



COMMUNITY RENEWABLE ENERGY

Minutes of the Spaunton and Appleton le Moors Community Energy Group meeting.

Held: on 10th Oct 2005, at the Reading room, Appleton –le moors, 7.30pm

Present: Dave Rawlings, Chair, Nelly Trevelyan, Secretary, John Marsden, George Winn-Darley, Helen Beaumont, Vicky Shaw and Judi Holliday, National Park.

Apologies: Jim Hall, Geoff Cawood, David Grewer.

Vicky brought us her news about a plan made by Yorkshire Forward and Transco for buildings that are not connected to the gas mains, to be able to buy, at a subsidised cost yet to be finalised, air source heat pumps. They plan to bulk buy 500 units and to thereby get the price down, initially from a starting cost of £2750 to £1750, and maybe right down to £550 per unit. There is to be a meeting at Newton on Rawcliffe Village Hall on Wednesday 2nd Nov at 7.30, where there will be a chance to meet representatives of Yorkshire Forward and the manufacturers. It is planned that someone will be trained locally to fit them and maintain them. Suitable buildings would need to be properly insulated to qualify. This could be a very possible technology for the village hall? Vicky is planning to attend the meeting and is willing to report back

Hebden Bridge alternative technology centre,(Y.R.E.N.) are planning to hold a green week in early Nov, and there will be displays and talks. Vicky and Judi are planning a trip for interested group members to coincide with the best talk. Date to be confirmed. Another trip is planned to see the Kielder wood-fired district heating system, on Nov 12th.

Finally; an evening event is being planned for December, a Barndance, maybe midweek, maybe at Hutton –le hole, or at Botton villge for all those involved in community energy schemes.. Watch this space for confirmation.

We discussed the planned presentation to the village. Oil has gone up 200% in two years. George was of the opinion that it would need to carry on upwards to make renewables look like better value to the general public. He suggested the idea of doing costs and outcomes in relation to a particular house in the village. We recognised that there was no such thing as a completely typical house, and Dave Rawlings said he was happy for us to use his house as an exemplar, as it was central to the village, of old construction and he had already put down his fuel and electrical usage. The point of doing this was so that people could then relate it to their own house. One of the main difficulties that we face in doing this show, is that it seems to be very difficult to get exact costs down clearly, from the manufacturers of the different technologies. People will want to feel confident that they are dealing with professional people. Vicky said that she could pull together the costs of the different technologies for one house.

Helen had started to investigate micro wind and had contacted Sir Henry Lawson Tancred at Alborough. Through him, she had found out some other contacts that she hopes to pursue further, Dr David Cochrane and Dr Philip Surman? To be continued.. Nelly reminded the group about the Swift rooftop turbine that can produce one kilowatt, that Geoff Cawood had discovered on the web. It is technically possible to connect to the grid with a two-way meter, but this need further investigating.

John Marsden had had a look at Photo-voltaics, and had talked to John Bett of Viotech Solutions at Whitby. He had said that he would be willing to do a presentation at our village day but was a little discouraging because he said that the technology was hard to get hold of, because Germany was absorbing all the available silicon supplies to do the street lights in Germany. John Marsden had visited a newly built eco house in Burton in Lonsdale. Enough tiles to supply the energy needs of a domestic dwelling can cost between £8,000 to £16,000 with up to 50% grant. A firm called Sundog energy were offering free system design and costing.

Nelly had done some more work around the idea of a community windmill. She had investigated two ideas. One was to link the scheme with the new flour milling project at their farm. This seemed to present some advantages in that,

A: There have already been two smaller windmills at HillTop that were accepted well by the park and by the public.

B: It is in a very windy situation

C; There was a need for three-phase electricity at the Farm and at two or three other farms in Spaunton, which is or will have to be supplied by a generator. Thus there could be one or two main customers for the electricity produced.

D: it could present a very 'sustainable' project to funders, by linking with local and organic food production and educational initiatives.

The immediate problem with this idea is that in order to sell electricity to the grid from a bigger windmill Spaunton would need to be connected to the three-phase supply, and this could be impossibly expensive.. (£20,000 plus per kilometre) We have contacted N.E.D.L and will be discussing this with an engineer soon. Without major grant funding this idea would be unlikely to run... However a possible source of grant aid has been suggested that will be looked into.

If the first idea is no go, the other potential site would need to be located near to the three-phase grid. (which runs along the A170) The highest, most obvious windy spot would be on Appleton Common above Skipster Hagg, where it would be only about half a mile to the grid connection. It is possible to buy secondhand, reconditioned windmills at the moment that may not be too big for the Nat Park planners to consider, for very reasonable prices (£50k has been mentioned). Obviously, this size of project would need a professional feasibility study, but the planning rules for the park are not set in iron and have not been tested yet. 250 klwatts or 500? There could be less difference in height and size than might at first be expected and productiveness would clearly be better with the bigger one. All these matters would need to be balanced before a clear decision could be made. For the village presentation it is proposed that computer generated photo mock-ups be attempted to give people a clearer idea of how they might look in the landscape.

Dave Rawlings had looked into biofuels as being the simplest way for him to cut his own fuel costs. There is growing usage of recycled cooking oils to make biodiesel.

Although biofuel can be made from almost any biomass source (such as wood), they vary enormously in the cost of conversion and the best prospects in the short term are for bioethanol from wheat and sugar beet . The use of set-aside land for growing fuel crops is being investigated. The economic analyses found on the web are out of date, not reflecting the recent steep increases in the price of fossil oil. Dave had attended the City of the future Conference in York and told us about it.

We were reminded that there is to be a free talk (Nov 25 Hovingham) organised by Colin Challen M.P, courtesy the Shed, on Climate Change .There will be bus transport to the venue.

Our next meeting will be Monday Nov 7th 7.30pm, same venue. We will continue to review information and ideas for the village event and need to finalise the overall format.