

BWEA Wales Renewable Energy Bulletin Issue 05 - May 2007

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Election Result for Wind

The recently held Welsh Assembly elections demonstrated the public anxiety about climate change and the desire to take immediate action to reduce carbon emissions. The main political parties gave the climate and other environmental issues a high priority in their manifestos and the subject was keenly debated on the doorstep and in public meetings. However, candidates and parties sometimes failed to give their unequivocal support to onshore wind energy as the most viable clean energy technology in the face of concerted and uncompromising small-group opposition.

The election results demonstrated that these voices of discontent are really in the smallest of minorities. Two independent candidates standing on behalf of the anti-wind group South Wales Against Turbine Technology (SWATT) only managed to poll 0.4% of the total votes in the Mid and West, and South West regions. This is despite running a very negative campaign that involved distributing leaflets full of dubious information concerning wind energy.

BWEA is pleased that the vast majority of the public have seen through the constant whining and false claims of anti wind groups, and would like to remind the newly elected Assembly Members of their moral duty to support policies that will directly counter the effects of climate change.

Wind Myth Blown Away

One of the common myths about wind farms is their effect on house prices. As reported in the Western Mail on May 12th, research by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and Oxford Brookes University shows this to be a myth with no clear relationship between the proximity of wind farms to homes and property prices. Cathy McLean, RICS Wales director, said, "Objections are often less about local concerns and more about wider ideological issues." More information can be found at www.bwea.com/media/news/070328.html

Wern Ddu Appeal hearing

A trio of Welsh wind farm developers who have combined their efforts look set to shortly present a proposal for over 100 MW in the identified Strategic Search Area 'A' in the Conwy/ Denbighshire area. Depending on the outcome of the recent public inquiry, first past the post may be Tegni's Wern Ddu, which has been in the system for over 7 years, and has had tremendous support from locals, who are very aware of the problems facing agriculture and other forms of business in the country, and see wind farms as a source of welcome financial contributions to the local economy.

Building on their strong community links, Tegni has an arrangement with the Urdd to allow schools from all parts of Wales to visit their wind farm in Llangwm, North Wales. At least 250 children visit each year, along with other interested parties, and charitable contributions have also been raised by people wanting a special tour up one of the turbines.

Huw Smallwood of Tegni commented "Renewables are for future generations, all the youngsters love the turbines, which only strengthens our resolve to succeed. It's time that our resolve was shared by local politicians who, through the issue of TAN8 now have the ideal opportunity to help facilitate a cleaner, greener future."

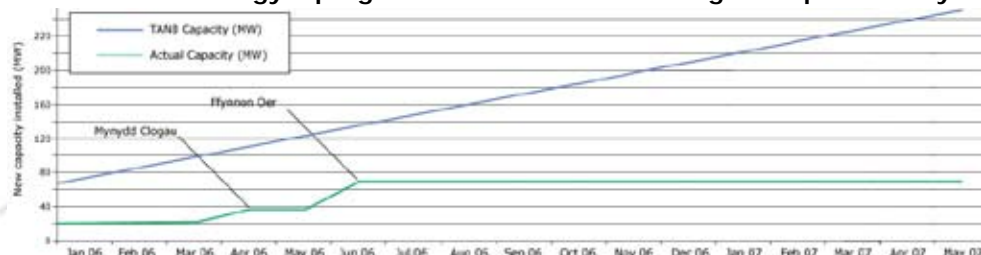


Huw Smallwood shows school children round Hafoty Ucha wind farm near Llangwm © Tegni

Progress towards TAN8 targets

The Welsh Assembly Government has set clear targets for renewable energy generation in Wales by the year 2010 and the Welsh Energy Bulletin monitors progress. No additional MW has been generated by onshore wind power since June 2006, meaning that Wales is 75% behind schedule.

Onshore Wind Energy – progress towards the TAN8 target adopted in July 2005



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