



**friends of  
the earth  
Bromley**

**July 2020**

No 390

**Our Next Meeting**

**Zoom!**

**‘The Story of Plastic’  
Discussion  
*Virtual meeting***

**Due to Coronavirus and following advice from Friends of the Earth, our July meeting will be a virtual one. See page 2 for full details.**

Usually 7.30pm The Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

Everyone always welcome

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[www.bromleyfoe.co.uk](http://www.bromleyfoe.co.uk)



**NEWSLETTER**

## July Meeting Participation

If you would like to be involved in the July Monthly Meeting, then we intend to run a Zoom meeting as we did last month. Please let us know by either emailing [bromleyfoe@gmail.com](mailto:bromleyfoe@gmail.com) or leaving a message on 020 8289 1503 and we will then send you details of how to join in nearer the time. You can either join using your computer (with video or without) or on a smart phone. Usually a phone number to dial in from any phone is issued with this type of meeting, but due to high demand this function has been disabled.

We will be arranging a discussion on the film *The Story of Plastic*, which is available for you to view before the meeting. See details on page 4.

We do also hope to organise speakers for some of these meetings, those who are willing to join via Zoom, but this remains to be confirmed.

*If you can't attend this meeting, or just find yourself with some spare time, perhaps we can encourage you to become 'Armchair Activists'.*

## Diary Dates

***Please note that due to the Coronavirus, many events have had to be cancelled***

**20<sup>th</sup> June (Sat)** 'Play for the Planet'. A musical event at Orpington Liberal Club. A fundraiser for BFoE - **Postponed**

**28<sup>th</sup> June (Sun)** Keston Countryside Day - **Cancelled**

**7<sup>th</sup> July (Tues) BFoE Monthly Meeting 7.30pm.** Speaker Prof Frank Kelly TBC. If you'd like to join our virtual meeting then please see the contact details at the top of this page

**4<sup>th</sup> Aug (Tues) BFoE Monthly Meeting 7.30pm. Speaker TBC**

**31<sup>st</sup> Aug (Mon) Cudham Village Fair - Cancelled**

This is correct at the time of going to press but obviously will be updated in the next monthly newsletter. If you need any further information on these events in the meantime, you can email us on [bromleyfoe@gmail.com](mailto:bromleyfoe@gmail.com)

**If any of the items in this newsletter make you angry, delight you, enthuse you or cause you any other emotion other than apathy, then please jot down a line or two and send it into the newsletter**

## Next Newsletter Copy

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views, articles for sale will all be considered for publication. Please send them to the editor via one of the methods below to arrive not later than **9am Saturday 18th July**

**Post:** 17 Everard Avenue, Hayes, Kent BR2 7LR

**Email:** [Robert.clark9@btinternet.com](mailto:Robert.clark9@btinternet.com) (please write 'Newsletter' in the subject line)

# June Monthly Meeting Report

Sue & John Bocock

This was our second Bromley FOE meeting on Zoom.

Sheila began by giving us an update on Graham, our oldest member, who is now out of hospital after his two falls. His daughter Louise has secured a place for him at a residential care home near Sevenoaks.

Fracking - Ann said the moratorium on fracking was continuing on Horse Hill. John had spoken to Lee the previous day. There had been problems with waste water contamination they had to get a new pump in; some of the water had seeped into the oil. Alan had explained that the low price of oil had made it uneconomic at the moment. Ann reminded us how much the campaigners valued support and how they always want/ need logs.

Plastics - Annette mentioned the film 'The Story of Plastic' which was to be a

Community Screening'. Exact date to be decided, and it could then be discussed at a later zoom meeting. Far greater use of plastics is noticeable during this pandemic: plastic bags for supermarket deliveries, take away cups and masks. Sheila mentioned Waitrose is no longer allowing people to bring in their own cups. However, on a positive note, Sainsbury's are selling some of their vegetables in net bags.

Cycling - Mary's local councillor, Alexa Michael, is very supportive and has explained the new cycling proposals, but Bromley is in competition with other local authorities for funding. Paul mentioned cycling paths and has suggested an alternative to the Ormonde Avenue to Crofton Road route which involved going through a tunnel that might have some remaining asbestos? Unfortunately, Crofton Residents Association doesn't seem to believe in designated cycle lanes possibly because of the expense involved?



Nature - Annette also reminded us of the amazing spring we have just had, a chance to rejuvenate.

The BBC programme 'Springwatch' was a true celebration. John told us of the many new roadside trees that had been planted complete with watering tubes beside them. Does anyone ever water them? Some of them are looking very dry.

The good weather has brought many people out, unfortunately leaving much of their rubbish behind - wrappings, squash bottles and nappies. This was particularly noticeable in Knole Park and more locally in Whitehall Recreation Ground.

Pollution - Christina and Alan both felt that we should be cutting down on our car use. Roads around schools should be closed. But the government's attitude seems to be "If you can't walk or cycle, use the car". Rob reminded us that the walking bus still exists in Hayes. Anne stressed the importance of joining a car club and encouraging car sharing, post Covid-19 social distancing.

The effect of cutting grass verges producing dust that blows into nearby houses causing problems for asthmatics and hay fever sufferers, was discussed. Parisa Wright from Bromley Environment Alliance (BEA) and also Greener and Cleaner had enclosed a small poster in the newsletter re Household bonfires 'Stop burning Save lives'.

Local Planning Update - Anne told us about the proposed conversion of the

Town Hall into a hotel. There is concern in the community about conservation. As a group we need to keep our eyes and ears open. Tamara reminded us that anyone can look at the planning lists at the Civic Centre.

Future speakers - In October we hope to have a speaker from the Woodland Trust. Sometime in the summer, we may have Frank Kelly (From the BBC programme 'The life Scientific') in person.

AOB - Tamara informed us that the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford had re-usable PPE. Ruth added that used pillow cases could be turned into drawstring bags to take home used PPE.

The meeting finally closed at 9.30pm having had a peak of 19 attendees during the evening.

## July Meeting Discussion

### *The Story of Plastic*

We will be discussing this film at the BFoE July monthly Zoom meeting. If you'd like to watch it first then please use this link: <https://indee.tv/screener/view/yVlcn9ZTa3QOAWaRUTi0xIom0OX-eYMNn/>

If this doesn't work for you then please email Emmanuelle, [lamanue@ntlworld.com](mailto:lamanue@ntlworld.com), and she will send you the link to click on. You are allowed to watch it twice if you wish but it must be viewed before 7<sup>th</sup> July.

'The Story of Plastic is presented by The Story of Stuff Project, a non-profit organisation, dedicated to chang-

ing the way that we make, use, and throw away stuff so that it is more sustainable, healthy, and fair. Since 2007, the organisation's nine award-winning animated movies have garnered more than 50 million online views around the world and inspired a million-member global community to take action for systemic change [storyofstuff.org](http://storyofstuff.org).'

'The film takes a sweeping look at the man-made crisis of plastic pollution and the worldwide effect it has on the health of our planet and the people who inhabit it. Spanning three continents, the film illustrates the ongoing catastrophe: fields full of garbage, veritable mountains of trash, rivers and seas clogged with waste, and skies choked with the poisonous emissions from plastic production and processing. The film distils a complex problem that is increasingly affecting the planet's and its residents' well-being.'

## **Green & Clean Bromley and Beyond (GCBB) June Meeting**

John Pavitt

### ***Air Pollution***

There has been a petition started called Ban Bromley Bonfires that can be joined on the link: <http://chnng.it/h5SzHQXd>

We were all encouraged to spread the word to people that are concerned about air pollution. One of the members has been monitoring the air quality and has found that there have been huge spikes in the ambient air quality which appear to be as a result of the increased amount of bonfires since

lockdown commenced. Particular problems have been with raised levels of NOX and Pm 2.5 particulate matter, which are very hazardous to health. People that suffer with asthma and Covid-19 symptoms are particularly at risk.

Apparently, the Council only takes action if bonfires become a statutory nuisance. It is understood that such action requires there to be frequent bonfires producing thick black smoke. The Council does not currently take account of the enhanced health risks that exist during the pandemic.

It was stated that there has been a 75% increase in the number of call outs by the Fire Brigade.

Another source of air pollution mentioned was the Council's Grass Verge cutting operation. The Council contractors use rotary mowers that in dry weather create clouds of visible dust. What is not seen is the invisible particulate matter that will inevitably be made air borne also. The rotary mowers also spread the cut grass all over the footway and into the carriageway. The contractor then follows up with a mechanical blower and blows the spread material back onto the sward or into the channel. In doing so in the summer, they create another cloud of visible dust. The other problem is that all the hard surfaces accumulate particulate matter that arises from a wide variety of sources including: diesel exhaust, tyre and road wear, brake wear, bonfires, log burners, and even the Sahara. The blowers recirculate all this particulate matter back into the atmos-

phere again, raising ambient pollution levels. The particulate matter is so light that it can remain airborne for a couple of days.

The problem with addressing the recirculation of particulate matter into the atmosphere is that PM10s and the even more hazardous PM 2.5s and sub 2.5 particulate matter are invisible to the eye. There appears to be a massive lack of understanding in respect to the hazards of particulate matter recirculation within commercial organisations, local authorities and the public, exacerbated by the invisibility of the particulate matter.

There have been examples of local action to protect vulnerable schools situated close to busy roads. One example was part funded by TfL (before they ran out of money) and in part by local fund raising activities. A green screen was put in place as well as air purifiers. The effectiveness of these measures will be monitored.

Apparently, a second round of funding is expected.

### ***Traffic Statutory Guidance***

A great deal of effort has gone into monitoring and commenting on the bid the council has made for cash to improve traffic management in preparation for easing of the lockdown. It is understood that TfL have run out of money, but the government does have a fund. It is understood that the Council have approved a bid for some 180 schemes.

People that have been following this

issue say the bids are far from perfect but are better than nothing. The details of the submission can be found on the council's Web site by visiting the [Environment and Community Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee](#) page and the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

### ***Rewilding of Parks and Verges***

There has been a great deal of effort in the West Wickham South area to rewild parks and verges. There has been some good progress in developing pollinator areas. It took a backward step recently when the council contractors cut some areas that had been left and were exhibiting some extensive growth of wild flowers.

### ***Bromley Environmental Alliance***

This is an embryonic group that was beginning to be formed just before the lockdown. However, the pandemic and other pressing issues have meant that it has yet to be launched. The aim is to bring together as many groups in the Bborough as possible with the objective of positively engaging with and assisting where possible the council to develop a sustainable future for us all.

## **BFoE Letter to Bromley Council**

Dear Cllr Smith

Bromley Friends of the Earth very strongly feel that the use of cars within the borough should be actively discouraged and radically reduced, in order to sustain the improved air quality which has been

achieved and enjoyed by everyone, during the Covid-19 lockdown.

As the lockdown eases, it will be easy for the public to revert to using cars as they did beforehand, unless a clear message goes out from the Council.

May we offer the following positive suggestions:

Greater encouragement to walk, as being a healthy exercise option

Increasing designated cycle lanes so that cyclists feel that bike use will be safer.

More use of car clubs, and shared car travel.

Addition to electric car charging points, [we note that the council is making good progress with these] and encouragement to purchase electric vehicles.

Promoting greater use of public transport as the lockdown eases, and negotiating with TfL for more buses especially during rush hour periods.

Closure of roads near schools and colleges during the morning and evening drop off /collection times, as is being proposed nationally.

### In Summary

All the above are vital if the council is to meet its CO2 emissions target reductions, to lessen the serious impact of climate change .

It would be useful if Bromley council could produce posters and adverts to promote less use of individual cars, and

list some of the above suggestions. A notice could also go on the council website, and to residents in the next edition of Bromley environmental news as a matter of urgency to build on the initiatives achieved during the lockdown. We hope you will find these suggestions useful.

Yours sincerely,

*Sheila Brown and Ann Garrett*

[Joint Co-ordinators of Bromley Friends of the Earth]

## **Electric Cars**

Robert Clark

I have to say that I agree with most of Reg Oakley's sentiments in his article on electric cars in the last newsletter.

I drive an electric van for my local business. It also doubles up as a family car as it has five seats. Local travel isn't an issue because a full charge can take me up to 60 miles, or 120 depending on weather conditions and the temperature. For longer distances there is a large problem.

We were intending to take a brief break away to Bristol this summer until the pandemic ensued. I looked into how we could get there and travel around using my van. The trip there looked possible, if a bit longer than we would like, due to a stop half way to gain some charge. This was necessary as we were due to stay on the outskirts of Bristol and no chargers were available locally.

The upturn was that we could get to

Bristol using the van, but could not travel around much while there. And we could not charge enough to get ourselves home again!

There are several issues with electric vehicles at the moment. Not enough rapid chargers exist across the country. Too many companies run the chargers that do exist. Charging via a street charger is expensive.

I charge my van at home on the drive. I'm lucky enough to have a drive of course and many don't. So a real cost-effective alternative needs to be created for them.

I'm left considering hiring a car to get us to Bristol. To compromise, though, I might try and hire a hybrid car.

## **Local Street Reuse Funding**

Parisa Wright

DELIGHTED (and relieved) to hear that the Bromley Council Environment PDS Committee unanimously approved the council officers' report on Road Usage, Social Distancing & Active Travel!

WELL DONE and THANK YOU TO ALL WHO WROTE IN to balance out the car lobby!!

Thanks also to Officer Angus Culverwell and his team for his work on these 180 proposals and also to the councillors who actually actively advocated active travel measures for their part of the borough! Let's build on those relationships and try to forge new ones!

If your school wasn't mentioned, there's still time this week to get an urgent request to the council!! Get in touch with your school and local councillors, and Angus. (Brendan Zappa and the Bromley Living Streets team may be able to assist if you need help with sorting).

There were of course a number of disappointed wards and roads and schools, but do not give up. Speak to your councillors and council officers to try and understand and address the concerns where possible. And then aim for the next round of funding perhaps? Or seek out other funding avenues for the council?

Now let's just hope the council get this first round of funding they are applying for and the measures are introduced before another hike in Covid-19 and gridlock!!

Full Paper here: <https://cds.bromley.gov.uk/documents/s50082088/ES20029.pdf>

## **Synthetic food – Part 2**

Peter Gandolfi

In part one, we looked at fake meat and in particular the production and use of mycoprotein Quorn. Here we look at the potential of totally synthetic foods.

All of the food we eat has been made, directly or indirectly, by plants using the energy from sunlight. Food production via photosynthesising inefficient:



less than half a per cent of the light energy falling onto a field gets turned into food.

If food could be made without relying on photosynthesis, it would free up a lot of the farm land we currently use for food production. Habitat loss (largely due to farming) is the single biggest killer of wildlife.

A number of companies are now working on different approaches, a couple of examples of these are below:

A US biotechnology company called Calysta, is working on a large scale factory using microbes to turn natural gas – methane – into a high-protein food for farm animals. The aim is to produce 200,000 tonnes of feed a year. In theory there is no reason why it could not go into food for human consumption.

This process has already been approved by the European Union for feeding to farmed fish, and live-stock such as pigs. Earlier, Calysta opened a small facility in Teesside to produce up to 100 tonnes a year of feed for farmed fish.

The idea was first explored in the 1980s by Norway's state-owned oil company, Statoil, which in the 2000s built a plant capable of producing 10,000 tonnes of feed a year. At the time, gas prices were high and the product had not been approved in the EU. The plant was closed, and the technology was sold to Calysta.

The process relies on microbes that

feed on methane. These use methane to get energy, producing carbon dioxide and water as waste products. The bacteria are grown in vats, fed methane, and are then dried and turned into pellets. The process relies on a cheap source of methane.

This ability first evolved billions of years ago – and probably predates photosynthesis. The microbes are common wher-

### Food

My empty gut rumbles reminding me of Angola  
A country crippled by dubious debts  
Many miles from our consumer largesse

Only one day and I miss my mini snacks -  
Lattes, savoury nibbles, chocolate boosts  
Followed by a ready meal or take-away

Food dominates my thinking -  
Sounds of crunching, munching, slurping, burping  
Smells of frying, herbs and spices . . .

Colourful visions of chilli beans, aloo-gobi, sag-  
aloo,  
Pizza mozerella, beansprouts, tofu bake, veggie  
roast,  
Cumberland pie, lasagne, spaghetti bolognese,  
chips...

Yoghurt, ice cream, mousse, lemon meringue pie,  
Pecan pie, apple crumble, rhubarb crumble, egg  
custard,  
Chocolate eclairs, chocolate gateau, strawberries  
and cream...

Past-its-sell-by-date packages fill up supermarket  
bins  
Restaurants throw away wholesome acres  
Tons of nutritious waste rots in land-fill

In Angolan townships stomachs wretch  
As the hot sun scorches the arid, land-mined soil

The World Bank vaults are calculatedly cool

Ann Garrett Ashley [April 25<sup>th</sup> 2008 – Jubilee Debt

ever there is methane, from vents on the sea floor to marshes. It is debatable how environmentally friendly this process is, as carbon dioxide is produced. Carbon emissions could be greatly reduced by using methane from a renewable source such as biogas. On the plus side, the process has tiny water and land requirements, potentially avoiding habitat loss and is more sustainable than taking fish out of the sea to feed back to other fish, as happens now.

A Finnish company called Solar Foods makes protein from air.

Water is split into hydrogen and oxygen. The hydrogen then provides energy for bacteria that turn carbon dioxide and nitrogen in the air into protein rich organic matter more efficiently than the photosynthesis used in plants.

This sounds a wonderful idea, converting carbon dioxide into food. Unfortunately, at present, there is little hydrogen to spare, and nearly all of the hydrogen produced is made from fossil fuels such as methane, so using it won't reduce emissions.

When Solar Foods is producing its novel protein Solein at full-scale, and using the cheapest source of renewable energy to do so, the start-up company believes it 'could match soya', CEO Pasi Vainikka tells FoodNavigator.

Next time – synthetic meats

## Toxic Particulates, and a case of 'do you remember when....'

One of the disconcerting things I think about having been an environmental campaigner for many years, is 'didn't we campaign on this issue in 19something'? And then wonder if we gott anywhere with it... (And yes, we have done!)

Anyway, reading Sheila's article in the June newsletter on Prof. Kelly, it reminded me of how Bromley Friends of the Earth were campaigning against the rise in diesel car use back in 1989/90.

We had 3 or 4 local papers around at that time, and got a lot of coverage, which proves useful when you

### TIE A GREEN RIBBON (round the old car aerial)

If you've gone unleaded flaunt it say campaigners

THOUSANDS of Bromley motorists are being urged to go green for the last time with a simple message - tie a green ribbon round the old car aerial.



BROMLEY Friends of the Earth, that supports the 'Tie a Green Ribbon' campaign, are pictured with a group of children and a car. The group is standing in front of a car, and one of the children is holding a green ribbon.

### Black marks for diesel emissions

Clean air campaigners highlight bus exhausts

CLEAN air campaigners are threatening to sue the police about Scotland's first ever black marks starting on a busy road.

Wendell Times 13.10.99

### Report that smoke!

REPORT every case of smoke from a bus or truck, says a campaigner.

THE COSTS

These figures show the cost of the pollution caused by diesel emissions.

Bromley Friends of the Earth

Wendell Times 13.10.99

DIRTY DIESELS

need a reminder (and still have a press cuttings book from then to check)! Most older environmental activists will remember protests against the surge in car use, diesel petrol, cheering for lead-free petrol, and booing/demonstrating at the building of many road by-passes, to name just a few points.

Sometimes, looking back can lead to celebrating how much has been achieved.

## **Miller's Mutterings**

Chris Miller

Well, what weather we had in May, from one extreme to another. Unfortunately, the crops are starting to suffer due to the lack of rain and showing signs of distress. This is apparent by the leaves curling inward, and the ears on the spring barley are already starting to poke through. The ears don't usually show this early. Bare patches are showing and some of this is due to lime deficiency. The boys applied lime earlier on but, due to the lack of rain, this has not washed into the soil. Unless we have some rain, the spring barley, wheat and oats will be very short, which means not a lot of straw and small grain.

We made some hay at the end of May, which is early for us, but again this was short. Peter had to climb into the back of the baler to unblock a lump of hay that had got stuck between the belt and the roller.

Some of you may have noticed a pur-

ple tinge to the crops toward the railway line. This is due to Phacelia, which was in the cover crop, not dying when it should! Very pretty but not what we wanted. This is proving a very challenging year, but that is farming for you.

Our annual farm inspection by Red Tractor will take place at the beginning of June remotely. Not sure how the day will pan out yet, but all the paper work is ready to be shown or scanned. Peter is to walk around the buildings with a camera linked to the inspector, showing him the spray store, sprayer etc and anything else he wishes to see. I will report back next month once it has taken place, to let you know the outcome.

We are sorry to report that only one more swallow has arrived this year, making three. Hopefully they are not all the same sex and they will have some young. We have read that thousands of migrating birds, mainly swallows and swifts, were found dead in Greece due to strong winds, low temperatures and rain at the beginning of April. This may be the reason why we are low on numbers this year. Plenty of other birds are here though, and we are pleased to report that the robin, blue tits, sparrows, and wren nesting in the garden have had young. Plenty of goldfinches around too.

A couple of weather sayings for June:

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

If it rains on St. Peter's Day (29th June) the bakers will have to carry double flour and single water,

If dry, they will carry single flour and double water.

## **Black Lives Matter**

From FoE Local Groups Newsletter

The world is watching a fresh wave of protests against racial discrimination in the US. Black Lives Matter protests have also started in the UK, in solidarity with the US movement, and to denounce systemic racism in this country as well.

As a climate justice organisation, we must be vocal about our support for the Black Lives Matter movement. Friends of the Earth works towards a future where there's climate justice for all, especially those who are most impacted and least responsible. This work has to acknowledge systemic racism, and actively fight against it.

## **Marinet's Sand, Sea and Sewage Report : Summary of Issues.**

- Sewage pollution of England's 400 sea bathing resorts remains widespread. 1 in 3 resorts still experience sewage pollution of their bathing waters, some very seriously so. This is based on Environment Agency and DEFRA official data, 2015 to 2019.
- Due to this pollution, this means that the UK ranks low at 25<sup>th</sup> out of 30 European countries in terms of its sea bathing water quality. Com-

pared to countries like Cyprus and Malta, our standards are very poor and we are simply not in the same league.

- Due to this pollution, the question must be whether some of England's sea bathing waters are safe to swim in? It is also known that covid-19 is present in sewage.
- At some resorts, sewage pollution events are being 'removed', by legal means, from the monitoring record. This is concealing the actual level of sewage pollution. This is happening at 1 in 7 English bathing resorts.
- Monitoring is also being manipulated at nearly all English resorts by selectively choosing sampling locations and times of sampling which has the effect of under-recording the often higher levels of pollution that do actually occur. This is not illegal, but it is seriously misrepresenting the true public health hazard to the bathing public.
- As a result of this manipulation in monitoring results and methods, the official published 'Quality Grade' at some resorts is higher than it should actually be.
- This overstatement of their 'Quality Grade' is even being recorded at some iconic English bathing beaches. For example, Blackpool is officially classed as 'Good' when actually it is 'Poor' (effectively a 'Fail', which can lead to prohibition of bathing).
- Sewage pollution at 1 in 3 English

sea bathing waters and the manipulation of monitoring procedures and official quality grades is, in some places, putting public health and safety at serious risk.

- The public is largely unaware of these levels of sewage pollution, and thus the risks they are unknowingly taking.
- At some resorts, quality is being affected by pollution retained in estuaries and their mudflats, and by inland sewage pollution and poor local agricultural practices.

Marinet's *Sand, Sea and Sewage* campaign aims to achieve:

- Honesty in all the official monitoring and recording of Quality Grades at England's 400 sea bathing resorts.
- Up-grading of all sewage works and their levels of treatment so as to eliminate sewage pollution. The UK should be number 1 out of Europe's 30 bathing water countries, and certainly not 25<sup>th</sup>.
- The key question therefore is: Is swimming in the sea in England safe? See the Marinet report *Sand, Sea and Sewage* for all the data and evidence behind the answers to this question. For a comprehensive summary of the issues, see page 6 of the report, titled '*Overview*'.

## London Co-ordinators' Meet-up on Zoom

Sheila Brown

Ann and Sheila took part in a Zoom meet-up with other London local group co-ordinators, hosted by Ted Burke and Fiona Whyte. These usually take place twice a year at the Printworks. Eleven groups took part; several reported having had Zoom meetings.

Each group was able to give a short update. North London groups are fighting a proposed incinerator. Several are involved in local climate action groups and working together with residents groups, XR and councillors. A number of groups are involved in the Tree campaign.

Havering reported having struck up relationships with council officers rather than councillors. Camden has partnered with an initiative called Think and Do and is working with them on a project called Camden Unwrapped to reduce plastic in schools. Think and Do is also involved in greening projects and giving trees to residents. Croydon has partnered with Croydon Council to set up a climate commission in which the group is involved. We mentioned being involved with Greener and Cleaner. Richmond and Twickenham are setting up a petition to stop night flights during the reduced flight period, using action network.

Ted ended the meeting by announcing that many FoE staff were being furloughed during the rest of June until 1<sup>st</sup>

July, so staff capacity will be low during June.

## Some News Headlines

**Britain goes 60 days without coal-fired power generation.** As of midnight on 10<sup>th</sup> June, Britain has had no coal-fired power generation on its grid for a full two months - the longest period since the Industrial Revolution.

**BP has seen a huge drop in profits** due to decrease in demand for oil during the lockdown and says it may have to leave oil finds in the ground. It indicated that the pandemic will accelerate the pace of transition to a lower carbon economy and energy system. Boss Bernard Looney said he was more convinced than ever that BP must move towards a net-zero carbon target by 2050 by spending less on oil and gas and more on low-carbon energy sources.

**Eco-iftar with the Muslim Council of Britain.** From the FoE Local Groups Newsletter. While Covid-19 is challenging our own campaigning and the work of our allies, it's been great to work with faith communities on tackling problem plastic where possible.

In mid-May our campaigner Jules Kirby participated in the Muslim Council of Britain's Eco Iftar. We're keen to continue developing and diversifying our collaboration with faith groups locally and nationally.

## Campaigns

### Planning Monitoring Team

### Climate, Energy and Transport

Ann Garrett

### *'Planet of the Humans'*

This documentary film produced by Michael Moore and written and directed by life-long environmentalist Jeff Gibbs, investigates just how green and sustainable green energy is.

It's available to watch on You Tube and was released to mark the the 50th anniversary of Earth Day on April 20th.

It takes a harsh look at how the environmental movement is fighting a losing battle on climate change, and how it has been taken over by capitalism.

Leaders are being followed who have taken us down the wrong road, selling out the green movement to wealthy interests and corporate America.

The film delves into solar and wind power and biomass, and shows how the latter involves burning wood chip which comes from felling trees in large numbers, while solar cells and wind turbines are made from an array of elements including cobalt, graphite, nickel, sulphur and lithium and involves the use of fossil fuels.

It would appear that the film is both realistic and pessimistic, but is worth watching, for individuals and groups like Friends of the Earth to make up their own minds, on what action can be taken to change things. Perhaps the only solution is some kind of compromise.

## ***Nuclear Power***

Dr Ian Fairlie, who spoke to our FoE group last autumn, was one of the signatories on a letter to The Independent on Sunday recently, which is critical of the new possible Rolls Royce military-designed small modular nuclear reactors. It states how since wind and solar power prices are dropping significantly, and that since the UK has some of the best renewable sources in the world, why the country could not be fully and economically powered this way. This would create greater employment with more export prospects.

Even well established forms of nuclear power are rapidly declining in competitiveness worldwide.

## ***Hydrogen-powered Vehicles***

Hydrogen can power vehicles but in a different way than it would heat houses. Instead of being burned, the hydrogen reacts with oxygen inside a device called a fuel cell. Electricity and water are produced. The electricity runs the car and the water drips from the exhaust pipe.

An attempt to switch to hydrogen vehicles in the the 1990s was thwarted by electric cars which store their energy in an onboard battery. However, there is now a push for hydrogen vehicles from China, Asia, Japan and South Korea , who have all set ambitious goals to have millions of hydrogen-powered vehicles on their roads by 2030.

## ***Congestion Charge Hike Needed***

Raising the congestion charge and extending its hours are vital to prevent key workers being stuck on buses, transport chiefs have said.

The central London levy is due to rise from £11.50 to £15 a day from June 22nd, and will be enforced til 10 pm and during week-ends as temporary measures during the pandemic. NHS staff, care workers and ambulance staff can already claim a full refund, but there are also calls for it to be available to teachers and the police.

Keeping buses moving will also help reduce pollution and create a healthier environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

## ***Plastics***

Annette Rose

## ***Masks***

During this crisis, thousands of pieces of PPE are being disposed of daily and it contains plastics. Unfortunately, some of the masks and gloves used by the public are not being disposed of correctly and some are already being found in our rivers and seas. As it looks like we will be using these items into the future, I hope the public can be educated in how to dispose of these items in the best way.

One group is hoping to develop masks for NHS staff that are reusable. The masks are at present being tested and it looks hopeful that these could make a real difference. They will be called 'Masks4Life'. The group, 'Oxford In-

spired' would like people to donate on their crowdfunder page to help with development costs. See the link below for more information and how to donate.

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/new-development-of-reusable-ppe-for-nhs-staff>

## **Nature/Trees**

Judy Palmer, Annette Rose

### ***Springwatch 2020***

Did you manage to catch any of the episodes of the BBC's Springwatch this year? I hope so – all done in lock-down too. One of the items I noted was the mention of the OU (Open University) Pollinator Watch - a brand new nQuire citizen science project investigating insect pollinators. If you took part in this, please do get in touch with us and let us know how you got on. All insect pollinators were being logged. There are lots of great recorders in our borough, and many of you will remember that Friends of the Earth conducted their own Bee Count for a number of years, which produced some brilliant statistics on our local bee movements.

If you like sewing, you may have just switched channels from Springwatch to the Great British Sewing Bee at 9.00pm! The amateur sewing equivalent of the Bake Off series.

One episode in the series they devoted to Reduce, Re-Use & Recycle and contestants were given used garments or items to make a new garment with. It is fascinating to see how all these talented

people use their imagination and knowledge to create clothes.

And we learnt also that we have the Victorians to thank for establishing the popularity, rather than the necessity, for the recycling boom; plus the rise of the Rag & Bone men who really did collect rags as these could be made into paper. Apparently, at the present time there are enough clothes in circulation to dress the next six generations – I wonder how they calculated that figure?

### ***Leaving it wild.....***

There has been a lot of chatter / media discussion on how we have all been occupying our time during lockdown, with many people working in their gardens. Some have been heeding advice from wildlife campaigners and have built bird tables, hedgehog homes, bug hotels and left space for wild areas. All really positive, and nature will say thank you by visiting more often!

The downside for nature is that some people prefer manicured perfection and have weeded and pruned and mowed to achieve a horticultur nirvana. Which is a shame if you want to see the birds, bees and butterflies!

I noted that the Wildlife Trust has launched #LeaveitWild urging people to have a messy corner, something we have long urged people to do. And that means leaving the dandelions and daisies and nettles and buttercups to grow! All very good sources of nectar for insects.



And along the same lines, here is a quote from the scientists at the IPBES (International Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services) urging governments to '... adopt a 'One Health' approach at all levels of decision-making – from the global to the most local – recognizing the complex interconnections among the health of people, animals, plants and our shared environment.'

Again, I noted that Buglife (*you may remember we had a speaker from them in November last year*) are being really successful with their project 'B-lines'. This is the wildflower system of corridors, roads and pathways designed for bees and other pollinators which have been created across the country. They have achieved the mapping of 17,000 km of these corridors here, and now wish to expand this to Europe. Such a great achievement for them, and fabulous to think that it will not only help the insect pollinators find pollen and a home, but help join up more habitats across the countryside.

### **English Tree Strategy consultation**

From FoE Local Groups Newsletter

Despite the pandemic, the Forestry Minister Zac Goldsmith is keen to launch the English Tree Strategy consultation soon, which will determine how many trees we grow in England over the next few years.

We don't yet have a date for when the consultation will be published but we're expecting it very soon and we'll need your help once it's out.

It's great that some local groups have already been in touch about making their own submission – quality of response is going to be very important and so we're very keen that local groups who have been campaigning on trees make more detailed submissions if they can. We'll send round the briefing shortly after the consultation document is published so watch this space.

### **E-Facts for the Month**

Peter Gandolfi

The carbon footprint of the internet:

As you can imagine this is a complex area and difficult to quantify. Estimates to date suggest that this could be around 300 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. Equivalent to every person in the UK flying to America and back twice, or around 1% of all the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions released from burning fossil fuels.

Put another way, 300m tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> is as much as all the coal, oil and gas burned in Turkey or Poland in one year, or more than half of those burned in the UK.

It's interesting to note that 1% is about the same proportion as printing and paper-based publishing represents in the UK. The comparison isn't entirely valid, for a whole host of reasons, but the fact remains that despite ecological claims for the virtual economy, the digital era may be no less energy-hungry than the paper-based world of 20 years ago. Part of the reason is the so-called rebound effect – the phenomenon that

when something (in this case the storing and interrogation of data) becomes cheaper and more energy-efficient, we often end up simply doing more of it, with the result that there is no net reduction, or even a rise, in cost or impact.

## Supplies That Don't Cost the Earth

*This is a regular reference point for useful and practical resources, helping us to sustain the greenest lifestyles we can. These are not recommendations from Bromley or National FoE, but are just suggested by BFoE members. Any suggestions or reviews gratefully received. [bromleyfoe@gmail.com](mailto:bromleyfoe@gmail.com)*

### Internet

[www.greenfinder.co.uk](http://www.greenfinder.co.uk) - a useful directory of environmental companies for all kinds of things.

Naturallythinking, Unit 2 Mill Lane Trading Estate, Mill Lane, Croydon, CR0 4AA, 020 3856 3588: <https://naturallythinking.com/>

<https://www.ethicalsuperstore.com/>

Crowdfarming, wide selection of directly supplied products from farmers around the world, many organic: <https://www.crowdfarming.com/en>

### Facebook

Greener & Cleaner Bromley (& Beyond) Consumer action!

Hayes Life Freebeecyclers There may be something similar in your area.

## Low or Zero waste Shops

While some of these shops are not specifically low waste, they do supply food loose or in large packs, thus reducing waste.

Wickham Food Centre (WFC) opposite M&S West Wickham.

Bromley International Food Centre, 237-239 High St, Bromley BR1 (opposite the Bromley Picturehouse Cinema)

The Turkish Food Centre (TFC) opposite the Catford Bus Depot in Bellingham.

South London Shop Without Packaging (SWOP), 7 Burnt Ash Lane, Lee.

Carnivore and Herbivore Shops in Southborough Lane, Bromley near the library.

Crystal Palace Food Market, Haynes Lane, SE19 3AN. Facebook - 'The Store Cupboard'.

## Apps

Karma and TooGoodToGo. Both allow you to purchase spare food from local restaurants at short notice and at very reduced prices.



Bethan Clark

## Reuse

If you have any items that you no longer need and that could be of use to someone then please let us know and we will publish them in the Newsletter. Alternatively, you could bring them along to our monthly meeting and put them on the table in reception. Any donations to BFoE from sales will be greatly appreciated.

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## List Of Roles

Everyone can be contacted via the groups email address: [bromleyfoe@gmail.com](mailto:bromleyfoe@gmail.com)

### Acting Co-ordinators/Mentors:

Sheila Brown 01689 851605  
Ann Garrett 020 8460 1295

**Secretary:** Vacant

### Treasurer:

Sheila Brown

### Press Team:

Ann Garrett

### Programme Organiser:

Sheila Brown

### Outings Organisers:

John & Sue Boccock 0208 290 0485  
Merchandising: Anne Clark

### Membership Secretary:

Dan Sloan 07414 920920

### Newsletter Production:

Dan Sloan

### Instagram and Twitter Admin:

Emmanuelle Coetzee

### Fundraising Officer:

Bill Priestley 01689 820469

### Admin Team:

Judy Palmer, Rob Clark, Annette Rose

### Web Site & Technical Support:

Peter Gandolfi, Mary Ingledew

### Refreshments

Mary Ingledew, Sylvia Chance

### Meeting Reporters:

John & Sue Boccock, Anne Clark, Annette Rose, Peter Gandolfi, Sheila Brown - further volunteers for this team would be welcomed

### Campaigns (Contact via group email)

### Nature/Trees:

Diana Hurd, Judy Palmer, Annette Rose, Tamara Galloway, Ruth Fabricant

### Anti Fracking:

Ann Garrett, John Catlin

### Plastics:

Annette Rose, Sheila Brown, Emmanuelle Coetzee, Ruth Gardner, Judy Palmer, Ruth Fabricant, Viv Gardiner

### Climate:

Sam Gee, Ann Garrett, Tamara Galloway, Ruth Fabricant, Judy Palmer (liaison with Climate Alliance)

**Planning Monitor:** Tamara Galloway, Ann Garrett

### Newsletter Editor:

Rob Clark 020 8289 1503  
[robert.clark9@btinternet.com](mailto:robert.clark9@btinternet.com)



## **Non-members Section**

If you are not a member of Bromley Friends of the Earth (BFoE) then hello to you. 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 acting co-ordinators Sheila Brown or Ann Garrett (their details are inside the back page of this newsletter.) Alternatively you can come along to one of our monthly meetings held on the first Tuesday of every month at the Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley - that's towards the bottom of the High Street, on the right going down. 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** (\*delete as appropriate)

I would like 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 work of our local group.

Name: .....

Address: .....

Post Code: ..... Phone No: .....

Email address: .....

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

.....

Please return this form to: Bromley FoE, 2 Bucks Cross Cottages, Chelsfield Village, Orpington, Kent BR6 7RN. Other enquiries regarding the group should be sent to [bromleyfoe@gmail.com](mailto:bromleyfoe@gmail.com) or contact one of our co-ordinators via their details inside.