bill will support the construction of a diverse mix of renewables, new nuclear, gas and carbon capture and storage. By stimulating supply chains, capitalising on our engineering expertise and making the most of our natural resources, the UK can be at the forefront of clean energy development.

Although I appreciate your concerns about the use of gas, my Ministerial colleagues have always been clear that it will have a significant role to play in supporting the decarbonisation of the UK's energy mix. Gas is a cleaner source of energy than coal and I can assure you that the role of gas in our energy mix will be compatible with the

UK's carbon budgets and emissions reduction targets.

The Energy Bill sits alongside the new levels of support announced for renewable technologies under the Renewables Obligation. It has been predicted that the Renewables Obligation will prompt between £20 billion and £25 billion of new investment between 2013 and 2017.

Changes to the UK's energy mix will need to be delivered in a cost-effective way, but I am confident that many of these technologies are on the way to becoming cost competitive without the need for subsidy.

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**Make it Better Campaign, Annette Rose**

### **Would you like to get involved?**

Please go to the Friends of the Earth website to send an email to Samsung and Apple to ask them about the tin which goes into smartphones. There are concerns about the severe environmental damage being caused by the mining for the tin.

### **Tell us about a product**

Do have concerns about a product? Do you know of a product which uses more of the earth's resources or causes more environmental damage than it needs to? This could be due to overpackaging or could be about the supply chain that goes into making the product. Please let the group know at our meetings or email me on [annette.rose1@ntlworld.com](mailto:annette.rose1@ntlworld.com).

## What Has Nature Ever Done For Us? (Putting a price on Nature)

This is a profile of a new book by Tony Juniper and was provided by Peter Gandolfi.

If you ask an economist – or politician - about how much nature is worth in purely financial terms, a typical answer would be in terms of the price of commodities such as timber, or tourism, but nature delivers far more than this and Tony Juniper brings this subject to a wider audience.

He mentions the many ways that natural ecosystems benefit human societies.

Some of these are obvious: Nature is the world's largest water utility. It is the principle means of conversion of solar energy on the planet and a massive carbon capture and storage mechanism. Photosynthetic plants are the source of all our food and insects pollinate a large proportion of all our crops.

Others are not so obvious: Natural predators keep pests in check, oceans plants and soils store carbon, wetlands protect coastlines from storm damage. In all, these contribute trillions to the world's economy every year. One estimate is that this is double our global GDP.

Yet one still finds that nature is considered to be a drag on development and growth. Juniper gives many examples, and this alone makes the book worthwhile for casual readers.

Some examples have been worked through in some detail. These include:

- New York City has saved \$7 billion by drawing its drinking water from a protected watershed instead of treating and filtering it.
- India's vultures numbered 40 million in the 1990's but are down to a few tens of thousands 10 years later, due to the use of an anti-inflammatory drug used in veterinary medicine. If residues of this drug were in cattle when they died, it killed the vultures very quickly.

The loss of the vultures meant that 12 million tons of purifying flesh got left each year in the countryside that the vultures used to deal with. Once the vultures had gone, this niche was taken up by wild dogs whose population soared by 7 million. This led to 50,000 deaths due to dog bits and rabies that would not have occurred with the vultures.

The effect of the loss of vultures on India's economy is estimated at \$34 billion.

Money really does grow on trees! Hopefully this book will encourage businessmen and politicians to ask questions. I certainly look forward to reading it.

## FoE Campaign Hubs, Judy Palmer

Being the Bee Cause campaigner I signed up to the Bee Hub to access all the information they have stored there, though you can also post and take part in discussions too.

They are also trialling an email every two weeks to activists with the top five round-ups available on the Hubs. So for early January you could take part in:

- \*promoting group meetings to potential new members;
- \*discuss energy bill public meetings with your MP;
- \*try a local group's supermarket pesticide quiz;
- \*upload petitions to the urgent action service;
- \*what do you think of the idea of ethical smartphones.

So for anyone with some browsing time to spare, visit the FoE website and follow the link to the campaign hub area, and take part!

The local group mentioned above re the pesticide quiz is Guildford & Waverley and I recommend a quick trip to their web site – [www.gwfoe.org.uk](http://www.gwfoe.org.uk).

They were voted FoE local group of the year at conference and the front page at the moment is about the Bee Cause/supermarket/pesticides; a local aerodrome and fighting Tesco. Most interesting to see another local group in action.

Also on the activist front – I was sent a brief information snippet on a community sharing scheme called Streetbank which sounds interesting.

You do have to sign up first though before you can see any detailed information. But for anyone wishing to promote re-use and sharing rarely used items, or unwanted DVDs, with your neighbours, its ideal.

## Bromley Police and Crime Plan Event – January 28<sup>th</sup>

Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London, became Police and Crime Commissioner for the capital in May 2012. A key part of the Mayor's role is to produce a Police and Crime Plan, which sets out the crime reduction strategy for London for the next four years, and explains what the Metropolitan Police Service and other agencies should be doing to tackle crime in the capital.

From 7 January 2013, MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Police and Crime)

will be consulting with anyone who lives, travels or works in London. The final Police and Crime Plan will be published by April 2013.

The Bromley borough consultation event is being held on January 28<sup>th</sup> 2013 at 8pm at the Great Hall, Bromley Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley, Kent BR1 3UH.

More info and pre-register for the meeting at [www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk). There's also a questionnaire on that web site.

## Storage – the answer to practical renewable energy, *Peter Gandolfi*

**Salvation out of thin air – notes from a *New Scientist* article ‘Staying Power’ 5 January 2013**

One of the problems with renewable energy is that in most cases it is ‘wrong time’ energy not being useable when it is needed. Solar energy is not available at night, and wind turbines can stop in light winds. This could be one reason why even modest targets consistently go unmet all around the world. In 2009 intermittent renewables accounted for only a paltry 3.3% of world energy generation.

There is certainly enough potential energy. Every minute enough solar radiation reaches the earth to meet global energy demands for a year, and according to research published last year (Stanford University), wind power could single handedly take care of the entire world’s energy demands. The problem is the mismatch between when the energy is available and when we wish to use it, so operators need backup power stations which increases the cost of using renewables.

Last year renewable accounted for less than 10% of all the electricity generated in the UK, and 13% of that generated in the USA, well short of previous targets.

Storage is the obvious solution, and has been in use for decades, but usually to make use of the unwanted power from nuclear power stations that are too expensive to shut down when the demand lessens.

An example is the pumped storage method used at Dinorwig in Wales, where water is pumped up to a reservoir on Elidir Fawr mountain during periods of low demand. When more energy is wanted quickly, such as during TV adverts when kettles are turned on, the water is released to drive turbines that produce electricity. 1300 megawatts can be produced in 12 seconds! Pumped storage has an efficiency of around 80% and this method accounts for 99% of the world’s storage.

Ireland is working on a €3.6 billion project to make full use of the country’s intermittent winds, pumping seawater up to a cliff top reservoir. Unfortunately mountain reservoirs are not practical everywhere.

Batteries may appear an obvious solution, but scaling up for grid storage has problems. A project in America uses lithium batteries in shipping container sized boxes, and can feed 32 megawatts back into the grid. Unfortunately using batteries has proved to be at least 10 times the cost of pumped storage.

In Huntorf, Germany, they have turned to air, using excess electricity to compress air and store it in caverns 500 metres below ground. When energy is needed it is released and used to drive a turbine. Efficiency rarely exceeds 50%, with a lot of energy lost as heat produced when a gas is pressurised. A 90 megawatt demonstration plant is planned to be operational by 2019.

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## Storage is the answer, *continued*

Air may be the key to energy storage. In Slough for the last two years a liquid air pilot plant has been generating electricity using the excess energy from a nearby biomass plant.

The excess energy from the biomass plant is used to power a giant fridge that cools air down to -196 degrees C to produce liquid air, which is stored in a large thermos type vessel. One litre of liquid air, when warmed up results in 700 litres of gas. When power is needed, some of the liquid air is exposed to room temperature, and the explosive expansion drives a turbine.

It is thought that this technology is capable of supplying tens or even hundreds of megawatts, with a single 50 ton tank, storing enough liquid air to power 15,000 homes for an hour.

“All components are available off the shelf” says an engineer from Leeds University who has studied liquid air. The costs are likely to be much cheaper than pumped storage, and no mountain is needed, although at present the efficiency is likely to be less with 50% being suggested.

California generates more than 20% of its electricity from renewables and is looking at a number of grid storage projects that it needs to meet its target of 33% renewables by 2020. Unfortunately the recent interest in ‘fracking’, has caused the large engineering company Air Products in Pennsylvania to stop working on its liquid air energy storage system, due to the now low price of natural gas.

Liquid air is also being considered as a fuel for cars. This could have a lot of benefits as its: Cheap, safe, non-polluting, and as easy to refuel as our present vehicles. A demonstration vehicle later this year is promised.

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### **FoE's Bike to the future – April 27/28**

Here is an opportunity to plan for the Spring and, hopefully, better weather.

National FoE is repeating its successful Big Green Bike Ride in April, starting from the bustle of London to the beauty and tranquillity of the New Forest National Park over two days. You can join for a single day (85 miles London to the New Forest) on Saturday April 27 or spend the next day on a 40-mile exploration of the New Forest – or both.

This is a unique route passing through gentle farmland and ancient woodland. Starting in south-west London, the route follows the Thames before hitting the leafy lanes of Surrey and Hampshire. The overnight stop will be a campsite in the heart of the forest, with an option to upgrade to a luxury shepherd's hut. FoE will provide cycles, medics, mechanics and luggage transfer.

So all you have to do is cycle – and raise some sponsorship money to support FoE nationally and also your local group. Register or see additional information at national FoE's website [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk).

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### Merchandising:

Anne Clark 020-8289-8483

### Teas:

Anne Clark / Ivy Smith

### Campaigns –

### Transport:

Ray Watson 01959-571566

### Climate and Energy:

Ann Garrett 020-8460-1295

### Food and Ethical Farming:

Peter Gandolfi details below

### Planning and development:

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

### Waste and Recycling

Annette Rose  
*annette.rose1@ntlworld.com*

### Bee Cause

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

### Bromley FoE web site:

***www.bromleyfoe.co.uk***  
Peter Gandolfi  
*petergandolfi@hotmail.com*

### Letters to the Editor

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

### Need a lift to meetings?

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

### Disclaimer

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

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

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

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

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**Non-members' Section**

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

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

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

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

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

Name.....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Email Address.....

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

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