

June 2009

Dear Councillor,

May we congratulate you on being elected to the new Cornwall Council.

We are sure you would wish to protect and enhance Cornwall's environment for the future, so we are asking you to work with local communities towards a **decentralised and sustainable** Waste Strategy for Cornwall, which excludes Incineration and moves away from Landfill.

In recent months, some people have tried to suggest that the only choice for waste management in Cornwall is between landfill and incineration.

This misrepresentation has led to claims of crippling costs to taxpayers when the incinerator was refused planning permission.

This is not the case – there are modern, clean and proven technologies for waste treatment such as anaerobic digestion and autoclave separation, which would benefit the Cornish economy and the environment, prove less expensive in both the short and long term and provide far more employment opportunities than a single centralised solution ever could.

These technologies could be up and running before 2012, which was the earliest the incinerator would have been operational.

Having rejected incineration, which is the worst option, there is a cost neutral window of opportunity for Cornwall to opt for the best of technologies and make a profit.

A new solution to Cornwall's waste needs to be found, as a matter of urgency.

STIG is already working with others, including Cornwall Sustainable Waste Network, Transition Cornwall Network and Enough is Enough campaigners, towards this end.

Together we are determined that community will not be set against community in a manufactured contest between landfill and incineration. There is a better, fairer way forward.

Following our previous letter to candidates, many of you requested more information. We hope the following will be helpful and serve as an introduction to STIG, our principles and aims.

Thank you for your time.



K.H. Rickard STIG CHAIR



P. Blanchard STIG SECRETARY



The Background

Cornwall County Council entered into an integrated waste management contract with SITA.

The decision was taken to opt for a centralised Incinerator at Rostowrack Farm, St Dennis, with a capacity to burn 240,000 tonnes P.A.

On 26th March 2009 Planning permission was refused.

STIG

St Dennis anti Incinerator Group was formed in 2005.

We remain convinced that Incineration is the wrong technology and a single waste facility for the whole of Cornwall is the wrong solution. It is the worst option for Cornwall.

Mission Statement:

- Being opposed to the incineration of waste, we would encourage Cornwall Council to investigate other forms of waste disposal.
- Whilst STIG must give priority to opposition of the siting of an incinerator at St Dennis, we are opposed to an Incinerator anywhere in Cornwall and will support groups in other areas where a site might be considered.

Rationale

The motive for Landfill tax is to reduce waste, increase recycling and keep organic matter out of Landfill, where it produces Methane, a potent greenhouse gas.

This can be achieved without resorting to Incineration.

Incineration demands the creation of waste in order to function, encouraging a throw-away society.

Incineration does not increase recycling and may actually discourage it.

Incineration of valuable resources, which have, literally cost the Earth in creation, extraction, processing, transport and production, does not help society to live within environmental limits but perpetuates a cycle of destruction and unsustainable consumption, in a world of shrinking resources.

Energy from waste is not exclusive to Incineration

Organic matter can be dealt with by Composting and Anaerobic Digestion.

A.D is now the Government's preferred technology for producing energy from waste.

Some 68% of MSW is biodegradable.

Other materials can be dealt with through Autoclave separation and sterilization, retaining resources within the system for re-use or reprocessing.

Unlike Incineration, these benign technologies do not produce Bottom Ash, hazardous Fly Ash or toxic emissions.

Principles

As custodians of this planet we have a duty to protect it, thus leaving a legacy that future generations can respect us for.

The need to conserve valuable natural resources and live within our environmental limits is fundamental to this aim.

Although St Dennis and Treviscoe would suffer immeasurable harm, had the Incinerator application been passed, ours was never simply a "not in my backyard" argument.



We have never said, "put it somewhere else," for it has become very clear to us that NO community should be forced to bear such a burden, and this Earth cannot continue to bear the plunder and destruction of its shrinking resources.

All the big issues of Climate Change, Resource Depletion, Energy and Food Security, Carbon Emissions and Renewable Energy are inextricably linked with the choices we make on how we regard discarded materials, the technologies we choose to deal with them and where we site them.

Aims

To encourage a sustainable waste strategy that recognizes the unique qualities of Cornwall and is based on fairness, the need to conserve resources and protect and enhance the environment.

Reduction of waste and the maximum reclamation and re-use of materials.

Ultimately we should be aiming for zero waste.

Although this may take time to achieve, may we suggest the following:

First steps

Immediate provision of Anaerobic Digestion, to divert organic waste from landfill, thus preventing fines and taxes.

Then include food waste in weekly recycling collections.

Allow small business to purchase bags and participate in kerbside recycling collections thus reducing landfill of recyclables.

Introduction of discreet local waste management schemes at community level that benefit communities, not blight them.

We know there are people of good will and integrity who want to work together with Cornwall Councillors and Officers to achieve a solution. We hope you will count STIG among them.

Please remember

Having rejected incineration, which is the worst option, there is a cost neutral window of opportunity for Cornwall to opt for the best of technologies and make a profit.

