



# New Forest Friends of the Earth Newsletter



Jan/Feb 2012 No.159

## Navitus Bay Wind Park onshore cabling route

Enid Knight visited one Enco exhibition. There will be further exhibitions:

1. **Fri March 2nd** Lymington Community Centre 2-8pm
2. **Wed Feb 29<sup>th</sup>** New Milton Memorial Hall 2-8pm

We do hope many of you will go. Enid Knight's report is below:

### *Eneco Public exhibition - 19th November 2011*

The onshore substation planned will be a tall building covering 1.4 hectares – much larger than I imagined. Not knowing the area (Mannington) I did not attempt to comment on choice of site but asked questions about the onshore cabling route to Mannington.

The cables are planned to arrive onshore somewhere along Barton Cliffs. A 20 metre-wide corridor is needed along the route for installation of cables. They cannot get this width by the more direct route to inland via the more heavily populated areas of Bournemouth, Christchurch or Highcliffe.

The fact that Barton Cliffs are an SSSI (from Highcliffe to Milford-on-Sea) as well as being particularly unstable is regarded as a big problem by Eneco. The current thinking is that at landfall they could protect the cliffs by digging down deep under them.

I was told that Eneco still have much juggling and investigation etc. to do to work out the cable route before the public consultation in February 2012.

The picture gives an idea of why a corridor around 40 metres wide is required. The picture shows: - cable installation corridor with cable trench, drainage and spoil storage and temporary access track.



## We win solar legal challenge 21st December 2011

Friends of the Earth has won its legal challenge against the Government in High Court.

Along with two solar companies we [took the Government to court](#) over their plans to slash support for solar energy.

After two days in court the Judge **ruled in our favour** calling the Government's plans "legally flawed".

These botched and illegal plans have cast a huge shadow over the solar industry, jeopardising thousands of jobs.

We hope this ruling will prevent ministers rushing through damaging changes to clean energy subsidies - giving solar firms a much-needed confidence boost.

*Andy Atkins, Friends of the Earth's Executive Director*



### **Illegal and unfair**

Government proposed cutting the amount of cash-back - known as feed-in tariffs - for solar projects installed after 12 December.

But this date was 11 days before the official consultation on the plans closed.

The Judge agreed with Friends of the Earth that this approach was **illegal**.

### **Real-world impact**

The Government's proposals have already caused thousands of planned or unfinished **solar projects to be shelved**.

### **Government must act**

Following this ruling the Government must **act now** to get solar back on track by:

- \* Providing **more money for feed-in tariffs**.
- \* Supporting solar projects in **schools and social housing**.

[Please send your MP a message](#) asking him to help put solar back on track.

## **Final Demand**

Thank you for an incredible first three months of our Final Demand campaign . Almost 20,000 of you have signed the Final Demand petition for a public inquiry into the Big Six energy companies.

With your paper petitions coming in every day we'll soon have many more. If we all get ten friends to sign it'll be massive. Last week our Head of Campaigns, Andrew, went to Downing Street to show David Cameron the first batch of petition signatures.

If you hadn't helped make this a serious issue in the media and in Westminster we wouldn't have got anywhere near Number 10.

Next spring we will hand in the final petition - so we'll need your help to create even more noise about the campaign. You can help keep up the pressure on Government too by getting your friends and family to sign our Final Demand petition – Download a copy from [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk). Now we'd like you to pat yourself on the back for your achievements so far. All the best,

*Glyn and the Final Demand team*

For your information a copy of the Petition is below:

*To David Cameron,*

*I want the Big Six energy companies to stop ripping us off. The energy companies stand to make billions by keeping us hooked on expensive, imported, dirty fuel. And your government is letting them get away with it. I urge you to*

- Launch an independent public enquiry into the Big Six's power over consumers and over politicians.*

- Not to axe support for clean British energy produced by communities, councils, businesses and householders.*

## **“Irreversible Climate Change in five years”**

The world is likely to build so many fossil-fuelled power stations, energy – guzzling factories in the next five years that it will be impossible to hold global warming to safe levels the last chance of combating dangerous climate change would be ‘lost forever’ according to the most thorough analysis yet of world infrastructure done by the International Energy Agency.

Anything built from now on that produces carbon will do so for decades and this ‘lock-in’ effect will be the most important factor likely to raise carbon levels to 450parts per million. This is regarded as the most that the atmosphere can cope with before the relatively safe level of an increase of 2° is reached. (we already have reached 390ppm). After that we will have lost forever the chance of controlling climate change. *Fiona Harvey in The Guardian*

# To Cut Air Passenger Duty would be plane stupid

Airlines are calling on the Government to scrap Air Passenger Duty (APD). We say it's vital to keep it. Easyjet, Ryanair, Virgin Atlantic and British Airways want an end to the duty, which the Government charges per passenger flying out of the UK. The airlines pass this cost on to their customers.

Lowering or scrapping APD would make flights cheaper. But we think aviation is already under-taxed. They receive more than £11bn in subsidies from the taxpayer each year through:

- \* Tax-free fuel
- \* No VAT on flights or new planes

APD goes some way to reflecting, in the price of an airline ticket, the serious and growing environmental effects of flying. To scrap it would be a mistake. Air Passenger Duty plays an important part in tackling aviation's significant impact on climate change - ministers must stand up to this unfair lobbying.

Air travel is one of the fastest growing sources of greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide, which cause climate change. Letting aviation emissions soar will make it much harder for the UK to tackle dangerous climate change. It could mean we'll need to make even bigger energy savings in our homes and businesses.

*Richard Dyer, Transport Campaigner, Friends of the Earth*

## **Also: From the Guardian Weekly Dec30th.**

Europe's highest court gave unreserved backing to a hotly contested European law charging airlines for carbon emissions on flights to and from Europe. These airlines will have to buy permits under the EU Emissions Trading Scheme from Jan 1st

# Stop Government support for damaging biofuels

The Government is planning to continue financial support for biofuels, despite the devastating impact they have on people and the environment.

The proposals - to amend a policy called the Renewables Obligation - mean:

- \* Energy companies will get more support for burning biofuels, than for producing electricity from clean, green onshore wind.
- \* Many small scale onshore wind projects will become unviable.

Yet increasing demand for biofuels and biomass - like palm oil and wood - from abroad, is driving:

- \* Deforestation. Wood is taken for burning and forest is cleared to make way for new biofuel crops.

- \* Land-grabbing. Local people are forced off their land so more biofuel crops can be grown.

- \* Extinction. Animals, plants and habitats are under threat.

- \* Climate change. Despite many Governments seeing them as 'green', some biofuels actually cause more greenhouse gas emissions than coal.

You can help - tell Energy Minister, Charles Hendry, to stop support for biofuels and imported biomass, and rethink plans that will make small scale wind unviable. *FoE*

## **Subsidised foreign trawlers “destroying fragile UK corals”**

On 18th October last month The Independent had a report about yet more damage being done to the sea-bed by fishing: “Deep-sea trawlers from mainland Europe are destroying diverse and fragile coral gardens off the northwest coast of Britain in an industry that is only possible thanks to **EU subsidies**, a report has highlighted.” This report was by the conservation group Oceana.

These waters are mainly being fished by Spanish and French ships; they catch a meagre amount of fish, and would probably operate at a loss if it weren't for the EU subsidy. But the damage they do to these hidden and little-known coral communities, about half a mile down, is irreparable. “Life at such depths develops slowly, and deepwater corals are some of the planet's most ancient living structures, with some thought to have been growing for more than 8,500 years. The fish living in the perpetual darkness can reach 150 years old and mature late, making a sustainable harvest difficult.”

The ‘coral gardens’ are located mainly in the Rockall Bank, the Darwin Mounds, and the Porcupine Sea Bight. All of them are within the EU's 200 nautical mile Economic Exclusion Zone in which fishermen from any EU state have access to all waters *Ann Vasilesco*

## Feed farm animals, not incinerators

From plough to plate Britain wastes an estimated 16 million tonnes of food every year.

That's enough to fill Wembley stadium 16 times over. Instead of ending up in landfill or being burnt, much of this food could **be eaten by humans**.

Much of what people can't eat could **feed farm animals**. And the rest could be used for **composting** and **anaerobic digestion** (treating food scraps to produce heat and gas). And it gets worse.

By importing animal feeds like soy - rather than feeding animals our leftovers - the UK is **driving deforestation abroad**.

**Please ask** Environment Secretary, Caroline Spelman, **to promote food waste as an alternative to imported animal feeds.** *FoE*

## Marine Conservation Zones at risk

Act today - our recommended network of 127 Marine Conservation Zones is under threat right now!

The marine habitats and wildlife off our shores are facing a serious threat with the long-awaited network of marine protected areas, promised by Government for 2012, being in danger of failing before it has even got off the ground. The Wildlife Trust is urging the public to write to Under-Secretary for Natural Environment and Fisheries, Richard Benyon MP, in support of Marine Conservation Zones.

In 2009 marine conservation took a big step forward with the passing of the Marine and Coastal Access Act which promised a coherent network of protected areas around the coasts by 2012. We are now busy trying to ensure that the Act does its job – including successful designation and effective management of a network of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) to protect our seas.

Despite all the hard work since the Act came into force there are now serious concerns that only a fraction of the 127 recommended MCZs will be designated, perhaps only 7-10 of the 30 recommended for the South East. This will leave just a scattering of protected sites and leave vulnerable and precious sites unprotected.

We are asking for your help to prevent this from happening by writing to Defra Minister Richard Benyon,\* urging him to create the proposed network of all 127 MCZ. We need to demonstrate the importance and urgency of the Marine Conservation Zone network. It is possible that decisions will be made imminently on who many sites will be put through so it is essential that the Government understands the depth of public support for MCZs immediately.

\*Send it to [defra.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:defra.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk) or Defra, Nobel House. 17 Smith Square London SW1P 3JR *FoE*

## Snippets

1 In the UK many of us helped to force industry to recognise that tuna fishing must change. We can feel proud that all major UK supermarkets and tuna brands are now leading the way globally, by committing to stop sourcing tuna caught using FADs. While promises on paper are a good start, we still need to check that changes are actually happening and it's vital that we continue to monitor the progress of John West, Princes, Tesco, Asda, Morrisons and Co-op to make sure their commitments are kept.

2 I have had an update from Transition Southampton and one of the items caught my attention. The idea of having communal cooking sessions which focus on low carbon ingredients and techniques.....a few people get together, prepare a meal and then eat it together. Would anyone like to take part in the New Forest area? I'd be happy to organise a pilot. Please contact me if you are interested. *Sarah Fawkes 01590 675613*

3 A company 'Greenbottle' is shortly to launch a paper wine bottle The Company says that with landfill running out degradable packaging will become more and more important. The new bottle weighs 55g compared to 500g for a glass one. Its carbon footprint is only 10% of the glass one and it decomposes in weeks in landfill. Paper milk bottles are now being sold in the southwest and

are very popular. At the present time more than 15 million plastic bottles are being used and most unfortunately end up in landfill. *Guardian Weekly*



Hopefully we are all regularly buying a number of Fairtrade products. This year we are all being encouraged to take a step more and talk to another person about the benefits of Fairtrade and encourage them to join us. It is hoped that 1.5 million new people will be supporting Fairtrade. Who shall we talk to?

*June*

## Dates for Your Diary

**Mon Feb 13<sup>th</sup>** Monthly meeting at 4, Daniells Close Lymington 2.30pm

**Sat Feb 25<sup>th</sup>** UNA talk by Deborah Lucas (Waste and recycling Officer NFDC “Protecting the Environment – Our Part” in Fuller Hall Lymington Community Centre 2-4pm £4 including tea

**Tues Feb 28<sup>th</sup>** NFFOE AGM This will be held in the Oak Room at Brockenhurst Village Hall at 7.30pm

**Navitus Bay Wind Park Exhibitions – [www.navitusbaywindpark.co.uk](http://www.navitusbaywindpark.co.uk)**

**Fri March 2nd** Lymington Community Centre 2-8pm

**Wed Feb 29<sup>th</sup>** New Milton Memorial Hall 2-8pm

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