

# Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth

## Cyfeillion y Ddaear Sir Benfro

Newsletter July 2010



### FoE Cymru submits Complaint to Europe on Pembroke Power Station.

The Milford Haven Waterway and adjoining coast are one of the most important marine environments in Europe. As such, it has been granted the highest legal protection currently possible: a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Habitats Directive. According to the Countryside Council for Wales, most of the features of the SAC that qualify for protection are in an “unfavourable condition”.



**Pictured are Jill Evans MEP, Gordon James and the EC representative in Wales, Andy Klom with the 500 page complaint written by environmental barrister, Peter Roderick.**

FoE Cymru, in a process initiated by Pembrokeshire FoE, has lodged a complaint with the European Commission because the UK authorities are not properly applying the law to protect this area. This situation would be made worse by the new LNG-fired power station at Pembroke.

Over half the energy in the LNG would be wasted as the power station, operating at 55% efficiency, would burn gas that has already needed a significant amount of energy to liquefy it for shipping and then to re-gasify for use in the UK. The waste heat from

the power station would be sufficient to heat well over half a million homes.

The power station would abstract cooling water equivalent to three times the average flow of the two rivers Cleddau into the estuary, and discharge it at 8C higher temperature back into the Haven. In the USA, such cooling systems are regarded as unacceptable in coastal locations because of the damage they cause to fish and other marine life.

We have long argued that the LNG should be burned in CHP (Combined Heat and Power) stations that would ensure both the electricity and heat is used. The oil refineries and LNG terminals on the shore of Milford Haven make it an ideal location for this. At the LNG power station and terminals in the Isle of Grain in Kent, this is precisely the system they are using, improving efficiency and saving 350,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year.

The company has started building the Pembroke power station before it has obtained an environmental permit to operate and despite being told by the Environment Agency that the decision to start construction is at its own risk. FoE Cymru has also asked Wales' Environment Minister to call in the environmental permit application to ensure that the SAC is adequately protected.

By using the best technology, industry can co-exist with Pembrokeshire's high quality environment securing jobs in industry, fishing and tourism.

### Waste to be reduced as well as recycled

The Welsh Assembly Government has agreed to set tough targets to reduce waste as a result of FoE Cymru's response to its waste strategy consultation. We asked for, and have obtained, a long-term target of reducing waste by 65% by 2050. This will start immediately with annual cuts of 1.5%.



(Photo montage of Wear Point)

## **Wear Point Wind Farm Approved**

The decision by Pembrokeshire County Council's Planning Committee to approve the application to build a four-turbine wind farm at Wear Point on the shores of Milford Haven was a great victory for renewable energy in Pembrokeshire.

Karina and Rebecca joined a good crowd of supporters at county hall in Haverfordwest for the planning meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> May. They handed out copies of the FoE Cymru briefing paper, 'Wind Power: 20 Myths Blown Away', to the councillors as they went in. Cllr Wynne Evans and Cllr Jamie Adams spoke in support of the scheme as did Cllr Maureen Molyneux representing Neyland West. She was particularly impressive and represented the many local people who have quietly supported the scheme. The arguments against raised all the usual myths and were loudly championed by Cllr Brian Hall of Pembroke Dock, but in the end it was passed by 9 votes to 8.

Wear Point is an already industrialised landscape where the wind turbines will provide a clean source of electricity for around 5,000 homes. It will also be a boost to the development of the green economy in Pembrokeshire and make an important contribution to the disappointingly small amount of electricity generated from renewable sources in the county.

It is technically the most advanced of the renewable energy options available and it is so good to see a decision made by PCC which we can really applaud.

## **The FOE Cymru Conway Conference by Ellie Clegg**

The conference was held from May 21st –23<sup>rd</sup> at the

start of the sunny weather. The surrounding woods were full of bluebells and the view across to the Great Orme, with sailing boats and calm blue sea made me think I had arrived in Capri, not Conway.

The event began with a well attended public meeting entitled "Climate Change in Wales– a positive way forward", the speakers were: Gordon James, Jane Davidson AM and Sir John Houghton. At the end, the FoE Cymru briefing paper on Climate Change Myths was launched.

Saturday was packed with workshops, including "What next for the Climate Change Campaign", "Policy and Politics", and "Nuclear Campaigning and the future of Wylfa". A representative from Climate Camp Cymru came and reported on their plans and looked at how we could work together. In the evening we had our popular pub quiz night which caters for all talents, including ones ability to draw a picture of Shrek.

On Sunday, another warm sunny day, we went off to visit Conway Valley Gardener's market which was held in a wildlife park on the estuary. This was followed by a visit to Dinorwig hydro electric power station, at Llanberis, the largest of its kind in Europe. Dinorwig is comprised of 16km of underground tunnels, deep below Elidir mountain. Its reversible pump/turbines are capable of reaching maximum generation in less than 16 seconds.

After our bus tour through its giant chambers we were back in the blazing sunshine and off to wind our way South through the Snowdonia Mountain passes back home.



**Dinorwig pumped-storage power station**

## Transition to the Shoal

The following is an extract from a letter written by Peter Anderson of the Shire Initiative and member of Pembrokeshire FOE who is currently helping us update our website. Peter's letter was one of the finalists in an Ooffoo competition to write a letter with inspiration or ideas to help bring change to the world. You can view the full letter at [www.ooffoo.com](http://www.ooffoo.com). Peter suggests that we use the new digital media to empower and mobilise communities to help us to change a society that operates as if it is an oil tanker, to a society that behaves like a shoal. He writes:

A common analogy of our time is one that refers to our current civilisation as a large oil tanker where the key decision making is centralised and in the hands of an elite few; where the motives for, and the engine powering the action are all based around oil; and where we can see the super-tanker is headed for catastrophe but are powerless to change its direction in time.

Another parallel for where we need to get to is often referred to as "Shoal Behaviour". Where each individual has a unique and important role to play as part of the whole; where society is vibrant, full of colour, ever changing, diversifying and communicating; where each individual is empowered to influence the whole; where disaster can be averted in an instant as society adapts and changes direction and where resilience is a natural characteristic.

So I believe a fundamental challenge our time, at the core of many social, ecological and economic issues is the question: "How do we make the transition from the tanker to the shoal?" .....

This brings us onto one of the great paradoxes within this digital age. Even though we have many methods of communication available to us ... we still cannot easily consult and coordinate ourselves within any geographical area. We cannot quickly ask a community, town or country what it wants or how it feels about any particular issue using the latest digital technologies we have strived so hard to produce. ....

In the empowered society of the shoal, coordinated collective action is a fundamental quality of its success and strength. ....

Peter goes on to explain how a software tool VocalEyes which is a part of the LocalEyes toolkit developed by the Shire Initiative can enable communication of this kind in our local communities. While the likes of facebook provide a global network, LocalEyes aims to connect communities providing "an exciting and powerful tool

for social engagement with the inevitable consequence of building more vibrant, resilient communities".

For more info visit: <http://www.shireinitiative.org>



### Some of the Pembrokeshire FoE group that visited Skomer Island in May

Members and friends enjoyed a beautiful, sunny day on Skomer. We picnicked on Pig-Stone Bay watching playful seals and a variety of sea birds. On the south side of the island we enjoyed close-up views of puffins and carpets of bluebells and campions. It was stimulating wildlife, weather and conversation and we will look forward to sharing another aspect of Pembrokeshire nature in the autumn.

### Greener Banking

If you would like to help Friends of the Earth even more, you might like to apply for a FOE COOP credit card. This will enable FOE to receive £15 immediately an account is opened and a further percentage each time the card is used - such an easy way to receive funds for vital campaigns. Phone Coop Bank 0800 002 006 or apply on-line at [cooperative.bank.co.uk/friendsoftheearth](http://cooperative.bank.co.uk/friendsoftheearth).

Thanks to all those who contributed towards the Plant stall. We raised £98



*(Photo from Western Telegraph of Narberth Hustings)*

## **What will The New Coalition Government mean for Pembrokeshire FoE?**

Well election fever is over, the first Green Party candidate has been elected, the new coalition government is settling in and we are all being asked to consider the economic realities. What does this mean for us in Pembrokeshire FoE?

In the run up to the election we held a successful hustings meeting with all the candidates for Carmarthen West and Pembrokeshire South at Bloomfield. It was heartening to find a great deal of unanimity on the importance of the issue of climate change. John Dixon, Plaid Cymru and John Gossage Liberal Democrat, who had both signed the FOE pledge, expressed a strong green message throughout, back by Henry Langen Independent Democrat. Nick Ainger Labour pointed to the Climate Change Act and the Marine Act and emphasised the need to invest in green jobs. However Simon Hart said that though he is not a sceptic, he is not convinced that global warming is related to human activity. He emphasised the importance of the carrot not the stick and that in a time of recession we cannot penalise non green jobs. He also felt nuclear will have a role in power generation, as did Nick Ainger who felt that this should not be at the expense of renewables.

This leaves us with work to do. Locally we are hoping to present the new briefing paper on climate science myths to our 2 MP's Simon Hart and Stephen Crabb. Nationally we need to continue campaigning to strengthen the voices of the environmentalists such as Zac Goldsmith, the only conservative to sign the FOE pledge, in the new Parliament.

It is important that in this time of fear and cuts we keep the positive messages of building resilience and green jobs, but also that we counter the sceptics and peddlers of myth who appeal to one of the most basic and dangerous of human instincts, denial.

## **Tougher for GMs in Wales**

Wales' Rural Affairs Minister, Elin Jones, has announced that, unlike in England, any farmers who grow GM crops in Wales will have to sign up to a register that will be fully accessible to the public. This was requested by Friends of the Earth Cymru in its response to the Welsh Assembly Government's consultation on a GM co-existence regime and is a part of the very restrictive policy on GMs being developed in Wales.



Pembrokeshire FoE has a stall at the Really Wild Food Festival in St Davids on 4<sup>TH</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> September  
Your help would be welcome

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