

Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth Cyfeillion y Ddaear Sir Benfro

Newsletter September 2014



Traws Link Cymru

This is an exciting campaign to reinstate rail links in West Wales connecting the South with the North via a link between Carmarthen and Aberystwyth and between Afon Wen and Bangor. This west coast route would boost the economy, help to protect the environment and connect a nation.

The core group is calling for a feasibility study. Of the 56.5 miles of track less than 3% has been built over, the three tunnels are intact and structurally sound, some realignment would be needed to speed up the rail link and avoid built up areas.

The cost is estimated at 650 million. This seems a lot but when compared with many road improvement schemes, for example the Port Talbot link road cost 107 million for just 3 miles, it is not so much and a scheme like this could well be funded by the convergence programme of the EU.

So what can you do to promote this dream?

- ♦ Write to your AM
- ♦ Visit the website www.trawslinkcymru.org.uk
- ♦ Find Traws link on Facebook
- ♦ They now have 2,138 signatures on their petition and hope for many more. A PDF of the petition form is available for you to print out and get some more signatures. You could then post them back to Adrian Kendon at Dolanog, Llanwnnen Road, Lampeter SA48 7JP, or you can go on line.

Sign the petition and pass the word on.



Global Frackdown Day Saturday 11th October

Friends of the Earth Cymru are organising a **Rally at Cardiff Bay on 11th October 12-2pm** to coincide with Global Frackdown Day. The aim is to take our message on the development of unconventional gases to the Senedd.

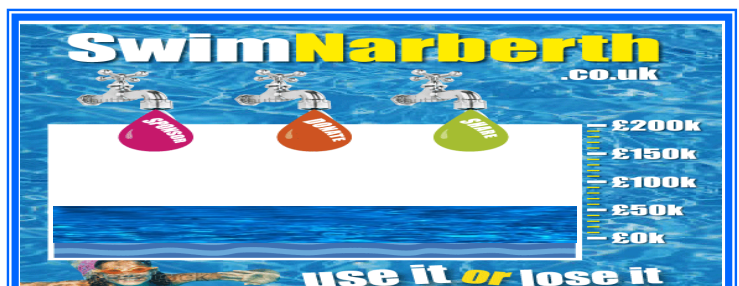
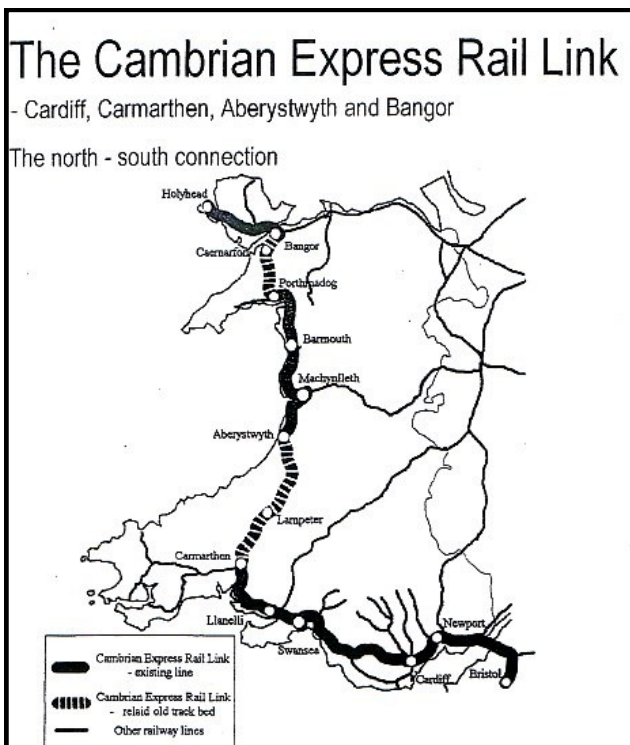
Carmarthen and Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth are organising a minibus to go from West Wales. Bring your placards and flags, dress up and join the fun.

Say NO to fracking

There will be speakers and we will be handing in the cards you have signed and the online signatures calling for an immediate ban on all forms of unconventional gas exploitation in Wales. The speakers will include Gareth Clubb and representatives of Plaid, the Green Party, The Vale Says No and Frack Free Wales.

To book your place on the bus please contact Kiri Howell by emailing kirihowell79@hotmail.com or phoning 07944 229785.

Places will be limited so book early.



As many are aware Narberth Pool is faced with closure at the end of October following a decision by PCC.

BUT SwimNarberth has other ideas.

On **Saturday 4th October 3-9pm at the pool** they will be launching their community share offer. This is a great opportunity to invest in a community renewable energy project which will result in a new biomass boiler heating the pool, solar panels and improved insulation. These innovations will make the pool viable and allow it to continue operating, a real example of green jobs. We know the model works. It has been proven at Harlech. So PLEASE support this venture.

One Planet Development

Salena Walker

The One Planet Development planning policy is a forward thinking planning policy adopted by the Welsh Government in 2011 as part of its One Wales: One Planet Scheme. The Welsh Government's objective is that "within the lifetime of a generation, Wales should use only its fair share of the earth's resources, and our ecological footprint be reduced to the global average availability of resources – 1.88 global hectares per person".

The One Planet Development planning policy offers a transition to a more sustainable way of life, by providing a way for the people of Wales to live and work on their own land. Applicants for the One Planet Development policy are required to produce a detailed management plan and ecological footprint analysis which demonstrates their commitment to sustainable living, including how they will provide for their basic household needs from land based activity within five years. The policy uses ecological footprinting to evaluate how much of the Earth's resources applicants are consuming. One Planet Development applicants should, initially "achieve an ecological footprint of 2.4 global hectares per person or less in terms of consumption and demonstrate clear potential to move towards 1.88 global hectare target over time".

There are now a number of successful examples of people living a One Planet life in Wales, the most notable being the Llamas Ecovillage in Pembrokeshire. On the 7th of May Nant-y-Cwm farm, in Caerphilly, South Wales became the first One Planet Development in Wales to receive permanent planning permission. Nant-y-Cwm farm is home to Dan and Sarah Moody and their five children and they had already been working their sixteen acre land for four years and were seeking retrospective planning permission from Caerphilly Council through the One Planet Development policy. The family meets their basic household needs from the land by producing meat, eggs and a wide range of fruit and vegetables. The smallholding also supports different local causes such as Kaleidoscope, the Cardiff based charity, through which people recovering from drug and alcohol addiction come to help out on Nant-y-Cwm farm and gain useful experience. Dan from Nant-y-Cwm farm says: "We have learned that we are able to work the land in an incredibly productive manner and that we are able not only to feed ourselves but also to derive a substantial income from our activities." The Moody's hope that now many other families and groups will be encouraged to try the same thing.

To help promote and raise awareness of the One Planet Development policy an independent voluntary body called the One Planet Council has been set up to support new applicants and planners. The One Planet Council offers guidance and tools to support anyone making the transition to this more sustainable way of life. The council consists of people from all walks of life, including specialists with knowledge and experience in related areas of planning, building, farming, land-management, climate science, self-employment, economics and well-being. Monthly meetings are held at the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David, Carmarthen. All are welcome.

Wind Turbine at Henllan Amgoed

Once again we are asking members to support a planning application for a wind turbine at Henllan Farm, Henllan Amgoed.

Please go to Carmarthen Council website, the planning application number is W/30688.



If you are interested in attending the council meetings please contact the acting One Planet Council secretary at info@oneplanetcouncil.org.uk

One Planet Council - <http://www.oneplanetcouncil.org.uk/>

One Planet Council meeting dates for 2014 - <http://www.oneplanetcouncil.org.uk/meeting-dates-2014/>

The One Planet Development planning policy - <http://www.oneplanetcouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/One-Planet-Development-TAN6.pdf>

One Wales: One Planet - <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/sustainabledevelopment/publications/onewalesoneplanet/?lang=en>

Llamas Ecovillage - <http://llamas.org.uk/>

EAT LESS MEAT

We are all increasingly aware that cutting down our consumption of red and processed meat is good for our health, but it may be vital in the fight against climate change. Conversion of feed to food is lowest in ruminants, pigs and chickens are better and intensive farming requires less space. However we are all aware of the welfare concerns of this approach and the environmental impact of feed production, particularly soy-bean production in the Amazon, is very damaging.



So what do we need to do?

Eat less meat - and other livestock products, particularly those of us who live in the developed world.

Waste less food - Eliminating food waste, a tall order, would mean we could produce half as much food again from the same resources.

Use agricultural waste - Use some waste residues from agriculture for energy generation with carbon capture or make biochar. Some of these residues will be needed to maintain soil quality.

<https://www.foe.co.uk/blog/cut-meat-consumption-or-lose-fight-climate-change>

Proposed Biomass-fired Electricity Generating Station at Trecwn

Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth has recently raised objections to this proposed electricity generating Station. This followed an email from biofuelwatch alerting us to their concerns with this proposal. While we often welcome the use of biofuels, it is vital that their use is sustainable and efficient.

The proposed generating station has a thermal efficiency of only about 26%, and a 5MW potential for heat recovery – were there to be any local use for the heat rejected by the station.

However it would not be economically feasible to supply Trecwn's few local dwellings with heat from the generating station, and whilst the applicant discusses the possibility of businesses being attracted to the location by the prospect of buying heat from the generating station at an advantageous price, the chances of this happening are surely remote.

FoE UK, FoE Pembrokeshire, and local independent environmental / energy campaigners have for a long time argued consistently that all new UK thermal electricity generating stations should be built as Combined Heat & Power (CHP) plants regardless of whether they burn fossil fuel or biomass. This is because, whatever the input fuel, it makes no sense to throw away any heat via a cooling tower or a seawater-cooled condenser.

We have therefore been adamant that it is “putting the cart before the horse” to choose a location for a generating station and then cast around for potential heat users in that locality; the only sensible procedure is to identify key large-scale users of heat, and then investigate the possibilities for building CHP plants alongside them.

We campaigned for the plans for a non-CHP power station at Pembroke to be abandoned in favour of a CHP station at the South Hook LNG facility near Herbrandston, because it had a large demand for medium-grade heat; although the new Pembroke Power Station was built as a non-CHP plant, our stance was vindicated by South Hook's recent announcement that they now wish to build a CHP generating station to provide heat for LNG revaporisation.

The proposal makes it clear that the biomass would likely be transported to site by lorry and we are concerned about where the fuel is to come from.

There is clear evidence that whole logs and trees are being chopped down to be processed into wood pellets to serve emerging biomass markets in the EU and the UK. US conservation organisation Dogwood Alliance has shown that pellet producers that supply UK power stations are using whole trees for their pellets. And together with another US environmental NGO, NRDC, they have published evidence that Drax's and E.ON's pellet supplier Enviva is targeting rare wetland forests in North Carolina.

Greenpeace Canada's 2011 report, “Fuelling a Biomess” shows evidence that “Canadian provinces are diving into a “biomess” by opening the door to large scale clearcuts, salvage logging and highly damaging extraction practices that could double the forest industry's footprint on already damaged forest ecosystems. Whole trees and large areas of forest are being cut to provide wood that is burnt for energy.”

We would fully support proposals for the construction of a fully CHP biomass generating station to feed electrical power onto the grid and supply heat to a nearby industrial facility; to this end, the obvious place to site such a plant locally is one of the Milford Haven oil refineries, both of which have a high and steady year-round demand for process steam.

The refineries are excellent potential locations for any sort of generating station:

- they have large connections onto the electricity grid;
- they should have no problems in obtaining all the necessary operating permits;
- they have no close neighbours;
- there is all the necessary expertise “in-house”...

The list of advantages is very long; furthermore, the ex-Murco refinery (near Tiers Cross) has a “live” rail connection which would allow biomass to be imported without worsening local road traffic – an important “green” consideration.

To summarise, we object to the proposed Trecwn biomass-fired generating station because it is non-CHP. There is only a finite quantity of biomass available either in the UK, or globally; therefore, so as to maximise the Common Good, all biomass must be used for maximum possible “energy benefit”. A 26% efficient biomass plant throwing away three-quarters of the fuel value via a cooling tower doesn't make sense, environmentally; we wonder how it makes sense economically. By contrast, steam delivered by a biomass-fired CHP generating station at an oil refinery would displace steam otherwise raised in the refinery's oil-fired boilers, thus achieving a significant reduction in carbon emissions: such a generating station's reject heat is therefore a doubly valuable asset.

We therefore call for the plans for a non-CHP biomass generating station at Trecwn to be abandoned; however, provided that the fuel source is proven to be sustainable and emissions, noise, etc., concerns can be addressed, we are not opposed to the construction of a biomass-fired generating station in Pembrokeshire; indeed, quite the opposite is true.

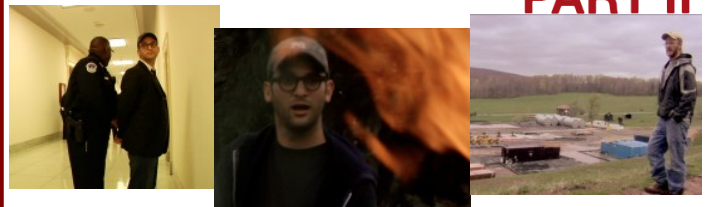
Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth AGM

Thursday 20th November, 6.45pm

Venue TBC

Followed by refreshments and at 7.30pm a showing of
The Josh Fox film

GASLAND PART II



In this explosive follow-up to his Oscar®-nominated film **GASLAND**, filmmaker Josh Fox uses his trademark dark humor to take a deeper, broader look at the dangers of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, the controversial method of extracting natural gas and oil, now occurring on a global level (in 32 countries worldwide).

GASLAND PART II, which premiered at the 2013 Tribeca Film Festival, shows how the stakes have been raised on all sides in one of the most important environmental issues facing our nation today. The film argues that the gas industry's portrayal of natural gas as a clean and safe alternative to oil is a myth and that fracked wells inevitably leak over time, contaminating water and air, hurting families, and endangering the earth's climate with the potent greenhouse gas, methane. In addition the film looks at how the powerful oil and gas industries are in Fox's words "contaminating our democracy".

Family fun with Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth over the summer – Kiri Howell was

joined by the group's newest and youngest active member 17 year old Environmental Studies student Amy Staff who assisted on a very busy 'creation station' at Lamphey Agricultural show in August.



Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth teamed up with the National Trust at Colby Woodland Garden. Here we provided 'Bee-cause' related activities as part of Colby's 'Buzzing About' summer events programme. As part of these events Kiri led a 'Get to Know your Pollinators' walk. Here a young participant shows off her find.



Back to School – recently Kiri attended Pembrokeshire College's 'Fresher's Fair' to promote the 'Run on Sun' campaign and to engage young people in our work.

What you can do – if you know of any events that we could attend, please let us know and of course, we are always on the lookout for new and active members to assist with our work – please spread the word!

Other new member signing up!



The Latest News on the Pembroke Power Station 10th July 2014

EU COURT THREAT OVER PEMBROKE POWER STATION FAILURES

The UK Government is just one step away from appearing before the European Court of Justice because of failures to correctly apply three European Directives [1].

The European Commission has today sent a letter outlining details of its concerns relating to Pembroke power station [3]. These include breaching environmental standards, allowing sub-standard technology to be used, and failures to assess environmental impacts of the power station before granting consent for it to be built. As a result of these failures, a protected marine habitat has been damaged and large numbers of marine organisms are being killed.

Gareth Clubb, Director of Friends of the Earth Cymru, said:

"The European Commission agrees with us that there is a strong case for legal action. The UK and Welsh Governments breached an unprecedented number of European Directives in granting permission for the hugely damaging Pembroke power station to operate. As a result of their slapdash approach, wildlife and habitats are being trashed and they're facing the prospect of appearing in court.

"Once again, we're discussing systemic failures in due process and environmental governance. It's about time governments started taking their environmental responsibilities seriously. The environment of Wales is one of our greatest assets; no-one benefits when some of our best environmental features are damaged".

NOTES: 1. Article 258 of the Treaty of the European Union states: "If the Commission considers that a Member State has failed to fulfil an obligation under the Treaties, it shall deliver a reasoned opinion on the matter after giving the State concerned the opportunity to submit its observations. If the State concerned does not comply with the opinion within the period laid down by the Commission, the latter may bring the matter before the Court of Justice of the European Union".

2. **"Environment: Commission asks UK to act on Pembroke power station, urban waste water treatment, and update bathing water rules** Today the Commission sent the **United Kingdom** three reasoned opinions on environmental matters. The first concerns Pembroke Power station, the largest gas-fired power station in Europe, where the power plant's cooling system has a damaging impact on the surrounding ecosystem, which is a Marine Special Area of Conservation (SAC) protected under EU law. Under the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive and the Habitats Directive, development consent should only be given after all the potential environmental impacts have been assessed. This does not appear to have been the case with the Pembroke-shire plant, where development and construction consents as well as a water abstraction licence and a permit for the dredging of the cooling system intake and outflow were granted before the full environmental assessments were completed. As a result, warm water with a heavy biocide load is currently being returned to the protected Milford Haven waterway. Many smaller fish, their eggs and other smaller organisms are affected by the cooling system, which passes large quantities of water from one end of the SAC through the plant and out the other side. The Commission letter also raises concerns about the application of the IPPC Directive on the final permits issued, in particular accepting this cooling system as Best Available Technology in this sensitive location and allowing an Environmental Quality Standard to be breached as a result". [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-14-470 en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-470_en.htm)

Pembrokeshire FoE Contact Info

Post: E.Clegg, Pant y Maen, Llangolman, Clunderwen
Pemb. SA66 7XJ

Website: www.foepembrokeshire.co.uk

[/www.facebook.com .Pembrokeshire Friends Of The Earth.](https://www.facebook.com/PembrokeshireFriendsOfTheEarth)

Telephone: 07768228584