



Friends of the Earth

Bromley

October 2012 No. 298 Newsletter

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

Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

Running a farm in Bromley

Steve Miller

A farmer's experiences in coping with all sorts of hazards

Tuesday 2nd October - 7.30pm.

Everyone welcome – bring a friend

Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

***** WEDNESDAY 17TH OCTOBER *****

Contact details inside front cover.

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FoE Conference – reports on page 3, pages 7 to 12

Diary dates:

- Oct 2nd (Tues)** **Bromley FoE's October meeting:** Chelsfield farmer Steve Miller on running an urban farm
- Oct 27th (Sat)** **Stall in Bromley High St.** 2.30pm to 4.30pm. Contact Ann Garrett for more info or see page xx.
- Nov 6th (Tues)** **Bromley FoE's November meeting:** Craig Bennett, Policy and Campaigns Director, FoE
- Dec 4th (Tues)** **Bromley FoE's December meeting:** Social and Festive Fayre

More recycling opportunities

The Council have established six new recycling banks for small electrical items

They are (and you can use Waldo Road & Churchfields Road depots too):

- Biggin Hill, Main Road, Waitrose car park
- Bromley, Walters Yard, near Sainsbury's
- Bromley, Norman Park car park, Hayes Lane entrance
- Chislehurst High Street car park
- Elmers End, Tesco car park
- West Wickham, Ravenswood Avenue car park

Anything with a battery or a plug can be recycled and this includes items like irons, kettles, toasters, remote controls, electric shavers, hair straighteners, mobile phones, cameras, radios, electric tooth brushes. The list also includes adaptors and charges, computer game consoles, power tools and other small items like hair dryers. Plus batteries & low energy light bulbs. More info at www.bromley.gov.uk/wasteneews.

Cudham Fete - Success – despite the wind!

Bromley FoE had a successful day at the well-attended annual Cudham fete, in spite of hefty gusts of winds threatening to blow over our gazebo. Indeed, there was so much public interest in our Bees campaign that we ran out of cards for people to sign calling for action by the Prime Minister to counter the dangers faced by the insect.

... Sorry, folks, but this is being concluded on the next page ...

Next Newsletter - copy details:

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor by ***** WEDNESDAY 17TH OCTOBER *****:

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

FoE's BEE Cause – Should we take part?

Judy asked that this be given prominence in the newsletter, so here it is...

The Bee Cause – Should we take part?

One of the workshops I attended at the FoE conference was on the Bee Cause, more of which next month. FoE is supporting the creation of 60 Bee Worlds across the UK and I would like to ask the group if they would like us to participate in this.

The creation of 60 Bee Worlds ties in with the 60 years of the Queen's reign to demonstrate that in this period 97% of our important natural grasslands have been lost. The Bee Cause marks the Diamond Jubilee as a turning point where we can demand action to end the plight of bees and the threats to the habitats they need, with the Bee Worlds serving as a permanent reminder to the Government.

FoE is calling on them to act by adopting a comprehensive National Bee Action Plan. The Plan would make life better for bees by improving the way we farm our food and plan our towns and cities, and by making sure the Government has the experts it needs to protect our most threatened bees.

If BFoE as a group would like to take this forward, we need to follow FoE's criteria for support, but the first step would be to find the appropriate site. To do so the group could organise a Bee Walk, again FoE have the guidance to help. One undertaking is that we will need to maintain the site for two years, minimum.

We can discuss this at the next monthly meeting and hopefully reach a conclusion then. I have the documentation to take it forward if we say yes.

This is going to be discussed at Bromley FoE's October meeting, but the first questions that spring to the Editor's mind are:

- What are the financial implications of involvement in this?
- What are the resource (people) implications?

Come to the October meeting and find out the answers for yourselves.

More about the Cudham Fete

It was encouraging to note that many visitors to our stall were already aware of the threat to bees and the harm that would occur to the food chain should they become rare or be wiped out. Once again, our children's hook-a-duck game brought in the families, allowing BFoE members to discuss the issue with parents while the children tried to win a prize.

Thanks go to the several group members who helped run the stall throughout the day.

Campaigns and Climate info, Ann Garrett

Bromley High Street Campaign Stall

A final reminder that this is on Saturday October 27th from 2.30 - 4.30 pm outside Caffe Nero or in the Mall Precinct near Argos if the weather is bad. We will be focussing on the Clean British Energy Campaign and we have plenty of visuals to display from FoE. Many thanks to those of you who have already signed up to help. Much appreciated.

Ringers Road Development Plan

We have objected, as part of the consultation process by Crest Housing, to their revised plan for a housing development in Ringers Rd, Bromley.

The plan appears too dominating and is an ugly design. The 10 storey suggestion of the main tower block nearest to the High Street is too overwhelming for the houses around, as is the block running further down Ringers Rd. We have asked that the height of the multi-storey block be reduced, and that the other building should be 'stepped down' the hill side. This development will set a precedent for other housing developments nearby in the future, so it is vital that the design is improved. Requests for eco features such as solar panels have also been made.

Energy and Climate

Welsh Green Substation on the way

To begin with some positive news. Almost a third of homes in Wales will be powered by green energy thanks to a major off shore wind farm. The Belfast-constructed substation set off on August 13th destined for installation

in Liverpool Bay. The 1,500 tonne platform was jointly designed and built by Siemens in Manchester and Harland and Wolff in Belfast, and will consist of 160 turbines. The substation will start lighting up the grid during the Autumn.

Severn Barrage update

David Cameron has asked ministers to consider backing the £30bn project to harness tidal power of the Severn estuary, as the Government struggles to find infrastructure projects that could help kick-start growth. There is a new barrage proposal which, supporters claim, could limit the environmental impact on wildlife habitats.

This new idea will include having a barrage with a lower head, holding back less of the tidal range, creating a smaller lake and therefore limiting damage to the banks of the estuary. The scheme could provide 5 per cent of the UK's energy needs, saving 1 million tonnes of carbon each year, and could generate power for 120 years.

This has always been a controversial project. What do Bromley FoE members think ?

Emphasis on gas - risks climate targets

An over-reliance on gas-fired power stations risks making it impossible for Britain to meet targets on cutting carbon emissions, the new head of a climate-change watchdog has warned. Gas-fired power stations approved over the next few years will

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September meeting report, John and Sue Bocoock

The speaker was John Bennett, Chief Executive of the Kent Wildlife Trust.

The Kent Wildlife Trust (KWT) was formed in 1958 and currently has 31,000 members, 1,000 active volunteers and a staff of 80 who manage a total of 64 reserves. Its five visitor centres are visited by 90,000 school children each year.

Half the 3,200 hectares the KWT owns are grassland (the rest is woodland) which requires grazing. This and other vegetation control is achieved by a herd of 550 cattle, sheep and a specialist team of tree-felling beavers.

KWT's philosophy is threefold:

- To inspire the sharing of wildlife knowledge and to save species and wild places
- To empower people to make a difference
- To influence development – KWT has an important role in this respect.

How is this done? How is it funded?

KWT is a registered charity, and is funded by membership subscriptions and donations. It is independent of government and other economic interests. It has roles in strategic planning and regeneration, such as the Thames Gateway Development.

KWT is part of an umbrella organisation and partnership, working together with 47 Wildlife Trusts which also include urban trusts. London was set up in the 1980s. These urban Trusts have important roles in advising local authorities and other land owners.

John then mentioned some individual sites. The first nature reserve was at Downe Bank, where Charles Darwin made his famous orchid observations. Other sites include marine reserves, Sandwich and Pegwell Bay, which includes sand dunes, coastland wetlands and lizard orchid. At Blean near Canterbury, natural regeneration of oak and hornbeam has followed the planting of a conifer plantation.

Intense pressure on the countryside has produced many small isolated pockets of wildlife habitats. While these remain isolated their small sensitive populations of animals and plants remain particularly vulnerable. A major role of KWT is the linking of these small areas to make them ecologically viable.

Campaigns and Climate – *cont'd*

dictate future policy and if the wrong decision is made about the precise amount on which we depend on gas, emissions targets will be missed.. The Coalition it seems is going to allow gas power until 2045.

Hinkley Point

The European Commission has approved proposals by EDF Energy to build and operate a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point in Somerset. The commission presented its opinion to the UK government, under article 41 of the European Community Treaty, concluding that the proposed Hinkley Point C investment 'fulfils the objectives of the treaty and contributes to develop a sustainable national energy mix'.

Streets are for Sharing project, Ann Garrett

On Sunday Sept 16th a local eco community group set up a project getting local people to reinvent and imagine a street in Hanover, Brighton, and explore how people can make changes in the way they travel, and to open up our streets for everyone to share.

This involved closing Grove Street for the day, and included a walking tour, street games, trying a bike trailer, getting bikes fixed and seeing inside a car club car. The local Hanover Community Centre was used for music and dancing, refreshments, short films and discussions.

The event was organised by Simon Bannister, a Brighton environmental development officer, and his young son Jonah Garrett Bannister.

See the website

www.hillylaine.wordpress.com; some of the info from there is reproduced below.

As well as looking at local growing, energy use and food, the ever clever people from Hanover Action for Sustainability (HASL) have been at work putting together a new initiative looking at sustainable transport and our streets.

Early thoughts have inevitably circled around car use – in two ways mostly: the impact of vehicle emissions on air quality/pollution and on carbon reduction/climate change, and the impact on our streets and quality of life from parked and moving cars, including; restrictions on children's play, obstruction and noise and using up space which could have other community functions.

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Here's an example of a temporary pedestrian crossing in Grove Street

FoE Conference 2012, Overview of one day, by Judy Palmer

After a gap of quite a few years, I went to the FoE Conference, in London this year, for the day on Sat 15 September and came away with some good positive feelings, and also with a bit of a sense of *deja-vu* – some things hadn't changed.

Organising conferences on university campuses in term time is not easy! The facilities FoE were using were spread over two buildings; the microphones needed tweaking a few times and you needed to concentrate reading the campus signage, but saying that there were plenty of FoE volunteers to steer you in the right direction. The workshop speakers were first rate, as usual.

More irritating for me, was seeing people I'm sure I recognised, but for the life of me couldn't remember why! Name badges were not issued to day attendees. One staff member who I did bump into on my way to his workshop was Paul de Zylva, now Senior Campaigner, Biodiversity Programme, who longer-term BFoE members will remember from way back as a local group campaigner (Croydon FoE I think?) / local groups coordinator; luckily he remembered me too.

We had three BFoE representatives attending this year and as Sheila was doing the whole weekend, I'm sure she will be reporting back on all she took part in, in due course – not an easy task! Peter Gandolfi also came up for the day and the three of us made sure we attended different workshops.

The day started with a quick intro and film montage of the last 41 years of FoE, and yes, that did jog a few memories! Sometimes there were low murmurs of *oh yes I remember that, or blimey, did that happen!* This led into a welcome from Andy Atkins, FoE's Executive Director, explaining the theme of the year was 'See Things Differently' and welcoming for the first time, non FoE members for the day.

As my area of interest is primarily Biodiversity / Habitats, the fact that Andy produced the Observer's book of birds as one of the first examples of his love of nature, went down well! This campaign is also well back on FoE's agenda I'm pleased to say.

There were loads of workshops and sessions to choose from and in the end I went to 'Re-connecting with nature – in conversation with Dame Fiona Reynolds' (1) and 'Change in the ground' (2) in the morning. In the afternoon it was 'Get stuck in to The Bee Cause' (3).

(1) This was led by Paul de Zylva, in conversation with Dame Fiona, who is stepping down as Director-General of the National Trust, after a lot of years there.

(2) This was led by Vicki Hird, Senior Campaigner, Land Use, Food & Water Security Programme, with 3 speakers. They were, in order of speakers, Pam Warhurst of Incredible Edible Todmorden; Fred Pearce, environment writer and Sue Dibb from the Food Ethics Council.

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FoE Conference 2012 – *First of two articles from Sheila Brown*

Friends of the Earth is proud of its large network of local groups across the United Kingdom. These groups traditionally come together in September each year for a Local Groups' Conference. The 2012 Conference was a new departure and had a completely different format from other recent conferences. It was held at Imperial College London and the Saturday (the middle day) was opened up to people who were not part of the local groups' network, nor even members of Friends of the Earth. The theme of the conference was *Seeing Things Differently*.

A London venue sounded a great idea – one could travel up for the day – but then of course the District Line closed on the Sunday and engineering works affected trains into Victoria.

Imperial College also has a huge campus, and many of us struggled to locate just where the FoE Conference was happening, communications not being brilliant and signing and information being sadly lacking on the first day when people were arriving.

However, after talk of how the Olympic volunteers had made such a wonderful contribution to the success of the Games, FoE put people in strategic places to guide people on the Saturday and Sunday.

The open invitation for the Saturday did indeed bring in outside people with little or no knowledge of Friends of the Earth's work, and one hopes they will have gone away enlightened, impressed, wanting to know more and, maybe, even seeing things differently.

Earthmover Awards

A feature of each year's conference is the Earthmover Awards. This year the four categories were: See Things Differently, Group of the Year, Friend of the Earth and Photo of the Year.

The first category was for a campaign or project run by a group in the last 12 months with a strong creative element and using innovative methods of engaging new people or imaginative ways of presenting an issue to a wider audience.

Birmingham was nominated for holding a high profile debate on the economic situation, attracting over 100 guests and culminating in a manifesto outlining an alternative vision for a sustainable Birmingham. Gosport and Fareham was shortlisted for organising a debating competition for school Sixth Forms on environmental issues, now to be an annual event.

It was felt to be of great importance to engage this age group. Norwich organised a high profile event to launch The Bee Cause, with 200 people packing out the Assembly House to hear from experts, including well known gardener Bob Flowerdew. The event was widely promoted and led to a local MP inviting Friends of the Earth to present the campaign to the Science and Technology in Agriculture Group in Parliament.

The winner, however, was Harwich Peninsula which ran a rapid response campaign to stop the council selling off land that served as an important local

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FoE Conference 2012 – Sheila Brown's first article, continued

wildlife corridor and public amenity. The group used a variety of campaigning techniques ranging from lobbying councillors and collecting signatures to using social media – Facebook, Twitter and YouTube – and even creating a QR code to enable the public to send objections instantly via email.

Group of the Year sought to reward a local group that has developed successfully over the past 12 months and become a more effective and more sustainable campaigning group.

Merthyr Tydfil had fought off a massive incinerator further up the valley proposed by giant American company Covanta which would have burnt 750,000 tonnes of rubbish a year. This would have had a massive impact on the town and outlying villages.

The group mobilised the public against a very tight deadline, organising fundraising events, holding public meetings and using social media, and forming the United Valleys Action Group. This resulted in 10,500 objections being sent in, and Covanta pulled out of the scheme before Open Hearings were due to be held.

The winner, however, was Guildford and Waverley group for their successful Wey Valley Solar Schools project which raised over £600,000 to place solar panels on six local schools, successfully campaigning to get solar panels installed on council housing and now working on a local renewable heat co-operative. This and other initiatives gave the group having a much higher public profile.

Rachel Gibbons was the winner of the individual award, Friend of the Earth for her commitment over recent years to the Youth and Education Network of Friends of the Earth. Her accomplishments include managing the campaign hub and website, designing and creating resource packs to engage children with environment issues, running training sessions across the country and working to build alliances with other organisations.

It is truly inspiring to hear some of these stories and, for me, the Earthmover Awards is always a high spot of Conference.

Streets are for Sharing, continued

In September, the group will hold its first public event – 'Streets are for Sharing'. This will include the closure (or opening up – depending on your point of view) of Grove Street, and a host of activities and events going on in the Hanover Centre.

The Grove Street activities will be mostly on a play street theme with an emphasis on children playing, street art and neighbourliness, and is (at least in part) inspired by the Bristol 'Playing Out' initiative, which sees regular temporary closure of streets to motor traffic and turning them into meanwhile playgrounds.

More info from the website
www.hillylaine.wordpress.com

Rally: Time to see things differently

Saturday afternoon culminated in a plenary session featuring Green MP Caroline Lucas, fashion designer and campaigner Vivienne Westwood and, from the Philippines, Lidy Nacpil. The session was chaired by Andy Atkins, who asked each speaker in turn to outline their vision.

Andy himself started by saying we should not accept the present as the future: believe that things can change; imagine the world you want to see; turn negatives into positives. A recent example of this was the issue about continued payment of the feed-in tariff; the high profile court cases which ensued had provided a huge opportunity to make the public aware of solar power and raised the profile of renewables. Therefore, seek opportunities to turn adversity to something positive. He challenged us to ask people to join us, to start a conversation in the workplace, for example.

Caroline Lucas

Caroline Lucas spoke next, and also suggested we accentuate the positive. She urged us to celebrate our successes but to be aware of the urgency of the crisis we face, and to convince our fellow humans that we have to change.

She said it was important to “keep the faith” and cited John Beale who had been the first Green (then Ecology) Party candidate to stand in the Brighton Pavilion constituency in 1979, polling just 638 votes. In 1992 Iain Brodie increased this to 963. In 2001

Keith Taylor polled 3,806 votes, which he increased to 9,530 in 2005 and which finally transformed into Caroline's victory in 2012 with 16,238 votes.

John Beale might have been regarded as a loser in 1979, and people might well have asked him if he regretted standing, but this sowed the seed for the triumph to come thirty years later.

Caroline's clear message was, “keep at it and believe in what you do.” The problems facing us are Exploitation, Waste and the Climate Crisis – and it falls to us to make a difference. We are now confronted with the grim reality of Arctic summer sea ice melt and the shrinking of the ice.

Being right is no longer enough; we need to listen and to engage people. Recognise that the climate crisis is not only an environmental issue; it is a threat to our security. Recognise that efficiency is not enough; what is needed are transformational behaviour changes.

Do not rely on reason alone. Challenge anyone who says we do not have enough money to address the environmental crisis. Money is there if we were to crack down on tax evaders and get rid of Trident; creating jobs in the green economy should be a priority. Look at the consumption of resources; involve the media. However, we should remember to have fun as well. Caroline charged us to go away and do something different and to make the vision positive.

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Lidy Racpil

Lidy Racpil comes from the Philippines and said that at the time of the Marcos dictatorship it was a case of fighting for one's very survival; this was paramount, and there was no time to fight for the environment.

Now people realise how necessary this is as the crisis seems to be right on their doorstep and the effects have begun to be seen. Metro Manila – the vast metropolitan area around the city of Manila – experienced severe floods in 2009 when a month's rainfall fell in six hours.

Experts said this was a phenomenon and unlikely to occur again for a couple of hundred years – but it happened again recently, affecting half the land area of Metro Manila with people losing their homes and possessions, and the scientists are now saying it will get worse.

People are genuinely frightened. The Philippines is made up of a total of 7,104 islands; it is no longer seen as a question of whether a number of these islands will be affected by rising sea levels, but of when. Immediate and drastic action is needed, and help is sought from the rich and élite, from corporations and industrial countries. A complete reorganisation of the system is needed, but countries refuse to do what needs to be done. Somehow they need to convince people to do this.

Livienne Westwood

Livienne Westwood was the next speaker – maybe an unexpected inclusion at a Friends of the Earth conference, but as well as being a

fashion designer she has been an activist and environmental campaigner for many years and has become a champion of The Climate Revolution.

She says that governments are too slow and we need to mobilise public opinion. When asked to take part in the Closing Ceremony of the London Paralympics, Livienne had a cunning plan as to how to use this opportunity.

She had a dress made up of seven metres of material, which was folded close to her body but onto which her students appliquéd letters spelling out the words "Climate Revolution." This she kept concealed, until the moment it was unfurled in the arena. Livienne said we must get everyone excited and involved and particularly engage young people. Finance and climate change are related.

Two things we need to do immediately is to save the rain forests, and to make the Arctic commons; we need to stop things before they happen. People need to come forward and "Join the Revolution!". Focus on the small thing you are doing – prepare your own food! (I suspect most of the FoE participants do?). Engage in Art and Culture as a way of getting off the consumer treadmill.

In summing up, Andy reiterated that we face huge challenges, but these bring opportunities. He charged us to decide what we are going to do differently, ask someone else to do it with you and go forward together with others.

Local Power – Re energizing our communities

This talk and discussion was by Alan Simpson, an ex MP, activist and consultant on local energy. He describes himself as a recovering politician!

He said that our present energy needs are controlled at present by a cartel of 6 energy companies who control the cost of our energy, and where it comes from. There is no real choice between them, (He thought the choice was between Fred West and the Wild West!).

He described a local group in Germany some years ago, who wanted to buy clean energy, but could not interest their suppliers in buying energy from clean sources. They also found that they were not allowed by law to 'own' their own local grid, which would allow them to decide who they purchased energy from. It took them some years to buy ownership of their local grid, and supply green power to thousands of homes.

This transformational process in Germany has now installed 53 Gig watt of renewable energy, and introduced 400,000 new jobs into the energy market, now with 2 million contributors. If these means are used to achieve their 2020 energy targets, half a million jobs would be created with an annual increase in GMP of 20 billion euros/year, avoiding fossil energy imports of 22 billion euros.

The use of biogas was discussed. 50% of our domestic gas needs could be

met by 2030. This could also be used in small home based gas to electricity plants for producing electricity locally, if controlled by a national network. There is a trial Biomethane plant at Didcot.

It was suggested that 20% of our energy needs could be supplied by geothermal, extracting heat from deep bore holes. 2km down produced hot water for heating, 5km down produces steam for power production. There is a trial geothermal plant at Newcastle.

Plants such as geothermal and biogas and others would give their best benefits if ownership of the local grid was taken back into the public domain.

Having control over our own local grid is the next step to fully utilizing clean energy. The present large energy companies have too many invested interests and fear the changes needed for the future.

He was asked why so many Scottish wind turbines were laying idle, (this had been in the recent papers). He said the problem was that energy suppliers could purchase their energy from any source, and some had chosen nuclear rather than green. This could not happen in Germany as a recent directive put in place by the green party was that green energy would also be chosen first if available.

Banks still preferred to lend money to a fossil fuel power station as their payback investment would then be in around 10 years rather than the 15 years needed from green forms of energy.

FoE on Nuclear Power and the Dash for Gas

FoE says - Japan set to abandon nuclear power

Commenting on reports today (Friday 14 September 2012) that the Japanese government is set to phase out nuclear power over the next 30 years and develop an energy policy more reliant on renewables, Friends of the Earth's Head of Campaigns Andrew Pendleton said:

"Fukushima reminded the world how risky nuclear power can be - Japan's landmark move sends a strong signal to other nuclear powers. Britain should follow suit. We've got a bounty of renewable energy at our fingertips that's already falling in cost and which, together with energy saving and smart technologies, can meet our electricity needs.

"In the months ahead the Government will decide how to power this country for the next generation while tackling climate change. Whatever obstacles the Chancellor throws in the way, Ed Davey must ditch costly gas and new nuclear and switch to clean British energy from our wind, sun and sea - providing thousands of new jobs."

Notes to editors

1. This week Friends of the Earth welcomed a letter from the Committee on Climate Change to Energy Secretary Ed Davey calling for a 2030 target to cut carbon in the power sector, as part of Electricity Market Reform.

2. The environmental charity is calling on the Government to strengthen its draft Energy Bill to ensure it:

- decarbonises our electricity generation by 2030;
- introduces an Emissions Performance Standard to limit the level of pollution allowed from power stations;
- makes our electricity system more efficient to cut energy waste;
- provides simple, straightforward support for renewable energy, to allow new companies, schools, communities and hospitals to plug into clean power.

FoE says - Climate advisor's warning over Govt 'dash for gas'

Welcoming today's letter from the Committee on Climate Change warning about the impact of current energy policy on UK climate targets, Friends of the Earth's Head of Campaigns, Andrew Pendleton, said:

"This is a very stark warning the Government cannot ignore: an unabated dash for gas is incompatible with tackling climate change and threatens the UK's growing green economy, which already employs almost one million people.

"The Energy Bill must contain a clear target to decarbonise the UK's electricity system by 2030, to give one of the few growth areas of our economy a massive boost and reaffirm the Government's commitment to tackling climate change.

"Investing in clean British energy from the wind, waves and sun will reduce the nation's dependence on increasingly expensive gas and create tens of thousands more jobs."

The Human Quest – Prospering within planetary boundaries

Peter Gandolfi writes: A review of an interesting book on our environmental crisis and how we may safely inhabit the Earth.

There must be many books that describe the world's environmental problems together with offering solutions. How many have forewords as this one does, by well known environmentalists, including Bill Clinton, and UN sustainability chief Gro Bruntland.

The Human Quest's authors, Johna Rockstrom and Mattias Klum deliver content worthy of this introduction.

It is argued that our activity on Earth is squeezed three ways between: Climate change, ever increasing human population and the problems with failing ecosystems.

Other environmentalists have also been saying much the same for many years, but here a fourth squeeze is added – Earth's history of tipping points where ecosystems and climates change suddenly and dramatically, as with the ice ages, and the other extreme, hothouse earth with forests at its poles. Either change would be catastrophic for our present societies.

They suggest keeping clear of tipping points at the limits to growth, it is not enough to keep within the boundaries the planet set for human enterprise, we need to keep a buffer zone for safety.

Some years ago, one of the authors, Rockstrom, and his colleagues defined nine of these planetary boundaries,

which together determined a safe operating space for humanity: Climate change, Stratospheric ozone depletion, Ocean acidification, Biodiversity loss, Freshwater and Land use, Nutrient cycling, Chemical and particulate air pollution.

We have already passed the safe limits for biodiversity loss and nitrogen overload, and are near limits with water and land use.

We have reversed ozone depletion, with the Montreal protocol, that restricts the use of ozone-depleting chemicals. They argue that we must get society back below limits with all nine, but that will require a huge shift in our outlook. This is the quest of the title, and the journey will not be an easy one. They offer a few suggestions, such as switching immediately to renewable energy and using sustainable agricultural practices, but the real task is a mindset shift.

The downside is that this book is only available as an e-book, with the print book currently only available in Swedish which is a pity.

Judy's FoE Conference overview *continued*

(3) Get stuck into the Bee Cause workshop was led by the FoE Bee Cause Team.

All in all, a great inspirational day. Now my notes need deciphering and a way forward needs to be figured out on how to implement the inspiration! *More later*

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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 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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