

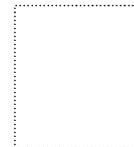


**Friends of the Earth**

**Bromley**

# January 2013 No. 301 Newsletter

Bromley FoE: inquiries to Birch House, Grays Road, Westerham TN16 2JB  
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## January Meeting

*Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley*

### **Biodiversity in Bromley**

*Sue Holland, Bromley's Biodiversity and Natural Heritage Officer, speaks about her role*

*Followed by our AGM to elect officers and receive accounts and other reports*

**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January - 7.30pm.**

Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by  
**\*\*\* WEDNESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY \*\*\***  
Contact details inside front cover.

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***Reminder - January meeting is on WEDNESDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> Jan, not Tuesday 1st***

### Diary dates:

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> (Wed)</b> | <b>Bromley FoE's January meeting and AGM:</b> Sue Holland, Bromley's Biodiversity and Natural Heritage Officer |
| Jan 15 <sup>th</sup> (Tue)      | Sevenoaks FoE Communications workshop, with Nikki Packham from FoE HQ  |
| <b>Jan 22 (Tue)</b>             | <b>Bromley FoE's Planning Meeting</b>  |
| <b>Feb 5 (Tue)</b>              | <b>Bromley FoE's February Meeting;</b> Shaun Spiers, CEO of Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)           |
| <b>Mar 5 (Tue)</b>              | <b>Bromley FoE's March Meeting;</b> FoE's "Make it Better" campaign  |
| <b>Apr 2 (Tue)</b>              | <b>Bromley FoE's April Meeting;</b> Dr Nikki Gammans, Bumblebee Project Officer                                |

### **Bromley FoE needs a new Treasurer - Your help is needed!**

At the Bromley FoE annual meeting in January we shall need to elect a new Treasurer – see previous newsletters for more details.

The task involves entering subscription payments, banking cash and listing items of expenditure. Some treasurer training and help is available from FoE Underwood Street.

If you would like more details, please contact Sheila Brown or Debbie Witherick (see the contacts list at the back of the Newsletter). Meanwhile, our grateful thanks go to Debbie for the work she has put in, whilst juggling family and work pressures. A job well done!

### **January meeting and AGM – WEDNESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> January**

This will also be our Annual General Meeting. Thoughts, suggestions, ideas etc for our future activities are welcome. We will also elect officers, including a new treasurer, and our joint co-ordinators Ann and Sheila would be delighted to hear from anyone willing to take on a job and help to run the group.

As a warm-up act, we have Sue Holland, who is Bromley's Biodiversity and Natural Heritage Officer and is also working with us to create our own "Bee World."

### **Next Newsletter - copy details:**

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor by **\*\*\* WEDNESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY \*\*\***:

**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

## Activism - major changes ahead?

*Fundamental changes in how local groups get involved in activism are being planned by National FoE – see the article below. Please bring any comments you may have for discussion at our January AGM.*

### **From Joe Jenkins, FoE Activism Director**

Over the past few months we've held consultations and meetings with activists from the groups network, Board, staff and beyond, looking at how our big activism events can deliver the best that they can for all of us. That's included a long hard look at our annual conference.

While for some conference is much loved, for many we have found that the fixed "conference" model has meant we were returning to unpopular, inflexible and expensive university campuses every year for an event that wasn't attracting as wide a selection of group members as we'd like. It made it hard for us to engage other people in Friends of the Earth campaigning events, and has also not involved the level of collaboration that we'd like for the future.

We learnt a lot from the past few months of discussions and as a result, we have developed a fresh new timetable of events which we hope will excite you as much as they do us.

These vary from involvement in a major summer festival to a high profile and prestigious lecture in London.

Events will kick off with a Campaigner's Get-Together in July 2013 when around 300 active grassroots environmental campaigners

are invited to gather in Hartington, Derbyshire for three days of stimulating discussion, activities and action.

There will be workshops and discussions on everything from big Friends of the Earth campaigns, to effective campaign tactics. There will be a celebration of our grassroots work - the Earthmovers Awards as well the annual democratic process for group members - as well as the motions debate (we'll be starting the process for motions earlier to ensure it's completed properly in time for the event).

The event will also include more hands-on activities such as prop-making and foraging. We're also hoping to have a children's play area, banner painting and an open-space/self-organising area. Outdoor activities such as organised hikes will be possible to take advantage of the stunning rural setting.

Central to the event is the idea that it's developed and run collaboratively between grassroots campaigners and staff. We want your ideas and your direct involvement in planning the event so if you're interested in helping to pull it together, we want to hear from you.

Ticket prices have been kept low - around £20-£40 with a range of accommodation including tents, dormitory beds, B&Bs or hotels. The dates to save are 12-14 July 2013.

*/continued on next page*

## Bromley FoE Accounts for year ended December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012

|                                     | 2012            | 2011            | 2010            |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Balance at January 1st</b>       | 933.04          | 855.48          | 966.15          |
| <b>Income</b>                       |                 |                 |                 |
| Subscriptions                       | 381.00          | 333.00          | 389.00          |
| Donations                           | 128.00          | 181.00          | 158.34          |
| Hall collection                     | 369.34          | 303.64          | 293.12          |
| Tea profits                         | 56.37           | 12.30           | 25.00           |
| Stall income & other fundraising    | 88.70           | 148.62          | 114.96          |
| Donations for National FoE          | 0.00            | 72.00           | 620.00          |
|                                     | <b>1,023.41</b> | <b>1,050.56</b> | <b>1,600.42</b> |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                  |                 |                 |                 |
| Hall hire                           | 403.00          | 420.00          | 400.00          |
| Newsletter                          | 416.30          | 370.00          | 365.60          |
| Stall rentals & other expenses      | 51.00           | 66.00           | 35.00           |
| Goods for resale                    | 0.00            | 0.00            | 0.00            |
| Conference subsidy                  | 0.00            | 0.00            | 90.00           |
| Payments to other organisations     | 30.00           | 25.00           | 187.50          |
| Donations to National FoE           | 30.00           | 92.00           | 620.00          |
| Other                               | 56.51           | 0.00            | 12.99           |
|                                     | <b>986.81</b>   | <b>973.00</b>   | <b>1,711.09</b> |
| <b>Surplus / (deficit) for year</b> | <b>36.60</b>    | <b>77.56</b>    | <b>(110.67)</b> |
| <b>Balance at December 31st</b>     | <b>969.64</b>   | <b>933.04</b>   | <b>855.48</b>   |

### **Activism changes ahead? *cont'd***

And that's not all. Starting in January/February 2014 up to a thousand people will be introduced to new and challenging ideas with our central London 'See Things Differently' lecture.

And on top of that we're planning on being a growing presence at Wilderness Festival; our chance to enthuse a new group of people.

On top of all that, our training events across the country will aim to adapt and respond more to the needs of campaigns and the network, bringing you together with others on areas of interest. Together, we're going to be busy...

We can't wait to organise these with you. To be part of it or to ask any questions you might have, drop an email to [gettogether@foe.co.uk](mailto:gettogether@foe.co.uk)

## Campaigns, Climate and Energy – Ann Garrett

### Campaigning

#### Climate March

Although the march on December 1st 2012 was again smaller than The Surge about three years ago, the message of No to Fracking was clear and imaginative.

Two of us represented Bromley FoE (hopefully there will be a photo in February's newsletter) and watched the construction of a 7.2 metre high mock fracking rig outside Parliament. There were some powerful speeches about the dangers of drilling for oil, such as pollution and the triggering of earthquakes, the need to abandon drilling projects in the UK as well as the rest of the world, and invest more in green energies.

We met up with Croydon and Southwark FoE members, enjoyed some great vegan food and lively music, and though small in number were proud to be on the demonstration with other committed people.

### Climate and Energy

#### Fracking

A few days after the climate march the Government went ahead on December 13th and lifted the ban on fracking. They gave the go ahead to shale drilling in the South East. Vast swathes of the countryside in Sussex, Surrey and Kent will be threatened. The UK's first drilling project in Lancashire has caused minor earthquakes and could in the future pollute water supplies.

During the fracking process water and chemicals are pumped into the ground

at high pressure to fracture the rocks and release gas. This is, however unlikely to reduce energy bills, but the Government is keen to provide energy security, and reduce the reliance on imported gas.

#### Doha Climate Change Deal

The reason the climate march is held the first week-end in December is to coincide with the international UN climate conference each year, and at Doha there was some historic recognition for poorer countries who are suffering the ravages of climate change.

There was a pledge from rich countries that they will receive funds to repair damage being incurred through an international legally-binding agreement. This was achieved through talks involving 195 countries and after a marathon 36 hour final session. There are still some uncertainties about exactly where the money will come from and how it will be disbursed. These issues will be sorted out at next year's conference in Warsaw.

Governments also rescued the Kyoto Protocol, whose initial carbon-cutting targets ran out at the end of 2012. The new ones will run up to 2020 and a treaty will be signed in 2015 at a conference in Paris.

**Remember -**

**January meeting / AGM is on**

**WEDNESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> January**

**Poems from Roisin and Ann**  
*in lieu of a report on the December meeting*

**She Came In Peace To Me**

**She Came In Peace To Me**, the Vine,  
Slowly growing over the wall  
Slowly growing over the Arbour  
Quietly and full of sap  
The leaves grew green  
The grapes matured  
From green to purple in the Autumn sun  
Her gentle shade shielding from the heat

An Arbour, a place of peace  
A place to start the day in thought  
Or meditation  
Only shape the Vine in January I said,  
For if you cut at any other time  
She bleeds,  
Great drops of fluid fall from truncated shoots  
If you cut in summer

And then the gardener came  
The gardener from next door  
He was supposed to kill the Ivy  
But in his rush he killed the Vine  
And I am left bereft  
The leaves are curled and dry  
The tiny grapes hang withered  
Not plump and juicy

And I am left alone  
In the sun  
Mourning

**Poems from Roisin and Ann**  
*in lieu of a report on the December meeting*

**Oil is the dinosaur**

**Oil is the dinosaur** of our age  
Destined to end Earth's comfortable clime  
Clogging the air with carbon dots  
Held high by tiny wings of oxygen

This is the disaster of oil  
It chokes, it cloaks the Sun  
Churning our weather  
To make a nonsense of our seasons

The ice is melting in the Polar Regions  
BIG Oil is racing for the profits  
No curb set on the greed  
of these mis-guided money men

With their insistence  
That Oil is the only way  
And we agree, if we sit by and say  
'I need my car'  
'I need my warm home too'

Yet we have Sun and Sea and Wind  
All three providing more energy  
Than we need, if we are careful

Now is the time for us to think about a future  
Which sustains, not destroys life,  
To stabilise our Climate  
And break free from BIG OIL's mortmain claims

## Transport info, Ray Watson

### Car use stalls

If austerity has one advantage it is that it has helped force Londoners out of their cars – partly through the rising cost of fuel and insurance, plus the congestion charge. One group of drivers illustrate this: under-35s are clocking up much less mileage than previously, probably because they earn less and thus cannot afford to own a car.

The motoring organisation, the RAC Foundation, says its surveys have shown a decline in Londoners' car driving since 1999. It claims better public transport as one reason for this, pointing out that bus travel in the capital is up 80 per cent since 2000 with 6.5million journeys made every day, while tube journeys have risen to four million a day, up nearly a quarter.

Obviously, even more investment in public transport will add further to bus and tube travel, thus cutting carbon emissions. Are you listening mayor Boris?

Another factor in reducing car use is the introduction of more road tolls, especially now that Ken Livingstone's congestion charge has been so successful. A recent convert in support of road pricing is the Local Government Association, which represents local authorities in England and Wales. In a report, it says that the forecast increase in road traffic, which is set to double over the next 25 years, means that tolls are inevitable to curb the number of journeys.

The RAC Foundation also supports the idea, together with the CBI which

favours privatisation of motorways. The previous Labour Government dropped pricing plans due to a public outcry and the current Government has been lukewarm about it, though it recently approved tolls to pay for work on the A14, a key artery linking the industrial Midlands with east coast ports.

And who has said for years that road pricing must come? Friends of the Earth of course.

### Danger for cyclists

The Government announced with a great fanfare that it was setting aside £30 million on road junctions to reduce the danger to the growing army of cyclists, 108 of whom were killed on the roads in 2012. Sounds good – until you realise that this equates to about £64,000 for each local council, so that sum will not go far.

Figures show that as a nation we spend very little on our cycling infrastructure compared with European countries. As Green London authority member Jenny Jones recently pointed out in a letter to the Guardian, £30 million is less than the mayor has cut from the capital's road safety budget. Money spent on road safety, she says, reduces the economic cost of accidents, including costs borne by the NHS.

She goes on: 'In 2010 the capital had a 23 per cent increase in cycling casualties and a significant jump in pedestrians killed or seriously injured. This trend has continued as the road safety budget has been squeezed down to less than a quarter of what it was. Put simply, austerity kills'.

## Andy Atkins - "Operation Noah" lecture

Operation Noah is a Christian organisation which provides leadership, focus and inspiration in response to the growing threat of catastrophic climate change endangering God's creation. Its vision is complete decarbonisation of the British economy by 2030. This year Andy Atkins, Executive Director of Friends of the Earth, was invited to give their annual lecture, and three of us from Bromley FoE attended.

Andy reminded us of how for a long time the public did not believe climate change was happening, but this has now been translated to despair and a feeling of helplessness. He highlighted that this was a moral issue: there was a moral imperative to get off fossil fuels but the Coalition government was failing to address the issue and being totally irresponsible in its decision making. That the weather is changing globally is indisputable, and data has borne out what was foreseen by scientists.

In 2005 Friends of the Earth helped form the Stop Climate Chaos coalition and launched its own major campaign which caught the public imagination and led to the Climate Change bill. The challenge for the next 10 years is to see the United Kingdom and Europe move to a low carbon economy "otherwise we run out of future." The first step is to get off fossil fuels.

The scale of our "addiction" to fossil fuels is enormous: 80% of the world gets its electricity from them, and in the UK this is 88%. The big oil companies of course are fighting to maintain their role. The international

goal is to keep temperature rise below 2° but it is already way too high. To have any chance of staying below 2°, it would need to peak by 2016 and then go down every year. This means that in theory we have four years to start going in the right direction, but already we are seeing the adverse effects on weather patterns: floods in many countries, Arctic ice melt, and all weather records being slashed.

In 2003 France saw many deaths from heat stress, harvests are failing and cities – including recently New York – are experiencing catastrophic flooding. This is a moral issue: we are breaking our contract with future generations and not to change our actions is totally immoral. Andy challenged the churches to take the lead.

We should consider the huge environmental impact of fossil fuel extraction, for example the tar sands causing devastation in Canada and affecting thousands. Nearer to home, particulate emission in London accounts for more deaths than road traffic accidents. If we are serious about remaining below the 2° level, we need to "leave the oil in the soil and the coal in the hole." There are those who argue that in the UK that our own fossil fuel extraction is minimal, only accounting for 2%. However the contribution from all the things we import brings this total far higher.

There is distrust between the rich world and the poor world. Rich countries need to set an example, otherwise poor countries will argue against signing up.

*/continued on pages 12 and 13*

## ‘Make it Better’ Campaign – Annette Rose

A new FoE campaign, ‘Make it Better’ was launched in December 2012. The aim of the campaign is to look at how the items in our shops are manufactured and what materials they are made of and make companies take responsibility.

Currently, companies in the UK are not required to fully measure or manage the environmental impact of the products they make. A product may appear green on the outside but inside it is a different story. The campaign is calling for new rules to ensure that companies track and come clean about their supply chains. FOE want to put pressure on the EU to ensure that all companies selling items in Europe make smarter use of the resources going into their products.

To this end, FOE have focussed on one particular supply chain that there are grave concerns about; Their focus is on mobile phone manufacture. Mobile phones are now an integral part of people’s lives. But FoE’s research now shows that there is a link between mobile phone manufacture and the destruction of forests, farmland and the devastation of communities overseas.

### **Bangka- The Tin Island**

Bangka is an island just east of Sumatra, Indonesia. A third of the world’s tin is from Indonesia and 90% of that amount is from Bangka and its neighbouring island. Tin is used in smartphone manufacture and it is almost certain that some of the tin used by best selling brands like Apple and Samsung comes from Bankor.

The results of mining tin on the island has had devastating results including

- Pollution of drinking water and loss of soil fertility
- Silt and sludge killing coral
- Endangered turtles and nesting sites lost
- Miners killed and injured from collapsing pits
- Loss of forest and farmland
- Abandoned mine craters filled with unhealthy stagnant water

### **So what action can we take?**

The first step is to get the mobile phone companies to respond openly to questions about their supply chains. FoE admits that they may not be aware of where some of their raw materials are coming from and need this drawn to their attention.

### **How to Make it Better**

The action pack has options for everybody to get involved in this campaign if they wish. You can email the phone companies asking them to clarify things, via the Foe website. You can post the campaign on facebook or call on friends to support the campaign by tweeting. There are letters to give out to the managers of mobile phone shops. The letters ask for information about the smartphones on sale in the store and ask managers to contact their suppliers to find out if tin from Bangka Island is used in their products.

I sent the FoE email to Samsung and Apple and this is the **response I got from Samsung.**

*/continued on next page*

**'Make it Better' Campaign, *continued***

Samsung Electronics takes the issue of ethical sourcing of minerals very seriously. We strongly support the ban on conflict minerals, including tin, tantalum/coltan, tungsten and gold, and the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission's efforts to monitor the source and chain of custody of minerals used in manufacturing.

Our efforts include, requiring our first-tier suppliers to sign a compliance agreement stating they will not use these minerals and contributing to relevant EICC initiatives, including the development of an assessment tool and conflict-free smelter certification

Since the enactment of the Dodd Frank Act by the S.E.C., we have also been trying to investigate sources of minerals in our supply chain. Accordingly, we will monitor the Bangka Island situation to determine if an investigation, into whether tin in our supply chain is being sourced from the region, is required.

Samsung is committed to upholding the highest standards of corporate responsibility, and we continue to evaluate our sourcing policies to ensure they comply with global standards associated with our industry.

Yours sincerely,  
D Thompson  
Customer Support Centre

**FoE pointed out** that Samsung have not fully answered the questions posed so have replied with the following.

**Dear Samsung,**

Thank you for responding to my email about the impact of tin mining on Bangka Island.

However, I am disappointed that you have not told me whether this tin is in your supply chain. Research by Friends of the Earth has revealed that it's highly likely that it is in your products - whether or not you knew about it or the damage it causes - and they alerted you to this several weeks ago.

Please can you also tell me exactly what you mean by monitoring the situation on Bangka, as evidence of the damage caused by tin mining has already been well documented in this report:  
[http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/tin\\_mining.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/tin_mining.pdf)

I would also appreciate a reply to my question about whether you'll support new Europe-wide laws to make companies reveal all about their supply chains.

**To date, Apple has not responded as far as I know.**

I hope very much that the group will be able to be involved in this new campaign. I have personal reservations about entering mobile phone shops and asking for the manager to give them the FoE letter. I don't think this is targeting the right people and don't see this as effective. But other members of the group may well have different opinions on this and would like to take this action.

## FoE says - Fracking green light sends shockwaves across UK

Responding to an announcement today by Energy Secretary Ed Davey, which allows shale gas fracking to continue in the UK, Friends of the Earth's Executive Director Andy Atkins said:

"Giving the green light to fracking for shale gas will send shock waves across the UK." Communities up and down the country will be disturbed by this reckless decision which threatens to contaminate our air and water and undermine national climate targets.

"George Osborne's short-sighted dash for gas will leave the country dependent on dirty fossil fuels - MPs must stand up for a safe and affordable future by insisting on clean British energy from the wind, waves and sun."

### **Friends of the Earth is opposed to fracking because:**

- By underpinning the Government's dash for gas, it will make it harder for us to meet our climate change targets.
- It risks major impacts on the local environment and human health, such as water contamination, increased air pollution and water demand.
- It risks diverting attention and investment away from a clean British energy future based on wind, wave and solar power.

Friends of the Earth groups are involved with a number of local campaigns against fracking across the UK, including:

### **Laurence Rankin from Southport Friends of the Earth said:**

"It is worrying that the Government is pushing ahead with fracking despite the many risks to our local environment and communities. " Residents across Lancashire are extremely concerned about the risks of water and air pollution, and the impact widespread shale gas fracking could have on jobs in farming and tourism. We want clean renewable energy, not dirty fossil fuels."

### **Stuart Cox from East Kent Friends of the Earth said:**

"This decision will be greeted with alarm by people in Kent and the South East - there are huge concerns about the potential impact of fracking on local people and their environment. Local opposition to fracking is already strong - today's shale gas go-ahead will make it stronger still."

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### **Operation Noah lecture, *cont'd***

How are we to overcome our addiction? We need to work towards a low carbon economy using wind and solar.

There are some grounds for hope. Over a third of economic growth is likely to have come from the green economy; electric car charging points are now happening on the M1, and an LED factory is doing well in Witney.

The next stage has to be to decarbonise our power generation, moving towards wind, tidal and solar,

*/concluded on next page*

## Bee Cause / Our Bee World – update by Judy Palmer

Along with the natural world and the national campaign we have hibernated / taken a break from physically working on our site at Tugmutton Common! During this time we need to spread the word on the campaign and Annette has already contacted Darrick Wood Junior School who have shown an interest in joining us.

A group of us went to a Sevenoaks FoE meeting in November where we listened to Dr Nikki Gammans speaking about her work on a bumblebee restoration project. A most interesting evening and Nikki will be coming to speak to our group in the New Year – a must-go-to event, so please look out for the date in the newsletter!

**Below is an update** from national Friends of the Earth on how the proposed timetable will be taken forward on the Bee Campaign:

The Bee Cause will be back in March 2013 and we hope you're looking forward to getting stuck in to save our great British bees.

**We're still buzzing** about all we achieved in 2012. Thanks largely to local groups like yours we secured a Pollinator Action Plan in Wales, collected over 66,000 signatures on our petition and much more.

**We want to secure** a Bee Action Plan in 2013 that covers the whole of Britain and all causes of bee decline. In March we'll be re-launching the first phase of the campaign with a focus on planting, to help cover the country in wildflowers. Phase 2 will be in

summer, and it's all about showing David Cameron the way forward.

**But we'll be pushing** Mr Cameron even harder for a National Bee Action Plan throughout. The support of your MPs will be crucial, so we'll be asking you to get in touch and invite them to join your events.

So thank you to everyone who has volunteered to help with this campaign and hopefully we will all be *buzzzzzzzzzzing* with energy and enthusiasm come the Spring!

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**Operation Noah lecture, concluded** ... and to look at the transport sector and domestic heating. Currently 75% comes from oil, gas and coal.

However, the Chancellor continues to subsidise coal, gas and shale and in 2011 cut the subsidies for solar energy, and is irresponsibly pulling apart some of the framework of the low carbon economy.

Andy urged churches to demonstrate integrity and strong moral leadership, to be movers to de-carbonise their own churches. There was huge potential. Church investments in the big oil companies should be withdrawn and put into green projects.

Christian groups needed to be as committed to combating climate change as they are to other social justice issues, such as poverty. The churches should lead on this, as nothing is more important than saving the planet.

## **KLAZOLOGY ... or The Congestion of Fixtures, by Richard Comaish**

I began, partly as a result of the collapse of the Communist Party of Great Britain in 1991, to embark on a highly active and varied social life involving attendance at many and various different meetings..

In the course of years of doing so, I soon became aware of a pattern of meeting clashes wherein different, unrelated meetings seem to congregate around certain days of the month or week, arguably undermining the health of local community organisation and participation. This I refer to as a 'congestion of fixtures.'

### **General denial**

Obviously I tried to alert colleagues to the problem at the earliest opportunity, but was met repeatedly with adamant and unremitting denial. It typically goes along the lines of 'Such clashes are inevitable' and/or 'Any choice of date would meet with the same issues, given the number of meetings going on locally.' Both responses, like all ill-informed truisms, sound reasonable and common-sensical enough prior to further inspection.

And it was said further inspection which seemed so elusive and unappealing to my respondents on the issue. Try as I might to explain that certain dates, such as the first and second Tuesday, the first Thursday and the second Sunday of the month seem to attract more than their share of fixtures, meeting attendees and organisers seemed irrevocably fixed on their own narrow interests, uninterested in the bigger picture, and to be accusing me, by implication, of some cognitive error or social heresy.

### **Esoteric explanations and conspiracy theories**

Given my long-term interest and involvement in the political Left and esoterica, esoteric explanations and conspiracy theories perhaps inevitably came under consideration. On one level, I eventually rejected both, concluding that the collective stupidity or clumsiness I was and am experiencing is neither deliberate nor in need of deep astrological analysis. On the other hand, common sense remains esoteric to those whose level of consciousness seems to amount to a conspiracy of ignorance.

### **Conclusions**

It took me many years to arrive at, or to become relatively sure of the following simple conclusions:-

1. Meeting fixtures congregate around Tuesdays and Thursdays. Because of the weekly work cycle we are (collectively) waking up on Mondays, and winding down on Fridays.
2. Mnemonic considerations: the 'first Thursday' and the 'second Sunday' are easier to remember and identify than, say, the third Thursday or the third Sunday of the month.

### **Does it matter?**

Probably not, if you want to inhabit a small, small-minded world where you just attend one local group, don't care about who and what you're missing, and don't like to think about big subjects like the likely effect of all this on your local community long-term. But to put it round the other way, can, for example, local FoE afford to constantly ignore local history?

## Bromley Friends of the Earth - List of Contacts

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### Membership Secretary:

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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:

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### Bee Cause

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### 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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