



# Friends of the Earth Pembrokeshire Cyfeillion y ddaear Sir Benfro

## Newsletter June 2024

### Narberth Plant Fair

We have been busy out and about, our stall at the plant fair was a success due to Rebecca's snowdrops and Ellie's houseplants.

### Eco Dewi Big Green Week market



We also had a stall at this event, which was sadly not that well attended. Very interesting stallholders though, here are some of them:

- The Barbastelle Bat project <https://www.vwt.org.uk/projects-all/natur-am-byth-barbastelles-in-pembrokeshire/>
- Pembrokeshire Hogspital [www.hedgehogsrus.co.uk](http://www.hedgehogsrus.co.uk)
- The Sea Trust <https://www.seatrust.org.uk/>

### Restore Nature Now march London 22 June

Some of us were able to join this march.



### The Election - Our choice

While many of us would endorse the Green Party's policies, we will also want our vote to count so it is important to assess all the parties in the election so we can use our votes effectively. It is dismaying to see the Tories rowing back further on their climate commitments and Nigel Farage blaming green policies for the economic woes of families.

Friends of the Earth have scored the main UK Parties so check this out

<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/system-change/green-policies-and-general-election-who-leads-pack>.

Never has it been more important to present green policies as positive choice both economically and for the health and welfare of this country.



### SUSTAINABLE FARMING SCHEME AND DEMONSTRATING FARMERS

As I've been going around Pembrokeshire recently, I'm struck by how few dairy cows are out grazing, especially as this region is renowned for its dairy production. I suppose this is just one of the signs of the loss of family run dairy herds and the growth of large mega dairies, where the cows are never let outside, so called "zero grazing". Then it got me thinking about the recent Welsh farmers demonstrations that have been so well covered in the media recently.

So why are the farmers out clogging up the roads with their huge tractors?

As we celebrate the bravery of the soldiers who freed Europe from the Nazis, with the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-day landings, it seems appropriate to remember that the UK's farm subsidies started after the war, which had so cruelly shown the vulnerability of Europe's food supplies. Over the years this has morphed into the scheme that we have today, the Basic Payment Scheme. It is a leftover from our membership of the EU, where farmers are paid so much per acre of land that they farm, irrespective of what they produce.

So now the Welsh government have taken the opportunity to "take back control" and rethink financial support to the Welsh farming communities. They have taken the view that public money should be used for the benefits to the wider society and that "subsidies" to farmers is justified on the basis of the kind of social value that farms can provide, including:

- carbon sequestration
- maintenance of habitats
- preservation of cultural habitats

This is voluntary scheme and will no longer pay farmers for just having land or producing excessive amounts of food. However, the Welsh farmers have been upset by the change and have focused on the headliners of the policy, such as 10% tree cover and 10% land set aside for nature.

So what is the alternative? Carry on giving public money to the wealthy for land ownership, or another alternative to what the Welsh government have been proposing? Therefore Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth wrote to two of the Welsh farming unions and the two main opposition parties. We received replies from two, one MS and one farming union. They both had plenty to say about their objections to the labour government's scheme but neither had an alternate policy to take farmers into a sustainable future.

In answer to the question as to whether their needs to be change, I visited the global library known as Google, and this is what I found\*:

- Only 5% of lamb and beef produced in Wales is consumed in Wales
- 50% of milk produced in Wales is sent outside of Wales for processing

- Dairy uses 20% of Soy imported into Wales from countries at very high risk of deforestation

- Farming is responsible for 12% of greenhouse gases produced in Wales

- Farming is the highest cause of pollution incidents in Wales (yes, even beating water companies!)

- 60% of agriculture incidents occur in South West Wales mainly between Jan to May

- There is no requirement for planning permission to build a slurry lagoon, and it can be within 2m of inland or coastal waters, or 50m of any borehole, well or spring

#### SUSTAINABLE FARMING SCHEME AND DEMONSTRATING FARMERS

- Average farmer salary in Wales £24,543 (£164,900 for dairy farmers)

So, this doesn't look very sustainable to me, unless that definition is of that mega dairies get even bigger and take over more family farms to spread their slurry and we accept that our rivers and estuaries are only there to take agricultural waste and not for fish, aquatic plants, birds or an important amenity for ALL of those who live and visit Wales. Yet our planning authorities still pass plans for more dairy livestock buildings, often retrospectively, and Natural Resources Wales seem pretty ineffectual, and when a farmer is found guilty of pollution, they get a fine of a few thousand pounds, when their turnover is millions. Not much of a deterrent.

So is there an alternative future? Well, I'm an optimist and believe if there is enough of us who have the same views then there can be change.

Is it time for new political values in Pembrokeshire?

Huw

\*Facts taken from websites of Welsh Parliament, GOV Wales, Meat promotion Wales,

WWF Cymru and RSPB Cymru, NFU Cymru and Wildlife Trusts Wales

## Pembrokeshire against Darc Radar

The 'United States Space Force'—one of Donald Trump's many 'big-brain genius' inventions—has proposed one of the most health-hazardous, tourism-ruining, skyline-blighting military installations ever proposed anywhere in the UK: **a gigantic 27-dish radar network**, named DARC, in the **heart of our St. Davids peninsula**.

The DARC radars proposed, as tall and wide as multi-storey buildings, would cumulatively produce radiation so powerful that scientific studies show the array would undoubtedly be unsafe for human residential habitation.

It gets worse.

The US military's submitted scoping plans go as far as to report, specifically, that they are trying to build a radar installation that would literally tower over **the very skylines of Newgale beach and Solva harbour themselves**. Shocked enough yet?

It gets worse-er.

If this were not enough, a lack of clarity concerning the micro-siting and radar-to-radar distance requirements of the plans actually reveals not only that the gigantic radars would span over a staggering **kilometre** (10 *football pitches*) of space, but could even stretch over the **very horizon of St Davids Airfield and the Preseli mountains itself**.

You can read more here and sign a petition:

<https://www.parcagainstdarc.com/>

## Racism and Climate Justice

Friends of the Earth have been training staff and members on these important topics. The training began by looking at racism in the British context, focusing on the British Empire which at its height was the largest empire in history covering 35 million square kilometres and 25% of the world's population. We looked at 3 areas in particular, slavery, Uganda and India.

They presented two main theories of racism. The liberal theory of racism, which originated in Europe as a response to the rise of National Socialism and anti-semitism. This sees racism as an affliction of the mind, based on unfounded assumptions of racial superiority. The solution is therefore education to remove unconscious bias and replace it with attitudes promoting diversity as 'good'. The second approach is

the radical theory of racism which was developed by people of colour in response to colonialism. In this model racism is about the structures oppressing people which are linked to stolen resources and profit. The solution therefore is about challenging and tearing down or fundamentally changing these structures and ending colonialism.

'In order to impose their rule, colonisers had to inflict terrible violence on the colonised, in order to ease his conscience, the coloniser gets into the habit of seeing the other man as an animal and accustoms himself to treating him like an animal – so the coloniser becomes an animal in the way he treats the colonised and thus the system has created not only racism, but a racist' Aime Cesaire – poet, author & politician

Structural racism (also known as systemic racism) is defined as 'the condition where 'society's laws, institutional practices, customs and guiding ideas combine to harm racially minoritised populations in ways not experienced by white counterparts' Lingyah 2021.

The training then looked at the link with climate justice. We looked at a myriad of examples from the reporting of the 10 worst humanitarian crises often due to the impact of climate change, to the impact of poor housing, air pollution and access to green spaces on the health ethnic of minorities in this country. And most importantly the way colonialism established the model of a global extractive economy which today still sees raw materials such as fossil fuels, palm oil, grain, soya and fish plundered for profits in the global north.

The last element of the training was to look at ways of engaging with other groups and in particular ethnic minorities in the creation of anti-racist campaigns link to environmental issues. Throughout, the training encouraged engagement and discussion, it was a fascinating challenge to find ways of addressing structural racism through our campaigning and a very enjoyable day.

## Council Climate Action Scorecards Volunteer Assessor

Climate Emergency UK

[councilclimatescorecards.uk](http://councilclimatescorecards.uk)

Following the success of the first-ever [Council Climate Action Scorecards](#) last year, Climate Emergency UK is looking to create the second edition of the Action Scorecards. Analysing council climate action only becomes valuable if you track the progress that has been made. They need your help to create the 2025 Action Scorecards and score councils on their actual climate action. See here how you can help:

<https://www.environmentjob.co.uk/volunteering/101537-council-climate-action-scorecards-volunteer-assessor>

## Summer walk

Join us for a walk on **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July**. Meet at 10 am at Stackpole Walled Gardens <https://www.stackpole-walledgardens.co.uk/> and we will walk for about 5 miles. Bring a packed lunch.



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