



Friends of
the Earth
Bromley



May 2019
No. 377

ewslter

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Bromley FoE: enquiries:
email: bromleyfoe@gmail.com, website: www.bromleyfoe.co.uk

May Meeting

Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

**Just transition and climate change:
visionary grassroots struggles from North America**

Shaun Dey from Reel News

The effect of climate change on poor communities in the USA

Tuesday 7th May - 7.30pm (prompt start please)

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

***** SUNDAY 19TH MAY *****

Contact details inside front cover.

Diary dates: May 2019

May 4th (Saturday) Open Garden with plant sale at Bill's house. See page 5

May 7th (Tuesday) Bromley FoE's monthly meeting. Shaun Dey from Reel News: The effects of climate change on poor communities in the USA.

May 11th (Saturday) Farm Walk: Court Lodge Farm, Warren Road, Chelsfield, by kind invitation of Steve and Chris Miller. Meet at the farm at 10.00am.

May 13th (Monday) Friends of Jubilee Country Park Event. Butterflies of Jubilee Country Park. Would you like to identify different species of butterfly that live in Jubilee Country Park or how to conduct a butterfly count as part of the UK Butterfly Monitoring Survey? If so, join Andrew Harby, Community Manager with Idverde, at 1 pm at Tent Peg Lane car park, off Crest View Drive, Petts Wood BR5 1BY.

June 4th (Tuesday) Bromley FoE's monthly meeting.

June 30th (Sunday) Keston Countryside Day from 2pm to 5pm at Hayes Common, Commonside, opposite the Greyhound Pub BR2 6BP. BFoE will have an information stall featuring our campaigns. Volunteers needed please to help on the stall and to set up from 11am.

If you need any further information on these events, you can email us on bromleyfoe@gmail.com or ask at the next monthly meeting.

May meeting: Just transition and climate change

Video activist collective Reel News went on a 14 week tour of North America last year to see what was happening with a climate change-denying president in charge of the USA. What they found were visionary struggles, with working class communities of colour getting on with implementing a just transition away from fossil fuels themselves. Shaun Dey will be showing some short films of some of these struggles, and also talk about the campaign for a million climate jobs to bring down carbon emissions in the U.K.

Disclaimer: Please note that any opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of Bromley Friends of the Earth or of Friends of the Earth

Next Newsletter - copy details

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor by *** **SUNDAY 19TH MAY *****

by post to John Street, 82 Babacombe 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.

April meeting report – Sue and John Bocock

Our April speaker, Asad Rehman, is Chief Executive of War on Want. He was formerly Friends of the Earth's Senior International Climate Campaigner, where he had 35 years experience in campaigning on social, racial and economic issues.

Asad explained that War on Want supports many groups, including workers rights, cooperation with trade relationships and investments. It is a membership organisation and a charity supporting communities rather than merely handing out aid directly.

Asad described the situation in Canada where a large oil and gas corporation, Lone Pine Resources, had sued the Canadian government over fracking in Quebec. The company had been given exploration permits for fracking under the St Lawrence River between 2006 and 2011. However, during these years public opposition to fracking was growing. Thousands of people signed petitions and over 100 local citizens groups were formed.

Eventually Lone Pine's permits were cancelled. They are now challenging this and not only asking for money which they had invested but also compensation for future profits they had hoped to make. This had all been done through the corporate court which gives corporations far-reaching privileges and access to their own legal system to enforce them; this threatens society, democracy and the planet.

Asad continued by talking about the climate and extreme weather

conditions. The cyclones in Mozambique had compounded the growth inequality of an already poor people. In Pakistan there were enduring heat wave temperatures of 52 degrees Celsius where 1200 people died. In Puerto Rico and Dominica the hurricanes had prevented access to fresh water.

One third of the glaciers in the Himalayas are melting and this is affecting the adjacent countries of India and Nepal. Coral reefs are being bleached and Arctic sea ice is vanishing. Even ordinary people are seeing these changes in their surroundings. One of the impacts of these events is seen in failing agriculture, which affects 75% of population worldwide.

A few figures: The richest 10% are responsible for 50% of global emissions. The richest 1% own 50% of global wealth. The poorest 80% own 5.5% of global wealth.

The next question posed by Asad was "What are the solutions?" Technologically these are still on the drawing board, but reforestation and bioenergy could be of major importance. We also need the ability to build hope, to have a positive image of the world and everyone needs to act, to enable more people to be lifted out of poverty.

There are some concrete demands that could be transformational: the first is energy, to produce and consume it efficiently.

/continued on pages 4 and 14

Digital Nature Trail in Jubilee Country Park – Judy Palmer

You may remember that back in Autumn 2017 some of us volunteered to help the Friends of Jubilee Park initiate their digital nature trail. This is where posts were created in different areas of the park equipped with a QR (Quick Response) bar which links to a website where a map of the trail is shown. Each post gives information on what you can see nearby in the seasons of the year.

Dr Judy John helped with the mapping of information, and the students from Bromley High School in year 5 helped with finding the species and taking the photos.

Autumn/Winter was completed in 2017, Summer in 2018 and now the photos have been taken for Spring. When the children return from the Easter holidays they will work on these and hopefully all the information will go live in a month or so.

Judy John again helped all the volunteers with the species you can see in Spring and Annette & I were allocated two posts to guide the children and staff members to, in finding insects, fungi, tree leaves, flowers and birds.

We all kept our fingers crossed with the weather and were really lucky! It hailed in the hour before we met up, and then again in the hour after we had all left, so a big woohooo on that! A thoroughly worthwhile project to be involved in and Annette & I thanked the Friends group for inviting us to do so.

April meeting report – *continued*

The second consideration is who owns energy. It should not be in the hands of private companies for the profit of their shareholders but for the public good “we need to aim high”. People have the basic right to energy, food, housing, health and social protection.

A one degree Celsius increase in temperature can lead to survival migration, when people are forced off their land. Fighting for scarce resources such as shortage of water, food and shelter can lead ultimately to violence.

The City of London was mentioned as an organisation which needs to address these inequalities. And to be subject to regulation. There are issues around poverty, there needs to be a living wage for the whole supply chain, an economy that works worldwide.

Trump's solution (and that of some other leaders) is to build walls. But what kind of world do we want? We need to talk about our visions of the world. A massive amount has been handed over for fossil fuels, and for the arms trade all of which leads to further inequalities.

This inspirational talk was followed by questions and comments “The City of London doesn't seem to care” to which Asad's response was that “there needed to be more regulation, a code of conduct was required.”

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OPEN GARDEN AND PLANT SALE

Come and join in a lovely garden event on
Saturday May 4th

Bill Priestley is opening his garden in Petts Wood again for us this year. There will be some plants for sale, together with home made refreshments and a raffle.

If you have any plants you wish to donate, please bring them along!

Here are the details:



Place: 22 Greencourt Road, BR5 1QW

Date: May 4th

Time: 2.00 – 5.00 p.m.

Entry fee: £3.00 (*including tea & cake*)

Call Bill on 01689 820469 if you need any more info

See you there!



A fundraising event on behalf of
Bromley Friends of the Earth

Great British Spring Clean – Judy Palmer and Annette Rose

A big thank you to every-one who came along to our litter pick in Priory gardens Orpington on 13th April. We did this as part of Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean and in conjunction with the Friends of Priory Gardens and idverde, The weather was good and we were able to collect about 10 bags of litter and many large items from the lakes.

Nationally, Friends of the Earth are considering beginning waste audits at some beach and urban clean ups to see if we need to target any particular organisations to reduce waste. So we did a rough audit of what we found. This has been fed back to the Plastics Team.

Our haul

In the lake, we found 5 traffic cones, several road signs, bottles and cans,

coat hangers, 2 screw drivers, a green chemical container and an in-date bank card! The litter from around the park included bottles, an umbrella, plastic wrapping, milk bottles, a plastic straw and many cigarette butts.

We didn't find large numbers of any particular brand names and it was good to see that the bins in the park were being used and contained largely cans and paper.

We noticed that there was a lot of rubbish under the hedges and bushes which were mainly pieces of old plastics which were breaking down into small pieces. The seats were surrounded by many cigarette butts.

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Climate, Energy and Transport – Ann Garrett

Mall Campaign Stall Report

An enormous thank you to all those who turned up in a bitter wind on April 6th to support the stall (*see photo below*). We obtained a number of signatures on the Bromley Against Fracking petition and the FoE cards. We also gave out the new FoE Futures Campaign cards and members of the public seemed reasonably receptive, especially when we mentioned the words 'climate change'. We were glad to end up in Nick's cafe afterwards for warm drinks!

Climate, Energy and Transport

Climate Protests

Whilst writing this Extinction Rebellion are busy with their actions in London, other UK and international cities, highlighting the very serious issue of

climate change and out a sense of desperation for the future of the planet.

They are calling on the government, the opposition and local councils to create a climate emergency, and invest more in renewable green energies as a matter of extreme urgency. The aim should be to reduce Co2 emissions by net zero by 2025. The movement has been endorsed by Jonathan Porritt, former FoE director.

One of XR's main principles stated on their website is 'We have a shared vision of change - creating a world that is fit for generations to come.'

It is also encouraging to see the school students' strikes in this country, throughout the world and locally here in Bromley.

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Plastics and the Environment – Annette Rose

Plastic Pollution Action Plan

Well done to those who have responses from MPs about the Plastic Pollution Action Plan.

One our members, Matthew Allcock, wrote to Ellie Reeves Member of Parliament for Lewisham West and Penge about the Plastic Pollution Action Plan. He received an encouraging response which included the following.

“As you may be aware, as part of its Waste and Resources Strategy, the Government is now consulting on certain measures in relation to plastics, including the introduction of a deposit return scheme, the extension of the plastic bag charge and the levying of a plastic packaging tax.

“The 25 Year Environment Plan also commits the Government to working towards a target of eliminating avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042. I believe that action can be taken on Britain’s plastics crisis a lot sooner than this date. I welcome the prospect of a tax on plastic packaging, but I am concerned that its delay until 2022 will result in 700,000 tons of plastic being directed to landfill before its implementation

“Please be assured that I will continue to press the Government for stronger action in relation to plastics.”

It is still not too late for people to write to their MPs about the Plastics Pollution Action Plan. Do let me know if you would like an email template.

Future Plans

There are new materials for our Summer stalls on their way soon from the Plastics Team at FOE. We will have postcards for members of the public to sign which will be sent to MPs and a new leaflet on plastics. The one we have is fairly basic and it is felt that most of the public have moved on from needing a general awareness leaflet to needing more details about what they can do to help.

We are hoping to hold an Unwrapped Event this Summer. We will be present outside a local supermarket and volunteers will help the public unwrap and leave their unwanted plastic wrappings. These events have been held successfully in several places by FoE groups. More details to follow.

What's New

Here is a roundup of some news about action being taken to reduce plastics. Thank you to Judy, Christina and Sheila for your contributions.

Johnsons and Johnson cotton buds now have paper stems. PG tips teabags are now fully biodegradable. Morrisons paper carrier bag trial has been a success with customers. They are strong enough to hold 16kg and cost 20p. The bags will remove 1,300 tonnes of plastic each year from the environment. Tiger in Bromley sell a range of bamboo kitchen utensils. Using bamboo is a good use for this fast growing wood.

Do please continue to let us know your plastics news!

Miller's Mutterings – Steve and Chris Miller

March certainly came in like a lion and out like a lamb. Hopefully you didn't sustain too much damage. We lost one of our old Scots Pine trees next to the house. I opened the curtains in the morning and it seemed a little dark, then realised that the branches were dangling in front of the window.

We were very lucky that it didn't damage the house. The branches have been dealt with just the trunk to chop down.

The wedding on the 2nd March was wonderful and we were so lucky with the weather. After a very happy service at St. Martins with family and friends, we returned to the farm where a company had erected a marquee inside the barn.

Peter and his new wife had worked very hard organising their very special day and had thought of everything. A wonderful hot three course meal was served and we were entertained by a magician on and off throughout the afternoon.

Dancing rounded off a fabulous day. The happy couple went on their honeymoon to the Maldives the next day. We managed to return the tractors and combine back into the barn by the Wednesday after the marquee and wooden floors had been removed. Pleased to say that Pete is back at work! We now have two Mr and Mrs Millers.

During the last week of March under great soil conditions, Peter planted the spring oats, which with a bit of luck will

be destined for porridge, muesli and the like. This is a new crop for us although we grew winter oats about 20 years ago. The country is short of farmers growing oats, so hopefully this will be a good crop for us.

Strange as it may seem, this is a break crop similar to peas, beans and oil seed rape but without the inherent problems of pigeons eating the emerging plants. A break crop help stop the build up of soil borne diseases and we use this as part of the three-crop rule.

Oats are cereals and require the same growing conditions as wheat and barley so fit in well with the other crops. The straw is also valuable for feeding animals in the winter. The wheat and barley are looking good after the fertiliser we applied last month. We have given up hay making this year and that ground has been planted with spring oats too. Spring is definitely upon us and the cowslips are appearing on the Chelsfield green. The blackthorn is out, what a sight and smell.

I'm sure you have seen many birds in and around your garden and it is lovely to hear the skylarks singing again. Three buzzards were circling above the farmhouse recently calling to each other. When will the swallows arrive this year? We get quite excited to see them return and feel that summer is on the way when we see them back flying in and out of the barns.

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Bromley FoE objections to Biggin Hill Aerospace College

Ref : Biggin Hill Aerospace and Technology College planning application

Dear Planning Officer,

Bromley Friends of the Earth wish to object to the above application on the following grounds:-

1. Due to the serious matter of climate change, we are opposed to any facility which encourages aviation expansion in any way.
2. Whilst acknowledging the importance of further education, this college is too specialist.
3. Due to the increase in opening hours at Biggin Hill, local residents and those further afield in the borough have complained about the increase in aircraft noise. The flight path also goes over the Princess Royal Hospital., which is most unsatisfactory. Students practising in aircraft will only exacerbate this noise.
4. There will be increased traffic congestion in the Biggin Hill area.
5. Impact on the surrounding infrastructure is another important consideration.

Summary

We are in a situation of highly worrying climate emergency, and it is about time the aviation industry took more responsibility in reducing expansion in whatever way they can.

One of the reasons for the college, is that it will bring more employment to the area. However, we in Friends of the Earth think that the council should be pressurising for more local job creation in the green renewables industries.

This would be positive for employment and development of skills for people of all ages, and contribute to reducing transport pollution, including that of aviation.

Yours faithfully,

Sheila Brown and Ann Garrett
[Joint Co-ordinators of Bromley Friends of the Earth]

Putting Your Money Where Your Mouth Is – Rob Clark

Asad Rehman's interesting talk at the last monthly meeting was very informative about the work of War on Want and the power of the corporate world. I feel I learnt a lot.

One of the consequent questions from our audience, about how we could influence larger companies and corporations, provoked me to consider my own response. This is something I have asked myself for many years and there are a few obvious things we can do. They may seem small in the grand scheme of things, but every little helps, and over time notice will be taken.

Back in the 1980s, when such things were very rare, I happened upon an independent financial advisor who specialised in ethical investments. Although I was quite young and had only a small amount of savings, I thought that I should start off my personal finance career on the right foot.

Since then, almost 100% of my savings have been in ethical funds, the availability of which has increased massively. Since then, many financial companies have jumped on the ethical bandwagon, which shows there must be something in it.

Our mortgages, pensions, current accounts and savings are all potential campaigning tools. We should consider where our money is held and what it is likely to be used for.

For example, I have never held a bank account because I questioned the morality of banks, following the boycott of Barclays Bank over Apartheid in

South Africa, in the 1980s. From then on, I have only ever had accounts in building societies.

These institutions do not kowtow to shareholders, because they don't have any; rather they invest surplus back into the organisation. I know they are probably not all squeaky-clean regarding where some of their money does end up, but at least the mechanics of these organisations seem ethically right.

I had the option to make an ethical choice regarding my pension more recently. This was difficult as most company pensions do not provide many options, but my latest company pension change allowed me to put my money in an ethical fund. My personal private pension has been in a similar fund since I started it some years ago.

I have a few other savings in managed ethical funds, and these seem to compete favourably with their non-ethical counterparts.

We don't have to go to the lengths of buying shares and attending company AGMs to make our voices heard and show our disapproval of them. Change can start nearer home by making sure our money is not invested in those organisations we disapprove of in the first place. They will all listen if investment fund interest begins to dwindle.

Before considering any investment, you should always get some independent advice.

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Update on Climate Strike movement and #NoTimeToLose – Sam Gee

On Friday 12th April, making the most of their Easter holidays, thousands of Britain's young people once again took to the streets to protest government inaction on climate change, in almost 60 locations across the UK, as part of a national youth-led climate strike.

The London event was a smaller protest than in March, because this was not specifically a global strike in the way that March 15th was, and likely because some would-be strikers were away, but the protests were far more organised. There was a half-hour road block at a busy crossroads in Oxford Circus, where a variety of speakers addressed the crowds, including Asad Rehman, Bromley Friends of the Earth's April guest speaker, who insisted that "you don't need to be a climate scientist to see the devastation that one storm has wreaked on Mozambique."

The strikes gained coverage in most national media outlets, and, together with the Extinction Rebellion (XR) shutdown of central London and the helpfully-timed primetime David Attenborough documentary *Climate Change: The Facts*, climate change has soared up the national agenda – at long last.

One particularly important effect is that the extent of the ideas that are publicly acceptable, known as the Overton window, has shifted, such that what was once considered radical is now widely accepted as necessary. The school strikes are no longer considered extreme – and they have garnered support from right across the world.

The next global strike, like the March event, will be Friday 24th May – as ever, tell all the young people you know. Unfortunately, I will be sitting one of my GCSE exams that day, but I know many Year 11 students with no exams that day, who intend to participate. The London protest will gather once again in Parliament Square at 11am, and the turnout is set to be big. Globally, it could even top March's 1.6 million. The politicians can't bury their heads in the sand for much longer.

Here in Bromley, at the Full Council meeting on 8th April, I asked Cllr William Huntingdon-Thresher how Bromley would be responding to the IPCC's Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming.

Predictably, the response lacked meaningful insight or promises, but it got climate change onto the agenda, and we hope to keep it there as we continue collecting signatures for our youth-led #NoTimeToLose petition, calling on the Council to declare a climate emergency.

At the meeting of the Environmental and Community Services (ECS) Policy Development and Scrutiny (PDS) Committee, on 9th April, I asked why in their entire annual scrutiny report, they did not mention or even allude to 'climate change' once – and they apologised, saying that they recognised that it should have been covered – an unusual climbdown from the Council.

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FoE - The climate change challenge: communities are fighting back

Will there be a Blue Planet style response from watching Sir David's climate documentary? From Brixton to Newport via Manchester, communities across the country are already working to solve the climate crisis and fighting climate-wrecking schemes where they live. Friends of the Earth showcased the strength of people power as the green group unveiled its Climate Action Plan recently.

Aaron Kiely, climate change campaigner at Friends of the Earth, said: "Natural history programmes have long been a ratings winner, it's time to really get behind Sir David's unflinching message. The human cost of climate change is already devastating, both here and globally with record-breaking heatwaves and terrifying cyclones, and global temperatures rising.

"But we know what the solutions to the crisis are and if we crack on now, we can still stop the worst impacts of climate breakdown. Added to that, if the government does the right thing now and commits to our climate action plan by the end of 2020, a fairer and greener economy can be built.

"If more communities take the climate challenge, the government won't be able to ignore the groundswell and will be forced into over-due action."

Get involved in building climate solutions where you live - **register your interest here**
<https://act.friendsoftheearth.uk/act/climate-action>

Friends of the Earth's Climate Action Plan:

- **Transport:** Stop the sale of petrol and diesel cars by 2030. Invest in brilliant and cheap public transport, cycling and walking everywhere.
- **Power:** Stop making electricity from dirty fuels and ban fracking. Start aiming for 100% clean energy from the wind, sun and sea.
- **Buildings:** End the misery of cold, expensive-to-heat homes. Fund a massive insulation scheme and shift to eco-friendly heating.
- **Agriculture and Land Use:** Stop using our land for intensive farming. Double tree cover and let wildlife thrive.
- **Infrastructure:** Stop backing projects that fuel climate change, like airport expansion. Start making climate change a deal-breaker in all spending decisions.
- **International Justice:** Stop funding fossil fuels. Pay its fair share to support more-vulnerable countries to cut carbon pollution and deal with the impacts of climate change.

Putting Your Money ... *continued*

To find an independent financial advisor registered with the Financial Conduct Authority go to:
<https://register.fca.org.uk/>

If you do end up asking an advisor about ethical investments and their response is to laugh, exhale sharply or say something like 'ah, well...' in an exaggerated fashion, then walk away. Their heart is definitely not in the right place.

The Continuations Page

April meeting report - concluded

"What were the implications of Brexit" to which Asad's response was "It was taking up too much time and energy. We need more engagement, all trade agreements were about the economy. There is no mention of inequality or of the environment."

We would like to thank Asad for coming to speak to us and we are looking forward to a future update on the important work War on Want is doing

Great British Spring Clean – cont'd

However, it was good to see that the Friends of Priory Gardens have been hard at work with regular litter picks and the general appearance of the park was good.

The Friends kindly provided tea and biscuits when we had finished.

Judy produced a leaflet about plastics and the Friends of the Earth campaign which we gave to some members of the public. (Thank you Paul for helping out with the printing!)

All in all a successful day!

Climate, etc - continued

Green Energy

Norway's oil fund, the world's largest sovereign wealth fund, is to invest billions of dollars in wind and solar power projects. The decision follows Saudi Arabia's oil fund selling off its last oil and gas assets. Analysts said the investments were likely to power faster growth of green energy.

Transport - The ULEZ Charge

The most radical scheme anywhere in the world aimed at curbing airborne pollution from vehicles came into force on April 6th with London's new Ultra Low Emission Zone. Everyone who drives a car that doesn't meet Euro 6 standards for diesel and Euro 4 for petrol, will have to pay £12.50 on top of any congestion charge if they enter the area of London covered by the Congestion Charge. This means that most diesels sold before late 2015 will be priced off the city roads.

Miller's Mutterings – continued

A slightly different weather saying for this month.

The early appearance of frogspawn indicates a mild spring and early summer – suitable weather for tadpoles. The position of frogspawn on a pond is also significant. If the spawn is in a sheltered spot near the edge, a wet and windy spring is expected. If it is out in the middle, it indicates a dry spring and early summer. It appears that frogs choose deep water for safety when they sense impeding drought.

Update on climate strikes – cont'd

With about a decade left on the climate clock before we start reaching irreversible tipping points, we have got to escalate the pressure, so get involved with the Climate Strikes – talk to your union – and Extinction Rebellion in whatever ways you can.

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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, and 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, and Kent, BR6 7RN.** Other enquiries regarding the group: may be sent by email to bromleyfoe@gmail.com, or telephone our co-ordinators at the telephone numbers above.

I wish to support Bromley Friends of the Earth and enclose my annual subscription (£8 single / £15 couple/family). I also enclose a donation (optional) of to help towards the cost of producing and distributing the monthly Newsletter.

Name..... Telephone Number

Address..... Postcode.....

Email Address.....

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