

Community Skills for Climate Change

Greening Beeston

°Climate east midlands



Background to the Community

Beeston is a suburb of Greater Nottingham, home to a population of 21,000 people. There are several active groups within the community such as a Local Exchange Trading Scheme, Civic Society and Greening Beeston.

Greening Beeston, which formed about 3 years ago was born out of the National Greening Campaign and is made up of a small group of committed individuals. Their overall aim is to achieve environmental, social and economic sustainability in Beeston by implementing projects that help to mitigate against and adapt to climate change. So far, they have focused on educating members of the community to catalyse positive behavioural change which enables individuals reduce their energy costs.

Project Aims

The aim of Greening Beeston's Community Renewable Power project was to make considerable headway in the development of a community-owned renewable project in Beeston. To do this successfully, Greening Beeston needed to select a suitable community building for the installation of a renewable energy

source and was helped in this by the Nottingham Energy Partnership and the local community.

Once selected, a planning application needed to be developed and tender documents created for the construction work. This would leave the community ready to start looking for funding for the renewable installation itself.

Once up and running, the group's intention is that income generated from the Feed In Tariffs will help them to fund future projects within the local community.

Achievements

A total of 22 sites within the Beeston area were originally identified as

Project Community Renewable Power

Grant
£5050

being possible sites for either solar PV or a wind turbine. Following research and/or consultation with the sites, the number of sites was narrowed down to 3.

A consultation week and event were held resulting in 130 members of the public stating their preference for the site they would like to be home to Beeston's Community Renewable Power. Chilwell School, with a 5kW wind turbine, was chosen as the most suitable project which promptly led to the NEP conducting an in-depth feasibility study of the site, followed by the development of a planning application and a tender document.

Throughout the whole project, Greening Beeston have been keeping the public in-the-loop about their Community Renewable Power through regular press releases, posters, leaflets, and constantly updating their website.



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

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Impact on the Wider Community

Through the consultation events, Community Renewable Power has brought together a large cross-section of local people, raised awareness about renewable energy and provided individuals with the opportunity to have their voice heard. The feasibility study has promoted contact with various schools, nursing homes, churches, the local council and community groups.

Once erected, the wind turbine will serve as an educational tool for both the school and the local community, promoting discussions that encourage a greater understanding of the array of options available to help protect our environment and promote sustainable development.



It has been calculated that the wind turbine will be able to generate 9,417 kWh of electricity per year. As a result, the school will be provided with free energy and will earn £900 per year to fund further energy improvements. Greening Beeston will earn £2500 per year to be used to fund other community projects ... and the environment will be spared 5.5 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year.

Challenges Faced / Lessons Learned

Although 'small is beautiful' in terms of group decision-making, it does mean that a small number of volunteers have had to achieve an awful lot; a larger group of people to help run such a project would have spread the workload.

Engaging the interest of the wider community takes a huge amount of time and commitment from a small group of volunteers, and a lot of publicity was needed to enable the consultation event to be the success that it was. Using the local press and other community groups' contacts proved very beneficial.

Planning for the unknown also presented its difficulties for the group. Relying on other organisations to respond by certain deadlines and provide key pieces of documentation set the group back at times, alongside changing planning regulations, and dramatic alterations to the Feed In Tariff Scheme.

In the Future?

Greening Beeston's main focus now is to secure enough funding to purchase and install the wind turbine in the grounds of Chilwell School, and

they are diligently working away at sourcing and writing funding bids.

The group hopes to build up its members' base to help share the workload of this project and all those that will follow in the wake of the wind turbine installation and its subsequent income generation.

Further Reading

The following reports are available on request from Greening Beeston:

- An Introduction to Low Carbon Projects in Nottinghamshire, Don Tinsley 2011
- NEP 2011 wind assessment of Chilwell
- NEP wind Tender Specification of works at Chilwell
- Evance R9000 Planning Application

Contact Information

To find out more, make comments or volunteer to help Greening Beeston's Community Renewable Power project, contact can be made through their website at:

www.greeninginbeeston.weebly.com

Useful Web Addresses

Climate East Midlands
www.climate-em.org.uk

Groundwork East Midlands
www.eastmidlands.groundwork.org.uk

Nottingham Energy Partnership
www.nottenergy.com

Planning for Climate Change
www.planningforclimatechange.org.uk