



Friends of the Earth

Bromley

March 2010 No. 267 Newsletter

Bromley FoE: inquiries to Birch House, Grays Road, Westerham TN16 2JB
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March Meeting

Friends Meeting House,
Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

John Breach, Jim Cook, Carole Wells
St Mary Cray Action Group

“Think Globally, Act Locally”
Community initiatives in St Mary Cray

Tuesday 2nd March
7.30pm.

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by
SUNDAY 14TH MARCH. Contact details inside front cover.

Car sharing comes to Bromley – see page 4

Diary dates:**March 2nd (Tues)****Bromley FoE's March meeting** – Local action in St Mary Cray**March 20th (Sat)****Bromley FoE's "Get Serious" stall** in Bromley High Street, 2.00 - 4.00 pm outside Caffe Nero**April 6th (Tues)****Bromley FoE's April meeting****April 25th (Sun)****Bluebell walk in Cudham.** More details at the March meeting and in the next newsletter.**March meeting – St Mary Cray Action group**

Many small local shops in St Mary Cray have closed, but the St Mary Cray Action Group is fighting back.

In recent months a weekly country market has started up, and a community Tea Room has been built to an environmentally friendly design

Recycling of unwanted CDs - continued

Peter Gandolfi writes: As a follow up to last months article on the potential of recycling CDs, I arranged by phone to visit the Vividor recycling site in Canning Town, completed the necessary paperwork, and arranged a day to visit.

I took a batch of about 1000 CDs (This was all I found I could carry on public transport), to the site about a mile walk from West Ham underground station. Now I know where it is, future visits will be easier, I plan to visit around every month or so. Scrap CDs for recycling can be given to me at monthly meetings, or by arrangement.

Contributions Wanted for the Newsletter

Please send contributions, up to 450 words, to the editor at the address below.

Next Newsletter - copy details:

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor **by SUNDAY 14TH 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

February meeting report, *Annette Rose*

Ewa Prokop, Bromley's Countryside Projects Manager on Biodiversity in Bromley

Ewa told us that it was the International Year of biodiversity this year. One of the key projects she is involved with is the Nomination for a World Heritage Site of the Downe area. The nomination is founded in its cultural and scientific value.

Usually nominations are based on their relation to the natural landscape, archaeological sites or traditional and industrial heritage. In comparison, the Downe site could be seen as relatively mundane.

So what is so special about it? Its specialness is linked to Darwin and his studies of species and habitats. Through his explorations around Down House we find out how important the links between species and habitats are. The site covers Keston, Downe Village and house, Cudham, Downe Valley and Cudham Valley including Blackbush Shaw. Darwin explored all these areas, collecting specimens and testing them.

Ewa gave the example of the Sundew plants found in the bog area of Keston Common. He tested them with many different chemicals and under different conditions to see how they would change or thrive. This plant no longer survives. It was not looked after. More effort is now put into conserving habitat. Darwin was very much part of the community and he was friends with Lubbock.

The landscape has not changed much from Darwin's time, although some change is normal and wildlife adapts to it. As part of the application, evidence has to be shown of positive management. There is a project called 'The Discovering Darwin Project' which aims to involve the community and has an education programme.

The Beeche Centre at High Elms is an important part in the education process. Access for the public is extremely important. The World Heritage Team also looks at wider aspects such as looking at the surrounding areas, its reflection on other sites such as our national parks and issues such as climate change. Climate change will produce a shift northwards of a lot of species.

Beeche Centre

She went on to speak a little more about the Beeche Centre and its popularity with the public. Events are run which involve the whole family such as the recent family tree event, where people compared their family trees to Darwin's and from that the tree of life. The centre also encourages more people to become involved in conservation. There is a Friends of Beeche group who work to improve access and engage with the public. Vehicles that give access for disabled people to the woodland paths have been very popular. Programmes such as Springwatch have helped people connect to their local area.

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Transport info – Ray Watson, transport campaigner

Car sharing in Bromley

It has taken more than a year to set up, but Bromley now has the beginnings of a car-sharing scheme. The borough's first car is stationed at Sherman Road, Bromley North, and it is available to anyone who joins the City Car Club, which operates similar schemes in inner-London boroughs. The company claims that every new City Car rids the world of 20 privately-owned cars, thus reducing CO2 emissions.

Under the scheme you pay only when you use the car, with fees working out at about £5 an hour plus discounts for longer periods. While no maintenance or repair costs fall on the user, petrol is extra, with the first 50 miles free. City Car Club's initial joining fee is £50. Companies can also join. (0845 330 1234).

The scheme has been debated in Bromley for more than a year, mainly due to persuading the council to donate a permanent parking space. Other car-share companies operate in London boroughs and it is to be hoped that more cars will become available to take privately-owned vehicles off the streets.

On your bike!

Look out for some more support for cyclists from Transport for London. This year will see the first of a whole network of cycle superhighways to link outer-London boroughs with the centre of London.

Also coming this year is London's own cycle hire scheme following the success of similar projects in various

cities including Paris. Bike hire will be free for the first half-hour, £1 for one hour and £6 for two hours. There will be 6000 cycles available throughout the capital.

TfL says that half of all car trips in outer London are of less than two miles, a distance that can be covered by bike in about 10 minutes.

Long wait for a train

The debate over whether high speed rail links should be built across the country – see last month's transport column - will soon come to a head following the Government's announcement that it will publish a white paper later this month. But don't get too excited.

Parliamentary insiders reckon that a bill will take three years to pass, followed by a period to get the financing in place, construction to begin in 2017 and trains starting to run in 2025.

It will be a long wait if you are standing on platform two...

And talking of delays...

There seems to be no end to the blame game being played over the mega work to update the Underground. The contractor, Tube Lines, blames the Mayor of London and Transport for London for not allowing enough weekend closures for the work to be done. The Mayor says the contractor is disorganised and charging too much.

/continued on next page

February meeting report, *continued* + Transport info, *continued*

February report, continued

Hedgerows

A new leaflet, 'Setting the Boundaries Naturally' has been produced. Hedgerows are species rich and they make corridors for wildlife and support many species including bats that eat the insects found in hedgerows. It has been shown that bats follow the route of hedgerows and routes change when hedges are removed. Hedges are a cultural part of our landscape. Hedgerows are quite well protected and there are regulations to stop their removal. Other advantages of them are that they prevent erosion, limit noise pollution and cause resistance to dust particles. There are events at High Elms to promote hedge laying techniques.

OPAL

Ewa told us about the Open Air Network Laboratories. They carry out surveys such as looking at lichens, mosses and plants. Lichens can be an indicator for air health. Opal provides baseline information so that future changes can be recorded. They consider how good local habitats are and how we make them better. They have studied earthworms and how they are an important part of the food chain. Darwin described how species are dependent upon each other.

Bromley Biodiversity Action Plan

This has been in existence for 10 years and its aim is to set local targets for the borough. We are lucky enough to have a wide range of habitats. Knowledge of stag beetles has grown enormously. There are also regional

targets and meetings are held across London to set targets.

Bromley's plans for the International Year of Biodiversity include the following. Raising the profile of the local area, possibly making cluster groups in smaller areas of the borough. Have events in different areas to involve the public. This may include logging different species of trees and birds. Practical activities to help local wildlife. Lots of organisations will be involved. Ewa invited the audience to consider if they would like to get involved and possibly give talks to other local groups.

During questions, Ewa answered some queries about the protection of garden environments. She explained the difficulties in this. She mentioned the loss of front gardens. She finished by stressing the great importance of protecting the greenness of the borough.

Links-

www.darwinslandscape.co.uk

www.bromleybiodiversity.co.uk

Transport report, *continued*

All of which is no help to the three million people a day who use the network -- especially those who travel on the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines where the work is taking place. But here is a crumb of comfort: the upgrade for the Jubilee line should be completed in October, says Tube Lines. Excellent! It is only a year late.

Campaigns info, Ann Garrett, campaigns co-ordinator

Report on 'The Forecast'

The Forecast was a play performed at The Greenwich Playhouse which I managed to see on the last day. It explored some of the issues relating to climate change, and was about three people who are drifting on a raft and have no food or water.

In the programme brochure it is described as ' a play written in response to climate change and is a comedy of survival on a globe fast running out of steam'.

The company Marvin and the Cats all trained at the internationally acclaimed Jacques Lecoq mime school in Paris, so the style of the show was physical theatre. There were also moments of satire, serious realism [e.g. when the characters were trying to ration their one bottle of water and one of them drank it up in selfish frenzy] and also political statements about over - consumption and consumerism.

It was quite original in the use of frozen symbolic images and choral speech chanting, and was often very stylised. Personally I would have liked a few more facts and figures, but the intention was to entertain rather ' lecture ' the messages in an obvious way, and it was presented with great energy and imagination.

Despite the sceptics, Climate Change must remain a priority

There has been great concern at the damage being done by climate sceptics, especially bad in the run-up to the Copenhagen climate conference.

What is worrying is that an orchestrated campaign is being waged against climate change science to undermine public acceptance of man-made global warming. Recently for example climate sceptic bloggers broadcast stories about casting doubts on scientific data predicting loss of the Amazon rainforest.

There is no doubt that the whole matter is linked to big business and corporate interests. ExxonMobil is a key player behind the scenes, having donated hundreds of thousands of dollars in the past few years to climate change sceptics. They have issued a statement to counteract criticism: ' We have the same concern as people everywhere - and that is how to provide the world with the energy it needs while reducing greenhouse gas emissions'.

Get Serious and Food Chain Campaigns

At the time of writing this I am waiting to hear about arrangements from Liz Hutchins, the FoE parliamentary worker, in organising a planning meeting to lobby Bob Neill MP, Shadow Planning Minister about the Get Serious campaign. A meeting will also be organised with Jenny Bates and Julie Higgins of London FoE to prepare for lobbying local councillors.

Meanwhile - keep getting the cards signed for your councillors to receive and support our stall on Saturday March 20th from 2.00 - 4.00 pm outside Caffè Nero in Bromley High Street.

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Office and Business Waste Recycling and Green Recycling in Bromley

Sheila Brown writes: I recently exchanged emails with Roberto Farina, Bromley's Project Manager, Waste Services, who came to talk to our group last year about recycling in Bromley. I was concerned that businesses do not enjoy the same level of service as domestic homes and asked him to clarify the situation.

Obviously businesses generate huge amounts of waste, most noticeably paper waste, but I had gathered from a local business there is no kerbside recycling pick-up and that they are even **charged** for recycling pick-up.

I asked if there was any truth in this as surely the Council would wish to work toward dramatically reducing the amount of recyclable material that

goes into landfill, and with offices and businesses producing so much more waste than homes do, surely they should be a major target area?

Roberto's reply: "Bromley does not currently offer businesses a recycling scheme because of our legal obligation to deliver an optimum service to residential properties. Reasons as follows:

1) Sheer volume of businesses within the Bromley borough would mean more lorries and more crews needed – thus the service could not be free as nothing is and the cost would be put upon the taxpayer (uproar from our upstanding residents to follow!!)

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Photo below is from *The Forecast* – see Ann Garrett's report for "review"



Campaigns info, *continued*

We will also have the new Fix the Food Chain cards on the stall aiming to get MPs to sign the new EDM 194 and building alliances with farmers.

South East Network Meeting

This took place on January 14th and was attended by Bexley, Greenwich, and Southwark representatives and myself from Bromley. We reported on activities from our groups and then 'workshopped' ideas about how to gain and retain new members. Two of the main suggestions were: - the effectiveness of linking with other organisations in our own areas, and advertising in the local press, shops and community centres. The other issue discussed was the importance of supporting struggling FoE groups.

FoE Regional Gathering

The event held in London on February 16th was well supported and as usual was a useful networking experience.

I attended a campaigning strategy workshop during which we produced ideas, in my group specifically, about opposing local Tesco developments! As well as contacting the media it was suggested that civic societies could provide valuable expertise and influence, as ours in Bromley certainly does.

After this there was a session devoted to local campaign and issues networking surgeries, which enabled people to catch up on developments. I focussed on Get Serious and was informed by Liz Hutchins that every council will have a cap on its carbon

budget, and that it is voluntary as to whether councils sign up to the National Indicator System.

Jenny Bates provided facts about the revision of the overarching London Plan which includes revising transport, economic development, a car quality strategy, and health issues. The Plan has to be examined in public this coming Summer, and the main climate target is a 60% reduction in carbon emissions by 2025. The Locally Developed Framework says that boroughs should develop their own targets and proposals. The mayor has to show how the London targets are to be achieved. There is also a useful website to access called ' Shaping London'.

During the plenary session by Andy Atkins, he mentioned that although Copenhagen was disappointing and very confusing from the environmentalist point of view, that at least China and the US are now talking. He said that in the challenges that lie ahead, we must all look for opportunities to push our agendas forward, and that there are potential 'silver linings'.

He stressed the importance of getting our campaigns to local candidates during the run-up to the elections, and to set up local group networks. In terms of the present state of FoE - despite financial constraints it is still in a strong position to be a vital campaigning force. Sixty six councils so far have been lobbied during the Get Serious campaign and the Food Chain campaign should result in a private member's bill.

Office and business waste recycling in Bromley, *continued*

2) Central Government have put obligations on businesses to recycle but unfortunately there is a charge. It is generally a cheaper service but it is still something that has been generated must be paid for to be taken away. (Cost of containers, lorries and crews to collect).

3) Plus there is free enterprise so we could not (legally) continue to under price business collections because we had crews in the area which is why we had to raise our prices last year and which is why we could not supply this service for free.”

I then asked Roberto about **Green waste recycling**. I had heard how somebody took green waste to the tip and was told that the £50,000 digester bought by the Council quickly broke down and is just a white elephant, and the organic waste is either being burnt or being transported elsewhere, despite green waste collections being offered to residents. Again, was there any truth in this, and what is being done to rectify this situation?

Roberto's reply: “The VCU (Vertical Composting Unit) costs around £230,000 and was given free to Bromley through a central grant scheme, however due to animal by-product regulations (and the development of the depot) it cannot be used to produce high quality grade compost as we could only use it for garden waste and not the food waste we collect.

To produce a decent (not high quality compost) it would take 2 days to make just 5 tonnes and it therefore cannot

handle the high volumes of garden waste collected by Bromley borough. The economic cost of running it (energy efficiency and so forth) to produce just 5 tonnes did not warrant the production of composting from it. However we have had several cases of interest for it from businesses that produce either garden or food waste that could run it to dispose of their own waste and we are exploring those avenues.

Our garden waste is currently taken to a composting site in St Pauls Cray and our food waste is taken to an In-Vessel Composting unit in Riddem in Kent where it breaks down the meat and bones at high volume (70 degrees centigrade – certainly not burnt!!) and then naturally composted down.

We would certainly not burn the garden waste as there is no benefit in cost to send it to an incinerator at £65 a tonne when the composting gate fees are less than half the price and we are using local businesses to help us.”

Bromley's Town centre inquiry

Bromley Council's grand plan, otherwise known as the Area Action Plan, to revamp the town centre will move on a stage further later this month when a Government planning inspector will hear views for and against the proposals. It is likely to last eight days or more and begins on March 30th at the Civic Centre. The inspector will make site visits and probably submit his report in the summer.

FoE's 2010 Campaign Guide from Change Your World

Fix the food chain

Thanks to 117 local groups campaigning to Fix the Food Chain last year, a previously little understood issue became something on the Government's to do list. Early Day Motion 845 received 259 signatures, making it one of the most popular of the parliamentary session, and put us in a great position to push on in 2010.

Fix the food chain - What next?

1) Now we're aiming for a law to reduce the environmental impacts of meat and dairy production. Your help is vital. There will be opportunities to engage throughout 2010, and you can check your new Action Guide for more information. Stage one is to persuade your MP to sign our new EDM, and the updated resources will guide you doing this at

www.foe.co.uk/community/foodchain. After the election, we'll shift our focus towards securing a bill through the Private Members' Ballot.

2) Building alliances with farmers will also be a key part of the campaign, and we're launching a project to help groups do this. In addition to guides and resources, we want to help groups develop tailored plans. Please come to our Farmer Training Day on Saturday 6 March — contact olivenhayes@foe.comk, talk to your Network Developer or read your Action Guide for further information.

Get Serious about CO2

We're starting 2010 with real momentum because by the end of 2009, councils of every colour had signed up to cut emissions by at least

40 per cent and to implement an action plan to achieve it. Read more about these successes at:

www.toe.co.uk/cornmunity/campaigns/climate/round_up_21974.html

Get Serious about CO2 - What next?

1) Your local campaigns are still vitally important to demonstrate the political will and the potential for councils to achieve real emissions cuts where it matters. This importance hasn't decreased.

2) There is also a new and exciting opportunity at the national level this year. John Denham, the Secretary of State for Local Government, announced in December that the Government was considering introducing Local Carbon Budgets for councils in England.

We're lobbying hard for that to happen, and for every council to cut emissions in line with the science. We're also calling for more money and support to help councils take action. You can help by asking your councillors to support Local Carbon Budgets, and telling your MP when they do. We'll also be keeping up the pressure in the run-up to the general and local elections to secure lasting commitments to the carbon cuts needed locally and nationally.

Demand Climate Change

More than 45,000 people from 164 countries signed our petition to world leaders; over 750 Friends of the Earth supporters joined The Wave; demonstrations were held in over 100

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Copenhagen – the last word (for now) – from FoE's Earth Matters

Bitter disappointment at the outcome of December's UN climate talks was sweetened by an unprecedented clamour for strong action on behalf of the world's poorest people that will be a measure of any future climate change treaty.

Decision makers picking up the pieces from two weeks of chaotic negotiations could have no doubt about the popular appetite for a strong and fair treaty to stop dangerous climate change.

A powerful global alliance of grassroots organisations — with Friends of the Earth and supporters at its heart — stood by the world's poor countries as they insisted that the rich should commit to tough action on climate change first.

Governments met for two weeks in the Danish capital under the United Nations, ostensibly to forge a binding agreement to avert climate catastrophe. Bullying and dodgy deals by rich countries ended with a damaging accord drafted by the United States, UK, China, Brazil and India. The so-called Copenhagen Accord is worlds away from the legally binding treaty needed to avert catastrophic climate change.

The failure of the EU and the United States to offer enough emissions cuts and money poisoned the talks. Rich countries failed to show leadership. In that context China did not accept a new legally-binding deal.

Developing countries — many of them already feeling the impacts of climate change — resisted strong-arm tactics

from the rich. At one point African countries held up the talks because the Danish hosts were preventing discussion of the Kyoto Protocol, the only legally binding climate agreement.

Friends of the Earth campaigners and supporters stood shoulder to shoulder with the poor countries. We took to the streets in some of the biggest-ever public demonstrations on climate change. Campaigners monitored the talks, shared intelligence and worked with the media. We lobbied and provided legal analysis. We pushed for open, fair and transparent negotiations. In the UK thousands of Friends of the Earth supporters took actions every day targeting key negotiators and influential countries. And we took part in a daily picket of embassies around London.

The Copenhagen Accord's stated aim is to prevent global temperatures rises of more than 2 degrees. But the emissions cuts it envisages spell rises of 3 degrees or more. Finance for developing countries is available only if they sign the accord. Even as the ink was drying on the deal traders were saying the price of carbon would now fall — a clear sign that Copenhagen had failed.

Friends of the Earth believes the voluntary deal makes getting a legally binding treaty more difficult. We are calling on the Government to show real leadership by declaring that it will unilaterally cut emissions by at least 40 per cent by 2020.

Homing in – Andy Atkins writes in FoE's Earth Matters

Battling back from Copenhagen through weather and transport chaos in December it struck me how far from home we all are. The feeble accord that emerged from the climate talks is a world away from what we need: a binding global agreement that safeguards the environment and that is fair to the poorest people on Earth.

Yet with your support we did take a huge step. For the first time at international climate talks environment and development groups worked together as a strong, unified global movement. FoE was central to this. Rich countries found it impossible to sell the final outcome as a triumph and their secret dealing and bullying were exposed as never before.

How we build together on this and other critical advances we've made in the past will have a big influence on the things our leaders do next.

This new decade starts with the UN year of biodiversity. It's a reminder that climate change is but one of the threats to all our well-being. In the months ahead we must win on climate and our natural life-support systems. We need to transform our neighbourhoods into low-carbon communities. And we'll need to convince a new government to put the health of the planet and future generations at the heart of decision-making.

FoE is uniquely placed to get us nearer to these goals; see, for example, how highly we are regarded by top politicians. They point out the critical role that our supporters have played in good environmental policy-

making. Because of you we have a track-record second to none. Thank you. We can only do this with your help. I look forward to working with you in 2010. We can get there.

FoE's Campaign Guide, *continued* different countries and around 10,000 daily actions were taken during December's Copenhagen climate talks.

The message was clear - climate justice now. But rich countries refused to cut their emissions first and fastest, or to put up the money. President Obama - desperate to save face rather than the planet - stitched up a weak, voluntary accord with a few other countries. Our job now is to build a stronger, braver, louder climate justice movement that makes it impossible for politicians to ignore the urgent need for real global action. It is vital that this so-called Copenhagen accord does not become the global agreement. Instead, we need binding emission cuts and money committed.

Demand Climate Change - What next?

We need to get back on the phone, email and the streets. We need to heap pressure on our MPs and to remain defiantly hopeful that together we can do this. We won't let the politicians let us down again, because as Nnimmo Bassey, Friends of the Earth International Chair, said: "By delaying action rich countries have condemned millions of the world's poorest people to hunger, suffering and loss of life as climate change accelerates."

FoE says - Stop Government funding for incinerators

Many local groups are fighting Government funded proposals for large incinerators. If built, they will require huge amounts of waste every year. And burn waste that could be reused, recycled, composted or anaerobically digested.

This makes no sense in the fight against climate change. Incinerators contribute to climate change, even if they generate electricity, by:

- * Generating energy inefficiently: emitting more carbon dioxide than fossil fuel power stations.
- * Burning reusable or recyclable materials: which wastes energy and natural resources.

There are much better alternatives to incineration.

Misspent taxes

The Government is offering councils £2 billion of taxpayer funding to subsidise new waste plants, including many incinerators. The forthcoming general election gives us a chance to call for more sustainable policies on waste management:

- * Moratorium on Government funding for incineration projects.
- * Tax on waste that is incinerated.
- * Targets for Britain to match the best European recycling rates.

Take action - Please send these demands to:

* Nick Herbert MP, Conservative Shadow Secretary of State for the Environment

* Tim Farron MP, Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for the Environment

* Hilary Benn MP, Secretary of State for the Environment

Please send this letter or email to these three -

I am very concerned that the Government is giving councils £2bn pounds of taxpayers money to fund PFI waste projects, many of which are likely to include incineration.

New incinerators will require a fixed amount of waste every day over their 25-30 year lifetime, meaning that we will severely limit our future opportunities to maximise both recycling and the anaerobic digestion (AD) of separately collected food waste.

DEFRA modelling already predicts that there will be too many residual waste plants (like incinerators) built by 2020. But this prediction is likely to be an underestimate, as they have assumed that waste will grow in volume - in reality it is reducing - and that recycling rates only reach 50%, when it is clear that much higher rates can be achieved.

The more excess plants there are, the more they will suck in waste that should be recycled or go to AD. For example, in a number of European countries, including Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany, they already have too many incinerators, and don't recycle as much as they could.

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FoE on incinerators *continued* ++ CAAT on BAE and SFO

Instead, technologies for residual waste treatment should be flexible, able to scale down capacity as recycling rates increase (e.g. as food waste collection spreads) or waste volumes decrease (as has happened in the recession), and should be based on approaches with the best resource efficiency and climate performance.

In addition to stopping public funding for incineration, we need to make sure that recycling is always cheaper than incineration. Landfill tax and the landfill allowance trading scheme are successfully driving waste out of landfill, but these only act to push material one step up the hierarchy. However, work carried out for the Treasury in the past has shown that the environmental damage from incineration is higher than for landfill, and that an incineration tax is justified in environmental and social terms.

A tax on incineration will help ensure that recycling is the more desirable option, particularly for commercial and industrial waste. Such a tax has already helped other parts of Europe reach high recycling rates. We should be aiming to do the same.

With the election coming soon, now is a great opportunity to commit your party to (i) a moratorium on public funding for incineration projects, (ii) a tax on the incineration of waste; and (iii) a commitment for Britain to match best European recycling rates.

Please could you inform me of your party's plans in this area.

BAE guilty but escapes court -

CAAT and The Corner House are shocked and angered by the decision of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) to settle with BAE Systems. As a result of the settlement there will be no opportunity to discover the truth behind alleged bribery and corruption in the many BAE deals that were under investigation by the SFO.

While the acceptance of guilt in relation to Tanzania is welcome, the investigations related to other countries were far more significant. Only last week the SFO charged a former BAE agent with corruption in relation to deals with several European countries.

The SFO settlement was announced in conjunction with the US Department of Justice whose fine concerned BAE's deals with Saudi Arabia. While the combined fine is more significant, the UK penalty of £30mn is a tiny price for BAE to pay to see the end of the investigations that had been gathering evidence for years.

Kaye Stearman for CAAT, says:

"CAAT is outraged and angry that the allegations about BAE will not be aired in a criminal court and that the SFO has accepted a plea bargain relating only to the smallest deal. After the Government stopped the SFO's inquiry into the company's Saudi deals, it was even more important the truth about its dealings in central and eastern Europe and Africa was made public. One day a former BAE agent appears in court charged with corruption, the next BAE is let off for an accounting misdemeanour."

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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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