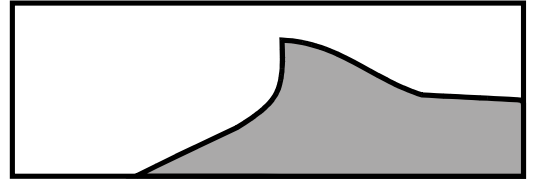


# South Wales Porpoise Project

18 Mary Street, Neath. SA11 1PN. UK  
(01639) 633947 • [www.gmmp.org.uk](http://www.gmmp.org.uk) • [office@gmmp.org.uk](mailto:office@gmmp.org.uk)



## News Release (08-02-03)

### HELP! Howie's lost one of his PODs



Measuring around 2 feet in length and looking like a bit like a piece of misplaced drainpipe with a cap on the end, PODs are actually sophisticated underwater monitoring devices.

The South Wales Porpoise project, with financial help from CCW, Neath-Port Talbot, Swansea and Bridgend Councils has been using the PODs to monitor for the high frequency clicks and peeps that dolphins and porpoise use to navigate. Their work will help us understand more about the lives of these secretive and possibly threatened marine mammals.

“The PODs are a sophisticated combination of detector and computer. They listen for sounds inaudible to the human ear and then record the ones we want, ignoring boat engines, fishing boat sonar, shifting sand and whole lot of other sea noises”, said Howie Watkins, Project Co-ordinator.



“We've placed five of them in the Bristol Channel, in a line from Kenfig to Carmarthen bay. Although they've only been in the water for two months, we've already made some fascinating new discoveries. The POD that's gone missing, POD 109, had previously recorded porpoises nearly every day in the Kenfig area. They've never been seen there before and no-one expected us to find any.”



The loss of POD 109 is a huge blow, as the project cannot afford to replace it without seriously affecting their other work. “We're working on a very limited budget, so if we have to replace this POD it will be a major setback”.

They're hoping that the POD will wash up on a beach or that a curious fisherman has removed it. “We labelled all the POD marker buoys and the POD itself is also labelled, but we're worried that sunlight and salt water may have faded the lettering. There's also an identification label inside the POD but in the current political climate I wouldn't be surprised if someone who found it was too scared to open it in case it was a bomb or something.”

“Please, if you find the POD get in touch with us. Our work, and the success of the Porpoise project depends on it. No questions will be asked. If you've seen it or found it, please ring Neath (01639) 633947.”

Howie Watkins can be contacted on Neath (01639) 633947 or [office@gmmp.org.uk](mailto:office@gmmp.org.uk). He is available for a photocall or interview on Monday February 10<sup>th</sup> should you require it. More information on the South Wales Porpoise Project is available at [www.gmmp.org.uk](http://www.gmmp.org.uk)

High Quality maps showing the POD locations and print quality digital photographs of the POD and of the South Wales Porpoise Project volunteers (including Howie Watkins) searching for the POD can be downloaded from <http://private.howie.info/press/index.htm>