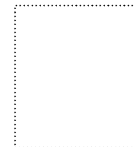


Friends of the Earth

Bromley

March 2009 No. 254 Newsletter

Bromley FoE: inquiries to Birch House, Grays Road, Westerham TN16 2JB
email: raywatson@iclway.co.uk; website: www.bromleyfoe.co.uk



March Meeting

Friends Meeting House,
Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

Recycling and Waste Matters
John Bosley (LB of Bromley)

Tuesday 3rd March
7.30pm.

Everyone welcome – bring a friend

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by
SUNDAY 15TH MARCH. Contact details inside front cover.

Our next stall in Bromley High Street is Saturday 4th April, 2pm

Diary dates:**March 3rd (Tues)****Bromley FoE's March meeting** – Waste and Recycling Matters – speaker is John Bosley from Bromley Council
Bromley FoE stall, Recycling in Bromley, Bromley High Street, outside Caffè Nero, 2pm-4pm**April 4th (Sat)****April 7th (Tues)****Bromley FoE's April meeting** – John Williams on “Darwin’s Bees”**May 5th (Tues)****Bromley FoE's May meeting** – Richard Priestley on “Global Problems, Global Solutions”**June 2nd (Tues)****Bromley FoE's June Meeting** (*postponed from February*)
– Richard Hines on FoE's Food Chain campaign**Report on January's ten-minute AGM and February's (non-)meeting**

Bromley FoE's AGM featured thanks to all those group members who had worked hard during the year organising the monthly meetings, campaign activities, the Newsletter and social occasions, plus admin items like membership and subscriptions.

The accounts were approved after some questions and campaigners and officers were re-elected en bloc. A new campaigner is Peter Gandolfi who will report to the group on the food/farming campaign.

February's meeting was cancelled because of the bad weather, so nothing to report, apart from the two of us who turned up ignorant of the cancellation.

ITEM WANTED

Portable television, 1990s style, with teletext and remote control.

Contact Sheila Brown, 01689-851605

BROMLEY FoE STALL

Saturday 4th April
Recycling in Bromley

Bromley High Street,
outside Caffè Nero, 2pm-4pm

Next Newsletter - copy details:

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

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

SOS – Save Our Store

It was more than a blow to local residents when Marks & Spencer announced that their Biggin Hill branch was to close -- it was a blow for our Shop Local campaign.

The point here was that Biggin Hill is a fairly isolated corner of the London Borough of Bromley and the locals would have to travel 20 or 30 minutes by car to an alternative shopping centre. So Bromley FoE sent this urgent appeal to Sir Stuart Rose, chairman of M&S.

Dear Sir Stuart

I have been asked to write to you as secretary of Bromley Friends of the Earth and on behalf of the many local residents concerned by your announcement that your store at Biggin Hill is likely to close.

Although part of the London Borough of Bromley, Biggin Hill is very much a community that is divorced from the rest of the borough. Thus, the loss of your store will mean that residents will have to drive 20 to 30 minutes to reach other shopping facilities.

This will inconvenience a large number of people and add to road congestion and air and noise pollution. There will also be an economic effect through job losses, money leaving the area etc. It may also lead to loss of business for your company as people shop elsewhere.

We fully understand the commercial imperatives behind your announcement but we appeal to you to:

1. Reprieve the Biggin Hill store for one year to allow a campaign to ensure that residents fully understand that it is necessary to 'use it or lose it'. Other local businesses would support such a drive.
2. Consult store staff to discover what cost savings could be made.
3. Use the year to research thoroughly the selection of goods carried in the store.

Finally, this store has made itself an integral part of the 'small town' atmosphere of Biggin Hill. Its loss would add to the economic decline of the locality. Please reconsider!

Information announced at Bromley Council's open evening:

- The borough's recycling rate has now reach 38 per cent
- An experimental scheme to recycle kitchen waste has been successful and will be extended to other parts of the borough
- The cost of dumping rubbish in landfill sites is now £80 per tonne
- The council is pushing to have the Docklands Light Railway extended from Lewisham to Bromley
- The borough does not have a plan to measure or improve air quality because it 'does not regard it as important enough'
- A plan to revamp Orpington shopping centre has been agreed but is dependent on developers being attracted to the area.

Bromley's AAP - A different view on the town centre plans

Bromley Council has come forward with a set of plans to re-develop the town centre -- more shops, more housing, renewal of old buildings and the like.

But new is not always good and Bromley FoE has some different views on the way ahead. We have sent these suggestions to the council for consideration as the plan moves to its next stages:

Please consider these points when reviewing the Draft Area Action Plan:

1. Development of the town centre will add to air and noise pollution already suffered in the central area.

2. Make a firm commitment that all planning permissions include a requirement that buildings are constructed to a high level of eco-friendliness e.g insulation, use of renewable energy, water recycling

3. There is little reference in the plan to the need for public transport improvements. Such improvements – necessary to avoid adding to congestion – should be in place before major re-developments add an additional burden to the town centre, as will surely happen if the stated desire for additional retail space and more homes is achieved. This requirement should be written into the plan.

4. Development of the area will undoubtedly rob the borough's outlying shopping centres of customers. Any re-development of the central area should go hand-in-hand with plans to assist other shopping centres such as Beckenham, Orpington, West

Wickham, Petts Wood, Chislehurst and Biggin Hill etc.

5. Development of the town centre will add to air and noise pollution already suffered in the central area.

6. Any re-development should carefully consider the impact of high buildings on the visual environment – does Bromley really want to look like Croydon as an example of dense building and extreme urbanisation? Or should it try to retain its user-friendly market town ambience?

7. Any development should increase rather than decrease the current pedestrian area and this should be a stated aim written in the plan.

8. Green spaces within the area should be protected and this should be firmly stated in the plan.

9. To combat the increased traffic and people movements that will be caused by retail development, office jobs should be moved out of the area. This would include moving Bromley Council staff to outlying areas of the borough (see point 2 above). Note that many council buildings (libraries, social services, schools etc) are already de-centralised so the above is not a radical change.

10. We call for a heritage survey to ensure that older buildings of character are protected.

11. Plans should protect the existence of the farmers' market.

12. Make a firm commitment to improve leisure facilities, especially for the young, at night as well as day, thus giving the town centre some 'life' at night.

Campaigns information, *from Ann Garrett*

Campaigns

The stall on April 4th will now focus on recycling leaflets from Bromley Council and will be from 2.00 - 4.00 pm outside Caffe Nero, Bromley High Street. The Livestock and Farming materials won't be available till June, so we plan to hold that stall on June 20th - same place and time!

Meanwhile - a reminder to keep the cards 'Supporting a Renewable Energy Revolution' coming in from local groups and organisations!

Livestock and Farming Campaign

Here are a few basic facts. [More information will be in the June newsletter].

Intensive soy production in Latin America is dependent on, and fuelled by, industrial farming in the UK and Europe. Friends of the Earth is calling on the Government to revolutionise the way we produce meat and dairy to break this chain, and to help protect the environment and livelihoods while supporting a thriving and sustainable livestock sector in the UK.

The UK Government should:-

1. Stop spending taxpayers' money on subsidising livestock.
2. Introduce new legislation to ensure public money is not spent on environmentally damaging unhealthy food.
3. Address the climate change impact of livestock production.
4. Change global investment policy.
5. Fund research and development into sustainable farming.

6. Make UK companies more accountable for impact on the environment.

7. Revise the Sustainable

Consumption and Production Strategy.

8. Review European Trade Policy.

Nuclear Power Plants Danger

New nuclear reactors planned for Britain will produce many times more radiation than previous reactors that could be rapidly released in an accident, it has been revealed.

The revelations - based on information produced in documents released by the nuclear industry itself, calls into doubt repeated assertions that the new European Pressurised Reactors, will be safer than the old atomic power stations they replace.

The information in the documents shows that the EPRs produce very much more of the isotopes technically known as the 'immediate release fraction' of the nuclear waste, because they could get out more rapidly after an accident.

Dr John Large an independent nuclear consultant has also expressed his concern. EDF have said that they are confident the new plants can be built and run safely.

Saving the World!

The Scottish Climate Change bill currently before parliament has been described as genuinely world-leading by FoE. It has been labelled as the best bit of climate change legislation anywhere in the world.

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Wrong, Mr Mayor!

Politicians often get in the way of progress purely for reasons of dogma. Mayor Ken introduced a congestion charge for west London, new mayor Boris kills it off – even though everyone now accepts that the concept works, reducing traffic by around 30,00 cars a day or a 15per cent drop – a figure that Boris Johnson calls ‘marginal’ and the CO2 saving as ‘trivial’. There is nothing ‘marginal’ or ‘trivial’ about it when every contribution, however small, is needed if emissions targets are to be met.

Plus there is the cost to Londoners of removing all the technical equipment and street furniture that was installed at a cost of £100 million. Then there is a loss of approximately £50m in revenue for Transport for London, money that has to be found from somewhere unless public transport is to be squeezed.

The scrapping plan is currently going through a consultation process. We can only hope that the mayor sees sense and shows his green credentials rather than, as Green Party assembly member Jenny Jones, said: ‘He has shown his true colours – petrol blue’.

Clubbing together

But the mayor is not always wrong-headed. He has announced his support for establishing more car clubs in the capital; they work on the principle that members can apply to book a car for an hour or a day. Which means, says Transport for London, that one car club vehicle takes 20 private cars off the road.

The mayor is sponsoring a scheme where he will pay for two years’ membership of a car club for anyone scrapping their car. With three million cars registered in London there is a long road ahead. But it is a start.

Strictly for the birds

On many occasions the mayor has supported the idea of a new Heathrow being built in the Thames estuary – in the face of criticism from environmentalists who point to the dangers of crashes caused by the tens of thousands of birds who nest there. Just remember the American airliner that had to land on the Hudson River because of a bird strike – and now just think of the campaign to build a huge airport at Lydd in Kent where over 100,000 birds are to be found.

More than that. The owners want to expand the airport right to the edge of the ancient Romney March. Also, it is less than three miles from the two Dungeness nuclear power stations, and two miles and eight miles from the Lydd and Hythe military ranges. Opponents also claim that rare plant and invertebrate and animal populations would be damaged.

There is a Stop the Lydd Airport Development group which is calling for support and a petition can be found at their website.

How to progress

Transport, of course, has to play a major role in reducing CO2 emissions – and it can happen, says some research by the Campaign for Better Transport.

/continued on next page

Transport information, *continued*

It lists a number of actions that could cut greenhouse gas emissions from transport by 20 per cent by 2020, including:

- Give greater rewards for low-carbon cars
- Improve journey planning and alternatives for business
- Increase rail and water freight and improve engine efficiency for lorries
- Cut aviation emissions by increasing teleconferencing, fair taxation of aviation and enhance rail services as an alternative to short-haul flights
- Increase public transport trips by bus and rail, introduce a national rail card and better links between planning and public transport.

And there are many other suggestions, including the highly necessary need to make life easier and safer for cyclists and pedestrians.

Don't be fuelled!

Both Air Zealand and America's Continental Airlines are experimenting with a green fuel derived from either algae or from plants other than edible ones, thus meeting the criticism that bio-fuels take up food production land.

Indeed, the Air New Zealand flight flew for two hours with one engine powered by a mix of fuel derived from the nuts of the jatropha tree and normal jet kerosene. Jatropha usually grow on rough, marginal land.

However, environmentalists argue that this land can be used to grow crops that are being developed for food, point out that millions of acres of it would be required to support even a small part of the world's aviation fuel needs and say that processing the fuel results in a very high level of CO₂ emissions.

Bromley FoE's comments on planned development at the old DSS building, 08/04190/OUT 1 Westmoreland Rd

This is site L in the AAP and is at the bottom of Bromley High Street

We object to the application on these grounds:

1. The height of the proposed building is out of character with the surrounding area, would dwarf important buildings in the locality and also obscure the openness of the view from central Bromley to the Keston ridge.
2. This is already a congested part of the town centre; the development would add further to current traffic problems.
3. The development would cause a loss of privacy for existing buildings in the area.
4. The development calls for a level of density in excess of that of the surrounding area.

Please take these points into consideration when the application is under consideration.

FoE Regional Gathering in London – report from Ann Garrett

I have to confess I only attended the plenary of this which was a talk by Andy Atkins. However I spoke to other people and gathered some more information.

Skills workshops included: finding and keeping members, being a co-ordinator, putting on a great event, working as a team, welcome to FoE (new people). Guess I would have gone being a co-ordinator!

Afternoon skill sharing included: what's happening to local government, the new planning system, campaigning on livestock 2009, and engaging community groups with the Renewables campaign. All useful stuff.

Andy Atkins new Executive Director of FoE spoke of how everything came together in the Climate Bill through achieving the set targets, and that the renewables campaign had mobilised people. He said there had been real changes in the outside world, and that progress had been made in local group's activities.

Sadly the Government seems to have put vast amounts of tax payer's money towards saving the bankers, and that raising petrol prices had been a missed opportunity.

On a positive note - the campaign against airport expansion has brought in more people from different organisations, and there are important national and international links developing.

He felt that Obama's green proposals are promising and could be an

influence on Brown. Creating jobs in environmental projects is a way forward, and it is the responsibility of politicians to find new solutions.

In summary Andy mentioned that it is important to convey the message to people that opportunities can and do exist to make a difference. One of the quickest ways to reduce CO2 is personal responsibility such as installing loft insulation. He stressed that deregulation of businesses can work but within a framework, the Climate Change Bill will require constant monitoring, and that members working with community groups can be actively creative. There is a lot of expertise in Friends of the Earth, and it is important he said to work at local and national level to achieve our aims.

Andy is looking forward to supporting us to seize opportunities in what will be a challenging year - to ensure progress is made in achieving a low carbon economy.

Muriel Passmore from Croydon FoE emailed to say that Howard Whitehead in his opening talk went through some of the 2009 campaign proposals:-

1. 40% cut in CO2 emissions by 2020 and targetting local councils
2. Livestock Bill.
3. Copenhagen in December - International agreement to cut emissions.

From February till April local groups need to discuss which campaign in particular they would like to work on!

Sustainable Energy Partnership – letter to supporters

*Fuel Poverty Bill: Second Reading
Friday 20th March
Green Energy (Definition and
Promotion) Bill: Second Reading
Friday 8th May*

Please lobby your MP to support both these Bills by being in the House and voting for them on the above dates

Welcome to our SEP supporter list! Every year, 20 lucky MPs are successful in the so-called Private Members' Ballot — which gives them a chance to introduce a Bill of their choice in Parliament. After extensive lobbying by our SEP supporters, this year we succeeded in getting two SEP Bills adopted! However, this is just the start of the process, as we now need 100 MPs to be in the House and vote for the Bills at their Second Readings. I am asking you to lobby your local MP to attend the House on 20 March and 8 May.

The Fuel Poverty Bill was adopted, with cross-party support, by David Heath, the Lib Dem MP for Somerton & Frome. Previous campaigning by the Partnership led to the groundbreaking Warm Homes & Energy Conservation Act in 2000 — which placed a duty on the Government to end all fuel poverty in England by 2016 and among vulnerable groups by 2010. But a recent High Court judgment ruled that this duty was in effect merely discretionary.

The Fuel Poverty Bill reinstates the duty and focuses on increasing the energy efficiency of the housing stock. It also requires social tariffs to be offered to vulnerable customers in the

short term. With 5 million UK households unable to afford to heat their homes this winter, the Bill is urgently needed. Its Second Reading is on Friday 20 March.

Meanwhile, Peter Ainsworth MP has chosen to put forward the Green Energy Bill, which is intended actively to encourage the generation of energy from small scale renewable and sustainable sources — key to controlling climate change and to reducing the United Kingdom's worrying reliance on dwindling traditional sources of energy. The Bill is due to have its Second Reading debate on Friday 8 May.

Fridays are always very difficult for MPs to attend —but they are much more likely to do so if asked by constituents. That's why we are asking you now — well ahead of the Bills' Second Reading dates—to do all you can to ensure your MP is one of the 100 MPs that we need to attend so that we can close the debates and ensure the Bills obtain a Second Reading.

I would be grateful therefore if you would write to your MP (at House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA) stressing your strong personal support for these Bills and asking for their commitment to attend on 20th March and 8th May.

Could you please let us know your MP's response? Thank you — and once again a warm welcome to the Sustainable Energy Partnership.

London FoE Co-ordinators' Update

It was great to see so many of you at the regional gathering. It was a great day with around 90 activists networking, taking part in workshops and hearing from Andy Atkins, our executive director. If you attended we hope you enjoyed the day - please let us have your thoughts on how we can improve it further. If you didn't, we hope to see you in May, which when the next gathering will take place.

Remember you can send any local group news for inclusion in this newsletter to howard.whitehead@foe.co.uk - this could be what you are working on, your victories or what you are struggling with. We think it would be really useful to have a local group round up section in the newsletter, but we can only do this with information from you!

Take care, Howard, Katie and Jenny

More time to build pressure on Renewables

The Government will now be publishing its Renewable Energy Strategy in June instead of March. That means we have more time to collect the action cards on renewables. Group should now aim to get them collected and sent off by late April time. If you'd like any support or tips for collecting the cards, contact your Network Developer.

Planning for 2009

By now you should have heard about the campaign package for 2009 at your regional gatherings. The campaigns will launch in May 2009 so it's really important that you set aside a

little time in your next couple of group meetings to think carefully about what you want to work on. If you couldn't make it to your gathering, here's some more information about the campaigns and the process for making your mind up.

Introduction to the Food Chain campaign

Our new Food Chain campaign is up and running, and opportunities to take action are just round the corner. In the meantime you can watch a short video introduction to the campaign, and read our new report on the environmental and social impacts of the intensive livestock industry at http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/real_food/

Important update - budget cuts

Please pass this item to members of your local group at the earliest opportunity.

Like most organisations, Friends of the Earth is planning for uncertain economic times. We have been reviewing income forecasts and you may be aware we have already had to make some cuts to all of our work, including activism. We are planning a much cheaper alternative to the normal Conference in 2009 and we're cutting a few other projects too. Please take a moment to read more and do contact your network developer if you want further information.

PA Renewal and Annual Surveys

Advance warning: Look out for your group's Partnership Agreement mailing in early March. This postal mailing will include the renewal form (which must

/continued on next page

London FoE Co-ordinators' Update - *continued*

be returned by 1st May), the annual How are you? questionnaire and Co-ordinator survey, plus various other important documents (e.g. updated insurance policy, new data protection guidelines, involvement framework etc).

We've made some changes to the Partnership Agreement this year, so please make sure you read the mailing carefully, and inform your group of the new arrangements.

Age of Stupid

Age of Stupid is a new film tackling the issue of climate change, due for release in March. Friends of the Earth is working with the Age of Stupid team to identify the best way to use the film to influence politicians and mobilise support ahead of Copenhagen - we'll let you know more details next month. In the meantime, feel free to phone your local cinema and find out when they're showing it. If you'd like to find out more, you can look at www.ageofstupid.net or, if you're a Facebook user, sign up to the film's page as a 'fan'.

Heathrow third runway - objectors slam decision

The Government gave the green light for a third runway at Heathrow airport, but unexpectedly not to more flights from "mixed mode" on existing runways. The Department for Transport also published an equalities impact assessment, which was triggered by Friends of the Earth's work. Mayor Boris Johnson and the 2M group of local authorities along with NGOs are considering legally challenging the decision.

More details at http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/press_releases/heathrow_15012009.html

Shout About in London

94 schools and youth clubs in London have signed up to our annual Shout about activity week for 11-13 year olds, which will run from 2-6 March 2009. You can get involved with your school or youth group - giving advice to the leader, talking to the pupils about campaigning or helping them to create a "vision".

The Shout about activity week is supported by an information and activity pack, and we can supply promotional materials for you to distribute at any upcoming local events. To find out more, visit www.foe.co.uk/learning, email shoutabout@foe.co.uk or call 0207 566 4086. To work with young people, you must have a Child Protection check carried out. This is easy to do and free of charge.

Campaign info (*cont'd from page 5*)

The Bill sets 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and a cut of 80% by 2050. It also includes international aviation and shipping within its targets.

Stop Climate Chaos believes that if the Scottish Climate Change Bill were sharpened up, it could lead the world by example at Copenhagen as well as setting Scotland on the path of a green economic revival. It is calling for the Bill to act now for a cut in carbon emissions and not delay serious reductions till 2020.

FoE's CYW – 2009: The Front Line – Building on Success

These are the three priorities for the Friends of the Earth network this year.

1. Local Government (working title)

This campaign - launched in May - follows on from The Big Ask and focuses on local action, initially aiming to secure local commitments to bold carbon reductions in 50 places in England and Wales. By supporting local groups to campaign where the opportunities are greatest, we hope to demonstrate what can be done to cut emissions and build support amongst local councils for new powers and funding to cut emissions even further.

The campaign will give local groups the scope to run proactive campaigns within a nationally- supported network through which they can learn and develop ideas from each other and drive towards a big national outcome. The campaign will achieve big steps in tackling climate change in the UK, so that the public start to see change and how it will make their life better.

2. Food Chain

The Food Chain campaign aims to revolutionise the way we produce and consume meat and dairy products. Through a parliamentary bill, it will raise awareness and press for action on the global impacts of intensive meat and dairy farming. It focuses on the impacts of soy farming for animal feed on places like the Atlantic forests of Brazil and Paraguay.

Land clearance for soy is the major driver of deforestation in South America. Individual activism will start in March - and a suite of exciting actions for local groups will be offered from

May and over the summer. We hope that most groups will be able to work on the Food Chain campaign. By doing so, you will help show how our day-to-day behaviour can have an effect on a major global problem, half a world away.

As with The Big Ask, we can show how individuals can act together to create political change and to contribute to the solution of seemingly intractable problems. And we can show how action on the big global problems will help provide livelihoods here and abroad for hard-pressed farmers.

3. Countdown to Copenhagen

Finally, from late summer onwards, we will start to focus attention on the Copenhagen climate summit and the need for an international agreement to drastically cut the emissions causing climate change. Our campaign will give groups and individual activists the opportunity to do something at home on a major global issue that will dominate public attention. We will work alongside Stop Climate Chaos and Friends of the Earth International on events here in the UK and in Copenhagen itself.

Many of you will have learnt more about this campaigns package at the recent Regional Gatherings in January. You'll shortly receive a mailing with more details to help you make up your mind on which campaigns to focus on in 2009. Visit www.foe.co.uk/community or contact your Network Developer for more help in making these decisions.

FoE's CYW - South America

Soy production and the new food chain campaign

Senior Campaigner for the Food Team Clare Oxborrow updates us on her recent research trip to visit Friends of the Earth Paraguay.

Sobrevivencia, which means "survival" in Spanish, is the name of Friends of the Earth Paraguay. During the course of my trip, I realised just how apt this name is: both Indigenous Peoples and the fantastic range of biodiversity native to Paraguay are struggling to survive.

I went to Paraguay to witness the impacts of the soy industry on the environment and local communities — I wanted to bring back evidence for our new Food Chain campaign of the need for political action to tackle the impacts of our meat and dairy industry in the UK.

Land distribution in Paraguay is highly inequitable; 2 per cent of the population own 70 per cent of land. In 2008 2.5 million hectares of soy were planted — an area the size of Belgium.

Local communities grow crops like maize, watermelon, sesame and mandioca — a type of yucca — to feed themselves and for local markets. However, as soy plantations expand, communities are forced out. I arrived a few weeks after the soy planting season. One family I met lived right next to a GM soy field. They are routinely subjected to the chemical spray drift from herbicide.

They call the chemicals "matotodo" or "kill everything", because of the effects on their crops and animals. After only

ten minutes, I could taste the chemicals and feel them irritating my skin. The Brazilian landowner has tried to buy their land countless times but for now the family is resisting attempts to force them out, despite suffering constant headaches and stomach problems.

The legacy of a dictatorship and 60 years of one-party rule means that campaigning is very different in Paraguay. Whilst Sobrevivencia do work on legislation (they were recently successful in getting a clause in a new law designating water as a human right), there is little enforcement so much campaigning focuses on resistance, awareness raising and capacity building.

Soy monocultures are dependent on factory farms in the UK and Europe — and vice versa. It's clear that we need to work together in the 'producing' and 'consuming' countries to tackle the system as a whole. Without exception the people I met wanted their stories to be told in the UK. They believe that pressure on the government from outside Paraguay will help get the change they are fighting for and hoped our Food Chain campaign will help this happen.

Sobrevivencia also work on solutions. Staff and volunteers own and run two organic farms, where they run training courses on organic and biodynamic agriculture for local authorities, students and the surrounding communities. This gives people practical alternatives to the soy model.

Letter from Crisis to their supporters

Our Crisis Christmas centres have closed their doors for another year. We have been waiting for all the information to arrive so that we can share the highlights of our activities over eight days of Christmas with you. (Nine centres – 5 day and 4 residential, 1900 guests of whom 500+ received medical attention, overnight accommodation for 500+ of London's most vulnerable people, 8425 volunteers giving an average of 24 hours each.)

So much of our work at Christmas is dependent on the generosity of our supporters. We were able to secure the buildings we needed for our temporary centres and an amazing 8000 volunteers came on board to help set up the centres and look after our guests over the seven days.

Despite a significant drop in company donations, which we expect to continue, thanks to the response from you and other supporters we reached our fundraising target. This meant we had the resources we needed and have more to spend on our services for homeless people in the difficult year ahead—We were particularly touched by the words of kindness that accompanied the donations we received. They are always a highlight for the supporter services team and demonstrate the loyalty and compassion of our supporters.

Crisis Christmas enables us to put a spotlight in the media on homelessness as an ongoing problem in the UK. This year we took advantage of this to highlight the impact of the recession on ordinary

people's lives and at the same time to ensure that those who are already homeless are not forgotten.

The response to our media coverage left us in no doubt that people appreciate the importance of our Christmas centres and the help they provide. None of which would be possible without your support.

Looking ahead, we are all facing uncertain and difficult times. Many of our new guests at Christmas told stories of recent unemployment and homelessness and we fear the worst is yet to come. During these anxious times our work is more important than ever. We have ambitious plans to increase our reach so we can help more people in more places in the UK. To do this your help is more vital than ever. We know we won't end homelessness overnight or on our own. But we will continue to take a lead, collaborate with others and with your support make change happen.

On behalf of everyone at Crisis, thank you for helping us to end homelessness.

If you have any comments or would like any more information on anything you read, please call the Supporter Services team on 020 7426 3881.

The Crisis Square Mile Run is on June 4th and starts at 7pm in Paternoster Square, near St Paul's Cathedral. To find out more, please visit www.crisis.org.uk/events, email events@crisis.org.uk or phone 020-7426-3825.

Bromley Friends of the Earth - List of Contacts

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Campaigns –

Transport:

Ray Watson 01959-571566

Climate and Energy:

Ann Garrett 020-8460-1295

Food and Ethical Farming:

Peter Gandolfi details below

Planning and development:

Tamara Galloway 01689-855352

tamaragalloway@yahoo.com

Bromley FoE web site:

www.bromleyfoe.co.uk

Peter Gandolfi

famgando@hotmail.com

Letters to the Editor

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

Need a lift to meetings?

If you require a lift to Bromley FoE meetings, please contact Ray Watson or Sheila Brown 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 contact us if an item has been sold/obtained, so that it can be removed from the newsletter.

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

Non-members' Section

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

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

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

Please return this form to: **Bromley FoE, 2 Bucks Cross Cottages, Chelsfield Village, Orpington, 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.

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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