



**friends of
the earth
Bromley**



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July 2017
No. 355

ewsletter

July Meeting

Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

James Farndon from Action Aid

*Time to Tackle Tax Havens; why tackling corporate tax dodging is vital
to international development and women's rights*

Tuesday 4th July – 7.30pm

Everyone welcome – bring a friend

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

*** **SUNDAY 9TH JULY** ***

Contact details inside front cover.

Diary dates:

- July 1st (Sat) Progressive Bromley Film Co-op “Black Robe”
Friends Meeting House, 6 pm shared food, 7 pm film
- July 4th (Tue) **Bromley FoE’s July Meeting** – Action Aid’s ‘Make Tax Fair’
campaign combating corporate tax avoidance
- July 21st (Fri) **Whitehall Recreation Ground Fun Day** – FoE Stall – close to
Chatterton Road and Raglan Road School
- Aug 1st (Tue) Bromley FoE’s August meeting: No speaker this time; we’re
planning a ‘do-it-yourself’ evening with contributions from
group members

July meeting – Tuesday 4th July

***Time to Tackle Tax Havens;** why tackling corporate tax dodging is vital to
international development and women’s rights*

James Farndon, Activism and Campaigns officer from Action Aid UK, will be
explaining how corporate tax dodging works, the impact it has on developing
countries and what we can do about it.

Post-election email from Craig Bennett, FoE’s CEO

***The Editor writes:** The day after the election, I received an email from the CEO of
FoE. I was a little disappointed by it, as it was soliciting regular monthly donations
whereas what I would have preferred was a letter that solely told me what FoE
intended to do to hold the Government to account – “The Conservatives committed to
support the Paris Climate Agreement in their manifesto. We’ll campaign to keep them
to that commitment” – with the appeal letter saved for another day.
*Did you receive this email? Do you agree with my view? Let the newsletter know.**

***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 9TH JULY** ***
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.

June meeting report – Paul Enock

Imagining a Fossil-Free London - Darragh Martin

Perhaps a little unusually in the context of recent talks, the presentation given by Darragh Martin of Divest London was not about a specific area of natural history, technology or local ecology. Darragh gave us a personal account of an evolving international movement with clearly defined political aims.

Structuring his talk around the moral and financial arguments for divestment, Darragh described the birth of the divestment movement as experienced by a student from Ireland who was studying at New York's Columbia University when Hurricane Sandy hit.

Here are some quotes from Darragh's PowerPoint presentation that may serve as reminders for those who were present, and as an indication of the talk's outline for those who were not:

The Moral Argument

"To serve as custodians of creation is not an empty title; it requires that we act, and with all the urgency this dire situation demands." (Desmond Tutu 2014)

"We refuse to believe that a better world isn't possible." (Mohamed Nasheed, former President of the Maldives)

The Mathematical Argument

"...to grasp the seriousness of our predicament, you just need to do a little math." (Bill McKibben, Founder of

350.org in Rolling Stone Interview, 2012)

565 = The number of gigatons of CO₂ we can emit and still hope to keep warming below 2°C

2,795 = The number of gigatons of CO₂ that would be released if all fossil fuel reserves presently held were to be burned (Carbon Tracker)

80% = The proportion of known reserves that have to be kept underground to avoid uncontrollable climate chaos

The Financial Argument

"If this [carbon budget] estimate is even approximately correct, it would render the vast majority of reserves 'stranded' – oil, coal and gas that will be literally unburnable without expensive carbon capture technology..." (Mark Carney, Governor of the Bank of England, 2015)

The Argument for Divestment (and not shareholder engagement)

"We tried engagement, and frankly got nowhere." (Stephen Heintz, President of Rockefeller Brothers Fund, founding company of ExxonMobil, after divesting \$45 million in 2014)

"It makes no sense to invest in companies that undermine our future." (Desmond Tutu 2014)

Divesting London

"As Mayor, I'll lead by example. I will: Take all possible steps to divest the London Pension Fund Authority of its remaining investments in fossil-fuel industries." (Sadiq Khan, Manifesto, 2016)

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Trump Pulls Out of Climate Deal

Donald Trump has worryingly pulled the US out of the Paris Accord to tackle climate change, in order to protect US businesses involved in the production of fossil fuels, such as coal and oil. This decision has come in for criticism from many countries and environmental groups. He has called climate change a 'hoax' created by the Chinese.

The decision is completely irresponsible and an insult to those countries that have committed to the Accord, after many years of complex debate and negotiations. Withdrawal leaves the US and Russia as the world's only industrialised economies to reject taking action.

Wind farms in Scotland

There are concerns about the siting of proposed wind farms in Scotland. The four projects are in the area of the Firth of Forth and Tay. They will offer the prospect of generating enough electricity to power 1.4million homes. At the same time between £314m and £1.2m could be generated for the Scottish economy.

However there are problems which are posed by some environmentalists. Every year the wind turbines' 335 blades could kill thousands of birds due to the turbines being erected in their feeding area.

Other environmentalists say that the farms could make Scotland the green energy leader of Europe.

The Scottish government therefore faces a delicate balancing act and needs to negotiate further with nature conservation groups. It seems there is no easy answer to this situation.

Shell and Climate Change

Shell have brazened out a backlash from shareholders over climate change emissions targets and fat cat payments. Board members have said that setting climate targets in line with the Paris Accord agreement was not in the best interest of the company, and have awarded huge increases to executive pay.

Greenpeace climate adviser Charles Kronick has stated 'when it comes to climate change, Shell's rhetoric still outpaces its action'.

Diesel Cars Sale

Figures have revealed in June that Londoners have continued to ditch diesel cars with new registrations falling by 34%. This is mainly due to warnings that they are partly to blame for toxic air.

By contrast the number of electric and other fuel cars registered rose by 12%. The figure for petrol models rose nearly 10%.

The shift has also come due to mayor Sadiq Khan's plan for October to bring in a £10 a day T-Charge for the most polluting vehicles to drive into central London. The overall aim is bring forward the introduction of the Ultra Low Emission Zone in the city centre.

Miller's Mutterings – Chris Miller

One swallow arrived on the 30th March, which was quite early for here but then we had to wait another three weeks before two more arrived. We are not sure why this happened but probably due to cold fronts over Europe, I'm sure someone in Chelsfield knows. Hopefully more of these lovely summer visitors will be arriving very soon.

The winter barley is at what we call the "paintbrush" stage. This means that the awns have just started to emerge from their sheath. This stage is about a fortnight earlier than usual, which according to our Agronomist is due to the mild weather we have had since the start of the New Year.

Hmmm not very mild today as it is hailing with a northerly wind! Whilst on the subject of the weather, as you can imagine, we are anxious to have some rain but as we have direct drilled this year and not ploughed, we are not in such a desperate situation as farmers that have ploughed.

Some crops around the country have not germinated through lack of moisture. Certain types of cereal required more moisture than others, spring barley seems to germinate with very little moisture whereas spring wheat and spring oats seem to require a lot.

As our peas were planted deeper they have all germinated, as you may have seen, and all they now require is some warmth to make them race away. The winter wheat is just before "flag leaf" stage, which means this is the last leaf before the ears come out.

The flag leaf on winter wheat is the most crucial leaf to keep clean as it produces approximately 50% of the yield of the ear by feeding it. We keep it clean by applying a fungicide. On barley it is the awns that do all the work on yield.

The grass could do with a good drink too. We don't usually have much problem with rats but have noticed a few around the yard recently. They appear from the fields mainly to find water so hopefully when the rain (!) does come they will disappear. In other words, we need rain!

Deliveries of hay and straw have slowed down as most people have put their horses out into paddocks but the electrical work is still ongoing and the boys are also doing a big clear out job in the old barn.

I did replace my chickens that were eaten by the fox but unfortunately they only survived two days. The electric fence broke the next evening and the fox had dinner again!!!

We didn't have any thunder in April but hope for rain in May.

Wet May, long hay.

Basecamp 1 – Overview – Sheila Brown

BASECAMP 2017 took place once again at Losehill Park Youth Hostel, Castleton in the Peak District. What used to be a conference held on a university campus has now become something veering towards a music festival with an outdoor feel. It sets out to appeal to younger people and attracts many with young families.

People can either camp on site, stay in the youth hostel or in local B&Bs in Castleton. It's a beautiful part of the world with high peaks, spectacular views, lots of trees and is a popular tourist area.

The youth hostel has 27 acres of grounds which include parkland and woods. Most events take place close to the main building where a large marquee and a number of yurts are erected, and other tents including a bar/café and a Creative Area. There are even free-range hens free-ranging around!

Basecamp invites not only Friends of the Earth people but all those across the environmental movement to come together, share and learn from one another and have fun.

From the programme: "Basecamp reflects our belief that individuals standing together can be a powerful force to change and that there are very many different ways to take action and make a difference.

It is themed around the idea of 'connection' – connecting to nature, people and place and forging bonds from local to national to global to build solidarity and resilience.

This year there was a lot of beautiful artwork to be seen around the site and on the programme, created by an organisation called Snakeoil. There were practical things to do, yoga, meditation, activities for children, film showings. Once again the Junk Food Project provided one of the meals – a real banquet – using rescued overdate food which would otherwise have been thrown away and finished up in landfill.

An innovation this year was the Patagonia Worn Wear team who mended clothes to save them being thrown away. They had a good number of takers, including us!

The big problem at Basecamp is so many things being offered simultaneously, making for sometimes agonising choices. Those of us from Bromley tried to spread ourselves a bit, and reports will appear in this and next month's newsletter.

This year Basecamp followed on immediately from an International Friends of the Earth meeting and many international delegates were there, giving a wider perspective.

As for next year, do start thinking now about whether you'd like to take part in this vibrant event in beautiful Derbyshire, with so much on offer and where one of the greatest things is the networking with other like-minded people.

Once again Good Energy sponsored Basecamp; see page 9.

Basecamp 2 – Climate Justice – Sheila Brown

How can we stop climate change and deliver the Paris Agreement in the age of Brexit and Trump?

This session gave some worrying statistics about the average warming and whether the 1.5° target is achievable; 2° is looking more likely. The Larsen Sea Ice shelf, which is the size of Wales, has separated. New weather systems are coming into play – the El Niño effect has extended.

Climate changes in the Arctic result in the loss of people's ways of life. In Africa three years of drought have resulted in crop failure, crops are harder to grow and there is less protein in the resulting plants. The US withdrawal from the Paris Climate Change agreement is a huge cause for concern.

There is now more political will, but there is a need to follow through and we absolutely must keep up the pressure.

There are some 'positives': Chinese solar output has increased by 80% and they have ended coal powered electricity. In India it's increased by 40% and they have a renewable target.

Significant progress is also being seen in the Middle East, notably Iran. In Australia renewable are increasing with low priced wind power. Ireland has banned fracking.

So what's the picture in the UK? How can we make the UK Zero Carbon? People seem keen on the idea but still

not sufficiently motivated, and Brexit is now swallowing up government time.

What should we focus on? Where is the front line? Obviously fracking in the community, and people certainly rise up against this. Hopefully politicians will realise they are backing the wrong horse.

Keep up our campaign "Keep Fossil Fuels in the ground". Divestment, renewable and clean air are all lines of attack, and food production also merits attention. Coal still remains a major problem.

Regarding fracking, the Government remains 'pro' and has granted 200 licences. It's been banned in Ireland and almost in Scotland. We have experienced six 'frack-free' years in the UK, but sometimes feel we are hanging on by our fingernails.

The open cast mine proposed at beautiful Druridge Bay on the Northumberland coast is still on the table, despite the plans being 'called in' last year by the Secretary of State due to climate change concerns – the first time this has ever happened to a fossil fuel project.

There's currently a Public Inquiry going on with FoE fielding experts at the end of which the Inspector will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State. "The Jury is out"!

Basecamp 3 – How to write a successful campaign strategy

Sam Gee writes: One of the many sessions that I attended at Basecamp was a fascinating and very useful one about writing a successful campaign strategy. The session was delivered by Sophie Neuberger, who is a Friends of the Earth employee a London campaigner – I'm sure many of you will have received emails from her.

We started the session by discussing what a strategy is, and people suggested ideas around a planned route in a campaign, or perhaps a series of tactics. The definition that Sophie gave us was that a strategy is "an overarching approach to achieving the aim" which usually takes the form:

- If we take approach X / do X
- The impact will be Y
- Which will achieve Z (the aim)

We then discussed the importance of theories of change to writing campaign strategies. A theory of change is a set of ideas, specific to an organisation or individual, about how change can be made. Sophie explained Friends of the Earth's theory of change, which is as follows:

- With anything that damages or threatens environmental and/or social justice, an alternative **must** be possible.
- There must be pressure for change
- The status quo must become politically untenable for decision makers

Sophie contrasted this with the approach of 10:10, another environmental charity, which focuses

much more on getting people to do practical stuff on the ground. She highlighted that no theory of change is right or wrong, but that some may be suited better to certain situations than others. And indeed with a problem as big as the environmental crisis that our planet is facing, the wider the variety of theories of change that the environmental NGOs have, the better.

We discussed what strategic thinking was at its most basic level, and we split it into three stages with solving a dot-to-dot puzzle as an example – research (finding the dots), analysis (understanding the dots) and synthesis (connecting the dots).

Then Sophie explained the key steps of any good campaign strategy. It must start with an overall aim, which is simple, achievable, realistic and binary (e.g. get the UK government to commit to phasing out diesel by 2025).

The aim should then be broken into a few objectives (e.g. get X many people to sign a petition, get 5 MPs to commit to backing a diesel scrappage scheme or arrange a meeting with Sadiq Khan). The objectives must be SMART – including Specifics, Measures of success, being Achievable and agreed, Realistic and relevant, and including Timeframes.

Once your aims and objectives have been set out, a situational and power analysis can be very helpful. You can draw a graph with more/less supportive on one axis, and more/less influential/powerful on the other, and

/continued on next page

Basecamp 3 – *continued* ++ Basecamp 4 – Good Energy

then plot as many people and organisations as possible onto that graph to show how supportive they are likely to be of your campaign, and how much power they have. It can help identify key allies who may have more influence than you do.

After the power analysis, setting out a critical path is key. This could include the order of actions you will take, or whom you will speak to. Sophie explained how people might try to tell you that you've got your critical path wrong.

She said how when she had talked with Sadiq Khan's team about phasing out diesel, they said "We support you theoretically, but the power to ban diesel lies with the UK Government, not us, so there's no point lobbying us about it," when in actual fact, Sadiq Khan could increase the congestion charge on diesel so drastically that it is effectively taxed out of existence – so it is within his power.

A strategic approach is then necessary. This is an overall approach, based on the power analysis and your organisation's theory of change, of how to achieve the objectives of your campaign strategy.

For example, with clean air, the strategic approach might be to ruin the social license of diesel. With fracking, it might be to put up legal planning opposition wherever an application to frack crops up. For the Divest campaign, it might be to lobby London Assembly members.

Only once you have set out your strategic approach should you look at individual tactics. These might include delivering information packs, writing to candidates in elections, petitions, meeting with decision-makers, organising a march or getting articles in the papers. And then finally you should set out timeframes, including specific dates, deadlines, and an order of tactics.

It was a very informative 90 minute session – just one of the many at the Basecamp weekend from 2nd to 4th June.

Basecamp – Good Energy – Time to Switch?

Sheila Brown writes: This year and last Good Energy sponsored Basecamp. Good Energy is a pioneer in the UK's green energy movement and generates and sells 100% renewable electricity and green gas to homes and businesses across the UK. Its purpose is to transform the energy market and tackle climate change.

Good Energy donates £50 to Friends of the Earth every time someone switches to them quoting "FOEBASE17". You could reduce your carbon footprint by up to 50% and help FoE continue our work in places like Sherwood and Lancashire.

It takes less than 15 minutes to sign up; call Good Energy on 0800 254 0004 or join online.

Basecamp 5 – My key experiences and take-home messages

Hilary Gee writes: What a great event! Inspiring, informative, informal and fun. I am not a very detail-oriented person, so I'm going to share briefly what my key take-aways were from the weekend based on the different sessions I went to:

Reasons to be cheerful – Simon Bullock

Basically – whilst there are many things to be worried about, there are some surprisingly great steps forward including:

- Most energy in Germany is from renewables
- China has postponed 350 (I think it was) coal-fired power-stations that it had been planning - coal-fired power stations are on their way out
- There are more US jobs in renewable energy than in other energy sectors
- Investment in renewable energy sources is still going up more than in other energy sources
- Many more things!!
- If you want gee-ing up – although it's his blog from last year see: <https://www.foe.co.uk/blog/5-reasons-be-optimistic-about-climate-change>

Clean Air Campaign

- Order a pack from FoE Head Office
- If you want to do some more monitoring, the packs only cost £15 each
- We have a neighbour in Lewisham (Rosamund Roberta) who is willing to help us (perhaps

come to talk to us) about campaigning on air quality

- FoE is supporting the idea of a diesel scrappage scheme
- FoE Week of Action on cleaner air is 24th June to 2nd July

How to influence your MP

- Go to the MP last
- Start by doing your research
- Then build relationships with key residents' associations and local organisations
- Then build belief and if possible a consensus in those groups for change
- Then you can get ready to go to your MP, not as a lone person from an environmental pressure group...but as a representative of residents
- So, questions for us (which we may have answers to – but I'm not yet embedded enough to know):
 - i. Which residents' associations have we got in with already?
 - ii. Which will be important for specific things? (e.g. clean air near schools etc.)
 - iii. What's our plan for increasing that? (e.g. air monitoring research in relevant areas and presenting the information to residents?)
- When you are ready to go to your MP:
 - i. research the MP
 - ii. understand their interests and areas of knowledge/skill/focus
 - iii. find things to thank them for (they like that!)
 - iv. work out what approach will influence them

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Basecamp 5 – continued

- v. bring evidence
- vi. bring relevant questions
- vii. request a follow up meeting
- viii. always go with someone else (even if they are just taking notes)

How to write news/press-releases – key things to consider:

- A ‘hook’ or headline that will grab attention
- Something new, shocking or surprising
- Share facts and stats – especially local names of places, celebs etc.
- Share stories about local people, celebs, businesses, organisations etc.
- Always find a great picture to share that captures something – human, beautiful, shocking etc.
- Human interest
- Humour
- Conflict/debate
- Something quirky

Hahrie Han – on how to build a movement – main messages:

- Three things to consider in movements:
 - i. Power
 - ii. Transformation
 - iii. Love
- Power and transformation are important – but movements are built on the third element – love. That means to build a movement, you have to:
 - i. welcome people into a friendly community
 - ii. ask them what they’d like to do (don’t just allocate tasks)

- iii. keep on making them feel part of the community – feeling loved will make them come back and will spread the word more than power and transformation – although those are important too.

There was clearly a lot more to her talk than that, including research information and stories about people joining movements without necessarily believing in the purpose of the movement, but then becoming fervent believers (e.g. in the controversial anti-abortion or pro-life lobby in the USA - see research by Munson in 2008 - <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/M/bo5186375.html>).

To make a movement, you need love – by welcoming people in with warmth, empowering them to do the things that interest them and make them feel part of a great and friendly community, they will want to belong, want to espouse the beliefs and start building them into their sense of identity. Then, they will also bring other people along.

A fact-based, campaign-centric and purpose-oriented approach will not turn a pressure group into a movement – LOVE is needed to build a community that will grow itself. My question for us – how do we do that even more and keep on stretching ourselves to do that more?

Apologies to those who’d love more depth and detail...hopefully FoE head office will start posting some of the presentations online soon! Next year, I’ll grab a few more facts and figures too!!

Nature Notes – Judy Palmer

The Great British Bee Count is well under way now and I hope some of you have managed to get out there counting up our bees! There have been well over 250,000 counts submitted so far, we have until June 30th to continue counting.

We had a lovely sunny time at Jubilee Countryside Park earlier this month when we held our Bee Breakfast there. Thank you to everyone who came along to support us and to the Friends of Jubilee for letting us use the pitch!



And another big thank-you to colleagues who came along to support us at Coolings Nurseries yesterday (Saturday June 17th). Phew, it was hot out there! But we had quite a large footfall of people going by, and joining in our Bee Quiz and asking about the Bee Count.

Springwatch 2017 – I hope you nature lovers out there caught some of the episodes of Springwatch this year. They were based on a National Trust property this time and most episodes raised awareness of many different areas of biodiversity - it was brilliant!

There was a shout-out too for the Friends of the Earth Great British Bee Count in the first episode, with a demo of the app on a tablet which was encouraging.

Waste & Marine bits – marine pollution has made it into the news again this month. After some of the plastic cotton bud sticks being replaced by paper, microbeads being banned from beauty products, we now have a bar company saying it will ditch plastic straws. The group apparently uses 4.7 million a year.

And on a global scale, the Maldives announced it will phase out non-biodegradable plastic, Austria will reduce the number of plastic bags used per person to just 25 a year by 2019 and Pakistan has announced its first Marine Protected Area.

This is all encouraging news as it is estimated that 5-13 million tons of plastic annually flow into the world's oceans. In fact a centre in Germany estimated that 75% of land-borne marine pollution comes from just 10 rivers, mostly in Asia.

At a recent UN oceans summit delegates from China, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines all said they would work to keep plastics out of the seas. And the Ellen MacArthur Foundation has launched an international prize for smarter materials and design for packaging – let's hope the challenge is taken up quickly.

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Nature Notes - *continued*

Bromley Biodiversity Poster

Please see below the latest poster from the group which is asking for sightings of stag beetles this month.

Save our Stag Beetles!

Stag Beetles are nationally scarce: their range has decreased since the 1970s so they are now restricted to the south & south-east of the UK. They are declining in Europe & globally threatened. Adults only live a few weeks, flying from late May-July. Eggs are laid in dead wood at soil level. Larvae feed on dead wood for 5-7 years before pupating in soil. Loss of woodland, dead wood (including fence posts) & crushing by feet and traffic have contributed to decreasing numbers. Look for adults flying on still, warm evenings & please let us know if you see one!



Far Left: Male
Left: Female
Below: Larva

E-mail the date, place (postcode or grid reference) and number seen to Bromley Biodiversity Partnership at bromleybiodiversity@gmail.com Your information will enable local targeted habitat improvements

How You Can Help Stag Beetles:

- Keep dead and decaying wood, including old fenceposts
- When dead trees are to be felled, leave as much of the trunk uncut as safety issues allow
- Avoid stump grinding of felled trees
- Make a stag beetle loggery
- For more information see: <https://ptes.org/campaigns/stag-beetles/>

Bromley Biodiversity Partnership is a partnership of local groups, organisations and individuals with specific expertise committed to protecting, enhancing and celebrating biodiversity within the London Borough of Bromley.

The Great Get Together – Ann Garrett

On June 19th the Quaggy Action Group with Paul De Zylva from Friends of Earth and MP Heidi Alexander, organised a Float Your Boats action in memory of Jo Cox.

This was part of the national Great Get Together week-end to celebrate her life and principles at the time of the first anniversary of her death. She was committed to improving the environment as an MP and a parent.

Many parents, their children and environmentalists turned up in Chinbrook Meadows at Grove Park to

make paper boats and float them on the river Quaggy as part of the ceremony. The action group also did some work on clearing overgrowth from the river to make space for the boats and improve the water flow.

Jo Cox's message was 'we are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us'.

A couple of photos and a poem to mark the occasion are included. The photo below is of the Quaggy Action Group with Paul De Zylva and the other shows children and adults floating their boats.



June meeting report – continued

"We should all be working towards delivering a cleaner, greener future, not just for fund members but for our residents and families." (Simon Miller, Waltham Forest Pension Fund Chair, 2017)

London boroughs with divestment commitments: Waltham Forest,

Southwark, Hackney (partial), Haringey (partial)

An Argument from the Heart

... we are families biking, recycling, reusing, engineers dreaming, designing, building, artists painting, dancing, writing and we are spreading the word.

(Kathy Jetnil-Kijner)

The Great Get Together - The Floating of the Boats

The Floating of the Boats

The waters of the Quaggy
flow gently through Chinbrook Meadows
on the week-end of The Great Get Together

They carry the myriad paper boats
made caringly in memory of Jo Cox
brutally killed on a Summer's day in 2016

Their message of 'Hope Not Hate' ripples
on the rivulets as they meander the Quaggy's course
defying the racist anger of abuse

Their consistency only interrupted by small tidal eddies,
protest surges of solidarity,
as people and their boats bond in unison

A plea for tolerance and peace
One voice
One world

Ann Garrett Ashley (June 16th 2017)



Online mini-hustings on Clean Air – Paul Enock

On 26 May 2017 the five parliamentary candidates standing for the constituency of Orpington were invited by Bromley FoE to answer three questions on the subject of air pollution.

Here are the questions and the answers received by two of those candidates (only two replied): Jo Johnson (the victorious Conservative candidate) and Tamara Galloway (Green Party).

Although these replies were received by the deadline, it was decided not to publicise them before the election in order not to risk contravening the recent 'Lobbying Act'.

a) Could the candidate please state what concrete actions s/he now undertakes to perform, in the event of their successful election, to end this exposure of the schoolchildren, commuters, and shoppers of Orpington to such high levels of harmful pollution.

Tamara Galloway:

The UK is facing a public health emergency – over 40,000 early deaths are attributable to air pollution every year. In the event of being elected, I would immediately put pressure on Bromley Council and TfL to ensure that spot-checks of vehicles are carried out along the most heavily affected routes in my constituency.

Jo Johnson:

If re-elected on 8 June, I will continue to support the work that the Government is already undertaking to reduce dangerous levels of nitrogen oxide in

our air. I will also ensure that the Mayor of London and the London Borough of Bromley are using the powers already at their disposal to improve air quality standards for residents in Orpington.

b) And on a national level, what actions does s/he undertake to perform if elected to ensure that the UK meets the UN's sustainable development goal to "substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination" by 2030?

Jo Johnson:

The previous government worked hard in order to help improve air quality. The Department for Transport has for some time been making significant investment in a range of green transport initiatives. More than £2 billion has been committed since 2011 to increase the uptake of ultra-low emissions vehicles and support greener transport schemes.

We recognise, however, that there is still more to do to protect public health, so a Conservative government will continue to take action against poor air quality in our towns and cities.

I welcomed the release of the draft UK Air Quality Plan for tackling nitrogen dioxide in our towns and cities at the beginning of May. The proposals seek to take targeted local action to tackle emissions in key pollution hotspots.

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Air Quality in Greater London – *Ralph Palfrey*

Air quality throughout Greater London is now unsatisfactory, and over 9,000 Londoners are dying prematurely each year from the long-term exposure to air pollution.

The main offender is particulates from diesel engine vehicles. The Mayor of London is introducing a daily £10 toxicity charge in October to the oldest and most polluting vehicles in Central London. Transport for London has provided a free online vehicle checker so that vehicle owners can check whether their vehicle will be charged.

The world's first Ultra Low Emission Zone is proposed to start in 2019, creating a stricter emissions standard. This is expected to reduce harmful nitrogen oxides emissions by about 50% in Central London, 40% in Inner London and 30% in Outer London.

The Mayor is spending more than £300mn to transform the London bus fleet by retro-fitting thousands of buses and committing to phase out pure diesel double deck buses from 2018. Twelve Low Emission Bus Zones have been announced, putting the greenest buses on the capital's most polluted routes, with the first located in Putney High Street and Brixton Road.

These zones are expected to reduce nitrogen oxides emissions by 84%, and thousands of school children in these areas will benefit from cleaner air. New taxis licensed after 1st January 2018 will need to be zero-emission capable to help clean up London's dirty air.

It is estimated that the total cost of air pollution to London's economy is £3.7 billion.

London is already one of the greenest large cities in the world, with about 8 million trees and about 20% tree cover. Unfortunately, because there are so many diesel engine cars it is likely to take many years before they are all replaced by electric or other non-polluting cars. It is unrealistic to expect many car owners to be prepared to retro-fit their cars with efficient filters at their own expense, particularly as these will somewhat reduce fuel economy.

There is a particular problem on busy roads where there is a dangerous build-up of these pollutants. This cannot be significantly reduced by the planting of vegetation, and I have therefore suggested to DEFRA that they sponsor the mass-production of a simple device to extract the noxious particulates from the air beside affected roads. This could be developed in conjunction with major cities in other countries, such as Paris.

I envisage a simple fan or other simple device to draw in the polluted air and pass it through a filter which could easily be changed.

In the rest of greater London the planting of further vegetation should be encouraged. In the longer term, I have recommended to both DEFRA and the Greater London Authority the planting of plane trees in suitable locations,

/continued on next page

Online Mini-Hustings & Air Quality - *continued*

Online Mini-Hustings - *continued*

Tamara Galloway:

One of the main aims of the Green Party's 2017 manifesto is to help end the public health crisis caused by air pollution. One major measure will be to increase incentives to take diesel vehicles off the roads. An environmental protection act would put in place measures to ensure we meet air-quality standards. We would expand and strengthen a mandatory Clean Air Zone network, empowering local authorities to take control of air pollution in their communities.

We would also promote cycling and walking through a £2bn programme of investment in healthy, active transport.

c) What legislation will the candidate support to ensure that the motor industry meets, and its regulators enforce, certification limits for NOx emissions in real-world operating conditions?

Tamara Galloway:

Companies that have been caught using technological dodges to evade the law should be punished. As outlined in our manifesto, the Green Party would introduce a one-off fine on car manufacturers who cheated the emissions testing regime and we would introduce a new Clean Air Act, one of whose aims will be to remove diesel cars from our roads – this will partly be effected through increasing Vehicle Excise Duty on new diesel vehicles and a scrappage scheme.

Jo Johnson:

The cheating and evasion by car manufacturers was due to the flawed EU standards. The UK Government has pushed its EU partners hard to ensure that Real Driving Emissions (RDE) tests would apply to new models sold from 2017. It is welcome that under the new RDE tests – to be introduced from September 2017 – vehicle manufacturers will be required to ensure that real world nitrogen oxide emissions for new models are increasingly aligned with lab-testing limits. We are confident that this will improve consumer confidence in manufacturers and deliver real improvements for air quality.

Air Quality – *continued*

such as parks, open spaces, large gardens and alongside broad avenues. These are capable of extracting carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and converting the carbon into solid form on their trunks.

It seems to be a reasonable assumption that they would also extract and deposit the carbon element from methane (CH₄), thereby helping to abate the exponential growth of methane in the atmosphere.

Many people are allergic to pollen and other substances deposited from trees. Asthma and other respiratory ailments have increased about three times in recent decades, but the primary cause is unlikely to be from vegetation, which has not increased significantly over the same period. I think that the most likely reason is our changed way of life.

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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

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

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