



Mobile Phone Mast Action Letter No. 2

EDITORIAL by TRUDY DEAN

Following the November issue of Mobile Phone Mast Action Letter No. 1 the Kent County Council Liberal Democrat Office has received additional information from various Council sources, media contacts and other action groups and, as a result, we have compiled this update sheet.

We have forged links with over 100 action groups across the UK and receive regular requests for copies of the Mobile Phone Mast Action Letter. The information from the action letter has also been placed on the **Mobile Phone Mast Action Group web site** <http://freespace.virginnet.co.uk/mast.action/kent.htm>

Here in Kent during November 1999 the council voted 'not to accept mobile phone masts on KCC highway' and in December 1999 we were successful in persuading the Kent County Council leadership to agree to a moratorium on any new masts on any KCC property until the Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones (Stewart Panel) reports in Spring.

More recently, I have written to the Federation of Electronics Industry asking them to confirm or deny that mobile phone company lawyers have advised them NOT to guarantee the safety of mobile phone masts. We await their response. The Northern Ireland group have, in the past, asked mobile phone companies to sign a letter stating that all residents within 500 metres are safe from adverse health effects from their masts and it also asks for indemnity against property devaluation and compensation for medical care. No letter has been signed to date but it is a useful demand for all campaigning groups to make.

The report from the Stewart Panel is due out in Spring 2000 when we hope to produce another update sheet to offer further guidance and advice. **Please keep letting us know what is going on in your area.**

Trudy Dean - Leader, Liberal Democrat Group, Kent County Council



News from across the UK

Parliamentary Information

Kent MPs supporting residents/mast bans:

Michael Howard in Shepway; Archie Norman in Tunbridge Wells; Howard Stoate in Dartford; Gwyn Prosser in Dover.

MEPs supporting residents:

Chris Huhne
Roy Perry



Media Interest

The Mobile Phone Mast issue has been featured on: BBC Radio 4 'You & Yours' Programme, the Esther show (who also printed further information on the Esther Fact Sheet), BBC Watchdog & Here & Now.

Articles have appeared in the Sunday Mirror, Independent on Sunday & Kent Messenger



ACTION

CAMPAINING POINTS

1. Healthy Schools Scheme - Some councils across the country may be promoting a 'Healthy Schools Scheme'. Key elements of the scheme in Kent are listed as:



- Each local healthy schools scheme will provide support to schools on becoming healthier places for staff and pupils to work and learn.
- It promotes physical and emotional health and recognises the need to provide both a physical and social environment that is conducive to learning.

However, many scientists agree that children may be particularly at risk from mobile phone masts because of the larger absorption of microwaves by their heads, and the fact that the electrical activity of their brains is still developing. A study has also shown an impairment of learning skills in exposed children. **If your local school has a mobile phone mast sited on its grounds you may wish to check if your council is participating in the Healthy Schools Scheme!**

2. Home Office Communications Advisory Panel - Guidance Note HGN (F) 20 Hazards associated with microwave transmitters includes guidance to Firefighters that:

- Firefighters should make every effort not to stand directly in front of a microwave antenna, and not to work near the antenna longer than necessary.
- As a general guide, the larger a microwave transmitting dish, then the greater the power it radiates in the direction to which it is pointing.
- Persons fitted with cardiac pacemakers or similar devices are advised to avoid working in the immediate vicinity of antenna installations.

3. Petition to the President of the European Parliament 45/97 - Roy & Ann Ashwood have submitted a petition (no. 45/97) to the President of the European Parliament claiming that their human and civil rights have been violated as a result of a 15 metre high mobile phone mast being sited in 1994 only 2.3 metres from their boundary fence. If you would like to receive more information on this petition please contact Roy Ashwood by e-mail roy.ann@virgin.net

4. Register of Masts - most councils do **NOT** have a register of masts covering their area. Ask your local council to see if they have one, if they have not, write formally requesting they compile one. You may be able to show from these maps that no new masts are needed in your area.

5. Early Day Motion (EDM) 56 on Mobile Phone Masts - Originally started by Howard Stoate, a Kent MP. Full text can be obtained from <http://edm.ais.co.uk/weblink/html/motion/ref=56>. Over 160 MPS signed the EDM, please check the list to see if your MP has signed it. It was tabled in Parliament on 18/11/99.



Success stories from English Authorities



In the first newsletter we reported on action taken by councils throughout Scotland and the rest of the World to control the building of phone masts. Since then many English Authorities have begun to follow suit:

Bedfordshire - agreed that the decision to erect masts on schools should rest with the Governing Body. Once this 'responsibility' was passed on all Governing bodies confirmed they would **not** agree to masts being sited on their land. The Amptill Against Aerials action group are a contact in this area. Their web site can be found at <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/tonyandpen/>

Warwickshire - agreed that no more masts should be sited on County buildings or school sites, pending the results of the independent inquiry.

Norfolk - no 'ban' in force as such. Previously schools could enter into a contract with mobile phone companies without consulting the Local Education Authority (LEA). Now all schools have to seek approval from the LEA before entering into a contract.

Essex - a decision was taken 2 years ago not to allow mobile phone masts on school sites. This decision was taken by Members, **against** the advice of the County Health & Safety Adviser for Education.

West Sussex - a ban is in force, driven mainly by Members. No masts are permitted on Council land and property until further research has been undertaken.

Leicestershire - a ban on mobile phone masts is in operation, pending further research. The council officers used the Beef ban as a precedent for the mobile phone mast ban and the decision was taken under delegated powers. The County Medical Adviser on Child Health, Dr Phillip Monk, also supported the ban. Concern was particularly expressed about outputs and the potential hazard to health, particularly in relation to access to school sites where work needed to be undertaken near a mobile phone mast.

Northamptonshire - Following David Blunkett's comments in the media a moratorium on siting new masts on Council land and property is now in place, pending the outcome of the findings from the independent group. Existing masts will stay in place.

Lincolnshire - advice was given to schools (approx 1-2 years ago) not to erect mobile phone masts on school sites. This was following information received from independent consultants (originally instructed by GM schools).

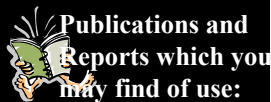
Manchester - advise that mobile phone masts should not be installed on primary school sites.

Wirral - in December 1999, following pressure from the public, Wirral Council asked for a scrutiny committee to be set up to 'examine the health risks of mobile phone masts'.

Woking - on 9th December 1999 Woking Council agreed to create a 200m exclusion zone around masts on council owned land.

Kent County Council - in November 1999 the council voted 'not to accept mobile phone masts on KCC highway' and in December 1999 the Kent County Council leader agreed to support a moratorium on phone masts on all KCC property until the Stewart Panel reports.

Kent & Medway Towns Fire Authority - decided on Friday 17 December 1999 not to site any more 'phone masts on Fire Brigade property, until further medical and scientific evidence is available. The Fire Authority also voted to instruct Orange to defer the activation of its equipment, sited on a fire station drill tower five metres from the nearest senior citizen's front door, in St Margarets, Dover, until further medical and scientific evidence is available.



Publications and Reports which you may find of use:

•Department of the Environment - Amendments to Permitted Development rights for TCD, Land Use Planning and Electromagnetic Fields, DETR Circular 04/99, Planning for Telecommunications

•European Communities Treaty of European Union Maastricht 7 February 1992

•Friends of the Earth Scotland - Summary of International and UK Situation (Health Risks) & Scotland Briefing

•House of Commons - 26 October 1999 and 18 November 1999 Early Day Motions and Science and Technology - Minutes of Evidence, Science and Technology - Third Report

•Mr Phil Willis MP - Debate on Telecommunication Installations. Harrogate & Knaresborough constituency 01423 528888

•National Radiological Protection Board - 1998 ICNIRP Guidelines for Limiting Exposure to EMFs, ABC of RF, Australian Study on the Effects of RF Radiation, Compilation of various papers sent out in October, Health Issues related to the use of hand-held radiotelephones, Information Services, Mobile Phones and Human Health Overview, Mobile Telephone Base Stations, Non-Ionising Radiations, Possible Health effects+A4 related to the use of radiotelephones, Press Release Guidance on Restrictions on Exposure, Press Release Independent Expert Group on Mphones, Radio Waves,

•Orange Base Stations - Health and Safety leaflets

•Mobile phone shops can provide maps of where all the masts are situated to demonstrate their coverage. Some networks have full or nearly full coverage anyway (raising questions as to the need for anymore masts!)

•Various reports by Dr G J Hyland contact Department of Physics, University of Warwick.

•Websites: www.wave-guide.org; National Radiological Protection Board www.nrpb.org.uk; World Health Organisation www.who.int/peh-emf; Mast Action Group <http://freespace.virginnet.co.uk/mast.action/kent.htm>

If you would like copies of the Mobile Phone Mast Action Letter No.1 or additional copies of this update sheet please send a covering letter and s.a.e. to the **Liberal Democrat Office, Kent County Council, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ. Tel: 01622 694239 Fax: 01622 694219**
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