



**Friends of
the Earth
Bromley**



January 2018
No. 361

ewsletter

Bromley FoE: enquiries:

email: bromleyfoe@gmail.com, website: www.bromleyfoe.co.uk

January Meeting

Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

Keeping the Festive Mood alive

(We're still within the 12 Days of Christmas)

Winter Quiz

plus

Annual General Meeting

plus

Campaign Updates and Future Plans

Tuesday 2nd January – 7.30pm

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

*** **SUNDAY 21ST JANUARY** ***

Contact details inside front cover.

Diary dates:

Jan 2nd (Tue)

Feb 6th (Tue)

Feb 26th to

March 11th

Mar 6th (Tue)

Bromley FoE's January meeting: plus AGM

Bromley FoE's February meeting: Pamela Zollicoffer on
"Alleyways and Footpaths of Bromley"

Fairtrade Fortnight

Bromley FoE's March meeting

January Meeting – Tuesday 2nd January 2018

This is the earliest day our January meeting could be!

We don't want anyone to cease the merrymaking or festive cheer

*"Tis the season" It's the 9th Day of Christmas –
(Will we have "9 Ladies Dancing"?)*

We will have a Winter Quiz, our AGM,
an update on Achievements and Plans
and we'll discuss Future Campaigning

Do bring along some seasonal nibbles

Disclaimer: *Please note that any opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of Bromley Friends of the Earth or of Friends of the Earth*

Next Newsletter - copy details

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor by *** **SUNDAY 21ST 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

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

Bromley FoE's AGM – Sheila Brown

Our Partnership Agreement with Friends of the Earth requires us to have an Annual General Meeting to elect 'officers' (sounds far more formal than it is) and to approve accounts. We also use this as an opportunity to say a public thank you to everyone who has been involved in the group for their contributions during the year.

Bromley Friends of the Earth is one of the oldest Local Groups, founded in 1972, so now going into its 47th year! Members of other local groups, who often only have a handful of members and meet in pubs, are often very impressed that we have speakers each month and produce a monthly Newsletter.

I always feel that we are walking on the shoulders of giants regarding these achievements; if we were starting up today, we would almost certainly not be able to reach these heights, but it is a lot easier to keep a well-oiled machine running. We are therefore incredibly grateful to all those who went before us and set all this in motion, and all those who have picked up the baton and kept things running.

We have a huge pool of talent and of willing people who turn out cheerfully and regularly to man stalls and organise campaigns. However, we are always looking for new people to join our team. The watchword is that you give as much or as little time as you are able. So, is there a job you'd like to do? Would you like to join our Campaigns team? Is there anyone who would like to take on the job of Press Officer?

As you know, we always put a write-up of our talks in the Newsletter each month and are looking for others to join our team of reporters. Is this something you could do? The more people we have, the less often each one has to report.

Whether or not you are able to take anything on, we still look forward to seeing all of you on January 2nd.

Meantime, have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Butterfly expert needed!

Friends of Jubilee Country Park are looking for someone knowledgeable about butterflies.

Sadly, Marcus Jordan, who used to do this work in the park, died recently.

They need someone to take over doing a weekly transect of butterflies between April and September.

They would be accompanied by a member of the Friends group. This will continue to maintain their records of numbers and species seen in the park.

Please contact the Friends group, either via their website or by email at jubileecountrypark@yahoo.co.uk if you are able to help or if you know of someone who might be able to.

December meeting report – Annette Rose

Paul Spear, Teacher at Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Dartford - 'Using Images to teach Thinking, Geography and Environmental Issues to Primary School Children.'

Ann Garrett introduced our speaker and explained that she had been to the school in April this year, when invited at short notice by Paul Spear to give a talk about Friends of the Earth.

Paul started by explaining that we live in a visual world. Critical thinking skills are important for learning and pupils need to question what they are looking at. Paul shows his pupils images to get them thinking. Useful activities include creating stories around the pictures given. 21st century images can be used but also photos and drawings from the past. By asking the children to imagine placing themselves within an image, they can put themselves in that situation. They can imagine what they would be experiencing with their senses such as hearing, sight and smell.

For example, they could be placed within a historical battle scene, imagine themselves in the picture and get them thinking what it would be like to be there. Pictures are often more accessible to many pupils than text.

Paul showed us a range of the type of images he has used including a forest scene, evacuation of children in wartime, a snow scene. He often uses images first thing in the morning with his pupils to get them thinking. They can be used in different subject areas

including History, Geography and Environmental studies.

It is also useful to get the pupils to think about thinking skills themselves. Paul has worked with another school using these visual techniques- Mulgrove School in Woolwich. This school is a leading school in Global Learning Programme. This is a government sponsored scheme which focuses on global issues.

He has asked pupils to make maps. He showed us some of the children's map work. They contained plenty of detail and had a key. The maps were made of different biomes. Paul was pleased with how the children responded to this activity and the maps they produced showed they had thought about the issues.

The audience then asked some questions.

Q What do the pupils say about how they could change things, for example the effects of climate change?

The pupils often come up with their own ideas, often sensible ones such as using electric cars.

Q BFoE have found that air quality in Bromley area is very poor. The group has written to local head teachers to let them know about the levels of pollution outside their schools but we had no response.

Paul thought that this was a shame because the data could be used in lots of ways.

/continued on pages 5 and 13

Clean Air Event – Annette Rose

This item just missed the deadline for the December newsletter.

Thank you to everyone who came along for our Clean Air photo shoot and stall on 28th October.

Here is the press release and photo that was sent out to several local papers. Unfortunately we didn't get any printed coverage that I know of this time but it was still a useful event and we can use the photos in the future.

Press release- clean air awareness event 28.10.17

Concerns over air quality in Bromley

Members of Bromley Friends of the Earth gathered in Queens Gardens, Bromley on Saturday to show their concern about air quality in the local area. They are currently carrying out a campaign of air-quality monitoring around the Bromley and Orpington areas.

Nitrogen dioxide is a toxic gas that has been shown to inflame the lining of the lung and reduce immunity to lung infections such as bronchitis. The group took some spot-check samplings for the gas earlier in the year, particularly targeting bus stops where school children from local schools spend a lot of time waiting.

They were alarmed to find that most of the locations had levels of nitrogen dioxide approaching twice the legal limit. These included the bus stop in Station Road Orpington, used by many

school children. Other locations found to be well above the limit were Croydon Road Bromley and the bus stop for the Princess Royal Hospital.

The group was joined by Councillor Vanessa Allen. Councillor Allen said "We support your initiative and would like to see Bromley Council do more to encourage alternatives to car use." She also thought it was important to develop more cycle paths and put in more electric car charging stations. She is pleased to see the establishment of car clubs in Bromley.

Paul Enock, Clean Air Campaigner for Bromley Friends of the Earth, said "We know that traffic related air pollution in London is a big problem but we were shocked by these initial findings in Bromley which seem to be across the borough, not just in the centre. We are very keen to work with Bromley Council to find ways to make our air cleaner and safe for our children to breathe."

December meeting report, *cont'd*

Q Does the school participate in Eco Schools activities as there appears to already be some eco work taking place?

Paul said he didn't think so but the school has various other awards. He would investigate this and thought it was a good idea. The school has an active Eco Club.

Q Why don't classrooms have globes any more? Lots of pupils don't seem to know where countries are located.

Paul didn't know! *cont'd on page 13*

Bonn Climate Change Talks

There has been a great sense of urgency about these, and President Macron has taken the lead with strong criticism of the US's withdrawal. Arnold Schwarzenegger however has always been very concerned about this situation and has said that the US should continue with its renewables programme.

The talks in November 2017 called on governments at all levels, NGOs, the scientific and business communities; labour organisations and all of civil society to join in a grand coalition to save the planet. The conference further clarified the enabling frameworks to make the Paris agreement fully operational and encouraged governments to meet their Co2 emissions targets. It was presided over by the government of Fiji.

Nuclear Power

An article in the Winter 2017 CND newsletter covered the link between nuclear power and weapons. It stated that it has long been known that part of the governmental case for nuclear power has been the links with nuclear weapons and the need of supplies of plutonium.

The Nuclear Information Service has pointed out that there is great pressure to keep building nuclear power stations to sustain the competence to maintain nuclear weapons.

The conclusion of the article stresses that nuclear power doesn't solve climate change, partly because it is not

carbon neutral. It also points out the hazards of the mining, milling and transport of uranium and the enormous problems of the storage of nuclear waste. The importance of diverting science and skilled labour to useful green technology is rational and ethical.

Flood Defences

Beavers could be put to work building dams to stop a village from flooding in the Forest of Dean, in what would be the first scheme on government land. The Forestry Commission has been an enthusiastic advocate for the release of a family of beavers into a large fenced area surrounding Greatbough brook above the village of Lydbrook, owned by the commission.

Experts predict that the beavers will rapidly create dams, canals and ponds slowing the stream's flow and potentially holding back 6,000 cubic metres of water to prevent huge floods inundating Lydbrook, a village that suffered badly from flooding in 2012. Villagers are mostly supportive, hoping the scheme will not only protect the village, but boost local wildlife and tourism.

However, there are some concerns in the village that the beavers could escape from the enclosure, and the scheme has been abruptly postponed by the Department for the Environment, much to the anger of the Forestry Commission.

A Quietly Successful Campaign?

Early in the morning on 14th November, along with about 25 other activists from a broad coalition including Friends of the Earth and 350.org, I was in Exchange Square, just off Bishopsgate, to lobby at the headquarters of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

Our aim was to persuade the bank's management to invest European taxpayers' money in renewable, fossil-free energy generation, rather than in the controversial Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (TAP), which would commit southern Europe to further decades of fossil fuel dependency, and donate yet more public money in subsidising the fossil fuel industry. The bank was deliberating whether to invest two billion euros in the pipeline project.

The TAP project plans to transport natural gas from the giant Shah Deniz II field in Azerbaijan to Europe. The approximately 878 km long pipeline will connect with the Trans-Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP) at the Turkish-Greek border at Kipoi, cross Greece and Albania and the Adriatic Sea, before coming ashore in Apulia, in Southern Italy.

As you can imagine, a lot of 'global energy players' including BP (with a 20% interest in the project) would like to see the funding go ahead.

Part of our message was that gas is a false solution to climate change. Emissions from burning fossil fuels for

energy have driven atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide (CO₂, the most abundant greenhouse gas) to levels that the earth has not experienced for approximately three to five million years.

The greenhouse effect has ensured that 2017 has been one of the three hottest years on record, following on from three successive years of record-breaking temperatures. These temperature rises drive extreme weather events, including the catastrophic hurricanes, floods and heatwaves that affected millions of people over the summer of 2017.

The early-morning action was well organised and the police and security forces present actually praised the organisers for the peaceful but effective way our lobbying was conducted.

As a symbolic protest against the militarised enforcement at the site of the pipeline's landfall in Melendugno in Apulia, where thousands of ancient olive trees will be uprooted to make way for the pipeline, we handed over a small olive tree to Alistair Clark, Managing Director of EBRD and Biljana Radonjic Ker-Lindsay, the bank's Head of Civil Society Engagement, who were happy to come down the stairs to accept it.

For video coverage of the event, search:
www.facebook.com/pg/anxiousactivism/videos

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Climate Change

Successes and losses. Earlier in December last year the IUCN Red List showing which species were in danger of extinction was published, along with a report on how climate change is affecting our bird species and migratory visitors. The report was published by the RSPB, the BTO and Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust and other conservation bodies using data from up to date bird surveys and monitoring studies.

It showed some birds were coming to the UK to breed as their range expands northwards and as the climate warms, some of our birds are in decline. Migratory birds are arriving earlier which can have an impact on their breeding season if their food is not available, or if they cannot find a nesting site.

And as we reported much earlier in 2017, many of our native birds are in decline in Bromley borough, probably due to a number of factors, for instance loss of nesting sites due to building work, intrusive light pollution and loss of food sources. We will continue to update on how we can help this year.

And talking of food sources – the Red List is now listing wild crops as being on the brink of extinction. This latest report by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) shows that wild plants are being ousted by intensive farming, deforestation and urban sprawl. Included on the list you can now see three types of rice, two types of wheat and seventeen types of yam. These wild crops are found mostly in SE Asia, the near and middle East and

Africa, and between them feed well over 100 million people. Putting them on the Red List should help them be prioritised for conservation actions.

There are other flora and fauna species listed too, but there is a success story – the New Zealand kiwi are recovering due to conservation efforts.

Friends of the Earth new

website/nature – you can access it here <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/nature> and it has a wealth of new and old information there, for instance on why nature matters, nature and climate change and the threats to nature. Plus information on bees, wasps, ragwort, spiders and slugs and snails! We need our diversity of species, and as Paul de Zylva has written there – *‘From seas to soils, the diversity of wild species on land and in the seas maintains the stability of the food chain. And diversity keeps pests and disruptive species in check.’*

And in a mini round-up of 2017 bee campaign successes - we saw a change in the UK government’s position on bee-harming neonic pesticides, the top 10 garden centres/stores said they would stop using them and more farmers wanted to grow crops in a bee-friendly way.

Come 2018 the FoE nature campaigners will be waiting on the Government’s (long-awaited) 25 Year Environment Plan, a proposal for a new environment regulatory body, together with new Bills. They will also be working on the issue of plastics.
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Miller's Mutterings for December – Chris Miller

Last month's weather saying said that if a beechnut is dry on All Saints' Day we should have a hard winter. Well I'm afraid to say that the 1st November was bright and chilly so be prepared.

The weather dominates us as you can imagine and this month's mutterings seems to be mainly about the weather. We were grateful for the rain, as we are about three months behind on rainfall for this year. Bewl Water is very low at the moment with only 35% of its full capacity.

As we head into December, the days seem quite cold which helps drive the slugs underground, they eat the emerging shoots and it kills off some of the aphids.

The mild weather we have been experiencing through October and early November suits the aphids that produce quantities of a sticky substance known as honeydew. This sticky mess causes viruses in wheat and barley so colder weather will help a little to clear them too.

Steve has finished hedge cutting and we have gained about 6 foot around each field. One of the advantages of not ploughing is that the ground is fit for the tractor with the hedge cutter on and does not cause damage to the soil structure.

All planted fields have had their necessary weed control applied for this year. Pete has been busy with MORE electrical work and roof repairs carry on with help from a friend.

Although bitterly cold this time, at least he didn't have to wear a bee protection suit as it was too cold for the bees to come out of the hives.

As news from the farm is a little slim during the winter months, I thought I would pass on a few comments from Steve's great grandfather. George Miller used to write to two of his sons during the First World War and we have carbon copies of some of the letters.

He writes that in October 1917 they had over 10" rain and were unable to plant wheat or lift the potatoes. They did manage to plant 40 acres of spring greens prior to the heavy rain though.

He goes on to say that the last few weeks of November had been exceptionally nice so had been catching up on the backlog of work but on the 4th December 1917 it started with heavy snow which then turned to rain. Trade at the London market wasn't very good especially for potatoes.

His eldest son, George Stanley had just been medically discharged from the army and his second son, Cecil was in the Royal Flying Corp. Steve's grandfather was too young to enlist.

A few saints' days with weather sayings this month but this one is for St. Thomas Day, 21st December.

*If it freezes on St Thomas' Day,
the price of corn will fall;
If it be mild, the price will rise.*

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EU's recent re-licensing of Glyphosate – translated from *Der Spiegel*

This article is a translation by Paul Enock of the lead article in the German news magazine der Spiegel, published on December 2nd. The original article was written by Michaela Schiessl.

For a while in November, it looked as if the world's most widely-used herbicide was going to be banned by the European Union, after the World Health Organization had concluded in March 2015 that glyphosate (the active ingredient in 'Roundup') probably causes cancer. This finding was disputed by industry-sponsored studies, but a sufficient number of European states seemed to be minded towards precaution.

Meanwhile, as Michael Gove was attempting to brush up his environmental credentials at home, the UK government was lobbying hard in Brussels, along with the NFU, for an extension of the herbicide's licence. There was much scare-talk in the media of an end to agriculture as we know it and of unacceptable increases in the price of food if glyphosate were to be banned.

Then, to everybody's surprise, Germany, which had been expected to abstain or vote against during Merkel's coalition negotiations with the *Grünen* (Green Party), used its influential vote in favour of licensing the chemical.

Shortly afterwards, on 2nd December 2017, the following surprisingly frankly worded lead article appeared in Germany's mainstream political weekly *Der Spiegel*. Reading the article, (which is translated below), one is reminded of the vast number of potential allies the

environmental movement in this country has in Europe, and the great power we could wield if only we could act in unison.

Poisoning the Land

In the argument over glyphosate, nothing less is at stake than the very basis of our existence.

They made it look like the act of a crazy loner. When Germany's Agriculture Minister, Christian Schmidt, approved the use of the plant-killer glyphosate for a further five years, against the resolve of his coalition partners, in the face of advice from his own Chancellor, and against the wishes of most German voters, he was acting completely alone. At least, that's what we're supposed to believe. "I decided for myself, acting within the responsibility that comes with my portfolio," the CSU party member stated, after he had done the deed. And just to make it all sound a tad more barmy, he added: "That's Schmidy all over for you".

Pull the other one. In fact, throughout his ministerial career, Schmidt has stood out more for his embarrassing performances ("*Je suis ein Thüringian salami*") and chronic cowardice, than for any revolutionary machinations. Not once has he dared stand up to the powerful Agribusiness lobby. As a newcomer to agriculture, the former secretary of state for defence has hitherto stuck strictly to orders received from the CSU leadership, and its friends from the German Farmers' Federation (DBV).

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EU's recent re-licensing of Glyphosate - *continued*

The latter have for years now been clear about the kind of farmer that should benefit from their lobbying: agribusinesses using industrial mass production techniques to provide the global food industry with cheap raw materials. The “expand or perish” philosophy pursued by the DBV has seen nearly 10,000 farmsteads disappear in Germany since 2013.

Rather than growing our food in vibrant rural communities, production increasingly takes place inside huge factories, fenced off from the world like high-security zones. Behind Minister Schmidt –the supposed loner –looms a powerful agribusiness lobby whose single-minded profit drive is putting the basis of our lives at risk.

The fight over the herbicide glyphosate has been so bitterly fought because the winner will be able to set the direction our farming industry is to take. And beyond that, the issue will decide how the world’s population can be fed, and who should profit from the process.

Glyphosate has become an emblem of this debate because it a necessary lubricant for the type of industrialised agriculture that pays scant regard to people’s ways of life, to nature, or to our fellow creatures.

It has become a symbol for the kind of agribusiness that pumps animals and plants full of chemicals, that contaminates water with nitrates, that damages the climate and contributes to our alarming rate of species depletion. The threat made by farmers’ representatives that, should glyphosate

be banned, they would simply deploy even more damaging substances, demonstrates the rotten state of the sector to whom we have entrusted stewardship of the land.

The quarrel over whether or not glyphosate causes cancer has diverted our attention from the real problem. All the squabbling about which studies are trustworthy and which have been manipulated has almost buried the basic questions: What kind of agricultural industry will our society tolerate? What price is our society willing to pay? And finally: How can our present system of farming be reformed?

The agribusiness sector is keen to head off this debate by claiming that the side-effects of chemical farming are just the price we have to pay for our ability to feed the world’s population. But farming experts see things differently: in order to fight hunger, we have to promote sustainable small-scale farming. This was the finding of a 2008 study conducted by 400 scientists and sponsored by the UN and the World Bank.

Indeed, they found that glyphosate and other herbicides only exacerbate the problem. Their deployment has allowed herbicide-resistant superweeds to proliferate. Some of these are resistant even to a cocktail of agents. Whole stretches of land in the USA, approximately 34 million hectares, have been overrun by glyphosate-proof weeds, many of them metres in height.

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FoE Updates - Clean Air update *and* Bee Cause Update

Clean Air Update

Lots of your local air pollution campaigns have been getting attention lately. Here are just a few of the highlights.

The Reading group handed in a petition to the council. Meanwhile Oxford Friends of the Earth's petition ended up being a 30ft long. And the Eastbourne group got a double page spread in the local paper.

You can find more news and success stories from around the network on the Facebook group. Please keep on sharing your stories with Tom on tom.wright@foe.co.uk

Leeds, the first of the five cities ordered by the UK government to implement a Clean Air Zone, has released its plans. Read our reaction to this at <http://bit.ly/2AJSK2j>. Consultations in Birmingham, Southampton, Derby and Nottingham are expected in 2018 and we'll report more as soon as we have it.

The Clean Air schools pack is now available to order, if you're already working with local schools or would like something to help you build a relationship with one. Find out more and order a pack at <http://bit.ly/2kDw90z>.

We're planning an air pollution week of action in the summer, to tie in with National Clean Air Day on 21 June 2018. More on that in the New Year but for now please save the date.

Bee Cause update

Our bees have been celebrating a lot recently and that's down to you, so thank you so much.

Firstly, Homebase finally caved into our demands to take bee-harming pesticides called neonicotinoids out of their garden plants which means all of the top 10 leading UK garden centres have made this commitment. This took months of you emailing, calling and tweeting but we finally did it!

Secondly, Environment Secretary Michael Gove announced that tougher restrictions were needed on these bee-harming pesticides. He felt the pressure from the growing science, the farmers already using alternatives and of course, the hundreds of thousands of you who have tirelessly campaigned for our bees over the years.

These are both fantastic wins that wouldn't have happened without you. But now we need to make sure the EU votes to get these pesticides banned from all of our crops. This vote was due to happen last week but it's been delayed until early 2018. We need to keep up the pressure and make sure Michael Gove sticks to his word when the time comes. Sign this petition to show your support for tougher restrictions – visit <http://bit.ly/2yRmskr> to sign the petition.

We've achieved so much and these bee-harming pesticides are so close to being banned from our fields! Thank you again for helping protect our pollinators.

December rpt, Glyphosate, Divestment News- *continued*

December meeting rpt – *cont'd*

Q Do the children mention Brexit?

The children do bring it up now and then. They did so particularly after the referendum.

Q Why was Ann invited to talk in assembly at the school?

A project was ongoing that was linked to the UN's Sustainable Development goals. The talk contributed to that. Greenpeace were invited too. Ann felt slightly daunted at having to talk to the whole school, about 200 pupils, but she said they were really attentive and "one could have heard a pin drop". Paul confirmed that the pupils responded positively to the talk and followed it up with lots of questions.

EU licensing Glyphosate – *cont'd*

Resistance to herbicides is spreading through Germany as well.

It would be an easy matter to remedy these results of our destructive agricultural methods. Organic farmers have shown us how fields can be managed without chemicals, using crop rotation, ground-covers and mechanical weeding. It would cost a couple of hundred euros more per hectare to work the land in an environmentally friendly way.

Each year, the EU distributes 59 billion euros to agricultural enterprises. It is the largest single item in the EU budget. Right now, the framework for the community's agricultural policy is being re-shaped. We have a unique

opportunity to set Europe's agriculture on a healthy footing.

Technically, this would be easily accomplished: Funds should go only to those who manage their land in an environmentally friendly way. Economic models have already been worked out for this. All that's missing is that little ingredient that Minister Schmidt also appears to lack: the political courage to stand up to and defy the powerful lobbies of the agrochemical and food industries.

Divestment News – *continued*

Success?

Along with Tytus Murphy, who organised the campaign, I have recently received an invitation to meet Mr Clark and Ms Radonjic Ker-Lindsay and to submit a written response to their consultation on funding TAP. The meeting will take place on 19th December at the EBRD headquarters. I will be happy to keep you updated on developments.

BEECHE Courses 2018

There are a range of courses being run next year at the BEECHE centre, High Elms that may be of interest to our group. These include 'Introduction to British Bats', 'Introduction to Badger Ecology' and 'Introduction to Butterflies and their Habitats'. Courses cost £40 for a full day and are led by experts. Details at www.bromleyparks.co.uk/bookings

Nature News, Miller's Mutterings - *continued*

Nature News - *continued*

Hopefully lots of our members signed the petition Friends of the Earth sent round in December 2017 which was calling on the Government to ask the manufacturers' and retailers' to reduce the production of plastic waste to help stop polluting our oceans.

Single-use **plastics**, the state of our **marine** eco systems and how we tackle this issue, is gathering momentum. Again, back in December last year, the UN's ocean chief said that the oceans were facing multiple assaults and she was backing Norway who put forward a resolution to the UN for the world to completely eliminate plastic waste into the ocean.

It takes years for a treaty agreement to be implemented, so society, and the plastic industry, need to start changing now.

Last year a UK charity started offering a trip with a difference – they have an electric-engine boat which is constructed from 99% recycled plastic (including 8,000 plastic bottles) and run free trips for London school children to 'fish' for plastic in the water around London Docklands.

The children learn in a fun way about the environment and how it can impact on their lives, then the plastic they 'catch' is safely disposed of with some of it going towards building more plastic boats.

Statistically London consumes more plastic bottled water than anywhere

else in the UK but has the country's worst recycling rate. And plastic bottles make up 10% of all the litter found in the R Thames. Little steps can make a huge difference.

A big **thank-you** from Annette and I in the support you have given us in 2017, it is most appreciated!

Miller's Mutterings – *continued*

This reflects the belief that a good summer follows a bad winter, leading to a glut of grain, and that a bad summer follows a mild winter, leading to a scarcity. Whatever the weather we still enjoy farming and grateful that George Miller came here in 1899 from a farm in Beddington.

*Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year
Steve, Pete and Chris*

FoE Brexit survey

In 2016, 76% of respondents in an FoE poll said that FoE should campaign around Brexit. To help shape the campaign, please take the survey at
<http://bit.ly/2AYX55V>

There are also two telephone conference calls; to join in please register at:

Jan 10, 6.30pm <http://bit.ly/2CsGhAu>
Jan 15, 6.30pm <http://bit.ly/2j7CZet>

Bromley Friends of the Earth - List of Contacts

Co-ordinators:

Sheila Brown 01689-851605
email – shellabrown336@msn.com

Ann Garrett 020-8460-1295
email – anncgarratt@yahoo.com

Secretary:

vacant

Treasurer:

Sheila Brown 01689-851605

Press Officer:

Ann Garrett

Programme Organiser:

Sheila Brown 01689-851605

Outings organisers:

John & Sue Bocock 020-8464-5990
johnbocock@hotmail.com

Newsletter Editor:

John Street 020-8460-1078
johnstreet@gn.apc.org

Membership Secretary:

Dan Sloan 01689-838819

Bromley FoE web site:

www.bromleyfoe.co.uk

Peter Gandolfi
petergandolfi@hotmail.com

Admin team:

Judy Palmer: Group emails
bromleyfoe@gmail.com

Rob Clark: Facebook co-ordinator
bromleyfoe@gmail.com

Annette Rose
annette.rose1@ntlworld.com

Fundraising Officer:

Bill Priestley 01689-820469

Campaigns –

Campaigns Organiser:

Ann Garrett 020-8460-1295

Transport:

Ray Watson 01959-571566
r.watson865@btinternet.com

Climate and Energy:

and Fracking / Clean British Energy:

Ann Garrett 020-8460-1295

Food and Ethical Farming:

Peter Gandolfi details above

Planning and development:

Tamara Galloway 01689-855352
tamaragalloway@yahoo.com

Clean Air:

Paul Enock
paul_enock@hotmail.com

Campaigner:

Annette Rose
annette.rose1@ntlworld.com

Nature:

Judy Palmer
judy.palmer@talk21.com

Monthly Meeting reporters:

John and Sue Bocock, Anne Clark,
Graham Hemington, Annette Rose,
Ray Watson, Paul Enock, Sheila
Brown, Peter Gandolfi

Merchandising:

Anne Clark 020-8289-8483

Teas:

Mary Ingledew / Sylvia Chance

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

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

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

Non-members' Section

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

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

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

Please return this form to: **Bromley FoE, 2 Bucks Cross Cottages, Chelsfield Village, Orpington, and Kent, BR6 7RN**. Other enquiries regarding the group: may be sent by email to *bromleyfoe@gmail.com*, or telephone our co-ordinators at the telephone numbers above.

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

Name..... Telephone Number

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Email Address.....

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

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