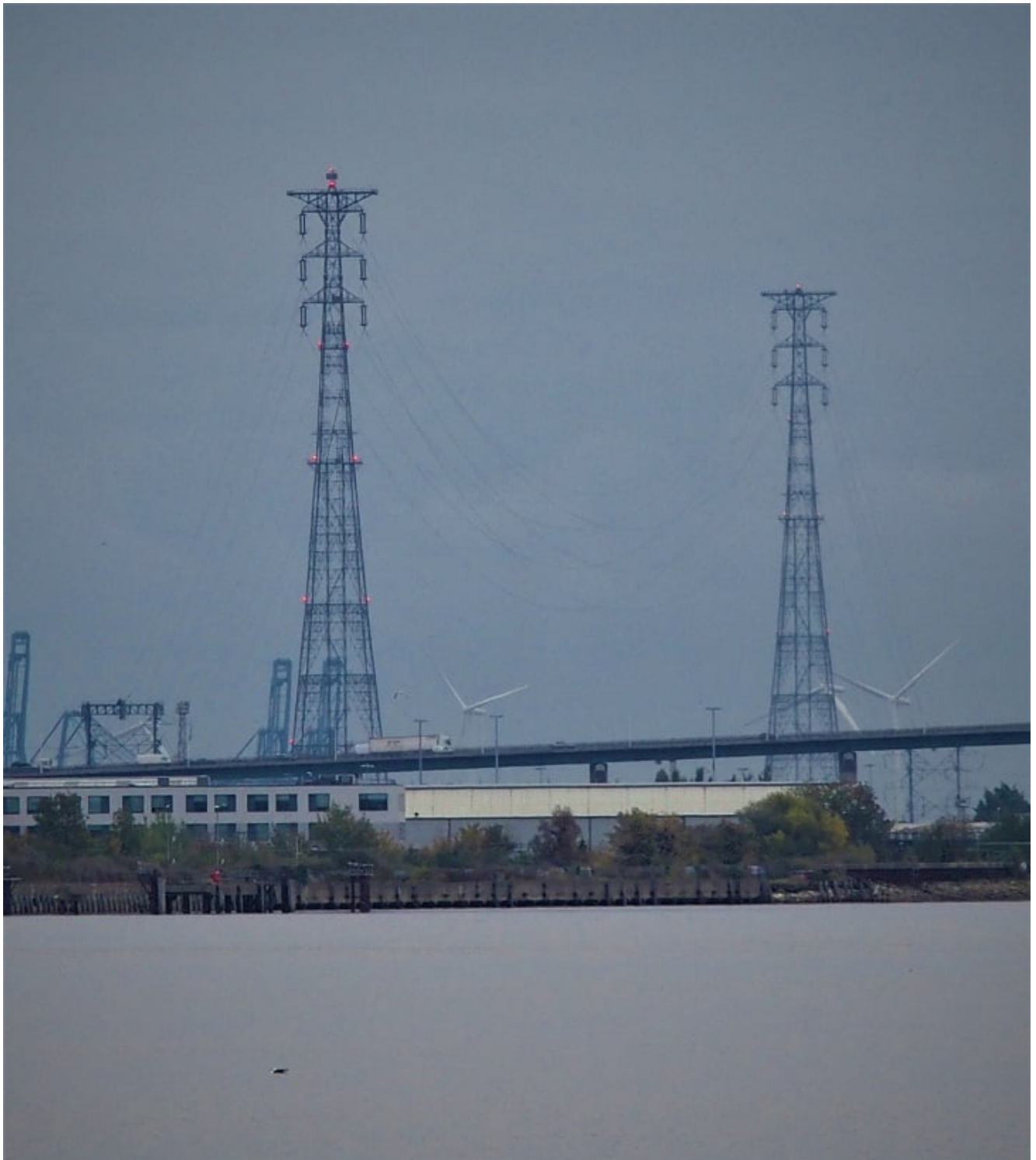


Something very, very tall

Pylons. Not just any old pylons, these are the 400kV Thames Crossing, the tallest electricity pylons in the country being 623 ft tall. They take powerlines across the River Thames between Essex and Kent over a span of 1372 metres, or 1500 yards, which is still what I think in, although I can and do use metric when required (ie most days)



Urban legend has it that when they were erected in 1965 they were deliberately made 3 ft taller than the Post Office Tower (620 ft, including aerials) which opened for use the previous year. The Post Office Tower is now called the BT Tower (British Telecom). It hasn't been the tallest building in London or anywhere in the UK for years.

I have been trying for months to get a decent picture of one,

better both of these pylons; then my husband stumbled upon the ideal spot by accident this morning. The bridge in the foreground is the approach to the Queen Elizabeth II bridge over the Thames, a component of the Dartford Crossing, which is the bridge travelling south and two tunnels travelling north. The river bends sharply after the bridge; from this angle it isn't obvious that the pylons are on opposite banks.

They can be seen from a long way off. Years ago when I used to visit a friend in Kent and would be driving back to Dagenham late at night, before the bridge opened when it was just the tunnels and there was no M25 (London equivalent of the Washington Beltway) I used to navigate my way home by aiming for the red lights, eventually I would pick up the tunnel approach to join the queue for the toll booths.

When the lockdown started in the UK in March and I started this occasional series of 'something cheerful' I was going to number the days. I'm so glad I decided against that. Keep well, gentle readers.