

UpBEAT

Newsletter for Blackshaw Environmental Action Team (BEAT)

March-April 2012



From The Editor

Welcome to issue no 18, which gives updates on our four main projects: Community orchards, Community wind turbine, Greening the Chapel and the hydro project. You will also find information about our fundraising, about BEAT meetings up to June, about Calderdale Council's new energy strategy for the borough and changes to the Feed-in-tariff.

Please remember our village clean-up on Saturday 21st April. We meet at the Chapel at 10.30 am to pick up litter for about an hour. The more people that turn up the quicker it will be done. You will be given litter pickers and bin bags but please bring your own gloves if you want gloves.

Afterwards refreshments will be served at the Chapel. Children can participate if supervised by an adult. Thanks to Phil Knowles for organising the village clean-up that takes place every April & October and has been running for over ten years.

We have had a very successful fundraising period and would like to thank our Parish Council for a donation of £40, Big Lottery Fund for a grant of £9855 and Calderdale Council for a grant of £1545. Also thanks to everyone who ensured we received a total £896 through LocalGiving.com on 1st and 2nd March. This support will enable us to do a lot more.

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Community orchards

Thanks to everyone who helped with the planting the wind breaks at Frank and Maggs on 12th and 19th February. Around 35 volunteers worked hard planting around 1000 trees in one day. On 25th March another 400 trees were planted by around 20 volunteers [pics available].

We finished the tree planting for the wind breaks and for the coppicing at Frank and Maggs on Sunday 25th March. Thanks to everyone who have helped. Now we just need to plant one hundred fruit trees in the nursery.

The wind break at Carol and Garry's site will also need to be planted when the fencing has been done. There will therefore be weekend days we will ask you to come and help with the tree planting.



Thanks to Treeresponsibility for all their help with the site at Frank and Maggs.

We have now received another 420 trees from the Woodland Trust, including fruit trees and fruit bushes. That will bring us to a total of 1260 donated trees for our two community orchards.

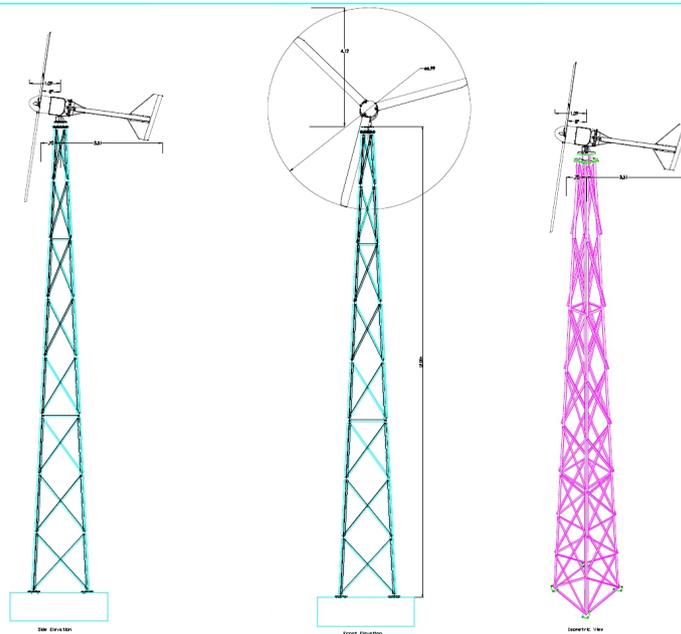
Two ten-year leases have now been signed by landowners of the two sites. Many thanks for their support. They are letting us use their land free of charge but are of course free to pick the fruit like everyone else. The trees will take about five years to give fruit but the fruit bushes should be productive earlier.

Community Wind Turbine

The second and final round of the grant application to Village SOS was submitted at the end of January and we will have the result on 10th April. The grant is conditional of us receiving planning permission, registering our community enterprise with the FSA, opens a bank account in the name of Pennine Community Power, etc.

We will also be issuing shares and applying for other grants for the community wind turbine. BEAT attended the Village SOS conference in Birmingham on 27th February. Over 400 people attended and information about the conference is available at the Village SOS website and from BEAT.

The planning application has been submitted to Calderdale Council. Our Parish Council discussed the application at its meeting on 27th February and decided to object on visual grounds and to recommend the tower of the turbine to be 10 metres instead of 12 metres. Two parish councillors voted for this, one against,



two abstained and one did not vote due to a conflict of interest. Calderdale Council will now consider the application.

Cooperative Enterprise Hub has offered us four days of free consultancy to help us set up Pennine Community Power as an Industrial and Provident Society. This can include the use of a lawyer or any other experts we need help from. We had the first meeting with a consultant on 17th February. A local lawyer, Keith Lomax, has given free legal advice to BEAT regarding the lease and we are grateful for his support.

The lease between BEAT/Pennine Community Power and the landowner of the land where the wind turbine will stand has now been agreed. Thanks to Lydia, Simon, Paul and Andy for helping out with the drafting of the lease.

The financial rules for Pennines Community Power have been agreed and sent the Financial Services Authority (FSA) to be registered as an Industrial and Provident Society. The founding directors will be Paul Willson, Ashley Sharp, Mark Simmonds and Finn Jensen.

Grafting Course

The grafting courses on 25th February and 17th March with Mark Simmonds were both a great success with 12 and 14 people attending, grafting 100 fruit trees. Here is what two participants emailed us afterward one of the courses:

“Many thanks for organising an excellent event. [We] really enjoyed learning a new skill, and found Mark's course very practical and helpful. If we can, we'd like to consolidate what we have learned by taking part in the re-run. Please do advise us when it will take place.”

Thanks to everyone who helped out –



not least Mark Simmonds who did the teaching. People brought food to share for lunch and we have some excellent chefs in Blackshaw. The first

event was funded by the Big Tree Plant – the other by BEAT. BEAT gave a donation of £60 to the Chapel for the use of the venue.

Greening the Chapel

BEAT has been given a £2,000 grant from LEADER/Rural Development Agency for the wall insulation and double glazing of the two downstairs rooms at the Chapel.

This will pay just over half the costs – we still have to raise another £1345. We have applied to another funder for the remaining costs. The LEADER would like the work to be completed by July 2012. The work will be done in the summer months.

We have also applied for a grant towards the costs of photovoltaic solar panels on the roof of the Chapel.

Hydro project

You may remember that BEAT and Hebden Bridge Transition Town (HBTT) have been working on a hydro project in Hebden Bridge. A survey for the project is available on BEAT's website (www.blackshaw.net/BEAT). Ash and Finn with Garry from HBTT had a productive meeting with ten landowners on 28th February where it was decided that we can now meet with just one of them – to speed things up.



Getting less FiT

The government has launched a consultation on the future of the Feed-in-Tariff (FiT), the payments for generating renewable electricity. Hardest hit will – once again – be the photovoltaic (PV) solar panels.

The consultation sets out plans to cut feed in tariff incentives for PV from 21p/kWh to 13.6p/kWh for installations with less than 4kW of capacity if deployment has exceeded 200MW by July. If deployment reaches 150MW to 200MW, it proposes reducing the tariff to 15.7p, and if less than 150MW is deployed, the tariff would drop to 16.5p (Business Green 16.2.2012).

So if you are planning to install PV solar panels on your roof you may want to get them before July 2012.

BEAT Meetings

The Leader of Calderdale Council, Cllr Janet Battye and the Council's Carbon Partnership Officer, Emma Appleton, spoke on 8th February about the Council's Green agenda. They explained the Cabinet had agreed a report called "Calderdale's Energy Future" for discussion at the full Council meeting on 15th February. The report outlines how the whole of Calderdale – not just the Council – will save 40% of its greenhouse gases (CO₂, etc) by 2020 with 2005 as the baseline. See article elsewhere in this newsletter. Many thanks to Janet & Emma for an interesting talk.

We had Matt Taylor from Forest and Land speaking at our 14th March meeting. Dale and Paul gave talks about their biomass heating system and photovoltaic solar panels. Thanks to all three of them.



At our 11th April meeting we have our local MP, Craig Whittaker, speaking on the Government's green agenda – unless he is called to an urgent meeting in Parliament. [picture of Craig W].

Our 9th May meeting will have Mark Simmonds from Calderdale Local Orchard Group (CLOG) speaking

about community orchards and allotments. Mark is also an expert on Industrial and Provident Societies and as BEAT is setting one of those up (for the community wind turbine) he will also be talking about that.

Next Meeting 11 April 2012
The Chapel, Blackshaw Head

Calderdale's Energy Future

This is the title of a 31-page document agreed by the full Council meeting on 15th February 2012. It was adopted unanimously. It represents a major shift in the Council's long term thinking – not just on energy but on how to make sustainable communities where more people work in the green economy, energy conservation, growing food locally for local people, etc.

BEAT's Sustainability Plan for Blackshaw Parish (available on www.blackshaw.net/BEAT) fits in very well with the Council's plans. BEAT is already working with Calderdale MBC through the dCarb Upper Calder Valley group but there are now possibilities for working even closer together.

Calderdale Council wants to reduce the borough's greenhouse gas emissions very quickly because of the serious risks of climate change, insecurity with imported fossil fuels like gas, oil and coal, rising fuel costs and because renewable energy offers substantial health savings as fossil fuels damage our health. The target is a 40% reduction of greenhouse gases by 2020 and an 80% reduction by 2050 with 2005 as the baseline.

These targets are in line with Manchester City Council and many other councils' targets.

The Council is interested in working closely with communities on insulating homes to a very high standard, for communities to produce their own energy and food – or at least some of it, to reduce the need for car journeys, change peoples' behaviour, etc.

To quote from the strategy document: "We must work with the local community, enabling and supporting community action across the Borough and encouraging communities to develop their own plans for renewable energy."

Among the 2020 goals set in Calderdale's Energy Future are:

- Locally owned renewable energy systems which directly fund community enhancements.
- Common access to growing space for children and adults to grown their own food.
- The elimination of fuel poverty.

representatives from the private and public sector and communities will develop an implementation plan. One of the many questions is what resources will such a working group have access to in terms of budget and staff time etc

BEAT has offered to help the Council implement the strategy as we are already in the process of creating community owned renewable energy and locally produced food
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Houses in Hebden Bridge being insulated

Funding Update

The Big Lottery Fund

has awarded BEAT £9,855 for the two community orchards, which will enable us to do the fencing, gates, stiles, purchasing of fruit trees and bushes, training courses, publicity, tools, two notice boards – once for each community orchard, etc

Calderdale Council

has awarded BEAT a grant of £1545, which will also be used towards the costs of the community orchards and allotments.

LocalGiving.com

You may remember from the last issue of UpBEAT that LocalGiving.com would double any donations given through their website from 1st March 2012 until their £375,000 had gone. As this was their



last national doubling up this year BEAT encouraged our supporters to make their donations on 1st March or a few days later. We managed to raise £896, which was an amazing result as we had already raised £680 through LocalGiving.com. Many thanks to everyone who donated.

If you did not manage to give BEAT a donation it is not too late to do so through LocalGiving.com – it just will not be doubled up but if you Gift Aid BEAT will get an extra 25%. Just go to www.localgiving.com/charities/beat or if you type the postcode HX7 you will find BEAT.

Green News

"Dramatically increase community energy", say UK groups with 12 million members in their vision of a dramatically scaled up community energy sector in the UK. Currently, 99% of the country's electricity is generated by just six companies. The new coalition, which includes some of the best known and trusted national organisations including The Co-operative Group, The National Trust, The National Federation of Women's Institutes and The Church of England, wants to start a revolution with communities at its heart which will drive a clean,

affordable and secure energy system.

Green Energy UK

BEAT has a longstanding partnership with Green Energy UK to provide 100% electricity from renewable sources. People who sign up through BEAT get a 10% discount on their bills – an easy way to reduce your greenhouse gas emissions.

We have changed our arrangements with Green Energy UK so BEAT now receives £25 for each customer that signs up through BEAT before 30-4-2012.

For more information please contact Green Energy UK on 0800 954 0675

and speak to Liz Bell.

To sign up to Green Energy UK through BEAT, or to learn more, go to:

http://www.greenenergy.uk.com?PARTNER_ID=560

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