



**friends of
the earth
Bromley**



June 2017

No. 354

ewsletter

Bromley FoE: enquiries:

email: bromleyfoe@gmail.com, website: www.bromleyfoe.co.uk

June Meeting

Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

Darragh Martin

Imagine a Fossil Free London: Fossil Fuel Divestment

Tuesday 6th June – 7.30pm

Everyone welcome – bring a friend

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

***** SUNDAY 18TH JUNE *****

Contact details inside front cover.

Diary dates:

June 2nd – 4th

June 3rd (Sat)

June 3rd (Sat)

June 6th (Tue)

June 17th (Sat)

June 25th (Sun)

July 4th (Tue)

July 21st (Fri)

FoE BASECAMP 2017 at Castleton, Derbyshire

Bee Breakfast at Jubilee Park; 10.30-12.30

Progressive Bromley Film Co-op "Life and Debt"

Friends Meeting House, 6 pm shared food, 7 pm film

Bromley FoE's June Meeting – Darragh Martin on
Divestment PLUS Traidcraft stall

Stall at Coolings Garden Centre

Keston Countryside Day – FoE stall

Bromley FoE's July Meeting – Action Aid's 'Make Tax Fair'
campaign combating corporate tax avoidance

Whitehall Recreation Ground Fun Day – FoE Stall – close to
Chatterton Road and Raglan Road School

June meeting– Tuesday 6th June

'Imagining a Fossil Free London: Fossil Fuel Divestment'

Darragh Martin from Divest London and Waltham Forest Friends of the Earth talks about his involvement with the fossil free divestment movement, the successful campaign in Waltham Forest, and how to use divestment as a way to take local action on climate change.

PLUS – Traidcraft stall selling a range of fairly traded foods, chocolate, jewellery, domestic products, gifts and other items.

THURSDAY 8TH JUNE – ELECTION DAY – DON'T FORGET TO VOTE

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 18TH 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.

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

Community inspired schemes in Totnes – Michael Payne

Mike Payne was until recently a member of Bromley Friends of the Earth but has now moved to Totnes. Here he shares with us news of two community-inspired local schemes.

Community inspired housing development

AtmosTotnes is a project led by the Totnes Community Development Society, an Industrial and Provident Society committed to pioneering community-led development in a way rooted in local economies. Atmos has taken an old milk processing factory and, in partnership with a mainstream developer and the site's owners, is redesigning it as a vibrant, mixed use development design as the heart of a new economy for Totnes.

The site is seen as being a catalyst for the town's economy, as well as the opportunity to model a new approach to development, and provide the means for young people to stay in the town. As greenfield sites across the country disappear under unaffordable, inefficient and boring homes, we urgently need a new model.

In order for the community of Totnes to have a limited control over the town's future economic, environmental, social and cultural needs, it is necessary to acquire and manage the site for and on behalf of residents of Totnes and District.

Only by being landowners can the community of Totnes be able to exert influence over the management of the site and the types of businesses that are attracted to the town.

The aim is to select commercially viable businesses that wish to lease properties and areas at AtmosTotnes in order to best facilitate the smooth transition of the Town's economy to a low carbon and self reliant form that will best meet the full range of needs of the town in the age after cheap oil. By owning the site the community will be able to re-invest trading profits in order to further its vision.

The project is aligned to the emerging response to climate change and peak oil. As a working example of Transition in action Atmos will put Totnes at the forefront of the low-carbon revolution. It will be an architecturally significant, low-carbon development and act as a transport 'gateway' to Totnes and the wider area.

Community inspired hydro electric scheme

The Weir on the River Dart at Totnes has provided the means for a community project to create a hydro electric system. Two Archimedes Screw turbines are generating clean, renewable electricity. The scheme is expected to generate around 1,350 MWh of clean electricity each year – enough to power around 300 homes for at least 40 years.

Also, a fish pass has been installed adjacent to the turbines to allow more salmon and sea trout to migrate past the weir and spawn in the Dart catchment. An automatic fish counter has also been installed to monitor the number and sizes of fish using the pass.

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May meeting report – The Siku Project – Sue and John Boccock

Nick Penny, our speaker for the May meeting, gave us a brief introduction to the Siku project which aims to prevent further thinning of the Arctic ice. "Siku" is the Inuit word for sea ice. The Inuit population in the region, whose way of life is most at risk from the loss of sea ice, numbers around fifty million.

The project was started by a group of Bangor University engineering students, who were all volunteers and were not funded. They now work in collaboration with Arizona University, The Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS), WWF and the Max Planck Institute.

Nick explained that the ever increasing loss of snow and ice is due to climate change and global warming, caused mainly by human activities. Snow is the most effective of light reflective coverings with ice and water being less efficient. Loss of snow means an increased melting rate of the ice.

For each tonne of carbon dioxide emitted three square metres of Arctic summer sea ice disappears. This means loss of roads for communication and transport. It also makes fishing and hunting difficult, not only for the Inuit but also for polar bears.

The loss of sea ice opens up larger parts of the Arctic Ocean to shipping and drilling for oil and gas, activities that add further stresses to Arctic ecosystems already stressed by climate change.

The whole situation requires careful monitoring and much thought to be given to the possible ecological and commercial scenarios of the future. Current ice thickness averages around 1.6 Metres, enough to last about three years without replenishment. To the south, the Taiga, previously largely treeless, is becoming forest. Other areas could turn into desert.

Solutions to the problem such as producing snow artificially are far from simple and would need large amounts of technology to produce the quantity of energy required, possible sources being solar energy, wind and wave power.

Pelamis the world's first commercial wave energy project is currently being used in Portugal. Many ideas will need to be tested, to be tried out; one size will not fit all. Reducing fossil fuel usage would make a major contribution.

Carbon credit schemes have been suggested, Marks and Spencer and Virgin Atlantic have been approached. Stickers on goods indicating carbon neutral manufacture have also been suggested. This subject area could provide a useful source of topics for fourth year engineering students.

In conclusion Nick summarised the Siku Project as a matter of "Holding things as they are until better technology comes along".

Over-development of Bromley Town Centre / SHaW Academy

Objection to proposed SHaW Academy building

Bromley Friends of the Earth wish to object to the proposed SHaW Academy planning application on the following grounds:

1. The protected view of Keston Ridge will be obscured. This has been an important view of the distant countryside for many years.
2. The height of the building is out of keeping with houses in the surrounding area and will be oppressive for residents.
3. The design of the building is aesthetically unpleasing - a bland concrete block which is not stepped down in any way to relieve the impact of the 'brutalist' style.
4. The impact on the infrastructure and traffic flow in an area which is already receiving a large amount of new building.
5. The lack of playground/recreation facilities for the future pupils of the school.
6. The impact of traffic pollution for these pupils.
7. The lack of parking facilities for teaching and administrative staff.

Letter to the press re Over-development of Bromley Town Centre

Bromley Friends of the Earth are extremely concerned about the size and height of the proposed housing development in a conservation area

opposite the Churchill Theatre on what is known as Site G. This will involve the demolition of housing of the tightly-knit community of Ethelbert Close and also Bromley Town Church.

There would be a serious impact on the beautiful wild-life environment of the Library Gardens, and the nature of the over-bearing unaesthetically pleasing housing block could create an uncomfortable wind tunnel for pedestrians.

Bromley Council have assured the public that there will be a full consultation process with Countryside, the selected developer, but we actually have little confidence that residents views will be sympathetically listened to.

When we asked for the large Ringers Road development to be 'stepped down' in keeping with the surrounding area, this was ignored, and the result was a massive, oppressive building dominating the skyline and dwarfing existing buildings nearby.

At a recent meeting with residents it was clearly presented as if the Site G proposal was a 'fait accompli'.

Whilst Bromley is under pressure to meet its housing quota, it appears to be ignoring a High Court ruling quashing the council's application to be granted a Town Centre Housing Zone status, and rushing through plans for the town centre which lack a cohesive vision, and which will only result in ugly piece-meal development.

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Bee Count & Bee Breakfast, & Pesticides - Judy Palmer

The 2017 Great British Bee Count has begun! Please follow the link here - <https://www.foe.co.uk/bee-count> to find out more information.

Or alternatively you can join us in Jubilee Park, Petts Wood, on Saturday June 3rd in the picnic area! Annette & I are setting up a bee quiz with samples of bee breakfast food for people to taste. And we will have information to hand on the Bee Count and the free app needed to join in. This year the bee count runs from 19th May until 30th June, so there is plenty of time to get out and count bees.

Some of our colleagues will be there to give us a hand (thank you!) and there is also an organised wild flower walk planned by the Friends of Jubilee Park that morning, which you can join in as well.

Pesticides – I hope you saw that B&Q is going to go neonic-free! Really good news that they are putting the pressure on other garden centres to do the same. There is a petition to sign which asks Homebase and Wyevale to ensure the plants they supply are neonic free, which you can access here - <https://act.foe.co.uk/act/get-bee-harming-pesticides-out-garden-plants>.

And last week (w/e 19.5.17) over 16,000 petition emails landed in their inboxes! So thank you if you have already taken this action. And an article appeared recently in the Daily Mail featuring Friends of the Earth campaigner Dave Goulson and Sussex University who had undertaken research on some plants bought at

garden centres which showed they were laced with pesticides. You can access the article here - <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-4501520/Insect-friendly-plants-laced-poisoning-pesticides.html>

Bromley Biodiversity Partnership – the latest poster with a request for sightings in the Borough is for hedgehogs. Please see more information below.

HELP OUR HEDGEHOGS!

Since 2000 hedgehog populations in England have fallen by more than 50% in rural areas, 33% in urban areas. In Bromley they are now rarely recorded. Hedgehogs live in scrubby areas, hedgerows, gardens and rough grassland. They often range 1-2 kms every night feeding on soil invertebrates and hibernates in deep leaf litter beneath hedgerows and scrub. Please let us know if you see one!



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

How You Can Help Hedgehogs: have a wild area with some scrub in your garden or park, check for hedgehogs before strimming, mowing or having bonfires, make sure there are holes in fence lines so hedgehogs can pass through, don't use pesticides, especially slug pellets, make sure ponds have one side sloping so animals which fall in can climb out. Make sure wire or nylon netting is secure or 15cms above ground. For more information see www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk

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

Editor's note – Apologies for the small type in the above – it was the only way to fit it in on the page

Education Visit to Dartford – report from Ann Garrett

I spoke on behalf of Bromley FoE to 200 children at Our Lady's Catholic Primary School in Dartford on April 20th.

The visit was organised by Paul Spear who had set up a week's ecological project for the school focusing on bio diversity.

After a brief history of FoE, beginning with the founding of International FoE in the US in 1969 and FoE UK in 1971, I gave information about the main campaigns and achievements, and

stressed the fact that we are an international organisation. Visuals about the Bee / Nature campaign and the former Run on the Sun campaign helped illustrate the talk.

Finally I involved all the pupils in making the movements and sounds of green energies such as wind and sea power, geothermal energy and the heat of the sun activating solar panels!

The children were very attentive and thoroughly focussed during the final positive dramatisations



The Methane Menace – *Ralph Palfrey*

Much is said about the CO₂ menace which is threatening our civilisation. Few people seem to be paying any attention to the methane menace, which could overtake CO₂ in perhaps a couple of centuries if we continue to behave as we are doing now.

It will then not only kill the entire human race, but will obliterate all forms of carbon based life on the planet. This is because it will cause a runaway heating effect in the northern hemisphere, which will release all the methane locked up in the permafrost.

At present there is relatively little methane in the earth's atmosphere, but it is increasing rapidly, and ruminant animals in particular release vast amounts of methane from their bodies. If we continue to consume large quantities of meat, milk and other dairy products such as butter and cheese, there will be a rapid build-up of methane gas in the atmosphere.

This is far more potent than CO₂ in its warming effect, and is also flammable. If we continue to live as we do, it may not take longer than a couple of centuries before the air in the northern hemisphere is hot enough to thaw the permafrost covering much of Siberia and other places.

Locked up in the permafrost are immense quantities of methane which in turn will produce a runaway effect which will further heat the northern hemisphere, resulting in the extinction not only of ourselves but all living organisms depending upon carbon. Coral reefs are already disappearing

as the oceans become more acidic and warm.

Vast quantities of liquid methane could eventually be released from the ocean depths if the sea water continues to become warmer. Already self-sustaining fires fuelled by methane break out within the permafrost.

What can we do to avoid this? The obvious thing would be to reduce our dependence on ruminant animals. We could, for example, stop eating meat and dairy produce from ruminant animals, depend upon pork etc, and stop consuming milk and other dairy produce.

An alternative partial solution would be to use artificial means to convert vegetation into milk. This milk would be free of all impurities and could be consumed by the millions of Asians and others who are allergic to cows' milk. It would also remain fresh for much longer.

This process would produce methane gas as a by-product, which could be used as a fuel in place of other carbon based fuels whilst reducing carbon emission relative to power generated. This could be attractive in Bromley, for example, by putting in a plant on the site of the old town gas works beside Homesdale Road.

This could be used to generate alternating electricity at mains voltage, for use in the Bromley area. It would considerably reduce the cost of electricity distribution, eliminating the

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The Methane Menace - *continued*

loss of efficiency of sending electricity at extremely high voltages over long distances through the National Grid network. Grass cuttings could be left there instead of at Waldo Road.

This wouldn't work as well in winter, when demand for electricity is at its peak, unless we first turn some of the grass into silage. The economic attractions of artificial milk could persuade self-interested investors who would not be motivated by purely altruistic objectives.

Regarding meat consumption, we might persuade people who now consume vast quantities of beef burgers to switch to 'pork burgers'. We ought to publicise the fact that high consumption of meat is unhealthy, and we could improve our health by eating vegetables instead.

The current generation who lived through WW2 were obliged to do this, as we were only producing 40 percent of the food which we were consuming at the beginning of the war.

We managed to survive the Naval blockade by German U-boats locally by killing the sheep which grazed the North Downs, which we then planted with root vegetables. This considerably multiplied the food available by eating the vegetables directly instead of consuming meat, after the sheep had first consumed the vegetation.

The war-time generation are living to a remarkably old age as a result. However, if we persist in eating junk food, the next generation will die early due to diseases such as diabetes.

At present the world population continues to rise, although the birth rate declines as people become more wealthy.

Unfortunately though, the average relatively wealthy person tends to consume junk food instead of staples such as rice or maize. They also waste vast quantities of irreplaceable other resources. Consequently relatively wealthy people as a whole consume many times the resources of poor people living at subsistence level.

In China, for example, many of the former peasantry have become relatively affluent. They will therefore need to be persuaded to avoid undue consumption of beef and other foods which result in the production of methane.

We need to promote vegetarianism and the consumption of forms of meat which do not result in the production of methane.

Before clean air legislation was introduced in Britain to stop coal being burnt in open fires there were sometimes thick 'peasouper' fogs containing carbon and sulphur compounds.

Plane trees were planted to capture the CO₂ and to store the carbon in solid form on the trunks of these trees. The carbon could then be disposed of by burial. Plane trees could be planted today to convert the CO₂, and possibly the methane (CH₄), into solid carbon.

Miller's Mutterings – Chris Miller

The weather, as I write this article is wonderful. It is lovely to see the sunshine especially today as that chilly easterly wind has dropped. The birds are singing their hearts out and it lovely to hear the skylarks and chaff chaffs again.

The swallows arrived here on the 7th April last year, so hopefully it won't be too long before we see them again. Always think that summer is on its way when we see these lovely birds around the farm. The cowslips on the Chelsfield Green are just starting to flower, so do find time to have a look at them if you can.

Steve and Pete have been out with the tractor fertilising and spraying for weeds and have planted the peas. The ground is warming up and despite not a lot of rain this winter; there is moisture in the soil so that the peas will hopefully germinate quite quickly. The pictures are of Steve and Pete filling up the drill with peas ready for planting.

We are getting used to not seeing the land ploughed but the crops are growing up well between the old stubble, which is slowing disintegrating. Hopefully the worms are enjoying the undisturbed soil! Not ploughing this spring still seems strange but the boys have been able to get on with other jobs that have been waiting for a long time to be completed.

More electrical work completed. The last of the pea straw has been delivered to the deer farm, which has

worked out perfectly as the grass has now started to grow for them.

We are pleased to announce that we passed our crop inspection with flying colours again this year so able to sell our grain.

A bit of delay in cutting up the blown down trees from last month, as we were broken into and all the chainsaws etc. were stolen. Mmmmm less said about that.

The fox took my chickens, but that was my fault, as I had forgotten to switch the electric fence back on after collecting the eggs. A bit of a shame as I had looked after them all through the bird flu restrictions. The ups and downs of farm life!

The old folklore of March coming in like a lion and out like a lamb has proved true this year and here is a short one for April:

*Thunder in April,
Floods in May*

PS - Steve has spotted a swallow in the yard today, 30th March.

Bromley Town Centre letter – cont'd

The latter was specifically disallowed by the inspector appointed by the Secretary of State with regard to Site G.

We would urge the Council to listen far more carefully to local groups' views, and really gain the confidence of its council tax-paying public.

Fracking Update

Some good news from Friends of the Earth - that the Barclays Bank director has issued a statement saying that the bank plans withdraw support for Third Energy.

Many thanks to all members of our FoE group who have been involved in the campaign leafleting outside Barclays and writing letters to the press.

However, we need to continue to monitor the situation of funding for fracking companies.

Nuclear Power Plants at Risk

Britain's plans for a new generation of nuclear power plants may be at risk if the Government bungles Brexit. The Lords Science and Technology Committee have stated that nuclear power stations would be unable to acquire fuel from abroad.

Britain is a member of Euratom, which aims to develop nuclear energy and distribute it to EU member states. The Euratom Treaty provides the legal framework for civil nuclear power generation and radioactive waste management.

Britain will leave Euratom as it quits the EU and there is a danger of losing access to the EU markets and skills it needs to construct new nuclear power plants. There is also a danger of losing its lead in fusion research.

Power of Communities

Good Energy have been empowering communities to take control of their energy for several years. Community

energy is a group of people coming together to generate, own, manage or reduce consumption of energy through renewables projects.

Good Energy buy power from over 1,000 independent renewable generators and support over 125,000 homes and communities in generating their own electricity through the Feed-in Tariff scheme.

It is estimated that by 2020, community energy could reduce the UK's annual CO2 emissions by 1 million tonnes, reduce coal imports for electricity by 9% and deliver hundreds of economic benefits to local economies.

Community energy is considered to be the future energy system - smaller, local, decentralised forms of power. With recent developments surrounding new nuclear and shale gas generation, support for community energy projects has never been needed more.

Chile's National Parks

Chile has just added 10 million acres to the land set aside for national parks. The move is a victory for the visionary US conservationists who have fought for decades to save the region from developers.

The protected areas include volcanoes, virgin forests and miles of wild coast line. The 'rewilding' programme will not only preserve wild life species, but will also help reduce the on-going threat of climate change by preserving rainforests.

Make London a National Park City – update

Find out more at the National Park City website

<http://www.nationalparkcity.london/>

228 of 654 ward teams have now declared their support for London to be a National Park City. This means we only need the support of 100 more! If you've not already done so, please contact a London councillor by email or Twitter and ask them to declare their support. You'll find everything that you need here.

If you are a (very busy at the moment) London councillor, thank you VERY much for your support! Please help us by championing the campaign in your borough and asking other councillors to declare their support.

There are lots of cool things in this update, not least the dates of the first #LondonFoxWeek!

Join our new Facebook group - We've just started a new Facebook group! London #NationalParkCity Friends is a new group for sharing news, ideas, opinions and events or asking for tips and advice. We hope it will grow into a large and useful group for folk interested in anything #NationalParkCity related (walking, growing, parkour, wild swimming, outdoor crafts, allotmenting, rewilding etc.). Do join now and invite your friends too.

Help us map a #BigWalkAroundLondon - To help catalyse our campaign, this July I'm going to be doing a 500km #BigWalkAroundLondon in a spiral from Enfield to the City of London. As I walk I want to explore lots of great

places, visit great projects and meet with the inspiring people who are making them happen. I also plan to meet with lots of elected councillors to ask them to declare their support for London to be a National Park City! I've got a very rough route, but I would love your help to decide where I should go and what I should see. Please help by drawing where you think I should go here.

July 15 - Hold the date! Join the #NationalParkCity Confluence - Join us for a day of action, walking through London from lots of different sources and photographing places, wildlife and other things that celebrate why London can be a National Park City. We will converge at a final confluence point to share our journeys in central London. We will be organising a number of starting points around the edge of London, but you can also pick your own. Hold the date!

July 15-29 - Get ready for #LondonFoxFortnight - Last year hundreds of our Twitter followers joined weeks of polling to decide which animal would make the best wild symbol for London. In the end it came down to a vote between house sparrows and the red foxes... and foxes won 56% to 44%. As British foxes are having a bit of a rough time at the moment, we thought we'd have a fortnight to celebrate them!

Campaign meetings - We have campaign meetings most months. They usually take place at Better Bankside near London Bridge,

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Make London a National Park City – update *continued*

but we've decided to trial having some outdoor meetings while it's warmer. The next meeting will be at the bandstand in Lincoln's Inn Fields in Holborn. See you there?

Join the London National Park City Network - We're building a unique cross-sector network of individuals, groups and organisations that want to help make the London National Park City a success. [Click here to join.](#)

The London National Park City Map - Thank you to everyone who helped to crowdfund our new map of London as a National Park City. Charlie and Dom are currently working hard on the mapping and design. It's looking fantastic. Because of delays in the release of some critical data that will appear in the map we are now looking to publish the map in July.

Join us for the #NationalParkCityForum - Most Wednesdays we hold a #NationalParkCityForum on Twitter. In previous weeks this Twitter chat has covered protecting green spaces, rewilding gardens, how to encourage more outdoor play and adventurous activities to try across the capital.

The political mandate to make London a National Park City - We have recently made a few updates to our original 2015 proposal for a London National Park City. One of these relates to the mandate that we are campaigning for.

The trustees of the National Park City Foundation have consulted with a range of experts and reviewed the

principle of the campaign regarding the political threshold of support that is required to provide the legitimacy to declare the capital a National Park City.

While the campaign will continue to recruit the support of two-thirds or more of the capital's elected ward teams, it has been decided that a simple majority (which includes the support of nearly 1000 councillors) and of reasonably mixed political representation spread across a large geographic area, along with the confirmed support of the Mayor of London and the London Assembly, is enough to demonstrate widespread political support.

A big thank you - It's through many small and achievable actions that we will make the National Park City a success. Thank you to everyone who has done anything to support the campaign

Totnes community schemes – *cont'd*

Extensive research has proven that fish can pass through the slowly rotating turbine with no adverse effects.

Construction started in 2014 and began generating electricity in December 2015. This electricity is currently being supplied to a local School and a local Foundry, the remainder is going to the grid but will supply the affordable housing at the ATMOS site when built.

Jo Johnson MP on Business Rates

Sheila Brown writes:

I wrote to Jo Johnson, MP for Orpington at the time when there were many stories in the press about how the planned massive hike in business rates would seriously affect small businesses and drive many to the brink of failure, asking him what his position was with particular regard to Orpington High Street. He replied as follows:-

Thank you for writing to me about the 2017 business rates revaluation. I am grateful to you for bringing your concerns to my attention.

As you are aware, I am a strong supporter of the fantastic progress that Orpington High Street has made over the last few years. I remain in close contact with the organisation Orpington 1st, which has done an excellent job promoting this development.

Accordingly, I have raised concerns about how increases in business rates will impact the area with my ministerial colleagues at the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Business rate liabilities are based on a property's rateable value, which is assessed on the basis of the rental value of the property. These are reviewed by an independent agency typically every five years, to make sure that rateable values reflect changes in the property market.

Ahead of the revaluation, the Government had already committed to a package of cuts to business rates worth £9 billion. This included reliefs meaning that 600,000 small businesses will pay no business rates at all.

I do, however, recognise that the revaluation has raised some hard cases, and I therefore welcomed the Chancellor's announcements at the recent Budget. Under these changes, no business losing Small Business Relief will see their bill increase next year by more than £50 a month, and the subsequent increases will be capped at either the small business transitional relief cap or £50 a month, whichever is higher.

A £1,000 discount on business rates bills will also be provided in 2017 for pubs with a rateable value of less than £100,000. Lastly, I welcome the fact that local authorities will be provided with a £300 million fund to deliver discretionary relief to target individual hard cases. Taken together, this represents further £435 million cut in business rates.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Bromley FoE meetings –

Tuesday 6th June

Darragh Martin on Divestment PLUS
Traidcraft stall

Tuesday 4th July

Action Aid's 'Make Tax Fair' campaign
combating corporate tax avoidance

Hiroshima-Nagasaki Fast, 6-9 August, London

The annual Hiroshima-Nagasaki fast is coming around: Peace-line regularly covers this event, and together with CND, Christian CND and other supporting organisations, LRCND would like to encourage members and supporters to publicise the four-day fast, and to take part for all or part of it.

A quick retrospective: the fast has been held in France and Germany since 1984, and in recent years has extended to many other countries including England and Scotland, the United States, Nigeria and Togo. The organisers in the different countries work closely together, and are united in emphasising that the fast is both a commemoration and a call to action and to awareness.

Last year the fast was followed by over 150 people in the countries mentioned, with a particularly strong participation in France and Germany. In both countries, it went hand in hand with various forms of non-violent direct action. There were protests and blockades outside the Buchel NATO base in Germany; and in France, forms of direct action took place outside atomic weapons research establishments and the HQs of political parties— with 2 activists being arrested, brought to trial, and given a conditional reprieve.

In the UK 8-10 people fasted for all or part of the 4 days, most of them being based throughout the 4 days outside the MoD in Whitehall. Michal, Jed, Julia, Florence, Margery and I - to name just some of us - gave out thousands of leaflets, spoke to

hundreds of passers-by, receiving dozens of visits from friends and supporters.

The commemorative part of our action involved moving songs and moments of silence on the 6th and 9th, at the times of the 2 bombings. The highpoint of the actions conducted in the context of the fast came on the evening of the 8th, when we blockaded Downing Street, to the mesmerising accompaniment of the Raised Voices pro-CND choir. The die-in we staged for over 30 minutes was watched, commented on and filmed by many, almost exclusively sympathetic, tourists and passers-by.

Details of last year's fast are at: <http://tridentploughshares.org/report-on-london-fast-2016/>

That site also links to reports in French on the Paris fast.

This year we will be fasting in London again, at the same time as reinforcing our links and common actions / commemorations with our fellow-fasters in France and Germany. The focus of our protest will be highly international, since we will be explicitly linking the fast to calls for an International Treaty banning nuclear weapons, currently under discussion at the UN.

Anyone wishing to participate in the fast, or to support it without actually fasting, will be very welcome.

Contact me for further details on marcwmorgan@btinternet.com, Marc Morgan, Haringey CND.

Marinet - Parliament concerned by UK Government's handling of MCZs and MPAs

The House of Commons' Environmental Audit Committee published its report Marine Protected Areas Revisited on 25th April 2017, advising that: The Marine Protected Areas Revisited report has found Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are not being effectively managed, and the Government needs to do more to protect vulnerable marine habitats, features and species once a site is designated as an MPA.

The Committee also expressed concern that the Government had moved the goal posts by setting unreasonably high standards of evidence for designating MPAs. The Committee recommended that the Government should:

- Adopt a precautionary principle approach to Tranche 3 Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) site selection and designations.
- Put in place strong monitoring and surveillance regimes to deter illegal activity.
- Commit to establishing highly protected reference areas within the MPA network.
- Provide support to the UK Overseas Territories (UKOTs) to help them properly detect and deter illegal activities.
- Provide its assessment of any additional budget and resources that will be provided to the Marine Management Organisation and the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities to enable them effectively to manage the third tranche of Marine Conservation Zones and Marine Protected Areas.

The Committee also found a number of concerns about the Department for Environment Food, and Rural Affairs' handling of MPAs, including:

- The slow progress made in designating Marine Conservation Zones. Only 50 MCZs have been designated so far — well short of the 127 sites originally recommended by the regional projects in 2011.
- The Committee was shocked and disappointed by the Government's decision to exclude highly protected reference areas from the Third Tranche of MCZs before the Government received expert evidence on the subject.
- The delays in creating a well-coordinated and ecologically coherent network of Marine Protected Areas. There are still a number of gaps remaining, particularly for sites to protect sand, mud and highly mobile species.
- The Government's unwillingness to provide adequate investment for the gathering of further evidence for the vulnerable areas.
- Weaknesses in communicating the potential benefits of MPAs to stakeholders.

Marine Protected Areas create significant opportunities and benefits for marine habitats and wildlife. It was clear that few people were aware of these potential benefits. The Government must implement a robust communications strategy to raise awareness of the MPA network amongst businesses and the general public.

FoE say - Fracking in Sherwood Forest – we're winning but it's not over yet

Great news! Fracking company INEOS has backed down from surveying in the Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve and at Clumber Park, in an important victory for people power.

But INEOS has not stopped looking for shale gas in the whole of Sherwood Forest. Its finalised plans confirm INEOS wants to survey other parts of the forest – and around towns, villages and farms across 250 sq km of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

Over a quarter of a million of you signed petitions by Friends of the Earth and 38 Degrees at the start of 2017, urging the Environment Secretary and the Forestry Commission to block INEOS from exploring in Sherwood Forest. Thank you.

And the fact that INEOS has backed off exploring in Clumber Park – after it threatened the National Trust with legal action if it didn't give them access – shows that standing up to fracking bullies works.

But we're not out of the woods yet.

INEOS' finalised plans confirm its intention to still carry out surveys in other parts of Sherwood Forest, beyond the small area protected as a Nature Reserve and SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest).

INEOS has also proposed putting in a test drill at The Lings on the western edge of Sherwood Forest. INEOS has tried to spin that this isn't part of Sherwood Forest – but local residents,

historians, Ordnance Survey maps and reports by Nottinghamshire Council all state otherwise.

The good news is that everything is still to play for – because we've found out that the Forestry Commission, owners of Sherwood, still hasn't given INEOS permission to access any part of Sherwood Forest, or other public forests in Nottinghamshire.

Let's be clear: even if INEOS backs out of Sherwood Forest entirely, we don't want to see fracking happen anywhere.

Waste4Fuel – *Annette Rose writes:*

Just when we thought this problem was almost over, the News Shopper has reported that the waste pile clear up has been delayed again. According to the paper, the council says it needs more money to continue clearing the dump but said this cannot happen until after the snap general election on June 8th.

Work had been halted in March because contaminated waste was found at the bottom of the pile which will cost more to dispose of. It also seems that The Environment Agency's calculations that there were 18,000 tons of rubbish was incorrect and there is more than this. So more funding has to be found.

Let's hope that these problems can be sorted and that the clean-up operation can restart again soon. The local residents have suffered enough.

More on Fracking - Barclays pulls out of Third Energy – SumOfUs.org

Have you heard -- Barclays says it's pulling out of Third Energy! That's the fracking company with its sights on Ryedale, just south of the North York Moors national park.

Chairman John McFarlane told shareholders at the bank's annual general meeting last Wednesday about the decision. I was outside the AGM to deliver our fracking petition, and I could barely believe my ears when I heard the great news from environmental activists inside.

If John McFarlane is true to his word, it's a massive win for local community groups like Frack Free Ryedale and Frack Free Greater Manchester, and all the NGOs, activists and ordinary people across the country campaigning to stop fracking in the UK. There's still lots more to do, but this is an important step in the right direction.

SumOfUs members have been campaigning for years to stop giant corporations like Barclays wrecking our environment and our future for their short-term profit. Hundreds of you chipped in and made it possible for local campaigners to organise a protest outside the UK Shale Gas Summit in Manchester last October.

Since then more than 56,000 SumOfUs members and thousands more from Friends of the Earth UK signed our petition to Barclays against fracking. You also shared it, tweeted it, and emailed it to friends and family across the country to keep the numbers and awareness growing.

Thousands of SumOfUs members are poised to use the power of their pensions to influence the bank too.

Monica Grippaios, a Ryedale resident who attended the AGM, said about the news: "After coming to the AGM for three years running, I was so delighted to hear the chairman say the bank are planning to divest from this area. I hope they will follow through on the promise and this is not an empty commitment. I certainly feel reassured and hope that I don't have to go back next year."

Though it's a start in the right direction, Barclays is still heavily invested in other disastrous fossil fuel projects, including the US's Dakota Access Pipeline. Barclays is in fact the UK's biggest bank backing fossil fuel extraction globally, with over £50 billion invested in new fossil fuel infrastructure.

It's not over yet -- we still have to see the bank's commitment to divest from Third Energy become action. But I think we can celebrate people power today -- because that's what brought us this win, and that's what we need more than ever.

SumOfUs is a community of people from around the world committed to curbing the growing power of corporations. We want to buy from, work for and invest in companies that respect the environment, treat their workers well and respect democracy. And we're not afraid to stand up to them when they don't.

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

If you have any items to sell, or anything that you require, please send details to the Editor. Items will be displayed for three months, the number in brackets after an item indicating for how long it has appeared. Could you please contact us if an item has been sold/obtained, so that it can be removed from the newsletter?

Any donations to Bromley FoE generated from this column gratefully received!

Non-members' Section

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

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

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

Please return this form to: **Bromley FoE, 2 Bucks Cross Cottages, Chelsfield Village, Orpington, and Kent, BR6 7RN**. Other enquiries regarding the group: may be sent by email to *bromleyfoe@gmail.com*, or telephone our co-ordinators at the telephone numbers above.

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

Name..... Telephone Number

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Email Address.....

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

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