

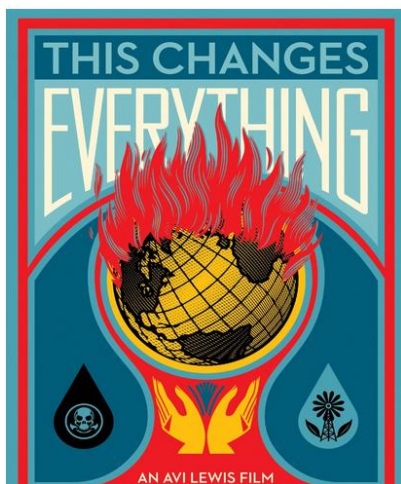
# Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth Cyfeillion y Ddaear Sir Benfro Newsletter Nov 2016



## Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth AGM

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> Dec at 6.45pm**

Seminar Room, Bloomfield Centre, Narberth  
Followed by refreshments and at 7.30pm a  
showing of the Avi Lewis-directed film



**What if confronting the climate crisis is the best chance we'll ever get to build a better world?**

Inspired by Naomi Klein's *This Changes Everything*, the film presents seven powerful portraits of communities on the front lines, from Montana's Powder River Basin to the Alberta Tar Sands, from the coast South India to Beijing and beyond.

## Ocean warming – a hidden challenge

The coming century will likely bring dangerous and dramatic changes to the planet's oceans, with ever-strengthening storms, annual bleaching of almost all coral reefs, loss of biodiversity and severe impacts on fisheries and aquaculture unless humans slash greenhouse gas emissions.

These are the findings of a comprehensive review of the effects of warming oceans, issued by International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and compiled by more than 80 scientists from 12 countries. The report chronicles how the seas have absorbed the vast majority of the excess heat trapped in the atmosphere by carbon emissions in recent decades, and how that energy is already altering the planet's weather systems and ecology, from deep ocean trenches to alpine glaciers.

"Ocean warming is one of this generation's greatest hidden challenges—and one for which we are completely unprepared," Inger Andersen, IUCN's director general, said in a statement. "The only way to preserve the rich diversity of marine life, and to safeguard the protection and resources the ocean provides us with, is to cut greenhouse gas emissions rapidly and substantially."



*Few ecosystems face greater threats than coral reefs, which provide habitat for more than 25% of marine fish species despite covering less than*

*0.1% of the sea floor. Warming water is linked to bleaching and disease, which can kill corals or reduce reproduction rates. Models suggest that current rates of emissions will cause annual bleaching of almost all reefs by 2050.*

In many ways, the oceans have helped mitigate the effects of carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere. They've absorbed more than 90 percent of the excess heat since the 1970s. If all the warmth that went into the top 1.25 miles of the ocean between 1955-2010 had instead gone into the air, the earth would have warmed 36 degrees Celsius.

Unfortunately, the report explained, the oceans are beginning to catapult that heat back into the atmosphere, with often dire consequences. The seas are likely to warm 1 to 4 degrees Celsius by 2100, and models suggest that will translate into stronger, more frequent El Niño events, more intense hurricanes and a general ramping up of the hydrological cycle, which brings moisture into the atmosphere from the ocean and then back down as precipitation.

The study, which the authors said is meant to build on the 2013 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, covered other issues as well, including ocean acidification and the potential links between warming waters and increased spread of tropical diseases. If that wasn't bad enough, the report also warned that increased ocean temperatures could unleash some 2.5 billion tons of methane hydrate—a potent greenhouse gas currently frozen into the sea floor.

Published in <https://insideclimatenews.org>

## Llanfyrnach Wind turbine



*Cwm Arian celebrating at The Produce Market, in Canolfan Hermon on Wednesday 12th October*

Cwm Arian Renewable Energy would like to let you all know that the community-benefit wind turbine on Trefawr Farm, Llanfyrach, has finally been granted planning permission!

“After a very long journey, our latest planning appeal was successful. Thank you for your continued support - having the good will of local people has been the main motivation for us to continue fighting to get this permission, to try and make some clean energy and some funds for our community. Support from further afield has been much appreciated too!”

## Go ahead for Scallop Dredging in Cardigan Bay

Scallop dredging will be allowed to resume in Cardigan Bay in West Wales following an extensive consultation. The process was halted in 2009 amid fears of its harm to life on the sea floor. It was set up as area of Special Area of Conservation and a big research project was started up to study the impact. Cardigan Bay has the UK's largest breeding population of dolphins, which feed on organisms in the area of dredging.

The Welsh Government commissioned a report by Bangor University, which together with Natural Resources Wales and the Welsh Fisherman's Association found that a resumption of dredging would not cause harm to the marine ecosystem, if fishing was managed carefully. The Marine Conservation Society says it's good that that the dredging is going to be managed more sustainably and conservationists will be involved, but they have big reservations.

More than 27,000 people signed the petition back in February to withdraw the plans and there were five and a half thousand responses to the consultation. George Monbiot said at the time the Welsh

Government would be the most environmentally destructive government on the Earth if it went ahead.

## Renewables overtake coal as world's largest source of power capacity

The amount of new renewables capacity installed in 2015 surpassed coal for the first time, according to widely-reported figures from the International Energy Agency. With 66GW and 49GW, respectively, solar and wind together accounted for 75% of the new capacity, equating to half a million solar panels installed each day and two wind turbines every hour in countries such as China.

The group has sharply upgraded its forecast of how fast renewable energy sources will keep growing, says the FT, estimating that falling costs and growing policy support will add up to 800GW over the coming five years, generating enough electricity by 2021 to handle all of the demand in the US and Europe. While Asia will be the “engine of growth”, IEA analysts said the outlook in the UK has deteriorated since the Conservative government took power last year and cut support for solar and wind. *(Report from The Guardian)*.

## Heathrow expansion

“After a week spent in Climate Change Camp at Heathrow in August 2007, along with thousands of activists, our every move being watched by the police reinforced with 1,800 extra officers and a planes thundering overhead every 55 seconds, I imagined we had made our point and had won the argument.” *Eleanor Clegg*

“It's easy to miss something that's invisible, silent, odourless and tasteless. Particularly when you have a strong financial incentive to do so. And the entire aviation industry has a very strong financial incentive to ignore CO2. They've been successfully ignoring it for decades, and last month's UN-affiliated international aviation conference made it abundantly clear that it is content to continue with its current approach.” *Guardian*

“The Climate Change Act requires the UK economy to reduce its emissions by 80% from 1990 levels, by 2050. Aviation is allowed to increase its emissions by 120% from 1990 levels. They are on course to exceed that 120% without any new runways. So how will building a new runway in the south-east reduce the number of flights down to a level consistent with that target? Unsurprisingly, it won't. In fact, entirely predictably, it will hugely increase flights and emissions.” *Guardian*

Sign the petition - <https://act.foe.co.uk/act/stand-against-heathrow>



## Eco-cohousing

For the last 4 years, a group of us in Pembrokeshire have been working on an eco-cohousing project called Vintage Green Cohousing. We are members of the UK Cohousing Network - part of a growing movement in Europe and the States which offers a solution to the housing crisis.

The idea behind cohousing is for households to share certain facilities in a large communal building with a kitchen and dining room; this space can also be used for other activities such as music, dancing, workshops for the wider community. The community would also have a workshop and tools, communal laundry, guest rooms, and a car-sharing scheme with a car park on the edge of the site. Individual houses still have their own kitchens and bathrooms, but they need less space for activities, which reduces the size and cost of each unit.



Planners and housing developers have a narrowly-defined set of objectives conforming to a now outmoded twentieth century outlook. Eco-architects argue for a closer consideration of the relationship between people, buildings and climate and so design houses that require less energy both to build and to run. The construction and operation of the built environment accounts for 45% of CO<sup>2</sup> emissions in the UK.

The construction industry is responsible for one third of the total waste produced annually. In 2015 the Government scrapped the zero-carbon emissions policy for homes, and removed all requirements and incentives to improve energy efficiency and incorporate energy generation into new housing.

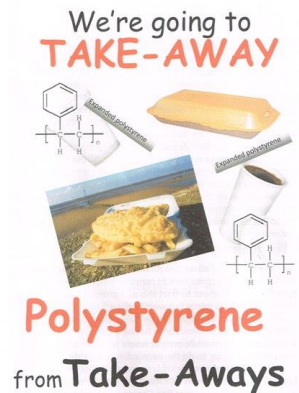
The most cost effective way to reduce CO<sup>2</sup> is to improve the insulation, make use of solar thermal heating with large, south-facing windows, and use building materials that absorb heat. Lifespan is important too - the longer a building lasts, the lower the environmental impact of materials used.

There is an increasing demand for single-occupancy dwellings. A building containing several small flats would be far more energy-efficient than a group of bungalows (the least efficient form of housing).

Our cohousing project will not only build green, but will allow us to work together, creatively building a community which works with nature rather than exploits it as a supplier of limitless resources. We started off as a group for the over-fifties only, but now we've decided to invite all ages. Visit: [www.vintagegreencohousing.org.uk](http://www.vintagegreencohousing.org.uk) and 'Vintage Green Cohousing' on Facebook

## Take-away Polystyrene

Following the success of the plastic bag charge, Conwy Friends of the Earth have turned their attention to so called disposable food containers.



Although polystyrene can be made into plastic lumber and flowerpots, most will end up in landfill or just littering our countryside. The visible debris is bad enough but further degradation results in lethal micro-plastics which are contaminating our seas and entering the food chain, presenting hazards to marine life and people.

So, what is the alternative? As individuals, why not take your own container to the take-away or coffee shop? There are also excellent biodegradable alternatives made from sugar cane and recycled cardboard. These are slightly more expensive so the question is how to persuade take-away shops and restaurants to make the switch.

We think Wales should lead the way with a 5p charge on all expanded polystyrene containers – this will help to redress the balance and make the use of biodegradable containers more viable.

## Exxon: The Road not taken

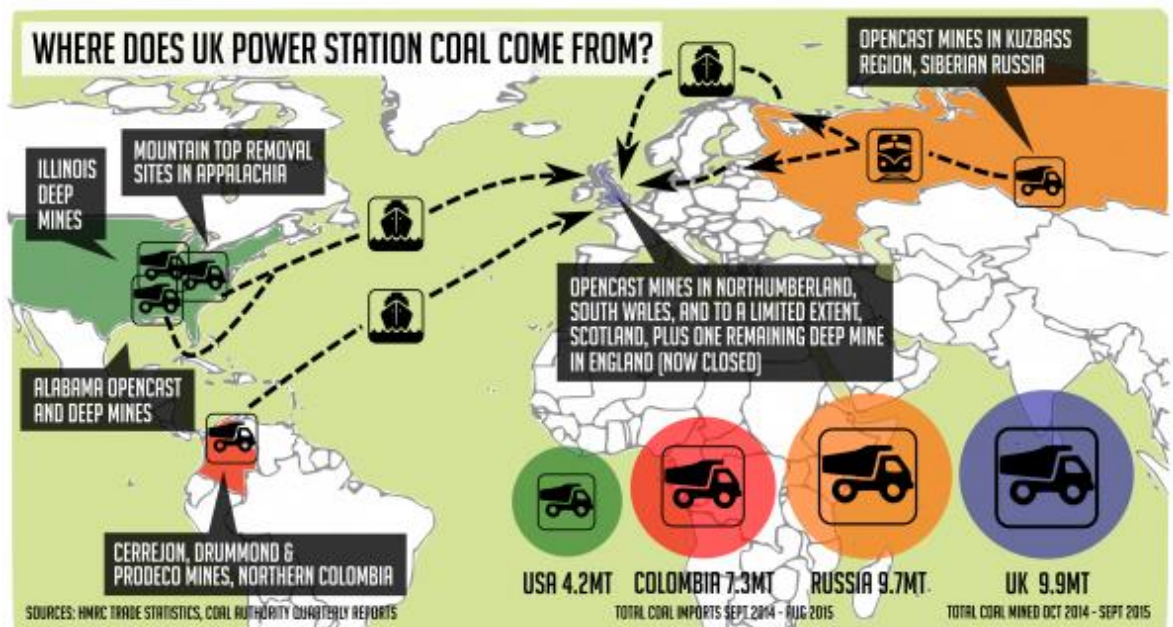
This e-book by Neela Banerjee, John H. Cushman Jr, David Hasemyer, and Lisa Song, describes how Exxon conducted cutting-edge climate research decades ago and then, without revealing all that it had learned, worked at the forefront of climate denial, manufacturing doubt about the scientific consensus that its own scientists had confirmed.

This series was named a finalist for the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service, earning national recognition from many other quarters, including the National Press Foundation, the Shorenstein Center at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, the Society of American Business Editors and Writers, and the White House Correspondents' Association. To download the e-book, go to:- <https://insideclimatenews.org/content/exxon-road-not-taken>

## King Coal

It is widely recognised that coal is a form of energy that must be phased out and yet here in the UK we are still burning it at Aberthaw and many other power stations. The government have announced its intention to phase out coal burning in the

next 10 years but as a report by the Coal Action Network points out this may be too late for local communities in Russia and Colombia. <http://londonminingnetwork.org/2016/01/can-report/>



The coal burnt here comes partly from open cast mines in the UK including South Wales and Northumberland. Merthyr FoE have long been campaigning against the extension of open cast mining which blights communities with noise, dust and increased traffic. Coal also comes from Russia, Colombia and Appalachia and often this coal is extracted at the expense of the local indigenous communities.

There are many companies involved in this blood coal but what is clear is that most of these operate on behalf of a much smaller number of companies including Anglo American, BHP Billiton, Peabody Coal and Glencore operating from London. London has been described as the 'washing machine for the producers of dirty energy'. These Companies are careful to distance themselves from the abuses and yet profit from them.

This is an illustration of why it is important to take an international approach, to raise awareness of the abuses in other countries, to target investors and to expose the role of large often shadowy corporations.

**Dyfed Reinvest** – the above information also shows why we are currently campaigning to persuade institutions to divest from (i.e. move their investment funds out of) oil, coal and gas companies. We reported this in the last newsletter, see our website (link on last page) for more information and updates on progress.

## Cornwall geothermal planning guidance

The deep geothermal resource in Cornwall represents a significant opportunity for renewable heat and power generation. Cornwall County Council has developed Planning Guidance for all renewable energy technologies that includes a specific section on geothermal.

In the 1970's and 80's the world-renowned 'Hot dry rocks project' at Rosemanowes Quarry in Penryn, led by Camborne School of Mines, confirmed the high temperatures which are found deep underground in Cornwall's granite. A recent study suggests this resource could meet all of Cornwall's demand for electricity and 20% of the UK's demand. Cornwall could lead the way in this new energy sector.

Running from 2014-2020 the European-funded economic regeneration programme for the region will contribute to the EU ambition to deliver smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. If accessed and exploited appropriately, this estimated level of resource could provide Cornwall with significant economic and social benefits.

Geothermal electricity offers advantages over other renewable energy sources; it provides baseload generation (24/7, 365 days of the year), as well as being able to react quickly to changes in demand, contributing longer term to a smarter energy system. In addition to generating power, the secondary heat produced by the process can also be used. This could form part of a longer-term plan to tackle fuel poverty, support and attract businesses with high heat demand and safeguard existing jobs. Geothermal also has a very small footprint on the landscape when compared to the same generating output of other technologies, and it emits no greenhouse gases.



# Friends of the Earth: The Next Generation

## Our 2016-20 strategy towards our 2030 goal

In an inspirational talk to the FoE Cymru conference Craig Bennett set out the goals and the challenges for the next 4 years. The environment is now centre-stage but lack of action and short term political expediency still hampers progress. Our goal is that by 2030 the next generation will be enjoying a better environment.

The focus is on 6 areas –

**Climate:** Building on the success of Paris and increased investment in renewable technologies, we now will focus campaigning on keeping fossil fuels in the ground.

**Nature:** Many in our world are almost completely disconnected from wild nature. This may be hard to imagine in Pembrokeshire, but even here animals are disappearing, hedgehogs are now as endangered as tigers. Re-establishing the value of wildlife to our culture and well-being is vital to overcoming the false dichotomy between nature and economic success.

**Health:** Ultimately human health is at risk from environmental degradation. Our campaigns to improve air quality in our towns and cities and to reduce our meat consumption will not only improve the health of the population but will also cut greenhouse gas emissions. A real win-win.

**The International Perspective:** FoE recognises that the environment is intimately linked to social, economic and political tensions all around the world. Fairness and social justice demand that the UK takes action, but also it is in our interests too. Climate refugees, or economic migrants as they are often called, are a growing example of the destabilising impact of environmental degradation.

**People's Freedom to Campaign:** There are many examples of the dangers faced by environmental campaigners and even here in the UK groups defending the public interest are under increased and sustained pressure from Government and the large corporations to silence their views. Standing up to this pressure is vital for the work of FoE.

**People Power:** Campaigns have always begun with people and in the digital age new ways of campaigning and linking people together have developed. FoE wants to build on this but at the same time support local groups building a diverse and inclusive network which nurtures talent and takes a bold and creative approach with an

unwavering focus on making positive change, while finally remembering to have some fun.

**Cardigan Bay:** see article above on scallop dredging.

## The Great Carbon Scam

The EU now gets more than 60% of its renewable energy from biomass, mostly from wood waste and felled trees. UN and EU rules mean countries don't have to count the CO<sup>2</sup> produced by burning biomass. This means biomass is sometimes being favoured over other renewables that could cut emissions more.

In some cases, biomass actually produces higher emissions than fossil fuels. The assumption that burning biomass is carbon neutral underpins the EU's 2020 renewables goal which is driving a huge expansion of bioenergy backed by hundreds of millions of euros of taxpayer's money.

*From New scientist - Sept. 24th 2016*

## An Inconvenient Truth Updated

Ten years ago the ground-breaking film 'An inconvenient Truth' was made by Al Gore - drawing attention to the way we were pouring CO<sup>2</sup> and other gases into the atmosphere with disastrous consequences. However, since then we have continued to carry on in the same way.

The film will be shown again at Pembrokeshire South East Energy Group's (PSEEG) meeting on 17th November at 7.00pm in the Regency Hall, Saundersfoot. Following this will be a presentation on the current data and why changes to our Earth's climate are causing so much concern. There will be tea/coffee and biscuits – no charge - and a chance to chat. All welcome.

## Sea Empress Oral History Exhibition

With a launch party on 18th November, an exhibition of the Sea Empress disaster of 20 years ago will be open daily from 19<sup>th</sup> to 27th November at the Reading Room in Manorbier.

This exhibition is the culmination of a programme of events arranged by artist and film-maker Abigail Sidebotham who is delivering a project aimed not just at remembering the Sea Empress disaster but also extending understanding of its impact 20 years on. Events included a talk and photography workshop with top conservation photographer Garth Lenz, and a presentation of local wildlife recordings by Rob St John and Mick Brown.

Further information available by emailing Abigail Sidebotham - [seaempressproject96@gmail.com](mailto:seaempressproject96@gmail.com) or see <http://www.orielmyrddinoffsite.co.uk>.



Huw Irranca Davies, Labour AM for Ogmore; Haf Elgar, FOE Cymru Campaigner; John Vidal, Environment reporter for the Guardian; and Craig Bennett, FOE Executive Director, in discussion.



Bledwyn Lake, local Groups Coordinator, organised and ran the conference with the other staff from Cardiff. Ex-director Gareth Clubb has now been appointed General Secretary of Plaid Cymru.

**Café-style workshops.** People were invited to lead a session on a topic and have information-sharing chats where people can come and go.



**Mike Jacob Local Groups Awards-** One winner and three runners up - everyone gave a presentation and everyone won a bottle of prosecco.



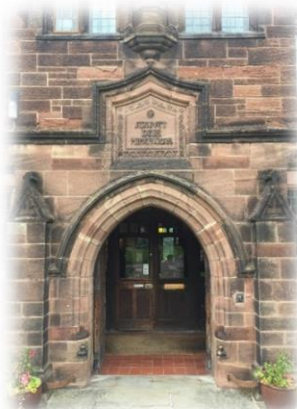
**Old King Coal** From Caerphilly to Croatia to Columbia to Russia, campaigners act in solidarity - exposing the multi-nationals' human rights abuses.

**Brexit. Where now?** Jill Evans MEP said it was the biggest challenge she'd ever faced and we need to push the Welsh Government to take decisions about what happens in Wales. Sam Low (FOE Remain Campaigner) said that weakening of our environmental laws wasn't part of the Leave campaign. Polls show people want strong environmental protection.



**GM Freeze - Raoul Bhambrai** Welsh Government needs to be proactive and take a strong position to keep Wales GM free. **Feed me the Truth-Latest campaign.** Until 2013 most UK supermarkets did not allow the use of genetically modified (GM) crops in production of their eggs, milk, dairy products, poultry, meat or farmed fish products. That has all changed and GM feed is now the norm - these products don't need to be labelled.

We want to generate enough interest in this campaign to persuade 10 large supermarkets to provide info to customers and increase the number of non-GM-fed animal products on sale. See [www.gmfreeze.org](http://www.gmfreeze.org)



**Gladstone's Library**, Hawarden in Flintshire – conference location

**Pembrokeshire FOE contact details:**

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