

UpBEAT

Newsletter from Blackshaw Environmental Action Team (BEAT)

Issue 8 : September 2010

From the Editor

Welcome to this first edition of the revived **UpBEAT**. It is, in fact, number 8 as BEAT produced seven issues of a newsletter called *UpBEAT* some years ago. There is now so much going on in and around BEAT that we thought we should revive the newsletter. If you have any news items or ideas suitable for **UpBEAT**, please contact us (details below). Feedback from readers is also most welcome.

The BEAT team

New!

Film Evenings

BEAT starts an irregular series of film evenings on Wednesday 8th September, at 7.45pm, at The Sportsman Pub at Kefs.



Bus E arrives at the pub at 7.35pm - so you will have time to buy a drink and get a seat. The **films will be on environmental issues** and how we as a community can respond to the challenges of climate change, rising energy prices, etc. The first film to be shown will be David Attenborough's "*The Truths About Climate Change*" which is a co-production between BBC and the Discovery Channel.

It is **free** to watch the films - although contributions are always welcome as it helps us to buy new films. However, **you do need to be a member of BEAT to attend the film evenings** (see below) - you can join on the night if not already a member.

After the film showing there will be an opportunity to talk about the ideas presented, or arising from the film. If you have suggestions for interesting films we can show please let us know (see **Contact Us** below).

Become a Member of BEAT

Become a member of BEAT for only £1 per year by contacting Georgina (01422 844636 / george@arbolution.co.uk).

We meet on the **second Wednesday each month** (see **Diary** for specific dates) and all of them are at The Sportsman pub at Kebcote at 7.45pm.

In support of our aims (see inside for details), our start time fits in with the local bus (Bus E arrives at

the pub at 7.35pm).

In October, January, April and July we have speakers and business to deal with. All other months (except August) there will be a film showing.

The **BEAT AGM** will take place on **Wednesday 13th October 2010**. It includes a guest speaker and will be followed by a fantastic buffet at £5 per head (optional).



Headlines / Message Board

- BEAT meets every second Wednesday each month at The Sportsman at Kebcote at 7.45pm
- New BEAT initiative : Film Evenings starting Wed 8th Sept @ 7.45pm. Suggestions for future films welcome.
- Energy Saving Trust (EST) survey deemed a success
- See inside for an update about the Sustainability Plan & opportunities relating to green energy sources



Diary

Important dates for your diary:

- 08 Sept : Film Evening with discussion
- 13 Oct : AGM featuring guest speaker, followed by buffet
- 16 Oct : Village Clean-up (10am)
- 10 Nov : Film Evening with discussion
- 08 Dec : Film Evening with discussion
- 12 Jan : Meeting including guest speaker

Contact Us

- Tim : 01706 813800 or dargancole@btinternet.com
Georgina : 01422 844636 or george@arbolution.co.uk
Finn : 01422 846863 or finn.jensen@rocketmail.com

BEAT's Aims

- a) To protect nature, wildlife and the general environment in Blackshaw.
- b) To ensure that local and national authorities and organisations act to conserve the area, involving local people in the process.
- c) To monitor and oppose any activity detrimental to nature, wildlife and the general environment in the area.
- d) To assist and/or develop any plan which enhances nature, wildlife and the general environment in the area.
- e) To encourage, promote and assist the introduction of domestic renewable energy technologies and similar sustainable initiatives, sympathetic to the general environment in the area.
- f) To promote, develop and sustain measures for the benefit of the environment in the area.

To read BEAT's Constitution, download it from www.blackshaw.net or contact Finn for a copy.

BEAT Officers

Chair : Tim Cole
Secretary : Georgina Tearne
Treasurer : Finn Jensen



Are you interested In Solar Panels On Your Roof?



Do you want to generate your own electricity? Then you could put a solar panel on the roof of your house for a photovoltaic solar panel that will produce electricity. In fact, you do not have to have a roof. The solar panels can be placed on the outside walls or on the ground.

The first step is to consider whether there are other renewable technologies that are more suitable and cost effective for your house. You could get solar panels that produce hot water - if you get your hot water from a tank in the building.

Financially, you can make a small profit if you produce your own electricity or heat. For a photovoltaic system you are **guaranteed a fixed subsidy of 41.3 pence per unit** generated for 25 years, linked to inflation and tax free. You will of course also make big savings on your electricity bills - a typical system will have paid itself off after 10-15 years but with increased electricity prices expected over the next decade it will pay itself off even sooner.

The sooner you get a photovoltaic (PV) system up and running the more you will earn for two reasons:

1. you will get paid for 25 years if you install it now but if you wait five years you will only get paid for 20 years and
2. the subsidy will decrease for newcomers year-by-year. The reason is that the subsidy is only meant to kick-start the renewable industry.

The argument for waiting a period to install a PV system is that the systems are likely to come down in price over the coming years, partly because mass production will make each unit cheaper

but also because technological improvements are expected for PV systems, like printed PVs and nano technology. There is also the risk that future governments may change the tariff you are paid.

There is an **alternative** to buying a PV system. There are companies that will install PV systems for free on your roof. They will let you have all the electricity it produces for free but they will keep the 41.3 pence subsidy per unit produced! So the only profit you will be making is the saving you will have on your electricity bills for the next 25 years. How much saving you will make depends on how much electricity the PV system produces, which again is dependent on how big it is and its location. So if you have a big roof you could make a big saving.

A Shade Greener is a company that plans to install



solar panels on 6,000 houses, including in Yorkshire (see www.ashadegreener.co.uk) - but there are other companies making the same offer.

For further information on PV systems: **Brian Goss: Choosing Solar Electricity - a guide to photovoltaic systems**, 2010, Centre for Alternative Technology, 185 pages, £14.00, ISBN 978-1-902175-59-1. This publication is a step-by-step guide on how to go about choosing a system that suits your needs - and your wallet!

If you are interested in looking into bulk buying of PVs please contact Andy Clegg on 01422-455507 or 07740674396 or email andywarcock@gmail.com. Bulk buying can result in discounts.

Get Cheaper, Green Electricity & Reduce Our Carbon Footprint

BEAT could enter a partnership with Green Energy UK which could provide you with cheaper, renewable electricity and result in cash back towards reducing the community's carbon footprint. Read how it would work....

Renewable, green electricity comes from wind turbines, photovoltaic panels, hydro projects, etc. It is good for the environment as it is not polluting or in limited supply like coal, oil and gas. It is healthier and more sustainable.



Green Energy UK offers 100% renewable electricity at a price that is lower than our regional electricity supplier (npower). For a typical 3,300 units of electricity, npower will charge £466.05. Green Energy UK would charge, on their Deep Green tariff, 463.43. However, if **at least ten households sign up to Green Energy UK through BEAT** there will be a **further discount** of £41.42 for a household using 3,300 units. So a saving of £44 compared to npower. Green Energy UK also has an Economy 7 tariff for those interested.

If a minimum of ten households signed up through BEAT, **BEAT would receive 5% of the total spent** by the ten households each quarter. The money would be managed by BEAT - to ensure openness and fairness - but it could be reserved exclusively for members **to spend on energy efficiency measures**, or even used to invest in producing our own energy.

If ten households signed up and used on average 3,300 per year BEAT would receive around £207 p.a. from Green Energy UK. So the more households that sign up through BEAT the more money we would get to invest in the community.



Many buildings in Blackshaw Parish are hard to keep warm. Heating probably accounts for nearly half of our domestic carbon footprint, while electricity accounts for about a fifth, so energy efficiency is a high priority for BEAT. If we can get funding to improve our homes and reduce our carbon footprint, simply from paying our usual electricity bills, that sounds like a good deal for the area!

For more information, please ring Green Energy UK on 0800 954 0675.

Alternatively, visit www.greenenergy.uk.com.

If you are interested in exploring bulk buying of green electricity please let us know on 01422 846863 or finn.jensen@rocketmail.com.



Sustainability Plan

A sustainability plan for Blackshaw was identified by BEAT as a high priority towards the end of 2009 and a working group of eight people has been working on it since.

The **Sustainability Plan Working Group** is open to anyone - it meets on the **second Tuesday of the month**. If you are interested in the group, please contact Finn (see **Contact Us**).

We have had discussions with landowners about possible hydro projects to produce electricity and we want to work with Calderdale Council on house insulation.

We are also planning a field trip for anyone interested in visiting a village that has started reducing their greenhouse gases, producing more food locally, etc to get some inspiration and advice for our project and learn from their experiences.

Village Clean-Up

BEAT organises two village cleanups each year, one in April and one in October. We invite everyone in the village, on **Saturday 16th October**, to help pick up litter on the roads, the tracks and footpaths. It is surprising how much we collect each time. Bin bags, gloves, etc are provided on the day. It usually takes one to two hours but the more people that turn up the quicker it finishes. Everyone is invited to the Chapel afterwards for tea, coffee and cakes.



If you cannot participate but would like to pick up litter in a certain area at another time please contact **Phil Knowles** (knowles.phil@gmail.com / 01422 844871).

**Saturday 16th October
10am @ The Chapel**



Energy Saving Trust



Energy Saving Trust (EST) teamed up with BEAT and the Parish Council and had four staff

members in Blackshaw Parish (including Charlestown) for two weeks in May / June 2010 to offer energy advice for all households interested - 98 households took up the offer.



BEAT had formulated some questions we wanted the Energy Saving Trust to ask all households. A report is now published on the findings. You can find the report on www.blackshaw.net under the BEAT section or email finn.jensen@rocketmail.com if you prefer to have the report emailed to you.

The EST has created a green community for Blackshaw Parish on their website (www.greencommunitiescc.org.uk - remember the cc!). If you put in your postcode and search for Blackshaw Parish you will be able to complete an online survey - a carbon footprint calculator - on your energy use, get advice on how you can reduce your energy use and monitor online how your energy use changes.



To encourage as many as possible to complete the survey Energy Saving Trust offered a prize to be drawn among those who completed the survey online - Debbie McCall won the prize. However, it is not too late to complete the survey for your household if you have not already done so.

BEAT : Contact Us

To find out more about BEAT, or any of the articles in this newsletter; to join, or contribute your ideas, you are welcome to contact

- Tim : 01706 813800 or dargancole@btinternet.com
- Georgina : 01422 844636 or george@arbolution.co.uk
- Finn : 01422 846863 or finn.jensen@rocketmail.com

Bulk Buying of Energy

Bulk buying of energy was one of the priorities identified in the EST survey and at a public meeting organised by BEAT.

We are therefore looking into the bulk buying of green electricity, oil and photo-voltaic (PV) solar panels. We are also looking for a **volunteer to research possibilities for bulk buying LPG.**

Should you be interested in volunteering, please contact Finn (see **Contact Us**).



Insulation of Hard to Treat Houses

'Hard to treat' houses are houses with stone walls, with no cavity walls or with no suitable cavity walls for insulation.

Calderdale Council is preparing to spend £100,000 on the insulation of 40 'hard to treat' houses for low income households. You cannot apply for such a grant yet but we will keep you posted when the scheme is launched.

If your house is **not** a 'hard-to-treat' building you can still receive a smaller grant for loft and cavity wall insulation if you are a low



income family or over 60. For everyone else, investing in loft and cavity wall insulation pays for itself within a few years.

For more information on the Council's grants for insulation email heat@calderdale.gov.uk, phone the council (0845 245 6000, ask for Housing Energy Action Team - HEAT) or look at www.calderdale.gov.uk/housing/grants/energy-grants/homeinsulation-scheme.html

