

ISSUE 6

NOVEMBER 2014



Chair

Pete Cole

Vice Chair

Sylvia Stephenson

Secretary

Phil Parker

Treasurer

Beverley Wilkins

DONATIONS WELCOME

Bank Name

HSBC

Branch

Dolgellau

Account Name

Fairbourne
Facing Change

Account Number

41488651

Account Sort Code

40-19-19

CONTACT US

Communication boxes in the Village Hall foyer and Fairbourne Newsagents.

Alternatively, contact the FFC Secretary, Phil Parker.

Email

phil_w_parker@hotmail.com

Telephone

(01341) 250080

A Welsh language version of this newsletter can be made available on request.

O wneud cais gallwch dderbyn fersiwn Gymraeg o'r cylchlythyr hwn.

Some of Fairbourne Moving Forward's Project Board Achievements Following FFC Representations

Since first establishing the Task & Finish Groups in June 2014, the following have been achieved to support the Fairbourne community:

- Problems in obtaining house insurance; through the Property Values, Insurance & Planning Task/Finish Group, we have established a conduit for homeowners to obtain a letter from NRW to support them in getting their insurance.
- Four bids for funding submitted to Welsh Government to continue our awareness raising relating to the Managed Realignment and also other projects such as undertaking a feasibility study into a Buy to Lease-back Scheme.
- Production of a Planning Guidance document to provide advice to people who are considering improvements to their homes/businesses.
- Production of a care fact sheet, providing information to people who may have concerns relating to paying for care in their older age.
- Publication of the ground water and coastal monitoring regime being undertaken for the next 5 years.
- Establishment of www.fairbourne.info web page.
- Arranging for the free printing (and only the printing!) of the FFC newsletter.
- Embarking upon a campaign of positive press for Fairbourne.
- Working on the Community Flood Warden project with a view to making this a more effective service.

EMBANKMENT BREACH WORKS START THIS MONTH – SEE PAGE 4

Fairbourne Support from the Bishop of Bangor

The Bishop of Bangor, The Right Reverend Andrew John, has written to the Fairbourne Facing Change Group, to offer his support....

"I received the August copy of Fairbourne Facing Change (newsletter) and I have had conversations with many in the village, especially those who attend worship in the church. The reason for my writing to you is to express solidarity and support for this community action group. While I appreciate that the issues surrounding climate change are complex, I was extremely concerned to hear of the initial responses by the government and other agencies that appeared to be taking an overly passive approach to this situation and conceding defeat too quickly.

This is one of those occasions when the energy of locals matched with county and broader support can have significant impact on the way the government approach climate change, and also of course, respond to local situations such as that in Fairbourne. I am very happy to be associated with the good work of Fairbourne Facing Change and if there are occasions in which I can be of assistance (even being present at fundraising events) I will do my best to support the organisation with more than these words of support.

With my good wishes to you all."

The Right Reverend Andrew John - Bishop of Bangor

FFC Funds Update

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to FFC funds, either through direct donations, through attending fund raising events, or through the purchase of FFC merchandise.

Our current bank balance stands at £5,681.46p.

Donations either large or small are always gratefully received. FFC bank details can be found on page 1.

FFC Merchandise

Looking for some Christmas stocking fillers? Why not 'help the cause' and buy something from the range of FFC merchandise? Items include fridge magnets, key rings, wristbands, our ever popular car stickers, and beautiful hand crafted cards suitable for all occasions.

Please contact a committee member, or keep an eye open at one of our future fund raising events.

Gwynedd County Council Confirms Funding for Coast and Groundwater Monitoring is Approved for 5 years

It is confirmed that monitoring will start this year, and is to consist of the following three measures:

1. Measurements of tide levels during spring tides.
2. Measurement of the shingle along full length of Rowan coast.
3. Groundwater levels.

Huw Davies Wrote....

"Fairbourne Monitoring Programme:

To be able to better understand how the water level below the ground behaves Gwynedd Council are proposing to insert a number of tubes into the ground to house measuring and recording equipment. The tubes will be no more than 100mm in diameter, will only protrude out of the ground about 300mm, and will need to be visited about once every month to ensure everything is in order and to download data.

We are currently having difficulty finding suitable locations. If you are interested in "hosting" a borehole in your garden we would like to hear from you. Initially all we need is a name and contact details and we will visit each person individually to explain further and assess the suitability of the site. Putting your name on the list does not commit you to anything."

If you are prepared to host a borehole on your property contact Huw Davies directly by telephoning 01341 424 405, extension 4405.

Cardiff Reshuffle

Following the recent ministerial reshuffle in Cardiff, Carl Sargeant AM has been appointed as the new Minister for Natural Resources. We are very pleased to confirm that Mr Sargeant has agreed to meet a delegation from FFC.

Change of FFC Secretary

From the very beginnings of the FFC Angela Ware has given untold hours of service in her role as Secretary to the group. Unfortunately, Angela is no longer able to dedicate the time necessary for this work due to a change in her personal circumstances, although she will continue to attend FFC Core Group meetings.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Angela for the tremendous amount of time and hard work she has given us during her time as Secretary.

We welcome Phil Parker as the new FFC Secretary. Phil has very kindly agreed to take over the role with immediate effect.

If you have any questions regarding the FFC, or about the Fairbourne Project Board and its Task & Finish Groups, please contact Phil ('Contact Us' - page 1).



DIARY DATES

SATURDAY 15TH NOVEMBER
FFC SURGERY: 10am to 1pm.

The next FFC Surgery will be held at the Fairbourne Bowls Clubhouse on Saturday 15th November from 10am to 1pm. This is a wonderful opportunity for residents to discuss concerns or issues, or to raise questions with members of the Core Group.

FRIDAY 21ST NOVEMBER
FAIRBOURNE MOVING FORWARD
PUBLIC MEETING

The 'Fairbourne Moving Forward' group's public meeting will be held at Fairbourne Village Hall on Friday 21st November.

Further details can be found on the notification leaflet which is attached to this newsletter.

Natural Resources Wales Give Assurances Over Friog Corner Defences

Assurances have been received from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) over the resilience of the Friog Corner sea wall. NRW have also secured funding to prepare a study for the continued stabilisation and betterment of the defences at this location.

Friog Corner statement (Prepared by Gareth Evans: Team Leader, Asset System Management)....

"The temporary works at Friog corner following last winter's storms are now almost complete with only minor repairs required to the concrete structure.

NRW therefore have secured £15,000 of funding to carry out a study of the Friog Corner to identify possibilities for any betterment in stabilising the damaged section through investigating the coastal processes, and the potential to maximise natural processes as part of the defence. NRW will be working with Gwynedd Consultancy in preparing a scope for the contents of this study and will be appointing a suitable Engineering/Marine Consultant to produce and complete the report by March 2015.

In the interim we will continue to monitor the performance of the existing measures and continue to inspect the site at times of high tides.

For the wider community we will continue to inspect and maintain our critical ditches and defences and together with community engagement and flood forecasting we will work together to help reduce the risk of flooding to the residents and businesses of Fairbourne".

While Natural Resources Wales are confident the repair measures will sustain the desired standard of protection, we are still concerned with the instability of the beach material and for this purpose we need to invest time and effort in investigating the processes so we can consider future management options.

Fairbourne Rock

DAVE HULL-DENHOLM AT FAIRBOURNE VILLAGE HALL ♦

Lindisfarne's Dave Hull-Denholm and Ian Thomson played a fantastic concert to a packed house at Fairbourne Village Hall on Sunday 12 October. Dave and Ian performed 'The Alan Hull Songbook', this being a collection of songs all written by their friend and former Lindisfarne band-mate.... the late, great Alan Hull.

Classics such as 'Lady Eleanor', 'Fog On The Tyne', and 'Run For Home' were just some of the songs which had everyone in full voice. The audience had a great time and Dave and Ian thoroughly enjoyed the night too, in fact they enjoyed their night in Fairbourne so much that they have asked to return next year to play another concert! This return gig is 'pencilled in' for next July. Details will be announced once any date has been confirmed.



Sincere thanks to Cath and the girls at Fairbourne Newsagents for their invaluable help in taking on ticket sales duties, and also to Gill Bonser for taking care of the night's raffle. Total profits from the night amounted to £408. As promised, this sum has been donated to FFC.

Thank you so much to everyone who came along to the concert, without your support these events simply wouldn't be viable. If you would like your contact details to be added to the gig mailing list then please send an email to bob.turnpenney@btinternet.com and include your name and contact details (postal and/or email address and/or text number).

Further gigs are in the pipeline for next year – please watch this space!

Bob Turnpenney.

♦ IAN THOMSON AT FAIRBOURNE VILLAGE HALL.

The Cambrian Coast Railway

The debate over the future of the Cambrian Coast Railway is ongoing. The rail link is of vital importance, not only to the Fairbourne area, but to every North Wales coastal community, and beyond.

This is the subject of one of the new '54 Questions' which Gwynedd County Council are dealing with. The issue has also been raised with Welsh Government Assembly Members.

Prospective Parliamentary Candidates for the 2015 Westminster Elections Support Our Cause.

Meetings have been held with parliamentary candidates Neil Fairlamb (Conservative), Mary Griffiths Clarke (Labour), Cllr. Liz Saville Roberts (Plaid Cymru), and Cllr. Louise Hughes (IND.). We're pleased to report that all the candidates are all fully supportive of FFC's aims.

Embankment Breach Works Start This Month:

Habitat Creation Works as part of the Fairbourne Flood Risk Management Scheme at Morfa Friog

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have informed 'Fairbourne Facing Change' that work to breach the embankment at the football field site is due to start this month.

John Davies (NRW Project Manager) prepared the following statement....

"In 2013 Natural Resources Wales (NRW) completed works to strengthen the existing Mawddach estuarine embankments as part of the Fairbourne Flood Risk Management Scheme. These embankments protect Arthog and Fairbourne from flooding. Following the works the embankments provide Fairbourne with a 1 in 200 year Standard of Protection against tidal flooding from the estuary. The embankments were seen to provide protection to the community during the storm surge experienced earlier this year.

The Fairbourne works were assessed for their impact upon the Mawddach Estuary (a nationally important environment) and it was established that by holding the existing embankment line the scheme was contributing to the action known as "coastal squeeze". As such mitigation works would have to be undertaken to deliver further salt marsh habitat in the area.

Morfa Friog (Penrhyn Point) was identified as being the most suitable site for delivering habitat - having been allocated as salt marsh within Shoreline Management Plan 2. The principle of delivering mitigation at Morfa Friog was included in the planning permission for the Fairbourne works. A further planning permission was sought to deliver the Morfa Friog works themselves. The land was secured by NRW.

It was not possible to undertake the works alongside the main scheme works and therefore it was decided to postpone the works until the most appropriate time, Autumn 2014. Following review of requirements NRW now propose to deliver this habitat by establishing a small scale breach, at the location of the existing pipe towards the north of the embankment. It will be in the region of a few metres, and will allow a free exchange of water between the area behind the embankment and the estuary. The edges of the breach would not be protected, thereby allowing the breach to widen through natural processes until it naturally stabilises. It is hoped to complete this work in late October/November 2014 and there will be minimal disruption to the community when it is undertaken. This approach will allow the area to naturally develop as salt marsh. Signage will be installed to confirm that the area is at risk of tidal inundation and to ensure that the site is not to be used for camping. The site will be managed and monitored by NRW. The highway or miniature railway will not be under any greater risk of flooding.

NRW will keep the community advised of progress/changes in the delivery programme via communications with Fairbourne Facing Change. The Fairbourne Moving Forward website www.fairbourne.info contains links to Project Board meeting minutes".

Community Responds to Answers to The '41 Questions'

The 41 Questions raised by FFC and the Community following the original FAQ's have been reviewed resulting in 11 questions being classified as fully answered, 22 requiring an update and the remaining 8 not fully answered. Further questions from the Community resulted in an additional 13 questions.

These 54 questions are once again with the Communications Task & Finish Group of the Fairbourne Project Board and we look forward to hearing their response. A copy of the latest questions will be posted on the FFC website.

The Project Board: Further News

The funding bids are in for both 'STEAM', and the evaluation of a Buy and Lease-back scheme. 'STEAM' stands for Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitoring. Scarborough is in the process of developing a ten-year tourism policy for the province. Gwynedd Council have put in a bid for funding from the Welsh Government to enable the process to be adopted in Fairbourne, enabling us to better understand the impact of SMP2 on the businesses here.

Another bid has also been made for funding to evaluate the potential for Buy and Lease back of Fairbourne property which, if approved, will give property owners choices which don't necessarily exist today.

