Newsletter #11 - June 2023



Welcome to Deeside CAN's Newsletter #11

We hope you and your families and friends are well and enjoying the glorious weather!

You are receiving this because you expressed an interest in keeping in touch with what we are doing. Please feel free to forward this on to others who may be interested or let us know (deesidecan@gmail.com) if you no longer want to be contacted by us. You can also access this Newsletter on our website https://www.deesidecan.org.uk/newsletters-overview/.

We now have an email list of around 300 that this Newsletter is being sent to, and almost 1,100 people following/liking us on Facebook, with numbers growing every day. Thank you for your support - together we can make a difference!

What have Deeside CAN been up to?

Raising awareness:

- We continue to **post news, updates, interesting articles and tips** on our Facebook page, and website, and we encourage you to have a look. We are featured in a double page spread in this month's edition of the **Banchory Fly** – thanks to the editor and those who wrote the articles.

Engaging local and national decision makers:

- We have launched a '**Positive Action**' campaign, asking our local representatives (MPs, MSPs, Local Councillors) to tell us the positive actions they have taken to deal with the Climate and Nature crises. In this Newsletter, we are highlighting
    - **Liam Kerr MSP**, who recently challenged the Scottish Government over its apparent dropping of further investment in rail for NE Scotland, in particular the Aberdeen-Laurencekirk corridor. We support anything the government can do to promote clean and affordable public transport, including rail.
    - **Alexander Burnett MSP**, who participated in National Lyme Disease Awareness Month. Although this is principally a health issue, it has its roots in climate change which is encouraging the spread of ticks in rural Scotland. Undoubtedly the Scottish Government should be taking the lead on this. We also appreciate his continued support for the Red Squirrel within his role as Species Champion, as well as his alert about the invasive species, the pirri pirri plant. Alexander is also giving voice to those concerned about the Hill of Fare Windfarm, and the erosion of local democracy in decision making for this major development.
- We gave feedback to the Scottish Government consultation on '**Energy and Just Transition plan**'.
- We are currently in the process of contributing to consultations on
    - The **Just Transition** impact on **Transport, Buildings and Construction, and Land Use and Farming** – the Scottish Government are holding an event in Banchory on Wednesday 26th June to discuss these topics with our community. You can apply to attend here: https://buytickets.at/scottishgovernment/934852
    - The Scottish Government's guidance on **Local Living and 20-minute Neighbourhoods**, which closes on July 20th. You can have your say here.

Reversing biodiversity loss:

- After more than 2 years of planning, Banchory's first **Wee Forest** was planted on 1st April at the far end of Bellfield Park. Over 100 people turned up on the day to plant about 480 trees of 23 different native species in just over 2 hours, which was fantastic!





The fence around our Wee Forest is decorated with over 300 flags showing the range of biodiversity we can expect to find here, made by school children across Mid-Deeside. The aim is now for the community to help look after the Wee Forest and learn more about our local wildlife. One of the key aspects will be the educational benefits for school children. You can see a time-lapse video of the planting day here.

- We continue to do our bit to safeguard nature with our **Wildlife Friendly Village** project. This aims to set aside 20% of all public and private spaces in towns and villages to give nature a helping hand by creating habitats for wildlife to thrive. If you are interested in helping, **please come along and join us** at the Bothy in Bellfield car park in Banchory at these times:
    - **every 2nd Saturday of the month from 10am to mid-day**. We will be working at a range of locations.
    - **every Tuesday** from mid-day. We will be working in the Bellfield Rose Garden.

- We are holding our second **Open Wildlife Friendlier Gardens Day** on July 1st. There are five wonderful gardens to visit where you can pick up inspiration, tips, and ideas. More information here.

Eliminating waste:

- Our **Zero Waste Deeside project**, working together with Number One, continues to do well.
- The **food waste project** is growing - we have over 40 volunteers who are contributing their time about once a month, collecting surplus food from 3 supermarkets on 3 nights a week, and giving it away for free the next morning (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday mornings at Number One). If you are interested in helping, please contact us.
- Our next focus is on **reducing plastic use.** We are supporting schools to run **'Wrapper-free Wednesdays'** and a **'Plastic-Free July'** and held a workshop with P4 class at the Hill of Banchory Primary School to raise awareness of plastics during the Big Green Week in June.
- The **Blister pack** recycling initiative now has a **Blister pack Champion!** Watch this space for more activity to improve recycling of medical packaging.
- The **Banchory Tools and Skills Share** Facebook page now has almost 190 members and is increasing in activity. You can join here. Once we get a better understanding of the interest and demand for sharing tools, we will be working with Magpie to set up a **Tool Library**.

Hill of Fare windfarm



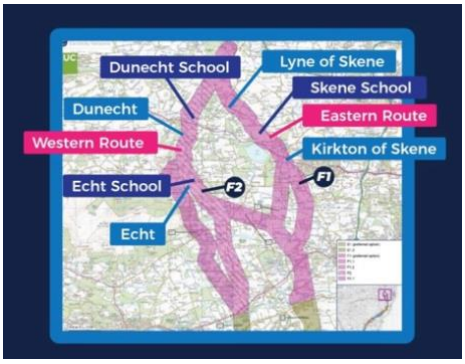
The Dunecht Estate and developer RES are proposing to build a **windfarm on the Hill of Fare**. The latest plan has 16 turbines, between 180 and 200m tall, which would be one of the tallest windfarms in the UK. It would effectively almost double the size of a prominent hill, which is surrounded by towns and villages. There are major concerns about the impact on landscape, habitat, deep peatland, and local water supplies. With such large turbines, visual flicker, noise, and vibration effects are noticeable.

You can find more information on the developer's website, the HOFWIG website and/or Hill of Fare WIndfarm Facebook page, and you can sign up to the HOFWIG regular newsletters here HOFWIG Newsletter.

RES held a consultation in some affected Community Council areas on 20th and 21st June. You can give feedback to RES about what you think of the windfarm proposal here; the deadline is 6th July.

Representatives of the Community Councils were also present and have set up an independent questionnaire to assess the Community's views so that they can be represented properly. You can give your input here, preferably as soon as you can.

East coast high voltage (400kV) overhead line upgrade



SSEN are proposing to install an **East coast high voltage power line** to carry electricity generated by offshore and onshore windfarms. The current preferred routes from Kintore to Tealing (F1 and F2) go between Crathes and Drumoak/Peterculter, and potentially through some of our neighbouring villages.

You can find out more information on the SSEN website, and the Deeside Against Pylons Facebook page. SSEN held a consultation at Kirkton of Durris on June 22nd. You can give feedback to SSEN about their current proposals by emailing them at TKUP@sse.com; the deadline is 28th July.

General

We'd love to hear your feedback and ideas, and especially if you'd like to get involved in any of our projects. You can get in touch by:

- writing to us at deesidecan@gmail.com
- joining us at one of our **fortnightly meetings on Mondays at 4-6pm**. Everyone is very welcome to attend; just tell us that you'd like to come along, and we will let you know details of dates and agenda, as well as the Zoom log-in/meeting location information.