

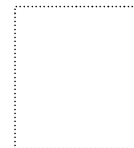


**Friends of the Earth**

**Bromley**

# March 2008 No. 243 Newsletter

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



## March Meeting

Friends Meeting House,  
Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

**Helping and re-homing wounded hedgehogs**

with Mavis Righini

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March**

7.30pm.

Everyone welcome – bring a friend

Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by  
**SUNDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH**. Contact details inside front cover.

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***Possible Easter Saturday walk – to be discussed at our March 4<sup>th</sup> meeting***

**Diary dates:**

**March 4<sup>th</sup> (Tues)**

**Bromley FoE's March meeting;** Helping and re-homing wounded hedgehogs, with Mavis Righini

**March 6<sup>th</sup> (Tues)**

**Guided walk –** Cudham Environmental Centre (see below)

**April 1<sup>st</sup> (Tues)**

**Bromley FoE's April meeting:** Credit Unions – finance schemes on a local scale

**April 5<sup>th</sup> (Sat)**

**Bromley FoE Stall;** 12noon to 2pm re the Planning Bill now going through Parliament, also Climate Change Day of action, Bromley High Street outside Café Nero

**April 20<sup>th</sup> (Sun)**

**Bluebell walk;** details to be announced later

**May 6<sup>th</sup> (Tues)**

**Bromley FoE's May meeting;** with FoE's Chief Executive Tony Juniper

**Green Guardian Awards – Ann Garrett was one of the judges**

It was a privilege to represent Bromley FoE in judging the Bromley ,Bexley, and Lewisham 2007 entries, along with representatives from Groundforce and Tramlink and Sean Duggan, founder of the the project.

The awards ceremony at Eltham Palace was attended by over a hundred people and it was the first time the scheme had been run in South London in partnership with the News Shopper. The categories were: green business, household, school, young environmentalist, building and champion. It was a demanding task deciding on the finalists as there some dedicated entries.

The actual awards were presented by Lewis Pugh who has swum in some of the coldest waters in the world, and uses his swims and love of the environment to raise awareness of climate change.

**Guided walk on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March**

Starting at Cudham Environmental Centre, New Barn Lane, Westerham Hill, TN16 2HT at 11.00am. Bring walking boots as it may be muddy. Bring a packed lunch and a change of footwear so that you can eat your lunch in front of the fire. Contact John and Sue Bocock for more details.

**Next Newsletter - copy details:**

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor **by SUNDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH.**

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

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

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

## February meeting report, Anne Clark

Apologies were given, as the advertised speaker was unable to come, to talk on "Biofuels – the latest." Ray took over, relying on the Guardian and other media news to argue the question "Bio and Agro fuels – good or bad in damaging the Earth?"

In Lincolnshire, the Greenergy refinery processes vegetable oil – the juice from rape seed. It strips out waste, adds chemicals to make it easier to burn and pipes 100,000 tonnes over to Conoco-Phillips and Texaco to mix with their diesel fuel. This becomes biofuel which is not very high in carbon.

There is a similar refinery in Rotterdam using rape from France and Germany. Greenergy is involved, too in ethanol which comes from sugar cane in Brazil and sugar beet, wheat and corn from across the world, but is not taking any from the United States, due to the large amounts of nitrogen fertiliser used by them, which affects global warming. Ethanol is mixed into petrol.

There could be 'good' oils such as used cooking oil (with Bromley Council taking an interest in this), waste Spanish oranges and animal slurry could all be used, but even some green groups were divided, and a group in York, although promoting the science, has said that some oils were safer than others. British rape seed oil is soon to be mixed with American soya oil; palm oil from Malaysia could be used and sugar cane bioethanol from Africa. Can the risks outweigh the benefits?

With all the transportation it would be a matter of fuel miles, similar to food miles. The palm oil is at present causing de-forestation with loss of vital carbon sinks and biodiversity not to mention displacement of indigenous people.

Would food prices rise in buying up land for growing crops? What is going to happen to land where the crops are continuously grown, as planting must be varied. The Government want a million gallons used every year to help reduce carbon by 2010 and have created a Renewable Fuels Agency to publish results from each supplier and say that they will apply strict sustainability rules. Nevertheless, the supportive Royal Society were still cautious and uncertain.

The big question is *Why* are we spinning in circles to produce substitutes for when the oil runs out, when we should be putting our energy into changing our lifestyles to reduce oil consumption? We could have better public transport, more efficient vehicles and use of renewable or different power with biogas mainly from waste products.

Remarks and discussion from the floor included forthcoming EU directives promoting agrofuel expansion but with very weak safeguards; rape seed biodiesel produces more greenhouse gas than normal diesel fuel; Brazilian rain forest and sorado are now given over to growing soya and sugar cane to produce ethanol; why not boost hydrogen, sun and water power? Get

*/continued on page 5*

## Transport information – Ray Watson, transport campaigner

### **It will cost you!**

Details are emerging about the new tax on airlines – or, rather, the tax on airlines that the passenger will invariably end up paying.

This is the tax announced a few months ago by the Government to replace the air passenger duty currently levied on every ticket and ranging from £10 for a European flight to £40 for a long-haul journey, bringing the Treasury about £2bn annually.

The new tax will be charged on all flights, thus including freight planes for the first time, and will be charged individually based on the weight of the airplane and the distance it is to travel. The amount is not yet set but it is likely that the figure will be based on splitting journeys into three bands – Europe, less than 3000 miles from London (but excluding Europe) and more than 3000 miles from the capital.

Naturally, the airlines are screaming. But, with the growing amount of damage they are causing to the ozone layer, they deserve little sympathy.

### **Non-stop expansion**

It gives an idea of the untrammelled growth of aviation when it is revealed that Britain's regional airports handled 100 million flights in 2006 with, for example, Edinburgh airport increasing its passenger flow from 2.5 million to 8.6million in just 15 years.

No wonder London City wants to grow, too. It has submitted a plan to its local council to increase its flights by 50 per cent, from 80,000 a year to 120,000 by 2010. An action group has been

formed to oppose the proposal, citing increased emissions and noise disturbance for a larger number of people.

No wonder too, that Mayor Ken is trying to get EU legislation to ban the large number of short-haul flights from Heathrow to cities such as Paris and Edinburgh, arguing that rail alternatives are available and are better for the environment.

### **Frightening!**

It is even worse if you look at the global number of flights. These were reckoned to be 29.5 million in 2007. That's 80,987 individual planes taking off per day worldwide, an increase of 4.7 per cent on 2006. There are now enough seats for 9.6 million people to fly every day.

Significantly Europe showed a 5.8% growth, led by the low-cost sector, which grew by 26 per cent and accounting for a fifth of all Europe flights. Maybe Mayor Ken has a point.

### **Spain takes to the train**

British rail users can only dream of the sort of journey Spaniards can now experience – plus the thrill of travelling at 220 mph.

A new high-speed service links Madrid with Barcelona. The 400-mile journey is completed in two hours 35 minutes and the whole thing is done with style. The 404 passengers have swivel seats installed with video and music players and there is a bar with hot and cold food, while first class passengers receive a free drink and are served a meal in their seat. /cont'd next page

**Congestion charge @ £25 – well done Ken;  
February report and transport info - *continued***

**The Mayor gets it right**

When Mayor Livingston recently announced his new carbon-saving initiative to increase the congestion charge to £25 for some four-wheel-drive vehicles and sports cars driving through London, the News Shopper asked for Bromley FoE's view.

We told the newspaper that we welcomed the scheme because transport was one of the larger contributors to greenhouse gases. And we added that we hoped that Chancellor Darling would go even further in his budget, to be announced this month (March).

We called for measures to give an incentive for people to buy cleaner and smaller cars, plus a purchase tax on higher emitting vehicles.

We also pointed out that another way of encouraging the purchase of greener vehicles was to adopt the French scheme where the government gives a cash rebate to those buying smaller or cleaner cars.

**February report *continued***

gas from compost worldwide; teach more green issues in schools including design and technology and have a sustainability subject to help get children more interested in science. Distances covered to get to work, decentralisation and using computers to work from home were matters discussed along with educating people not to be so wasteful. But it was decided not to complain and oppose something unless we suggest something with which to replace it.

After the break it was announced how successful we had been in getting the cards filled in challenging the Government's new Planning Bill and campaigning to keep our democracy. Discussions on climate change, early day motions and changes in targets.

Negotiations are still ongoing regarding Biggin Hill airport, and planes flying earlier in the morning and later at night. Also contact John and Sue Bocock if you want to know more about a walk and visit to Cudham on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March at 11am.

**Transport info *continued***

The aim is to have 6,200 miles of high-speed track by 2020, making Spain a world leader in railways. This would ensure that no one in the country would be further than 30 miles from a station on the high-speed route. With planned expansions into France, it would mean, for example, that Paris would be only four hours from Barcelona.

Unsurprisingly, other routes opened ahead of the Barcelona link have proved immensely popular, with, for instance, a doubling of passengers between Malaga and the capital. And ticket prices are also something to make the British envious. The Madrid-Seville connection of 290 miles costs between £22 and £54. If the train is more than five minutes late you get your money back!

And of course, there is also the little matter of trains emitting four times less carbon than planes ...

## Campaigning information – Ann Garrett, campaigns co-ordinator

### Planning Reform Bill Street Stall

Many thanks to all those stalwarts who turned up on January 26th to help with the stall for nearly 3 hours in the end, in a bitter wind, to collect signatures on the cards requesting amendments to the bill. These include: - decision makers are democratically accountable, the sustainable development duty is strengthened, a public right to be heard in person, a duty to ensure that decisions on new infrastructures involve reducing carbon emissions.

A generally very reasonable response from the public. 75 cards were posted to FoE, and about 20 other people promised to post their own. Members of our group are also contacting their MPs by email or letter.

### Regional Gathering

This was held on January 19th at the Conway Hall, and as I was only able to attend the morning session due to other Green matters, meant that I missed the skill sharing on nuclear power, aviation and winning local campaigns, and workshops on engaging with local media, lobbying on the planning system, global issues, agrofuels and renewables campaigning.

However, it was useful to meet other London reps during a speed-dating type of mini-interview- connecting session - particularly Murial Passmore the Croydon co-ordinator, who would like to attend one of our meetings!

Jenny Bates in her role as London FoE Regional Campaigns Co-ordinator mentioned the new five-year plan, the

re- opening of the Thames Gateway Bridge enquiry, new campaigns for City Airport, environmental justice and air quality monitoring. She also said it was important to contact GLA candidates before the May 1st elections, and that the mayor would have new powers and duties relating to climate change.

Tony Juniper gave the keynote speech. He stated how this has been one of the busiest FoE periods and that it has been a very intensive agenda both locally and at Government level.

The fact that the Climate Change Bill has been adopted has increased support and respect for FoE. In referring to the Bali Conference he said that although it had only been a partial success, there had been a real shift in position by some countries and that opportunities were beginning to emerge in rich countries providing technologies for poorer countries.

He also emphasised the success of the Big Ask with the draft bill due to come in the Spring and said it was an incredible breakthrough, but that we must work for the 80% target and inclusion of aviation and shipping.

Future campaigns will include airport expansion, the responsibility of supermarkets, and agro fuels. There will be a stress on bio-diversity and a lot of activity in the EU with a Pan-European Climate Change campaign which will hopefully impact on the UN. The issues of global competitiveness, the influence of emerging countries  
*/continued on next page*

## Campaigns info *cont'd*; Agro-fuels protest; No more hot air; Bikes not Bombs

### Campaigns info continued

like China, the Planning Reform Bill, and the UK nuclear decision would be continuing challenges for us.

He spoke of how people want tangible solutions and that we need to develop a high media profile which was beginning to emerge with the transformation of the situation over global warming.

In conclusion Tony said that he was happy to see FoE in such fantastic shape and that a thorough recruitment process was taking place to replace him as Chief Executive. It was certainly a very inspiring and constructive speech!

During a Q and A session afterwards, there was discussion on population growth, the issue of nuclear power, and the importance of jobs in off-shore wind power, the reduction of oil consumption, and work in local groups in building links and involving other community groups. PHEW!

### Agro-fuels protest date

The Campaign Against Climate Change is calling for a demonstration outside Downing St to draw the government's attention to greenhouse gas emissions caused by making agro-fuels from intensively grown plants like sugar cane, soy, palm oil and corn and which are also adding to forest clearances.

The situation has been spotlighted by recent UK and EU decisions to make it obligatory for transport fuels to contain a percentage of agro-fuels. This law comes into force on Tuesday April 15 -- and that is the day chosen for the protest. The time: 6pm.

### No more hot air

It was a decisive vote in the European parliament: members voted 592-26 in favour of banning patio heaters, which have become part of the scenery outside pubs, bars and restaurants since smoking bans threw smokers out into the cold. Indeed, it is not uncommon in central London to see a restaurant with half a dozen or so heaters blazing away into the sky even when no one is present.

The ban will be beneficial because it is calculated that these liquid petroleum gas guzzlers push out more CO2 in a year than the average family car.

So who were the 26 who voted No? They were mostly from the UK Independence Party, who argued that the ban would damage cafe culture!

### Bikes Not Bombs

March 22-26: Bikes against Bombs to mark the 50th anniversary of the first Aldermaston March. Bike ride from London to Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Establishment and back again. ([info@bikesnotbombs.org](mailto:info@bikesnotbombs.org))

Joining up with CND's "Surround the Base" protest at the Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Establishment on Easter Monday March 24th marking the 50th anniversary of the first Aldermaston March.

London coach leaves Embankment at 9.30 on Easter Monday. Contact Dave Polden ([david.lrcnd@cnduk.org](mailto:david.lrcnd@cnduk.org)) for tickets. Ann Garrett is going on the Embankment coach and will take Bromley and Beckenham CND banner.

## Talks between Bromley Council and Biggin Hill – Ray Watson

It has been confirmed that Bromley Council and Biggin Hill Airport are holding talks over changes in rules that would increase the number of planes departing and arriving both earlier in the morning and late at night. If the council approves the change it would seriously affect the tens of thousands of Bromley residents living under the flight path.

Basically, the proposal is that that the airport would be permitted more flights in the 'shoulder' hours – early in the morning and late at night. This would mean that the airport might start operating at 5 a.m., when staff would start work and aircraft begin manoeuvring and warming up and continuing until at least 10pm.

Currently, aircraft based at Biggin Hill have a concession that gives them longer operating hours than 'outsider' flights – but this distinction would also be ditched and the longer hours opened to all flights. A further change would allow the longer opening hours on Sundays and Public Holidays, both currently excluded.

On two previous occasions such suggestions were rejected by Bromley Council, in its role as the head leaseholder of the airport, following massive protests from residents. It was also pointed out that Biggin Hill already has longer flying hours than similar airports including those like its rival London City.

The danger this time is that council leaders are thought to be looking to get more money from the airport – the rent paid to the council includes a

percentage of the airport's turnover. Sounds good for council taxpayers, - but what about the price paid by residents for more disturbance, more noise, more traffic congestion, more air pollution and lower property values?

Flight Path, the Bromley alliance of residents and others group – Bromley FoE is a member – has sent a protest letter to the leader of the council, Cllr Stephen Carr with copies to all councillors. The borough's MPs and GLA members. *See the text of the letter on the next page.*

There is a suggestion from Cllr Carr that in return for these concessions the airport would agree to reduce the annual number of flight movements it is permitted under its lease. But this is nonsense because the airport never gets anywhere near the ceiling figure of 125,000 movements annually; last year it used just under 70,000.

Cllr Carr says the council wants to reduce disturbance, noise and pollution 'as our overriding duty is to help protect the environment and the quality of life of our residents'.

### **More expansion**

Meanwhile, it may be significant that the airport has sent two requests to the council for permission to build more hangars, more offices and increased parking. It also wants to keep alive the permission granted nearly 20 years ago for a 50-bed hotel which is due for renewal. Residents groups oppose this on the basis that two recent planning applications for a 100-bed hotel were refused by the government on the /continued on next page



## Letter from FlightPath to Bromley Council re Biggin Hill Airport

Flight Path notes that at a meeting with Bromley Residents' Federation on 15th November 2007 you said that negotiations were taking place with Biggin Hill Airport Ltd (BHAL) about 'extra flights outside the set limits' of the lease, which you said might have to be adjusted, and that a relaxation of the shoulder hours may be necessary.

While you also said that the council would not default on the current lease Flight Path reminds you that residents have consistently supported the view that re-negotiating the lease is not an option. Any change, as suggested above, can only be to the detriment of the people of Bromley in terms of noise and disturbance.

There is also the danger that an amended lease may lose the hard-won protection gained by the High Court judgment.

How many of your residents would want to live in a borough with an airport operating from perhaps 5 am, when staff begin to arrive, every day of the week, including Sundays and public holidays? Maybe that was the reason the council twice rejected an extension of shoulder hours activities (in March 2000 and March 2004)?.

Further, trading off longer hours against fewer air traffic movements would be nonsense because the airport is operating far below the maximum allowed under the lease. The gain to BHAL might well be increased profits – but how much extra revenue would accrue to Bromley? And what would be the cost to council

taxpayers in terms of reduced property values and a lower quality of life?

Note too, that Flight Path has amply demonstrated that BHAL already has generous operating hours in comparison with other similar airports, including London City – see the paper sent to all Bromley Conservative councillors dated March 28th 2007 and this organisation's 'The Case for the Community' document.

Your objective is for the council to get the best value out of the airport. Perhaps so – but not at the price of expanding an airport in the suburbs of London with all its attendant dangers, its destruction of residents' quiet enjoyment, its damaging effect on the Princess Royal Hospital and its blight on property.

Is that how you want Bromley to develop?

**Bromley Council talks - continued** grounds that the airport would not be able to provide enough business to support them and also that the design was unsuitable. The anxiety is that the airport would seek council permission for more flights to increase the hotel's business. Residents have told the council that they oppose the renewal because the hotel would be built on Green Belt land and also challenge the renewal because the airport wants significant changes to the original application, saying it should be considered as a fresh application not a renewal.

As a result of these objections the council has delayed its verdict.

## Which fish should we be eating and which should we avoid

With concern about overfishing, the Marine Conservation Society has put out the following guidelines:

**Fish to eat** – The fish on this list come from well-managed, sustainable stocks and in MCS opinion are the best choices.

### **Best Choices**

Abalone (*farmed only*)  
 Brown crab (*pot caught off south Devon coast*)  
 Clam (*e.g. hand raked*)  
 Cockle (*from Burry Inlet, Wales*)  
 Cod, Pacific  
 Dover Sole (*from Eastern English Channel*)  
 Herring (*from Thames, Blackwater, North Sea and Eastern English Channel*)  
 Lobster, *California red rock*  
 Lobster, *Western Australia rock*  
 Mussel (*e.g. rope grown*)  
 Oyster (*farmed native and Pacific*)  
 Salmon, Pacific (*from Alaska*)  
 Scallop (*e.g. dive caught*)  
 Scampi, Dublin Bay  
 Prawn or Langoustine (*from Loch Torridon, NW Scotland –not available in UK*)  
 Sea Bass (*tagged from Cornwall*)

### **Next Best Choices**

Alaska or walleye  
 Pollock (*from Alaska*)  
 Bib or pouting  
 Black Bream, Porgy or Sea Bream (*from Cornwall or NW and N Wales*)  
 Cape Hake (*from South Africa*)  
 Cod, Atlantic (*farmed organic only*)  
 Coley or Saithe (*from NE Arctic and combined North Sea stock*)  
 Dab  
 Flounder (*from Cornwall or NW and N Wales*)  
 Gurnard  
 Halibut, Pacific  
 Lemon Sole (*otter trawled from Cornwall*)  
 Lythe or Pollack (*tagged from Cornwall*)  
 Mackerel (*from Cornwall*)  
 Mahi mahi (*handline caught*)  
 Pilchard or Sardine, European (*from Cornwall*)  
 Red Mullet (*not from Mediterranean*)

Salmon, Atlantic (*farmed organic only*)  
 Scampi, Dublin Bay  
 Prawn or Langoustine (*pot caught from west of Scotland*)  
 Spider Crab (*pot caught only*)  
 Tilapia (*farmed*)  
 Trout, brown or sea and rainbow (*farmed organic*)  
 Tuna, albacore (*pole and line, handline or trail-caught from South Pacific or South Atlantic*)  
 Tuna, skipjack (*pole and line or handline-caught from Pacific western & central Pacific or Maldives*)  
 Tuna, yellowfin (*pole and line, handline or trail-caught from Pacific (western & Central or Atlantic)*)  
 Whiting (*from English Channel*)  
 Winkle (*hand picked*)

A list of fish to avoid is on the next page.

## Which fish should we be eating and which should we avoid

**Fish to avoid** – avoid these fish at present. They come from unsustainable, overfished and/or badly managed fisheries, and/or have high levels of by-catch.

Alfonsinos or golden eye perch	Halibut, Atlantic ( <i>wild caught</i> )	Sea Bass ( <i>trawl caught only</i> )
Anchovy ( <i>from the Bay of Biscay</i> )	Halibut, Greenland ( <i>from overfished stocks*</i> )	Shark ( <i>inc deepwater sharks</i> )
Argentine	Herring ( <i>from depleted stocks*</i> )	Skate
Black Scabbardfish ( <i>trawled from Northern stocks</i> )	Ling	Snapper ( <i>mutton, cubera &amp; northern red</i> )
Blue Ling	Marlin ( <i>blue, Indo-Pacific &amp; white</i> )	Sturgeon ( <i>wild caught</i> )
Brill ( <i>from North Sea only</i> )	Monkfish or Anglerfish ( <i>from overfished stocks*</i> )	Swordfish ( <i>except from US managed fishery</i> )
Chilean Seabass or Patagonian Toothfish ( <i>from non-certified fisheries</i> )	Rat or RabbitFish	Tiger Prawn ( <i>except organically farmed</i> )
Cod, Atlantic ( <i>from depleted stocks*</i> )	Ray ( <i>except mature cuckoo spotted and starry</i> )	Tuna ( <i>All bigeye and bluefin tuna. Albacore from N.Atlantic, Mediterranean &amp; Indian Ocean</i> )
Dogfish or Spurdog	Red or Blackspot Sea Bream	Turbot ( <i>wild caught from North Sea only</i> )
Dover Sole ( <i>from overfished stocks*</i> )	Redfish or Ocean Perch	Tusk ororsk
Eel, European	Roundnose Grenadier	Wolf fish
Greater Forkbeard	Salmon, Atlantic ( <i>wild caught</i> )	* For detailed information on species, fishing methods and depleted or over-fished stocks, visit <a href="http://www.fishonline.org">www.fishonline.org</a>
Grouper	Scampi, Dublin Bay	
Haddock ( <i>from Rockall only</i> )	Prawn or Langoustine ( <i>N, NW Spain and Portuguese coast</i> )	
Hake, European ( <i>from Southern stocks</i> )		

### Marine Conservation Society urges ban on balloon releases

The Marine Conservation Society (MCS) has renewed its call to ban balloon releases. MCS has gathered information about deaths from ingestion (swallowing) and entanglement in balloons and balloon string. Marine turtles and seabirds are particularly at risk, as they feed on

marine creatures that float at the surface, like jellyfish, and mistake floating balloons for their jellyfish prey. Other species such as whales, dolphins and fish have also died as a result of balloon releases. The number of balloons found on UK beaches has also increased in the last ten years.

## FoE's CYW – Does the Planning Bill help tackle Climate Change?

The Government has published the Planning Bill outlining drastic changes to the way major infrastructure projects are decided. The Bill could herald a new wave of carbon-intensive development of roads, airports and a new generation of nuclear power stations. Planning Advisor Naomi Luhde-Thompson sheds some light.

### **Q. What's this Planning Bill?**

The Planning Bill seeks to simplify the decision-making process around major infrastructure projects, which is not a bad idea but the Government's proposals are seriously alarming.

### **Q. What will the decision-making process look like?**

There will be national policy statements for roads, aviation, energy and ports etc. Some of these statements will be site specific, however you will not have the opportunity to present your view in person if these proposals affect you - a situation that is quite likely to be legally unworkable as well as very different from the present. The Infrastructure Planning Commission will then take decisions on a huge range of major infrastructure projects with regard to these stated policies. The proposed Commission will be an unelected body that can make and amend legislation giving it powers that are unprecedented in this country.

### **Q. What about my right to have a say?**

There is an inquiry process for each development's application in the Planning Bill, but it will be radically different from the way inquiries are currently run. Your right to a say will be

limited to written representations and an open mike session at the end of the inquiry after the evidence has been presented. Currently, if you register your interest, you can speak at any point during an inquiry and cross-examine other people who are taking part. Planning Inspectors are trained to assess your evidence with at least equal importance if not more than that presented by the developer's lawyers.

### **Q. What is in the Bill on local planning?**

There is a new duty on local authorities to consider climate change. This is a vital part of the implementation at local level and is backed up by the national Planning Policy Statement on Climate Change. There is also a new 'community infrastructure levy', which is basically a rehash of the existing way that councils acquire increased value of land allocated for development to pay for local infrastructure. There are also changes to permitted development, meaning that you will no longer need to apply for permission to install solar panels under certain conditions.

### **Q. What about nuclear power?**

The development of nuclear power stations is going to be a big problem if we don't get the inquiry process sorted out. For instance, in the Bill Wales does not have delegated powers on energy - probably because the Government is considering building nuclear power stations there. Essentially the inquiry process has stopped some nuclear power stations being built because of safety issues.

*/continued on page 14*

## FoE's CYW – The Big Ask – What comes next?

The countdown is now on to an internationally ground-breaking Climate Change Law. Neil Kingsnorth gives us the lowdown on what's to come.

After months and years of hard graft and tireless campaigning the end is in sight. A draft Climate Bill exists and in February it will be heading back from the Lords, where it's currently being debated, to the House of Commons. Once there the Bill will be interrogated by a committee and then there will be a full debate on the issue in April. It will most likely reach a version that the Government takes to a vote in the summer. After that, whichever version passes the vote will almost certainly become law.

At the time of going to press, the House of Lords had debated the Bill with Lords from all sides of the house raising Friends of the Earth's three key demands that the Bill needs to:

- include international aviation and shipping
- increase the target of CO2 reduction from 60% to at least 80%
- include tough annual milestones.

Government has felt the heat as Friends of the Earth and other organisations have piled on the pressure from all sides. Hints have been dropped that Government might agree to a target of 80 per cent. And while they've not yet said they would agree to annual targets, they are toying with the idea of beefing up 'annual interim milestones' within five yearly targets, which is a big step in

the right direction. Nothing's certain in politics, but we're winning the arguments.

Two and a half years of campaigning, media coverage, running stalls, meeting MPs, putting on film showings, quizzes and social events, meeting MPs again, running more stalls and all the rest of the magical activism you've created have led to where we are now. And the final push is on for this law to do the job it needs to do, with the muscle it needs to make it happen.

### **The final push**

We're putting on the pressure from all angles to try to win the three arguments that will make this law work. Come April we're hoping groups will join in the final big push - the last period of local group action on the Big Ask and the last chance we have to pile the pressure on and win Friends of the Earth's biggest ever campaign.

### **Day of action**

On Monday 5 April we will be coordinating a day of action involving as many local groups as possible. We'll produce all the resources, advice, action packs and information you need and you'll be able to use that to run a day of action easily and effectively.

This final co-ordinated push is timed to put the pressure on MPs and remind them of the crucial key demands around the time that the Bill is due to have its second reading in Parliament.

## Climate and Energy info, from Ann Garrett

### **Sellafield Clean-up**

British taxpayers will have to fork out more than £30 billion to clean up Sellafield. It is so contaminated that it take over a century and even then the site will have to stay under indefinite institutional control. These facts were available in a recent white paper.

The British Nuclear group and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority will be responsible. The plan envisages that high-level nuclear waste will be kept on the site for most of this century, with a final storage facility only becoming available in 2075, and that plutonium - the raw material for nuclear bombs - will be stored at Sellafield indefinitely.

### **Greenpeace slams government climb-down on coal-fired power station**

The government has been criticised of bowing to pressure from energy privateers to abandon plans to ensure that that a proposed coal-fired station is built with new technology to help cut emissions. This means that the power plant due to be built at Kingsnorth, Kent should only be built with carbon capture and storage [cc's] privateise. Another £1 billion project has now been planned for Medway.

### **N-power announces Welsh tidal farm**

Energy privateer N-power has announced plans to build one of the world's first commercial tidal energy schemes off the north Wales coast.

The project will be completed by 2011 supplying enough power for up to 6,000 homes, and the scheme will be

sited in an area of 82ft deep open sea known as the Skerries near Anglesey. It will consist of 7 turbines, each likely to stand 29ft 6in above sea level.

### **A kneezy peasy phone charger!**

An electricity-generating knee brace that can charge mobile phones has been invented.

Wearing the invention, an energetic walk can really re-charge the batteries. Volunteers wearing the brace one on each leg found it possible to generate 5 watts of electricity!

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### **Planning Bill and Climate Change** *continued*

Without retaining the current inquiry rules it will be difficult to properly examine developers' proposals.

### **Q. What is Friends of the Earth doing locally?**

As the Bill progresses, we will have amendments and email actions to MPs available for you. For more information go to:  
<http://community.foe.co.uk/campaigns/climate/planning.html>.

### **...and nationally?**

We are lobbying MPs to get a carbon duty into the Bill to ensure that all decisions on major infrastructure must seek to reduce emissions. We will also work hard to ensure that the current inquiry rules, introduced in 2005, are retained along with your right to be heard in person at an inquiry.

## Bromley Friends of the Earth - List of Contacts

### Co-ordinators:

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*temporarily unavailable – apologies*

### Letters to the Editor

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

### Need a lift to meetings?

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

### Disclaimer

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

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

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 also contact us if an item has been sold/obtained, so that it can be removed from the Newsletter.

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

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**Non-members' Section**

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

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

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

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

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

Name.....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Email Address.....

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

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