

Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth

Cyfeillion y Ddaear Sir Benfro

Newsletter July 2009



Oil and Gas Proposal Opposed

Areas of seabed being offered to companies for oil and gas exploration include wildlife rich areas of the Pembrokeshire coast.

The map below shows, in the blue shaded areas, the 'blocks' that were included by the government in the present 25th Seaward Licensing Round. None were bid for but the fact that they were put on the map is unbelievable. They include the Pembrokeshire Islands Special Area of Conservation, which is one of the most precious marine environments in the UK.

We have written to our local MPs and to Wales' Environment Minister calling on them to do everything in their power to make sure that this area is excluded from the 26th Licensing Round, which will be launched next January. We have also produced postcards to the energy minister demanding the areas withdrawal from all future rounds of oil and gas licensing. To obtain more postcards phone 01437 563670 or 01437 532575.



Photo by Richard Crossen of Sea Trust

Pictured are some members of the pod of around 1500 dolphins spotted off the Pembrokeshire coast recently by members of Goodwick-based Sea Trust.

THE END OF THE LINE

Imagine a world without fish

The beautiful and moving film, The End of the Line, about the world's oceans was shown at the Torch Theatre on the 8th June as part of World Oceans Day.

The film follows the two year journey of investigative journalist, Charles Clover, as he finds out about the state of our seas and the impact of fishing, which is now taking place on a truly industrial scale.

In particular he looks at the fate of the magnificent Bluefin tuna which is as endangered as any land animal yet is still served and eaten in celebrity restaurants around the world

The film also looks at the impact of falling catches on coastal populations dependent on fish for their food and calls on us to imagine a world without fish.

The message is stark and shocking, the evidence is compelling, but there is also real hope. Where marine reserves are established the sea recovers with remarkable speed and, as has been shown in Alaska, with careful conservation based on good science fishing can be sustainable.

So what can we do?

- ✚ First buy and eat only Marine Stewardship Certified fish, for more information go to www.fishonline.org.
- ✚ Second put pressure on our politicians to create a network of marine reserves around the UK. As

highlighted in the last newsletter NOW is the time. Parliament is considering the long-awaited and much needed Marine Bill. However as Mark Williams MP recently stated in his speech to the house, and as this lovely film makes clear, we need "some highly protected areas that are, in effect, no go zones for damaging activities". Site designation must be carried out on a purely environmental and scientific basis and the recovery of the sea will bring its own economic rewards. To sign up go to www.marinereservesnow.org.uk, www.endoftheline.com www.marinet.org.uk

- ✚ Finally we must continue to act on climate change which is the other major threat to marine life.

The End of the Line is a wakeup call to the world and I came away keen to lobby hard for the protection of the wonderful coastal waters of Pembrokeshire and Cardigan Bay. What better place for a marine reserve?



NEW WINDFARM WELCOMED



Castle Pill windfarm Picture by Infinergy

The new Castle Pill windfarm, near Steynton, was formally opened by Infinergy on June 17th. It consists of three quiet direct-drive turbines with a combined capacity of 2.7 Megawatts. This will supply the annual electricity demand of around 1500 homes.

We welcomed the windfarm, stating:

“Wind energy is one of the cleanest, safest and most cost-effective forms of energy available. It is technologically the most advanced of the renewable energy options available and can deliver much-needed cuts in carbon dioxide emissions now. In a world that is increasingly threatened by climate change, insecure energy supplies and peak oil wind power has much to offer.”

Globally, wind is one of the fastest growing sources of energy, generating

enough electricity to power 27 million homes. In the UK, 2,533 turbines provide enough electricity for over two million homes. In Wales, over 200,000 homes are powered by wind.

PEMBROKE POWER STATION

We have written to the Countryside Council for Wales requesting, under the Freedom of Information Act, the papers they produced to support their opposition to the LNG-fired Pembroke power station. We are hoping to be able to use this as the basis of a complaint to the European Commission for failure to comply with the Habitats Directive.

PEMBROKESHIRE LDP

We submitted our response to the consultation on the Pembrokeshire Local Development Plan just in time. In this, we emphasised the need to move away from a “business as usual approach” in order to meet the immense challenges of climate change and peak oil. Specifically, we called for greater support for renewable energy, public transport and ‘green’ social housing.

STUDENT TO HELP OUT

Sean Badrick, a student at Bournemouth University, will be doing a summer placement with Pembrokeshire FoE. Sean, who lives near Milford Haven, is currently writing our response to the Welsh Assembly Government’s waste strategy consultation. This helped is invaluable and we look forward to reporting back on his work.

NARBERTH SUPERMARKET

Stories in the press that a major supermarket chain was eyeing up a site in Narberth appear to be unfounded.....for now anyway.

PLANT SALE

On a glorious hot day we managed to raise over £200 this year. A record? It was not a little down to some marvellous carnivorous plants grown by Ellie and the enthusiastic help of Kate. As always a big thank you to all those who brought plants along, and those who bought plants too; we hope you are enjoying them.

FoE's FOOD CHAIN CAMPAIGN

The food that we eat has a significant, but often hidden, environmental footprint. Producing it requires ever increasing quantities of land, water, energy and chemical inputs. Meat and dairy production has a particularly large impact, relying on high-protein animal feeds, mainly Soy, from the other side of the world. This has resulted in large swathes of land in Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina being converted for Soy production causing deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions, the loss of valuable wildlife habitats, the forced eviction and intimidation of local indigenous communities. The livestock sector is responsible for an estimated 18 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions. This campaign is calling for a shift in support from intensive to more sustainable forms of agriculture; ensuring that environmentally damaging and unhealthy food is not used in schools, hospitals, care homes, the armed forces and prisons; including the climate impacts of agriculture in international climate negotiations.....and more. For details of FoE's Fix The Food Chain campaign go to: http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/biodiversity/press_for_change/food_chain_20419.html

This will enable you to contact your MP to urge him to sign an Early Day Motion.

FOOD FESTIVAL

Narberth's 11th food festival will be held on Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th of September. We will have a stall looking at FOE's latest campaign on the food chain. As consumers we are thinking more about the air miles our food travels but what about the food of our food, be it fertiliser or feed. Come along to see the evidence. There is also an education day for school children on Friday 25th if you can help out on the stall please let us know.

PEMBROKESHIRE PRODUCT DIRECT

Ever wanted to visit the farmers market to buy local produce but can't because you work on Fridays or just don't have the transport? Well now you can visit this website instead. There is a wide variety of local produce to order and if you order by Tuesday it will be delivered to you on Thursday or Friday. www.pembrokeshireproducedirect.org.uk

INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE PETITION

Friends of the Earth International is petitioning all heads of government to support a strong agreement at the UN climate change talks at Copenhagen in December. This has been called the most important conference ever because all our futures depend on an early agreement to cut greenhouse gas emissions. Please sign up at: <http://www.foe.co.uk/climatetalks/petition.html>

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