

Seminar looks at 'wind turbine syndrome' , Carrick Gazette, 27 Sept 17

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A seminar looking into wind turbine noise and its effects on health was held in Glasgow last week.

The speakers at the event included Dr John Yelland, Independent Acoustician and Professor Mariana Alves-Pereira, Lusofona University, Lisbon.

Dr Yelland is an Oxford physicist and acoustician who has spent most of the current decade representing local communities at council determination meetings, and has appeared as an expert witness at Planning Inspectorate Hearings and Public Inquiries. He is concerned by the wind industry's continuing refusal to acknowledge the mounting evidence of the suffering and harm caused by wind turbine infrasound to local residents, and by the seeming inability, or unwillingness, of both local and central government to offer any useful mitigation or guidance. He is acoustic consultant to the UK Independent Noise Working Group.

Dr Mariana Alves-Pereira of the Lusofona University in Portugal has degrees in physics, biomedical engineering and a PhD in environmental science. Her team has been researching vibroacoustic disease since 1980 - initially focused on the low frequency noise (LFN) that impacted aeronautical technicians. Late in 2013, Dr Alves-Pereira presented a case study from Portugal where a family was found to be exposed to LFN caused by the operation of nearby wind turbines (2006-2013).

Also on the organising team were Rita Holmes who lives in Fairlie, Chairwoman of Hunterston Site Stakeholder Group which, on behalf of local communities, monitors and scrutinises plans and progress relating to the decommissioning nuclear A power station and the generating EDF B station. She is Chairwoman of Fairlie Community Council which is a statutory consultee for Planning Applications in the North Coast and Cumbrae area of North Ayrshire. This area includes Hunterston.

Susan Crosthwaite has been involved in investigations into windfarm noise since 2012, supporting work done by Dr. Sarah Laurie of the Waubra Foundation and many others. She is a co-signatory of a recent letter to the World Health Organisation (signed by eminent professionals from the medical, scientific, acoustic and engineering sectors), which gave evidence for the imminent publication of the 2016 Noise Guidelines.

The Independent Noise Working Group (INWG), formed during August 2014, is a multi-disciplinary team fully independent of the wind industry supply chain.

The objective of the INWG is to conduct an independent and scientific study into wind turbine noise. They say there is clear scientific evidence that whilst audible wind turbine noise can cause distress and annoyance to affected local residents, there are increasing numbers of victims suffering from adverse health impacts where audible noise is not the sole or major cause of their distress.

Susan Crosthwaite said: "Both Dr Yelland and Professor Alves Pereira's evidence demonstrated that current low frequency and infrasound monitoring is not fit for purpose, as the equipment deployed is not designed to record within the specific low-frequency ranges required to find evidence of infrasound impacts.

"The presentations by Dr. John Yelland, visiting experienced French Acoustician Patrick Dugast and Professor Mariana Alves Pereira, provided convincing evidence that there is a significant failure to provide adequate protection to an increasing number of affected people, which includes children and in some cases various species of animals.

"During the Q & A session several members of the audience relayed their experiences, including those who have already had to abandon their homes.

It was reported

that only when the turbines are switched off or sufferers are away from their local area of impact, is there any respite from the serious health impacts they are suffering.

However on their return their suffering increases in intensity and takes longer to ameliorate. Victims need to be listened to and believed. Public Health needs to recognise Wind Turbine Syndrome, Vibro Accoutic Disease and all the associated symptoms so that GPs and consultants can provide the right treatment."