CLAIMS

1. A mooring assembly for attaching a vessel to a subsea well including a well conductor, the mooring assembly comprising:

   (a) a housing for the well conductor;

   (b) a base defining an interface for a subsea ground surface; and

   (c) a rotatably mounted vessel attachment point;

   wherein, in use, a vessel moored to the subsea well is capable of rotational movement around the subsea well.

2. A mooring assembly according to claim 1 wherein the housing defines a conduit for the well conductor.

3. A mooring assembly according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the housing comprises fixing means to enable it to be fixed in position relative to the well conductor.

4. A mooring assembly according to claim 3 wherein the fixing means comprises a first mating surface provided on the housing that is compatible with a second mating surface on the well conductor.

5. A mooring assembly according to claim 4 wherein the first mating surface comprises a pin, a ball, a bore, a projection, a blade or a channel.

6. A mooring assembly according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the housing further comprises a locating means for centring a well casing therein.

7. A mooring assembly according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the housing further comprises a guide means to further assist with landing a well casing in the housing.

8. A mooring assembly according to any one of claims 1 to 7 wherein the base comprises at least one engaging means for the subsea ground surface.

9. A mooring assembly according to claim 8 wherein the engaging means for the subsea ground surface comprises a projection.

10. A mooring assembly according to claim 8 or 9 wherein the engaging means for the subsea ground surface comprises at least one arm or strut that extends laterally from the base to allow the interface to extend over a larger area of subsea ground surface.

11. A mooring assembly according any one of claims 8 to 10 wherein the engaging means for the subsea ground surface is adapted to receive an additional anchoring element.

12. A mooring assembly according to claim 11 wherein the additional anchoring element is a stake, pile, screw or a spike.

13. A mooring assembly according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the base further comprises a spacing means to allow the formation of void between the base and the subsea ground surface, when in use.

14. A mooring assembly according to claim 13 wherein the void is adapted to allow for the passage of a fixing material, such as mortar, glue, cement or concrete to an area adjacent to a lower portion of the base.

15. A mooring assembly according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the base comprises a skirt or at least one arm that extends out radially from the main longitudinal axis of the housing.

16. A mooring assembly according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the rotatably mounted vessel attachment point comprises at least one bearing member that defines a bearing surface.

17. A mooring assembly according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the rotatably mounted vessel attachment point comprises an attachment member for releasably receiving a vessel anchor line or hawser.

18. A method for fitting a mooring assembly for a vessel to a subsea well including a well conductor, the method comprising the steps of

    (a) providing the mooring assembly including a base; and

(b) rotatably mounting the mooring assembly to the well conductor at or near a subsea ground surface;

wherein, in use, a vessel moored to the subsea well is capable of rotational movement around the subsea well.

19. A method according to claim 18 further comprising the step of fixing the mooring assembly to the well conductor.

20. A method for mooring a vessel to a subsea well, the method comprising the step of attaching the vessel to the subsea well via a mooring assembly according to any one of claims 1 to 17 and wherein, when moored, the vessel is capable of rotational movement around the subsea well.