



**Friends of
the Earth
Bromley**



September 2018
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ewsletter

Bromley FoE: enquiries:

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

September Meeting

Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley

Ted Burke *from Friends of the Earth*

Building a pathway towards a Plastic Free Future

The story so far and how we can make an impact locally

Tuesday 4th September - 7.30pm (*prompt start please*)

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Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by

***** SUNDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER *****

Contact details inside front cover.

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*

Diary dates:

- Aug 27th (Mon) **Bromley FoE stall** at Cudham Fete
- Sep 4th (Tue) **Bromley FoE's September Meeting**
Ted Burke FoE – Plastics
- Sep 15th (Sat) **World Cleanup Day:** Bromley FoE will be taking part and are planning to clear up plastics in Bromley Library Gardens from 2-4pm. More details at the September meeting.
- Sep 21st (Fri) **Peace Day Event:** Bromley Parish Church Rooms, 7.30 to 10.00pm. Bromley FoE will have a stall
- Sept 22nd (Sat) **People's Walk for Wildlife**
- Oct 2ⁿ (Tue) **Bromley FoE's October Meeting**
- Oct 7th (Sun) **Proposed visit to Bedgebury Pinetum** and Forest. More details at the September meeting
- Oct 27th (Sat) **FoE stall** with Bromley Against Fracking in the Mall Precinct, Bromley from 2.30 - 4.30pm

September Meeting – Tuesday 4th September 2018**Building a pathway towards a Plastic Free Future**

Ted Burke from Friends of the Earth is coming to talk about the Plastics story so far: how the issue captured the nation's hearts when Blue Planet 2 aired last year and the progress that's been made since.

What FoE's national campaign is doing and how we can make an impact here in Bromley Borough.

Next Newsletter - copy details

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor by *** **SUNDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER** ***

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.

August meeting report – Sheila Brown

Their Life in Our Hands – a potted history of animal welfare over two centuries

Karen Wheller – already well known to our group having spoken to us about Beaver Water World and also joined us on FoE stalls with Bromley against Fracking – came to speak to us tonight about Animal Welfare. Karen's first degree was a BSc in animal welfare law, followed by a degree in animal (mainly bird) behaviour.

The first animal welfare legislation was enacted in 1822 – but what do we mean by 'animal welfare'? It's about the conditions in which animals are kept and the wellbeing of individual animals. The UK has strict minimum standards and finally acknowledged 'animal sentience' in 1986, recognising that animals are able to think and understand what is happening to them.

The first piece of legislation was thanks to Richard Martin, a Liberal MP and was about 'Cruel Treatment of Cattle', resulting in a health check once a year (now it is every two days!) He set up the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) in 1824 and it was given Royal recognition by Queen Victoria in 1935, becoming the RSPCA which we know today. Its aims were the prevention of cruelty to animals and promoting their welfare, and these aims remain the same today.

The Cruelty to Animals Act of 1835 only included a narrow band of animals – farm animals and dogs – but enabled the first veterinary hospitals to

be set up, established standards for transporting animals and ensuring that they were 'humanely' slaughtered, but then this stipulated that they should be killed within 10 minutes of being stunned, whereas this is now 3 minutes. In 1876 birds and cats were added to the categories included.

The Protection of Animals Act of 1911 consolidated various older pieces of welfare legislation and began a shift towards 'protection' of animals rather than just preventing cruelty.

The mid 1920s saw a move to include zoos, circuses and the media and the Performing Animals Act was passed in 1925. Limits were set regarding the amount of work an animal could do. It is due to be updated in 2020 with a move to an outright ban of animals in circuses – these are generally falling out of favour with the public due to a shift in culture – BUT the use of animals in the media and television is exploding with 300 different companies supplying animals for the media.

In 1951 the Pet Animals Act came in: pet stores had to be licensed by the local council, but councils vary enormously in what they allow (in Bromley no 'dangerous wild animals') and in frequency of inspections.

In 1976 we had the Dangerous Wild Animals Act for the most part covering larger exotic animals, anything considered particularly venomous, and primates. Each local authority keeps its own list of licensed premises but the licensing criteria vary greatly

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August meeting report – *continued*

between different councils, for example, in Bromley only one licence is needed to cover a number of wild animals.

1981 brought the Zoo Licensing Act – a tome of 680 pages including amendments and schedules. Once again different authorities allowed different standards. It stipulated regular inspections, public safety standards, and strict veterinary requirements with each establishment having its own vet. Private zoos were only allowed to open seven days a year. The Big Cats collection in Smarden Kent came under this category, but in Kent the requirement is for each individual animal had to have a licence. There was a move towards zoos concentrating more on entertainment.

In 1986 the Scientific Procedures Act came in and this was the first legislation to regulate use of animals for experimentation, although the definition of 'sentient' was restricted to vertebrates and cephalopods.

It was not until 2006 that the Animal Welfare Act was passed, listing the 'Five Freedoms' of Animals (freedom from hunger and thirst, freedom from discomfort, freedom to exhibit natural behaviour, freedom from pain, injury or disease, freedom from fear and distress).

It gave local authorities stronger powers to inspect shops, zoos, laboratories and farms and introduced the banning of people convicted of an animal cruelty offence from keeping

animals again, and also prohibited the sale of animals to under-16s. It also put an end to giving goldfish as prizes at fairs grounds.

It was judged to be a fairly robust law, but Scotland brought in a separate law which is actually stricter than ours. The drawbacks were that it only applied to vertebrates and cephalopods and there were exemptions (experimentation, pet shops – a pet shop can get away with keeping an animal in worse conditions than a zoo because the former intends to sell and the latter to keep the animal).

This Act did not bring in a requirement for welfare of animals kept to be sold to be brought in line with the welfare requirements of animals being kept permanently. Equally, it did not go nearly far enough with regard to welfare of chicken, stipulating an area per animal of only 1½ sheets of A4 paper, regardless of the size of the individual breed. Once again there was huge disparity in the way each local authority interpreted it and in its issue of Zoo licences.

One huge area which was omitted was animal slaughter, a very unpalatable subject. Most animals have to be pre-stunned prior to slaughter but there are exemptions for some religious slaughter methods. Unfortunately the 2006 Act did not address this sufficiently.

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Report on visit to Ruxley Gravel Pits – Sue and John Bocoock

A 46 acre site of special scientific interest (SSSI) in Ruxley, Orpington, which was originally excavated between 1929 and 1951. It is owned by the Environment Agency and managed by Kent Wildlife Trust. The site comprises 4 gravel pits and the river Cray which runs through three of them, the fourth is fed by springs.

Once the gravel extraction had finished, the pits attracted many species of birds and a diverse range of plants. In 1975 the site was designated an SSSI. Over 500 species of vascular plants and 169 bird species have been recorded, including song thrush, reed bunting, kingfisher, and sky larks, and 53 of the 169 are breeding bird species.

There are also numerous insects: 23 species of butterfly, 9 species of dragonfly and over 500 species of beetle. This variety reflects the diversity of habitats on the site: wooded island, fringes of mature trees, scrub, fen and open water. Vegetation on the banks includes the rare club rush. The open water areas have rafts of yellow and white water lilies.

This was our second visit to the reserve. This time it was very warm, in great contrast to the cold of our previous visit in January 2016. The former mountain of rubbish, adjacent to the reserve, has now been cleared and only the rusted remains of the processing equipment along with the concrete base are still visible.

Our thanks go to Martin Watts for once again guiding us round the site, and to

Linda for providing us with very welcome refreshments at the end of our two hour tour.

NB – Much of the work involved in maintaining and managing the site is done by volunteers.

August meeting report - *continued*

Second half of the meeting

Many varied topics were covered in the second half of our meeting. Here are some of them.

Future transport:

Bill Priestley reported that his brother Richard's car club in Hereford was introducing a hydrogen powered car and members would have the chance to try this out and give feedback. A fully electric post van has been brought out by Peugeot . Utilities are buying electric vans. South Korea has ordered 50,000 electric buses.

Nature:

RSPB are organising free nature walks during August. A Charter for Parks is being introduced.

Saturday 22nd September is Chris Packham's People's Walk for Wildlife: <https://www.chrispackham.co.uk/the-peoples-walk-for-wildlife> Members of Bromley FoE will join this; details at the September meeting.

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Basecamp 1 – War on Want – report by Sam Gee

A talk from Asad Rehman, Executive Director at War on Want.

“Sacrifice zones – from colonialism to climate change – who lives and who dies”

Asad Rehman, a former lead campaigner at Friends of the Earth and now Executive Director of War on Want, gave an impassioned speech at Friends of the Earth Basecamp 2018 explaining the injustice at the heart of the problems that NGOs like his and Friends of the Earth are trying to tackle.

War on Want, he explained, was originally founded in opposition to the Korean War, with its name describing the only war worth fighting. They are not an aid-giving organisation. Instead they aim for direct solidarity with the communities they stand with, and are now a global human rights and anti-poverty charity.

He explained that he had decided to focus his speech on the concept of sacrifice zones, which have underpinned the global socio-economic model for hundreds of years. In the US, he went on to say, big industry has always situated its factories in sacrifice zones, impoverished, largely BME communities, poisoning their water with industrial effluent, and entrapping them in a cycle of poverty through exploitative employment structures. The people in those communities have little choice but to work in these same factories.

Ingrained into the business model of the US is this idea of sacrifice zones, areas which can be exploited, that supposedly do not matter. To make profit, communities of colour had to be sacrificed, but invisibly. Even big environmental NGOs often ignored this sacrifice, and were even complicit in it.

The racist allocation of sacrifice zones is nothing new. Instead, it has been happening for centuries. Christopher Columbus landed in Hispaniola (Haiti) at the end of the 15th century. Under French colonial rule, Haiti was the richest colony in the world, accounting for more than 50% of France's GDP. However, Haiti was forced to pay the equivalent of US\$40bn to French banks following the slaves' revolt. It was only finally paid off 140 years later. This amount dwarfs all aid paid to Haiti in more recent times, and is, Asad argued, symptomatic of the hard-wiring of the philosophy of sacrifice zones into global systems and institutions.

Asad commented on how, in the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in April 2018, no one was talking about the root causes of poverty in the global South: neoliberalism, the mark left by colonialism and the corporate elite. Worryingly, we live in a time when 44% of Brits are proud of their country's history of colonialism (YouGov, 2016). As Asad said, during the British Empire, Britain extracted £600tn of wealth from India, taking India from accounting for 27% of the world's GDP to accounting for just 3%.
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Basecamp 2 – Plastic-Free Friday launch – report by Sam Gee

At Basecamp in June this year, I attended the launch of the #PlasticFreeFriday campaign, which was a series of short speeches from Dr Christian Dunn, a lecturer at Bangor University and founder of #StrawFreeChester; Helen Tandy from Chester Friends of the Earth; Hilary Haworth, of the National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI); and Julian Kirby, plastic campaigner at Friends of the Earth.

Christian began his talk by highlighting that climate change is the single greatest threat to our planet, and stating that the solution to it is the straw. 550 million plastic straws are used in the UK and US every day. Plastics are affordable, versatile and durable; they are crucial to modern life, and yet, pre-WW2, virtually no plastic was produced.

Since the Second World War, 8.3bn tonnes have been produced, and virtually all of it still exists, as plastic, somewhere on Earth. Plastics never decompose, and scientists now think that they will be the geological marker of our time. A truckload of plastic enters the ocean every second, and although the World Health Organisation is currently investigating, the consequences to human health are largely unknown.

The reason for why straws will solve climate change, Christian suggests, is that by stopping using them, we will reduce crude oil usage, and therefore cut greenhouse gas emissions. "No," he contradicts himself. "Although theoretically crude oil usage would

decrease if the world ditched straws, we all know that the scale of climate change means that it alone would hardly change a thing." The real reason for why straws will solve climate change, he argues, is because it is a first step. It galvanises communities by giving something achievable. It is a visible first action with visible results. It is quite literally as simple as saying, "No straw, please."

After one step, Christian argues, people can move onto the next step. The next step for #StrawFreeChester is #PlasticFreeChester, because now everyone on the streets knows about the campaign, and are on board, ready to move forward. What's more is that the issue of ocean plastic has captured the public imagination like no UK environmental campaign ever. The groundswell in favour of action will enable us to turn the tide against ocean plastics, and ultimately, against climate change. 'Climate' is too abstract. A straw is not.

Helen describes the coincidence that enabled the formation of #StrawFreeChester. By chance, she saw a tweet from Christian asking if anyone in Chester was interested in campaigning against plastics on a local scale. She explains how usually in her campaigns, she likes to have the ultimate end goal in mind, with resources from Friends of the Earth HQ, but she agreed to start with the straw.

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Basecamp 3 – The fight for Clean Air Zones – report by Sam Gee

In a panel discussion session at Basecamp in June 2018, clean air campaigner Muna Suleiman was joined by Aaron Kiely, Richard Dyer, Jenny Bates and Ollie Hayes to bring the latest on the campaign for clean air zones (CAZs) across the country to tackle the UK's illegally dirty air. With the Government's plans ruled illegally poor by the High Court for the third time, in February this year, and 40 000 premature deaths a year, action could not be more urgently needed.

Ollie began by describing air pollution as a massive public health concern, linked to lung cancer, asthma and dementia. He drew attention to the fact that air pollution is deeply linked with climate change, and stressed that the UK Government is breaking the law with its inaction. Friends of the Earth is saying that nearly all towns and cities need CAZs. However, there's opposition, especially from the car industry, which is very influential over politicians. We need to keep reminding decision-makers that lives are at stake.

Jenny went on to point out that there are already 200 CAZs across 12 EU countries. We do have a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in London, soon to have an Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) and possibly a zero emission soon. However, they must be large enough and must be based on prices that are high enough to discourage people, as well as real-world emissions data for vehicles, not lab test figures. We also need supplementary measures as a full carrot-and-stick approach, including changes in road tax and

investment into public transport, walking and cycling.

Richard explained how Friends of the Earth is demanding that CAZs must include cars and vans, not just HGVs, and must be large enough. Increasingly, people are supportive of measures that restrict the dirtiest vehicles – more than half of the UK population back them, polling suggests. In Manchester, just 2% of journeys are by bike. In Swindon, 75% are by car. By contrast, in Freiburg, Germany, just 25% of journeys are by car. He also pointed out that legislation exists that allows local authorities to dish out fines for idling.

Aaron stressed the need for a scrappage scheme to help drivers ditch diesel, funded by car manufacturers. He called for such a scheme to not just move people into a slightly less polluting car but instead, it must get them out of fossil fuelled cars altogether. We also need more e-bikes, more bus passes, more rail cards and more car sharing/club schemes.

Muna noted a study of air pollution around the royal residences in the run-up to Meghan and Harry's wedding, and that it had got some media coverage from the more royalist outlets!

One audience member posed the question, "What can local groups do to address the fairness problems of CAZs?"

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Basecamp 4 – London Regional Breakfast – report by Sam Gee

At Basecamp in June this year, there was an opportunity to have breakfast on Saturday with others from across your local group's region, which, for Bromley, is London. We had a chance to briefly talk about some of the successes, ongoing campaigns and challenges being faced by groups from around the capital. The discussion was led by Cat Currie, Friends of the Earth's London regional campaigner. Here is an outline of some of the key topics discussed:

- People from a couple of groups commented on how the Sherwood Forest fracking campaign is far more successful than previous campaigns, such as #StopBarclaysFracking in October 2016, because it is such an iconic place, and is recognised by most children, who then are more likely to get their parents involved.
- A member of Hackney and Tower Hamlets Friends of the Earth described their plans for the Saturday following Clean Air Day (Thursday 21st June) to close and turf a street to show what London could be like as a liveable, breathable city. They said it was part of their campaign to make Hackney "ten times greener", by presenting a positive, almost-utopian vision to work towards. They said that the turving a road is very viable for local groups, costing around £200-300. You can read about their event here: <https://sayitpoplar.co.uk/news/st-pauls-way-festival-takes-on-clean-air-theme/>

- On 22nd September, Car-Free Day, groups across the country will be claiming their roads for clean air street parties. This is part of the campaign for Sadiq Khan to enforce one day a year as car-free.

August meeting report - concluded

Butterfly numbers are severely reduced this year due to weather conditions.

Bee Count: 23,755 people took part in the count and 483,000 bees were spotted.

Fracking:

A recent Guardian article showed a link between fracking and air pollution. There had also been several earthquakes in the Newdigate area where fracking is taking place and a call for it to be halted.

Planning:

The Broke Hill planning application for a housing development in Sevenoaks on the southern outskirts of Bromley Borough has now increased from 800 to 850 houses.

Computer repairs:

Tamara has discovered two companies able to work wonders: Excellent Electrics, 6 Chatterton Road, Bromley, Kent, BR2 9QN and Black Star Electronics Repair at 40 Fairlight Cross, Longfield, Kent, DA3 7JD. Both have websites.

Basecamp 1 – War on Want – *continued*

Neo-colonialism continues to permeate attitudes to the global South, and sacrifice zones continue to underpin Western wealth. Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) strip back social spending in low-income developing countries (LIDCs), often whilst benefiting banks and politicians in the global North. Together with debt repayments and expropriation, SAPs have enabled US\$26.5tn to be extracted from the global South. 60% of the world is being denied the right to a dignified life, which Asad argues is an inevitable consequence of neoliberalism.

Commenting on the websites and messages of the UN and other organisations, Asad does not see the urgency that is required. The global North is still willing to compromise on the lives of those in the global South, and one huge example of this is the lack of action on climate change, which is overwhelmingly affecting and threatening the lives of people of colour in the global South. The global North has allowed a polar bear to become the image of climate change; so displaced from the realities being faced by those who will be hit most by the climate crisis.

The rise of the far right shows that Europe defends the idea of sacrifice zones. All the major parties in the recent Italian elections said, apparently uncontroversially, that they would put Italian warships in the Mediterranean to drive back refugees.

Asad went on to say that radical systemic changes are needed, and

one key campaign is that for a global minimum wage. Issues like the plastic straw are good for engaging people, but what about when they do ditch straws? They lose agency because they thought they would be able to solve all the problems, and yet they haven't.

In order to continue to challenge neoliberalism and neo-colonialism, Asad concluded, we, as environmental activists and organisations, need to put those who will be hit worst by climate change at the heart of everything we do.

Basecamp 3 – Clean Air Zones - *continued*

In response, Jenny called for local authorities to introduce more and better cycle lanes and public transport. Richard said that car sharing schemes needed to be made more accessible to disadvantaged people. Muna said that in Bristol, they have been able to highlight how the unfairness of air pollution is far worse than potential unfairness from CAZs, because it is those without cars who are often poorest **and** the worst affected by air pollution.

The final audience question asked whether there sufficient pressure on car share, hire and cab firms to go electric. Richard explained that that is not currently a focus for Friends of the Earth, but that it was an excellent idea for a local campaign.

Plastics and rubbish - Judy Palmer

At the August meeting we discussed whether we would join in **World Clean Up Day** on 15th September and it was agreed. We will see how much plastic we can pick up in the Library Gardens in a certain time limit (*not agreed on as yet*) and some finer points need to be arranged, but see the diary dates for the meeting point.

Friends of the Earth has recently reminded us that we can take part in an 'Urban Beach Clean', run by the Whale & Dolphin Conservation whenever we want! When you consider that up to 95% of plastic which is in our oceans actually comes from inland communities, this is worth considering.

Many people will say, *well it is not our job to do this, what about the people who leave the litter in the first place?* And yes, some people are inconsiderate of others, but some rubbish gets blown by the wind from bins and boxes. Plus, people seeing groups of litter pickers advertising why they are doing it, may well remember not to do it the next time! I also think of the Ghandi quote in these cases too – '*You must be the change you wish to see in the world*' – therefore an environmental campaigner out there doing, rather than just speaking, is a positive picture.

Other plastics info - As we have seen in the last year or two, people have stopped buying plastic bags in supermarkets as one of their first steps to help with the plastic waste problem. People are saying no to plastic straws and take away cups; people-power is forcing the issue with producers and

manufacturers of plastic to re-think and re-invent. I read recently that a chemical engineer has helped manufacturer a new glitter product which is not made with polyester but a regenerated cellulose that's extracted from trees.

In football, the Football League announced in the Spring that it would be introducing measures for clubs to phase out single-use plastic. To take this even further, the UN has declared that a League Two team, Forest Green Rovers, is carbon-neutral! The club chairman is also the founder of the green energy firm Ecotricity and the club is the first vegan football club, so it must be the 'greenest' club ever.

In fashion, waste has been endemic in the industry for decades, but even they are taking small steps to improve. There is a call for manufacturers to use more monofibres instead of synthetic and mixed-fibre fabrics which are hard to break down in the recycling process. Only 1% of our waste clothing is estimated to be recycled, so this needs to change.

Then, not least, plastics in supermarket food container. Well, this does vary from one chain to the other, but black plastic trays seem to be used by all, and are the worst for the recycling scanners – they cannot be 'found' so end up in landfill. Designers and plastic manufacturers need to wake up and invest in developing good easy-to-recycle designs. But they say they need the money to do this. Oh dear.

Nature bits and pieces – Judy Palmer

A while back Chris Packham, the conservationist and broadcaster, wrote a stirring article in the New Scientist tackling the issue of the loss of so much of our countryside and different species. He feels very strongly that we need to do something radically about these losses, and the first step is to try and get the UK population to 'Walk for Wildlife'.

Sheila has mentioned this in the diary dates, but as yet we have no new details other than it will be in London on 22nd September, so watch this space as they say.....

You may remember a new **Environment Bill** was announced this summer, but Friends of the Earth are asking groups to help spread the word about urging our MPs that this Act needs to be robust and have strong environmental principles, with an independent environmental watchdog which will hold the government to account now, after Brexit, but also in later years, for future generations.

On future generations – would they think it was safe to bury nuclear waste under our national parks? Some misguided (*I think!*) people do. A report was published earlier this summer looking at finding geological disposal facilities for this waste, and concluded that safety matters should prevail over environmental concerns wherever a site was found. A thorny and controversial problem to contend with, nuclear waste.

On a happier note, the **first floating dairy farm** is opening later this year in Rotterdam's Merwehaven harbour! It

will farm 40 cows initially, being milked by robots, and hopes to produce 800 litres of milk a day. It will be on three levels and anchored to the ocean floor and will even generate some of its own energy by hydrogen produced through electrolysis powered by solar panels.

A Dutch engineer came up with the idea in 2012 when he was in New York and saw the devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy and the subsequent loss of fresh produce getting through to the shops.

This new farm will be hurricane resilient, help cut down on transport costs with its products, help the town's population shop locally, as well as partnering with a local green waste company which uses electric trucks.

Urban farms are increasing and are useful as they use less water, fertiliser and pesticides as well as having fewer transport issues. Space can be a drawback, but indoor farms are on the increase too, as some crops can be grown on vertical poles, use a water-only feeding system and LED lights with infrared sensors to monitor how the crops are faring.

More people are realising how the prolific use of pesticides is damaging our food and eco systems and pesticide companies are being taken to court, and losing.

Global Warming

On August 7th the front page headline in the Metro was ' Global Warming Doomsday Alert'. The following article said that a temperature rise could trigger ' Hothouse Earth'. This was after the recent prolonged heatwave and will hopefully have been influential in alerting the public to the real dangers this planet now faces.

The piece went to say that scientists warn that humanity now faces doomsday within decades as climate change reaches a tipping point that triggers runaway global warming. The rise of 2C will set off an uncontrollable chain of events. These and a 5C increase will raise sea levels by up to 197 ft and threaten the future of the habitat for humans.

The planet is now 1C hotter, and potentially reaching the tipping point in 50 years. The facts are due to be published in a paper by the National Academy of Sciences.

Oil Drilling Concerns

Leading seismologists and geologists have called for an immediate moratorium on oil drilling in Surrey after a dozen earthquakes shook the county in the last four months.

Experts in the hydrocarbon industry have written to The Times, the Business Secretary Greg Clark and the heads of the oil industry regulators to warn that ' public health and the environment are not being adequately protected given the unstable geology'.

They said that that this instability had not been identified before planning permission and other permits had been issued for the currently active drill sites.

The University of Edinburgh has stated: ' These earthquakes are unique and unprecedented events in the region and seem to be increasing'.

Fracking Update

Six anti-fracking activists were arrested on July 24th at the Cuadrilla site at Preston New Road in Lancashire. They were challenging the ' extreme and expensive ' injunction by Cuadrilla aimed at preventing 'meaningful ' protest..

Fracking has no residential support in the UK, with the Government pushing it upon communities who have already said no. It is over ruling local council decisions in doing so.

Transport

Some better news now - **speed limits** on main roads in central and suburban London will be cut to 20 mph in an attempt to reduce accidents and improve safety.

Sadiq Khan announced this on July 24th and said that the first changes will take place on red routes inside the congestion charge zone. Speed cameras will be recalibrated and police will mount random patrols in areas classed as high risk.

In order to reduce pollution, however, more people need to car share and use

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Miller's Mutterings – Chris Miller

Phew! I think you can guess what I am about to write this month. With a bit of luck, by the time you read this we should be well into cutting wheat. The spring barley will be a while yet as it was planted later than normal due to the wet conditions.

How the crops have coped with the hot temperatures we will not really see until they are all cut and weighed. The sun has burnt both crops rather than them dying naturally, which is what we call senescence. With the lack of our crop of oil seed rape I think it may be a lean year.

Steve and I went on holiday in June. We were watching all the hay being made in Devon and wondering about ours (sad I know) but Peter was on the ball and made ours all by himself. It had "turned" quickly in the heat so couldn't make haylage but made plenty of hay bales. Think we will have to go away again in June., hee hee.

The boys are attaching markers onto the new drill; this will mark the ground as they drive enabling them to see exactly where they have drilled. This will stop overlapping and misses in the rows. Some drills do come with this attachment but ours didn't.

To fit retrospectively has given our John Deere rep. a few headaches, as it doesn't come as a kit. Each part has to be looked up and ordered individually but we have got there in the end. It was quite daunting when about 100 packets arrived of various sizes without plans but the boys are nearly at the point of cracking it. Some jigsaw. I'll let you

know how they get on but I think I will stay out of the way!

The young swallows are a delight to watch and we do have house martins after all. Couldn't identify them at first, they are so quick that I couldn't see if they were swallows or house martins. Don't know what happened to the swifts but I gather that numbers are down this year. Our daughter, who lived in Kings Hill, has plenty flying around her house.

Weather saying for August is:-
*If a cold August follows a hot July,
it foretells a winter hard and dry.*

*Chris Miller
Court Lodge Farm*

Climate, Energy and Transport - *continued*

public transport [not easy with train overcrowding at present], and the rail infrastructure needs development to increase freight transport.

A flying taxi design proposal has been unveiled by Rolls-Royce. The hybrid vehicle would take off vertically and carry 5 passengers at up to 500 miles without being recharged. Gas turbines would generate energy to charge an electric battery.

Rolls is looking for partners to develop the taxi, which could take to the skies in the early 2020s!

TRUMP TOWERS – Poem by Ann Garrett

Jan 19th

Trump Towers here, Trump Towers there
Trump Towers proliferating everywhere

Multi-national ruthless powers
Ensures the future of the Towers

Business deals grow the whole world over
While tax avoidance is 'in clover'

Tax evaders are running wild
Trump will see they are not filed

Business empires are flying high
Trump Towers are reaching into the sky

The President-elect is nearly in place
elevated in Trump Tower's lifts high up 'in space'

Jan 20th

Now Trump Towers and the White House are virtually one
It will be hard to garner light from the sky and warmth from the sun

Trump will be building walls so firm,
that bridges won't stand much chance this presidential term

Trump Towers here, Trump Towers there
Trump Towers will be ruling everywhere

Ann Garrett Ashley [Jan 19th - the eve of the Presidential Inauguration and Jan 20th inauguration Day]

There was no room for the 'Trump Towers' poem in the last newsletter. It was meant to go with the photo of the FoE banner on the Trump march. FoE were on the demo emphasising his poor environmental record. The poem predicts this in the symbolic line 'It will be hard to garner light from the sky and warmth from the sun.'

Update from Rosie and the Plastics Team at FoE

We've got lots of exciting things happening on the plastics campaign so here's a quick update for you.

Resources

Many of you will hopefully have seen some Google Docs with lots of info, from stall ideas to short films. We've now combined all of this information into one place - https://www.yourcampaign.info/plasticsguide?utm_source=Friends+of+the+Earth+Communications&utm_campaign=38666b61ea-LM1808008&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_383af65c6b-38666b61ea-20940449

This is your one-stop shop for the plastics campaign. Have a look and let us know if there any extra things you'd like to see. Or if you've held a great event and think others can benefit from it, let us know if you'd like to write a section to share with other groups.

Film screenings

We've bought a screening licence for 'A Plastic Ocean'. It's a brilliant film exploring many of the problems with plastics as well as looking at solutions. It's a great way to raise awareness and get people in your community engaged in the issue. If you'd like to hold a film screening then contact edward.burke@foe.co.uk. We've also got a guide to help you plan one.

Also, do you know about Action Network? It can help you advertise events, create petitions, and raise the profile of your group, and could be really helpful for your screening of A Plastic Ocean.

Find out more at https://friendsoftheearth.uk/local-groups/action-network-digital-campaigning-tool-local-groups?utm_source=Friends+of+the+Earth+Communications&utm_campaign=38666b61ea-LM1808008&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_383af65c6b-38666b61ea-20940449.

Urban beach cleans

Recent studies show that up to 95% of the plastic in our oceans actually comes from towns, cities and villages, making its way to the sea through rivers, drains and waterways. And it's not just people deliberately littering a plastic bottle placed out for recycling can still find its way to the ocean, often as a result of overflowing bins or high winds.

Even if you don't live on the coast, you can make a real contribution to tackling plastic pollution in your own community by taking part in the #UrbanBeachClean programme run by our friends at Whale and Dolphin Conservation.

To find out more or order your free clean-up kit email rosie.cotgreave@foe.co.uk.

Signing up to the campaign

At the moment we're emailing all local groups about plastics, but soon we'll only email those who have signed up to work on the campaign. To ensure you keep getting our updates, please email the details of your group's plastics campaign contact to localgroups@foe.co.uk.

Basecamp 2 – Plastic-Free Friday launch – *continued*

They initially got 30 businesses on board. She says that for her, targets are important, and so are costumes! As such, they created a turtle costume for their street stalls, helping them on their way to the now 70 businesses that have gone straw-free. Now, Chester are headed not just for straw-free, not just plastic-free, but zero-waste. This campaign, she concludes, was more evidence that often local groups are ahead of the national charity, ready to ride the wave of public support and media attention.

Hilary explains that the NFWI is the largest voluntary women's organisation in the UK. They have 220000 members in England and Wales across 6300 local groups. They are running an End Plastic Soup campaign, which focuses on ending the entry of synthetic fibres, released in the laundry, into the oceans. They are directing their attention at "the soup, not the crouton," Hilary explains.

The campaign, backed in a resolution voted through by 98.9% of WI members, targets microfibres, which get through filters into the ocean, and attract pollutants, which bind with their surface, are ingested by fish, and work their way up the food chains, to humans.

The NFWI is working with university research partners and is calling on governments and industries to act, but is starting locally through laundry checklists, promoting recycled clothes, and writing articles in local newspapers. Change, Hilary argues, is needed in the textiles industry, the

fashion industry, clothes retailers, water companies, and attitudes to fast fashion.

Julian highlights the staggering vastness of the plastic problem. How do we engage the public on such a huge issue? Well, we don't need to. No campaign has ever been so successful at shifting public opinion. Friends of the Earth has started #PlasticFreeFriday as a step that combines action with awareness. We end to make the invisible visible, and the intangible tangible. When you go plastic-free as an individual, people begin to ask questions, which is exactly what we need.

New Government 'Civil Society Strategy' launched

Last week saw the launch of the Government's highly anticipated 'Civil Society Strategy: Building a Future that Works for Everyone'. The key points of relevance to Bromley's voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector are as follows:

1. Community-led initiatives, inclusive communities and place based social action

- give people more control over the future of the communities they live in,
- reduce social, financial and digital exclusion.

/continued on next page

2-minute Beach Clean Project

Sheila Brown writes:

Whilst on the Isle of Wight I came across this scheme at Freshwater Bay. People are encouraged to take two minutes picking up litter from the beach and then bin it or recycle it. A litter-picker and bags are provided. This scheme is backed by the Marine Conservation Society and Surfdomo (a commercial enterprise which supplies clothing and equipment for surfers).

Editor's apologies – Sheila did provide two photos of this scheme but for various reasons it didn't turn out to be possible to include both of them.



New Government 'Civil Society Strategy' launched – *continued*

2. Supporting young people

- Government to work with the Big Lottery Fund to use a £90m funding pot for the creation of a new body to provide support to young people with multiple barriers to employment.

3. Strengthening local infrastructure

- Explicit reference to the important role of local infrastructure organisations in strengthening civil society by supporting and representing VCSE groups.

4. Funding, commissioning and contracts

- The Government outlines a planned revival of grant-making.
- Improve engagement in commissioning and co-design,

You can read a more detailed synopsis of key points at <https://www.communitylinksbromley.org.uk/>

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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?

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