

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER: ISSUE 1: AUGUST 2021

TO THE RESIDENTS OF ARTHOG, FRIOG & FAIRBOURNE.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS NEWSLETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE IS TO ENSURE THAT YOU ARE AWARE OF WHAT THE ARTHOG COMMUNITY COUNCIL, AND THE REPRESENTATIVES ON THE FAIRBOURNE MOVING FORWARD PROJECT BOARD, ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE ON YOUR BEHALF.

Six months ago, Fairbourne passed the 7th anniversary of the storm of 2/3rd January 2014, a storm that created havoc around the UK and caused huge concern in Fairbourne after an erroneous report from the BBC regarding future abandonment, implied that Fairbourne would be gone in 10 years. This statement made on national TV left residents devastated. During this storm FAIRBOURNE DID NOT FLOOD. Barmouth flooded, as did many other areas in Gwynedd. Overnight, properties were deemed to be worthless.

Fairbourne is also now entering 'Epoch 2' as outlined in the Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2), which was adopted by Gwynedd County Council (GCC) in 2013. The Arthog Community Council (ACC) and the Fairbourne representatives on the Fairbourne Moving Forward Project Board (FMFPB) think it is time to canvass residents as to what they would like to see happening in the future.

The Arthog Community Council meets on the first Wednesday of every month (except August) 7pm to 9pm in alternate Village Halls. All details of the meetings, and the agenda, are displayed in the three Village Notice Boards, three days prior to the meeting being held.

The Fairbourne Moving Forward Project Board is meeting approximately every three months. Obviously, the Covid pandemic has influenced the ability to meet and now Microsoft Teams is the only means of conducting a meeting. This is problematic as the equipment that some of the Fairbourne Project Board representatives have is not always as advanced as that used by Gwynedd County Council, and connectivity is quite often a problem in Fairbourne.

The minutes of the Arthog Community Council are displayed on our website located at www.arthogcommunitycouncil.cymru once they have been approved and signed off. The minutes of the FMFPB are available from either GCC or the ACC. Currently the ACC is administering all work for the FMFPB, and the board has now received a small grant from GCC/Welsh Government that enables us to purchase basic stationery etc. and also to cover the cost of sending out one or two newsletters per year, so funds are not being diverted from the Arthog Community Council.

CHAIRMAN: Peredur Roberts.

CLERK/CLERC: Angela Thomas.

Tair Trem, Penrhyn Drive North, Fairbourne, Gwynedd, LL38 2DJ.

Phone/Ffon: 07831 697611/07757 640740. Email: cyngorarthogcouncil@gmail.com

All the Councillors, and the two Ambassadors, are volunteers, i.e. they do not receive any payment in the form of a wage/grant or reimbursement for costs incurred. The Clerk of the ACC is the only person to receive a wage. All details of receipts and payments through the Arthog Community Council are available for viewing by prior arrangement at the end of the financial year from the Clerk.

A list of all Councillors with their contact details, and the members of the FMFPB is available to view at all three of the Village Notice Boards.

A brief Questionnaire is attached to this Newsletter, and it would be very much appreciated if every household could take the time to make their views known to both the ACC and the FMFPB. This is very important! If a reply is not received then it will be assumed that you do not have an opinion regarding what is being proposed by Natural Resources Wales, Gwynedd County Council and Welsh Government.

It must also be noted that if you do not reply to the questionnaire, then residents/households cannot claim to be unaware, or uninformed, of what is happening regarding these issues.

GUIDANCE ON FILLING OUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE

- ▶ **Please fill in your address, including postcode.**
- ▶ **It would be helpful if you could also add your name (unless you prefer not to).**
- ▶ **If you would like to be kept informed of any future developments, then please also fill in your email address.**
- ▶ **Please circle either YES or NO in answer to each question.**
- ▶ **Please leave any comments in the appropriate COMMENTS box.**

PLEASE SEND US YOUR COMPLETED FORM BY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS

- ▶ **By leaving it in the allocated post box provided within Fairbourne Post Office.**
- ▶ **By post or hand deliver to Tair Trem, Penrhyn Drive North, Fairbourne, LL38 2DJ.**
- ▶ **By handing it in person to any Arthog Community Councillor.**
- ▶ **Please return your form within one week of receipt.**

Yours sincerely

Angela Thomas,
Clerk, Arthog Community Council.

PLEASE COMPLETE BOTH SIDES, DETACH FROM NEWSLETTER, AND RETURN

NAME	
ADDRESS	
EMAIL ADDRESS (FOR UPDATES)	

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have, in writing, stated that they will maintain the Sea Wall until 2054 providing, in the meantime, sea level rise or climate change has not intervened and caused a catastrophic event in the Village resulting in abandonment before 2054. Regarding decommissioning, 'managed retreat' could occur well prior to 2054, but Gwynedd Council has a duty of care to all residents. At this moment in time they have no answers to questions such as the following. Where will we be moved to? What would trigger a move? Will families be moved together? Who pays for this? There is no compensation: **THAT IS FACT!** Currently there is no dedicated evacuation plan for Fairbourne should a serious climatic event occur. The generic Evacuation Plan is deemed too "**red sensitive**" by Gwynedd County Council for residents or the ACC to see or hold a copy. We are told that North Wales Police will manage an evacuation should an event arise, and that's all we need to know! The ACC and FMFPB have asked scores of times since 2014 for answers to the above questions and many others besides, but to no avail. The ACC and the FMFPB have also asked for a dedicated evacuation plan for Fairbourne, but as yet none has been provided.

WERE YOU AWARE OF THESE COMMENTS?	YES	NO
YOUR COMMENTS		

Up until this point decommissioning has always been talked about in terms of Fairbourne alone, yet recently published flood maps show that sea level rise/climate change is an issue for the whole of the UK coastline. It also needs to be realised that some coastal areas of North Wales will be in more or equal danger as Fairbourne, and at the same time. It is now being stated quite clearly that this is not a Fairbourne alone issue.

WERE YOU AWARE OF THESE COMMENTS?	YES	NO
YOUR COMMENTS		

Do you feel that the community, and you as individuals, have been adequately communicated with, and informed regarding the future of Fairbourne by both Gwynedd County Council and Welsh Government?

	YES	NO
YOUR COMMENTS		

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The ACC and the members of the FMFPB have become concerned that Fairbourne is being discussed and decisions are being made without full engagement with the Community, either via the ACC or the Project Board. Covid has made it impossible to hold Village Hall events to bring residents up to date, however, there is nothing new to report in any case. GCC Officers had been instructed not to hold face to face meetings but to work via Teams or Zoom online. Gwynedd Council have an internal Fairbourne Project Board of their own but with no representation from the Community Council attending.

Are you, as residents, in agreement with the Community being represented by the ACC and the FMFPB, until such time as open events (if new information is received) can be held and to keep asking Gwynedd Council to answer the many vitally important questions that have been asked since 2014?

YES	NO
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Would you prefer to represent yourself?

YES	NO
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YOUR COMMENTS

Would you prefer to take no action whatsoever and take your chance that Gwynedd Council, when the time comes, will place you and your family in any accommodation available (including B&B), whatever and wherever that may be, and possibly far outside of this area? The housing register for Gwynedd currently stands, (as of February 2021), at approximately 2,700 waiting, and is increasing, so this will make the placement of displaced Fairbourne residents locally even more difficult.

Take no action and rely on Gwynedd Council to look after you?

YES	NO
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YOUR COMMENTS

Currently the Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2) is undergoing a “refresh” in all areas. Communities are NOT invited to submit any information that they deem to be of importance to the end conclusions. Your community is being assessed by people who do not live in it.

Were you aware of this statement?

YES	NO
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What, as a permanent resident/second homeowner/holiday homeowner in Fairbourne, would be the ideal answer to the future abandonment of Fairbourne? Please indicate by numbering 1 to 4, with 1 being your first choice, and 4 being your least favourite choice.

	1 to 4
A Compensation for lost property	
B Rehousing in like for like accommodation	
C Re-housed away from the area	
D An extension (if viable) to decommissioning in 2054	

IF NECESSARY, PLEASE USE AN EXTRA SHEET OF PAPER TO ADD FURTHER COMMENTS