

DSEN Newsletter—Winter 08

Welcome to the winter edition of Devon Sustainable Energy Network newsletter which aims to facilitate the exchange of sustainable energy news and information across Devon. If you would like to make a contribution to the next newsletter, have an event to publicise or wish to be removed from the mailing list, please contact Fiona Swan, secretariat for DSEN on 01752 235180 or email info@dsen.org.uk.

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DSEN News

RE4D Update

Many of you will be aware that the pilot stage of RE4D draws to a close at the end of March. The Exit Group have been looking at possible sources of future funding and the most promising option is European Co-operation funding. Representatives from Devon, Dorset, Cornwall and Somerset, are meeting with potential French partners on 7th February to discuss how a South West / cross channel project might work.

In the mean time Devon County Council is looking at gap funding to keep RE4D ticking over. As yet we are unable to say what level of service we could offer to new clients but we will keep you updated through this newsletter and our website; www.re4d.org.

RE4D 'phase one' has been really successful, offering grants and funding feasibility studies for SME's and community groups in the Objective 2 areas of Devon. Feedback from clients has shown that the independent advice and mentor support offered by the RE4D team has been invaluable in helping individuals and organisations install renewable energy systems. The high turnout of installers at a recent event in Tiverton shows how relevantly RE4D has been able to support them, with business development grants and training courses.

We are on track to achieve most of the targets set out by our current funders, we have assisted over 200 SME's and community groups and given 47 grants, leading to 60 new installations in the Objective 2 areas. One of the most recent is a 12kW hydro turbine at Moorhaven, near Ivybridge in South Hams. The project has been complicated and lengthy but the owners will finally be able to start generating in the next few weeks.

We have also been running a householder survey on the website to find out how many domestic installations have taken place, and if they haven't what have been the barriers. Costs, inadequate grants and planning constraints have so far been the most common reasons for not installing. If you have had, or are considering having RE installed at your home please visit www.re4d.org/survey to complete the survey. If you don't have access to the internet you may call 0800 512 012 and speak to Sophie Phillips.

In other RE4D news...

Devon County Council was named Most Proactive Local Authority in the South West for its work on promoting renewables, particularly through RE4D. The Regen SW Awards took place in November at the Winter Gardens in Weston Super Mare, Councillor Humphrey Temperley accepted the award on behalf of DCC. Paul Baker (DARE) was also praised for his work in the sector.



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The RE4D installer event 23rd January 2008, incorporating the DSEN RESG meeting

The event at the Hartnoll Hotel near Tiverton was very successful; with speakers arranged around a rather nice lunch. The day started with a brief introduction from Paul Baker from DARE and Tom Furness from RE4D, who organised the event.

The first speaker was Chris Roberts from the BRE, a director of the Microgeneration Certification Scheme, who explained the benefits of the scheme and was then grilled by the audience. Hopefully he will be able to feedback these important comments from Devon's installer network.

Alex May from Step Ahead Research followed with the training needs analysis of the renewables sector that he has been working on for Devon County Council. Alex informed the audience of the pilot training project they are undertaking, providing sector specific skills as well as more generic training for those based in Devon. He invited those present to take up some of the free spaces that were still available on the pilot scheme.

The day then broke for lunch, which provided an opportunity for networking and chocolate cake. John Baker from Devon County Council was the next speaker. He outlined the Technology Growth Plans he is managing as part of RE4D and provided an update on 11 exciting projects. The Technology Growth Plans will provide detailed information over a range of technologies and identify areas where the sector could progress.

Afterwards Melanie Sealey, RE4D project manager, outlined some possible sources of continuation funding for the project and gave an overview of the efforts that are being made to secure the funding. The day was brought to a close by Paul Baker from DARE who led a discussion on the future of the DSEN RESG. The consensus was that meetings such as this were very welcome and useful. However, no mechanism was identified for organising further meetings outside the scope of RE4D.

Devon News

Plymouth Warm Start

Devon and Cornwall Housing Association and Westcountry Energy Action have been successful in securing £42,000 of funding from the ScottishPower Energy People Trust to enable housing association tenants to keep warm at home and help to reduce their fuel and other utility costs.

The project will provide new Devon and Cornwall Housing Association tenants and existing tenants that are having new heating systems installed with face to face tailored advice on energy, water efficiency and recycling along with basic financial advice. Each tenant will also be given a SMART Meter to help them monitor electricity consumption. Follow up advice and support will be given 8 weeks later to monitor and evaluate progress.

An Energy Performance Certificate will be issued for each property and the potential for energy efficiency and renewable energy measures along with funding will be explored. Plymouth Warm Start will be launched in April 08.

For further information contact Fiona Swan at fiona@wcea.org.uk 01752 235180.

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Devon Warm Zones Set To Launch In April

Devon Warm Zones, a partnership between the Devon local authorities, Westcountry Energy Action and National Energy Action, is continuing at pace to put in place what's needed to establish a series of Warm Zones across the County.

The Warm Zone concept has been around for eight years and involves taking an area based approach to helping householders access the various energy efficiency and heating schemes that are available. A targeted marketing campaign will be backed up by professional systems for referring householders to the best scheme for them.

For three years from April Devon Warm Zones will be concentrating it's efforts in specific areas. The main aim is to achieve a significant reduction in fuel poverty in those areas but there will also be some significant carbon savings achieved.

Over the next few weeks Devon Warm Zones will be out and about visiting the communities which will benefit from the project. The project team will be running meetings in each Warm Zone to introduce the project to the community and workers in the community, to gain their insight into how it could most benefit their community and to raise awareness of what will be on offer to householders.

The team are putting the final touches to a range of exciting and distinctive leaflets, posters and other materials. Look out for these, they will be appearing in a community near you soon. To get involved or for more information call Peter Dorans on 01392 205853 or email on peter.dorans@nea.org.uk.

Healthier Homes North Devon (HHND) is trialling new heating system to tackle Fuel Poverty

HHND (managed by WcEA), Transform Neighbourhood Management Team and North Devon District Council have pooled resources to trial a sustainable heating system for one vulnerable resident in Bratton Fleming. Mrs Forster lives in a three bed semi-detached, 1950s ex-council house, with no heating other than an open coal fire and she is unable to stay warm – even though her fuel costs are huge. Insulation measures have been installed with grant assistance, but this alone is not enough for her to achieve affordable warmth.

Mrs Forster qualifies for a WarmFront grant for oil-fired central heating, but this was very expensive - £2000 more than the maximum grant available to her! The cost of running the system, and the price for oil being so volatile would be issues for concern and therefore unlikely to remove her from the severe fuel poverty she is currently burdened with.

The partnership have proposed installing an Air Source Heat Pump, combined with a solar hot water system. This air-to-water system provides low temperature water for space heating (around 45°C); underfloor heating is not an option, so it was crucial to choose heat emitters that will meet the winter heat demand. We have opted for a hot water distribution system that will run around the internal perimeter of the dwelling, behind skirting boards – it is easy to install with minimum disruption and low labour requirements. Domestic hot water is provided by an array of evacuated tubes and off-peak electricity, combined with a high performance thermal store.

Most importantly we will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the system, and the benefit to Mrs Forster. We carried out a SAP assessment before measures, and we have installed data loggers to record internal and external temperatures for the duration of the trial (November 2007 to March 2008.) We will

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also look at monitoring how often the heat pump kicks in so that we are clear about how much fuel it is using, and therefore the cost.

It is expected that by end of March we will have collected enough data to show that Mrs Forster can afford to stay warm on her limited income, and that this system is appropriate for dwellings with limited space, such as flats and houses of multiple occupation – a cheap, effective and sustainable alternative to electric or oil heating systems. A full report will be available in the next DSEN newsletter.

School gets solar panels

Silverton Church of England primary school is having 24 photovoltaic solar panels worth £20,000 installed. In total these panels will generate 3.300kW each year and will save about 2 tonnes of CO₂ each year. Silverton was nominated by the Co-Operative staff and members and were one of the lucky 100 schools to receive financial assistance towards the installation of these panels.

Head teacher Heath Nickels has said that they have been 'working hard to reduce the school's carbon footprint' and that having the solar panels will 'instantly boost our efforts while sending out a strong message about our commitment to helping the environment'.

A monitor is going to be installed within the school to allow the students to keep track of quantity of energy being produced by the solar panels, in addition to the amount of CO₂

A Co-Op spokesperson has said that they hope by switching on the solar panels 'Silverton Primary School is teaching the next generation about climate change while setting an excellent example to other schools, businesses and homes.'

REGIONAL NEWS

Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre (ESTAC) Update

The Energy Saving Trusts intention to set up and finance regional domestic energy advice services are now underway with the publishing of the pre qualifying questionnaire. Westcountry Energy Action, the current managing agent of the Devon Energy Efficiency Advice Centre is working in partnership with other organisations across the region to attempt to secure the ESTAC contract which will be finalised by Sept 08.

The ESTAC will provide domestic energy efficiency, renewable energy and transport advice and will result in a three fold increase in activity across the region.

Silver Grade awarded to Powderham Castle

The Green Tourism Business Scheme has awarded Powderham Castle in Exeter with a silver grade for their efforts to become more green.

A qualified grading adviser assessed the site against a detailed set of criteria, including areas such as; energy and water efficiency, waste management and biodiversity.

South West second most sustainable region in the UK

Research carried out by Jewson (builder's merchant) has shown that people in the south west are more likely than other regions, to both understand sustainability issues and to improve energy efficiency within

their homes.

It was also revealed that 76% of people had already made some improvement to the energy efficiency within their homes, which was above the levels of any other area in the UK. In addition to this nearly half of the people living in the south west would be willing to pay up to 20% more for sustainable improvements and would also consider sustainable factors when making home improvements.

NATIONAL NEWS

Exemptions to the recently introduced Home Information Packs

Since the 14th December 2007 Home Information Packs (HIPs) have been compulsory for all properties being placed on the housing market. There are however a number of exceptions for properties that are not part of the 'standard' housing market.

Any properties that were put up for sale prior to the introduction of the HIPs are currently excluded from this legislation. As the HIPs were introduced at varying times for different types of property there are exemption dates;

- 1st August 2007 – properties with four or more bedrooms
- 10th September 2007 – properties with three or more bedrooms
- 14th December 2007 – properties with one or two bedrooms

In addition to this the exemptions include;

- All residential properties which are not available for sale with vacant possession (if a long term tenant is in residence and there will simply be a change in property ownership between landlords).
- Seasonal and holiday accommodation
- Mixed sales – when sold with one or more buildings or area of land used for non-residential purposes.
- Dual use of a property – where part of the building is for residential purposes whilst the other is for non-residential use.
- Sale of multiple properties to be purchased as a complete unit rather than sold separately.
- Unsafe properties or those due to be demolished
- Park homes – this is because the housing legislation does not treat these properties as 'dwelling houses'.
- New Builds – although this is going to change later this year

For more information please see:

<http://www.homeinformationpack.gov.uk/pdf/DraftProceduralGuidanceforHIPRegs.pdf>

http://www.homeinformationpack.gov.uk/pdf/070918_FINAL%20Guidance%20for%20enforcement.pdf

Defra Framework for pro-environmental behaviours

Defra has recently developed a framework for pro-environmental behaviours in the hope of improving the support they currently provide for their consumers. The framework has been designed with the intention of providing support for policy development and implementation within Defra, other government departments and also externally.

It brings together information and research into the public understanding, attitudes and behaviours, identifies behaviour goals and draws conclusions on the potential for change across a range of behavioural

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groups.

Its overall aim is to increase the contribution of action from both individuals and community groups with regard to improving the environment. The framework covers several important areas, including a set of core principles and approaches which can lead to the encouragement of more environmentally friendly behaviour. In addition a set of 12 headline behaviour goals have been established. These cover several main topics , such as; food and drink, personal travel, homes and household products, and travel tourism.

It also includes an assessment of the types of environmental actions people are already taking and their relative willingness to do more.

Five steps have been identified to help achieve the further progress of this framework;

- To distribute the environmental behaviours framework across Defra and to its partners at national, regional and local levels.
- To work with the key partners to try and identify new ways for partnership working.
- To provide advice and support to a variety of projects which a strong consumer dimension.
- To continue to build and develop the existing evidence base.
- Finally, to review the headline goals by the end of 2008.

For further information please see

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/evidence/social/behaviour/pdf/behaviours-jan08-report.pdf>

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Forthcoming Training and Events

WcEA training sessions

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|---|------------|----------|
| • Renewable Energy Basics | - Plymouth | 04/04/08 |
| | - Exeter | 11/07/08 |
| • Understanding Fuel Poverty and Energy Awareness | - Plymouth | 10/10/08 |
| | - Plymouth | 18/04/08 |
| | - Exeter | 18/07/08 |
| • Energy Champions | - Plymouth | 17/10/08 |
| | - Plymouth | 02/05/08 |
| | - Exeter | 25/07/08 |
| | - Plymouth | 24/10/08 |

For more information please see the attached flyers

CAFÉ training sessions

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|----------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| • Making It Happen | - Leeds | 06/02/08 |
| | - Newcastle | 07/02/08 |
| | - London | 05/03/08 |
| | - Aberdeen | 25/03/08 |
| • Finding out about Energy | - Exeter | 11/02/08 |
| | - Aberdeen | 25/02/08 |
| | - Liverpool | 11/03/08 |
| • Funding | - Middlesbrough | 20/02/08 |
| | - Perth | 22/02/08 |
| | - Aberystwyth | 19/03/08 |
| • Planning for Success | - Glasgow | 27/03/08 |
| | - Newcastle | 28/03/08 |

For more information please see <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/café/events/>

For other related news please follow the links to the following newsletters;

Devon Association for Renewable Energy (DARE) www.devondare.org/news.htm

Regen SW <http://www.regensw.co.uk/press/newsletters.asp>

Cornwall Sustainable Energy Partnership (CSEP) www.csep.co.uk/page115g.html