

**Newsletter No. 26, September 2007
Marine Information Network
Friends of the Earth Local Groups**

**Seven Ways to Save our Seas !
UK Campaign for Marine Reserves**

We held a successful AGM at the Friends of the Earth Local Groups Conference on 10th September, elected new officers for the next twelve months, and have taken the first steps in the launch of **our new national campaign – the UK Campaign for Marine Reserves**. This newsletter reports on all these items, and more.

MARINET membership at our AGM stands at 46, comprising 31 Full Members (FOE Local Groups) and 15 Affiliate Members (Individuals and non-FOE organisations). Since the AGM a further FOE Local Group has joined. Our finances remain in reasonable health. Membership donations for the current year have amounted to £603 and we have received a substantial donation of £1727 from Kings Lynn and W. Norfolk FOE when this Local Group recently wound itself up and dissolved. After expenses incurred during the last year, this leaves us with a current balance of £1465. Obviously a substantial donation like the one we have just received is unlikely to be repeated, so caution with our finances remains necessary. However after meeting basic running expenses which amount to around £750 per annum, we intend to use the balance to support the campaigning and training needs of our members. In the forthcoming year this will be primarily for our new national campaign for a widespread and ecologically coherent network of Marine Reserves throughout UK seas i.e. covering at least 30% of our seas out to 200 nautical miles. This campaign, for which **we are currently seeking a Campaign Team**, is described in further detail below and will take place against the background of the UK Government's proposal for a reform of marine management in a Marine Bill in autumn 2008. We will also be continuing to support members with their campaigning on marine aggregate dredging.

The AGM has elected new officers, who serve on a voluntary basis and administer the Network through the MARINET Steering Group. The officers for the next twelve months are:

Chairman: Max Wallis (Barry and Vale Friends of the Earth)
Secretary: Bill Rigby (Hull Friends of the Earth)
Treasurer: Malcolm Scott (North Tyneside Friends of the Earth)
Co-ordinator: Stephen Eades (North Wiltshire Friends of the Earth)

The MARINET Steering Group also has two members from national FOE. These currently are Nicole Barton (Local Groups Development Officer) and Ed Matthew (Senior Campaigner with the New Economics Team). The Steering Group meets every three months or so (as necessary), and is open to other MARINET members. At the AGM it was agreed that David Levy (North Wiltshire Friends of the Earth) should be invited to attend. The Steering Group runs the Network in accord with our constitution (copy available on application), administers our growing website www.marinet.org.uk and will be taking a central role in establishing our new Campaign Team on UK Marine Reserves. **If you want to be involved with the Steering Group or to help with any of MARINET's campaigns**, contact Stephen Eades stephen.marinet@btinternet.com tel. 01249 653972.

UK Campaign for Marine Reserves

This is a major new campaign for 2008, and we will be asking all our members to be involved.

At the present time, we are seeking to appoint a Campaign Team. This Team will exist in its own right within MARINET, and be responsible to the Network via the Steering Group. National FOE will provide funding.

We are currently looking for people to be members of this Campaign Team. You do not need to have had previous campaigning experience, nor do you need to live near the sea, and you do not even need to be a member of MARINET. What we are looking for are people who seriously want to be part of a major campaign to restore the health to our seas.

The aim of the campaign is to persuade the UK Government, Parliament and the nation of the need for a widespread network of ecologically coherent and representative marine reserves (covering at least 30% of our seas out to 200 nautical miles) whose purpose will be to restore the health and economic value of our seas. This campaign will take place within the context of the forthcoming UK Marine Bill and the EU Marine Strategy Directive.

We need the following people:

Team Leader – a person to lead the Campaign
Policy Officer – to research and write briefings
Webmaster – to design the campaign website
Media Officer – to create media opportunities
Lobbyist – lobby Parliament and organisations
Activist – build support in FOE Local Groups
Finance Officer – to organise campaign funds

We will be deciding on the Campaign Team's appointments in October, and then we will be giving **free expert training** in the necessary campaigning skills to the Team Members. The aim then is to have the Campaign Team trained along with the campaign's plan and objectives established by January 2008.

Anyone can apply. If you are interested, or you know someone else who might be, please contact Stephen Eades, MARINET coordinator stephen.marinet@btinternet.com or telephone: 01249 653972.

Other Campaigning News

Marine Aggregate Campaign : This campaign is now being fought on several fronts. Not only are we continuing to contest the renewal of the long established licences off the East Anglian coast, and not only are we contesting the adequacy of the Government's monitoring scheme which is supposedly designed to establish whether all the new licences in the Eastern English Channel are having any adverse impact on fisheries and biodiversity, but we are also being asked to look at the impact of licences off the South Wales coast and the proposal to commence extraction for the first time off the coast of the Isle of Man.

Is marine aggregate dredging acceptable? Is the environmental cost overridden by the needs of the national economy – for example, the stadia and infrastructure for the 2012 Olympics will all be built with marine aggregate. This is a hard call, but certainly we cannot afford the substantial coastal erosion along the East Anglian coast as a result, and we cannot afford the severe and potentially irreparable damage to enormously rich marine habitats in the Eastern English Channel and in the seas around the Isle of Man. At present, the EIAs which accompany the licences have not properly assessed these impacts, and MARINET is making a strong demand to Government that these EIAs need to be seriously improved.

To date, the Government shows little evidence that it is listening. So, our campaign continues.

Campaigning Tools:

A key purpose of MARINET is to provide its members and the public with information. As the old adage affirms: knowledge is power.

Key to this is our website www.marinet.org.uk For example in the month of August we carried some 29 items on our **Latest News** page, making us a leading source of Marine News. Subjects covered include marine aggregates, coastal erosion, renewable energy, the Marine Bill, bathing water, pollution, marine reserves, global warming, fisheries and the acidification of our oceans. Are you part of the 300 or so people who now visit our website everyday?