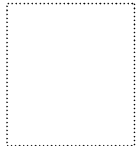


**Friends of the Earth**

**Bromley**

# March 2013 No. 303 Newsletter

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

*Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley*

### The “Make It Better” Campaign

Improving the way our products are made

*Richard Dyer, Campaigner: Make it Better Campaign,  
Economics and Resource Use Programme – FoE*

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March - 7.30pm.**

### *In this Issue:*

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

**\*\*\* SUNDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH \*\*\***

Contact details inside front cover.

***Make It Better – Campaign stall, Bromley High Street, March 16<sup>th</sup> – see page 6***

**Diary dates:**

**Mar 5 (Tue)**                    **Bromley FoE's March Meeting**  
Richard Dyer, campaigner: Make it Better campaign and  
Economics and Resource Use Programme

**Mar 16 (Sat)**                    **Bromley FoE High Street Stall** (*more info on page 6*)

**March 19<sup>th</sup> (Tue)**                Sevenoaks FoE's March Meeting  
Recycling - Discussion

**Apr 2 (Tue)**                    **Bromley FoE's April Meeting**  
Dr Nikki Gammans, Bumblebee Project Officer

**May 7 (Tue)**                    **Bromley FoE's May Meeting**  
Sue Holland, Bromley's Biodiversity and Natural Heritage  
Officer

**Bromley FoE's March meeting - more info**

**FoE's Make it Better Campaign**

The Make it Better campaign is all about improving the way that our products are made. We should all think about the impact the things we buy have on the world. But it should be up to the companies that make them to ensure they don't hurt people and the environment. FoE is campaigning for tough new rules to make companies come clean about their supply chain.

**A very short poem from Richard Comaish**

**Outsider**

Always too young, too clever, too smart?  
Always the fool, a dishevelled old fart?  
Never fit in, 'cause you're never quite with it?  
Then you're an outsider, so learn to live with it.

**Next Newsletter - copy details:**

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor by **\*\*\* SUNDAY 17<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, *Ray Watson*

**Shaun Spiers**, chief executive of the environmental group Campaign to Protect Rural England, met two major controversial problems head on when he spoke at our well-attended February meeting: housing and planning issues.

Those issues, he said, caused more controversy than any other.

Before going into detail, Shaun reminded us that his organisation, now well respected and consulted by Government Ministers, was founded in 1926 by landowners, architects and planners. It became a byword for snobbishness and just saying No to developments, even though its early mission statements included phrases like 'developing the countryside harmoniously'.

It took a long time, but that had now changed, with CPRE believing that not all change was for the worst and that replacing old beauty with new beauty was to be approved. Its vision of the countryside was optimistic and pro-people.

Its main aim was to challenge developments affecting the countryside and these currently included campaigns on light pollution, litter, transport and issues relating to food and agriculture – this last was of great importance because 80 per cent of the countryside was dedicated to farming. It also encouraged people to get out into the countryside and make good use of its leisure facilities.

He said that planning and housing were difficult areas because there was

always the danger of being accused of social engineering if you took the view that the countryside was OK to live in if you were rich but not if you were poor, while there was a major uproar when it was suggested that small families in large houses should move to smaller premises.

However, it had to be recognised that we badly need more new homes because there were people in modern Britain living in appalling circumstances.

Shaun said that one of the reasons for pressure to build homes in the countryside was that the public sector had for many years built far too few houses – in the Seventies there were years when 100,000 new homes were built. Today, that figure was down to 30,000 even though there was now a greater demand for houses.

The current Government believed that the private sector would build sufficient homes to bridge the gap, but there was no evidence to prove this. Also, CPRE was in favour of approving increasing the density for developments.

Shaun revealed that CPRE had had discussions with developers to point out that they would receive less opposition to their plans if they improved the quality of their design – 'we do not want little hutches' – developed brown field sites rather than on the Green Belt and made houses more energy efficient.

*/continued on page 13*

## Make It Better Campaign, Annette Rose

If you haven't already done so please email the big smartphone companies to ask them to provide information on the making of their phones and where the tin comes from. This is simple to do from the Friends of the Earth website. The 'Make it Better' Campaign will be the topic for our speaker at the March meeting. Some of the questions I hope will be answered are-

What responses have been received from the big smartphone companies?

What will be the next steps for the campaign?

How can we explain this campaign to the public on our days of action so that it is meaningful and useful?

This interesting blog is on the FOE website-

### **The Future of Mobile Phone Design**

What exciting innovation would you like to see in your next mobile phone? Bendable glass, super-fast-charging batteries - these concepts are not far from our shops.

Mobile technology is moving fast. It would be great to see companies developing phones that reduce their impact on people and planet. We're not asking for the impossible - compare today's slim smartphones with clunky 80s handsets.

In the next columns are 5 steps to greener phones, from Professor of Sustainable Design and Consumption Tim Cooper.

- **Energy-saving batteries**  
There are lots of ways for mobile phones to use up less energy. A great example is the organic radical battery (ORB). It uses no heavy metals that can be harmful to humans, and charges in just 30 seconds.
- **Changing contract length**  
Most companies offer contracts that encourage us to keep upgrading and getting the latest models, even if our old phones are still perfectly usable. By offering customers savings if they take on longer contracts, or exploring other options like fixing or leasing, phones could live for longer and help the industry become more sustainable.
- **Phones designed to be easy to repair**  
Many phones are deliberately glued shut or have special screws that stop users from opening them. Designing phones so they are easier to take apart, to repair or replace parts would make a big difference.
- **Apps to encourage greener behaviour**  
Organisations like Our Mobile Generation, sponsored by Vodafone, are pioneering new apps that will encourage people to live greener lives. I like the "Walk Mate" app from Sony Ericsson Elm, which works out how far you've walked and the petrol saved by not driving.

*/continued on page 14*

## Transport info, Ray Watson

With the growth in urban cycling, casualty figures for cyclists are increasing, particularly in busy inner London areas. As this column has reported before, mayor Boris Johnson is allocating millions of pounds to improve several black spot junctions safer, but leading the way on what must be done comes from an unlikely direction – property developers.

The London Cycling Campaign has persuaded a group of major property developers to adopt rules for lorry drivers attending building sites. Among the items in the charter are: lorries must have close proximity sensors with audible warnings or cameras to make drivers aware of cyclists on their near side and that drivers must be trained in cyclist-awareness.

Safer cycling is not all one way: safety training for riders is being stepped up by cycling organisations that are well aware that some rogue cyclists give their number a bad name by ignoring road signs and crossing on red lights.

Locally, cyclists are not always well behaved when sprinting through Bromley's green and pleasant country lanes. They frequently ride three or four abreast and also congregate in groups at junctions, ignoring other road users. Cycling clubs take note!

Meanwhile, rising motoring costs and traffic congestion now mean that more and more people are biking to work. In the UK the total has reached 762,000, of which 161,000 are in London, double the figure in the 2001 survey, according to the Office for National Statistics.

But that compares with 15.3million who commute by car, while the total for public transport is 4.8million. Student numbers make Oxford and Cambridge the most popular towns for cyclists and Exeter and Norwich take the title for the highest percentage who walk to work – 15per cent.

### **Cutting speeds**

Four London boroughs – Camden, Waltham Forest, Islington and Hackney – have agreed to operate a 20mph default speed limit in residential roads and will work towards applying it to main roads. We look forward to it spreading to Bromley.

### **Whose money?**

Mayor Johnson's original idea of building a floating airport in the Thames estuary has sunk without trace – probably when it was pointed out that concrete in water has a habit of collapsing through corrosion. But he chugs on enthusiastically to find more airport capacity for the capital. Indeed, he has allocated £3million for a study of the various proposals now on the table, his latest suggestion being that Stansted should have four runways.

Odd that the £3million is being spent on examining projects outside the capital. But then it is only your money and mine...

### **City's slick work**

There is trouble brewing at Dockland's City Airport, which you can almost see from parts of Bromley. Residents near there have expressed dismay that the owners are to submit a planning ...

*/continued on page 6*

## Campaigns, Climate and Energy, *Ann Garrett*

### **Bromley High Street Campaign Stall**

A reminder that this will be on March 16th from 2.30 - 4.30 pm in the Mall Precinct, Bromley. The focus will be on the Make It Better campaign. There will be a petition to ask the big smart phone brands if their phones contain tin linked to the trashing of precious forests and coral reefs in Indonesia.

Many thanks to those people who have already signed up to help and to Annette for organising the materials.

### **Cumbria Council and Nuclear Waste**

Cumbria council leaders have rejected plans to build a £12 billion underground nuclear waste site in the area, and are urging the government to pump more cash into Sellafield. It is thought to be safer to invest more money in the present surface storage facilities there which can be improved and more easily monitored and maintained.

The Prospect trade union which represents 12,000 nuclear workers has expressed concern for jobs and economic growth in West Cumbria.

Where are more government initiatives and investment to employ these people in the renewables industries? We are far behind Germany in this respect.

### **Clean British Energy**

Having been involved in campaigning for the above I thought it was time I switched my energy provider from one of the 'Big Six'. So I have signed up to Good Energy! Here is the publicity from their brochure :-

1. Our electricity is local - we support over 40,000 green generators across the country, so there's probably some one producing Good Energy near you.
2. It's natural - all of it. We're making the most of great British weather, generating energy from the sun and the sea, the wind and water.
3. It's everlasting, it'll never run out, so it's secure for generations to come.

It emphasises the fact that it's important to be part of changing the way energy is made.

### **Environmentalists praise Obama**

In his inaugural speech Mr Obama pledged to respond to the threat of climate change, saying that failure to do so would 'betray our children and future generations'. He plans to boost renewable energy sources along with more traditional ones. Environmental groups are concerned, however, that he will approve the Keystone X1 oil pipeline that will carry tar sands oil from Alberta to Texas, but are pleased that he has at least acknowledged the words 'climate change' at long last.

### **Transport info, *continued from page 5***

... application for infrastructure work that will allow flights by larger planes with up to 130 passengers and which will open up Middle East routes.

Bringing in larger aircraft could mean re-routing flight paths over a broader area. Just a quick glance at a map will show that parts of Bromley are not that far from City Airport.

## Police Consultation Exercise, John Street

Last night (Monday Jan 28th) I went to a police consultation event at Bromley Civic Centre. It was part of the cross-London consultation by MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime) on a different way of policing for London.

My guess is that it's driven by the need to save money; the only publicity I've seen for it so far is the closure of a number of 24-hour police counters across London. The intention is that there be just one 24-hour police station per borough and in this borough that will be Bromley.

There were about 100 people present, and probably around 80 or so were members of the "public" although if the people who asked questions were anything to go by a goodly proportion of them were councillors or representatives of community groups.

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Stephen Carr, and the others on the top table were Steph Roberts (Bromley's Borough Commander), Met Assistant Commissioner Simon Byrne, London's Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime Stephen Greenhalgh and another councillor whose name I didn't catch.

The meeting lasted about an hour and a quarter, with presentations taking up around 35 minutes and questions from the floor the rest.

The consultation exercise is open until March 6th and details can be found at [www.london.gov.uk/priorities/mayors-office-policing-and-crime](http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/mayors-office-policing-and-crime)

There was talk of the 20/20/20 challenge, i.e. reduce 7 priority crimes by 20%, boost public confidence by 20% and reduce spending by 20%, also reduce court delays by 20%, increase compliance with community sentences by 20%, and cut youth reoffending by 20%.

Across the Met, the number of PCs will increase (2013 to 2015) from 24,630 to 25,909, the number of supervisors will decrease from 7,160 to 6,022 and the number of senior managers will decrease from 37 to 26.

The number of police buildings will be reduced from around 500 to around 300, their area will reduce by approx a third, and the aim is to reduce their running costs by a similar amount. The number of police staff will be reduced by around 12% and over £100million will be saved by greater use of technology.

In Bromley, the number of police officers is to increase from 428 (Oct 2011) to 482 (2015) and the number of officers in Safer Neighbourhood Teams should increase from 65 (Oct 2011) to 127 (2015). Given that most of these will, we have already been told, come from the ranks of PCSOs, we can expect the number of PCSOs in the borough to go down.

I counted nearly 20 questions from the floor. The Borough Commander stayed behind at the end to answer more detailed questions about what this would mean for policing in the borough - but I didn't so can't comment on what she said.

## BEE Cause campaign news update, *Judy Palmer*

**Starting nationally:** in January and February Friends of the Earth were really busy on the pesticides issue of the campaign. After the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published its scientific review on three of the main neonicotinoid treatments, B&Q and Wickes announced plans to remove neonic products from sale. Then Homebase withdrew a Bayer lawn treatment containing imidacloprid.

The FoE bees dropped in to 10 Downing Street with a 64,000+ petition asking for a national bee action plan. And now over 100 MPs have signed up in support.

*(Please see elsewhere in the newsletter a copy of a generic letter sent to Orpington MP Jo Johnson, plus a copy of his reply. If anyone wishes to send this letter to their MP, it can be done electronically as an email from the FoE website, or alternatively copy this one published.)*

Pesticides are only one issue in the decline of all species of bees and creating a national bee action plan would bring all the various parties of expertise together to help combat their plight.

**Our Bee World site news:** we have met up with some of the Friends of Tugmutton group and Sue Holland the Council's Biodiversity officer who oversees the work on the Common and we discussed the practicalities of working there.

We now have a proposed list of digging dates, the first of which was on 16<sup>th</sup> February, and we had a really

productive two hours digging over the plot. A **very** big thank you has to go to the 6+ people from the Friends of Tugmutton who came and helped. We certainly would not have got so much digging done without them! (Or suitable refreshed with coffee and biscuits, thank you!) And not forgetting our own Annette, Patrick & Bill for giving up their Saturday mornings to help me dig.

Our second dig is scheduled for Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> March @ 10.30 should anyone else like to join in the fun!

### BEE BUZZZZZZ, *Judy Palmer*

Some interesting statistics on bees:

- \*bees see all colours except red
- \*bees have five eyes and can see ultra violet light
- \*it would take about one ounce of honey to fuel a honey bee to fly around the world
- \*bees can fly for a kilometre or more collecting nectar
- \*some species of bumblebee can travel up to 3 kilometres a day
- \*nineteen species of bees make honey
- \*bees' wings vibrate 11,400 times a minute – that's why they buzz
- \*there are six common types of bumblebee commonly found in British gardens
- \*bumblebee nests only last for one year and will not be used again
- \*a queen bumblebee hibernates in winter underground in a cool undisturbed place
- \*queen bumblebees search for nest sites by flying low over the ground in a zig-zag pattern
- \*St. Valentine is the patron saint of bee-keepers.



**Judy Palmer wrote to her MP, Jo Johnson in the cause of the bees,  
and he replied, as below**

**Letter to Jo Johnson**

There has been a lot about bee decline in the news recently. This week B&Q, Homebase, Wickes and the European Commission all took steps to protect bees from the most harmful neonicotinoid pesticides.

But chemicals are only one cause of bee decline and I'm concerned that not enough is being done by Government to tackle this urgent problem.

92 MPs from all parties, including Government and Shadow Ministers, have joined Friends of the Earth in calling for a Bee Action Plan to tackle all major causes of bee decline.

As your constituent I would very much like you to back this call and sign the statement at [www.foe.co.uk/beesstatement](http://www.foe.co.uk/beesstatement).

A British Bee Action Plan - with content developed by a stakeholder group including farmers and scientists - will help Government take the coordinated measures needed to save bees before it's too late.

I trust you will feel able to sign the statement. Please let me know if you do.

**Jo Johnson's reply –**

Thank you for writing to me about a national bee action plan.

UK experts in Europe are actively involved in work to update the process for assessing the risks of pesticides to

bees in light of recent scientific developments. This will include a new risk assessment for bumble bees and solitary bees, alongside an updated one for honey bees.

All pesticides, including neonicotinoids, are tightly regulated. The risk assessment process, set out in European legislation, looks in detail at the dangers to honey bees, considering a range of factors including methods of application and examining both lethal and sub-lethal effects. The regulatory process is constantly updated so that it advances with scientific knowledge and suitable legal restrictions are in place to ensure that bees are not exposed to excessive doses.

Several new studies were published in spring 2012, suggesting that low doses of neonicotinoids could have sub-lethal effects on bees with consequences for bee populations. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is now carrying out its own research to fill gaps in what is known, including questions that have been raised about the relevance of the recent studies to field conditions. This will be completed in 2013. Ministers have also commissioned a longer-term project to quantify the actual exposure of wild bumblebees to sub-lethal doses of neonicotinoid insecticides in UK landscapes.

The recent studies do not justify changing existing regulation.

*/continued on page 14*

## From Biofuelwatch, via Ann Garrett

### **The future's not bright: Low-level air pollution leads to drop in wildflower populations say Manchester scientists**

The UK's colourful countryside is in danger due to air pollution, according to a Manchester Metropolitan University researcher.

Air pollution caused by car exhausts, fertilizer and industry is killing off many of our plants – with numerous wildflowers being threatened with extinction. The man-made processes release nitrogen into the atmosphere, which comes back down in rain or snow – acidifying the land.

Even low levels of pollution are now believed to result in declining plant populations, particularly wildflowers such as creeping buttercup, harebell, yarrow and autumn hawkbit.

High nitrogen levels are typically associated with declining populations,

and Professor Nancy Dise's research indicates the impacts of pollution may be more widespread than previously thought.

"We studied many grasslands along the natural gradient of pollution across Europe" said the professor of biogeochemistry. "Our results showed that even at the cleanest sites, low levels of pollution affected the abundance of some plant species."

The biology and conservation ecology group's Dr Richard Payne and Professor Dise collaborated with the Open and Lancaster Universities to examine 153 European grassland sites. Levels of nitrogen found at the cleaner sites was below the legally-recognised "safe" level, and prompted Professor Dise to advise against further pollution of clean areas.

The new research was conducted across sites with a variety of pollution levels to prevent skewing the data as previous studies may have.

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### **Where are the medals - a poem by Richard Comaish**

Where are the medals  
For those who live in squalor  
Not out of choice, or  
We're too tired to bother  
But because someone once asked,  
'Will you take the tower block?'  
And courage, chivalry or noblesse  
Obliged us to say yes  
When killers, hoodlums and the rest  
Said no, we will not go  
Into this hell you make  
For those yet to learn  
That caring façade is fake!

## Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall renews his campaign to protect the seabed

Damaging fishing methods and a lack of marine protected zones are being targeted by a renewed campaign to protect the world's dwindling fish stocks, spearheaded by food writer Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall. The dredging of seabeds with nets weighted with huge metal ploughs, tearing up all life, rocks and seaweeds and leaving a barren environment is one of the most destructive ways of gathering seafood, but is legally used to gather scallops and other bottom-dwelling species. Its devastating effects will be highlighted in the new Channel 4 series of Hugh's Fish Fight.

At least one retailer, the northern grocery chain Booths, has pledged to stop selling dredged scallops in anticipation of customer reactions and will stock only scallops that have been dived for, a more laborious and expensive process but one which does not damage the surrounding area. Booths said it hoped this move would stimulate more retailers to follow suit, and fishermen to invest in diving.

Viewers are invited to get more militant than just watching their shopping baskets. Fearnley-Whittingstall is leading a march on parliament in order to persuade ministers to put in place a wider network of marine conservation zones, where fishing would be closely regulated to preserve stocks and destructive fishing methods banned.

Last year, there was widespread disappointment when the fisheries minister, Richard Benyon, said that of 127 sites proposed for protection, only "up to" 31 would be recommended for the designation in 2013.

In Norway, marine protected areas have been an important plank in the government's Fish Forever campaign to reduce overfishing. Egil Skarbøvik, a Norwegian trawler skipper, said: "In Norway we have been able to build up the strongest cod and haddock stock in the Barents Sea ever, thanks to strong regulations including closed areas, sorting grids and a strict coastguard. The catches are at an all-time high – fantastic for fishermen. The changes worked in Norway and I don't see why they wouldn't work for the same species in EU waters."

Fearnley-Whittingstall is hoping to replicate the success of his two-year campaign against the discarding of healthy fish at sea under the EU's fishing quotas, which helped lead to a historic vote in Strasbourg in which MEPs voted by 502 to 137 to ban the wasteful practice. Discarding results in about half of the fish in the North Sea alone being thrown back dead, even though they are edible and healthy, because they are caught by vessels that have exceeded their quota, or because they are species for which the vessel does not have a quota.

Maria Damanaki, the EU fisheries commissioner, has repeatedly praised the work of campaigners in bringing the subject to wider attention, and mobilising the public in favour of her proposed reforms. More than 800,000 people signed the Fish Fight petition against discards. The fight to end discards is not over yet, however, as further negotiations must take place with ministers and member states.

## Marinet – MCAs and CFP

### Marine Conservation Areas

Marinet has been looking at the marine ecosystem in a completely unique way. Namely, that all seas and oceans are sovereign; that they are completely protected in law, and industry has to demonstrate through its practice that it is not harmful to the ecosystem and, where industry currently cannot demonstrate this, is required to produce strategies for improving practice.

In Marinets's view, this is the way forward. It is certainly behind the amendments which Marinets is putting forward for Common Fisheries Policy Reform.

The concept of ecocide and the involvement of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea / United Nations is one of Marinets's goals for 2013. The issues have a wider network of concern than governments give credit for. People are concerned about global fish stocks, and believe that there are far more protected areas than actually exist.

When our government was given the opportunity to protect and provide marine reserves, they shied away and reduced habitat protection by four times what was being recommended. This was because the fishing industry has been given quotas, and the Marine Conservation Zone identification had nothing to do with fish stocks and ways of improving them. Marinets will challenge the legal status of these decisions.

### Common Fisheries Policy

Marinet is currently campaigning to ensure a strong **Reform of the EU Common Fisheries Policy**.

Fisheries management throughout EU seas generally has been woefully inadequate over many years. Marinets believes that there is strong evidence to argue that this management has been negligent and neglectful under UK and international law and therefore is essentially illegal.

They are consequently planning a seminar for early summer at which they will set out their belief and evidence of the illegality to experts, government and other NGOs with a view to assembling a case that demonstrates this illegality.

They hope to develop a legal imperative which requires the re-establishment of food security as a cardinal principle of management policy, with this principle being delivered by rebuilding fish stocks to the maximum levels the seas will support, aided by marine reserves protecting the spawning and nursery grounds of fish stocks.

Most importantly, fishermen will be given financial compensation for a new role as managers of the stocks whilst they are restored to health. That way, fishermen are protected as the management of fisheries shifts from endless (unsustainable) extraction to a new conservation-based set of principles, and the fishing industry is restored to long-term economic health.

## The nightmare of being paid in good time, *Jerry Diccox*

Getting paid quickly is a continuing nightmare for many suppliers to the major retail chains. Bromley FoE member Jerry Diccox took his protest to Sainsbury after their announcement that they were delaying even further payments to suppliers. He received this reply:

Dear Mr Diccox

Thank you for your letter. I know you are concerned over the changes to our payment terms for non-food suppliers and I am pleased to take this opportunity to explain.

Our non-food suppliers were on a variety of historical terms, some as short as 45 days, which was out of line when compared to the 90-120 day payment terms of most retailers. By moving to 75 days we are reducing this difference, whilst providing a level playing field for all of our suppliers to quote against and still remaining ahead of the industry norm. We have given our suppliers three months notice of the new payment term and are working closely with them during this change to ensure a smooth transition.

We are confident we are one of the fairest payers in the FTSE 100 and many of our suppliers have used our unique trading finance platform to provide flexible finance for their business for several years. This platform, which allows UK suppliers to get any invoice paid within one day of delivery, makes us one of the promptest payers in the industry.

Thank you again for getting in touch and I hope my letter has reassured you of our commitment to treat our suppliers fairly. I hope you will reconsider your decision and we have the pleasure of continuing to serve you for many years to come.

### **February meeting report, continued** *from page 3*

Another danger was that the Government was against planning, preferring to leave it to private enterprise. That could prove chaotic. Nor was he in favour of the recent trend to have major schemes considered by technocrats rather than the people.

Indeed, he felt that it was remarkable that the planning laws lasted so long after being passed by the post-war Atlee government. 'Those laws guaranteed the protection of the countryside we now have', he said.

Answering a flood of questions, Shaun said it was 'inconceivable' that CPRE would support airport expansion, either nationally at Heathrow or locally such as at Biggin Hill airport, and on wind farms he said decisions as to where to site them should be made locally – they had a place in the energy mix but it was getting more and more difficult to defend them.

## FoE says - Garden centres act on pesticides linked to bee decline

Garden centres are the latest retailers to remove household products containing insecticides linked to bee decline from their shelves, Friends of the Earth revealed.

The action by Notcutts, Hillier, Squires and Blue Diamond, which between them operate 60 garden centres across the UK, follows similar moves by DIY superstores B&Q, Homebase and Wickes.

Concern about the impact of neonicotinoid pesticides on bee populations has risen sharply in recent months. Last month the European Commission proposed restrictions on three neonicotinoid chemicals following a report by the European Food Safety Authority.

Friends of the Earth is urging people to contact their local garden centres to ask them to remove products containing neonicotinoid pesticides.

FoE's Head of Campaigns Andrew Pendleton said:

"It's great to see garden centres across the UK heeding the warning from European safety experts and pulling pesticide products linked to bee decline from their shelves. The approach of leading retailers stands in stark contrast to the Government's reluctance to back European efforts to safeguard bees from pesticides. With bee numbers plummeting Environment Secretary Owen Paterson must take urgent action to safeguard these crucial pollinators by backing a ban and introducing a bee action plan to tackle all the threats they face."

**Make It Better Campaign**, *continued from page 4*

- **Phones made from greener materials**

There are some amazing alternatives to plastic and metal out there, including polylactic acid plastic (PLA) which is made entirely from corn starch or glucose and is renewable and biodegradable; recycled plastic, made from the new plastic you throw into your recycle bins, and natural materials like bamboo.

FoE's Make It Better campaign is calling on manufacturers to improve how they make their products. You can get involved at [http://www.foe.co.uk/what\\_we\\_do/make\\_it\\_better\\_action\\_37571.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/what_we_do/make_it_better_action_37571.html). I'd like to be able to love the way my phone's made as much as I love using it. If companies start integrating green design into their processes, hopefully I won't have long to wait.

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### **Jo Johnson's Letter on Bees**, *cont'd from page 9*

Nevertheless, the research being conducted by Defra and the on-going work in Europe to develop the risk assessment could change the picture and it is always possible that further new evidence may emerge. I have received assurances that ministers will move quickly to consider the implications of the new scientific and technical information when it is available.

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*sheilabrown336@msn.com*

### Press Officer:

vacant

### Programme Organiser:

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### Outings organisers:

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### Newsletter Editor:

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*johnstreet@gn.apc.org*

### Membership Secretary:

Dan Sloan 01689-838819

### Merchandising:

Anne Clark 020-8289-8483

### Teas:

Anne Clark / Ivy Smith

### 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*

#### Waste and Recycling

Annette Rose  
*annette.rose1@ntlworld.com*

#### Bee Cause

Judy Palmer, *judy.palmer@talk21.com*

#### Bromley FoE web site:

**[www.bromleyfoe.co.uk](http://www.bromleyfoe.co.uk)**

Peter Gandolfi  
*petergandolfi@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!

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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 [r.watson865@btinternet.com](mailto:r.watson865@btinternet.com).

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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