



Friends of  
the Earth  
Bromley



**July 2019**  
**No. 379**

# newslette

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## July Meeting

*Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley*

### **Climate Action:**

*Friends of the Earth's new climate campaign and  
action we can take in our local community*

**Ted Burke, London Campaigns Organiser, Friends of the Earth**

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July - 7.30pm (prompt start please)**

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

**\*\*\* SUNDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> JULY \*\*\***

Contact details inside front cover.

**Diary dates: July 2019**

**July 2<sup>nd</sup> (Tuesday)**      **Bromley FoE's monthly meeting.** Ted Burke from Friends of the Earth will be updating us on the Climate Action Campaign.

**July 13<sup>th</sup> (Saturday)**      **RSPB event-** A walk through a mosaic of woods and open heath, in search of butterflies and birds. Meet at 9.30 am in Keston car park, Westerham Road, BR2 6AT Time: 9.30 am Price: Free

**July 20<sup>th</sup> (Saturday)**      **Jubilee Country Park Meadows Day by the picnic area** 11am-3pm. Volunteers needed to help on our stall please. There is also a wildflower walk at 10am and nature walk at 2pm. See the Friends of Jubilee Country Park website for more details.

**August 6<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday)**      **Bromley FoE's monthly meeting**

**August 26<sup>th</sup> (Bank holiday Monday)** Cudham Village Fair. We will have a BFoE stall. Volunteers needed to help set up and run the stall please.

*If you need any further information on these events, you can email us on [bromleyfoe@gmail.com](mailto:bromleyfoe@gmail.com) or ask at the next monthly meeting.*

**July meeting- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July**

Ted Burke, FoE London Campaigns Organiser will talk on Climate Action; FoE's new climate campaign and action we can take in our local community.

We are facing a climate emergency, the biggest threat we've ever seen to humanity's very existence and to much of the natural world. What can be done? Friends of the Earth is campaigning to improve Transport, Power, Buildings, Agriculture, Infrastructure and Social Justice to address the challenges we face.

**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 21<sup>ST</sup> JULY \*\*\***

**by post** to John Street, 82 Babacombe 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.

## Double Trouble - June meeting report – Paul Enock

Paul de Zylva (Senior Analyst, Friends of the Earth) spoke on ***Why restoring nature and keeping climate safe are the ultimate test of democracy***

What's happening to nature? Let us not be afraid to use this word – often substituted by scientific terms such as 'ecosystems', which are better thought of as the cogs underlying the phenomena of the natural world as we perceive it.

One thing is clear: we have to deal with climate and nature together. They form a double helix that at the moment spells double trouble. While our yardstick for climate change is pretty clear: emissions and degrees of global warming that are currently out of control, we should make no mistake about our natural world either. The evidence is in, and we are in trouble.

The Global Assessment of the state of the planet's biodiversity and ecosystems by the Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services is not just another expert report documenting nature's decline: it is THE definitive scientific analysis for the 21st century. To compile it, 455 experts from 50 countries spent three years examining 15,000 scientific studies and other evidence.

The headline is that 1 million species are heading for extinction because of the continued erosion of these ecosystems. This choice of headlining was not so surprising perhaps because we're so inured to these big numbers. For me, the most startling conclusion is that the decline of

biodiversity and ecosystems is undermining other aims and spending, including work to address poverty and hunger.

Put another way, governments' efforts to improve human health, to ensure plentiful, nutritious food and clean and reliable water and to deal with hunger and poverty are at risk because the natural web of life-support systems we need to meet our basic needs is in tatters. The loss of species, habitats and the harm to ecosystems are undermining life on earth – including our own existence.

Another report that came out this year, from the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), showed that this decline of nature is largely due to industrialised agriculture. According to Graziano da Silva, FAO Director General: "The foundations of our food systems are being undermined..." The irony could not be greater: the way we are going about trying to produce more food is undermining our ability to produce food at all.

### So, what do we do?

We must admit that the time for consequences has arrived. The scientific evidence is in and it could not be clearer.

Our governments have known about the trouble we are in for many years and have failed to act. Such failure brings into question whether the way government operates is fit for purpose.

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## How to keep on being BRILLIANT

After the last meeting, Paul de Zylva sent this email to Sheila Brown:

Hello Sheila,

Thanks for last night's meeting which was super to be at.

At the end of the meeting I said a few words about all that you do in Bromley Friends of the Earth. I meant it because, the group, what it does and how it does it is – continues to be - seriously impressive. Your meetings make that clear.

The meeting covered so much ground, particular local concerns and activities, tie-ups with others in the area and beyond as well as and did so in a well organised and open way.

The knowledge, awareness and curiosity of group members is of particular note as this means that BFOE is an important testing ground for people like me to get a sense of what we are saying is along the right lines.

Last night's talk was the first time I had covered those points in public. Although I did not give the entire talk I had in front of me in paper verbatim - a copy of which I've sent to your meeting recorder should you want / need it in its entirely complete with references (!) – it was a chance to get test what I am thinking, saying and planning in front of a knowledgeable audience.

Every group is different, of course, but I would have no hesitation in suggesting anyone anywhere, and of

any age, to take a look at BFOE for tips on what to do and how to keep on being brilliant.

By the way, the article I mentioned in that day's newspaper about older people being as relevant to change we need, as the youngsters everyone is talking about, is here:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/04/i-wake-up-angry-and-i-go-to-bed-angry-meet-the-protesting-pensioners>

Paul

### **June meeting report – *continued***

Political leaders tend to be preoccupied with sustaining the drivers of nature's decline rather than ending them. Governance and government need a major overhaul to gear their entire activity to reversing nature's decline without half measures or tinkering at the margins.

We need to start questioning whether government and business are set up to meet this double challenge and, if not, we need to propose the kind of governance and decision-making that will keep our climate safe, that will restore nature and ecosystems and will address hunger, poverty and social inequity.

As our leaders will spend much of 2020 renegotiating the existing global agreements on both climate and nature, it is time to ask not for more evidence but for our leaders and institutions to step up.

## Plastics Update – Judy Palmer

Meet Gusita the Turtle! She was on display in the Walnuts, Orpington, on Ocean Day, June 8<sup>th</sup>.



She is a 5metre wide metal sculpture made from recycled motorbike tyres, metal and reused paints by a Hackney based artist collective called No Time to Waste and first made an appearance a while back at London Zoo. She is interactive for children to clamber into and learn about the issue of single use plastics and they certainly loved her on Saturday!

We were invited to have a stall there too, and many thanks to Viv, Mary and Bill for helping Annette and I for a few hours. We had a small display of items you can buy made of other materials other than plastic and one of re-purposed items to show how to

extend the use of some materials instead of throwing it away. Or you could answer a short quiz on how long you thought an item took to decompose – this proved a great way to connect with people who stopped to chat. Or you could sign one of our bunting pledges saying what you promise to do to not buy unnecessary plastic. And of course, we had our information leaflets there for people to take away.

Lots of people stopped by for a chat and we were even given a plant by a family who came back to donate it especially – it produces a cucumber like growth which eventually produces seeds which form into a loofah like material! Bill has kindly taken possession of it and will keep us updated on progress over the next month or two. .



It was a great way to spend a few hours chatting to people, even if it was in a ‘wind tunnel’!

## Plastics in the Environment – Annette Rose

### Get Drastic on Plastic

I have received 100 postcards for the public to sign at our stalls. The cards will go to the Secretary of State for the Environment. It asks for new legislation that commits the government to phasing out the sources of plastic pollution. I will bring some along to the next meeting for us to sign.

### Cleaner and Greener

Do check out the Facebook page 'Cleaner and Greener in Bromley and Beyond.' Members share their tips for living a greener lifestyle and pass on useful information. There are also meetings arranged. Many of the tips refer to reducing plastic use. One tip from some-one who had holidayed in Greece was to use uncooked pasta tubes for straws.

### Netting bags

Many people are now using their own netting bags for fruit and vegetables in supermarkets. You can buy these quite cheaply in kitchen shops or make your own from net curtains. They are light and washable. I've been using them for a few weeks now and most shop assistants don't comment and a few saying what a good idea they were.

### SWOP

I recently visited the SWOP shop at Lee Green. This is the Shop without Packaging. I was able to buy some useful non plastic items to show on our stalls. This included a reusable coffee cup, food wrap, metal straw and cleaning brush, facial wipes made from cotton and shampoo in a bar. The

shop was very busy and people were busy filling and weighing their containers they had brought. You can buy pulses, pasta, cereals, seeds, flour etc. as well as non foods such as washing up liquid, laundry liquid and soaps.

### Splash

On this site, you can order bottles of household necessities and then get refills sent. The refills are packaged flat so will go through your letter box and just need to be mixed with water. You can return these sachets to the company and they get recycled. So in theory, you should never have to buy another plastic bottle containing a range of products from shampoos to washing up liquid.

### Plastics in Rivers and Canals - Plastic pollution: 'Mission to eradicate' plastic in canals.

Here is a report about the hard work being done to clean our rivers and canals.

The canals and rivers of England and Wales could be plastic-free in a year if every visitor picked up one piece of litter, a charity says. The Canal and River Trust said 14 million items of plastic ended up in waterways each year.

The charity said it was "on a mission to eradicate plastic" and urged people to pick up any rubbish they find. It added that canals and rivers acted as "plastic highways", which was a "huge problem for wildlife".

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## **Plastics in the Environment – *continued***

The trust worked with Coventry University to carry out research for a new report. It took a "snapshot" of the amount of plastics and litter observed at representative locations along 2,000 miles of waterways and found plastics such as bags, bottles, disposable cups and food wrappers accounted for 59% of the waste.

Locations included Leicester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Burnley, Devizes, Tottenham Hale, Torfaen, Milton Keynes, Manchester, Ellesmere Port, Brentford, Worcester.

Peter Birch, national environmental policy advisor at the trust, said: "By taking a little care of their local waterway, everyone can have beauty on their doorstep.

"The Canal and River Trust is on a mission to eradicate plastics from our vast network of canals and rivers - helping us all to live in better, more beautiful neighbourhoods, whilst tackling a global issue, and making life better by water."

The latest study found litter was being dropped over boundary walls from nearby buildings, off bridges and being blown or washed in from areas near the waterways. The trust said it made a great effort to minimise litter along waterways and emptied 900 public litter bins more than 46,000 times annually.

Volunteers for the charity spend more than 100,000 hours clearing litter from towpaths and canals each year.

### **'War on Plastic'**

If you haven't seen it, this BBC series with Anita Rani and Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall is worth catching up on.

Many of the issues covered are familiar but they have been able to take questions to the big supermarket chains and to Michael Gove.

Tesco is asked why plastic wrapped packs of peppers are far more expensive than loose ones. In the first episode Hugh visits an illegal plastics recycling plant in Malaysia and finds British plastic waste dumped in huge quantities.

### **What's New**

The pressure is on the supermarkets now and many are introducing new plastics reduction measures.

Morrisons now have recyclable bags for fruit and veg and recyclable large paper carrier bags for 20p. I've noticed there is a much wider choice of fruit and vegetables which is plastic free. They also have a plastics recycling bin in store where you can put all plastic wrappings and bags.

## **Tree Campaign**

Friends of the Earth have now launched their Tree Campaign (*see pages 17 and 18*), as we learned from Paul on his visit to us last month! You can sign the petition on their website, but they also have a 10 fascinating facts section about trees which you may not have seen, so I thought I would copy them into the newsletter, minus the lovely photos though!

**Fact 1 – trees talk to each other** – they are connected by a network of fungi growing in and around their roots. They use this fungal network to share resources with each other, for instance such as older trees giving young saplings food to help them grow.

**Fact 2 – trees keep your wine fresh** – cork bottle stoppers are mostly made from Portuguese evergreen oaks where they strip the bark from the trees. These corks also help age the wine. So look out for real cork tops, and not metal screw caps which contain an inner seal of plastic!

**Fact 3 – trees clean the air** – they filter dangerous pollutants from the air using their leaves and bark. The plane trees planted in lots of London streets are great at fighting air pollution.

**Fact 4 – trees are good for your health** – research has shown how trees can help improve your mental health. And did you know that aspirin originally can from willow bark?

**Fact 5 – trees clean water** – trees filter the rainfall with their leaves,

branches and trunk and the roots hold the soil in place. This is of great help in the fight against flooding.

**Fact 6 – trees are home to millions** – they are home to birds and squirrels but are an important habitat for other wildlife. Oak trees are a great example as they can support over 280 species of insect. And don't forget that leaf litter feeds bacteria, fungi, insects, plants and animals.

**Fact 7 – trees combat climate chaos** – trees absorb CO<sub>2</sub>, so they are vital to our planet. They release oxygen – that helps us to breathe.

**Fact 8 – trees are the original skyscrapers** – trees create jobs, from tree surgery to fruit harvesting, and landscaping to green waste management. They create indirect jobs too as they improve soil quality for agriculture.

**Fact 9 – trees improve soil** – decaying leaves and bark add a protective layer to the earth, so this in turn protects against evaporation from heat. It also retains water which keeps soil healthy so that other things can grow.

**Fact 10 – trees can increase house prices** – properties in tree lined streets tend to have a greater value. As well as being beautiful trees help cool our streets in a heat wave, as well as making your soul sing.....

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## Reply to last month's article on 5G threat – Peter Gandolfi

I have no point of view on the proposed rollout of 5G, but I do not like to see pseudo science being used to unfairly denigrate a possible useful technology. The word Luddites come to mind.

A little background information:

The early 1990s gave us 2G with text and picture messaging. 3G ten years later brought the mobile Internet. Another ten years brought 4G with the ability to stream video. We now have billions of mobiles in use around the world.

5G will give more speed, but more importantly is the ability to connect not just people, but to things, and the ability to work smarter. It is seen by many as the missing piece to link many of the areas we may be depending on in the future, whether this is autonomous technology including vehicles, remote surgical procedures, (due to its very low latency) and really useable video conferencing etc. Its very existence will allow future applications that would otherwise not exist.

I just do not have the time, inclination – or space to reply to each negative bullet point, some of which do have a level of truth – at much higher power levels than discussed here, but will try and cover some general points.

Many of us reading this, myself included, are old enough to remember the debate on the mobile phone network in its early days over 20 years ago, and how dangerous these

devices were. Likewise with microwave ovens. I would imagine that those activists now regularly use both of these technologies without a second thought.

The electromagnetic spectrum of non ionising radiation used here is well studied. There certainly are dangers – at high power densities. As the cell size used in 5G is smaller, the high power low frequency towers can be replaced with low power high frequency units.

If you live in a sunny region, you are already being exposed to more radiation than microwave signals from 5G. This is because visible light has a higher frequency than 5G signals and people are more exposed to sunlight.

The WHO (World Health Organization) states that:

***“Despite extensive research, to date there is no evidence to conclude that exposure to low level electromagnetic fields is harmful to human health”***

(Source: WHO *About Electromagnetic Fields, Summary of Health Effects*)

At the very end it states that Fibre Optics are safer, but misses the point that the whole idea of mobile signal coverage, is that it is Mobile.

### Campaigning

Three of us took the Bromley FoE banner on the Anti Trump march on June 4th. (*see photo on next page*) Our aim was to emphasise how concerned we are about the fact that President Trump is a climate change denier, has boosted the fossil fuel industries in the USA with huge funding concessions, and pulled out of crucial international agreements on global warming .

We began in Trafalgar Square and were part of the chanting crowd near Downing Street when he was meeting Theresa May. National FoE officers from the Print Works wore face masks and took their messages to Parliament Square.

### Climate, Energy and Transport

#### Theresa May's Statement.

The announcement on June 11th that the Government will introduce new initiatives to tackle climate change is extremely encouraging. Theresa May outlined legally binding plans for the UK to achieve 'net zero' emissions by 2050. This will send a strong message to other countries to follow suit, and is supported by The Confederation of British Industry who said firms are squarely behind the plan.

#### Climate Strikes

David Attenborough has given encouragement to the school students' climate strike protests and said: "They are the one big reason I have for feeling we are making progress. If we are not making progress with young people we are done."

He went on to say that his generation had done terrible things in contributing to the pollution of the environment. During his interview he emphasised that that young people may have less experience, but that they ' have the sight '.

#### Fracking Projects

The government's fracking projects would release the same amount of greenhouse gas emissions as almost 300 million new cars, fatally undermining ministers' obligation to tackle climate change, according to a new report.

The finding come as ministers' efforts to kick start their fracking proposals face growing resistance in the courts, fierce local opposition and also opposition from Labour and Tory councils alike. The government needs to realise that it's time to change course and ban fracking before it is too late.

#### Electricity Generation

People's footsteps could be used to generate power. Treading on 'smart' paving stones and generating about 5 watts per footstep and linking them to battery storage panels, could be a positive way of contributing to electricity generation.

Energy stored from 150,000 steps is enough to run an electric car for more than half a mile! This idea is part of an installation to launch Pavegen's latest funding round which raised nearly £3million.

## Campaigning - photos

**Bromley FoE banner at Trump demo**



**FoE Head  
Office staff at  
the Trump  
demo**

## **Millers' Mutterings – Steve and Chris Miller**

Rain, we need rain. All the crops desperately need rain, but as always, we will only get what we are given. Some of the wheat, as you may have noticed whilst passing, has got yellow patches. We had the wheat tissue tested and the results came back showing a slight shortage of lime and sulphur although the problem was made worse by the lack of rain. We will just have to put up with the swathes of yellowing this year as it is too dry to do anything about it now.

On the 11th May, we welcomed a group of people from the Bromley branch of the Friends of the Earth for a crop walk and discussion about farming methods today.

We had a damp, sunny and blustery morning walking around a little part of the farm talking about what we do and showing them the crops. One of the questions raised was about pesticides, this included fungicides, insecticides and herbicides. We didn't purposely miss a piece in the field when we sprayed the wheat with a grass weed spray but a strip was missed. The grass has completely smothered the wheat and we will cut nothing from that section.

We went on to explain that the cost now of chemicals is so high, that every application pesticide has to return a benefit. Needless to say we definitely don't just chuck anything on willy-nilly. The group were surprised at the level of record keeping that we have to adhere to but were very interested in the drill we use for direct drilling. A most enjoyable morning, sharing our

knowledge of farming here in Chelsfield.

One of our major fears is the possible withdrawal of Glyphosate as we are fighting a battle with a weed called black grass. There is no herbicide will kill it and as each plant produces approximately 2,000 seeds, the only way we can stop it in its tracks is to spray it and in doing so, kill the crop as well. You will notice the field in Church Road as you go towards the stables looking like a patch work quilt as we have had to spray off the black grass here.

Another reason we went over to direct drilling was to keep the seeds on top of the soil and not burying them to germinate in future years. We will also be planting a new hybrid variety of barley that should help to smother the black grass as this new variety will be a lot thicker and taller.

Although we only have a relatively small amount of Black Grass, it is a major problem throughout the country. Peter has sprayed off the footpaths, hence the yellow strips on the edge of the paths, to adhere to the rule of the paths being 1 metre in width.

Our annual farm inspection from the Red Tractor took place at the end of May and pleased to report that we passed. This is when we show an inspector all our record keeping for pesticide and fertiliser applications, our NSTS certificates for sprayers, when the sprayer had its MOT, combine,

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## CAAT say “We won! Saudi arms sales ruled UNLAWFUL”

**Campaign Against Arms Trade have sent this email to their supporters:**

Amazing news!

In the last few minutes the Court of Appeal has ruled that UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia for use in Yemen are UNLAWFUL. The Court found that the government had failed to properly assess whether there have been breaches of International Humanitarian Law.

This historic judgment means that the government must now stop issuing new arms exports licences and suspend existing licences to export arms to Saudi Arabia for use in Yemen, and retake all decisions in accordance with the law.

These sales should never have been licensed in the first place. Even as schools, hospitals, weddings, and funerals have been bombed, the government has licensed the sale of billions of pounds of weapons for use in the conflict.

We have now shown that these arms sales were not just immoral, but also unlawful. But even now the government is likely to resist. Every step of the way it has done all it can to keep the weapons flowing.

Please email your MP today and help us make this count:  
[caat.org.uk/unlawful](http://caat.org.uk/unlawful)

In solidarity,  
Sarah  
Campaign Against Arms Trade

### **Millers' Mutterings – *continued***

trailer records, soil test records, rodent control records and so on. The list is quite long but you get the general idea. Without this certificate we cannot sell our wheat and barley so very important.

We have seen the kite flying overhead but sad to report that we only have 4 swallows this year. The swifts seem to scarce too. The sparrows have fledged in the garden and there seems to be plenty of them.

Blue tits have been nesting in the nest box and great tits in the porch. Watching newly fledged pied wagtails in the garden was lovely. The crows are flying down into the chicken run and eating the chicken food from the hopper which we are not too impressed with.

There are quite a few Saints days in June with weather saying so here are a couple.

*Rain on St Barnabas' Day, 11<sup>th</sup> June, is good for grapes.*

*Cut your thistles before St. John, 24th June and you will have two instead of one.*

## Low Traffic neighbourhoods in Bromley – Sheila Brown

This was organised by Living Streets Bromley. The national organisation Living Streets was formerly the Pedestrians Association which is a beacon for walking and has campaigned for over 85 years, leading to the UK's first pedestrian crossings. There were speakers from Sustrans, Clean Air Parents Network, Living Streets London and Bromley Council.

There are serious concerns that the effect of pollution on children plus road safety are barriers to people walking; the speed of traffic is definitely an issue and the cause of accidents. In Shortlands there is a long-term project to improve the bottleneck junction and introduce a pedestrian crossing.

Speakers from the Council said safer streets were needed for children to be allowed to walk to school: there are simply too many cars. Beckenham High Street which recently pedestrianised is among the country's top ten healthy high streets. This has improved footfall and businesses and cafés are thriving. The Council really want to encourage people to walk, especially to school. Schools traffic accounts for 25% of all traffic.

Sustrans' aim it is to make it easier for people to walk and cycle. They work through community engagement, believing that local people are the experts in their own area.

The Clean Air Parents' Network is a network of parents, carers and grandparents who campaign and lobby to clean up the air we breathe due to road transport. They maintain there is

NO safe level of particulates. It came up later in the meeting that particulates not only from fuel but from tyres, brake linings and even sand from the Sahara are also contributory factors.

Jeremy Leach, chair of London Living Streets (formerly the Pedestrians Association) spoke. This is an umbrella organisation for 14+ London groups which promotes walking and local shopping for the health of people and communities.

Chislehurst Safer Streets is concerned with traffic through Chislehurst which discourages, particularly children, from walking.

There is the promise of new technology coming in, for example, speed limiters on all buses by 2023. In the course of questions, '3D' pedestrian crossings were mentioned – these give the illusion of a solid, raised crossing. Also Cargo bikes, some electric – these have huge baskets in front and trailers behind. Sustrans recently accomplished an office move of 50 people across London by cargo bike. Apparently both Sainsbury's and IKEA are looking into this idea.

There were a number of questions and points raised. Concern was expressed about all the new high rise development and the resulting number of cars, about the number of delivery vehicles and pollution as a result of online shopping and about dangerously high pollution levels outside Valley School.

## Quaggy Walk – Peter Brown

Late September 1968 was a time of heavy rain in south London, so much so that the little Quaggy River, which meanders from Locks Bottom through Petts Wood, Sundridge Park, Chinbrook Meadows, Mottingham, then skirts Kidbrooke before passing through Lee Green to join up with the Ravensbourne in the middle of Lewisham, spectacularly bursts its banks and flooded the centre of Lewisham and a large area between Lee Green and Lewisham.

The flooding was headline news in the national press, with dramatic photos of buses and cars struggling to get through the “lake in Lewisham High Street” as the Daily Mirror put it.

We learnt all this from Pamela Zollicoffer of the Quaggy Waterways Action Group who took a small group on a tour of the most affected areas of Lewisham and Lee Green.

As we walked along she showed us “then and now” photos from newspaper reports and other archives.

The walk started at Lewisham Station, where we stopped to look at the confluence of the Quaggy and the Ravensbourne, in the newly created Confluence Place, where Lewisham Council is making a feature of the two rivers as part of the redevelopment of that part of Lewisham.

In central Lewisham, as elsewhere in its course, the Quaggy is in characterless concrete culverts, sometimes beneath roads and pavement, but the Action Group has

worked hard to create a more natural environment, and to rid the river of the rubbish and litter that previously blighted it. Work has also been carried out in several places to smooth the flow of the river and thus to reduce the risk of future flooding.

Our walk took us past Lewisham Clock Tower and along Lee Road in the direction of Lee Green, with diversions into side roads to take note of the work that had been carried out on the river bed to naturalise it.

At one point, to protect the car park of a Lidl supermarket, a four-foot high concrete wall has been built as a flood barrier.

As we walked along Leahurst Road towards Hither Green station Pamela showed us photos of the devastating effect of the floods on the people whose homes had been flooded.

We continued to follow the course of the river to Manor House Gardens for a refreshing end-of-walk cup of tea.

Our thanks to Pamela for leading this, her third, walk for Bromley Friends of the Earth and to Sue Bocock for making the arrangements.

## Sale of land at Bromley Civic Centre

**Friends of Bromley Town Parks and Gardens** have written to Mark Bowen, Bromley's Director of Corporate Services regarding the proposed sale of land at the Civic Centre. Here's their letter:

**Dear Mr Bowen,**

RE: Public notice in the Newshopper regarding the proposed sale of land at the Civic Centre – objections required by the 19th June 19.

This matter has been brought to our attention by the Bromley Civic Society. Please note that our group strongly objects to this proposed sale of public open land, for the following reasons.

1. No planning application has yet been submitted to provide evidence of the worth of any development of this land. This is particularly important as this land is part of a public park, a Grade 2 listed building and several Grade 2 listed landscape features.

2. Further details of this sale and map of the area impacted are not readily available to the public. Instead they are expected to book an appointment to visit the Civic Centre specially to inspect these documents. A very opaque processindeed.

This action is extremely similar to that where the council attempted to quietly sell off parts of the Library Gardens and Church House Gardens. This notice of sale was subsequently withdrawn after widespread complaints about the inappropriate use of this procedure. It seems that the council have not learnt the lesson and are

intent on continuing along the same path yet again.

The whole of this wider area, which we know as Bromley Palace Park, is a highly valued public green space of great importance to both our group and the wider Bromley public. How the council deal with it should properly reflect this.

Yours faithfully,

Jeff Royce, Chairman, Friends of Bromley Town Parks & Gardens

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### FoE calls for huge boost to tree planting

The latest National Statistics on woodland produced by Forest Research were released today (13 June 2019).

Guy Shrubsole, trees campaigner at Friends of the Earth, said:

"Our government talks the talk on fighting climate breakdown, but these figures show that planting of new trees, and replacing those felled, in England is at an historic low. Trees are going to form a key part in getting the country to net zero emissions, so we need to see a huge improvement in how quickly trees are being planted.

"This is why Friends of the Earth has launched its call for UK tree cover to be doubled. Doing this will help us fix the climate emergency and make more space for the country's rapidly declining nature."

## Friends of the Earth Tree Campaign

**Emi, FoE Trees Campaign Lead, writes:** I'm excited to let you know that we're launching a new campaign to double tree cover.

I'd also like to invite you to a webinar to hear more about the campaign and to share your thoughts. The webinar is on Tuesday 2 July 2019 from 19:00-20:00. [Register for the webinar](#)

We're campaigning to double tree cover as part of our broader efforts to tackle climate change and restore nature. Doubling tree cover could remove 10% of the planet-wrecking greenhouse gas emissions in the UK annually.

We know that some of you are active on this issue, and we're keen to learn from your experience. The webinar will provide participants with an overview of the campaign and invite people to share their reflections.

The campaign is at an early stage. Your input now will be invaluable to test our assumptions and help shape the direction of the campaign.

Your skills, energy and local knowledge will be critical in winning this campaign too. We'll need to engage with all sorts of stakeholders – from local authorities to farmers – in order to double tree cover. Local groups can play a pivotal role to make this happen.

Join the webinar to learn more about how your local group can get involved and to share your knowledge and ideas for the campaign.

We hope you can join the webinar. Until then [please visit the campaign's webpage](#) or join the Facebook group, or [sign and share our petition](#) calling on the government to double tree cover.

### FoE - Why should the UK double tree cover?

Trees play an incredible role in combating climate chaos by removing planet-wrecking emissions from the air around us. Despite their importance, just 13% of the UK's total land area has tree cover (compared to an EU average of 35%).

We believe one of the best solutions to protect our environment and achieve net zero emissions (removing as many emissions as we produce) is to double UK forest by 2045, but government targets currently fall well short.

FoE has a [briefing on its website](#) which explains ***How more trees, woodlands and forests will support aims to help combat climate change, and protect and restore nature.*** Here's the start of it -

Politicians often make pledges to plant trees.

With a fanfare they like to announce a number they will plant. They tend to say less about the types of tree they will plant, how these will be managed and maintained, and how they will make sure any new forests will work for wildlife as well as for people.

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## Friends of the Earth Tree Campaign - *continued*

Rarely do they make the connection to climate change and the need for the UK to become much more forested in order to remove carbon pollution from the atmosphere and restore nature and ecosystems.

In the UK, the government found out how much people care about trees and forests when it tried to sell off the publicly-owned forest estate in 2011.

The government backed down and has since started to regard trees, tree cover, woodland and forests more positively as part of sustainable land management, improving conditions for nature and as part of a national strategy to both curb climate change and adapt to its impacts. However, the government's ambitions fall far short of what is needed.

Trees, woodlands and forests provide multiple benefits by:

- Supporting many species of wildlife from bugs and birds to other plants
- Providing clean air
- Aiding flood protection by storing excess water and stabilising soils
- Regulating global temperatures and shading and cooling our local streets
- Absorbing carbon from the atmosphere and storing it – and by keeping soils healthy and intact, tree roots and forest cover help to lock in the even higher levels of carbon contained in our soils

- Acting as natural barriers, protecting soils and crops from strong winds and heavy rainfall and providing shade and shelter for livestock.
- Being visually attractive and great to visit for relaxation, recreation and exercise

This briefing addresses how more trees, woodlands and forests will support aims to help combat climate change, and protect and restore nature and recommends a doubling of woodland cover across the UK by 2045.

## Nature Update – *continued*

**New Marine ‘blue belts’ created** - Did you hear that 41 new blue belts have been created around the coastline of the UK?

The new areas cover 4,600 square miles and spans 85,000 square miles. This brings the total of marine conservation zones to 91.

Local fishermen and marine conservation experts were consulted, and there were 48,000 responses from the public to the consultation.

Now we need to see good management put in place to help nurse these valuable series of underwater habitats to thrive.

## Bromley Friends of the Earth - List of Contacts

**Acting Co-ordinators:**

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**Treasurer:** Sheila Brown *details as above*

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**Technical Support:**  
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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!

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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, 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.

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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, and Kent, BR6 7RN.** Other enquiries regarding the group: may be sent by email to [bromleyfoe@gmail.com](mailto: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 annual subscription (£8 single / £15 couple/family). 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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