STAND FIRM
Meet the women who helped beat fracking

NATURAL PROTECTION
How trees can help farmers fight pests

JOINING FORCES
Climate action in your community

WORKING FOR CHANGE
Tips for creating a climate friendly culture at work
IT'S ABOUT SUSTAINABLE GROWTH.

ETHICAL ISAs THAT TAKE CARE OF YOUR MONEY AND THE PLANET.

TRIodos CASH ISAs

Make the most of your tax-free allowance, while knowing your money is helping people, building communities and protecting the environment. When your balance reaches £100 we will also donate £40 to Friends of the Earth.

Visit triodos.co.uk/foe for eligibility, full terms and conditions and to find out more. This offer is also available with our current account and our range of savings accounts, and is limited to one donation per new Triodos customer. The tax benefits of an ISA depend on your individual circumstances, and tax rules may change.

FOLLOW YOUR HEART – USE YOUR HEAD

Triodos Bank

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Welcome

I know you will have been as shocked as I was to see the unprecedented fires in Australia and floods in Indonesia at the start of 2020. The damage to nature and human lives is devastating. And without rapid action from our leaders, billions of people will continue to feel its sharp effects.

But I take hope in the fact that our movement is getting stronger. Over 170 Climate Action groups have formed in just a few months, committed to fighting as a network to secure action from the new UK government.

And I’m proud that because of supporters like you, 108 MPs have committed to vote for urgent climate action. My day job allows me to connect with all sorts of people – from youth strikers to community leaders – and my faith in people power is unwavering: I believe it is communities around the country who will not let floods and fires become our new normal. Together we will take back tomorrow.

Aaron Kiely
Climate Campaigner

This issue: don’t miss...

12 Stand firm
The women who helped halt fracking in the UK

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Why planting trees and hedges will help farmers

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Climate friendly tips for your school or workplace

16 Taking action
Putting our Climate Action Plan into practice

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How your support is making a difference

Climate strikes

2019 was the year of the climate strikes, and our Youth and Families team worked with many youth-led environmental organisations to provide advice and support on wellbeing, safeguarding and inclusion.

Our Climate Campaigner Muna Suleiman (right) was a key speaker at the 20 September Global Climate Strike, and we were proud to have staff and supporters standing with strikers at 8 strikes around the country.

Stay in touch!

Join our community on Twitter and Instagram (@friends_earth) and Facebook (friendsoftheearth)
2 major decisions reversed on fracking and moorland burning

121,070 people have signed our call to double UK tree cover, as part of a new major campaign on trees

170 Climate Action groups set up since launch in April 2019

301,057 people have taken our hidden plastics quiz and signed our plastics petition

104,000 followers on Instagram, compared to 35k at the start of the year!

217,193 people have signed our call to demand a climate action plan from the government

1 legal challenge to the Court of Appeal against the expansion of Heathrow Airport

295 new supporters gained in one day from Oxford FoE’s campaign to double tree cover

996 people visited our exhibition “The Art of Activism”, which included work by Turner prize-winner Jeremy Deller
Pledge to ban burns
In autumn 2019 the government pledged to ban moorland burning on blanket peat bog, following our revelations that landowners were still burning the threatened habitats (to aid grouse shooting) despite a voluntary agreement not to do so. Environment minister Zac Goldsmith said: “We are developing a legislative response to the problem.” Blanket peat bogs, a threatened habitat, are one of the UK’s biggest carbon stores, locking up millions of tonnes of climate-altering gases in their deep peat soils.

Welsh Assembly divestment
Early in 2020 the Welsh Assembly Members’ Pension Scheme announced its decision to move nearly all its investments away from fossil fuel companies and set itself a 5-year timeline for ditching the rest.

The move to divest follows meetings between Assembly Members, the Pension Board and their financial advisors. Friends of the Earth Cymru spokesperson Bleddyn Lake said: “This is a welcome step in the right direction [but] the job isn’t anywhere near done... we reiterate our call for all public bodies in Wales to ditch investments in fossil fuel companies.”

STATE OF NATURE
More than a quarter of UK mammals face extinction, says a report. The State of Nature examined data from almost 7,000 species and drew on expertise from more than 70 organisations. Our nature campaigner Paul de Zylva said: “The UK’s ministers and businesses persist in planning and funding – often with public money – disastrous projects and practices that continue to destroy nature.”

BIRMINGHAM CAR BAN
Birmingham is on the brink of an exciting transformation. According to our Regional Coordinator Chris Crean, the city’s transport sector is looking at: reallocationg road space to benefit cyclists and pedestrians; transforming the city centre; prioritising “active travel”; and managing demand through parking measures and levies. Chris said: “At long last the city is trying to tame the dominance of the car.”
HOW TO SAVE THE PLANET

'How to Save the Planet'
A new podcast from Friends of the Earth

Subscribe on Spotify or listen at foe.uk/podcast
Last year saw more fires in the Amazon, like this one in Pará.

**FLOODS WREAK HAVOC**

Torrential rains have hit Indonesia, the Philippines and Brazil since the start of the New Year. Hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced, and each country has suffered dozens of fatalities.

The deaths are largely caused by landslides, which overwhelmingly affect poorer communities where housing is often located in precarious areas.

As climate breakdown worsens, world leaders have a moral obligation to invest in climate adaptation projects to protect the most vulnerable populations.

**Update: Amazon fires**

Following worrying reports of increased fires in the Amazon last summer, we launched an appeal to support our colleagues in Brazil.

The team has since visited some of the affected communities, and is joining forces with existing local organisations who are fighting the wider exploitation of the Amazon. Fires are just part of the problem – land and natural resources are being diverted for all manner of economic “gain”, from dams that displace communities to mining, which can pollute the rivers.

Project coordinator Arthur says their central aim is to support communities in advocating for their rights:

“One of the main demands that emerged from these initial conversations is in relation to communication. Journalism in Brazil is concentrated in the hands of the powerful, and it is difficult to find space for the voices of communities. That is why we are making this effort to communicate what’s going on. We are planning on carrying out communications training, so that the communities can use this tool to their advantage.”
RUSSIAN ACTION

Fires and floods in parts of Russia are common nowadays, but striking for climate in Russia is not an easy form of activism.

Novosibirsk, Sochi, St Petersburg and Murmansk are among the cities where activists faced restrictions for their mass strikes in late November. One activist, Arshak Makichyan – who inspired a Russian “Fridays for Future” movement – was even sentenced to 6 days imprisonment for taking part in a Moscow demo.

Friends of the Earth Russia are calling for:
- a stop to persecution of environmental activists;
- an end to anti-environmental initiatives;
- transparency of environmental information and wide public participation in this field.

COP 25 Madrid

World leaders met in Madrid in December at COP 25 to agree measures to combat climate breakdown. The media (and staff who attended) labelled the talks a “failure”. Bad deals put forward by the US, Brazil and EU on trading emissions rather than reducing them were “so bad that countries couldn’t reach an agreement on them”.

Those same countries also refused to provide further money and little action to support communities impacted by climate breakdown. But it wasn’t all bad news: a much wider cross-section of society than previous years were critical of leaders at the talks. What’s more, a whopping 500,000 people took to the streets in Madrid to protest climate inaction. The 2020 climate talks will be held in Glasgow.

Australia’s crisis

January 2020 brought unprecedented devastation to Australia following widespread bushfires. We launched an appeal in mid-January to support recovery efforts, but fires had already burned over 12 million acres of land, destroyed 1,500 homes and killed at least 27 people and over 1 billion animals. Ancient rainforests – areas totally unique in terms of the biodiversity they support – have been lost forever.

Cam Walker, Campaigns Coordinator at FoE Australia (and a volunteer firefighter) says: “This is climate change. This fire season is exactly as predicted by scientists. This is what a +1.5 degree world looks like for us. We must fight to change this broken system. What we need more than ever is people power to mobilise action on climate. Please join a campaign for climate justice wherever you are in the world.”

Over 1 billion animals have been lost to the Australian bushfires

In Madrid 500,000 protestors took to the streets

Find out more

To get more information about setting up or joining a Climate Action group visit foe.uk/take-action
Over the past few centuries, agricultural land has commonly been cleared of trees, hedges and wildflowers to make more room for growing crops, with the recent trend being for larger and larger areas devoted to a single crop. This loss of diversity in our farmed landscape has led to problems. Pests such as slugs and aphids can get at tomatoes in our back garden, but they can also wreak havoc for farmers working hard to feed millions of people.

Pesticides are chemicals that are widely used to prevent such pests from damaging crops but can cause harm to much of our precious wildlife including bees, birds and hedgehogs. But what if there were another nature-friendly way to protect our food? There is. Natural pest control works with nature to keep pests and predators in balance. To get this balance right, we need to create the right environment, and trees play a big part in this. Trials run by the Woodland Trust and the University of Reading found most pests were less common on farms with trees, as the number of natural predators (such as spiders and ladybirds) increased. An experiment at the University of Leeds found the same thing, with spiders and wasps (both good pest controllers) both common on farmland that incorporated trees among crops.

**Harmonious hedges**

But it’s not just trees we should be thinking about. Hedges are home to numerous insects and animals that rely on eating pests who would otherwise damage crops. A hedge can reduce the number of pests across an area as far
400+ tonnes carbon per hectare is how much a young wood can lock up in trees, roots and soil

13% of the UK is covered by trees (compared with an EU average of 38%)

3 million hectares of additional woodland is needed to double tree cover by 2045 and help reach net zero

Trees

Evidence of the benefits of trees to farmland exists, but there are other barriers to overcome if we are to get trees and hedges back as a common feature across our countryside.

Trees can provide farmers with a more diverse income, providing fruit or nut crops. But committing to planting trees and hedges on their land means farmers face a big financial hit upfront, and it’s a huge change to what many of them are used to. Advice and reassurance from knowledgeable sources work wonders, and when the Woodland Trust provided this for free it was very powerful. But as with many services, capacity to advise is limited by resource and finance, and needs to be scaled up so the entire farming community can access them.

To scale up such services we need firm government plans that help farmers plant trees. In the 2019 General Election, numerous party manifestos committed to planting millions of trees annually, from 30 million a year (Conservatives) to 100 million a year (Labour). While the Conservatives’ tree-planting commitment was by far the most... conservative, it will still require a focused effort across government to deliver lasting impact.

At the same time we’re also leaving the European Union, which means leaving the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP): a system of subsidy payments made to farmers to make sure enough food is produced, and that those dependent on agriculture for their income have a fair standard of living. The CAPs replacement, the new Environmental Land Management scheme (ELM), promises to reward farmers for public goods such as clean water, landscape preservation and biodiversity.

With the Conservatives’ manifesto commitment and the forthcoming arrival of ELM, we now have a perfect opportunity to rethink how we incentivise the inclusion of trees on farmland not just for their beauty, but for the roles they can play in tackling climate breakdown, and the homes they provide to animals and insects – which in turn helps to rebalance the pests and predators on our farms.

Find out more
For more on how trees can help fight climate change see foe.uk/double-trees
Groups joined forces to fight fracking.
Standing firm

What began as a small protest by a group of women in Lancashire has ended with a ban on fracking in England. We meet the Nanas

The Nanas are a group of ordinary women-turned-activists who, as part of the wider anti-fracking movement, worked with Friends of the Earth and other environmental organisations to bring fracking to a halt in their home county of Lancashire and across England.

“People are often surprised by our ages. We’re not what they expect an activist to look like,” says member Miranda Cox.

“We chose the Nana image because we like what the Lancastrian matriarch stands for: rolling her sleeves up, getting things done, but still having time for a nice cup of tea,” says Rebecca Fitton.

And, like many grandmothers, the Nanas have been steadfast in their dedication to protecting their families, friends and communities. “What drives me every day is that we need to protect this planet for our future generations,” says Miranda.

The 8-year battle to stop fracking began back in 2011 when energy firm Cuadrilla started drilling for shale gas at Preston New Road, near the village of Little Plumpton. Founding member of the Nanas, Tina Rothery, says: “Cuadrilla was arguing that shale gas was green energy and would create jobs. But it didn’t take much research to uncover some really alarming information about the industry.”

Fracking (hydraulic fracturing) involves pumping a mixture of water, sand and chemicals into the ground to fracture shale rock and release gas. It has been associated with earthquakes and risks of water contamination and, more worryingly, would extend our reliance on fossil fuels at a time when we should be focusing on moving to renewables.

FAST FACTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fracking</th>
<th>The UK anti-fracking movement in numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12%</td>
<td>by March 2019, only 12% of people in the UK said they supported fracking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>there are nearly 300 opposition groups around the country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>was the magnitude of one of the earthquakes triggered by fracking at Preston New Road in 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Fossil fuels are the past,” says Tina. “I don’t understand why the government doesn’t want to prioritise a renewable energy future.”

The Nanas formed in 2014 and, that summer, they staged a 3-week occupation at the Preston New Road site. Over the next 5 years, they used a number of tools to oppose fracking: from maintaining a peaceful presence at the gates of the drilling site, to Women’s Wednesdays, when local women dressed in white would spend 15 minutes in calm contemplation and silent protest at the site.

Elsewhere in Lancashire, at Roseacre Wood, a separate attempt by Cuadrilla to start fracking was beaten by Roseacre Awareness Group on the grounds that it would increase HGV traffic in the area. “But this is about a lot more than a local dispute about increased traffic,” says Barbara Richardson, chair of the group. “Fracking poses far too many risks to our health and local environment. This is not the time to start a whole new fossil fuel industry which would lock us in for decades.”

The Nanas’ concerns about the government’s attitude towards fracking went beyond the environmental and health impacts. In 2016, the government overruled a decision by Lancashire County Council against fracking. “I realised local democracy was under threat,” says Miranda. “It flew in the face of everything I believed.”

The Nanas’ relentless work paid off with a major victory last November, when the government announced a moratorium on fracking in England (it was already on hold in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, through different routes). Friends of the Earth will keep pushing for a full ban, but the anti-fracking groups’ victory against the industry is a fantastic result and a powerful demonstration of the impact ordinary people can have.

“We know through history that people power will make a difference,” says Miranda. “If you’ve got a cause and you’ve got something to say, say it, do it, get organised.”

Stop funding fossil fuels abroad

The moratorium on fracking in England is a significant step towards ending the UK’s reliance on fossil fuels. But UK organisations and government agencies are still pouring billions into fossil fuel projects abroad. From oil refineries in Oman to offshore oil and gas in Ghana, UK money continues to fund climate breakdown. This spring we’re launching a series of actions to fight these harmful “investments”. Visit foe.uk/fffa to find out more.
add to your retirement pot

without driving climate change

a. abundance investment  >  make good money
Plan of action

We’ve got the solutions to climate breakdown – here’s how you can help
This year started off on an excellent foot, with news in January that the National Trust would be converting huge areas of its land from meat production to woodland to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Friends of the Earth tree campaigner Guy Shrubsole said at the time: “Growing billions of trees across the country, at the same time as cutting emissions, is one of the key solutions to the climate crisis.”

It’s a brilliant action that is directly in line with our Climate Action Plan. The Plan shows how to achieve “net zero” (removing as many emissions as we produce) as soon as possible (and way before the government’s self-imposed deadline of 2050).

Reaching net zero before that time is vital if we want to stop climate breakdown. We have just a short space of time in which to act if we’re to prevent irreversible damage.

The Climate Action Plan offers 6 tangible solutions that range from transport to trees.

Behind each one is a people-first approach, whereby all the measures to cut emissions (such as cheap, green public transport) are implemented in a way that doesn’t price people out of living greener, more sustainable lives.

The Plan is being presented to MPs across the country by our Climate Action groups.

After all, it’s government that has the most money, power and resource to bring about the transformational change we need.

If there isn’t already a Climate Action group near you, starting one is easy: your first meeting could be three people talking through ideas in a pub. Find out how local groups can bring people together to make things happen by reading Ali’s story, over the page.

**What you can do**

1. **Take action locally**
   Join a Climate Action group in your area to help make your community climate friendly (see page 18-19)

2. **Contact your MP**
   No matter the party, make sure they’re aware of the plan. Tweet or email them and book an appointment in their surgery hours

3. **Sign our petition**
   Call on MPs to back our national Climate Action Plan at www.foe.uk/climate-booklet

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**NEXT STEPS**
Manchester Friends of the Earth is a well-established group that is now part of the Climate Action group network. Member Ali Abbas explains how easy it is to get involved with your local Climate Action group, and what can be achieved when people get together to make things happen.

“Climate breakdown is such a big issue to deal with, it can be hard to know what to do about it – or what to ask for. And that’s where Climate Action groups come in. Made up of people just like you, they’re working within their communities and with local leaders to put Climate Action Plans in place.

**Get involved**
“There are many different ways to get involved with a group – it’s not just being out on the street with a placard or lobbying politicians. There’s research, social media, organising events, membership and finances, designers for newsletters and websites. The first thing is to find out where your local group is, meet some nice people and find out what tasks need doing. It’s a real breath of fresh air when someone new comes in.

“What’s important is people find a task and do it – that’s what got me hooked. I did a couple of really basic things, I’ve got an IT background so I updated the website and then from there learnt more and started doing other things. Everyone’s got their strengths they can bring to it and you don’t know what you can do until you do it. For me, volunteering and campaigning have been transformational.

“The Climate Action Plan has given us concrete solutions we can push for. One really easy thing we’ve done [in the Manchester group] is to write to all our local council leaders on the environment and say, ‘here are some of the actions you can take’. A lot of councils have passed climate change resolutions but haven’t actioned them, so we gave them some ideas. We invited councillors and council officers from across Greater Manchester to a briefing session, there were 8-10 people there, and the feedback we got was that they found it really helpful to chat through the action plan. That session was really simple to organise:
just send out email invitations, organise a meeting space and get people together. And now we have set up a little network of councillors and officers who can work together and support each other.

**Practical solutions**

“What has always attracted me about Friends of the Earth is that they provide a lot of interesting background and research but also practical solutions. It isn’t just about going to policy makers and saying ‘here’s the issue’ – it’s saying ‘here’s the issue and here’s the solution’. That’s a real strength of the partnership between Friends of the Earth nationally, the local Friends of the Earth groups and now the Climate Action group network.”

**Giving back**

Ali on how he first got involved in his local Friends of the Earth group

“I volunteered for the Commonwealth Games in 2002, hosted by Manchester, and really enjoyed volunteering and giving something back to the city.”

“I was interested in Friends of the Earth and went along to a local group meeting, met some nice people and they had some jobs to do, so I started helping and got hooked.”

“There was a campaign in 2005 called The Big Ask, aimed at getting a new climate law to make governments have legally binding targets. At first the government wasn’t interested but after three years of campaigning we got the law, so I could see that campaigning worked.”

**Find out more**

To get more information about setting up or joining a Climate Action group visit [foe.uk/get-involved](http://foe.uk/get-involved)
Small steps

Working together to create change

Keen to make a difference but not sure where to begin? Start by working in the spaces you use regularly: your workplaces and clubhouses. You’ll have seen that we’re asking people to take action at a community level by joining their local Climate Action group. But your community doesn’t just mean your local town. It could be your football club, your school or even where you work. Get in touch with your caretaker or office manager to talk through some of the climate friendly options. Or ask others for input – some construction sites and offices have suggestion boxes for ways to improve the workspace, and you could do the same.

ACT NOW!

Simple changes

Use these quick tips to start a cultural shift in your workplace

1. **Food glorious food**
   Start a shared lunch with your colleagues to use up food in communal fridges. Or look into food-sharing apps like Olio or donating leftovers to soup kitchens and food banks.

2. **Start a club**
   It’s easy to feel disheartened if you’re the only person pushing for positive changes, so get the word out and invite others to join. You’ll be more effective and you can support each other during busy times.

3. **Do a waste audit**
   Don rubber gloves, tip one day’s worth of rubbish on to a tarp and log the different types of waste. Measuring your baseline will motivate you to reduce waste, and help you track improvements.

4. **Sort and separate**
   Not all recycling is created equal, so make sure your efforts aren’t going to waste by having different bins for different types of rubbish.

5. **Travel smart**
   Consider using Skype or Microsoft Teams to reduce the number of people travelling to meetings. As for holidays, companies can sign up to Climate Perks and offer paid “journey days” for employees who travel over land or sea instead of flying.
FREE FOOD FOR ALL!

Don’t ditch your leftovers – join our lunch-sharing club to help save money and reduce waste. Find out more by contacting your colleague below.

CONTACT: 

GET IT SORTED!

We’ve made it simple to sort your waste ready for recycling, so please use the correct bin to make sure we can make a difference. Find out more by contacting your colleague below.

CONTACT: 

TIRED OF WORK TRIPS?

We’re working hard to reduce our carbon footprint, so before you book travel to a meeting, please consider using Skype or Microsoft Teams. Find out more from your colleague below.

CONTACT: 

TAKE ACTION

We’re working to make this space more climate friendly. Interested in helping us to make an impact? Then contact your colleague below to find out about our next meeting.

CONTACT: 

Spread the word
Use these cards to point colleagues in the right direction
want to tackle climate change?

welcome to our world.

Good Energy offers 100% renewable electricity generated from sun, wind and water.

Switch to us and we’ll credit your account with £50 and donate £50 to Friends of the Earth*.

Go to: goodenergy.co.uk/foe to get a quote and switch.
Quote referral code: Good Friends when prompted at the checkout.
Alternatively, call us on: 0800 254 0004 quoting Good Friends.

*£50 credit will be added to your account once your switch is complete. Offer ends 31st December 2020. Terms and conditions apply.
My name is Adam Scott and I’m the Corporate Partnerships Lead at Friends of the Earth. Part of my job is to find companies to partner with who are committed to tackling climate breakdown and protecting our planet. As you can imagine, my team does a lot of research into these companies to make sure their values align with our own.

That’s why we partner with energy companies that only offer 100% renewable electricity – that’s energy which is free from both fossil fuel and nuclear sources. All our green energy partners make sure that every unit of electricity you use is then matched 100% with a unit generated from renewable sources.

But why do renewables matter? Well, most electricity currently powering the UK comes from burning fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas. This releases carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere where they stay, trapping heat, for many years. And as they build up, the planet’s temperature rises.

**Switch to renewables**
This means we need to find other ways of powering our planet if we are serious about stopping climate breakdown. With new nuclear power looking very expensive, and new gas too polluting, there’s only one major source of power we can turn to: renewables.

Me and my team have been busy researching the best green electricity suppliers for the planet – from the super green to the budget-friendly – and we’ve found three great partners: Ecotricity, Good Energy, and Octopus Energy.

By choosing one of their tariffs, you’re helping to tackle the climate breakdown and choosing to support a company committed to ending the UK’s reliance on fossil fuels.

**Find out more**
We have found the best green electricity suppliers
foe.uk/switch-green

* Ecotricity
  www.ecotricity.co.uk

* Good Energy
  www.goodenergy.co.uk

* Octopus Energy
  www.octopus.energy.uk

Keep your home warm and bright with renewables
Among other things, our legal team helps protect campaigners’ rights to protest.

Friends of the Earth is the biggest grassroots environmental network in the world, and our emphasis on climate solutions lies at the heart of our work. That means that while we recognise the enormous environmental challenges we’re facing, we try to concentrate on what can be done about them.

Our staff include policy experts (who research topics such as where best to plant trees and how to phase out pesticides), campaign activists (who work on the ground to support community action) and our incredible legal team in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Our small team is led by solicitor Will Rundle, and it helps support communities up and down the country fighting climate-wrecking actions, doing the background work on what’s legal and what’s not. They also work with our campaigners to draft legislation that will help protect people and planet.

**Protecting protesters**

The team was key to securing a win on fracking: they fought to protect the right to protest peacefully (something which was central to community resistance, and contributed to the release of 3 protestors from jail), and helped put an end to the government’s plans to allow fracking companies to carry out exploratory drilling without planning permission.

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**Laws of nature**

Friends of the Earth’s legal team carries out essential work to make sure supporters’ actions are as effective as possible.
NO FRACKING
HERE OR ANYWHERE...
WE MUST UTILISE WIND SUN & SEA
They’ve also been working tirelessly to appeal Heathrow expansion. Local groups have been opposing the project for years. There are also appeals from across civil society, but FoE’s appeal is based on the government’s climate change and sustainable development commitments as well as protecting future generations from climate-wrecking infrastructure.

**But it’s not all good news.**

A big part of the legal team’s work lies in holding government to account. As lawyer Katie de Kauwe puts it: “The UK government may come out with really great sounding pronouncements about how much they care about the environment and the natural world. But they are equally capable of fighting tooth and nail to stop putting those promises into effect.”

For example, the team fought hard last year to ensure that the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) was subject to environmental assessment. Despite government acknowledgment that more needs to be done to protect the environment, the team lost on a technicality, meaning that no environmental assessment was carried out on the national planning framework.

Still, head of legal Will Rundle says there’s more at stake than what goes on inside the court rooms. “Win, lose, or draw, we aim for more than a decision. We want to shift the balance of public and political discourse on crucial topics such as climate breakdown, plastic pollution and equality for all.”

**Make a difference**

Find out how your donations can help the team’s work at foe.uk/legal-planning

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**THE COMMUNITY VIEW**

**Invaluable help**

Steve Mason from Frack Free United on how the legal team has helped:

“Frack Free United tapped into the expert knowledge of the legal team for some of our lobbying events. Their involvement alongside the political team was invaluable. Katie de Kauwe came to our event at the Labour Party Conference and updated delegates with the current legal situation of fracking. The support added expert credibility in our lobbying work and without the events we would not have convinced the government to impose a moratorium.”

**Future lawyers**

The Phil Michaels Legal Interns Scholarship Fund provides year-long paid internships for aspiring young environmental lawyers. Our newest intern, Conso Enobakhare, says:

“Friends of the Earth is an organisation whose mission I firmly believe in. Campaigning for environmental justice reflects my desire to understand how the ‘rule of law’ can be harnessed to bring about urgent change.

“As part of the internship, I conduct legal research, draft correspondence, and keep record of meetings and court proceedings. The current political climate makes this experience even more worthwhile, as I get practical insight on environmental litigation and policy making in the UK.

“This year at FoE will give me the confidence and tools to progress into a career as an environmental lawyer.”

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Look good. Do good. Inspire others.

Friends of the Earth partners with Teemill because they’re passionate about innovating to make their clothes as sustainable as possible.

- 100% organic cotton
- Made with renewable energy and printed on demand (so no waste)
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After 18 incredible years working for Friends of the Earth (and 5 years as CEO), I’ll be moving on to become Chief Executive of The Wildlife Trusts in April.

It’s been a privilege to be in this role, and the job has afforded me all sorts of memorable experiences. But like a lot of people, I have family life to balance, and it’s not exactly a 9-5. On top of the invites to speak about the climate emergency at events across the country, there are the unscheduled calls from the media to drop everything and speak on TV or radio.

I’ve mastered the technique of having one ironed shirt always ready to wear for my top half, while keeping my pyjama bottoms hidden below the desk when I work from home. I’ve never quite had my children burst through the door during a TV interview, but Barney, our gorgeous-if-bonkers Labrador, did come close to offering some informed comment on the Australian bushfires live on BBC News recently.

**Finding your calling**

The thing about working at Friends of the Earth is that it’s not so much a job, as a calling. I remember telling my careers teacher at school in the 1980s that I wanted to be a campaigner at Friends of the Earth. He thought I was crazy, and suggested I became a teacher instead. But I’m so pleased I didn’t listen. There’s nothing more inspiring than working with colleagues, supporters and activists to deliver real change.

And it’s the hard times, the setbacks, that make campaign wins all the more satisfying. The massive fracking win, for example, came after years of feeling as if we were fighting a losing battle. We received huge criticism, but we kept going, and my goodness didn’t it make the eventual success all the sweeter?

These struggles can take a toll though, and we must find ways to care for ourselves and look after the people in our lives as well. For me, it’s been friends, family, and walks in the countryside with Barney and my children that have kept me going and kept me optimistic.

And that’s essential, because to campaign, you have to believe change is possible. It is that which keeps you going; a belief, a conviction, a knowledge, that there are millions of us who want to work together for a better world. Millions of people who are, and always will be, friends of the earth.
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Your views

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“I’ve read that the UK produces 2% of greenhouse gases, which means that other countries, especially China with its coal-fired electricity-generating stations, produce 98% of the rest. Aren’t we already doing enough in the UK?”

Pat, Milton Keynes

We have recently invested in an air source heat pump to cut electricity consumption at our holiday home in Dorset, and we’re thinking of contributing to a carbon-offsetting scheme. Which do you recommend?”

Kevin, Bridport

Thank you for writing. Historically, countries like the UK were responsible for 79% of climate-changing emissions between 1850 and 2011, way more than China. You could say that blaming them for climate change is like blaming a substitute who was brought on with a minute to go for your team losing a match. A global solution is not going to happen if we don’t take the lead with ambitious climate action in line with the science.

Thank you for your new bitesize Earthmatters. Just handy enough not to get too battered in my knapsack. The articles are interesting, current and enlightening. I’d love to hear about the team. How about a ‘day in the life’ feature? It would be great to get tips on how to juggle bringing up children with joining demos?”

Cate, Oxford

We love the new smaller size too (and it’s more eco-friendly), and we’re hoping to share more about the team – this edition Aaron has written the welcome letter (page 3). Working here is really rewarding. Don’t get us wrong, it can be hard being on the frontline of climate action, but with our community groups, supporters and colleagues there are always reasons to be hopeful. And our advice for juggling home and work life? Take children with you and become climate warriors together!

Meet the team

Your questions have been answered by Aleanna Shaughnessy, Supporter Relations Manager – seen here with her dog, Bilbo, who regularly accompanies her on protests.
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Alasdair Roxburgh,
Director of Communities and Networks,
Friends of the Earth

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