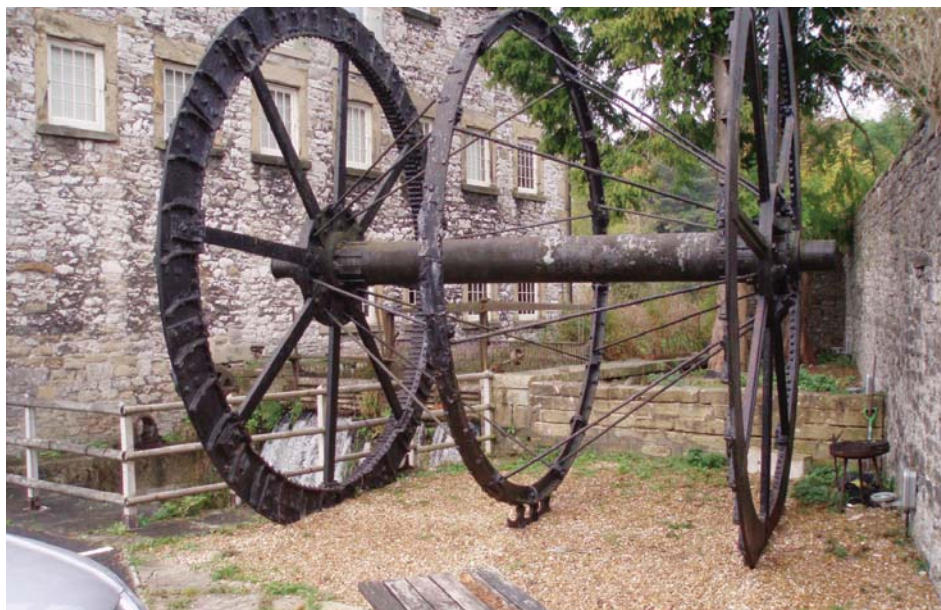


Community Skills for Climate Change

Sustainable Bakewell CIC

°Climate east
midlands



Background to the Community

Sustainable Bakewell (SB) is a Community Interest Company (CIC) – a limited company registered at Companies' House which carries out community related activities within its brief (it is allowed to have enough retained funds to be viable). SB started in October 2008 with focus on renewable energy, recycling and developing sustainable lifestyles. The group has been working on a number of projects over the past 4 years including helping with the development of a community orchard, setting up new allotments in Bakewell, delivering energy monitor training and holding general sustainability days for the people of Bakewell and surrounding villages.

In 2009, SB received permission from the owner of Victoria Mill in Bakewell to investigate developing the site for micro hydro. SB developed a clear staged strategy detailing how to take this project forward. Prior to this project, SB had received some funding from the Peak District

National Park Authority via DEFRA's Sustainable Development Fund to carry out a pre-feasibility study of the site, in which approximate estimates of energy yield were determined and the wider site and catchment implications defined.

Project Aims

This project had three main aims:

- 1 To fund a detailed engineering investigation and hydro energy confirmation study, complete with report.



Project

Stage 3 of the Micro hydro generation facility at Victoria Mill

Grant

£5600

- 2 To begin the consultation process with the local community.

- 3 To involve all of the local stakeholders in this local renewable venture.

Achievements

An engineering feasibility study by Derwent Hydro Ltd has been successfully carried out as far as practical to examine the amount of renewable energy obtainable at Victoria Mill. It has shown that the amount of water that could possibly flow through a restricting culvert leading to this site could produce 4kWh over the millstream weir.

An ecology study of the river has been carried out on wildlife, bats, otters and other mammals, and has shown that a micro hydro site could be implemented that would not prove detrimental to any mammal.

www.climate-em.org.uk/projects/community-skills

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Two consultation events have been held in the community, one in the form of a millstream and river tour, and the other a set of presentations with question and answer sessions.

All of the above have served to raise the visibility within the local community and the region for the potential for Victoria Mill as a feasible micro hydro project.

Impact on the Wider Community

Without a doubt, this project has opened up the debate within Bakewell on the need for sustainable energy, and it has especially focused upon the possibility of generating energy from the local river. This debate has also created a forum for people to voice their opinions about this type of energy, allowing for both local environmentalists and global environmentalists to get their key points across.

As a result of this forum, it has become apparent that opinions about such initiatives can be polarised within the town of Bakewell, and such views need to be further mediated in order to allow all members of the community to enter freely into the debate.

Challenges Faced / Lessons Learned

SB are very excited about the possibility of developing the Victoria Mill site. However it has become apparent the wider community needs lots of time and the “full picture” to get used to new and innovative ideas.

Some difficulties were experienced in engaging and debating with other river stakeholders and planners. SB have subsequently realised the



importance of being more proactive in assessing the diversity of potential stakeholders' responses to help ensure they fully prepare for all questions and debates that may arise. SB has sought to be transparent and have its intentions made clear to all interested parties from the outset of the project. As a consequence, the group has learnt that they must maintain ownership and control on information flows to prevent misleading or incomplete information being released prematurely.

In the Future?

A second ecology study is planned to look further into the aquatic life of the river, which will hopefully allay opposed river stakeholders' fears of this micro hydro project potentially being detrimental to the aquatic life.

A series of meetings has been set up with stakeholders to make progress on issues that are preventing the overall project from moving forward.

A third community consultation meeting is planned with the intention

of gaining a broader assessment of views of the local community on the hydro project.

A set of renewable energy information days has also been planned in Bakewell covering topics such as solar PV, solar thermal and biomass heating.

Contact Information

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Useful Web Addresses

Friends of the Peak

www.friendsofthepeak.org.uk

Plan LoCaL

www.planlocal.org.uk

Planning for Climate Change

www.planningforclimatechange.org.uk

Climate East Midlands

www.climate-em.org.uk

Groundwork East Midlands

www.eastmidlands.groundwork.org.uk