

IN THE NEWS

WESTERN MORNING NEWS

The Western Morning News issue of Wednesday 7th April published the first of two articles on the fencing and grazing issues on the Isles of Scilly and West Penwith entitled “*Feelings are running high in battle over wild places*”. For the full article go to

<http://www.thisiswesternmorningnews.co.uk/news/Feelings-running-high-battle-wild-places/article-1978763-detail/article.html>

“*Countryside peace is being shattered by ‘grazing wars’*” is the title of Martin Hesp’s second article on his contested landscape series published in the Western Morning News issue of Wednesday 21st April 2010. But on the WMN web site it is titled “*Grazing sparks shoot out in wild West*”

<http://www.thisiswesternmorningnews.co.uk/environment/Grazing-sparks-shootout-wild-West/article-2046466-detail/article.html>

SPM COMMENTS ON ARTICLE

It is no wonder that farmers generally applaud voluntary ‘conservation grazing’ when they are offered a huge financial carrot of taxpayers’ money at “eye-watering sums”. Adrian Thomas, the spokesman giving a farmer’s perspective, has an Entry Level and Higher Level Stewardship agreement covering 91.11 hectares at a total cost of £236,777.84 [see <http://www.natureonthemap.org.uk/news.html> Agreement reference AG00239118]. And why does Natural England always manage an interview with this farmer whose land is basically a coastal strip, while fighting shy of conducting an interview on the moors that form the core of the Save Penwith Moors campaign?

Jon Brookes (National Trust) and Peter Bowden (Natural England) are quoted as being “taken aback” by the criticism of their moorland management. If they had bothered to engage with the public at least six years ago at the very beginning of this scheme, instead of surreptitiously installing barbed wire fencing, gates and cattle grids and then grudgingly ‘consulting’ with the local community once the whole issue became known about as a fait accompli, they would not now be expressing such ‘genuine upset’. They have only their own incompetence and self-importance to blame for the present unhappy situation.

As for Mr Bowden's quoted statement that "they [local farmers] could almost do what they like – they could put 100 cows up here". this shows his own poor grasp of moorland management and welfare obligations in that sustenance is so limited that designated moorland grazing sites have had their gates left open to allow cattle access to grassland.

ISLES OF SCILLY

"Electric cattle fencing upsets Isles of Scilly locals" For this story go to BBC News
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/cornwall/8597030.stm>

"WE'VE LIVED WITH THEM FOR CENTURIES"

An article by Martin Hesp on moorland/commons was published in the Western Morning News on 30th June: Putting the future of common lands back on the national agenda. Mention was made of the Open Spaces Society report on Finding Common Ground that has some VERY important findings applicable to our campaign. Please read both of these by going to:

<http://www.thisiswesternmorningnews.co.uk/politics/Putting-future-common-lands-national-agenda/article-2360633-detail/article.html>

and <http://www.oss.org.uk/finding-common-ground/>

"A FENCE ON COMMON LAND IS PERCEIVED AS AN ABOMINATION"

On Tuesday 20th July the Western Morning News published an article by Martin Hesp entitled *Conservation of common land is fine – but give us access to it.*

"For many people, access to their local common has been a part of their daily life since childhood, providing fresh air, a sense of belonging and identity and somewhere to take daily exercise or walk the dog, on land which feels as though it has remained unchanged for centuries....."

See the full article at <http://www.thisiswesternmorningnews.co.uk/news/Conservation-common-land-fine-8211-access/article-2431561-detail/article.html>