



Windbags against windfarms

Cambridge IMC, 06.09.2004 13:07

A proposed wind farm near Boxworth, West of Cambridge, is going forwards as Your Energy has submitted a full planning proposal. The proposal is for 16 wind turbines on farmland next to the A14, that could "provide enough energy to supply 20,000 homes – 37 per cent of the domestic need for South Cambridgeshire," according to a Cambridge Evening News article.

The proposals are being opposed by the MP for South Cambridgeshire, Conservative Andrew Lansley, who has either been convinced by the myths of local and national opposition groups, or is merely following the Tory party line.

A local group, Stop Cambridge Wind Farms, has appeared to propagate the same misinformation as a national anti-wind farm group, Country Guardian. The *Guardian* (Newspaper) reported that Country Guardian "strongly denies accusations of having close links with the nuclear industry (its chair is Sir Bernard Ingham, who is a paid lobbyist for British Nuclear Fuels)." These links obviously make its denial very hard to swallow.

Because wind farms have proved so surprisingly controversial groups have appeared to balance the debate, including the British Wind Energy Association, and Yes 2 Wind, a coalition between Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, and WWF. These provide answers to all the common misconceptions. There is also a campaign called Embrace the Wind which asks people to register their names if they support wind power.



levin, 19.09.2004 17:25

On a windy Saturday (18th September) a group of people went to Boxworth to the 'Cambridgeshire Against Windfarms' exhibition to provide another viewpoint for the visitors. Although most attending, with a few exceptions, were already against the windfarm to be located between Boxworth and the A14, many motorists passing by honked and gave a thumbs-up.

Nearly everyone we spoke to expressed the view that they were not against windfarms as such, but believed this proposal was too close to the township, citing noise as the biggest concern.

However, at Yes 2 Wind they state that, "Thanks to advances in wind turbine technology, well designed, well sited turbines can be quiet enough to cause no disturbance to people living just a few hundred metres away. At these distances, any noise they do make is usually drowned out by the natural noise of the wind itself in the trees and vegetation. To protect nearby residents from any undue disturbance, proposals to install wind turbines are required to meet strict noise standards."

Hopefully the trip to a wind-farm in Hull, organised for Thursday 23rd September by the company who proposed the windfarm (Your Energy), will dispel these concerns.

CamBoaters' campaign continues with open day

Manos and Mertle, 23.08.2004 00:29

On Sunday August 22 the CamBoater association organized an open day to encourage people to visit the river boats and get to know those who live there. A festive atmosphere prevailed, with literally hundreds of people of all ages visiting the 20 specially decorated boats near the Jesus Green Lock. The morning was part of an ongoing series of events which aim to raise the profile of the Cambridge boating community and gain support for their campaigns.

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If you'd like to get involved, e-mail imc-cambridge-contact@lists.indymedia.org or come to one of our open meetings at 7.30 on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of every month in Clown's Café, King Street.

The association has been formed in the last few weeks by resident boaters on the Cam to campaign against new mooring rules recently introduced by the Cam Conservancy. Starting from October 1st boats will not be allowed to moor on Midsummer Common, directly affecting the approximately 22 boats that will have to move, but also causing overcrowding of the entire river. The campaign has also highlighted other concerns, including the lack of waste disposal facilities and fuel supplies available for boaters, and the presence of just a single water point for tens of boats.

The boat owners living along the river Cam have formed an official CamBoaters Community Association. The formation of the association formalises the growing sense of community amongst river boat live-aboards, although the CamBoaters have already been a pro-active body for some time. As well as producing and sponsoring their own newsletter, the CamBoaters organised the Boat Open Day and Great Cam Clean-Up, in which boat owners voluntarily collected over 600 litres of rubbish and over 600 litres of recyclable waste from the river and banks between Bottisham Lock and Granchester. The election of specific Events and Operations Co-ordinators to the committee indicates that these united efforts to contribute to the good of the river as a whole will continue in full force.

Robin Cocker, chair of the newly formed committee, says "This is a really positive step forward for the CamBoaters. Being part of an official association will help individual boat owners assert our rights as users of the river. We hope it will help us develop even stronger relations with other river users and local residents."

There are 13 members of the



CamBoaters Community Association committee, all of whom live on boats on the river Cam. Committee meetings are open to all members, and emphasis is firmly on collective, democratic decision-making.

Since then, the council have voted unanimously to oppose the decision to move boats from Midsummer Common, leading the Conservators to defer the mooring ban until October 2005. They have also voted to review their policy on navigation of the river.

50 people protest against National Front

rachel / m, 14.08.2004 19:00

The National Front were to visit Oakington asylum seeker reception centre to protest against the presence of asylum seekers. 50 anti-fascist protestors were at Oakington to "show that the people of Cambridge have no interest in their politics of hate." The protest, organised by the local branch of Unite Against Fascism with only three days notice, attracted



banners from the local Trades Council, Amicus and the CWU, as well as local councillors, members of other Trade Unions, school students, pensioners and more. The fascists, however failed to show up.

Instead of their boasted 100 people demonstrating publicly outside the centre, where asylum seekers are detained, they were forced into a hurried and tiny skulk through Cambridge. They gave out leaflets in the centre of town, then marched from Regent Street to the train station. We (the anti-fascist protestors) heard that they were in Cambridge and drove back. Many of us were prevented by the police from getting near to them, but those that did saw what seemed to be less than 10 Nazis climb into their three cars and leave.

The success of our actions shows that the people of Cambridge have no interest in the politics of the National Front being spread in their town, and the importance of the network of anti-Nazis which we have built up.

University and police bust party

A. Raver, 14.09.2004 22:31

Very early Sunday morning (September 12th, 2004), about 100 people gathered beneath a motorway bridge somewhere on the outskirts of Cambridge City, which was, as it turns out, a very cosy 100ft long concrete tunnel.

In other words, a prime location for having a good time! Everyone there had the same idea – to party the night away to Techno, Breaks and House until it got light or they got tired – whichever came first.

This is what was dubbed the 'Ground Zero' party. Celebrating life rather than mourning the dead. Nothing wrong with that you might think. Except for two 'minor' details...

Firstly, you have to be rich enough to buy a late license from your local authority. And even then this is at said local authority's discretion. If they don't like what you're doing (ie is it making money? Is the location a 'safe' one? etc), you don't get the license.

Despite all this, some more adventurous souls boldly go into the night to find secret (mainly disused) locations to hijack/reclaim, set up their sound systems and invite along other equally adventurous types to dance to their repetitive beats!

Cue the Ground Zero crew, boldly going where no licensee will dare to venture.



Secondly, the Ground Zero party in question happened to be taking place on what turned out to be Cambridge University owned land (funnily enough, not a million miles away from the proposed site for their now infamous Monkey Lab).

Needless to say, some University cronies were promptly dispatched in their little white van to investigate the 'disturbance' (despite the fact you couldn't hear or see a thing from the main road half a mile away), soon to be followed by numerous Coppers (I counted at least five cars and three vans).

On this occasion, the local law enforcers were quite well behaved, deciding not to confiscate anything and just politely asked the organisers to turn off the music and pack their stuff – to a collective groan from all the die-hard ravers who were ready for being up all night.

'Twas not to be!

However, there have been numerous other (Shock! Horror!) unlicensed parties over the summer season (some of which I have also attended), at various other *non-university owned* locations, at which neither hide nor hair of the police was to be seen for the whole of the night, with things drawing to their natural, sleepy, (sometimes muddly) conclusion in the early hours of the morning.

It should also be pointed out that the number of attendees at these parties was much larger than this one.

Draw your own conclusions from this if you will.



Cambridge free shop

Ye Olde Shoppe Assisystante / manos,
05.09.2004 14:39

On Saturday 4th September, some people from the Cambridge Action Network set up a 'free shop' in Cambridge Market Square. Anyone could give or take stuff, yet the most important rule was: no money exchange.

As a participant in running the Free Shop for the afternoon, I would say it was a moderate success, meaning we had a constant trickle of interested people looking us up and asking what it was all about.

We managed to redistribute/recycle/trade about half of the things we took along, which can be counted as a success for any business I reckon!

The clothes seemed to 'move' the slowest, so, perhaps if we do this again we should take along a wider variety of items instead.

One of my personal favourite moments was the old boy who had travelled all the way from Wales for the day and was delighted when I told him that he could have a little leather briefcase for nothing – very sweet!

Also many of the toys and games that I took along found children to take them home, meaning that they've just had their useful lives extended, as well as bringing some pleasure to someone new, also disproving the media myths about today's kids only being interested in video games!!

We had the obligatory blaggers who only hung around for as long as the food and drink lasted, as well as the incredulous passers-by who are so conditioned into the 'money = exchange of goods' mentality that when we approached them



and said it was all free they didn't seem to understand – DOH!

Someone turned up and said to me that they had heard there was going to be an 'anti capitalist rally' – doncha just love Chinese Whispers!!

As well as all this, the stall soon became an informal social(ising) centre, as people would come and go, hang around and chat for a while and then go off, so, it was a nice, informal atmosphere over the course of the afternoon.

Some people got into the spirit of it and did actually trade items with us – one woman swapped a cap for a tie, someone else donated some picture frames in return for some clothes.

Most of the toys we just gave away, as we just wanted make a few kids happy ... especially the brother and sister who timidly approached the stall then wandered off, coming back an hour or so later to claim their prize – a Mousetrap boardgame!

I think this is something we should definitely consider repeating, as, not only was it an interesting 'social experiment', but, it garnered a lot of interest from the public, and once a few people had grasped what we were up to, it all worked.

Remembering Hiroshima and Nagasaki

IMC Cambridge, 03.08.2004 20:04

It's almost 60 years since the nuclear bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, on the 6th and 8th of August, 1945 (respectively). So far we have managed to avoid it happening again, though the USA is looking to build "usable nukes" or "bunker busters".

To remember these tragic events, there was a peace camp at USAF Lakenheath and two vigils in Cambridge.

dmish, 05.07.2004 18:17

July 4th – American Independence Day. An ideal time for the UK to declare it's independence from the policies of this American administration.

If only. But some members of the UK population did. At the misnamed RAF Lakenheath base (it should be USAF) around 50 activists gathered to declare our independence from the USA, and our objections to the USA basing combat aircraft, nuclear and other bombs in our country. This base has been used for dropping cluster bombs on Iraq in the most recent conflict. The nuclear bombs



are illegal. We don't want them here.

So there was music, theatre, tea, cake and cucumber sandwiches for the many well dressed attendees at the Peacemakers' Ball. And the fence was made more colourful with the addition of a variety of banners.

Later the protest moved to RAF Feltwell (another misnamed USAF base). A large 4th of July party was going on inside, and party goers were offered information on the secret Lakenheath nukes as they went in. The response rate was frankly pretty low. Maybe it was hard to hear inside the rather large SUVs and pickups favoured by many of the base residents.

The party (outside the base) was still going well at 9pm. But the party to celebrate the removal of illegal US nukes will be even bigger ...

IMC'er, 06.08.2004 16:05

Today, (August 8th, 2004) from 2:00pm until 3:00pm, half a dozen Cambridge Women In Black (CamWIB) members held a vigil in the Market Square to mark the anniversary of the Atom Bomb being dropped upon Hiroshima.

They all remained silent throughout the duration of their vigil as a mark of respect for those that perished during and after the bomb was dropped.

There was also a small stall beside them, (courtesy of CamPeace), highlighting the current Guantanamo Bay Human Rights abuses.

Rachel, 09.08.2004 18:42

A vigil was held on Midsummer Common to commemorate the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. 30 people attended the CamPeace organised event.

We stood in silence for 5 minutes holding hands. This silence was followed by some thoughts on Hiroshima and Nagasaki being expressed by participants. There was then another 5 minutes of silence in



which we held hands. Lanterns were then lit and left to float in the river.

Local resident Margaret Wright said that, for her, the purpose of the vigil was "to keep the tradition going which was started at least 20 years ago by Cambridge CND to remember the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945." She wanted to point that the Cambridge commemoration was only one of many such events which were held worldwide yesterday. She sees the aim of these vigils as being to "seek peace," and to "seek the abolition of all weapons of mass destruction."

Who are the G8? A week of action and discussion in Cambridge

nickleberry, 14.06.2004 18:50

The Cambridge Action Network (CAN) organised a forum on the subject of the G8, to coincide with the end of the G8-summit in Georgia, USA. This was the last in a series of events that took place in Cambridge including a film screening and some street-theatre. Here's what I took from the evening...

The forum kicked off with a series of short talks on different aspects of the G8. This proved a very effective and politically non-hierarchical way of communicating – there were no experts here, instead different people had spent some time in the previous week researching a particular aspect of the G8 and they shared what they had learnt.

At the end of the forum a discussion took place about what people want to do about the G8 coming to Scotland next year. How are we to respond to this?

The institution of the G8 was critiqued with keywords being war, the arms-trade, anti-environmentalism, authoritarianism and capitalism. The history of the G8 was examined in the context of the development of capitalism after World War II.

The G8 also plays a big part in the Arms Trade which is a bit fucked-up. Two thirds of all conventional weapons trading come from five of the eight nations. Although the G8 have agreed to the principle of not selling arms to human rights abusers sometimes the odd tank/machine-gun/helicopter gunship sneaks through.



One of the major recipients of these loopholes has been Iraq. A major concern was raised about the management of Iraqi debt, 50-90% of which came from Saddam's weapons purchases (mainly from the G8). Maintaining this debt allows creditor nations to maintain control over Iraq, despite *apparently* handing sovereignty over to that nation on 30 June.

Of course debt has crippling effects on other nations than Iraq and this was also examined. The IMF has played a large role in enforcing conditions on indebted countries – these conditions are undemocratic and often suffocating. The G8 nations of course have a big say in what these conditions will be.

Some of this debt has been cancelled but much remains – the conditions imposed on countries who were to have their debt cancelled were too strong as well as, once again, being undemocratically forced upon them.

The G8's relation to the trading system was examined. The overriding theme seems to be that though the G8 nations

profess a great love of free trade, their focus is mainly on *other people* trading freely while they carry on subsidising their own industries. The most obvious examples are in agriculture where both the EU and the US subsidise their own farmers massively. This is supposed to be against the rules but resorting to the WTO's dispute settlement procedures is expensive and few countries can match the technical and legal expertise of American trade teams.

The G8's role in encouraging privatisation was examined, particularly in relation to Pakistan. A particularly sinister example was cited in the privatisation of education. Governments in developed countries are encouraging third world countries to allow private education which is usually of a much higher standard than government education.

In the light of the issues expounded above, discussion focussed on if, and how, we want to respond to the G8 summit coming to Scotland next year. It was felt that it is important to build up a vital movement that can respond to the summit over the particular three days, but also maintain itself and build locally over a much longer period of time. How then to politicize the local community?

This was the question which occupied the remaining time. Education was seen as key, but in a particular sense. Not just book learning – education as consumption of facts – but education as part of a political process which allows people to engage in the world around them and makes them feel empowered. A key aspect of this education process is learning, but it is not the only aspect: people should be inspired, they should feel hope; people should be able to act, they should be able to respond to the issues that are examined; people should be able to reflect on what they have done and consider how to move forward.

How this is to take place is not yet clear – it is hoped that a cycle of action and reflection/discussion will begin to take shape over coming months. This cycle will hopefully involve copious quantities of people responding to the G8 summit next year, as well as being part of an ongoing, sustainable and vibrant movement.

Links

Cambridge Action Network: www.cambridgeaction.net

Cambridge Women In Black: www.camwib.org.uk

CamBoaters: www.camboaters.co.uk

Yes 2 Wind: www.yes2wind.com

Dissent! Network of resistance against the G8: www.dissent.org.uk Direct Action at RAF Lakenheath: 3rd October

Upcoming events

Asylum and Immigration Film Screening: 3rd October, 7.30,
The Geldart, Ainsworth Street, Cambridge

Asylum and Immigration Forum: 6th October, 7.30, The
Bharat Bhavan (Old Library), Mill Road, Cambridge

Direct Action at RAF Lakenheath: 3rd October

For more information on all these stories and events, see <http://cambridge.indymedia.org.uk/>