

# Fairbourne Facing Change **NEWS**

COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP

## **ISSUE 1**

**MARCH 2014**



### Chair

Pete Cole

### Vice Chair

Sylvia Stephenson

### Secretary

Angela Ware

### Treasurer

Beverley Wilkins

### Working Groups

Business

Environmental

Finance &  
Communications

Health &  
Wellbeing

Legal

## **Welcome to the Fairbourne Facing Change Newsletter**

Here is an outline of what has been achieved so far....

- Core group and work groups established.
- Interest and support of a Member of the European Parliament (MEP).
- Contacted Senior Politicians to raise awareness of our position.
- Established a Community Bank Account to accept donations and cash contributions to fund the campaign.
- Established that the Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2) is not a statutory document but is a "live" document that is open to discussion, and input from the local community is actively encouraged.
- Invited to join Fairbourne Multi-Agency Project Board meetings. We determined that, at this point we would only attend as observers with speaking rights. This has been accepted.



A positive and productive meeting between Kay Swinburne MEP and FFC representatives was held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March.

## **How have you been affected by recent events? Let us know!**

We need written evidence from you if you have been directly affected by the recent BBC television and other media coverage of Fairbourne. For example.....

- Has your property been devalued, or have your insurance premiums increased?
- Have you cancelled a building project?
- Has the sale of your property fallen through?
- Have you been refused a mortgage?
- Are you a business owner or are you self employed and you have lost work?
- Has your physical or mental health been affected?

See the 'Contact Us' details on page 3 of this newsletter.

## Keeping everyone informed

If you are receiving this newsletter as a tenant in a rented or leased Fairbourne property then please pass on this copy to the property owner.

If you would prefer to keep a copy for your own use, please note that extra copies of this newsletters are available from Fairbourne News Agency (Cath's Corner shop).

It is vital that we keep everyone fully informed of any, and all news and future developments.

## Pass it on.....

We are hoping to establish a data base of contact details (email addresses and/or phone numbers) from those already supplied to us by residents and supporters. This information would be for FFC use only and would not be intended for the general public. If you do not wish to be included in this list of contacts then please let us know by contacting Angela Ware, (the FFC Secretary). See contact details on page 3 of this newsletter.

## What is the Fairbourne Multi-Agency Board?

It is a group set up by Gwynedd Council and includes Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales, Welsh Water, Network Rail, Arthog Community Council (3 representatives) as well as the County Councillor and other Council Officers.

This Board has been set up to take forward the SMP2 which has been the subject of much media attention. It specifically looks at and discusses the SMP2 for our village. The Board is actively encouraging community engagement and involvement. It is a real opportunity, through the Fairbourne Facing Change campaign, to engage and influence this important initiative.

FFC attended our first Board meeting on Friday 21st March. It is our intention to play a full part, as observers with speaking rights, in this on your behalf. At this meeting it was confirmed that a public meeting planned for December 2013 to inform the community of the position regarding SMP2 was cancelled by the Community Council because the information was regarded as "too sensitive". This effectively was the Community Council censoring the flow of information. FFC made it clear that this is unacceptable and is part of the problem which the community is having to deal with.

Questions and issues raised at our three public meetings are being collated in readiness for the meetings scheduled for 25th April. Copies of our questions will be available for you at the meeting. These meetings are intended to provide us with a better understanding of SMP2 and its implications. Present will be representatives from statutory bodies involved in the Fairbourne Multi-Agency Project Board who have particular responsibilities.

We hope that you will attend the meetings on 25th April to show how strongly the community feels about this.

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## Minister slates BBC media coverage

Alun Davies, Minister for Natural Resources and Food in the "Record of Proceedings (Draft) of the Environment and Sustainability Committee dated 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014" has said:

*"I am extraordinarily disappointed and I deplore the level of reporting and coverage of these plans (SMPs) in recent weeks, particularly by the BBC. The BBC has caused unnecessary concern and anxiety for many people up and down the Welsh shoreline. The BBC should be ashamed of itself by broadcasting some of this material.*

*These plans are absolutely essential to how we manage the shoreline. They are also about people's lives, people's businesses and people's homes. It is enormously irresponsible to report these draft plans as facts. No decisions have been taken. When decisions have been taken, they will then be reported, first of all to this place, and they will be done in consultation with communities that may or may not be affected. What we will not be doing is simply allowing the BBC to railroad us into some of these decisions.*

*So, I am very clear. I am profoundly disappointed with some of the erroneous reporting that we have heard in recent times. It is important for the communities involved, and the people whose lives are affected, that we deal with these matters with due process and with due seriousness, that we take this matter very, very seriously and that we do not simply use it to produce a story here and a story tomorrow."*

The Fairbourne Facing Change community action group continues to lobby Alun Davies to come forward and publicly speak out in order to improve our situation.

## News from the Health and Wellbeing Group

Fairbourne community members wishing to discuss their worries or concerns are invited to contact the Health & Wellbeing Group, with a view to arranging an informal chat to discuss their particular areas of concern. The purpose of this plan is primarily to ensure individuals (or even couples or families) are not alone or vulnerable in this time of uncertainty, in addition to bringing the community together.

A considerable amount of work has already been done on behalf of the village and the Health & Wellbeing Group, along with all the working groups, will continue to do so. We, as a group consider this an opportunity to enable people to decide how and when they would prefer to discuss their own feelings, concerns, or worries in a confidential setting. Never feel afraid to ask for our help, it's what we are here for.

At the Fairbourne Multi Agency Project Board, FFC representatives pointed out the need for Gwynedd Council to identify an appropriate officer in the Council to help support those suffering as a result of the situation we find ourselves in. This suggestion was positively received.

It is time to pull together and regain the confidence and positivity of our village. Anyone wishing to take part in an informal and totally confidential chat or meeting please contact Peter Shepherd.

Telephone: 01341 250597 or email: [petershepherd2010@hotmail.com](mailto:petershepherd2010@hotmail.com) Alternatively you can drop a note in one of our contact boxes, either in Fairbourne Newsagent's or in the foyer of the Fairbourne Village Hall.

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## Future Financing for the FFC

It's an unfortunate fact that a group, such as ours, needs to raise funds, even just to function on a day to day level. Nobody within the FFC receives payment for the time and effort which they put in to keep the group running, making representations, writing letters, delivering newsletters, attending meetings, or producing documentation, and this situation will not change. However, phone calls and postage needs to be paid for, petrol needs to be bought, and paper and printing costs are not cheap....you get the picture. As an example, the materials required to produce this four page newsletter have cost approximately 9p per newsletter. That's a total of roughly £45 to produce 500 newsletters.

It also must be kept in mind that any future potential legal work or representation will need to be covered. So far all the day to day expenses have been covered by the FFC members themselves, out of their own pockets. This situation quite obviously cannot continue forever.

In short, we need a fair, affordable, and proportionate way to raise funds for the group. The group have already been trying to identify such a scheme in order to cover expenses. One idea which does seem both logical and fair, is to introduce a type of donation scheme based on a 'per property' basis, not a 'per person' basis. Whatever amount people feel they can afford. Any decision will be based on the feedback which we receive. One thing is for sure, our homes, our peaceful village, and our rural way of life have to be worth fighting for. What price can you put on what we currently have?

We need to know your thoughts. Would you be in favour of such a scheme? Can you think of any alternatives? Do you have any other fund-raising ideas? Please let us know – see 'Contact Us' below.



If you would like to receive correspondence through the medium of Welsh then please contact Angela Ware.

Os ydych yn dymuno derbyn gohebiaeth drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yna cysylltwch a Angela Ware.

 [angela.ware3@virginmedia.com](mailto:angela.ware3@virginmedia.com)

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## Contact Us!

The FFC is your group. The group exists to help, support, and fight for the rights and fair treatment of the residents and homeowners of Fairbourne who have been placed in an intolerable situation by Gwynedd Council's SMP policy, and the way in which it has been portrayed. You can easily contact the group with any questions, concerns, letters to the newsletter, or ideas which you may have.

Communication boxes have been set up for your use, simply post your note or letter in the box and it will receive attention. The boxes are sited within the Village Hall foyer, and also at the Fairbourne Newsagents (Cath's Corner Shop). If you need to contact the group urgently then please telephone the FFC Secretary, Angela Ware.

 [angela.ware3@virginmedia.com](mailto:angela.ware3@virginmedia.com)

 (01341) 251299

## Contributions for the Newsletter

We hope that you have found this first issue of the newsletter both useful and informative, and we welcome any feedback. We will be publishing further newsletters as and when appropriate.

Is there something you think we have missed out of the newsletter? Do you have a contribution for a future issue? Would you like to write an article for publication? Any thoughts or ideas which you would like to share? Then please use the 'Contact Us' details at the bottom of page 3 to get in touch. If you are using one of the village's communication boxes to contact us then please write 'NEWSLETTER' somewhere on the front of the envelope.

Thank you.

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## The Fairbourne Facing Change Community Action Group

A schematic view of how the group is currently structured.

