



Update

Waste Strategy and Zero Waste

Group members spoke out about the Council's new Waste Strategy, which aims to increase recycling via a new "co-mingled" collection. We argued that this method will increase carbon emissions and lead to waste being exported for processing.



Photo: UK Win

We also took part in a Zero Waste lobby in Parliament (pictured) where campaigners and MPs heard experts' views against incineration.

Brent's Climate Change Strategy

The newly-formed strategy steering committee met for the first time in November. Group member Lia Colacicco is representing us, and has been looking into providing information and practical steps for residents.

Big Climate Connection

We took part in this [climate change lobby](#) with MP Sarah Teather in [November](#) to discuss the forthcoming Energy Bill, fuel poverty and other local issues.

Save the Welsh Harp Centre

Brent's only environmental education centre at the Welsh Harp is under threat due to Council cuts. We have joined teachers and other groups to protest against closure of this vital resource.

Sponsored Walk

Brent FoE are holding a sponsored walk on Sunday March 20th in Richmond Park to raise funds for our activities. To take part see <http://brentfoe.com/node/100>

****STOP PRESS** Brent FoE Green Fair**

We have had approval from Brent to hold a Green Fair in Willesden Green on May 21st. Look out for further details.

People Power Has Saved Our Forests – Now Save the Welsh Harp Centre



Photo: 38 degrees

Following massive public pressure, the Government has ditched plans to sell off England's national forests. Environment Secretary Caroline Spelman was forced to apologise that they "got it wrong."

The plans, described by opponents as "environmental vandalism", would have threatened wildlife conservation and public rights of way. Forests play a key role in preventing climate change as growing trees absorb CO₂, but release it when cut down. They are also important for our well-being, encouraging exercise and relieving stress. Woodlands also benefit children's development and overall health.

Our precious forests are best preserved by the Forestry Commission in public ownership, not sold to private developers for profit. The [Woodland Trust](#) say the plans would have raised a tiny amount but caused immeasurable damage.

More about the successful forestry campaign [here](#)

Getting children to appreciate nature and respect the environment is widely recognised as key to preserving our future. Yet Brent Council is considering axing the Borough's only environmental education centre at the Welsh Harp. A broad-based campaign aims to reverse this decision. Will Brent bow to public outcry?

More about the Welsh Harp campaign [here](#)
Lobby Brent about the Welsh Harp - write to cathy.tyson@brent.gov.uk, your local councillor, cllr.mary.arnold@brent.gov.uk, cllr.jim.moher@brent.gov.uk, and cllr.harbhajan.singh@brent.gov.uk.

Green Tip: In the UK, we use thousands of tonnes of **aluminium foil** each year to wrap food, but recycle just 12 per cent of this. Aluminium can be recycled over and over again without any loss of quality, but try to avoid it completely by trying these ideas. Wrap your sandwiches or picnic food with greaseproof paper - which you can compost afterwards. Store your packed lunch in a re-useable tupperware container, or empty ice-cream tub. Re-useable containers are also great for storing leftovers in the fridge, or simply cover your food with a plate.

Read and recycle

We hope that you have enjoyed reading this newsletter. Please recycle once you have finished it or, better still, give it to a friend.



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Read this newsletter online at www.brentfoe.com

Brent's Wasted Strategy

Last September Brent Council held a consultation on a new strategy for collecting household waste. Having spent £9 million on landfill tax last year, Brent rightly want to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and recycle more instead. Residents currently recycle only 28% of our waste - the aim is to increase this to 50% by 2050.

However there has been considerable controversy about plans to achieve this. Green recycling boxes will be replaced with new wheelie bins costing £1.7 million, recycled waste (currently sorted at the kerbside) will be mixed together or 'co-mingled', and non-recyclable or 'residual' waste will only be collected fortnightly.

After much research, we took part in the consultation and addressed several Council meetings with our own ideas, which were ignored.

Group member Elaine Henderson says, "The trouble with co-mingling is contamination - both by residents putting wrong materials in the new large bins, and as the waste is crushed and not separated, paper gets contaminated with broken glass. We discovered the processor who currently buys Brent's paper won't take it, and fear it will now be exported.

"When Camden Council changed from a kerbside sorted to a co-mingled collection their carbon emissions increased by 77%. Will Brent, like Camden, end up reversing their plans? We also think the fortnightly collections and new wheelie bins will prove unpopular with residents."

For more information see www.brentfoe.com



Photo: Lorraine Skinner

Greening the Energy Bill

This Winter has been hard for those living in cold homes. As energy prices rise and jobs decline, we need to address this and move to a greener economy. The forthcoming Energy Bill is a great opportunity to do just that. However Friends of the Earth wants it strengthened.



Central to the Bill is the Green Deal. Householders and businesses can take out loans to improve their properties' energy efficiency, paying back through savings in fuel bills. FoE says proposals are inadequate, and calls for a comprehensive strategy to end fuel poverty and cut emissions from homes by at least 42% by 2020. This requires a whole-house, street-by-street retrofit approach, with loans accessible to those most in need.

With 4.5 million households in the UK living in fuel poverty, and over a quarter of carbon emissions coming from our homes, taking such steps will make a huge difference.

FoE demands [tighter regulations](#) for rented housing – often the worst insulated properties - and also wants the Government to introduce [local carbon budgets](#), capping emissions in every local area.

What we need is a truly green Energy Bill benefitting everyone – with warmer homes, cheaper fuel bills and many thousands of new jobs.

For more about FoE's Energy Bill campaign see [here](#).

Ask your MP to sign a Parliamentary petition to protect tenants [here](#).