

One of the largest areas of lowland heath in the country set to receive national protection

A historic moorland landscape in west Cornwall, immortalised in the Poldark novels, has today (7 October) been notified as a Site of Special and Scientific Interest (SSSI) in recognition of its national importance for wildlife.

Penwith Moors is at the most south-western extreme of mainland Britain and offers a unique and extensive mosaic of lowland heath, grassland, acid fen and pockets of woodland. The SSSI will protect an ancient landscape shaped over centuries through the careful stewardship of generations of land managers. The designation will recognise the resulting special features of 59 parcels of semi-natural habitat and farmland spanning over 3,100 hectares, stretching from St Just to St Ives.

The site is home to rare and endangered plants like coral-necklace, pale dog-violet, pillwort and Cornish moneywort which are found amongst the collection of habitats. Rare lichens grow on the outcrops of granite rock, with the song of Dartford warblers drifting across the landscape's heathlands. The area also supports a rich diversity of invertebrates nestled in the heathland.

The site dates back to prehistoric times and has a greater concentration of archaeological and heritage sites than any other comparable area in Western Europe. Standing stones, circles and quoits adorn the landscape alongside more recent mining structures reflecting the Cornwall's illustrious tin, gold and copper mining history.

Wesley Smyth, Area Manager at Natural England said:

An incredible variety of rare plants, insects and birds thrive in the rich tapestry of the Penwith Moors landscape.

This SSSI designation will help protect and restore sites of national importance to wildlife, with farming and nature continuing to co-exist and shape the landscape. We will continue to support farmers and the local people who live, work and visit the Penwith Moors to drive nature recovery and support sustainable uses for this site.

Penwith Moors also has a long history of agriculture and livestock grazing, with many of the 4000 year old field systems still used for their original purpose. Natural England recognises these deep traditions and will continue to work in partnership with local landowners, farmers and the community to promote sustainable farming and nature recovery.

Stunning landscapes such as Penwith Moors are a huge asset for the Cornish economy, drawing in investment from the national and international tourism sectors. Much of the SSSI benefits from public access meaning local communities enjoy access to high quality nature rich spaces for health and well-being as well as the fun and relaxation such spaces inspire.

The decision to notify this area as an SSSI follows extensive assessments by Natural England of its habitats and species, including specially commissioned wildlife experts, which highlighted the importance of the moors for wildlife.

The designation will support landscape scale conservation, to restore habitats in unfavourable condition where wildlife is declining. The protections created by the SSSI designation will prevent damaging activities from taking place, and also promote sustainable land management practices which benefit habitats and species.

Paul St Pierre, Conservation Officer at the RSPB said:

Building on significant public investment through partnerships with landowners and managers, this proposed designation will give important heathland habitats and their unique wildlife, like Dartford warbler the protection they deserve, in one of their largest remaining unprotected areas in southern England, and put this iconic area on the map as a place to invest in nature. This is an action we very much welcome.

The government has laid out its ambitions in the [25 Year Environment Plan](#) for a growing and resilient network of land, water and sea that is richer in plants and wildlife, and has committed to a legal target to halt the decline of nature by 2030 underpinned by the Environment Act.

Following the notification, a four-month period of consultation will open during which anyone may comment on, or object to, the notification. The SSSI designation will then be confirmed, amended or withdrawn within nine months of the notification.

To respond to the consultation, visit: [Penwith Moors SSSI – Defra – Citizen Space](#)

Further information:

- Natural England is the government's adviser for the natural environment in England, helping to protect England's nature and landscapes for people to enjoy and for the services they provide. Natural England is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.
- A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is one of the country's very best wildlife and/or geological sites. SSSIs include some of the most spectacular and beautiful habitats: wetlands teeming with wading birds, winding chalk rivers, flower rich meadows, windswept shingle

beaches and remote upland peat bogs, as well as much loved woodlands, meadows, heathlands and wetlands.

- Natural England has a duty under the Wildlife and Countryside Act to designate any area of land which in its opinion is of 'special interest' for its wildlife (flora and fauna), geology or landform
- As of 7 October 2022, the SSSI has been formally notified to landowners and occupiers and other interested parties. There will be a 4-month period in which anyone can make representations or object to the notification. If all objections are resolved or none are submitted, the designation will be confirmed. If there are unresolved objections the Natural England Board will hear all of these; they must then decide whether to confirm the designation (with or without reductions). If the notification is not confirmed within 9 months of the date of notification, the notification falls.
- Once notified, farmers and other land managers must apply to Natural England for consent to carry out certain activities on the land. Natural England may grant consent, with or without conditions, or refuse consent. If refused or conditions are imposed, land managers have a right of appeal.
- The SSSI is close to, and in some locations adjoining, two extant SSSIs: Aire Point to Carrick Du SSSI (598 ha); and Lower Bostraze and Leswidden SSSI (2.28 ha).
- The area in Cornwall forms a core part of the West Penwith NCA and overlaps with parts of the Cornwall Area of Outstanding National Beauty and Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site.

[UN Human Rights Council 51: UK statement on Russia resolution](#)

Thank you, Mr President,

What a timely moment to be debating this resolution as others have noted the Nobel Committee has recognised the work just this morning on the memorial of Ales Bialiatski and for the Centre of Civil Liberties and I quote their phrase in so doing that they recognise their "outstanding effort to document war crimes human rights abuses and abuse of power". Yes, indeed.

We would like to thank our 26 European allies for showing leadership on this issue and bringing a resolution to the Council that is a measured, proportionate and necessary response to the alarming human rights situation in Russia. The truth is that President Putin uses repressive legislation to restrict freedom of speech and assembly; he crushes dissent through arbitrary detention and violence; and he has created a climate of fear and intimidation in order to deter civil society and activists from speaking out against the authorities.

Since Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, repression and attacks against individuals exercising their human rights and fundamental freedoms have only increased.

Repression at home enables aggression abroad. Putin's Government tries to silence those who speak out against the war and detain those who try to avoid being abroad to die in the towns and fields of Ukraine. The increasing violence abroad in turn necessitates more brutal repression at home.

We have heard arguments in this house today that the response proposed in this resolution is somehow disproportionate, or that steps should be 'more incremental'. But the reality is that the action being proposed in this Council in response to the human rights crisis in Russia is considered; it is deliberate; and it is entirely appropriate.

Mr President, as Russia increases repression against its own citizens, the countless number of Russian people who have suffered – and continue to suffer – are looking to us, in this room, right now, to demonstrate that we stand in solidarity with them. To demonstrate that we will not ignore their struggle, or their grief. And that this Council can help them to establish the truth and provide hope to those working to protect human rights.

For these reasons the United Kingdom will vote Yes on the draft resolution before us, and we urge our fellow members of this Council to do the same.

Baglan group of companies – Official Receiver progresses power supply termination

Update 7 October 2022

Following on from previous updates, former customers of the company have now secured alternative electricity supplies and therefore the appeals brought against the intended actions of the Official Receiver to terminate the electricity supply have been discontinued by the applicants. The Official Receiver has been engaging with specialist contractors and the site has now been de-energised and disconnected from the National Grid.

The liquidation process has continued and the Official Receiver has been working closely with specialist partners and stakeholders to ensure an orderly wind down of the companies' affairs.

On 7 October 2022, the Official Receiver disclaimed any interest in the site.

The Official Receiver has been working with key stakeholders to ensure they

are aware of the actions taken as part of the closure plan and disclaimer of the Baglan site and associated assets.

On [24 March 2021](#), upon the petition of the directors, winding-up orders were made against the Baglan group of Companies, which include:

- Calon Energy (Baglan Bay) Limited;
- Baglan Generating Limited;
- Baglan Pipeline Limited; and
- Baglan Operations Limited.

The court appointed the Official Receiver, Gareth Jonathan Allen, as Liquidator. Upon the Official Receiver's application, the court appointed David John Pike and Michael Robert Pink from Interpath Advisory as Special Managers to assist with the liquidation.

Background

The Baglan group of companies comprise of a gas turbine power station located in Baglan Bay, South Wales. In June 2020 the ultimate parent company entered administration and in July 2020 the power station ceased generating electricity. Power is supplied to customers, which includes the Baglan Energy Park, through a substation on the site, known as the private wire network.

Baglan Energy Park, a 180-acre site, remains home to a large number of other businesses and organisations, and the Official Receiver has striven to ensure all key stakeholders have been kept abreast of developments.

Liquidation

A liquidator's statutory duties are set out in insolvency legislation and their primary role is to ensure the assets of the companies are realised and distributed to creditors. The legislation also sets out that a liquidator is only empowered to carry on the business of a company where it is necessary for the beneficial winding up of the company. In order to facilitate an orderly wind-down of operations at the site, the Official Receiver has maintained the supply of electricity the Energy Park from the private wire network since his appointment in March 2021. This included the maintenance and operation of the high voltage electricity lines with all the associated risks to health and life, for which the Official Receiver is personally liable.

The Official Receiver and Special Managers have worked tirelessly with key stakeholders to keep them informed of developments in real time and explained the limits of the Official Receiver's statutory powers as liquidator to continue electricity supply, stressing the urgency for customers and stakeholders to develop contingency plans.

This has been and continues to be a complex and challenging liquidation. As part of the closure plan the Official Receiver has also carried out other significant activities at the site, including removing hazardous substances

and depressurising the 11.8 km high pressure gas pipeline.

Latest developments

Following applications to court challenging the Official Receiver's decision to terminate the supply of electricity, the Court determined the applications and handed down its judgment, dismissing the applications and granting the applicants leave to appeal. A date for the appeal hearing is yet to be confirmed. The court also ordered that the supply of electricity to customers must continue until conclusion of the appeal process or customers request the disconnection of electricity supply.

The Official Receiver is pleased to announce that the Baglan customers have now sourced alternative electricity supply via connection to the new Western Power Distribution network, or by utilising temporary generators.

Following the receipt of customer disconnection requests, as of 8 July 2022, the Baglan group of Companies no longer supply electricity to customers. The Official Receiver is now engaging with contractors to carry out the de-energisation works and complete remaining closure activities, upon which the site will be disclaimed.

The Official Receiver thanks the employees of the Baglan group of Companies for their commitment throughout the course of the liquidations and the safe delivery of operations and closure activities at the Baglan site.

If you are a customer or creditor of the Baglan group of companies, please contact the Special Managers via email: baglancustomers@interpathadvisory.com.

OSCE Warsaw Human Dimension Conference: UK closing statement

Thank you very much Mr Chair.

I would like to say congratulations on the wonderful news to those who have won the Nobel Prize.

I would also like to add our thanks to the organisers of this year's Human Dimension Conference, to all those who have arranged side events and to all those who have spoken, including through our excellent interpreters.

Now, more than ever, platforms like this are vital to give government officials, international experts, civil society representatives and human rights defenders an opportunity to take stock and reflect on the state of human rights and fundamental freedoms across the OSCE region.

This conference has taken place under the dark cloud of President Putin's illegal war in Ukraine. A war which has had an impact on human rights and fundamental freedoms, not only in Ukraine and the Russian Federation, but across the OSCE region. The UK strongly condemns the sham referenda in the areas under temporary Russian control. The UK will never recognise the supposed outcome.

I would like to thank the inspiring human rights defenders and civil society representatives for their courage, tireless and selfless work and their bravery in sharing their stories with us over the past two weeks.

I want to reassure you that we have heard you.

We have heard your recommendations: to use OSCE monitoring tools, such as the Moscow Mechanism, effectively and ensure that recommendations are followed up upon; to support Human Rights Defenders working in country as well as in exile; to use our statements to support victims of oppressive governments and to call out those responsible for such oppression. We have noted many more.

We have heard the requests of those working on fundamental freedoms in Russia to differentiate between President Putin's regime and the people of Russia.

We have heard your calls not to neglect the backsliding of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy in other participating States.

We have heard from the formidable and unwavering wives, mothers and sisters of Ukrainian political prisoners, detained civilians, and those forcibly disappeared, many of whom remain detained and many who remain missing to this day, their families resolutely searching for scraps of information on their whereabouts. To name, but a few, of those who are detained or disappeared:

Serhiy Tsyhipa

Mykyta Buzinov

Nariman Dzelyal

Asan Akhmetov

Aziz Akhtemov

Vladyslav Yesypenko

Iryna Danilovych

Mykola Masliy

Yevhen Hurianov

Olha Melnychenko

We share in the hope of their loved ones – that they will be found, released and reunited.

We think of others across the region, including Vladimir Kara-Murza and the 1,300 political prisoners in Belarus.

We urge Russia and Belarus to engage with us and with the families who deserve answers.

We will continue to raise cases until political prisoners are free and the whereabouts of those forcibly disappeared are revealed. We will not forget.

Thank you Mr Chair.

£34 million boost to frigate weapon systems sustains 150 UK jobs

During the next five years, Royal Navy ships will undergo a series of technical upgrades to their Magazine Torpedo Launch Systems and threat countermeasure capabilities, the latter of which will help ensure the ships continue to counter the threat of hostile anti-ship missiles.

The contract was award to Systems Engineering & Assessment (SEA) in Devon.

Sustaining 150 UK jobs across Barnstaple, Beckington and Bristol in the south west of England, the upgrades will ensure that critical systems on Type 23 frigates continue to operate reliably, and that upgrades can be seamlessly adopted and installed until their out of service dates.

The Type-23 frigate carries out a wide variety of operations, including securing the UK's vital maritime trade routes East of the Suez Canal and safeguarding British interests in the South Atlantic. This week the Royal Navy deployed HMS Somerset to play a leading role in protecting critical energy infrastructure, working with Norway and our allies in the North and Norwegian Seas.

Minister for Defence Procurement, Alec Shelbrooke, said:

These crucial upgrades will help to ensure our Royal Navy ships remain equipped with the latest counter-threat capability.

Supporting 150 jobs at sites across the UK, this contract is another example of how we are investing in the future, sustaining UK jobs and securing cutting-edge defence capabilities.

Type 23 frigates will have electronic upgrades to Seagnat, a system which safeguards the vessel against incoming missiles by firing a variety of decoys to defeat incoming missiles.

Some ships will also undergo a further technical upgrade to their Magazine Torpedo Launch Systems – a close range, quick reaction Anti-Submarine weapon system which launches torpedoes from tubes mounted in the vessel's magazine.

The contract was placed by the Maritime Equipment and Warfare (MEWT) team at Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), the procurement arm of the UK Ministry of Defence.

DE&S' Director Ships Support Rear Admiral Jim Higham:

I'm incredibly proud of our team which has worked so hard to place this contract, ensuring Type 23 has the battle-winning capability it needs to perform their critical role in the Royal Navy fleet now and into the future.

In addition to Type 23 updates, the contract will also upgrade Seagnat systems during the next five years on Type 45 destroyers and Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) tankers, which provide fuel, food, fresh water, ammunition and other supplies to Royal Navy vessels around the world.

The contract also secures five further years of support for the systems on board the vessels with improved provision for spares.

The equipment supported under this contract (Magazine Torpedo Launch Systems, Seagnat and Air Weapons Handling) are used on various ships in the Royal Navy such as Type 23 frigates, Type 45 destroyers, Queen Elizabeth Class (QEC), Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessels and Albion-class Landing Platform Docks.

Richard Flitton, Managing Director at Systems Engineering & Assessment said:

This major contract, SEA's largest to date, demonstrates the systems knowledge and maritime domain expertise within our UK-based team and builds on our long-standing partnership with the Royal Navy.