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Save the Whales
GREENPEACE

8. Climate change: calling for action

Protests over climate continued. In 2008, Greenpeace activists and others occupied the Kingsnorth coal-fired power station in Kent, helping lead to a phase-out of coal for electricity production. In 2018 Extinction Rebellion and the Fridays for Future school strikes led new protests. In 2021, the Government agreed a Net Zero Strategy to cut emissions close to zero by 2050 which has since been strengthened.

1. Save the whales

By the 1960s, commercial whaling had grown so much that many whale species were in danger of extinction. Save the whales was the first major international campaign, linking protests, discussions and grassroots activity to raise awareness. Many celebrities also joined the protests.

2. Nuclear power? No thanks

The use of nuclear power was growing quickly, many people became worried about safety, high costs and how to dispose of the dangerous nuclear waste. After the Chernobyl disaster in 1986, the true costs and impacts became a reality. The 'Nuclear Power? No Thanks' smiling sun symbol became known across the world. Over 20 million badges and stickers were produced in over 60 languages.

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The environmental movement in the UK

For over fifty years environmental groups have worked to protect and restore our natural environment. There have been **Protests**, **Policy** work and **Projects** that made change happen. This poster charts some of the key events.

7. Climate change: the Big Ask campaign

Concern about climate change grew through the 1990s. In 2003, Friends of the Earth launched the Big Ask – a campaign for a UK climate change law to cut CO₂ emissions. Nearly 200,000 people across the UK asked their MP to support the bill and local groups raised awareness. In 2006, the UK Government agreed to the bill and it was announced in the Queen's Speech.

6. Creating clean energy

Environmental groups have been deeply involved in the push for clean energy. For example, engineers from the Centre for Alternative Technology set up EcoGen – a company that developed the first onshore Welsh windfarm at Llandinam in 1992.

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3. Clearing the air

Lead – a brain-damaging pollutant – was added to petrol for over 50 years. The Campaign for Lead-Free Air (CLEAR) drew together evidence of health risks which the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution (RCEP) used in its report in 1983 confirming the dangers and recommending the use of unleaded petrol. The same day, the UK government started moves to phase out lead, banning it completely in 1999. In 2021 the ending of lead in petrol was achieved world-wide.

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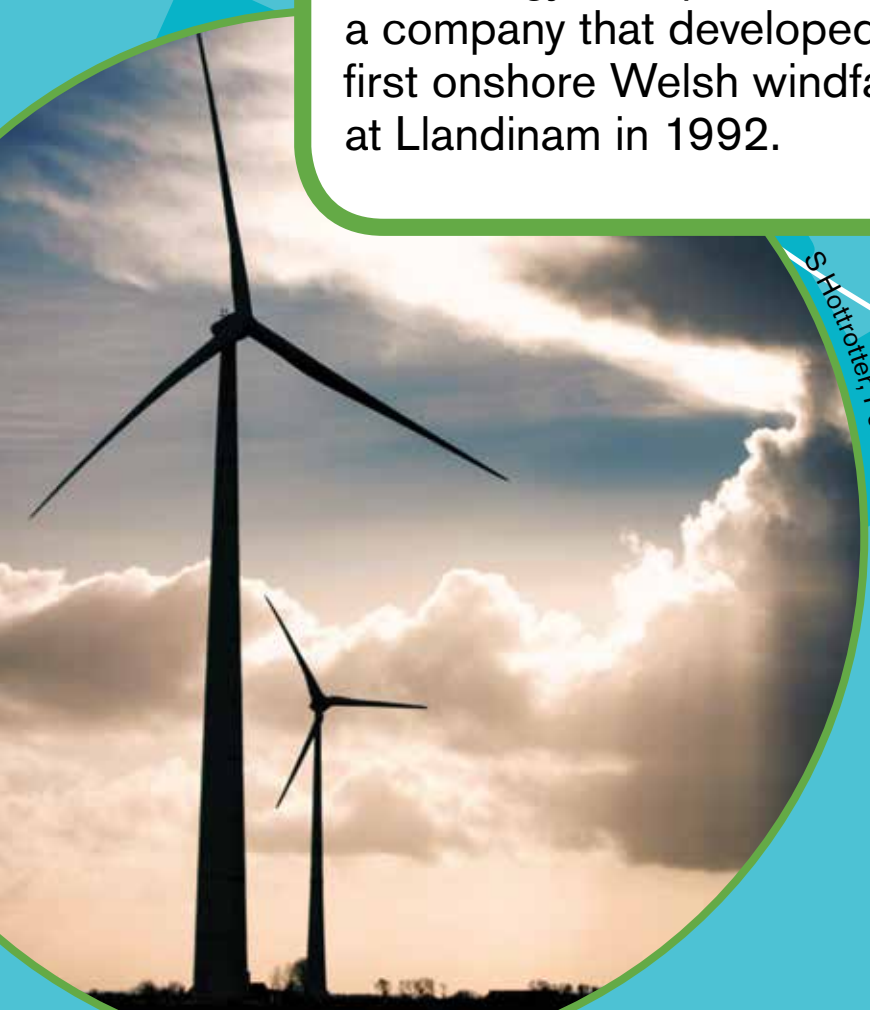
4. Reduce, reuse, recycle

For over 20 years, volunteers ran local recycling schemes showing how effective recycling could be. In 2003 a four-year campaign by Friends of the Earth led to the Household Waste Act, that led to the national doorstep recycling programme.

5. Road protests

Government plans in the 1990s for a massive road-building programme led to many direct actions, with protestors occupying sites, living in trees and digging tunnels to block the construction work. Some roads went ahead but the programme was abandoned in 1997.

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