



**friends of  
the earth  
Bromley**



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*June 2015*

*No. 330*

# ewsletter

## June Meeting

*Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley*

### **A Chemist's View of Sustainability**

*John Courtneidge*

*John Courtneidge is a Chemist and Co-operator and will use practical experiments, experiences and demonstrations starting at The Spirit Level and Arriving at Wholeness*

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June – 7.30pm**

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

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

Contact details inside front cover.

***Stop the South London Incinerator – see pages 10,11***

### Diary dates:

June 2 (Tue)	<b>Bromley FoE's June meeting:</b> John Courtneidge on Sustainability and Peace
June 12-14	<b>FoE's BASECAMP</b> at Castleton, Derbyshire
June 17 (Wed)	Climate Lobby of Parliament - <i>see below</i>
June 20 (Sat)	<b>Stall at Coolings</b> – 10.00 am – 4.00 pm
June 28 (Sun)	<b>Keston Countryside Day</b>
July 7 (Tue)	<b>Bromley FoE's July meeting</b>
July 12 (Sun)	Commonwealth Bore Place Summer Open Day – Sevenoaks FoE have a stall

### Climate Lobby of Parliament – Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June

On Wednesday 17 June, local transport campaigners are invited to join 10,000 people for the biggest Climate Lobby of Parliament ever!

When the dust settles after the election and reshuffle, **let's show the new Government just how much we care about climate change.**

2015 is a critical year in the fight against climate change with the UN negotiations in Paris in December, and it's up to us all to send a loud and clear message to political leaders, here and abroad, that **they must take urgent, definitive action** to limit the disastrous impacts of climate change.

Supporters of The Climate Coalition made up of over 100 charities, unions and NGOs, will be gathering outside Parliament from **12 noon**. MPs from the new Parliament will then come outside from **1pm to 4pm** to meet their constituents to discuss what they can do in the build up to Paris and beyond.

**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> 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.

**\*\*A number of articles in this newsletter have been shortened \*\***

**\*\*because of limitations of space.\*\***

## May 2015 Meeting Report – Annette Rose

### **Why all Schools should ‘Run on Sun’.**

We welcomed Tom Wright from the activism team at Friends of the Earth who came to speak to us about the ‘Run on Sun’ campaign.

Tom explained that part of his job is to design activities for the campaigns and he enjoys visiting local groups to get feedback on how things are going. He has been working on the Run on Sun campaign since January. The campaign catalyst was Anna Watson. Bradford council enabled a school to get solar panels by lending the money and she thought why can't all schools do this?

At the early stages of the campaign it was discussed whether the focus should just be on schools or should include other buildings. Also, could the campaign include other renewables, not just solar power? However, the decision was made to narrow the focus at least initially.

Tom told us that renewal energy is certainly getting more popular around the world. However Britain is far behind. Germany produces 35 GW and we produce 5 GW. The good news is that the cost of solar power has dropped by 99% in 35 years. So why isn't there more of it?

The advantages for schools are that they can reduce their carbon emissions and save the school money- £8,000 a year. However it could cost £50,000.

Tom then outlined how the campaign has progressed so far. Talks to schools are important and some local groups have been able to do this, sometimes using the interest in the creation of bee worlds in school grounds as a way in. The campaign has been running nearly a year now and was launched on June 21<sup>st</sup> last year with a day of action. There will be another day of action this year.

Some of the difficulties and barriers to schools getting solar panels were outlined. Government rules do not make it easy for schools to borrow the money needed to fund the panels. So a focus has been to get these rules changed. 15,000 people have signed a petition that was sent to Nicky Morgan to ask for a change in the rules. There has not been a positive response so far.

FoE ran a competition for a school to get solar panels. Although there were only 36 entries, it created a lot of publicity around it and many contacts were made with 25,000 votes cast. The winner was Stoneydown Park School in Walthamstow. It was great that all the pupils, staff and parents were onside to try to win. There were 6 finalists who will all be given some support to get panels.

1000 schools have signed up for an information pack on solar energy. There is also a Run on Sun Education pack which contains lesson plans for Key Stage 2 which was launched in February 2015. The NUT and NUHT have supported these.

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## May meeting report, *continued* + **Bill's Open Garden**

Tom told us about how some local groups have tackled this campaign. Examples included Eastbourne and district group who are working with their MPs and have a school presentation for staff and governors on how to go solar. Bristol FoE managed to secure £50,000 to fund an energy champion scheme to get panels on roofs. Manchester FoE persuaded the local council to set up a solar schools programme and Darlington FoE are working with local schools to encourage them to go solar.

In the London Assembly, Boris Johnson is considering spending money in the 2015-16 budgets to help schools install solar panels. They congratulated Stoneydown Park School.

### **So what are the next steps for the campaign?**

The focus will be on MPs to ask them to commit to a Solar Action Plan. We need to help schools get funding, get solar panels in schools as standard and use solar schools as a platform for a wider campaign on renewables.

Tom admitted that actually getting solar panels on roofs as part of the campaign has been a slow process. FoE are working with a company called Ecotricity who are supplying solar panels on 50 schools in a scheme in which the schools will own them. There will be a build up towards the Paris climate talks.

Tom stated that the campaign will not be a massive priority but it will be working with more schools for the next 2 to 5 years and may have a bond

scheme to help schools finance projects.

Suggestions for our group were to lobby MPs, speak to the local authority and talk to schools.

There were questions from the audience about the carbon emissions from schools, other renewables in schools and a mention was made of Eco Schools. Tom said they are working with other partners including the Eco Schools organisation.

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### **Bill's Open Garden 2015**

**A really big thank you** to everybody who helped to make Bill's Open Garden a success. The rain held off and MGR turned out in their numbers again. The home made cakes were delicious and we had plenty. It really was a team effort from taking the money, selling raffle tickets, manning the stalls, serving the tea and cakes and washing up. And the people who gave bric- a- brac and bought plants helped too.

We had lots of interest in our group on the BFoE stall, particularly with the Bee campaign and the bric- a- brac stall was busy. And of course thank you to Bill for all his hard work preparing his garden and bringing on the plants so they were ready to go on sale.

We were very pleased with the money we raised, just over £500, which was well up on last year despite the cooler weather. The money will help with our campaigns in the coming year.

## Nature Campaign, - Judy Palmer

*Editor's Note – See also the article on page 7, with apologies for any duplication*

Last month saw the launch of a wider Nature Campaign by Friends of the Earth called Defend Nature.

They have joined forces with other environmental groups in the UK & Europe because the laws intended to protect our top and most threatened wildlife species and habitats are themselves now threatened.

This is from Paul de Zylva, the Friends of the Earth Nature Campaigner: “The European Commission (EC) is reviewing whether the nature laws – the EU Habitats and Birds Directives - are ‘fit for purpose’. The EC has launched its ‘REFIT fitness check’ of the laws and there is a public consultation taking place NOW. Make no mistake, this is all part of the deregulatory agenda to cut red tape and remove perceived burdens on business and economic success.”

“Please follow this link to take part: <https://www.foe.co.uk/news/urgent-easy-way-help-us-protect-nature-laws>. We want millions of people to show politicians and bureaucrats that we want a healthy economy not one that succeeds at the expense of our nature.”

These details are from the FoE press release:

“The directives offer legal protection to nature sites by, for example, steering development to alternative locations. This network of protected sites, known as Natura 2000, is described by the

European Commission as the ‘centre-piece of EU nature and biodiversity policy.’ The aim of the network is to ensure the long-term survival of Europe’s most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

“Some of the UK’s best loved sites are protected in this way, including Cannock Chase, Flamborough Head, Dartmoor and Snowdonia. Across Europe many of the special places protected by these laws are famous throughout the world – including the wetlands of the Doñana National Park in Spain which is home to flamingos and imperial eagles.

“The laws also help safeguard a specific list of more than 1,400 rare or threatened species in Europe by restricting harmful activities such as hunting and insensitive development. The European rules have been instrumental in the recovery of some iconic species, such as the bittern.”

Nature and the natural environment, are essential to our well-being, it should not be sold off, piece by piece.

### **Open Wild Gardens, Judy Palmer**

If you have a wild garden, Friends of the Earth would like to hear from you!

Whether you have a tiny back garden, allotment or community space that has become a great place for bees, we want you to throw open your gates and take part in Friends of the Earth’s Open Wild Gardens.

Inspire others to create a safe haven for bees and other wildlife.

*/continued on page 8*

### **Borough Goes Green to cut Energy Bill**

London's first publicly owned renewable energy is to be set up in Barking and Dagenham in a scheme that could see the installation of solar panels on school roofs.

The council has given the go ahead to the plan that could even result in a water turbine being installed in the river Roding, and hopes that the scheme will help cut its £6 million energy bill as well as provide cheap heating and lighting in the community.

### **Japanese Nuclear Industry demands more Reactor Restarts**

Japan's pro-nuclear lobby has pledged that 2015 will be the year the country's shut-down nuclear reactors are restarted.

Despite public opposition following the Fukushima disaster, industry officials and their supporters claim that the country needs nuclear power to play its part in cutting CO2 emissions and to ensure a stable electricity supply.

The Japanese public remain deeply concerned about safety, as radiation from the original disaster forced thousands of people from their homes due the wide area of contamination in 2011.

### **Renewables Overtake Nuclear in the UK**

This data was released in March by the UK Department of Energy and Climate Change. According to their

report, the proportion of the UK's electricity generated by nuclear power fell by 0.6% from 19.2% to 19% from 2013 to 2014. Meanwhile between the same years the proportion of electricity generated from renewables rose 20% to 19.2%, a record figure. Since overall UK electricity generation fell a massive 6.7% between 2013 and 2014, it means nuclear is accounting for a smaller proportion of a smaller market.

### **Go Vegan to Protect the Planet**

There is now, more than ever, a need to switch to a plant-based diet. Not only is it kinder to the animals and better for health, but the environmental arguments are also overwhelming according to Animal Aid publicity. The vegan diet requires less land, uses less water, generates fewer greenhouse gas emissions and is cruelty-free.

Methane, which has the potential to warm the planet 23 times quicker than carbon dioxide, is produced during the digestive processes of sheep, cows and other ruminants and is released from their untreated manure. Farmed animals require large quantities of drinking water and huge volumes are used to grow the crops that are fed to them.

Meanwhile, large areas of natural forest are currently being destroyed to grow feed and provide grazing for farmed animals. A varied vegan diet requires just one fifth of the land needed for a typical omnivorous diet.

## Defend nature – new nature campaign launched – *Judy Palmer*

*Editor's Note – See also the article on page 5, with apologies for any duplication*

Please see below a most important message from the Friends of the Earth Nature Campaigner Paul de Zylva urging people to sign a petition to protect Nature's Laws. The EU is launching a consultation asking people how important they feel nature is but the feeling is that they want to ultimately water down the laws which defend our most important sites and species.

Let's tell them we want the laws to defend our sites, not weaken them. Nature is important to our well-being so please pass this email on to all your contacts urging them to sign.

### **Urgent: easy way to help us protect nature laws – Sign the petition**

People across the UK and Europe are being asked to defend vital laws protecting nature. Could you help by signing the petition? There's only a brief window to do this. Sign petition to defend nature at <https://www.foe.co.uk/page/defend-natures-laws> .

The European Commission has launched a review of crucial European Laws that protect our best nature sites and iconic wildlife. And there's only a matter of weeks to respond to the public consultation.

### **Threat to UK nature**

Known as the Birds and Habitats Directives, these laws protect famous places like Snowdonia, Dartmoor,

Epping Forest and Flamborough Head.

Across Europe the review is a threat to incredible places like the Doñana National Park in Spain, home to flamingos, and the Šumava National Park in the Czech Republic – the largest remaining area of wilderness in central Europe.

### **Wide support for petition**

That's why Friends of the Earth has joined with other groups in the UK and Europe to launch a campaign telling the European Commission to keep these crucial laws.

Sandra Bell, Nature Campaigner for Friends of the Earth: "These laws are crucial in protecting many UK plants, animals and wildlife sites – watering them down would put nature in severe jeopardy. Nature is vital to both our wellbeing and our economy. Anyone who cares about nature should send a clear message that laws defending our wildlife mustn't be weakened."

### **Do we need laws protecting nature?**

On the face of it, it might seem reasonable to review the effectiveness of this legislation. But there is a more sinister agenda behind this. The review is part of a deregulation drive in the European Commission that is already trying to weaken environmental protections. There is plenty of evidence that when the laws are properly enforced they result in better protection of nature.

### **Please sign the petition.**

## News from Jenny Bates + Threat to Seabed + Nature campaign, *cont'd*

### **Some news from Jenny Bates - regional campaigner for London**

#### **New Air Quality Plan for London**

The UK Supreme Court, after a final hearing, ordered the government to come up with a new Air Quality plan by the end of the year, emphasising 'the need for immediate action to address this issue'. Don't forget that local group members can join our air pollution google group-just let me know by emailing me at [jenny.bates@foe.co.uk](mailto:jenny.bates@foe.co.uk).

#### **London City Airport victory**

It was 'hold the front page' at the Newham Recorder where City Airport's failed application to expand made a dramatic splash. This is a huge victory for the people of East London and congratulations to the campaigners from HACAN East who have been working on this.

Following Newham pushing through the airport's planning application for new aircraft stands and a taxi way (which would enable more peak-time flights), the Mayor stepped in to block it (barring any call-in/JR). Far from expanding, with Crossrail bringing Heathrow within easy reach soon, the airport should be closed, making much needed space for housing.

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#### **Threats to seabed and Barrier Reef**

The US government has given approval for large scale deep sea mining, a destructive project between Hawaii and Mexico that would damage important habitat for whales, sharks and sea turtles and wipe out seafloor ecosystems which seeks to extract gold, nickel, copper and other valuable

metals and minerals from the seabed. The deep sea mining would involve massive cutting machines that would leave behind a barren landscape devoid of life.

The Centre for Biodiversity is challenging this with a lawsuit which aims to compel the US Government to look at the environmental risks. It emphasises the need to protect the ocean wildlife and habitat and urges the United States to provide leadership for other nations to follow.

Meantime in Australia Greenpeace has launched a massive worldwide campaign to protect the Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest coral reef, which is under threat of a proposed gigantic coal terminal. The reef is already under threat from climate change

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#### **Nature Campaign, *continued***

So is your garden

- Full of bee-friendly flowers?
- A place where nature can thrive?
- Free of pesticides that are harmful to bees?

Get in touch!

Go to [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk) to the Get Involved tab and follow the Bee Cause links to become involved.

#### **Footnote – Bee count in May,**

The wonderful Monty Don in the Gardeners' World episode on May 15<sup>th</sup> gave a good 2-3 minutes air-time to FoE and the Bee Count app.

## **Campaign for Better Transport - Now we have a Conservative government what are the prospects for transport in London?**

The Conservative manifesto was indecisive on airport expansion. They say they will 'respond to the Airports Commission's final report'. They are committed to HS2 and to Crossrail and Crossrail 2. They are in favour of increased investment in and electrification of the railways. They said little about congestion although they plan to double cycling by 2050. At the same time they propose to make things easier for motorists by, for example, abandoning the fuel duty escalator.

Things would not have been much different if Labour had formed the government. On airport expansion they said: 'Following the Davies Review, we will make a swift decision on airport expansion'. Like the Tories they are fully in favour of HS2. They made no mention of Crossrail or Crossrail 2 nor of issues around congestion.

The Lib Dem manifesto had a generally bolder approach. They are opposed to the expansion of any of London's airports and are for no net expansion of runways. They said they would 'Ensure London's transport infrastructure is improved to withstand the pressure of population and economic growth'. They would also 'Work to encourage further private sector investment in rail freight terminals and rail-connected distribution parks' which would reduce congestion on London's roads.

The Greens have a more radical approach. They oppose any airport expansion and advocate higher taxes to discourage air traffic. They are

against HS2 and say: 'The money to be spent on this hugely expensive project, which at best will reduce journey times for a few passengers, would be much better spent on improving the conventional rail connections between various major cities'. They would also like to improve rail freight services and reduce the number of empty or partially loaded lorry trips by using cargo bikes for last-mile deliveries to replace some white van trips.

UKIP are also against the expansion of London's airports but advocate a new airport at Manston (in the constituency from which Nigel Farage was hoping to be returned). They are also opposed to HS2 thinking that the money could be better spent on other priorities such as the NHS.

It is interesting that a number of aspirations for transport are things which are already in existence in London. The Conservatives, Labour and the Greens mentioned smart ticketing in their manifestos which Oyster already brings us. Labour and the Greens want more control over public transport and an integrated transport system. The Lib Dems want an extension of low emission zones and the Greens want to introduce Ultra Low Emission Zones to ensure air pollution is reduced to comply with EU limits.

*Note – This article has been taken from the May 2015 newsletter of the London Group of the Campaign for Better Transport.*

## Stop the South London Incinerator

**Ann Garrett** asked for this to be included; Craig, who wrote it, is an active member of the Stop the Incinerator Campaign who lives in Wimbledon. He adds: "I hope this news will alert Bromley residents to the fact that there is still much uncertainty over the wisdom of incineration. With the lucrative nature of burning free donations of plastic rubbish, there is a risk of research being partial, and that there are far cleaner, cheaper alternatives - we should be aiming for Zero Waste lifestyle, (the vision of Zero Waste Europe ) and more broadly, the circular economy (advocated by FoE)."

Firstly, the location of the incinerator (Beddington Lane), and a rough model of how the plume from the chimney might travel, is given here <http://www.plumeplotter.com/southlondon>

You will see that the incinerator is just over 3 miles from the western regions of Bromley borough - Crystal Palace, Anerley.

A word of caution on this model (and modelling generally). The model does take the planned chimney emissions into account, and a few measurements of current weather data. It doesn't however take hills into account (the plume is more likely to 'touch down' earlier on hills), and it is incredibly difficult to model complex systems reliably. Many people know of the 'butterfly effect', which shows that even the flapping of a butterfly's wings might lead to changes in the formation of a tornado. This model can only give an impression, and indeed models are used by incineration companies to give

a favourable impression, where perhaps caution is due. One thing that is known however, is that the chimney height had to be raised in 2013 from 85m to 95m in order to disperse pollution further afield.

Incineration is officially regarded as something we should be doing as a last resort, after reducing waste, reusing materials, and recycling.

Unfortunately however, where incineration has been introduced, it is shown to reduce recycling rates. It is worth remembering that incineration is very lucrative - our weekly rubbish collections would effectively be free donation to an incineration company - in particular, free plastic, which is energy-rich, as it is based on oil. As a business model, it's compelling, however, there are two main difficulties for incinerator companies to overcome - 1. The greenhouse effect; 2. Pollution risks

**1. The Greenhouse effect.** As incinerators burn fossil fuel (plastics), the only way they can be justified from a greenhouse gas emissions point of view, is if they provide heat as well as electricity. So, it's a box that needs to be ticked for planning approval. Unfortunately the heat piping networks are a very expensive way of providing energy, which may have to extend miles to reach housing. So they don't make as much economic sense for the incinerator companies, and hence are often dropped once the incinerator is built.

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## Stop the South London Incinerator - *continued*

For the South London incinerator, the heat piping network is to a planned housing development over a mile away (FELNEX), and was given the go ahead without giving due competition from more economically viable alternatives (such as heat pumps, or being supplied by a nearer incinerator, Bioflame). This forms part of the basis of a legal challenge on 28th April in Royal Courts of Justice.

**2. Pollution risks.** The contract for this incinerator, and most incinerators generally, allows for pollution windows of 4 hours at a time, up to 60 hours per year. The contracts have to allow for such excesses for two reasons (a) the stuff being fed into incinerators is highly unpredictable (b) incinerators have to be 'kept going' - they are more efficient if they are kept to high temperature, and give higher pollution levels when being 'rebooted'.

This incinerator will take in a highly unpredictable mix of household waste, from 4 London Boroughs and beyond, together with trade waste. (There are some reports that the waste will have to be imported from further afield, even abroad, to be kept fed too).

Overall, unfortunately it is very tricky to prove how much risk incineration poses to the public health - with a 'try and see' approach on the one hand, versus a precautionary approach on the other. The debate is reminiscent of smoking and cancer, which went on for decades before the public safety case was won. A recent government study, designed to prove the safety of incinerators, and which has been criticised for using a simple

'distance from incinerator' model of exposure, was due out in March 2014; results have been postponed till end 2015, yet we're still committing to this incinerator.

The main concerns highlighted in the award-winning documentary 'Trashed', by Jeremy Irons are dioxins and nanoparticles. The emissions permit shows that the planned emission of nanoparticles will be 30mg per metre cubed, equating to approx 4kg per hour, which is a lot of nanoparticles!

A tactic often used by incinerator proponents is to say that particle emissions will be comparable with background emissions from diesel exhaust.

There are several counter arguments to this - (a) diesel car emissions are supposed to be many orders of magnitude less than 30 mg / metre cubed, (b) this is no longer an acceptable standard to set - our attitude to diesel emissions has changed rapidly since the WHO 2012 study proved that they cause cancer, and (c) unlike diesel particles, the particles from incinerators are known to be coated with heavy metals, so could well be more toxic than diesel particles - no evidence is yet available for the comparative risk from this form of nanoparticles.

So, join the campaign and donate to the legal challenge if possible. See <http://www.stoptheincinerator.co.uk> and join the Facebook page for campaign updates.

## **Fracking – we're winning but we've not won yet** *(Donna Hume, FoE)*

The recent election result might look like a blow in the fight against fracking - but don't despair. While Labour wasn't opposed to fracking, the Conservatives are the party that is most determined to get shale gas and oil out of the ground.

Between giving tax breaks for the fracking barons, holding secret meetings to plot overturning local decisions, handing over Government land and doing frackers' geological research for them, it's a wonder George Osborne ever got anything else done.

But I realised something important. The Conservatives, in office, have been trying to frack Britain for 5 years already. But in that time, they have managed to get just one gas well fracked. That was 4 years ago. So in the next 5 years, let's make it zero fracked wells.

### **Fracking story so far**

When the anti-fracking demonstrations in Balcombe exploded, they took the Government by surprise. The Government did not realise the extent to which people – of all political persuasions – were willing to fight to protect their water, air, soil, their climate and their homes.

82% of the village were opposed to fracking, and the Government has learned that wherever fracking is proposed, it will be opposed.

### **A message from Balcombe**

When Katy, Bernadette and Carl from Balcombe village sent this message to the country (see video message on FoE website), they may not have known

they were kicking off a movement of thousands of people.

### **Winning the fight against fracking**

And those people are winning:

In Balcombe, the frackers gave up and left, despite permission to carry on, because of the scale of protest.

In Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon's Government has suspended all fracking.

In Wales, the Welsh First Minister has halted all fracking too.

In Wisborough Green, West Sussex Council said no to Celtique Energie.

In East Kent, Coastal Oil and Gas slunk away from testing for coal bed methane gas near 3 villages.

In 32 other councils where they have pre-emptively declared frack-free zones.

In our National Parks, which the Government has been forced to say it would protect from fracking.

### **We're winning - but we haven't won yet**

On 26 June, Lancashire Council will decide whether to allow Cuadrilla to frack. The success so far of communities in fighting fracking makes Lancashire all the more important – to all of us, to the fracking industry, and the Government. It is a big chance for this Government to show it can make fracking happen.

If fracking succeeds in Lancashire, the Government will likely go full steam ahead with plans to hand out licences to frack in half of England.

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**Changes to Friends of the Earth Board –**  
*Roger Clarke, Chair, Friends of the Earth Trust*

We wrote at the end of last year about constitutional changes designed to strengthen the Board and improve accountability. In particular, we are aiming for a smaller Board, recruited from the best possible range of candidates.

The principal concerns about the proposed changes were from Local Groups in Wales, who wanted to be sure that the interests of Wales were properly heard at Board level.

The Board has agreed in principle to proceed with the proposed changes (detailed in the January letter below – *ask Sheila if you want to see a copy*).

There has been a delay in implementation while we reach a final decision on the best way to link our two legal structures, Friends of the Earth Trust and Friends of the Earth Limited. We expect to conclude this issue at General Meetings of the two Companies on 25th April.

The move from a Board of 17 to a Board of 12 will be phased over the next 15 months. Board members will complete their existing terms of service. This means that there will be no elections in 2015. We expect at least one elected place to become vacant in 2016.

To prepare for the new election and appointment process in 2016, we will establish a Nominations Panel later this year. It will comprise two Board members and two independent members, at least one of whom will be from a Friends of the Earth local

group. We will write to you in due course to invite names for Panel membership.

We are concerned about gender balance on the Board. Only five of the current Board members are women. The ratio will temporarily get worse as existing Board members finish their three-year terms. As we move into the new system, we want to aim for approximate parity between female and male Board members. The Board will give guidance to the Nominations Panel to this effect.

The Board is considering a number of measures to address the concerns of Wales (and Northern Ireland), including ensuring that the voices of Wales [and Northern Ireland] are heard at the Board, and the possible creation of formal Advisory Boards in these two areas with devolved administration, building on the current arrangements in Wales. We will shortly write to Local Groups in Wales about our proposals.

There will be a further opportunity to explain the changes, and their implications for Local Groups, at Basecamp in June, along with over 150 other workshops, talks and activities.

Please also note that the dialogue forum is currently live, giving a valuable opportunity for you to propose and vote on suggested topics for discussion at Basecamp. All information about these is available at [www.foe.co.uk/dialogue](http://www.foe.co.uk/dialogue).

## Biggin Hill – complaint to Bromley’s Chief Executive

It has been suggested that, if you feel that Bromley Council was wrong in allowing BHAL to extend their opening hours, you could send a complain to Bromley’s CEO, Doug Patterson. A suggested letter is below.

Dear Mr Patterson,

### **Biggin Hill Airport Limited (BHAL)** **COMPLAINT**

I am writing to complain about the way the Council, under your supervision, *(please choose one or two of the suggested topics below or one of your own — also please change the wording to make the letter personal)*

- A. has conducted the consultation launched on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2015 about increasing operating hours at Biggin Hill Airport, which influenced the decision by the Council to vote for extending operating hours;
- B. reached a decision on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2015 to extend operating hours at Biggin Hill Airport based on incomplete and unsound information;
- C. acted unfairly to affected residents and consistently showed bias towards the Airport;
- D. is prepared to enter negotiations with BHAL on unsatisfactory and 'best endeavours' environmental conditions;
- E. showed negligence in not considering the approach to runway 21, which affects thousands of residents;
- F. is aiming to negotiate financial conditions with BHAL following recommendations by Cole

Jarman which will still be very unsatisfactory and not commensurate with the disturbance caused to the residents.

Please acknowledge receipt of this complaint and ensure that it is properly recorded.

Yours sincerely, etc

You could also copy the letter to your ward councillors and to your MP, plus the Mayor of London.

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### **Fracking, continued**

But if the fracking decision fails, it is only a matter of time before the fracking baron's' financial backers – the big banks and energy companies, Barclays and British Gas - stop wasting money on plans that continue to fail.

**This is a fight not just for Lancashire**, but for the future direction of Britain, for renewables instead of fracking, and for the future of our planet.

On Tuesday 23 June we will be joining d hundreds of people across Lancashire outside the council the day they decide on Cuadrilla's fracking plans. Watch this space for further details.

If enough of us, from all over the country, stand with the people of Lancashire, we can halt fracking in its tracks.

## Bromley Friends of the Earth - List of Contacts

### Co-ordinators:

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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, 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: 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 £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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