



# Friends of the Earth Pembrokeshire Cyfeillion y ddaear Sir Benfro

## Newsletter June 2019

### Climate emergency



As many of you know the PCC passed a motion to declare a climate change emergency. This is a long way from the domination of the council by supporters of the oil & gas industry when climate change denial was to the fore. However we know that in order to translate this motion into action and change we will need to keep the pressure on.

On Monday 3rd June we discussed our next steps with Cllr Vic Dennis and Labour candidate Marc Tierney. The County Council had published a working paper detailing what they were already doing and what further action could be taken. Whilst this is a good start, we wrote to the Scrutiny Committee that we missed a sense of urgency, and asked them to specify a timeline that reflects the climate emergency situation. We also urged the Council to work together with the private sector and the public to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2030 for the whole of Pembrokeshire.



*A Climate emergency was declared by Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) on the 9<sup>th</sup> May after a petition was presented by Transition Bro Gwaun (TBG)*

### The Time is Now: Mass lobby of Parliament 26 June

A mass lobby for climate, nature and people

Join us in Westminster on **Wednesday 26 June** to tell our MPs that **#TheTimeIsNow** to prevent [climate breakdown](#) and save our wildlife.

We're expecting over 10,000 people coming from all over the country for face-to-face meetings with our MPs. Will you be there?

The main event is happening between 1 and 4pm. We'll form a huge line organised by region and constituency. Stewards will ferry MPs straight to you.

Visit The Time is Now website to sign up. We might be able to organise a minibus from Pembrokeshire, please email us if you are interested.

### Extinction Rebellion (XR)

**A rebellion against the political, economic and social structure of the modern world in time to avert the worst devastation outlined by scientists studying climate change.**

Extinction Rebellion was established in the United Kingdom in May 2018 with about one hundred academics signing a call to action. The group is backed by hundreds of researchers and scientists who fear that most people are unaware of the scale of the risks posed by accelerating environmental breakdown.

The eleven days of protest that began on 15<sup>th</sup> April in London was the biggest act of civil disobedience in recent British history. It felt momentous, a dam had bursting letting all the frustrations, our anger and fears about climate chaos free into a joyous tide of creativity.



*A group from West Wales was there camping in Oxford Circus*

Steve Hack was coordinating XR actions throughout Wales. Steve had been a FOE board member as well as running his own Renewable Energy Company. Sadly

Steve died at the beginning of April after the leukemia he seemed to have completely recovered from returned.

Carmarthen and Cardigan formed XR groups back last autumn and began taking part in actions in London, Cardiff and Carmarthen, following training in Non-Violent Direct Action. Following the presentation of a petition to Carmarthen County Council (February 20, 2019) by XR, Council also gave its full support to 11-year-old Coral Sylvan who led a group of climate change activists in a packed public gallery and stood in front of the chamber to ask councillors what they would do to secure her future. In response, the council agreed to declare a climate emergency. It also committed to becoming a net zero carbon local authority by 2030, and to develop a clear plan within the next year.

More recently XR groups have formed in Pembrokeshire. The Haverfordwest group meets in Haver Hub on Thursdays at 6 pm and the Narberth group meets at the Museum on Tuesdays at 6 pm.

### Plastic Free Narberth

The litter picks are ongoing, please come along and support us, every last Sunday of each month, meeting at 9.30 am at the Bloomfield Centre car park (free parking).



*A few of us together with Plastic Free Laugharne lobbied Simon Hart MP in February to support the FoE Plastic Pollution Action Plan*

Simon Hart MP is backing the residents' call for the government to put a plan in place to tackle plastic pollution which is backed up by new laws. The action plan calls for a phase out of plastic pollution over 25 years, starting now. It also calls for work to start immediately on how to reduce pollution from hard-to-replace plastics, tyres, clothing and paint.

Simon Hart MP joins 10 other MPs across the country who are backing a Plastics Pollution Action Plan, which is the first step to getting lasting action to tackle plastic pollution.



*Sandy – entirely made from plastic washed up at Ginst Point. By Annie Hart, Plastic Free Laugharne*

### The joy of the electric car

By Rebecca Cadbury

In the last newsletter I reported on a fascinating talk given at the FoE Cymru conference on electric cars. Since then I have got one!

So what has it been like in reality. For me cars are a means to an end and driving a bit of a pain, but I have to confess to being so delighted with my EV, I think I am fast becoming an electric-head. Ready to bore anyone who asks, what is it like?

I set off on my first long journey with considerable trepidation. Would the chargers work? How long would they take? What if there wasn't a charger at the conference centre? With the aid of zap map, (downloadable as an app), the Ecotricity electric highway (as an Ecotricity customer I am only charged 15p per kWh) and the ability to charge, albeit slowly, from a 13 amp plug, I travelled 500 miles in 3 days at a cost of less than £20 (3.6p per mile) and spent less than 1 hour waiting for the car to charge.

I now have a car charger at home so topping up often takes just 2-3 hours and can be done when the sun is shining on my solar panels. It does take a little planning but I believe it is only going to get easier. There are 4 new charge points in Narberth carpark.

As for driving it, the regenerative breaking takes a few goes to get used to but otherwise it is so easy to drive. Quiet, quick when you want, (0-60 is amazing) it but much more economical when you drive it in the eco setting and keep to the speed limit.

As I drive around I wonder why everyone is not in one too. The obvious answer is that they are more expensive to buy, but I suspect that the whole car industry has resisted the introduction of the technology and encouraged the myths and fears associated with it.

Maybe we have finally reached a tipping point, with new models the price will come down, the extraordinary savings will become undeniable and hopefully ultra-low emission zones in our cities will all help to bring about the much needed change. In the meantime for anyone who can afford the initial outlay it is a no brainer.

For general information on EV's go to <https://www.electraa.org.uk/>: for comparison of the models go to <https://ev-database.uk/> and for charging points go to <https://www.zap-map.com/>

### Good news: Oil and gas exploration suspended

Applications to survey for oil and gas off the West Wales coast have been suspended by the company Eni UK Ltd. This news has just been revealed in a letter to Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth from the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy in London.

We are delighted to learn that this outrageous plan to search for oil and gas in one of the U.K.'s most valuable marine wildlife areas has been suspended.

The proposal triggered an extremely angry response throughout West Wales and further afield. It made a mockery of the declaration of a climate change emergency by the Welsh Government and the House of Commons and flew in the face of growing international concern about wildlife extinction. We now call upon the company to totally scrap, rather than just suspend, this application.

We also call upon the Welsh Government to tighten their policies to ensure that this sort of application cannot happen again.

PLEASE sign our petition to The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP. Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy demanding these plans are not just suspended but scrapped:

[https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/stop-oil-and-gas-survey-of-west-wales-coast?source=direct\\_link](https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/stop-oil-and-gas-survey-of-west-wales-coast?source=direct_link)

### More good news: M4 relief road scrapped!

Welcoming news that the M4 relief road has been rejected, Friends of the Earth Cymru director Haf Elgar said:

“This is a great news for Wales and the planet.

“As well as costing Welsh taxpayers over £2 billion pounds, this devastating road would have ploughed through the unique, wildlife-rich Gwent Levels, pumped more climate-wrecking emissions into our atmosphere, and ultimately caused even more congestion and air pollution.

“This decision is testament to the untiring efforts of local residents who have opposed this plan over decades and is a clear signal that the Welsh Government is taking its climate emergency declaration and commitment to future generations seriously.

“We now need substantial investment in sustainable transport around Newport and across Wales to help build a cleaner, safer future for us all.”

### Beaver walk

On 18th July we have arranged a visit to the Bevis Trust in Carmarthenshire (SA33 5YL) to hear about and, hopefully, see beavers.

The visit lasts 1-2 hours and generally starts at 6.30 pm. Please email us to confirm your place and get full details. Cost: £20 per person.



### Appeal by FOE to support legal battle to stop Heathrow expansion

Friends of the Earth has said it will appeal against the ruling by judges to dismiss five legal challenges to expansion at Heathrow airport, because the decision is “outdated in an ecological and climate emergency”.

Craig Bennett, Friends of the Earth's chief executive, said he believed the court had got it wrong: “We are

in an ecological and climate emergency and parliament have supported an outdated decision to chase climate-wrecking development. How can we take any government remotely seriously when they claim to care about climate chaos while supporting this runaway?".

FOE are seeking to appeal the court's decision. So if you'd like to help fight the case, please chip in today: (<https://friendsoftheearth.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=2025520aace5b8eab03720707&id=e1c7918df7&e=53f9d872d8>)

### Flight Free 2020

This aims for 100,000 people to pledge not to fly in the year of 2020 in an effort to avert climate breakdown. The aim is to contribute to the climate change debate and raise awareness of the climate impact of aviation with a wide audience. It's inspired by the Swedish campaign Flygfritt, which persuaded 15,000 Swedes to pledge not to fly last year, while gaining a lot of media coverage both in Sweden and here in the UK. [www.flightfree.co.uk/pledge](http://www.flightfree.co.uk/pledge)

### 5G is it Safe

Europe is racing head to install 5G, so that it doesn't lose out to the USA or China. Concerns are being raised about whether giving the Chinese telecoms firm Huawei a role in building the UK's 5G network, poses an unnecessary risk to national security, but little notice is being taken of the possible effects on human or wildlife.

A growing body of science that warns of health risks from long-term exposure to electromagnetic radiation by mobile technology. There is almost no research on the effects of the higher frequencies needed for 5G. A group in St. Dogmaels, near Cardigan has formed West Wales 5G and EMF Health Awareness. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1058346474289171/>

5G is seen as crucial to the formation of an infrastructure for 'smart homes' and the 'internet of things' and cutting CO2 emissions by directing power to where it is needed and so reducing waste. 5G will partly use very much higher frequencies than what have used before. The scientific knowledge on what this can mean for public health is minimal. Individual projections have warned that there is danger that such high frequencies may heat body tissue. Some

scientists are sounding the alarm about potential health risks caused by radiation from mobile technology. Most radiation safety authorities, assure that this is completely unfounded

At least three studies over the years have documented that there is often a link between conclusions of studies and the source of the money that paid for the research. Science funded by industry is less likely to find health risks than studies paid for by institutions or authorities. Many critics of the dominant Electro Magnetic Field EMF research bodies and its historical ties to industry compare the situation with the way tobacco manufacturers were able to maintain doubt about whether smoking was dangerous. <https://www.investigate-europe.eu/publications/how-much-is-safe/>

Professor and researcher Dr. Magda Havas is internationally recognized for her studies on the biological effects of electromagnetic pollution. She said that at high intensities these waves cause intense heat and pain because sweat glands on the surface of our skin act like mini antennas. "At lower intensities scientists are predicting damage to eyes, loss of insect populations which are already declining, antibiotic resistance in bacteria, and physiological effects on the nervous system and the immune system," said Havas.

From 30<sup>th</sup> May 2019 the first 5G was launched in Cardiff. In order to access 5G, customers will need to have compatible handsets and also pay for one of EE (part of British Telecom)'s 5G-ready data plans. Prices start at £54 a month on contract.

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*(Leave a message and I will get back to you)*