

Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth

Cyfeillion y Ddaear Sir Benfro

Newsletter April 2013



Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth has a visitor from the US Gulf Coast

Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth welcomed a visitor from the US Gulf Coast of the USA at a meeting in Narberth this week. Bryan Parras a resident of Houston, Texas and an environmental justice advocate came to London from the Gulf Coast to attend the BP AGM.

He is one of the Gulf Coast's most dynamic activists fighting for social and environmental justice issues and works as a researcher into the effects of airborne pollutants. Ironically there is a world renowned Medical and Cancer Research Centre based in Houston, which is financed by the oil industry.

We were shown video about the community of Manchester in Houston which is overshadowed by a huge Valero refinery. The refinery surrounds the marginalised community and blocks out what used to be its view of the Bayou. This is one of the largest petro-chemical complex on the Gulf producing 100,000 barrels a day. On the other side is one of the busiest highways in Houston, as well as a car crushing plant which creates further noise and dust including asbestos. On top of this are the emissions from the oil tankers entering the port.

The people are fighting back, uniting with communities against the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline under the banner. **"We demand to know what you are forcing us to breath"**

Bryan and Emily Coats from Tar Sands Network UK who also came with him were given a brief tour of the Pembrokeshire coast and the site of Valero, Dragon LNG. To watch the video go to <http://www.no-tar-sands.org/2013/04/watch-out-valero/>

The Energy Bill

The Energy Bill will shape the energy sources used to power Britain for the next forty years. The International Energy Agency has warned that the world faces serious risks from climate change unless the world makes a significant and urgent shift in investment patterns towards energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies, and away from fossil fuels.

Tim Yeo and Barry Gardiner MPs' amendment to the Energy Bill, which would introduce a target for clean power by 2030, in line with Committee on Climate Change advice is waiting to go through parliament.

There is a strong consensus across businesses, investors and civil society that the best way to position the UK as a modern, efficient economy attracting investment and creating jobs, while cutting carbon emissions and controlling energy costs is to decarbonise our electricity supply by 2030.

On 4th February 2013 Prime Minister David Cameron said "We are in a global race and the countries that succeed in that race, the economies in Europe that will prosper, are those that are the greenest and the most energy efficient."

Take Action Let's hold the Government to it's word: you can download a letter to your MP from our website. FoE in London are focusing their campaign on Simon Hart, you can write to him as a member of FoE even if you're not in his constituency. Please join us for further discussion at the

Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth

present a talk by

Andy Atkins

Director of Friends of the Earth

on

Energise Wales: building a green, low-carbon economy in south-west Wales

Followed by refreshments and discussion
Monday 13th May 7.45 Seminar Room
Bloomfield Centre Narberth



First ever pedal powered popemobile

Having already established a reputation as the Pope who takes the bus, Pope Francis will take another step towards cementing his image as the people's pontiff when he takes delivery of the first ever pedal-powered Popemobile. The entirely carbon-neutral, pedal-powered Popemobile was originally commissioned by the Environmental Transport Association (ETA) after the previous pontiff, Pope Benedict, expressed his desire for a green, all-electric vehicle.

Designer of the pedal-powered Popemobile, Yannick Read, said: "Cycling is the great leveller – a means of transport as serene as it is practical and an entirely appropriate way for a Pope to travel. The green-credentials of the vehicle dovetail perfectly with Pope Francis's image as the people's pontiff."

This article and photo comes from the Environmental Transport Association newsletter and has been reprinted with their kind permission

Another Wonderful Wildlife Walk With Mick

Following the success of our trips to Skomer and Ramsay Islands with expert guide Mick Brown over the last two years, we were hoping to visit Skokholm Island this year. Unfortunately, this will have to be postponed a year as work on the jetty at Skokholm has not been completed and boats cannot land.

Instead we have organised a walk with Mick from Marloes Sands car park to the Deer Park at Martin's Haven. This should be a fascinating talk because of the abundance of wildlife and rich geology in the area, to which Mick will bring in comments about the offshore islands.

The walk will take place on **Sunday 26th of May**, setting off from **Marloes car park at 10.30** and finishing at around 4.30 p.m. As there will be no boat and landing charges, it will be cheaper costing £6 per person for members and £10 for non-members (children free).

To book a place on the walk please phone Karina Russell on 01437563670 or email her on karina.russell@phonecoop.coop.

Wales First Electric Car Club

Members of Wales' first electric car club have taken to the roads for the first time. Cilgwyn Community Group, Newport, will share the new Nissan Leaf as part of a community transport scheme. They were able to buy the car thanks to a £25,000 grant from the Big Lottery Fund's Village SOS programme.

It can be charged from a domestic plug and will be powered where possible with renewable electricity. The car will cost £2-50 an hour plus 5p a mile to hire. A software programme will allow people to book on line or by phone.

It's hoped the scheme will be taken up by other communities

Nissan has invested £400million in its Nissan leaf factory in Sunderland, but sales have been disappointing. Nissan says they can travel 120 miles without charging, but ambient temperature can seriously affect this. Replacing the battery is very costly.

Recent research in Norway concluded that Electric vehicles (EV) have a higher impact on climate change than conventional internal combustion engines: 8 tons equivalent of CO2 emissions compared with 6 tons. This is largely because of the battery. If the EV is powered by electricity generated from renewable energy the comparison becomes increasingly favourable throughout its life.



Green Fair
10 to 4pm on Saturday 25 May,
Cardigan
Pwllhai area (next to Ecoshop)
Ecocymru.org

Petition in support of Fuel Quality Directive

Eleanor Clegg, representing Pembrokeshire FoE, along with Emily Coats from Tar Sands Network UK presented a petition with 4000 signatures to Nick Clegg at his office in Whitehall, London

The petition, organised by UK Tar Sands Network, 350.org, Campaign Against Climate Change, People & Planet, and Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth, urged the Deputy Prime Minister to support the EU Fuel Quality Directive (FQD), legislation which will discourage imports of fuels derived from tar sands oil to Europe.

The petition pointed out that increasing amounts of diesel derived from tar sands are expected to be imported to the UK, especially via Valero's refinery in Pembroke. Valero, a key supporter of the Keystone XL pipeline which would take tar sands oil to Texas, has also been the target of recent protests in the Gulf Coast.

The petition was received by the Deputy Prime Minister's office, who claimed they were unaware of Valero's plans to import tar sands oil to the UK.



Pembroke power station update

Concern about the performance of the power station and its local impact continues. The foam thought to result from the biocide used in the cooling system continues to spill down the cliff and across the haven.

At a recent meeting with Safe Haven we discussed the problems of air pollution in the Pembroke and Milford area. It is interesting to note that the only monitoring site for air pollution is in a field near Narberth. At present discussions about Pembroke power station are continuing between

the EC and the UK Government following the EC's support of our complaint.



The Big Plant Sale in Narberth
Saturday 4th May
If you have any plants or seedlings you
can donate. Tel: 01437 532575

Get Buzzy for Bees this Spring!

This year we are continuing to support FoE's Bee Campaign which is calling for a Bee Action Plan.

We all know the last couple of years haven't exactly been brimming with warm, sunny weather, but surely one of the great pleasures of the spring is the buzzing of bees on blossom...and who doesn't love honey? Bees are a familiar and much loved sight in our gardens, but they are also vital for production of many staple foods? As pollinators, they are crucial to the cropping of a large number of fruits, vegetables and nuts. In fact, it's estimated that bees are responsible for one in every three mouthfuls of food that we eat.

There has been a dramatic and worrying decline in bee numbers in many parts of the world over the past two decades. There is no single cause, but a parasite called the varroa mite and 'colony collapse disorder' have had a devastating impact – and certain pesticides, bad weather and loss of habitat are all thought to play a part.

In the past couple of weeks, B&Q, Homebase and Wickes and Waitrose have all decided to ban neonicotinoids, the pesticides linked to bee decline, as a result of pressure from campaigners. Europe is also considering proposals to restrict their use later this month. And the Welsh Government will be publishing a new Pollinator Action Plan this spring following discussions with Friends of the Earth Cymru.

But we need to keep up the pressure on David Cameron to follow the Welsh lead set up a nationwide Bee and Pollinator Action Plan.

The good news is that we can all do something to help. Here are some suggestions for practical steps we can take in our homes, gardens and when shopping.

- **Buy local honey** to support our beekeepers
- **Grow bee-friendly plants** such as lavender, rosemary, crocus, beans, hawthorn or a wildflower meadow area

- **Provide shelter for 'solitary' bees** by creating or buying bee 'hotels' made from hollow stems such as bamboo.

- **Come to the Narberth plant sale, Saturday 4th May**, where we will have plants, local honey and

wild flower seeds for sale. You can also sign a letter to our MP's asking them to sign the FoE statement calling for a British Bee Action Plan.



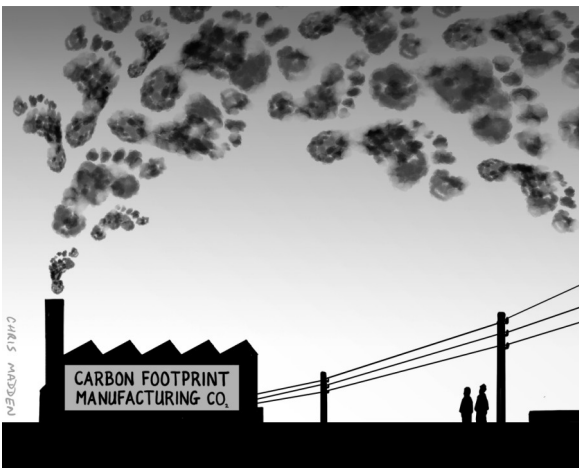
Support Community Energy Project
Pembrokeshire's first medium sized community
wind energy project could soon be a reality if two
proposed turbines manage to negotiate their
precarious path through the planning process in
the very near future. To ensure they do, the community



group who are establishing the project would like anyone who feels strongly about community owned renewable projects to write letters of support for the planning application. Details of the planning application can be found on the Pembrokeshire County Council

website under its planning code number 12/0862/PA. More back ground on the project and guidance on letters of support can be found on the community group's own website www.cwmarian.org.uk. Letters of support need to be submitted to the council's planning authority as soon as possible, and no later than May 15th, if an anticipated deliberation occurs next month. This support may be vital; a small group, who do not appear to appreciate the many benefits of the project, are very active in opposing the application.

The project originally came out of community visioning meetings in the Hermon, Llanfyrnach and Glogue area of North Pembrokeshire. This was followed by the establishment of Cwm Arian Renewable Energy (CARE) the community group which has taken the project forward with financial support from the Westminster and Welsh governments. If successful the renewable energy initiative will have a huge positive environmental impact as not only will there be large carbon savings on the green electricity produced, but the financial revenue will also be fed into the surrounding community specifically for carbon reducing activities such as household energy efficiency, micro-renewables and renewable heat. This is very important for this locality as a large part of the area which will see these benefits includes the electoral ward of Crymych which was highlighted last year as being the ward second most at risk of fuel poverty in Wales. Finally, success at planning will open the potential for individuals wanting to invest ethically and locally in renewable energy.



Cartoon
By
Chris
Madden

Stop Press: We are delighted to learn that Pembrokeshire FoE has been nominated for the Mike Jacobs award for our work on: the Pembroke Power Station, Tar Sands, public engagement events, local and national campaigning.

The winners will be decided at the conference next weekend.

Lammas Eco Village Guided Visit on Saturday 27th July at 11am

**The tour will be lead by Melissa,
who keeps bees. We will be shown
round the village including a visit to
her apiary.**

Warming oceans take the heat

When it comes to climate change; it's easy to focus on the atmospheric temperatures. But 90 per cent of the world's heat gets trapped in the ocean. A study published this week finds that the rate of ocean warming has accelerated over the last decade.

Climate scientist Professor Kevin Trenbeth, one of the authors of the study, tells Carbon Brief that this may help explain why global atmospheric temperatures have risen more slowly over the past decade. He adds: "global warming has not gone away".

<http://www.carbonbrief.org/blog/2013/03/worlds-oceans-are-getting-warmer-faster>

Pembrokeshire FOE will be holding there monthly meetings at SPAN Arts, Town Moor, Narberth on the second Thursday of the month. Check the website for future dates. **Next Meeting: May 9th at 7pm**



<https://www.facebook.comPembrokeshireFriendsOfTheEarth>.
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Comments welcome

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