

**Newsletter No. 25, July 2007  
Marine Information Network  
Friends of the Earth Local Groups**

**Major New Marine Campaign  
and AGM.**

Two main items of news in this edition – **we are launching a major new campaign on Marine Reserves** in order to secure a real commitment from the UK Government to marine conservation in its forthcoming Marine Bill, and we are asking you and your members to become directly involved in this campaign; and, **we have our Annual General Meeting coming up** and we hope you will be able to attend, elect our new officers, and tell us about what you have been doing and how you would like MARINET to evolve.

First, **the AGM** which is on **Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> September**, 4.30 to 5.30 pm. The venue of the AGM is the FOE Local Groups Conference at Reading University. For conference booking details, see <http://community.foe.co.uk/conference/>. If your Local Group is attending the Conference, please send a member of your Group to the MARINET AGM to help shape our future over the next twelve months. Full details of the precise room location will be available at the Conference from our stall. If you are an Affiliate member, you are equally welcome to the AGM.

Our present chairman, Julian Kirby (Lambeth FOE) has just secured a full-time job at Underwood Street and has resigned and stepped down from the chair of MARINET due to his other work commitments, and we are most grateful to him for the contribution he has made since his election last year, especially towards our Marine Reserves campaign. As a result, the position of chairman is currently vacant. The Steering Group has decided not to co-opt a chairman in the interim, but to seek a new chair at the AGM in September. **All officer positions will be open to election then**, so if you would like to take on the role of MARINET Chair or any other position, you will be very welcome. Contact Stephen Eades [stephen.marinet@btinternet.com](mailto:stephen.marinet@btinternet.com) for additional details.

The other major item which we will be discussing and developing at the Conference is our new **national Marine Reserves Campaign**, full details of which are given overleaf. This is a major new campaigning opportunity for MARINET members, and we will be running a special workshop on this Campaign at the Conference on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> September, commencing at 8.00 pm. We are being given strong support by Underwood Street, and **the aim will be to develop and train a special campaign team drawn from UK Local Groups and our members to deliver the Campaign aim, which is an extensive and ecologically coherent network of Marine Reserves throughout UK seas** within the context of the new Marine Bill. This, therefore, is **your chance to learn** from an expert campaigner, employed by national FOE for MARINET's benefit, key campaigning skills which you will then be able to apply to our Marine Reserves Campaign and other campaigns run by your Local Group. This is a major and exceptional environmental campaigning opportunity. **Please inform your members.** Further details are given overleaf and are available from Stephen Eades, MARINET co-ordinator.

See the MARINET website for an up to date explanation of the Marine Bill <http://www.marinet.org.uk/marinebill.html>

## Marine Reserves Campaign.

The Government's new Marine Bill lacks a full and convincing commitment to both marine nature conservation and the urgent need to restore the damage which has been done in recent times to UK marine biodiversity and fisheries. Therefore, we are launching a major national campaign to secure the management of at least 30% of the UK's offshore seas up to the 200 nautical mile limit as highly protected marine reserves (HPMRs, or Marine Reserves in common language).

This extensive network of Marine Reserves has been recommended by the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution when it considered the state of UK seas, but this recommendation and the policy involved has been ignored by the UK Government. Marine reserves are a primary tool of marine management and have been used with great success elsewhere in the world, notably by Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada.

So we are developing a Campaign, focused on the forthcoming Marine Bill, which will persuade the UK Government to enact a Bill which creates a framework for an extensive network of UK Marine Reserves out to 200 nautical miles, using the "ecosystem-based approach to management" as the key idea behind reserve selection and management.

## The Campaign Team.

We have decided to set up a special Campaign Team within MARINET which will be specially focused on this Campaign.

The Campaign Team will work with the aim of winning support in Parliament for a network of Marine Reserves covering at least 30% of UK seas, and the Team will consist of the following people:

A **Team Leader** who will lead the Team.

A **Policy Officer** who will research issues and write briefings for the team and the public.

A **Webmaster** who will administer a dedicated campaign website and advise the team on its electronic communications and administration.

A **Media Officer** who will develop contacts with all forms of media and secure the campaign's national publicity.

A **Lobbying Officer** who will establish contacts with Parliament and all other organisations who can help deliver the campaign's aim.

An **Activist Officer** who will engage MARINET members in the campaign and integrate their support into the aim and work of the campaign.

A **Finance Officer** who will secure the necessary funding and administer the campaign's finances.

## Recruiting and Training the Campaign Team.

The MARINET Steering Group (the elected officers from the membership and two national FOE officers) recognise that MARINET does not have the members or skills at the present time to deliver this Campaign. Therefore the Steering Group has decided, with the aid of finance from national FOE, to set up and train a special Marine Reserves Campaign Team within MARINET.

This Campaign Team will be recruited from the membership of **all the Local Groups** in England, Wales and N. Ireland (i.e. not exclusively from MARINET members), and the people chosen for the Campaign's jobs and roles will be given **special training by a national expert campaigner from outside of Friends of the Earth.**

This is therefore a unique campaigning and learning opportunity for environmental activists wherever they may live in the UK, and whether they presently belong to MARINET or not. We will be recruiting activists for all the roles in the Campaign Team in September, and if you have someone in your Local Group or you know someone who is interested in this opportunity, please ask them to contact Stephen Eades, MARINET co-ordinator, [stephen.marinet@btinternet.com](mailto:stephen.marinet@btinternet.com) Tel 01249 653972

## Other MARINET News.

The **Marine Aggregate Campaign** continues to challenge new aggregate licences off the east coast of England, and in the eastern English Channel where a major new area of extraction activity is beginning. Over half the sand and gravel for new buildings in London is now being supplied from these marine sites, and the new Olympic stadiums will be built from this source. See the MARINET website <http://www.marinet.org.uk/mad.html>

Our analysis of **Seaside Bathing Water Quality** has shown that the Government's claim that 99.5% of all beaches comply with EU Quality Standards is a sham, and in fact on 5.5% of UK beaches comply with the full EU Mandatory Quality Standard. Therefore, check bathing water quality at our website <http://www.marinet.org.uk/ukbw.html> before you go bathing this summer.

**Our website** now gets over 350 visits per day from the public, so its is an ideal place to list your Local Group <http://www.marinet.org.uk/regional.html>

For MARINET's take on the **Latest News**, see <http://www.marinet.org.uk/latestnews.html>