

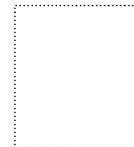


**Friends of  
the Earth**

**Bromley**

# June 2008 No. 246 Newsletter

Bromley FoE: inquiries to Birch House, Grays Road, Westerham TN16 2JB  
email: [raywatson@iclway.co.uk](mailto:raywatson@iclway.co.uk);



## June Meeting

Friends Meeting House,  
Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

### Public Transport on your doorstep

with

**Alan Lucking, business manager SELTRANS**

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June**

7.30pm.

Everyone welcome – bring a friend

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by  
**SUNDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**. Contact details inside front cover.

***Bromley FoE stall at Keston Countryside Day, Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July***

**Diary dates:****June 3<sup>rd</sup> (Tues)****June 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>****June 14<sup>th</sup> / 15<sup>th</sup>****July 6<sup>th</sup> (Sun)****September 12-14**

**Bromley FoE's June meeting:** with Alan Lucking, business manager of SELTRANS (South-East London Transport Network), which co-ordinates and promotes public transport across five south-east London boroughs, including Bromley

**Stop the Arms Trade week:** see page 6 for more info

**Climate Forum:** organised by the Campaign Against Climate Change, see page 9 for more info

**Keston Countryside Day:** Bromley FoE stall

**FoE Local Groups Conference, Loughborough**

**Two interesting quotes from the past**

*It is the political convention season in America – and here are two amazingly prescient quotes from Senator Edward Kennedy in a speech at the Democratic Party convention in New York no less than 28 years ago:*

**The environment:** “To all those who inhabit our land let us provide new hope that prosperity shall not be purchased by poisoning the air, the rivers and the natural resources that are the greatest gift of this continent. We must insist that our children and our grandchildren shall inherit a land that they can truly call America the Beautiful”

**Nuclear energy:** “We can be proud that our party stands for investment in safe energy instead of a nuclear future that may threaten the future itself”

**Green garden open – Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2pm to 5pm**

Bromley FoE member Elizabeth Greenwood has opened her garden for charity for several, years and she is doing so again this year with a new theme. The garden will demonstrate a green theme with info on energy and water conservation. Proceeds to Harris Hospis Care. The address is 281 Leasons Hill, Chislehurst.

**Next Newsletter - copy details:**

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor **by SUNDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> JUNE.**

**by post** to John Street, 82 Babbacombe Road, Bromley, BR1 3LS

**by phone** to: 020-8460-1078, **by email** to: [johnstreet@gn.apc.org](mailto:johnstreet@gn.apc.org).

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

## This month's transport column – by Ray Watson

It is pleasurable to report some good news on the environmental front – especially when it is from the transport sector where aviation emissions cause so much gloom.

The Office of National Statistics no less says that Londoners are among the greenest citizens in the UK. They walk furthest -- an average of 230 miles each a year -- while the distance travelled by car has dropped 15 per cent and mileage on public transport has grown by 30 per cent. Add to that the news that the distance travelled by cycle has increased by two-thirds.

The figures, which cover the 2005-06 period, also show that 26 per cent of London children go to school by car against a national average of 31 per cent, while traffic on major roads increased by 26 per cent nationally but only by four per cent in London.

Aviation does of course provide the gloom. Every major UK airport showed a large increase in passengers over the period 2001-06. For instance, Stansted dealt with 23.7 million passengers in 2006, a jump of 73 per cent since 2001, and of course primarily due to cheap fares.

### **Hotels suffer**

A largely unnoticed aspect of the cheap flights boom came in evidence given to a Commons select committee on tourism. The budget hotel chain Travelodge told MPs that its business had suffered because people flew instead of drove to UK destinations and because more Britons went overseas instead of staying at home.

The chain said airlines received unfair tax breaks – a point first emphasised by Friends of the Earth years ago and still not acted on.

### **Shipping guilty, too**

While everyone was pointing the finger at aviation about its dangerous – and growing – CO2 emissions, shipping has quietly sailed on with little questioning – until recent times. FoE is among many now pushing to getting shipping's CO2 total included in the Climate Change bill we fought so hard for.

Just as well, because shipping's CO2 output rose no less than 16 per cent in 2006 over 2005.

### **On a charge...**

One of the big drawbacks to electric cars is the lack of places to charge the battery – possibly something the oil companies are quite happy about. But now a Danish utility company has signed a deal with an American group to build a nationwide system in Denmark to charge car batteries.

The scheme links in with Denmark's huge success in harnessing wind power, now up to 20 per cent of its power usage. On windy days that figure can double and the cost of the power drops to almost nothing. That will allow the motorist to charge batteries at almost nil cost.

The Danish Government has pledged to build a nationwide grid for charging or battery exchange within the next two years.

*/continued on page 12*

## May meeting report – Ray Watson

### **We can beat environment problems, says Friends of the Earth boss**

The challenges to the environment may be daunting but they are winnable, Tony Juniper, executive director of Friends of the Earth told a packed hall at our May meeting.

Tony, who leave FoE this summer after 11 years, emphasised that local activism had played its part in winning some considerable policy changes, and pointed out that groups, such as ours had helped force the Government to bring in a Climate Change bill by waging a campaign that produced 500,000 signatures from the public.

He said: 'As a result, Britain will be the first country in the world to have an Act that ensures the Government must reach set targets to reduce carbon emissions'.

Addressing the theme 'The Environment: Are We Winning?', Mr Juniper quoted examples of past victories gained by the environmental movement – from clean air laws and toxic pollution controls to ozone protection, the creation of national parks and protected areas such as rain forests, and international protection for endangered plant and animal species.

He said that much had been achieved at national and international level despite people saying that politicians and individuals would never be persuaded to change.

However, the environmental argument was now moving to a wider stage. 'Now we need broad action to combat

all the various aspects of the threats to the world – land shortage, water shortage, food shortage, energy shortage as the oil runs out and threats to bio-diversity.

'In the past we found solutions for one threat at a time, but all today's threats are inter-related and need solutions on an across-the-board basis. It will take brave and concerted actions by politicians and individuals to find the answers.

'But we have already won the argument as to whether there is a problem – only a few now deny that there is a threat to the planet. In the past, we have come up with answers despite people saying we would not. Now it is accepted that much will have to change, including the way we live, and we will need firm national and international rules. It can be done. It has to be done'.

The meeting went on with a variety of questions and comments from the audience, which included guests from FoE branches in Croydon, Sevenoaks, Southwark and Bexley and also present were several long-standing Bromley FoE members.

Ann Garrett gave a vote of thanks to Tony and Sheila Brown, in thanking him for such a positive presentation amid the gloom of the world's problems, presented him with a leaving gift of a book about the Kent countryside.

## May meeting in pictures



*These pictures (left – Tony Juniper, and below – some of the audience) were taken with Bromley FoE's very own digital camera.*



## **Do you want to attend FoE's Local Groups Conference – Sheila Brown**

This year's Conference will take place in Loughborough 12-14 September and is open to any local group member. It is a great opportunity to network with other Friends of the Earth supporters from around the UK – plus there are usually delegates there from overseas Friends of the Earth groups.

This year's conference will be Tony Juniper's last as Executive Director and will also be the occasion when his successor Andy Atkins introduces himself and sets out his agenda. There is an opportunity to debate motions which have been submitted to Conference, elections to the Board and celebration in the form of the Earthmover Awards. These are awards to local groups for outstanding achievement under various headings including Group of the Year, Campaign of the Year and Successful Solutions.

Last year's winners included Hull Friends of the Earth who spearheaded a campaign against a local GM potato farm and brought its work to a halt, Huddersfield who organised a poetry competition for 8-11 year olds to celebrate National Tree Week, taking the message about the importance of sustainability and environmental care into schools and, via the media, to a wider audience, and South Cheshire who started a Growing Foods with Schools Project.

There are also seminars and workshops covering the breadth of campaign areas. The weekend is a chance to learn, a great opportunity to network with others, to feel part of a huge movement and come back feeling invigorated and motivated. If you are interested in attending, talk to Sheila or Ann.

## **Stop the Arms Trade Week – June 1 to 8, from CAAT**

The focus of this year's Stop the Arms Trade Week remains the Control BAE campaign. In the light of the recent High Court ruling that the Government broke the law when it curtailed a corruption inquiry into BAE-Saudi arms deals, it is vital that we maintain pressure on the Government not to interfere in the investigation again. Wherever you live, this is a great opportunity to take coordinated local action against the arms trade!

Please don't forget to let us know of any events you're planning and email the details to Marisa: [marisa@caat.org.uk](mailto:marisa@caat.org.uk).

To order a free campaign pack contact CAAT on [enquiries@caat.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@caat.org.uk) or phone 020 7281 0297.

### **London 4 June, 11am**

Arms Trade Walking Tour; Meeting point: Clock Tower, Victoria Street (in front of Victoria Station). This tour of several arms manufacturers/dealers and private security / military companies in Central London will attempt to raise awareness of elements of the Arms Trade in the capital. Contact Robin to confirm ahead on 07939 159 283.

More info from [www.caat.org.uk](http://www.caat.org.uk).

## CYW – Info on Local groups conference

Do you want to get involved but aren't sure how? Do you want to share your ideas, but don't know how to have your say? Activist Information Officer Jill Andrews explains the opportunities for local group members to engage in shaping the future of FoE.

### **Making the most of Motions**

Each year local groups have the opportunity to submit Motions which ask the Board of FoE to consider taking action on a particular issue. This might involve suggesting new areas of work, challenging the direction of a campaign, or proposing ways that the organisation can function better. In 2007 Motions were submitted on a range of topics, varying from our position on nuclear new-build to how we share information between staff and local groups.

Once submitted, Motions are debated at Conference and voted on. If passed they become Conference Resolutions and the Board decides how and when to implement them.

The deadline for submission was 23 May 2008. After this date all local groups will have the opportunity to suggest amendments and prioritise their top six Motions to be debated.

### **Standing for election**

If you are keen to be involved in guiding the direction of Friends of the Earth, why not stand for election to the Board?

The organisation is governed by Board members of Friends of the Earth Limited and Friends of the Earth Charitable Trust. Most of them are

local group members, elected to represent their region for three-year terms. The elections for the North East, South Central and East of England regions are now due, so if you are a member in one of these regions, you are eligible to stand.

The above groups were sent information on the elections in March. The deadline for nominations is 20 June 2008, after which members in the three regions will be able to vote for their preferred candidate. Ballots close at Conference.

### **There's time to celebrate too**

An important part of being involved in something so worthwhile is celebrating when things go well and appreciating the efforts of everyone involved. Our annual Earthmover Awards offer such an opportunity. Local groups can be nominated in five categories and winners receive £250, a trophy and an opportunity to present their achievements during the awards ceremony at Conference.

All local groups have been sent information on how to submit nominations. The deadline is 20 June 2008 and a panel of judges made up of two Board members and one local group member will decide the winners.

### **It all ends with Conference**

Motions, Elections and Earthmover Awards all culminate at Conference, and the event itself is a great way to get more involved with our work and our amazing grassroots network. This year we'll be at Loughborough from 12-14 September. We hope to see you there.

## Campaigns and other info – Ann Garrett

### **FoE Conference - Sept 12th - 14th**

If any one would like to attend this - please get in touch with Sheila, Ray or Ann ASAP.

### **Tony Juniper Meeting**

*Thanks from Ann Garrett* - Many thanks to all who helped on the evening with organization and refreshments, to Ray for his expert chairing and a special thanks to Sheila whose idea it was to invite Tony Juniper and for the large amount of time and energy she put into contacting people.

### **Campaigns**

We have decided to have stalls at Keston Countryside Day on July 6th and at Foal Farm Day on July 20th. The next Bromley High Street stall will be on Sept 20th and will focus on agrofuels as part of national campaign.

### **Greenhouse gas hits record level**

It has been reported that the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has reached its highest level in human history as it nudges ever closer to the point of no return. The greenhouse gas is also pouring into the sky even faster than it did during the second half of the previous century. There are now 387 parts per million of CO<sub>2</sub> in the air, the highest for 650,000 years.

Latest figures from the scientists at the Mauna Loa observatory in Hawaii show that CO<sub>2</sub> levels were at least 100ppm higher than they were before the industrial revolution. This raises renewed concerns over the Earth's diminishing ability to soak up pollution and means that targets for reducing emissions need to be revised

drastically. The weakening of our carbon sinks, the oceans and rainforests is a major contributory factor.

Mike Childs from FoE has made a statement saying that world leaders must push ahead with 'robust policies' to cut emissions and that Gordon Brown should toughen the Climate Change Bill to aim to reduce emissions by 80% by 2050, and that aviation and shipping should be included.

### **The White House vs the white polar bear**

A federal judge in the US had ordered recently that George W Bush should stop stalling on whether to designate the polar bear as a species endangered by global warming. The designation could it was thought, have large consequences for his climate change policies; his administration would by law, have to avoid doing anything that would 'jeopardise the continued existence' of the mammal whose habitat is melting away.

This was the hope originally. However on May 15th, when the US did put the polar bear species on its endangered list, the move was only seen as symbolic. US officials said the bears protected status will not be accompanied by measures to combat climate change, and that drilling for oil in the Arctic will continue.

Environmentalists have claimed a limited victory, but are angry that no action will be taken to tackle climate change

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## Campaigns info - *continued*

### **Brazil reveals eco-friendly plans for the Amazon**

Brazil has revealed new eco-friendly plans for the Amazon rainforest, including low-cost loans to farmers and emergency measures to combat illegal logging. In a bid to reconcile economic development with conservation, the government is offering 40,000 families once involved in logging, food, social security and unemployment benefits as it develops other programmes to help them find new sources of income.

What a constructive contribution to help save the Amazon and indeed major parts of the world affected by what happens to it. As President Da Silva says : ' The Amazon belongs to humanity and produces benefits for the entire planet, but its Brazil that decides what to do with the Amazon and cares for it '.

This emphasises the importance of world co-operation and responsibility in producing strategies to preserve our planet.

### **Hydrogen-Fuel Cell developments**

The first fuel cell-powered car is likely to 'hit the roads ' in the next few years, but portable gadgets are now available. These include clocks, mobile phones, calculators, cameras, and portable fuel cell generators. There is also a miniature car on the market for those enthusiasts. All these gadgets can be fuelled by water and will save batteries and electricity.

In the present ' verging on the fuel crisis ' situation, it is positive to know that this technology is becoming available. The hope is that renewable energy sources, such as solar cells and wind turbines, will be used to make the fuel by splitting water into its hydrogen and oxygen constituents

## **Campaign Against Climate Change – Climate Forum – June 14/15**

**Saturday-Sunday 14th-15th June 2008 in London**

50 workshops/seminars, fantastic list of speakers from around the world, 2 major plenaries, art exhibitions, music, performance - Saturday Night party

**Venue:** South Camden Community School, Charrington Street, NW1 1RG London

**See the full list of speakers** and check for updates at <http://www.campaigncc.org/forum.shtml>

**See the full (provisional) program** at <http://www.campaigncc.org/forumprogram.pdf>

**Crash space available!** Email [info@campaigncc.org](mailto:info@campaigncc.org) for details or if you want to be put up by someone.

**Entry:** recommended donation of £5 for one day, £8 for two (contact us if you have difficulty paying)

More info from the Campaign Against Climate Change website at [www.campaigncc.org](http://www.campaigncc.org).

## **CYW – Reflection on the impact of the Big Ask Day of Action**

Will people remember 2008 as the year FoE finally convinced the UK Government to introduce the world's first Climate Change Act? Perhaps not, but what is certain is that you will be able to look back on our momentous achievements and say, "we did that."

### **Action stations**

This April, the vast majority of local groups across England, Wales and Northern Ireland took part in a mass day of action - a final push of co-ordinated media pressure across the UK to secure the strong Bill needed.

Hundreds of eye-catching stunts - which highlight Gordon Brown ignoring aviation's contribution to climate change - have been convincing MPs to support its inclusion in the Bill.

### **We're no longer alone**

Friends of the Earth's Day of Action was just one of many inspiring events planned by the Stop Climate Chaos coalition between 30 March and 5 April to demand a tough climate change law. In 2005 we were a lone voice calling for climate legislation, but now we are joined by a wide range of coalition partners, all applying pressure on Government.

World Development Movement groups took joint action with us on 5 April, as did Friends of the Earth Scotland groups across the border. In Northern Ireland groups planned a separate day of action to get their own MPs over to Westminster for crucial votes.

### **Home run**

The Bill is well on its way through Parliament - and while there are still

vital changes needed, the good news is the Bill is still being improved. The Government has drawn up changes that will mean expected emissions will have to be declared every year, instead of across a five-year period - this means the Bill requires Government to act to keep temperature rise below 2 degrees Celsius.

The Bill does not yet have an 80 per cent target, but the Government has conceded an early review of this target. We are still fighting for a science-based target and to ensure all emissions are counted fairly - a fight that is likely to be concluded in the Commons where over 200 MPs have now signed EDM 736 in support of these changes.

Our final Big Ask Day of Action is set to overcome the tallest hurdle - including aviation and shipping emissions - and bring into law a truly effective Climate Change Act this summer.

After two and half years of creative campaigning we are on the verge of an historic moment. Our Big Ask campaign has pushed climate change to the top of the political agenda and inspired others to join our calls both at home and abroad.

Your energy, enthusiasm and dedication as Friends of the Earth local groups have made this happen. Let's hope that we can all look back on the Climate Change Act 2008 as the turning point which saw other countries around the world adopt legally binding emissions frameworks.

## The Big Ask Climate Bill Public Meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> April

The meeting was organised by Friends of the Earth and Stop Climate Chaos, *reports Sheila Brown.*

The Panel was made up of **Hilary Benn** (Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), **Peter Ainsworth** (Conservative Shadow Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Secretary), **Steve Webb** (Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Energy, Food and Rural Affairs) and **Tony Juniper** (Director of Friends of the Earth and representative of the Stop Climate Chaos Coalition). The meeting was chaired by Anne McElvoy, Executive Editor of the Evening Standard and attended by over 1000 people

Tony Juniper opened the meeting and thanked everybody for coming and for their support with the Big Ask which had brought about the Climate Bill, the first law of its kind for CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. Emissions in the UK have a global impact but it was important to roll out the Big Ask across Europe too. Interest was being shown by many different countries, and Friends of the Earth had received calls from as far away as Korea and Japan. It was an instance of Britain taking the lead and the world following, as had happened with abolition of the slave trade.

However, there were still areas of the bill which needed strengthening. The target was a 60% reduction by 2050 but this needs to be 80% otherwise a 4° - 5° warming would occur. The 60% target was now out of date based on present evidence. Secondly, international aviation and shipping

needed to be incorporated into the bill, not just through talk of a trading scheme but by incorporating these into the bill right at the start, not at some unspecified point in the future. Thirdly, regarding emissions trading, we need to take the lead, not just pass around instead of drawing up carbon budgets. Fourthly is the question of how the Act is reported back to Parliament. Its remit is spread across various departments leading to fragmentation, therefore the Prime Minister needs to take the lead.

To sum up: We welcome the Bill. It is an act of leadership. However, it needs strengthening. We welcome the support of other parties for this Bill. It may take 50 years to implement, so we MUST get it right at the beginning. It needs to be strong at the beginning, as it may get handed on to less strong leadership.

Hilary Benn was the next to speak. He thanked Friends of the Earth and Stop Climate Chaos for bringing this Act into being. This story shows how politics can change things and is the culmination of an idea and passion. We see the science and understand the threat. The Bill will put in place carbon budgets for the next 50 years. It will provide transparency. It will cut emissions by 60% by 2010 and will create a framework to deal with issues. The figure of 60% came from the Royal Commission. The Government has asked the Commission on Climate Change what needs strengthening and what is the right way to reach a decision. Regarding aviation, this is an international problem. The  
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## Big Ask Climate Bill Public Meeting – *report continued*

Government is trying to get a European Union scheme under which levels will be capped. Whatever the UK does, we still need the rest of the world to respond. We need to apportion these amounts. It comes down to Global Social Justice. Mr Benn concluded by urging the audience to carry on doing what we are doing.

Peter Ainsworth began with congratulations on the success of the campaign and to the Government on introducing the Bill. There was a new duty to engage with the public and a new duty to publicise advice given to Government and state reasons for objections. Central targets should be introduced. An assessment of progress made and future progress should be included. The Government had a duty to adapt, to establish an adaptations sub-committee as the effects will be here for years to come.

There should also be a cap on emissions other than carbon emissions. Measures should be introduced to include international travel, aviation and shipping in the Bill. The Prime Minister has a pivotal role, as Tony Juniper suggests. The purpose of the bill is to stop **Climate Change**, not just emissions. Targets should be set according to science, not politics, and should be 80%, not 60%.

Steve Webb pointed out that Conservatives and Liberal Democrats form a majority in the House of Lords. In a mixed metaphor, he described DEFRA as “a minnow among wolves”. Aviation and shipping were indeed key factors. The Bill should be seen as the

start of policy for energy efficiency, renewables and carbon capture. Our work tonight is the start, not the end.

A lively question and answer session followed which included reference to individual carbon rationing and the thought that people should be encouraged to “use less stuff”.

### **Transport column - continued And, finally...**

June 1 is the first day that 11 to 15 year olds can use the special Transport for London youth oyster card that offers free and discount travel. Application forms are available from tube stations, Oyster Ticket Stop or via [tfl.gov.uk/zip](http://tfl.gov.uk/zip).

### **Adrian Appley – a thought on veganism**

As someone who is as keen as any FOE member to play my part in helping to save the world from total destruction I am very concerned that there do not seem to be many vegetarians or vegans in FOE. Whilst at the last Bromley FOE meeting I asked Tony Juniper whether or not he was vegan and from his evasive answer it was obvious he was not. If one of the major FOE officials does not take the matter seriously how can we expect other FOE members to? Think about it.

## WDM says Clean Coal is a dirty lie

A new generation of coal-fired power stations is the last thing we need, says WDM policy officer Tim Jones.

Last summer I had the privilege of marching 1,000 miles across the UK campaigning for action to tackle climate change. Some of the most prominent landmarks we passed were huge coal power stations, such as the Longannet plant which dominates the Firth of Forth in Scotland, and Drax, which casts its shadow over Yorkshire.

On the first day of our journey we sailed past Kilroot in Northern Ireland, the UK's most recent coal power station. And on our final day, we walked past the now defunct Battersea power station. Battersea was the first large-scale power plant to be built in the UK when the government decided to create a publicly owned 'national grid' in the 1930s.

### **Coal: the dinosaur fuel**

Long before it was used to generate electricity, coal was the basis of the industrial revolution. Factories, trains and ships were all powered by burning coal - and people were blissfully ignorant that this was steadily increasing the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Now we know that coal is the UK's most climate-polluting fossil fuel, more damaging than oil and gas. Overtime, we have switched to using gas and oil for heating and transport. Yet coal is still the number one fuel for generating the UK's electricity.

### **No new coal power**

Over the next few years the UK has a fantastic opportunity to phase out the use of this most dirty of fuels.

European anti-pollution law requires that by 2015, six UK coal power stations have to close, and a further eight will only be able to operate for a limited amount of time.

Replacing coal power with renewable energy, whilst at the same time reducing the amount of electricity we use, would go a long way to meeting the UK's targets for reducing climate-changing carbon dioxide emissions. But instead, energy companies want to replace coal power stations with ... coal power stations.

Unfortunately, coal is still a cheaper way to generate electricity than many forms of renewable energy. The UK government has refused to subsidise alternative renewable energies enough to make them attractive to private companies.

Therefore, energy firms such as E.ON, RWE npower and Scottish and Southern Energy want to build a new generation of coal power stations - starting with one in Kingsnorth in Kent.

### **Wrong route**

For the UK to build new coal power stations would be madness in the face of impending climate crisis.

A new generation of coal power plants would emit more carbon dioxide a year than Bangladesh - a country with 140  
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## WDM on Clean Coal - *continued*

million people. If allowed, these emissions will mean that the government will fail to meet its targets for cutting carbon.

Our government has a history of failing to meet targets for reducing emissions. So perhaps it's no surprise that they are willing to make decisions that will cause them to fail to meet targets which have only just been set. The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) has thought up a way round this.

Instead, UK companies can pay to reduce emissions in developing countries. These bought reductions count towards meeting targets for cutting emissions back in the UK. We can continue our high carbon way of life by paying for others to change.

Developing countries need assistance in developing clean energy technologies, and in limiting their carbon emissions. But this assistance has to be as well as radical cuts in the UK, not instead of them.

The UK has one of the worst records on alternative energy sources in the EU. Just four per cent of UK electricity comes from renewable energy. But Britain also has some of the largest wind, wave and tidal resources in Europe. We have failed to develop them "because since the 1960s we've been reliant on oil and gas from the North Sea", says Energy Minister Malcolm Wicks.

In the same way, we are now in danger of letting coal squeeze out the development of renewable energy. The closure of coal power stations

over the next few years is an opportunity to change the way we generate electricity in the UK. This opportunity will be missed if the government gives the go-ahead to build new coal power plants in their place.

### **International negotiations**

There is another opportunity internationally. Negotiations began at Bali in December on a new global agreement to cut emissions.

Developing countries are very suspicious of the will and ability of rich countries to act on climate change. Rich countries still emit far more carbon dioxide per person than developing countries. And in most rich countries, including the UK, emissions are rising rather than falling.

If the UK government allows new coal power stations to be built, developing countries' fears will prove to be justified: the UK does not want to, and will not, significantly reduce its contribution to climate change. The UK's position in international negotiations will be irretrievably undermined.

But we could phase out coal power and begin to develop a low-carbon electricity system instead. The UK can make a positive contribution to the worldwide effort to tackle climate change. But not if we return to using coal; a fossil fuel well past its sell-by-date.

*Find out the latest on the campaign to stop the proposed Kingsnorth power station at [www.stopkingsnorth.org](http://www.stopkingsnorth.org).*

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Peter Gandolfi

*famgando@hotmail.com*

### Letters to the Editor

Why not write us a letter if you have a strong opinion on something or just want to share your thoughts. Send them in and perhaps even start a discussion - who knows.

### Need a lift to meetings?

If you require a lift to Bromley FoE meetings, please contact Sheila Brown or Ray Watson on the numbers shown above.

### Disclaimer

Please note that any opinion expressed in this Newsletter is not necessarily that of Bromley Friends of the Earth or Friends of the Earth.

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

**2 Formica top kitchen tables. £10 each. Contact Joyce Pitt 020 8460 2809[1]**

Items are displayed for three months. The number in brackets indicates the number of times an item has been displayed. Please contact the editor if the item is sold so that it does not appear unnecessarily. Any donations to Bromley FoE generated from this column gratefully received!

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## **Non-members' Section**

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

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

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

Please return this form to: **Bromley FoE, 2 Bucks Cross Cottages, Chelsfield Village, Orpington, Kent, BR6 7RN**. Other enquiries regarding the group should be sent to: Birch House, Grays Road, Westerham, Kent, TN16 2JB; phone 01959-571566, email [raywatson@iclway.co.uk](mailto:raywatson@iclway.co.uk).

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

Name.....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Email Address.....

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

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