

Interested Party Reference number: [REDACTED]

Dear Inspectors,

I am writing to provide you with my verbal speech and the extra detail missed when my time ran out.

Thank you for allowing the hearings to be at a convenient location, it was appreciated by all those that were able to attend.

I request that you keep the What3Word location ([in blue](#) below) regarding the protected bluebells confidential on all public records.

I express my deep concern regarding National Grid's proposed **Sea Link** project and to echo the serious issues raised by Kent Wildlife Trust's Conservation Evidence Manager, **Emma Waller**, in December 2023.

Ms Waller made clear that many in the community are *hugely disappointed* by the currently preferred route and are calling on National Grid to "**Rethink Sea Link.**" Her comments reflect a growing sense that nature is, yet again, not being adequately valued in the planning of major infrastructure.

Need to reconsider the route - Kent Wildlife Trust has urged National Grid to fully review strategic alternatives and to select the **least environmentally damaging option**. The present route poses risks to sensitive habitats, and it is vital that a more sustainable option is properly considered.

Lessons from past damage – Nemo Link - Ms Waller also drew attention to the damage caused during the 2018 **Nemo Link** cable installation through Pegwell Bay. Although trenchless techniques were originally promised, these commitments were later abandoned in favour of open-cut trenching, with harmful consequences for the site. She warned that, without firm guarantees, the same mistakes could be repeated with Sea Link.

Concerns about ecological surveys and the consultation process - In Kent Wildlife Trust's formal consultation response, Ms Waller strongly recommended that National Grid should **resubmit the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)** only once:

- all relevant ecological surveys have been completed,
- full and detailed impact assessments are available,
- clear and enforceable mitigation plans are in place, and

trenchless techniques are formally committed to at all sensitive ecological locations, including Pegwell Bay National Nature Reserve.

She also criticised what appears to be an over-reliance on desktop surveys rather than thorough, on-the-ground ecological assessment.

Climate action must not undermine biodiversity - While Kent Wildlife Trust supports renewable energy and the wider decarbonisation of the energy sector, Ms Waller stressed that this cannot come *at the expense of wildlife*. The climate and biodiversity crises are interconnected, and both must be addressed together if we are to achieve true sustainability.

Protected habitats and wildlife at risk - The proposed Sea Link route threatens some of Kent's most important and sensitive ecological areas, including **Pegwell Bay**—an internationally significant site—and **Minster Marshes**, with an estimated loss of **13.6 hectares of wildlife-rich land**. Species such as seals and numerous bird populations could suffer; notably, Pegwell Bay hosts Kent's largest seal colony, yet only a "desktop mammal survey" has been undertaken to date.

Request for meaningful public participation - Ms Waller encouraged all nature lovers to make their views known during the consultation period, emphasising the importance of public involvement in protecting these landscapes and the wildlife that depends on them.

I am deeply concerned for two main reasons. First, there is a documented instance where a company within the Applicant group did not honour its commitment to use a specific method, opting instead for a much more harmful alternative. Second, that company failed to fully meet its mitigation responsibilities. If this behaviour were to be repeated, it would have devastating consequences for our town and the surrounding communities and lessons must be learnt from that example.

I concur with Aldeburgh Town Council and am also grateful to the Inspectors for raising (at EN020026-001019-SL_11NOV_ISH1_PT2.pdf 1.3.16.21 p26) an issue which is critical to the Aldeburgh landfall as well as to Kent and is now Action Point 16.

However, you will note my comments from the written detail attached to my speech given on the 6th of November, as a minimum starting point HDD must be one of the conditions in place for mitigation should this awful project be consented or any decisions you make, overturned at government. If Scottish Power Renewables can review and reassess then there is no excuse that HDD cannot be used fully.

It is paramount that all businesses affected along the route are fully mitigated and that proper compensation is granted. Speaking with a local farmer, he stressed that the distress and anxiety already being felt is just not being understood and small farming businesses are struggling because of the affects of more and more farmland being eaten up in a country where food production is more and more vital.

I remain concerned about Changes in mobility patterns (e.g., increased traffic) and especially around the proposed working hours and the noise and vibration during construction and operation. It must be noted that this area is like it is for very important reasons – for its tranquillity, peace and quiet, nature, wildlife and environment – any disturbance to this means reputational damage beyond repair.

Mitigation*

*Not to be limited to the below.

- **Without a doubt** - Full HDD – especially where designations are in place on land including areas that are part off are included fully beyond boundaries.
- Conduct a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) before construction.
- Fair and timely compensation for displaced or affected businesses and residents within communities.
- Provide resettlement support, not just monetary: housing, livelihood programs, transition allowances.
- Construct pedestrian bridges & access points where communities need them.
- Construct an extension to Crag Path to join from Aldeburgh to Thorpeness, off road.
- Noise barriers, controlled construction hours, acoustic enclosures for machinery.
- Engage communities in continuous consultation and grievance redress mechanisms.
- Engage with all communities about their other wishes for mitigation and recognise that the location is within Aldeburgh and not between Aldeburgh and Thorpeness – this error must be corrected without delay.
- Provide a substantial and long-term budget for all local Town and Parishes to utilise for proper PR.
- Offshore solutions must be fully explored and other industrialised areas eg the Isle of Grain must be recognised as the only place for these projects – nearer to where the power is needed.
- Use low-emission machinery, real-time air-quality monitoring.
- Storm-water and waste-water management plans.
- Conduct a **Cultural Heritage Assessment**.
- Relocate or preserve heritage sites where possible.
- Protect the Coralline Crag and Aquifers to the highest degree.
- Provide an environmental & Social management plan (ESMP) Covers noise, waste, water quality, ecology, safety, and community engagement.
- Air, water, noise, displacement outcomes, and biodiversity must be monitored and reported publicly.

Cllr T-J Haworth-Culf. Suffolk County Council Cllr for Aldeburgh, Knodishall, Thorpeness, Aldringham & Leiston

6th November 2025 hearing words and detail

Good afternoon, everyone, I wear many hats – I am the SCC Cllr for Aldeburgh, I am Aldeburgh's Mayor, I am a resident impacted.

I stand here today deeply concerned — not just for myself, but for our entire community — about the devastating impact that the proposed **Sea Link National Grid project** would have on Aldeburgh and our surrounding villages.

If this project is consented, it will forever change the character of our coastline and countryside. This is not one isolated scheme — it is part of a **relentless wave of industrialisation** that threatens to overwhelm our fragile landscape. The cumulative impact of Sea Link, alongside other energy projects will scar this area beyond recognition.

Our local economy — built on tourism, on peace, beauty, and the sense of escape that draws people here — will and are suffering immensely. Who will want to visit Aldeburgh, when construction noise replaces birdsong, when the sound of construction drowns out the sea breeze, and when the serenity that defines this place has gone.

We are told this rush is for “net zero.” But there is **no excuse for rushing to net zero at any cost**. The evidence from centuries of temperature records tells a far more complex story. True sustainability cannot be achieved by destroying communities, nature, and livelihoods in the process.

Sea Link must be paused — at least until **Sizewell C** is completed and we know, with evidence, whether this project is even needed. To proceed without that understanding is not progress; it's recklessness.

Scottish Power Renewables presented to Aldeburgh Town Council recently they explained that they had listened and adjusted their consented plans to include far greater use of **Horizontal Directional Drilling** — recognising that HDD is better for people, for the environment, for our trees, our wildlife, and our communities. They themselves said the positives far outweigh any negatives, including cost. And crucially, they worked **with** landowners and local people so that no one faced compulsory purchase or received their frightening threats.

Trying not to repeat previous words - Let me draw attention to something small but symbolic: the **protected bluebells** [REDACTED] within an ancient woodland beside an ancient hedgerow, unacknowledged in the documentation. The location referred, also extremely close to a family of precious birds of prey, that have also gone unnoticed and deer herds that have found a safe haven after being displaced once from an NSIP! These deserve full protection and full HDD treatment. Our **National Landscapes** and every **Site of Special Scientific Interest**, including all of Aldeburgh, deserve that same respect.

Beneath our feet lie the **chalk aquifers** — vital lifelines for farmers, wildlife, and our water supply. Once damaged, they cannot be repaired. Yet these risks are brushed aside.

Ordinary people, real livelihoods, genuine consequences.

We're constantly told that, due to Russia and other global factors, we must strengthen our power grid and that this will somehow lead to cheaper energy bills – what nonsense! The same narrative insists we must boost our resilience in food production. Only yesterday, Mr Nickolls shared the harsh realities his farm faces, highlighting the grave threat to our critical food security. Once this and other precious farmland is lost, it cannot be replaced – it's gone for good.

Other brownfield sites exist – so why not use them where power demand is highest? Why must East Anglia, a cornerstone of farming and food production, be sacrificed for the sake of net zero, while London's needs take precedence?

We've been left out in the cold, trampled on, and battered. All in the name of climate change, our communities and environment are being sacrificed – you really couldn't make it up! Perhaps National Grid could lend us their mythical magic wand – the one that will somehow reassure our lost wildlife and habitats that, in 10 to 15 years, they're welcome to return?

It's worth remembering, too, that Aldeburgh depends heavily on tourism for local jobs and prosperity.

And while local people live with the uncertainty, the toll on wellbeing grows heavier. Sleepless nights, anxiety, the constant worry about what will happen to homes and livelihoods — these are real and measurable impacts. It is unjustifiable to impose such stress on our community without absolute necessity or proper alternatives.

Decisions are being made — or overruled — by ministers, by National Grid, by Ofgem: all London-based policymakers who see the country as a single grid map, not as living communities. (That disconnect between **national ambition and local consequence** is at the heart of this problem.)

London's rush to hit net-zero targets has become a race for headlines, not a thoughtful, coordinated transition. Projects are being forced through to show quick progress, even when the generation they're meant to serve — like Sizewell C — doesn't yet exist. We need a pause for proper planning, not panic-building that damages lives and landscapes.

Ofgem must not fund unproven projects like Sea Link. Public money must not underwrite speculative infrastructure whose need has not been demonstrated.

Our coastline is a living heritage, not a dumping ground for short-term solutions. If Sea Link goes ahead as planned, it won't just be the landscape that's lost — it will be the heart of our community. I refer and concur with the concerns from the RSPB North Warren, Aldeburgh Town Council, my colleagues at SCC and others who share these deep concerns.

So I say: **protect our areas. Safe our vital and critical coralline crag. Safeguard our aquifers and our Protect our high streets and our economy.**

Let this be the moment when London's race to net zero does *not* come at the expense of rural truth, heritage, and wellbeing.

Thank you. T-J Haworth-Culf Suffolk County Councillor – Aldeburgh & Leiston Division. Suffolk County Council

Supporting evidence, graphs, data and photos attached (below)

Attached. To support verbal presentation

Written Representation: Objection to the Sea Link Project

1. Introduction

I am writing my verbal presentation to the hearings on the 6th November, to express my strong objection to the proposed **Sea Link National Grid project**, on behalf of residents and communities in Aldeburgh and the surrounding villages.

While I fully support the UK's transition to clean energy, this project, as currently proposed, would have a devastating and disproportionate impact on our local environment, economy, and community wellbeing.

2. Cumulative and Environmental Impacts

Sea Link cannot be viewed in isolation. It forms part of a **rapidly expanding cluster of energy infrastructure** along the Suffolk coast, including Sizewell C, Scottish Power Renewables' projects, and other National Grid proposals.

The cumulative effect of these schemes will cause lasting damage to the landscape, biodiversity, and character of the area. This region's unique coastal environment, wildlife habitats, and tranquillity are already under immense pressure. Adding yet another large-scale development risks **irreversible harm**. The location referred, also extremely close to a family of birds of prey, that have also gone unnoticed and deer herds that have found a haven after being displaced once from an NSIP!

3. Economic and Tourism Concerns

Aldeburgh and nearby villages rely heavily on **tourism** — visitors are drawn here precisely because of the peace, beauty, and rural character of the coast. Industrialising this landscape with pylons, substations, and heavy construction will deter visitors and erode the very qualities that sustain our local economy.

The economic contribution of tourism to this region far outweighs any short-term construction benefits that Sea Link may bring.

4. A Better Example – Scottish Power Renewables

It has already been demonstrated that energy projects can be delivered more sensitively. When **Scottish Power Renewables** engaged with local communities, they were able to adjust their plans and adopt **Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD)**, a method that significantly reduces environmental disruption and protects trees, wildlife, and habitats.

Crucially, they worked **collaboratively with landowners**, avoiding compulsory purchases and showing that mutual respect produces better outcomes. This demonstrates that **environmentally considerate methods and community partnership are possible** — and should be the standard, not the exception.

5. The Case for a Pause

There is **no justification for rushing Sea Link** before it is clear whether it is even needed. The project is being pushed forward to meet broad “net zero” objectives, but its specific purpose — to connect generation that does not yet exist — remains uncertain.

Sea Link should be paused until Sizewell C is completed and a clear, evidence-based assessment confirms that additional grid capacity is required.

To proceed prematurely would be wasteful, environmentally destructive, and deeply unfair to affected communities.

6. Ofgem's Responsibility

Ofgem must not provide financial backing for unproven or unnecessary infrastructure.

Public funds should not be used to underwrite speculative projects that lack a demonstrated need or a transparent cost-benefit justification. Ofgem's mandate is to ensure value and fairness for consumers — not to advance politically driven timelines that disregard local consequences.

7. Human and Community Impacts

Residents are already experiencing stress, anxiety, and declining wellbeing as a result of ongoing uncertainty and the cumulative threat of multiple infrastructure projects. The psychological toll is significant and must not be dismissed.

Meaningful community engagement is essential, and so far, this has been lacking. The human cost of these proposals — the **loss of peace, security, and connection to place** — is just as real as the environmental damage.

Many representations during the hearings highlighted Thorpeness and the increasing concerns expressed about coastal erosion. Concerns are mounting regarding the unproven techniques being used.

Thorpeness coastal erosion April to October 2025



<https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/25584812.homeowner-laments-no-plan-save-thorpeness-homes/>

<https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/25571461.home-thorpeness-demolished-amid-coastal-erosion/>

<https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/25620316.current-erosion-not-increased-flood-risk-thorpeness/>

<https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/25390407.sea-eating-away-garden-88-year-olds-thorpeness-home/>

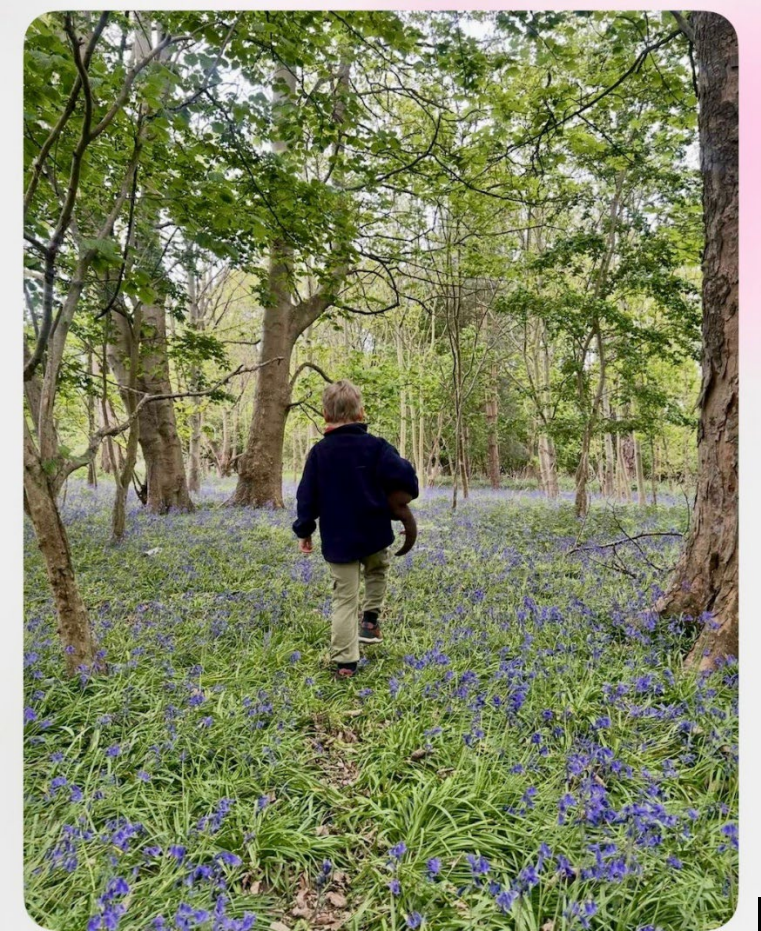
8. Conclusion

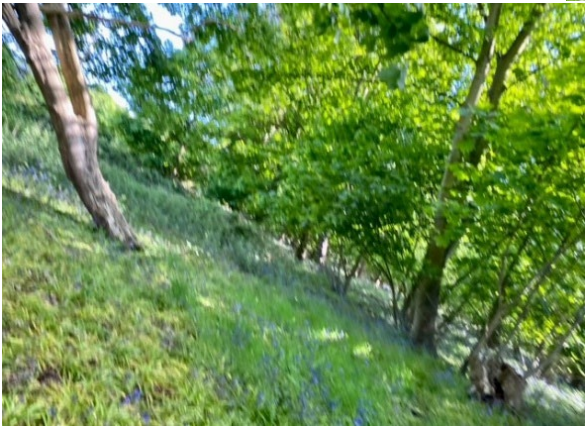
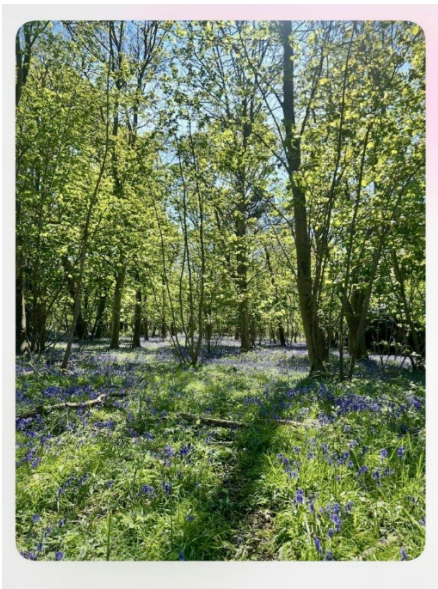
We are not opposing progress or renewable energy — we are calling for **responsible, coordinated, and evidence-based planning**.

The rush to meet national targets must not override the need to protect local people, heritage, and landscapes.

A **pause** is not a delay to progress; it is an opportunity to make sure we get it right — to ensure that projects like Sea Link are truly necessary, environmentally sound, and fair to the communities they affect.

Our coastline is not a corridor for industrialisation. It is a living, breathing landscape that deserves respect, protection, and thoughtful stewardship.



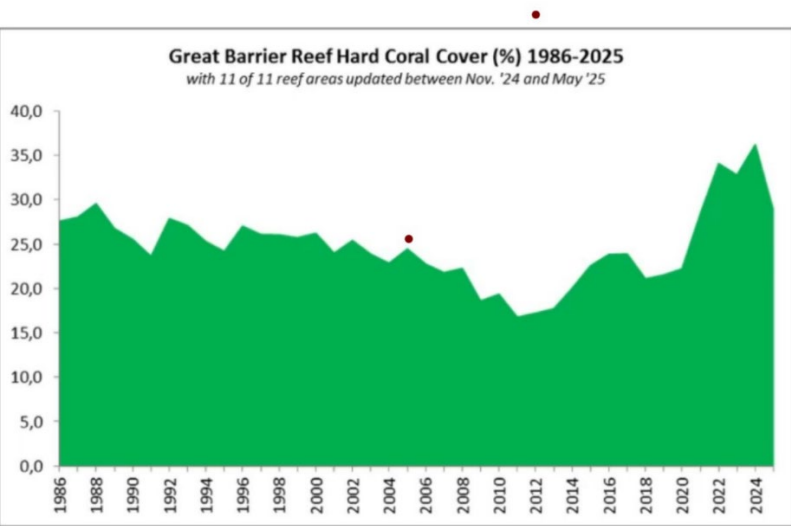




Unnecessary race to London’s Net Zero?

In September this year, a total of 538 reef health surveys were completed across 46 reefs and those results show minimal bleaching in one southern region, and none anywhere else.

According to this data, coral cover is now at its 4th highest level in 40 years, beaten only in 2022,23 and 2024. Therefore, the GBR is thriving!

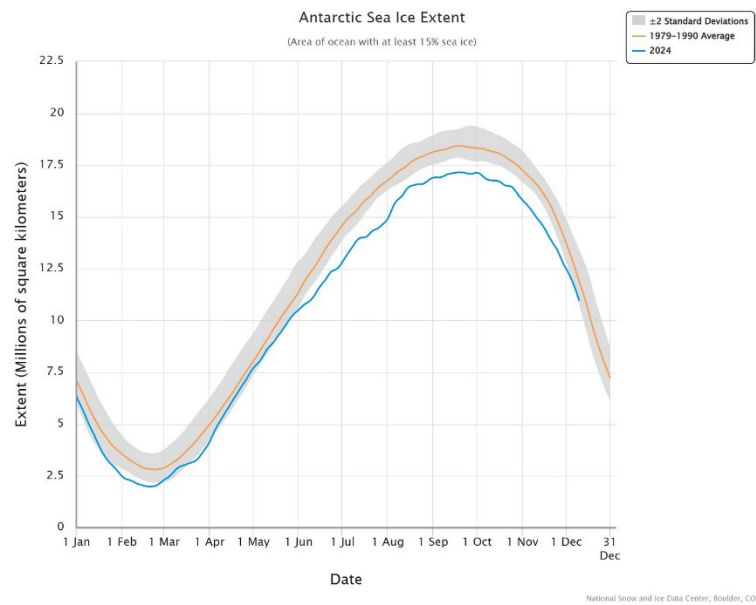


Antarctic Sea Ice Nearing 1979-1990 Average

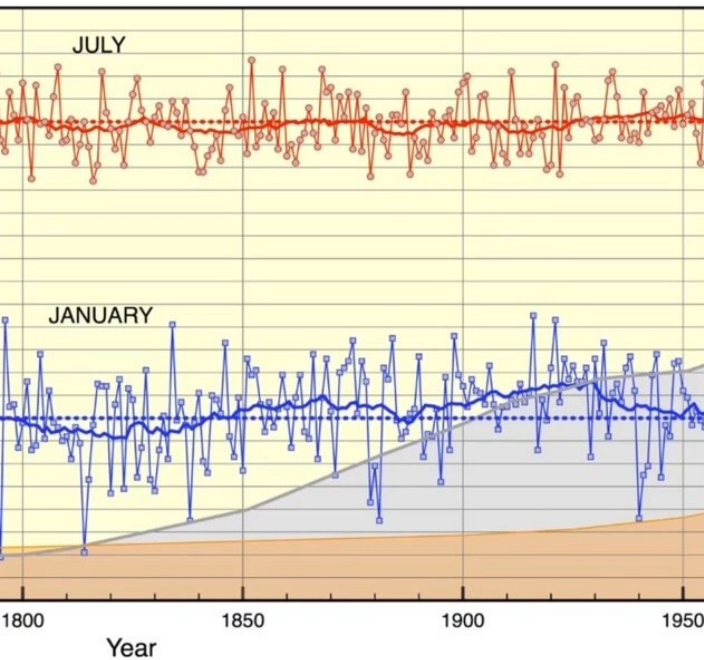
Contrary to breathless claims of irreversible melting and looming catastrophe, current *Antarctic sea ice extent* is both comfortably within two standard deviations of historical norms *and* rapidly approaching the 1979–1990 average.

This recovery underscores natural variability of Earth’s climate, which is governed by complex and dynamic forcings that go beyond simplistic, CO2-focused unthinking.

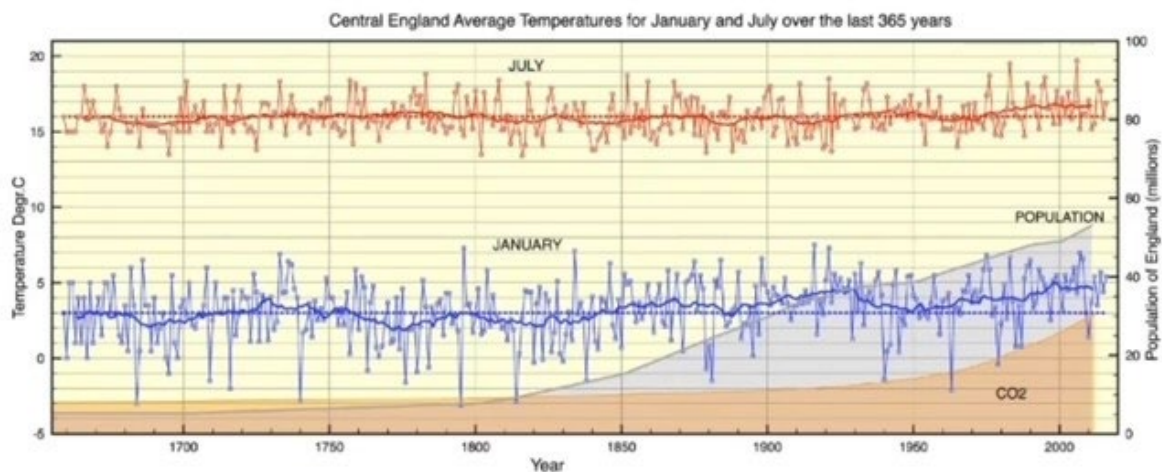
The seasonal ebb and flow of Antarctic ice, influenced by factors like ocean currents, wind patterns, volcanic activity, and solar cycles, showcases nature’s resilience and self-regulation



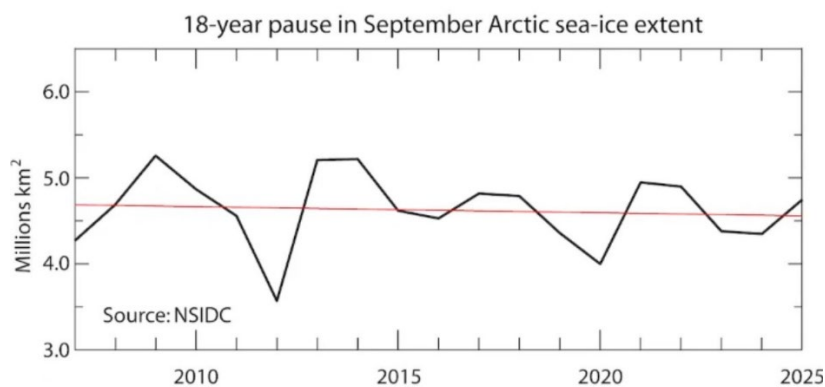
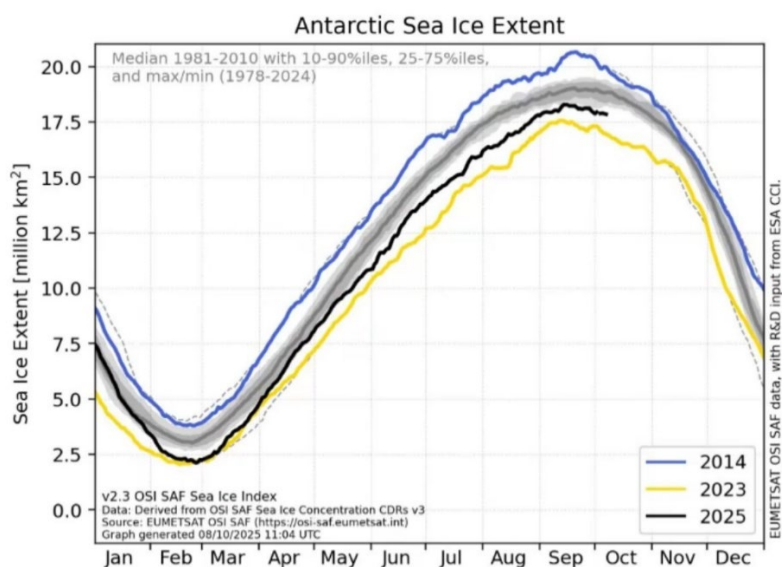
As the data shows, nature isn’t obeying alarmist scripts:



365 years of temperature data from central England, the worlds longest running climate record, showed no trend, despite a sixfold rise in population and a surge in co2, January temperatures have barely shifted since 1600. Likewise for July, normally the hottest month of the year, temperatures are virtually unchanged. Even during the coal-fired industrial revolution there was no sudden spike. The warmest winters on record happened in the 1700s, the 1800s and the early 1900s, long before modern emissions. Any warming is slow, natural, with the slight modern uptick 1) the urban heat island effect and 2) Earth’s gradual recovery from the ice age.



If carbon dioxide really controlled the climate, the above chart would shoot up on the right, but it doesn't and this might be why the temperature record is often ignored.



Global sea ice extent at both poles is tracking close to the 1981 to 2010 average. Antarctic ice has rebounded sharply from last year's low while arctic coverage is now within the normal range, and has shown no downward trend since 2007, nearly two decades of stability. According to official NSIDC data. Stability doesn't sell headlines!

Whilst our efforts of all thing's climate, we must put more effort into education and continue to build on making everyday life better for communities.