



**friends of
the earth
Bromley**

June 2020

No 389

Our Next Meeting

Zoom!

Speaker TBC

Virtual meeting

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

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

Everyone always welcome

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www.bromleyfoe.co.uk



NEWSLETTER

June Meeting Participation

If you would like to be involved in the June Monthly Meeting, then we intend to run a Zoom meeting as we did last month. That was a test and it seemed to work well and so the invitation is opened up to all for June. If you would like to take part, then please let us know by either emailing bromleyfoe@gmail.com or leaving a message on 020 8289 1503. We will then send you details of how to join in nearer the time. You can either join using your computer (with video or without) or you can call in to a phone number and hear what's going on that way. Let us know your preference.

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

Diary Dates

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

2nd June (Tues) Bromley FoE's monthly meeting - **See details at the end of the May Monthly Meeting item**

13th June (Sat) Groundswell - **Postponed**

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

28th June (Sun) Keston Countryside Day - **TBC**

31st Aug (Mon) Cudham Village Fair—Cancelled

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

"Nature abhors a vacuum" : this is readily demonstrated by the way a raspberry seed will unerringly find its way into a gap between your teeth.

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

Next Newsletter Copy

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views, articles for sale will all be considered for publication. Please send them to the editor via one of the methods below to arrive not later than **Sunday 14th June**

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

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

While You're Isolating

Futurelearn.com

www.futurelearn.com

Libraries

www.better.org.uk/library/london/bromley

Nature

Chris Packham is doing several encouraging talks on his facebook page.

RHS Podcast

www.rhs.org.uk/podcasts

Seasonal advice on gardening from experts. You don't have to be a member or subscribe to listen to these podcasts.

National Measurement Institute

The NPL is offering free courses, which usually cost lots of money, until 30th June. They are very specialized but you may find something of interest.

<https://www.npl.co.uk/skills-learning/free-e-learning>

Write Something for This Newsletter

bromleyfoe@gmail.com

anticipated. We had an outline agenda to give the meeting some structure.

Fracking – Ann reported that four more wells had been given planning permission at Horse Hill /the Gatwick Gusher.

Plastics – Blackheath Scientific Society were holding an online meeting/lecture on Recycling Plastics; several people expressed interest in this. Friends of the Earth are encouraging us to have a virtual community screening of a film entitled 'The Story of Plastic'. The screening can be watched by people in their own time over a few days and then be followed by our own Zoom discussion. More about this next month.

Annette also reminded us that we are still working towards a stronger Environment Bill.

Waste and recycling - We welcomed the reinstatement of recycling collections after an initial interruption. The Council had just announced temporary collection depots for garden waste during lockdown (details page five). It was good to see thank you notes to the re-

May Monthly

Meeting

Annette Rose & Sheila Brown

With so many families and groups catching up with each other on Zoom, it was suggested we try this for a Friends of the Earth meeting on a trial basis with limited participants. Rob kindly set this up and 12-13 people par-



fuse collectors and an appreciative letter in the Metro thanking Veiola. On the question of whether paper can still be recycled if it has become wet, it seems that it can, but will be used for lower grade paper so the council gets less money for it. So try and encourage people to keep their paper waste dry.

Bonfires – there has been a lot of discussion on this subject and people are strongly discouraged from burning anything in their gardens, particularly plastic waste, which has caused air pollution levels to rise and hugely affects anyone with asthma or respiratory problems.

Planning – Bromley Civic Society are monitoring planning applications but it seems likely major applications will be put on hold. It was suggested that with the likely increase and continuance of home working, huge new office blocks will no longer be needed. Maybe these could be used for apartments.

Despite a few technical problems, the meeting worked well and we are looking at a Zoom meeting for everyone on 2nd June.

Get Well Graham

Graham Hemington, our oldest member, has been in hospital following a fall. He very much hopes to be back home soon. Very best wishes for a speedy recovery are sent to Graham from all his friends in Bromley FoE and we hope he'll soon be back with us.

Trailer for our August Meeting!!

Sheila Brown

Professor Frank Kelly, who is due to speak to our group in August, was the guest on Radio 4's The Life Scientific. He was one of the first scientists to prove that toxic particulates in the air can damage our lungs. His route to becoming a world expert in air pollution was almost accidental. He did a degree in Physiology, then a PhD in America studying muscle formation in rats. He then changed direction completely, studying free radicals which are found in the environment and are very damaging to our health, doing research on premature babies whose lungs are not sufficiently developed to deal with the levels of oxygen they need to keep them alive, and established that they needed anti-oxidants. Returning to London he became acutely aware of air pollution and started focusing his work on this. He established that Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), which is a free radical, combined with particulates has a toxic effect on our lungs, and set up an experiment to verify this. He replicated the NO₂, ozone and diesel particulates found in Oxford Street, which has the highest pollution levels in London. Gradually the WHO and the EU took notice.

The introduction of the Congestion Charge in 2003 provided the opportunity to identify the types of vehicles and fuels used. This resulted in information on emissions and what people were breathing and a map of air pollution hotspots was drawn up. The introduction of the Low Emissions Zone in 2008 was brought in specifically to limit air

pollution, with the money raised reinvested into public transport. Changing buses from diesel to electric results in the biggest improvement with regard to NO₂. However, during the 1990s the government was actually encouraging the use of diesel to reduce carbon emissions, and pollution actually increased.

Motor manufacturers were maintaining that their diesel engines were becoming cleaner but the evidence from 120 monitoring stations over London showed otherwise and then in 2015 “Dieselgate” broke, showing that Volkswagen, and others, had been falsifying data.

The UK led the world in air pollution monitoring, under Frank Kelly’s leadership, with more monitoring stations in London than any other city in the world. But understanding the problem did not lead to action to improve our health; despite knowing the issues, it did not rise up the political agenda. The Mayoral system in London helped lead to big advances, especially under the current Mayor. What is needed is a societal change and financial input. People love their cars. Change is beginning to happen and Frank feels more optimistic. Now with the lockdown, people are seeing how traffic-free cities can look: improved ambience and people undertaking more exercise and cycling more, so things are moving in the right direction, with a “win-win” situation all round. People are enjoying cleaner air, blue skies and hearing the birds sing. Let’s hope we can retain some of this.

Cudham Show & Fete 2020

31 August Bank Holiday Monday

-- CANCELLED FOR 2020 --

See you all back on Mon 30 August 2021

Roughly 2000 visitors each year enjoy our Show and Fete at Cudham Recreation ground. With the current COVID-19 related scenario, the Cudham Village Club committee has made the reluctant decision to cancel this year's Show & Fete 2020.

Even if the Government's lock-down advice were to change before the date, we do not feel that we would be comfortable encouraging such a large gathering at this time. Additionally, it commercially requires a decision to be made months before August, because that is how long it takes to plan.

The Cudham Show & Fete has been occurring for longer than anyone can remember. We are always heart-warmed by the lovely memories and comments we receive every year, from people telling us stories of how they used to visit when they were children... and now they bring their own grandchildren. So you can imagine the regret we have in making this announcement.

HOWEVER, the good news is that we will be back bright and eager on 30 August 2021. We will make a very special return - please do put the date in your diary. We will open stall bookings in the new year. And we will carry any pitch discount due this year to 2021.



In the mean time, please do all keep safe.

With Love, from the Cudham Village Club team Jag, Judy, Philip, Ian, John C, John M, Sharon, Mark and Bill.

All garden waste must be bagged. YES to Grass cuttings, prunings (no bigger than 2 inches round) and dead plants. NO to Tree trunks, large branches, soil and rubble, garden furniture, flower pots, plastic debris. You are asked to bring your waste permit with you.

Garden Waste Temporary Sites

The opening of sites on Saturdays and Sundays during May has been announced as follows. At time of going to press, it is not known whether this will continue in June, so check the LBB website.

Saturdays 11 am to 4 pm.

Sundays 8 am to 12 noon

Bromley: Norman Park, Hook Farm Road (off Bromley Common)

Green Street Green: Salt Depot, Shire Lane Spur (off Sevenoaks Road)

St Paul's Cray: Cotmandene Crescent car park (off Chipperfield Road)

News from Southwark

Our friends Stephanie and Jim Lodge from Southwark, who have often attended Bromley FoE meetings, report on planning issues in that Borough:

Our beloved Council has approved yet another block for students who are mobile instead of housing for those on the housing list and long-term residents who can't afford to move, 11,000 our illustrious leader announced, the latest one was for Bermondsey Spa for students in college in Central London, not for local people. Approving student accommodation does absolutely nothing for those locals needing the 11,000 homes.

The South London Press reports that plans for this six-storey student block have been approved in the teeth of hundreds of objections with many residents present at the planning committee meeting. There is also an issue of loss of light and privacy and that the development will impact on the wellbeing of local residents. There's a strong groundswell of feeling that residential development would be of more value to locals.

News from Sevenoaks; Electric Vehicle Charging

There has been a discussion about this in Sevenoaks, and Reg Oakley comments as follows:

Where things fall down in the UK is that there is a seriously inadequate number of rapid charge points if you are contemplating long journeys. Particularly when you get away from the South East.

Another major failing in the UK is that the charge points are provided by quite a number of companies and administered by them with a wide range of payment methods. Going somewhere in the UK is a bit like travelling through Europe pre Euro zone where you needed different currencies as you crossed borders.

I have investigated a trip to Sevenoaks' twin town of Rheinbach. I found that throughout Belgium just one company provides all the public charge points, and a similar situation exists in Holland.

So we have a customary UK government style 'pig's ear' of providing for public charging of EVs.

Transport in the future is going to be a real problem as a 100% switch to electric cars with present or foreseeable technology is unfeasible. The only answer I can see is in a dramatic change in lifestyle.

I do use an electric car only for what might be termed local usage. I am fortunate in that I can charge it at home from an installed fast charge point. This just isn't possible for the thousands reliant on the street parking. I charge on an overnight tariff, which means that the operating cost for the car is circa 2p a mile. (I purchase electricity from Octopus, who make all the usual environmental friendly claims and offer very good tariffs.)

Be Careful What You Wish For

Sheila Brown

"I wish the diary wasn't quite so busy"

"I wish there wasn't so much traffic on the roads ..."

"I wish we didn't have all those planes going over all the time ..."

"I wish they'd find something other than Brexit to talk about all the time ..."

But clearing the diary has given us space to be, to contemplate the beauties of nature and the miracle of spring-time and renewal. The lack of traffic

and aircraft has given us pure air to breathe and clear blue skies and also the prospect of a healthier lifestyle with more walking and cycling. The reduction in air travel will hopefully mean curtains to Heathrow's 3rd Runway and, with the huge cost of the pandemic, will the money be there for HS2?

Collared Doves

Robert Clark

We have had the privilege of watching two collared doves building a nest in a mahonia a few metres from our rear window and raising their young. Seemingly oblivious to our comings and goings, the pair have laid eggs, hatched them and on May 6th we watched them fly the nest.

As the nest was so close and due to the open nature of the mahonia, we could observe the nest from several windows seeing right into it, as you can see from the photograph. The nest, though precarious, has weathered high winds and storms, rain and even hail.

It's delightful that several of the doves return daily to feed and the mother seems to enjoy sitting on the nest again for old times sake.

We also have coal tits nesting in a bird-box elsewhere in the garden but never have we had so thoughtful a pair of birds presenting their nest for us to watch so easily. I gather from our bird book that they might be using the nest several more times this summer.



Miller's Mutterings

Chris Miller

What lovely weather we had in April, just what we all needed. All the crops germinated well after their planting at the end of March and the dose of fertiliser Peter applied at the end of April has fed all the plants. We had a little rain just after he did this which was great and now all the plants are looking green and healthy. We will now just be carefully monitoring the crops as they grow and applying fungi-

cide if needed. We have been told by our Agronomist (over the telephone obviously) that oil seed rape is being decimated by flea beetle in parts of Kent, but we are not growing this fortunately. Still awaiting to hear about our farm inspection. We had the sprayer tested at the end of April as its certificate was due and are keeping the farm records up to date in readiness.

It is lovely to see so many people using the footpath to the church from Warren Road, but it is getting wider due to the number of people using it and trying to social distance, which we understand. We won't have to spray the path off this year that is for sure. I noticed four young lads doing wheelies right across the wheat and then they cycled over to the far hedge. I managed to call a couple of them over to me and calmly explained that I appreciated they needed somewhere to cycle but doing wheelies and skids over the emerging wheat plants was a bit upsetting. I also explained that we hadn't managed to get the crop in last year due to the rain so these plants were quite precious to us. They nodded and said all right and off they went. I think lock down is getting to me!

You may have noticed that we have lost the plastic covering on our poly tunnel. Unfortunately, we were broken into a couple of weeks ago and someone tried to steal a trailer. For some unknown reason, they cut a doorway out of the side of the poly tunnel instead of using the double doors, which were open. We then had strong winds for the next week which tore the rest of the plastic

off. The trailer had a flat tyre so they were not able to push it far fortunately. The straw that was in there we managed to move to a barn. We have been busy trimming some of the trees in Church Road. This work is normally done during the winter but it was too wet to get on the land. We are doing this for two reasons, the ash trees are diseased with ash die back and the sight line along the road very difficult. Trying to come out of The Grove to cross Church Road into Sparrowhawks is very dangerous, so now we and the drivers can see better. If we left the diseased trees they could fall onto the power/telephone wires or across the road; a few branches had already fallen. In the autumn we will box this hedge up which will help the wildlife. Whilst doing the work, Steve heard a long bang (it must have been loud because he is nearly deaf) and realised he had run over something and one of the tyres had burst, resulting in a very large hole in the tyre. He very slowly drove it back to the yard and called the tyre man. Unfortunately, all four tyres needed changing so £1200 later we had new shiny tyres complete with decent treads!

We were thrilled to see our first swallow arrive at the farm on the 5th April and the second one came two weeks later. At the time of writing this, end of April, no more have arrived but we hope to report lots more next month. We have a wren nesting in our log store next to the house, blue tits in the nest box, pied wagtails in the yard and sparrows close by. I decided to attack the ivy growing up the wall and through into the workshop but was stopped abruptly by finding a

nest with eggs in. I quickly left the ivy and a robin returned to sit on the eggs, phew. Needless to say the ivy will have to wait until the autumn to be removed. It is always lovely to see and hear the birds but the swallows always seem to bring joy of a forthcoming summer.

A slight variation on red sky at night weather quote for this month:-

If the evening is red and the morning grey,

It is a sign of a bonnie day.

If the evening's grey and the morning red,

The lamb and the ewe go wet to bed.

Chris Miller
Court Lodge Farm

Do You Remember?

Do you remember, before the tsunami, how we strolled on the sand, felt it warm beneath our toes, collected seashells in our hands; and thought, if we so chose, we could create a future that was beautiful and free?

Try to recall, before the hurricanes, the cool of the forest, the gently rustling leaves, dappled sunlight in the clearing; and how we believed we could spend our lives here pleasantly, without pain.

Can you still see, before obscuring sandstorms, the passing clouds, the pale azure of the April sky?

Can you smell the salty air and hear the seabird's cry,

when catastrophe hadn't yet revealed its form?

Think back to when we braved the summer snows, while the bees died, as the gulf stream changed its course; and we were still denying the underlying source of simple truths every survivor knows.

How did we squander our inheritance, despoil creation, discard nature's glorious gifts like so much plastic waste, ignore precursors of disaster too obvious to face?

Do you remember all this, now almost beyond imagination?

© Leon Silver
Bromley August 2019

Bonfires & Government Guidance RE Covid-19 Traffic Measures

Bromley Environment Alliance
Parisa Wright

During this respiratory pandemic, ANY burning will be a nuisance to public health and potentially cause increased pressure on the already stretched NHS.

If neighbours are lighting bonfires, wood burners or other fires and causing smoke in your area, and you are worried about your family, vulnerable neighbours, and/or those at home battling or recovering from Covid19, here are some simple steps you can take:

1) If you know which garden is burning:

a) If you feel safe to do so, knock and ask them politely to stop— from an acceptable social distance of course, reminding them of the respiratory nature of the pandemic and that we have a high number of asthmatics in Bromley. You could also put a note through their door explaining the situation and the nuisance it is causing.

BUT if they refuse or the burning continues:

b) Every time they burn, fill in a form provided by Bromley Council (see link below) and encourage other neighbours to do the same. The more forms the council receives, the quicker it will send out a letter to the person concerned. <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/BonfireReportForm>.

c) GCBB has created this poster (enclosed) which you can print off and place locally to highlight the issue. You can also write to your local councillors to raise your concerns and let them know people are still creating a smoke nuisance during the pandemic so that they help the council publicise clearer messaging around the issue. You can pop your postcode into this site to get the details of who your local councillor is: <https://www.writetothem.com>.

2) If you do not know which garden is burning:

a) Print and pop up a few copies of this poster on your road;

b) Write to your local councillors to raise your concerns and let them know people are still creating a smoke nuisance during the pandemic so that they

help the council publicise clearer messaging around the issue. You can pop your postcode into this site to get the details of who your local councillor is: <https://www.writetothem.com>.

c) Write to Kate Lymer (Public Protection), David Jeffreys (Health Board), Will Harmer (Chair of the Environment PDS Committee) asking for clearer and more prominent messaging to residents about stopping burning during the lockdown because of the effects it is having on local lungs and the NHS during this respiratory pandemic (perhaps on their weekly newsletters/emails and also the “Bonfires” part of the website).

URGENT ACTION PLEASE - Wherever you live!!!!

2) Could we all have a look at this SUPER IMPORTANT guidance to local authorities re traffic management and Covid-19 which came out on Saturday 9th May and perhaps send an email from each of our groups to the council (perhaps William Huntington-Thresher, Will Harmer, Kate Lymer and David Jeffreys - given each of their important roles relating to public health, public protection, the environment and road safety - and cc to Colin Brand and Stephen Oliver etc - and your local councillors?) asking what urgent steps the council will be taking to meet these instructions and offering to help where we can.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reallocating-road-space-in-response-to-covid-19-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities/traffic-management-act-2004-network-management-in-response-to-covid-19>

Extracts:

"Foreword by the Secretary of State for Transport:

The coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis has had a terrible impact on the lives and health of many UK citizens, as well as severe economic consequences. But it has also resulted in cleaner air and quieter streets, transforming the environment in many of our towns and cities.

And millions of people have discovered, or rediscovered, cycling and walking. In some places, there's been a 70% rise in the number of people on bikes - for exercise, or for safe, socially distanced travel.

When the country gets back to work, we need them to carry on cycling, and to be joined by millions more. With public transport capacity reduced, the roads in our largest cities, in particular, may not be able to cope without it.

We also know that in the new world, pedestrians will need more space. Indications are that there is a significant link between COVID-19 recovery and fitness. Active travel can help us become more resilient.

That is why towns and cities in the UK and around the world are making or proposing radical changes to their roads to accommodate active travel.

We recognise this moment for what it is: a once in a generation opportunity to deliver a lasting transformative change in how we make short journeys in our towns and cities. According to the National Travel Survey, in 2017-18

over 40% of urban journeys were under 2 miles – perfectly suited to walking and cycling.

Active travel is affordable, delivers significant health benefits, has been shown to improve wellbeing, mitigates congestion, improves air quality and has no carbon emissions at the point of use. Towns and cities based around active travel will have happier and healthier citizens as well as lasting local economic benefits.

The government therefore expects local authorities to make significant changes to their road layouts to give more space to cyclists and pedestrians. Such changes will help embed altered behaviours and demonstrate the positive effects of active travel. I'm pleased to see that many authorities have already begun to do this, and I urge you all to consider how you can begin to make use of the tools in this guidance, to make sure you do what is necessary to ensure transport networks support recovery from the COVID-19 emergency and provide a lasting legacy of greener, safer transport.

Grant Shapps
Secretary of State for Transport"

<https://www.gov.uk/.../traffic-management-act-2004-network-ma...>

More relevant extracts:

"Measures should be taken as swiftly as possible, and in any event within weeks, given the urgent need to change travel habits before the restart takes full effect.

None of these measures are new – they are interventions that are a standard part of the traffic management toolkit, but a step-change in their roll-out is needed to ensure a green restart. They include:

Installing ‘pop-up’ cycle facilities with a minimum level of physical separation from volume traffic; for example, mandatory cycle lanes, using light segregation features such as flexible plastic wands; or quickly converting traffic lanes into temporary cycle lanes (suspending parking bays where necessary); widening existing cycle lanes to enable cyclists to maintain distancing. Facilities should be segregated as far as possible, i.e. with physical measures separating cyclists and other traffic. Lanes indicated by road markings only are very unlikely to be sufficient to deliver the level of change needed, especially in the longer term.

Using cones and barriers: to widen footways along lengths of road, particularly outside shops and transport hubs; to provide more space at bus stops to allow people to queue and socially distance; to widen pedestrian refuges and crossings (both formal and informal) to enable people to cross roads safely and at a distance.

Encouraging walking and cycling to school, for example through the introduction of more ‘school streets’. Pioneered in London, these are areas around schools where motor traffic is restricted at pick-up and drop-off times, during term-time. They can be effective in encouraging more walking and cycling, particularly where good facilities

exist on routes to the school and where the parents, children and school are involved as part of the scheme development.

Reducing speed limits: 20mph speed limits are being more widely adopted as an appropriate speed limit for residential roads, and many through streets in built-up areas. 20mph limits alone will not be sufficient to meet the needs of active travel, but in association with other measures, reducing the speed limit can provide a more attractive and safer environment for walking and cycling.

Introducing pedestrian and cycle zones: restricting access for motor vehicles at certain times (or at all times) to specific streets, or networks of streets, particularly town centres and high streets. This will enable active travel but also social distancing in places where people are likely to gather.

Modal filters (also known as filtered permeability); closing roads to motor traffic, for example by using planters or large barriers. Often used in residential areas, this can create neighbourhoods that are low-traffic or traffic free, creating a more pleasant environment that encourages people to walk and cycle, and improving safety.

Providing additional cycle parking facilities at key locations, such as outside stations and in high streets, to accommodate an increase in cycling, for example by repurposing parking bays to accommodate cycle racks.

Changes to junction design to accommodate more cyclists – for example,

extending Advanced Stop Lines at traffic lights to the maximum permitted depth of 7.5 metres where possible.

‘Whole-route’ approaches to create corridors for buses, cycles and access only on key routes into town and city centres.

Identifying and bringing forward permanent schemes already planned, for example under Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, and that can be constructed relatively quickly."

I want to send them an email asap as a lot of work will need to be planned and set in motion fast and this will have a huge impact on the health and wellbeing of the borough (plus our carbon footprint). PLEASE WRITE TO YOUR COUNCILLORS, IF YOU DON'T THEY (OR THEIR COLLEAGUES) MAY WELL ARGUE THESE CHANGES ARE NOT WANTED BY VOTERS (despite the pandemic!) X

Thanks to Clive at Ravensbourne Residents Associations for highlighting this!

I think this new guidance, (or some of the interesting facts and figures and avenues for change above) is also worth sharing with our members on FB and in newsletters in case any residents or schools would like to contact their councillors on the application of these instructions from government. Many of us would appreciate a safer and cleaner route to school and the ability to walk or cycle safely with children, for example.

Do let us know if you are able to share the "Stop Burning, Save Lives" Poster and also if you are able to send a letter

on behalf of your organisation/group, and if that base is already covered, on your own behalf.

Thank you all for any uptake on this important matter - we can all help, from the ground up, to influence how ruling parties view the environment.

Chernobyl: the true scale of the accident

20 Years Later a UN Report Provides Definitive Answers and Ways to Repair Lives. Joint News Release WHO/IAEA/UNDP

Update: 1986-2016: CHERNOBYL at 30 5 SEPTEMBER 2005 | GENEVA - A total of up to 4000 people could eventually die of radiation exposure from the Chernobyl nuclear power plant (NPP) accident nearly 20 years ago, an international team of more than 100 scientists has concluded.

As of mid-2005, however, fewer than 50 deaths had been directly attributed to radiation from the disaster, almost all being highly exposed rescue workers, many who died within months of the accident but others who died as late as 2004.

The new numbers are presented in a landmark digest report, "Chernobyl's Legacy: Health, Environmental and Socio-Economic Impacts," just released by the Chernobyl Forum. The digest, based on a three-volume, 600-page report and incorporating the work of hundreds of scientists, economists and health experts, assesses the 20-year impact of the

largest nuclear accident in history. The Forum is made up of 8 UN specialized agencies, including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA), United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR), and the World Bank, as well as the governments of Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

“This compilation of the latest research can help to settle the outstanding questions about how much death, disease and economic fallout really resulted from the Chernobyl accident,” explains Dr. Burton Bennett, chairman of the Chernobyl Forum and an authority on radiation effects. “The governments of the three most affected countries have realized that they need to find a clear way forward, and that progress must be based on a sound consensus about environmental, health and economic consequences and some good advice and support from the international community.”

Bennett continued: “This was a very serious accident with major health consequences, especially for thousands of workers exposed in the early days who received very high radiation doses, and for the thousands more stricken with thyroid cancer. By and large, however, we have not found profound negative health impacts to the rest of

the population in surrounding areas, nor have we found widespread contamination that would continue to pose a substantial threat to human health, within a few exceptional, restricted areas.”

The Forum’s report aims to help the affected countries understand the true scale of the accident’s consequences and also suggests ways the governments of Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine might address major economic and social problems stemming from the accident. Members of the Forum, including representatives of the three governments, will meet September 6 and 7 in Vienna at an unprecedented gathering of the world’s experts on Chernobyl, radiation effects and protection, to consider these findings and recommendations.

Major study findings. Dozens of important findings are included in the massive report:

Approximately 1000 on-site reactor staff and emergency workers were heavily exposed to high-level radiation on the first day of the accident; among the more than 200 000 emergency and recovery operation workers exposed during the period from 1986-1987, an estimated 2200 radiation-caused deaths can be expected during their lifetime.

An estimated five million people currently live in areas of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine that are contaminated with radionuclides due to the accident; about 100 000 of them live in areas classified in the past by government authorities as areas of “strict control”. The existing “zoning” definitions need to be revisited and relaxed in light of the new findings.

About 4000 cases of thyroid cancer, mainly in children and adolescents at the time of the accident, have resulted from the accident's contamination and at least nine children died of thyroid cancer; however the survival rate among such cancer victims, judging from experience in Belarus, has been almost 99%.

Most emergency workers and people living in contaminated areas received relatively low whole body radiation doses, comparable to natural background levels. As a consequence, no evidence or likelihood of decreased fertility among the affected population has been found, nor has there been any evidence of increases in congenital malformations that can be attributed to radiation exposure.

Poverty, "lifestyle" diseases now rampant in the former Soviet Union and mental health problems pose a far greater threat to local communities than does radiation exposure.

Relocation proved a "deeply traumatic experience" for some 350,000 people moved out of the affected areas. Although 116 000 were moved from the most heavily impacted area immediately after the accident, later relocations did little to reduce radiation exposure.

Persistent myths and misperceptions about the threat of radiation have resulted in "paralyzing fatalism" among residents of affected areas.

Ambitious rehabilitation and social benefit programs started by the former Soviet Union, and continued by Belarus,

Russia and Ukraine, need reformulation due to changes in radiation conditions, poor targeting and funding shortages.

Structural elements of the sarcophagus built to contain the damaged reactor have degraded, posing a risk of collapse and the release of radioactive dust; A comprehensive plan to dispose of tons of high-level radioactive waste at and around the Chernobyl NPP site, in accordance with current safety standards, has yet to be defined.

Alongside radiation-induced deaths and diseases, the report labels the mental health impact of Chernobyl as "the largest public health problem created by the accident" and partially attributes this damaging psychological impact to a lack of accurate information. These problems manifest as negative self-assessments of health, belief in a shortened life expectancy, lack of initiative, and dependency on assistance from the state.

"Two decades after the Chernobyl accident, residents in the affected areas still lack the information they need to lead the healthy and productive lives that are possible," explains Louisa Vinton, Chernobyl focal point at the UNDP. "We are advising our partner governments that they must reach people with accurate information, not only about how to live safely in regions of low-level contamination, but also about leading healthy lifestyles and creating new livelihoods." But, says Dr Michael Repacholi, Manager of WHO's Radiation Program, "the sum total of the Chernobyl Forum is a reassuring message."

He explains that there have been 4000 cases of thyroid cancer, mainly in children, but that except for nine deaths, all of them have recovered.

"Otherwise, the team of international experts found no evidence for any increases in the incidence of leukemia and cancer among affected residents."

The international experts have estimated that radiation could cause up to about 4000 eventual deaths among the higher-exposed Chernobyl populations, i.e., emergency workers from 1986-1987, evacuees and residents of the most contaminated areas. This number contains both the known radiation-induced cancer and leukaemia deaths and a statistical prediction, based on estimates of the radiation doses received by these populations. As about a quarter of people die from spontaneous cancer not caused by Chernobyl radiation, the radiation-induced increase of only about 3% will be difficult to observe. However, in the most exposed cohorts of emergency and recovery operation workers some increase of particular cancer forms (e.g. leukemia) in particular time periods has already been observed. The predictions use six decades of scientific experience with the effects of such doses, explained Repacholi.

Repacholi concludes that "the health effects of the accident were potentially horrific, but when you add them up using validated conclusions from good science, the public health effects were not nearly as substantial as had at first been feared."

The report's estimate for the eventual number of deaths is far lower than earlier, well-publicized speculations that radiation exposure would claim tens of thousands of lives. But the 4000 figure is not far different from estimates made in 1986 by Soviet scientists, according to Dr Mikhail Balonov, a radiation expert with the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, who was a scientist in the former Soviet Union at the time of the accident.

As for environmental impact, the reports are also reassuring, for the scientific assessments show that, except for the still closed, highly contaminated 30 kilometer area surrounding the reactor, and some closed lakes and restricted forests, radiation levels have mostly returned to acceptable levels. "In most areas the problems are economic and psychological, not health or environmental," reports Balonov, the scientific secretary of the Chernobyl Forum effort who has been involved with Chernobyl recovery since the disaster occurred.

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For a full copy of this article please email bromleyfoe@gmail.com

Campaigns

Planning Monitoring Team

Checking the monthly planning applications that the council publish is a really interesting job especially if you know your local area well. The current team are looking for help from people who would be willing to keep an eye on the applications in their own back yard from

the comfort of their home, and raise an alert to anything which may require us to officially comment on.

If you would like to find out a little more about what is involved, then please contact Tamara Galloway at: tamaragalloway@yahoo.com

Climate, Energy and Transport

Ann Garrett & Leon Silver

Global Rethink On Water Use Can Ease Climate Crisis

Underfunding over decades has brought the world's water resources to a crisis point, according to a new report. And now the climate crisis threatens to worsen a situation that has left billions without clean drinking water and more than half the global population lacking access to safely managed sanitation, it says.

Water has been a neglected factor in the climate crisis, underfunded and overlooked, even though floods and drought are likely to be the hardest-hitting effects of global heating.

While trillions of dollars have been poured into reducing greenhouse gas emissions, little has been spent on water supplies.

This year's UN World Water Development Report, published today, says that opportunities to use water projects to cut greenhouse gas emissions while improving access to clean water are being missed.

Renewable Power Outperforms Gas

RENEWABLEUK, the trade body for the UK renewables energy industry say new official figures show that renewables generated a record amount of electricity between July and September last year, outperforming gas.

The latest "Energy Trends" report published by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy shows that in the third quarter of 2019 renewables provided a record 38.9% of the UK's electricity, exceeding gas at 38.8%.

The Government report highlights what it describes as a "strong performance from renewable sources". This new quarterly record for renewables beats the previous one of 36.8% set in the fourth quarter of 2018.

Low carbon electricity (renewables and nuclear) rose to a record high of 57.3% due to increased renewables generation. Generation from fossil fuels decreased to a record low of 40.1%.

The report states that the rise is due to increases in renewable generation capacity as well as favourable weather conditions, particularly for offshore wind. It highlights wind as the principal source of renewable generation, providing 19% of the UK's electricity in Q3.

Whilst we in Friends of the Earth know

that there are real dangers from nuclear power and the problem of the burial of nuclear waste, for the time being it contributes to the renewable package.

Woolwich Ferry Staff Win Jobs and Pay Guarantee

WORKERS on the historic Woolwich ferry service across the Thames have been guaranteed their jobs and wages despite service reductions caused by the coronavirus.

In a major victory, Unite the union won a guarantee that the service's 56 workers would be kept on full pay if they are "furloughed" and not required to work.

The Woolwich Ferry carries pedestrians, cyclists, cars, vans and lorries across the river in East London and is used by two million passengers a year.

Operation of the free services is set to be taken back in-house by Transport for London. The ferry is a true example of the value of increasing water transportation.

Gatwick Gets Approval To Add 50,000 Flights on New Runway

Gatwick Airport will push ahead with plans for a £500 million second runway after the scheme passed a major legal hurdle.

Britain's second-busiest airport is expected to submit detailed proposals for 50,000 extra flights a year as part of its recovery from the crisis posed by the

coronavirus.

It wants to bring its existing standby runway – which is only used in emergencies when the main runway is closed – into full operation.

It has emerged that the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has ruled that the plan will not require changes to the airspace around Gatwick which had threatened to pose a significant barrier.

In a written judgment, the watchdog said that there would be no changes to the design of flight paths in or out of the West Sussex airport as a direct result of the new runway, adding: "The environmental impact relating to this proposal is assessed as nil".

Nature/Trees

Annette Rose

RSPB Zoom Talk

Despite the present reduction in aviation pollution, it could well increase again as the lockdowns ease.

RSPB Zoom talk 13.6.20 'Saving Nature through Science' Dr Mark Eaton.

Dr. Mark Eaton is a conservation scientist who works for conservation organisations including the RSPB. His very interesting talk was attended by 36 people on Zoom.

Scientific evidence informs what the RSPB does. It invests resources in doing its own science. In fact the RSPB is established as a recognised centre of excellence in conservation science. 'The

RSPB Centre for Conservation Science' is not one place but works in lots of different locations and has 50 to 60 full time scientists at PhD level. It has been ranked 4th out of 61 research institutions for its research projects.

So why do they put so much effort into research and how does it help the RSPB?

They need to know:

- 1.What are the important problems?
- 2.What are the causes?
- 3.What are the solutions?
- 4.Has the action taken worked?

1.Knowing the Important Questions.

There is a long history of monitoring in the UK and a cultural interest in natural history. Often this is done by volunteers such as with the annual Breeding Bird Survey. This long running survey involves standardized monitoring of grid squares and can measure trends over time. For example we know there has been a 155% increase in gold finches since the 1990s. This is thought to be due to milder winters and more people having feeders in their gardens. The whinchat, though, has seen a decrease of 57%.

The BBS also monitors mammals at the same time such as foxes rabbits and hares. The Annual Report by the Breeding Bird Survey is available to see online. However, it doesn't tell us about the rarer species such as the chuff and hen harrier.

There is a separate survey by the Rare

Breeding Bird Panel which gathers data on rarer birds and it produces an annual report too.

'The State on Nature Report' is produced every 3 years and looks widely at the UK's wildlife and how it is doing. There is particular concern about farmland birds. They have steeply declined since the 1970s.

In total, more than 19,000 people are involved in surveying each year and if you include all those who participate in the RSPB's Big Garden Bird Watch annually, it is many more.

In addition, there are 'Birds of Conservation Concern Assessments'. Birds can be put on red, amber or green lists. Green is of lowest concern, amber- moderate concern, and red of high concern e.g. the turtle dove.

Of the main 19 species of farmland birds, 12 are on the red list. There is some good news. Avocets are now on the green list and bitterns are moving off the red list. As reported - the bitterns are booming!

2.What are the Causes?

Two of the main drivers of change are the intensive management of farmland and climate change. Climate change has had some beneficial impacts with warmer winters.

One bird that has been studied is the cuckoo. There has been a big decrease in numbers in recent years and it has been found to be closely related to moth numbers. Tree sparrows have largely disappeared too. Their main food is aquatic invertebrates. A million farm ponds and

ditches have been lost affecting their food supplies.

Puffins are red listed now. Puffins typically hold their catch in their mouths and this is often photographed by visitors. People have been asked to send in their photos so what they are eating can be examined. They are called the 'Puffarazzi'. If you google 'Puffarazzi' you can find out more about this interesting research project.

Sometimes it is not easy to find the causes. For example the wood warbler has been steadily declining. Studies have looked at diet, vegetation and predation but the cause has still not been found.

3. Knowing the Solutions.

The RSPB has been involved in research on wind farms to find out which birds are at risk of bird strike due to their location. They can then give recommendations on the siting of windmills so that they will not impact on bird populations. Companies will seek advice from the RSPB before placing the windmills because they know there will be opposition if they choose a bad location.

Sometimes the solutions can be rather simple. Some farms have patches where seeds are not sown and these patches are ideal for nesting skylarks. Farmers are compensated for the loss of income from these patches.

Diversions feeding techniques were able to take red kites away from nesting lapwings.

And this brings the circle back to:

4. Does the Action work?

This is where all the surveying is so important.

Unfortunately there is not enough funding to carry out all the actions needed to help our wildlife. The new Agricultural Bill which is going through parliament now may improve the situation.

E-Facts for the Month

Peter Gandolfi

What do the countries Bhutan and Suriname have in common? They are the only countries that add no greenhouse gases into the environment, and are in effect net zero. Both have small populations, lots of hydroelectric power and large forests.

By 2050 the oceans will contain by weight more plastic than fish - if we don't change our ways.

This was the conclusion of a 2016 report from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation

Are lithium-powered electric vehicles as 'green' as we are told they are?

A recent Radio 4 Crossing Continents programme, gave an interesting perspective on how the mining of lithium affected the indigenous population, high in the Andes, where most of the world's stocks of lithium are found in the brine deep below the salt flats.

To listen to it, search for 'Crossing Continents' on BBC sounds.

All the electric cars sold in 2017 when they reach the end of their lives will result in 250,000 tonnes of unprocessed lithium-ion battery waste.

Supplies That Don't Cost the Earth

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

Internet

www.greenfinder.co.uk - a useful directory of environmental companies for all kinds of things.

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

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

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

Facebook

Greener & Cleaner Bromley (& Beyond) Consumer action!

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

Low or Zero waste Shops

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

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

Bromley International Food Centre, 237

-239 High St, Bromley BR1 (opposite the Bromley Picturehouse Cinema)

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

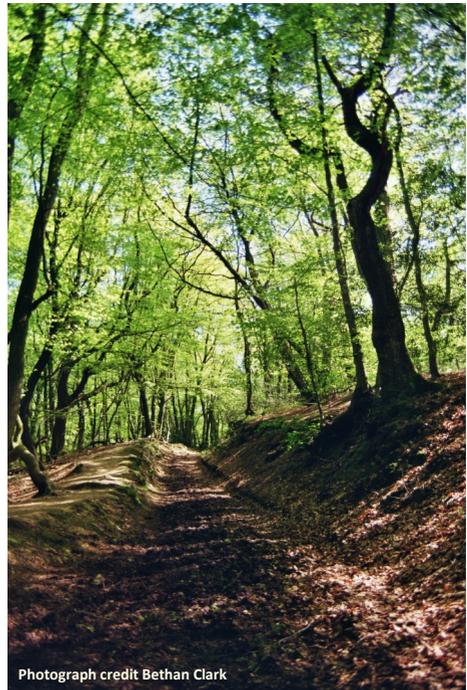
South London Shop Without Packaging (SWOP), 7 Burnt Ash Lane, Lee.

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

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

Apps

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



Photograph credit Bethan Clark

Reuse

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

List Of Roles

Everyone can be contacted via the groups email address: bromleyfoe@gmail.com

Acting Co-ordinators/Mentors:

Sheila Brown 01689 851605
Ann Garrett 020 8460 1295

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer:

Sheila Brown

Press Team:

Ann Garrett

Programme Organiser:

Sheila Brown

Outings Organisers:

John & Sue Boccock 0208 290 0485
Merchandising: Anne Clark

Membership Secretary:

Dan Sloan 07414 920920

Newsletter Production:

Dan Sloan

Instagram and Twitter Admin:

Emmanuelle Coetzee

Fundraising Officer:

Bill Priestley 01689 820469

Admin Team:

Judy Palmer, Rob Clark, Annette Rose

Web Site & Technical Support:

Peter Gandolfi, Mary Ingledew

Refreshments

Mary Ingledew, Sylvia Chance

Meeting Reporters:

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

Campaigns (Contact via group email)

Nature/Trees:

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

Anti Fracking:

Ann Garrett, John Catlin

Plastics:

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

Climate:

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

Planning Monitor: Tamara Galloway, Ann Garrett

Newsletter Editor:

Rob Clark 020 8289 1503
robert.clark9@btinternet.com



Non-members Section

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

If you would like to know more about who we are and what we do, please contact either of our acting co-ordinators Sheila Brown or Ann Garrett (their details are inside the back page of this newsletter.) Alternatively you can come along to one of our monthly meetings held on the first Tuesday of every month at the Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley - that's towards the bottom of the High Street, on the right going down. If you would like to join us then please fill in and send us the form below.

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

I would like to support Bromley Friends of the Earth and enclose my annual subscription (£8 single/£15 couple/family.) I also enclose a donation (optional) of £..... to help towards the work of our local group.

Name:

Address:

Post Code: Phone No:

Email address:

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

.....

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