



**friends of  
the earth  
Bromley**



*February 2014*

*No. 314*

# ewsletter

Bromley FoE: enquiries:

email: [bromleyfoe@gmail.com](mailto:bromleyfoe@gmail.com), website: [www.bromleyfoe.co.uk](http://www.bromleyfoe.co.uk)

## February Meeting

*Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley*

### **Sustrans – Encouraging active and sustainable travel**

**Catherine Osborn and Toby Jones, Sustrans route officers,**  
talk about how Sustrans are enabling people to travel by foot, bike or  
public transport for more of the journeys we make every day.

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February - 7.30pm**

#### ***In this Issue:***

|                    |       |                      |       |
|--------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| Diary Dates        | 2     | Fundraising          | 11    |
| February mtg info  | 2     | Make It Better       | 11    |
| AGM report         | 3     | Recycle electricals  | 11    |
| Accounts for 2013  | 4     | Garden Organic       | 12,13 |
| January mtg rept   | 5,6,7 | Film UK Gold         | 13    |
| Honeybees wanted   | 7,11  | CAAT news            | 14    |
| Transport comment  | 8,11  | Go green by bike     | 14    |
| Fracking in Sussex | 9,10  | Bromley FoE Contacts | 15    |
| Campaigns info     | 10    | Non-members section  | 16    |

Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

**\*\*\* SUNDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY\*\*\***

Contact details inside front cover.

***Can you help fill a hamper ??***

***See page 11***

**Diary dates:**

**Feb 1<sup>st</sup> (Sat)**

**Bromley Progressive Film Co-op:** showing of Film UK Gold 6pm for 7pm (*see page 13*)

**Feb 4<sup>th</sup> (Tues)**

**Bromley FoE's February meeting:** Catherine Osborne and Toby Jones from Sustrans

**Feb 24 – Mar 9**

**Fairtrade Fortnight 2014**

**Mar 4<sup>th</sup> (Tues)**

**Bromley FoE's March meeting:** speaker from Fairtrade Foundation, with Fairtrade products on sale. Joint meeting with Sevenoaks FoE in Bromley)

**Mar 22<sup>nd</sup> (Sat)**

**Bromley FoE High Street stall**

**February meeting – Sustrans speakers**

**Catherine Osborn and Toby Jones**, Sustrans route officers, talk about how Sustrans are enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day.

Sustrans' work makes it possible for people to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in.

**Looking forward to our March meeting**

In March during Fairtrade Fortnight, we have a speaker named Alexis Martinez Palacios from Grupo Agrosiete SAS from Uraba. He is a Plantation worker and involved in union and management-worker Fairtrade committee politics.

We shall also have some stalls selling Fairtrade products.

**Wanted - 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.

**Disclaimer:** *Please note that any opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of Bromley Friends of the Earth nor 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 16<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

## AGM Report – Judy Palmer

Sheila and Ann started by expressing thanks to everyone who had helped out over the past year. And also later to give Ray a present and our very grateful thanks for all his hard work as the group secretary.

Sheila went through the Treasurer's report and we voted to accept it. We are a financially healthy group, even though our expenses are quite high – the cost of producing the newsletter has had to rise (postage has gone up considerably), the rates for the hire of the hall have risen and subscription income has fallen! But to help combat this, we have a new fundraising officer – welcome Bill Priestley! He will start by holding an open garden day and will let us know the date soon.

Our national partnership agreement with Friends of the Earth was discussed briefly, and a donation to them agreed. This then led on to voting for our officers – our two co-ordinators have agreed to do another year (thankfully!), so Ray proposed them both and I seconded them. Ann then proposed Sheila as treasurer and Bill seconded.

Unfortunately we had no one to volunteer as the group secretary, so I have agreed to monitor the group emails, using the group's email address, and to receive any printed matter for distribution. Sheila and Ann will also take on a bit more admin work.

Annette and I mentioned how beneficial and supportive it has been using the 'buddy' system in being campaigners. This also could be

applied to the secretarial role, creating an Admin Team. There is already an email address for contact with the group and we will need to create a telephone number.

**Note from Sheila:** Thank you, Judy, for writing this report.

I should like to add thanks to John Street and Dan Sloan for all the work they put in to produce our monthly Newsletter, which is well regarded at Underwood Street and is a prestigious publication to wave around at FoE gatherings. As neither John nor Dan was there for the AGM, I wanted to record thanks in writing.

**Additional note from Sheila:** I should also like, in writing, to pay tribute to all Ray has done in his 12 years as secretary and the past 10 years in supporting Ann and myself. No-one was prepared to "step into his shoes" so secretarial and admin tasks are being taken on by the two co-ordinators, with Judy kindly volunteering to be the group contact by email. Thanks too to Marina for all the support she has given.

### Need a lift to meetings?

If you require a lift to Bromley FoE meetings, please contact Ray Watson (01959-571566) or Sheila Brown (01689-851605).

|  |
|--|
| <b>Bromley FoE Accounts for year ended December 31<sup>st</sup> 2013</b> |
|--|

|                                     | <b>2013</b>     | <b>2012</b>     | <b>2011</b>     |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Balance at January 1st</b>       | 969.64          | 933.04          | 855.48          |
| <b>Income</b>                       |                 |                 |                 |
| Subscriptions                       | 299.00          | 381.00          | 333.00          |
| Donations                           | 121.00          | 128.00          | 181.00          |
| Hall collection                     | 305.00          | 369.34          | 303.64          |
| Tea profits                         | 67.00           | 56.37           | 12.30           |
| Stall income (1)                    | 215.08          | 88.70           | 148.62          |
| Donations for National FoE          | 0.00            | 0.00            | 72.00           |
| Prior year adjustment (2)           | 286.00          | 0.00            | 0.00            |
|                                     | <b>1,293.08</b> | <b>1,023.41</b> | <b>1,050.56</b> |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                  |                 |                 |                 |
| Hall hire                           | 440.00          | 403.00          | 420.00          |
| Newsletter                          | 508.00          | 416.30          | 370.00          |
| Stall rentals & other expenses      | 53.96           | 51.00           | 66.00           |
| Goods for resale                    | 166.95          | 0.00            | 0.00            |
| Speaker expenses/gifts              | 138.70          | 0.00            | 0.00            |
| Conference subsidy                  | 0.00            | 0.00            | 0.00            |
| Payments to other organisations     | 100.00          | 30.00           | 25.00           |
| Donations to National FoE           | 50.00           | 30.00           | 92.00           |
| Other                               | 23.69           | 56.51           | 0.00            |
|                                     | <b>1,481.30</b> | <b>986.81</b>   | <b>973.00</b>   |
| <b>Surplus / (deficit) for year</b> | <b>(188.22)</b> | <b>36.60</b>    | <b>77.56</b>    |
| <b>Balance at December 31st</b>     | <b>781.42</b>   | <b>969.64</b>   | <b>933.04</b>   |

(1) includes sale of Bee goods

(2) to bring accounts in line with bank statement balance

## January meeting report – by Judy Palmer (Page 1 of 3)

A busy meeting and well attended on a wet and blustery night, thank you to everyone who was there. We had Cllr. Colin Smith, the deputy leader of the Council and the portfolio holder for the environment, enduring a Q&A session with our members in the first half, and the group's AGM in the second, whew!

Cllr Smith was introduced by Ray our chairman for the evening and we learned that he has been a Councillor for 11 years – almost as long as Ray has been our group secretary in fact! Ray explained that the questions would be on recycling, biodiversity and fracking, the subjects being of the most interest to us as a group. Cllr Smith works on planning, parks & green spaces, the 'Friends of Parks' schemes, parking and litter. (For the sake of brevity, the Q & A have been condensed.)

*Q. Good to hear of the new electrical goods collection service starting in 2013, but there was an increase in the waste tonnage going to landfill. How will the Council tackle this increase?*

A. Recycling rates at present are approx 52% but the recycling programme needs refreshing. Statistics seem to show people are buying more and recycling less but it's not apparent why people are recycling less. So there is more going to landfill & incineration. There will be more news from the Council on the recycling programme later this year.

*Q. Recycling in schools – paper, battery and textile recycling have bins for hire, can the Council now tackle food waste there?*

A. Schools & churches have separate and different collection services and schools are autonomous so they don't have to obey the Council. The Council needs to engage with schools more, landfill taxes are too high. Unfortunately doing the right thing on waste can take away from other services.

Q/A on cost of landfill which can be variable. They roughly recycle half the waste.

*Q. What happens to: a. the green box contents and b. the food waste contents. Can blue bottles be recycled yet?*

A. Food waste is composted. The green box contents go to an MRF unit (mixed recycling facility) where it is graded and separated. (A fascinating experience visiting one, well worth a visit!) Apparently the plastics are sorted by grades and it's done by lasers. The paper goes to paper mills. There is still a problem with the purity of blue glass, and Cllr Smith had no new knowledge.

*Q. Cllr Smith was asked his opinion on the use of wheelie bins in general as they can be used to avoid recycling.*

A. The Council does not believe in making recycling compulsory, it's counter-productive, but households who don't recycle at all can be approached. They don't encourage the use of them as you can't see the contents, and Veolia's contract charges excess for them.

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## January meeting report – continued (page 2 of 3)

But some people have physical difficulties, and some people are not aware of recycling.

Q/A on whether recycling should be made compulsory as in some European countries.

*Q. Heritage / development of Bromley High Street, will Bromley be 'Croydonized', his thoughts.*

A. Not if Cllr Smith can help it! Some of the Council's decisions are taken out of their hands, the former Blue Circle site on green belt land being a case in point, as the Government ruled this had to go ahead, as the Council was not meeting housing targets (which they dispute). If the Council have to provide 500 new homes, not using green belt land, then town centres have to be built in.

There are many points for the Council to consider – Bromley's town centre needs to be re-energised and re-invigorated and it requires a prime retailer. If the DLR comes to Bromley it would help it become a business hub, so do you build upwards or outwards to accommodate offices? The Council don't want to build on green belt land, but the Government is making noises to saying yes.

Councils are telling the Government that their 2017-18 budgets will be millions short, as their funds will be cut by a third, so how do they raise the money? Balancing the books becomes a choice of raising council taxes (Bromley don't like this route), building new homes which provide more revenue, taking money from the

budgets of the Education or Health Services, which has the biggest budget in the borough. All services need to become more efficient.

If you don't build in green belt, you build in towns and it makes more sense to do so. The Council are continuously defending farm and arable land from building work.

*Q. Why is Queen Gardens being built on?*

A. It was a contentious issue and closely fought. Pros and cons were discussed, but business won – the revenue and footfall are needed.

*Q. Will Biggin Hill airport be sold off? Will there be more night flying?*

A. He was not aware of any plans to sell it off. If it became more of a business hub then there could be more flights, but not commercial ones. There is no letter of application for night flying. There are people across all three main political parties who feel the airport should be made more use of. But the Government tells them what to do – two more case examples are the use of the old DHSS building in Bromley, and building a new school in the borough.

*Q. His views on the granting of a licence to permit exploration for shale gas in the south of the borough, does he know of any other licences issued similar to this? And that Croydon has granted a drilling licence.*

*/concluded on next page*

## January meeting report – concluded (page 3 of 3)

A. No applications to drill have been received, his view on fracking is that the jury is still out, he wants to know more of the pros and cons. It won't be ruled out though – energy provision in all forms needs to be investigated. He thought the idea of a seminar on fracking would be worth considering. He also thought that what happened in Balcombe over the summer was good in that it raised awareness of the issue.

*Q. Would the Council consider generating electricity? Putting solar panels on civic buildings?*

A. It has been looked at, but financially it doesn't add up. Every line of revenue is being looked at.

*Q. The quality of buildings needs to improve, can pressure be put on developers?*

A. Some conditions can be put on the quality of materials used, but the view of building aesthetics is personal. The Council tries to preserve styles where possible, the arts & crafts styling in the north of the town centre being an example.

*Q. The BBAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) is due for renewal this year, but may not be due to economics. Will it? Would any of the original steering group be involved? Also does it need renewing if it works?*

A. Yes it will be worked on, but probably not very quickly and the steering group may be consulted. It's always good to revisit it to ensure it works well.

Cllr Smith and Ray kept to good time and after this question he was thanked and we broke for tea and a chat. The second half was devoted to our AGM – please see the report elsewhere in the newsletter.

And that's it from me, a 'guest' reporter!

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### Honeybees needed! – Judy Palmer

Recently the Farmers' Weekly and, I believe, the Guardian ran articles saying that Europe needs an extra seven billion bees to pollinate its crops, and poor Britain has less than a quarter of the honeybees it requires. Apparently the demand for insect pollination across Europe is outpacing the growth of honeybee colonies as farmers grow more oil-bearing crops like oilseed rape and sunflowers, and also fruit.

Researchers at the University of Reading said agriculture is increasingly reliant upon wild pollinators such as bumblebees, solitary bees and hoverflies for these crops.

They said the European Union's biofuel policy, which encourages the growing of these oil-bearing crops, is making Europe more reliant upon these wild pollinators.

The study was published in the US journal, *Public Library of Science One*, and concluded that more than half of the 41 European countries including

*/continued on page 11*

## Transport comment – Ray Watson

### **It's the people who pay – again and again**

As if the upheavals experienced by the railways over the last decade were not enough, another bizarre situation has come to light: the Government is heading towards making a profit from rail fares.

How can this be? Well, the current fares policy allows the Government to set the vast majority of fares every January and a report from the Campaign for Better transport reveals that in three years the amount collected from passengers will exceed the railways' running costs.

Of course, when it gets to that stage the Government could cut fare levels. But don't bank on it!

### **No more Boris nonsense!**

Yet again the Thames Estuary airport project beloved by mayor Boris Johnson comes to the fore because someone leaned on the Davies Commission that is considering how to cope with more air travellers, to ensure that the mayor's idea is examined once again, even though the commission virtually ruled it out in a recent interim report and that the £112 billion scheme is forcefully opposed by airlines, local councils and environmentalists.

It is time to stop this charade. After all, it will mean more costly work for the commission, additional expensive expert advice etc, plus the mayor is spending Greater London Council money to promote his idea. One way or another the bills will be paid out of the public purse. The mayor would do

everyone a favour if he simply binned his lovechild.

### **On our doorstep**

No doubt about it, our local roads have suffered from lack of maintenance due to the squeeze on Bromley Council spending – the potholes prove it. However, there may be better times ahead because the Government has awarded the borough £2.9 million for road works.

As well as repairs, the cash will be spent on road safety measures, parking schemes and cycling initiatives. This latter is much to be commended, saving as it does on carbon emissions from cars. Indeed, a much greater effort is required by suburban councils like Bromley to promote more cycling. Just recently, despite the horror that is New York traffic, a bike hire scheme has been started there, with a target of 10,000 machines and 600 docking stations.

And if it can be done in the Big Apple, it can be done almost anywhere.

### **M1 speed limit cut**

In a surprise move, the Highways Agency has plans to reduce the maximum speed on a 34-mile stretch of the M1 to 60 mph. The reason: to reduce vehicle emissions as demanded by new European rules.

The idea is to reduce the speed limit on part of the motorway in Yorkshire from 7 am to 7 pm seven days a week as part of a scheme to 'manage' traffic

*/continued on page 11*

## Fracking in Sussex, and beyond – Judy Palmer

*The following information has been taken from the FoE web site on the varying situations villages across Sussex are facing at the moment on the threat of fracking. One is for a proposal to drill in the South Downs National Park. It is written by Brenda Pollack, the FoE SE Co-ordinator.*

My main focus in the region is on fracking due to the Weald Basin area being the second most important for shale gas in England. Here are a couple of actions you can take to help on this campaign. My priority right now is helping residents fight a proposal for drilling in the South Downs National Park. As someone who helped campaign for years to get this area designated we will do all we can to support Frack Free Fernhurst. If you are interested in fracking work do join our fracking hub.

### **Take Action**

Email Government minister about failure to protect communities.

You probably know that the government has changed planning guidance to make it easier to frack and have now announced that companies do not need to notify individuals whose land they may drill under. (This was in the pipeline but only just been confirmed this week.)

We've got a new email action online to send a message to Eric Pickles the Secretary of State for Communities and Planning. We have tried hard to get him to listen to us but he has his fingers stuffed in his ears so we need him to hear directly from local

communities concerned about fracking.

Please tell Mr Pickles that he, and his government, are failing to protect local communities. And do share this with friends and family. You might want to quote back at Mr Pickles some recent statements he has made about early and clear involvement of communities in the development of wind farms:

“We are making sure local people have a crystal clear voice in airing their opinions on wind turbines very early on. From day 1, communities should be centre stage in crafting plans that affect their lives instead of having them forced upon them.”

### **Celtique Energy – please object – twice**

West Sussex is really becoming the frontline in the fracking war. Cuadrilla's application to test for oil flow at Balcombe is still being assessed by the county council and not yet open for consultation.

### **Fernhurst – West Sussex**

The application to test drill a vertical and horizontal well at Nine Acre Copse in Linchmere has now gone live. I visited the site and was surprised at how close to houses it is. Residents there need your support. **This is in the South Downs National Park. If this gets through it can happen anywhere.**

Frack Free Fernhurst have good information about how to object on their website.

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## Campaigns, Climate and Energy – Ann Garrett

### Next Campaign Stall

This will be in the Mall Precinct on March 22nd from 2.30 - 4.30 pm. The focus will be on the Fracking campaign, when we should have some new materials, but we will also have Make It Better and Bees campaign materials as well. Offers of help will be most welcome !

### Climate and Energy

#### Fracking

Councils that approve fracking projects will be allowed to keep millions of pounds more in tax revenue. This is bad news, as it will encourage more councils in the drive for exploration. Authorities will receive 100% of the business rates collected from shale gas schemes rather than the usual 50%. The company Total is due to confirm that it is investing in fracking exploration in the UK.

Meanwhile there is a project to drill in the South Downs National Park. A group called 'Frack Free Fernhurst' has been formed. Locally we have been informed that drilling could soon begin in West Wickham, but are awaiting more details about this.

#### Irish Sea Contamination

We need to be reminded of the dangers and cost of nuclear power's long term legacy. British nuclear operators face being sued for billions of pounds by the Irish government and Irish victims of any radioactive damage they cause under legal challenges to be introduced this year.

Greenpeace has warned that the dumping of the reprocessing plant's

liquid waste has made the Irish Sea among the most contaminated waters in the world [those surrounding Japan might soon be catching up ], even though Ireland itself produces no nuclear energy

#### Energy

The community of Good Energy customers has reached a spectacular 100,000. The company made its first steps into the energy market 15 years ago at a time when the renewables industry was in its infancy.

The UK now gets 11% of its electricity from renewables, and Good Energy is doing its best to encourage larger, more powerful businesses and organisations to join them in tackling the huge challenge of climate change.

With extreme weather conditions becoming more frequent, companies like this are making a valuable contribution to resolving some of the problems. They are working towards transforming the energy market and ensuring it is secure and stable for generations to come.

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#### *Fracking in Sussex, continued*

#### Wisborough Green

I also visited Wisborough Green and met concerned residents and saw the site. This one is right next to ancient woodland owned by Sussex Wildlife Trust. There are big concerns here about rare bat species that use the area for foraging. The good news is that the County Council has recently written to Celtique Energy requesting a lot more information before they can proceed.

## Fundraising, Make It Better, Free Recycling, + continuations

### Requests from the Fundraising Team

#### 1. Crafters – We need You!

As part of our new drive to fundraise, we are asking if any of our talented members would like to make items for the group to sell this year, when we are out and about at different venues.

So if you can draw, paint, sew, knit, make cards or jewellery and are interested in helping, we would love to hear from you. Please see either Bill Priestley or Judy Palmer, or contact us through the group email address – [bromleyfoe@gmail.com](mailto:bromleyfoe@gmail.com).

#### 2. Would you like to help fill a hamper?!

When we are doing the summer fairs we propose to organise a raffle or two, and have had a donation of one or two hampers (thank you to the Clark family!) which we will fill and raffle off.

If you have any items suitable for including in a hamper – non-perishable please, see Bill Priestley at the monthly meetings.

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### Make it Better Campaign

*Annette Rose writes:* The campaign is continuing to work on persuading politicians to do their bit. We want a strong law to spell an end to scandals in supply chains. If you haven't already done so, please go to [www.foe.co.uk/makeitbetter](http://www.foe.co.uk/makeitbetter) to join thousands of others calling on Secretary of State for Business, Vince Cable to support the Make it Better Law.

### Honeybees, continued

Britain, France, Germany and Italy did not have enough honeybees to pollinate properly the crops grown.

Further research at the university published last month showed that wild pollinators such as bumblebees and solitary bees are just as effective pollinators of oilseed rape as honeybees.

The research team also concluded that insect pollinators added £37m a year to the value of just two varieties of British apples, Gala and Cox, by increasing fruit yield and quality.

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### Transport comment, *continued*

levels, together with adding a fourth lane by converting the hard shoulder, and introducing variable speed limits. This, say experts, will ease traffic flows and cut emissions.

But, as expected, some motorists' organisations criticised the proposal as something that would curb business efficiency. Surely, they should welcome a step towards the nation's climate change targets being met.

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### Free Recycling of Electrical Goods

Bromley Council provides a free collection service for electrical goods within the borough. To book a collection, call 01795 434114 Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm or email [bromley@sweeep.co.uk](mailto:bromley@sweeep.co.uk), including your name, address and contact numbers, as well as a list of the electrical items to be collected.

**Appeal from Garden Organic - forwarded by Anne Clark**

**URGENT Action Needed: New developments mean the EU is effectively about to ban small seed producers**

I am writing to you on a matter of some urgency. I know it's Christmas but we need to take action on this issue now.

You may remember earlier in the year we wrote to you telling you about the EU plans to licence seed production. It would have effectively banned small seed producers and potentially even criminalised the gardener who produces his own seed! The impact on plant diversity would have been devastating.

We joined forces with several other campaigning groups across Europe and won concessions which excluded the smaller producers. However the situation is now looking worse...

**The New Developments**

One influential Italian MEP, Sergio Silvestris, has been working hard to amend the legislation. And it is now proposed that the new legislation is amended to cover all plant materials which are made available for sale. Even worse, Mr Silvestris has removed the exemptions to the rules for voluntary and community living seed banks like the Heritage Seed Library.

This is extremely bad news. This means not just food crops but also ornamentals, vegetables, fruit trees and even wildflowers will now be subject to EU regulation! Can you believe that, even wildflower seed subject to EU regulation!

**The Implications**

In its proposed form, the legislation would require all seed producers, of whatever size, to become licensed operators and all plants sold to be described and listed and to meet set standards with plants having to conform to tightly defined descriptions. And seed producers will have to bear the costs (which will get passed on to consumers). If you want to produce seed, you would need to register, even if you are just producing seed to share with friends.

Now, this legislation works very well for the big producers who churn out large volumes of limited varieties. But, what about all the small seed banks, specialist nurseries, seed exchange networks, even amateur breeders -- how will they bear the cost of regulation!? The Heritage Seed Library would almost certainly become unviable.

And there is no reason for it.

It is not as if there are massive problems with the way seeds are produced at the moment. This legislation is simply a way for the large corporations to get a stranglehold on the market. And there's the principle of the thing. The EU is proposing to licence and regulate nature — it is perverse.

We are, right now, joining forces with our NGO colleagues across Europe to fight this. We all need to play our part.

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## Garden Organic, *continued* + Film UK Gold

### The key points we are arguing for are:

- a) Living seed banks, seed exchange networks and Statutory Seed Banks to be exempt from regulations;
- b) Reduce ornamental (including wildflowers) testing requirements in the Regulations;
- c) Introducing exemptions to the ruling if the quantity of seed sold to the customer is below a certain level (packet size). Many niche varieties are sold in smaller quantities and not sold on a large commercial scale;
- d) Recognition of the value of open-pollinated varieties, heterogeneous materials that cannot conform to the standards. And allowing exemptions to varieties developed in the future as well as existing varieties;
- e) Regulation of marketing of Plant Reproductive Material (PRM) not to be applied to small farmers and amateur growers.

### Take action

Please would you write to your MEP to raise awareness of this issue. I have drafted a letter which you can use for this. However, with this kind of campaigning work, it is generally best if you are able to write your own because MEPs tend to disregard letters that look mass-produced. You can download the letter at [www.gardenorganic.org.uk/support\\_us/saveourseeds.php](http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/support_us/saveourseeds.php)

I know this may not be the best time in the year to be asking this but we desperately need to get moving as fast as possible.

### Film UK Gold - *Extract from a review in The Guardian*

Mark Donne's documentary on the UK tax avoidance industry will outrage and appall.

This is the kind of film to get the blood boiling and the steam hissing out of your ears. Campaigning journalist Mark Donne has constructed an ambitious and admirably clear assault on the UK's lamentable record in the tax avoidance industry, zeroing in on the unsavoury role played by the City of London and its institutions – not just in this country, but in far more desperate international territories too.

In fact, one of the more sinister allegations of this film concerns TheCityUK, a body set up by our own Square Mile, which is using its clout to develop the Kenyan capital Nairobi as a financial hub.

Donne's film offers a harsh verdict on the current UK government; despite its protestations to the contrary, it has introduced legislation to make it easier to avoid tax abroad. Barack Obama, in contrast, comes in for a fairly glowing assessment, condemning the arrangements in certain UK-controlled territories as a "scam" and setting up tough regulations for anyone doing business with US companies.

*This film is Bromley Progressive Film Co-operative's February film, to be shown on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> February at Friends Meeting House, Bromley. Doors open at 6 pm for shared food. Film starts 7 pm, with discussion and food after.*

## Latest news from Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT)

A few days ago CAAT sent this info to their supporters

### **Rolling out the royals**

Prince Andrew is in action right now, propping up dictators and BAE's weapons sales. He's not alone: senior Ministers, members of the RAF and civil servants are all at the Bahrain International Airshow helping promote BAE's Typhoon warplanes to Bahrain's dictators.

Despite continuing suppression of protests in Bahrain, the UK government continues to push arms sales.

King Hamad of Bahrain has overseen a brutal crackdown on his own people. Those who speak up for democratic reform face being tortured and locked up, or sent into exile. Bahrain has no military need for BAE's Typhoons, but it does have a political need: it knows that buying UK weapons can also buy UK silence on Bahrain's human rights abuses.

Please take action: the UK must support human rights not repression. Visit [www.caat.org.uk](http://www.caat.org.uk) to see what you can do.

### **Our action stops arms sales**

We know our action can make a difference. Last month an international campaign stopped a massive shipment of tear gas from South Korea to Bahrain. The order would have been for more tear gas canisters than Bahrain has people. Tear gas has caused at least 30 deaths in Bahrain since 2011, injured thousands and is even fired into people's homes as a form of collective punishment.

We supported the campaign with action online and protests at the South Korean embassy, helping create international pressure on the South Korean government to act. And every email, every tweet and phone-call – every early morning protest – added up to an amazing result: together we stopped the shipment. South Korea announced it would not allow the sale, citing "unstable politics."

Public action stopped the sale of weapons which would have been used to intimidate, maim and kill – and set an important precedent. Visit [www.caat.org.uk](http://www.caat.org.uk) to see what you can do.

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### **Go green, go by bike**

Plans for FoE's popular annual Big Green Bike Ride are under way – and registration is open for cyclists of all standards who want to experience a fun weekend plus raising sponsorship money for FoE.

The dates are Saturday May 17 and Sunday May 18. The first day features an 83-mile bike ride from the bustle of London through idyllic countryside to the New Forest, while on day two there will be a 35-mile exploration of the New Forest. Accommodation, food and evening entertainment are all part of the programme.

Register now for a weekend with a difference that will help to support FoE. Note that minimum sponsorship applies. More information at: [biggreenbikeride@foe.co.uk](mailto:biggreenbikeride@foe.co.uk)

## Bromley Friends of the Earth - List of Contacts

### Co-ordinators:

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

### Secretary:

vacant

### Treasurer:

Sheila Brown 01689-851605

### Press Officer:

Sophie Lyons  
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### Programme Organiser:

Sheila Brown 01689-851605

### Outings organisers:

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### Newsletter Editor:

John Street 020-8460-1078  
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### Membership Secretary:

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### Bromley FoE web site:

***www.bromleyfoe.co.uk***

Peter Gandolfi  
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### Admin team:

Judy Palmer: Group emails  
*bromleyfoe@gmail.com*

Rob Clark: Facebook co-ordinator  
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Annette Rose  
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### Fundraising Officer:

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### Campaigns –

#### Campaigns Organiser:

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#### Transport:

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#### Climate and Energy:

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#### Food and Ethical Farming:

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#### Bee Cause

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#### Monthly Meeting reporters:

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

#### Merchandising:

Anne Clark 020-8289-8483

#### Teas:

Anne Clark / Ivy Smith

**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: 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.....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Email Address.....

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

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