

Community Skills for Climate Change

Sustainable Hayfield

°Climate east
midlands

Background to the Community

Hayfield is a large idyllic village with a population of around 2800, located at the foot of Kinder Scout in the Peak District. It enjoys a relatively cool, wet and windy climate, with the River Sett running through its centre.

Its socio economic, employment and housing mix reflect its historical transition from a farming community in the late 18th century, to a prosperous mill town in the 19th and early 20th century to its current status as an attractive commuter destination.

Sustainable Hayfield (SH) is a community group which formed in January 2011 around a shared determination to ensure Hayfield will be a beautiful place to live for all future generations. They advocate that the more a community works together, the more that can be achieved in good time, making it easier for everyone to embrace the change required to achieve sustainable living.

Project Aims

SH's project, Working Towards a Lower Carbon Community, has several aims:

- To raise awareness of sustainable issues (energy, waste, food and transport) within the community, reaching out to each sector, via a series of community events.
- To carry out energy assessments on 8 core housing types identified and use this information to draw up a road map for each house type showing how to improve its energy efficiency. Through these road maps, and via house surgeries, relevant, practical and financial help would be provided to householders to make energy efficiency improvements.
- To initiate a school carbon reduction programme, through initially carrying out a detailed energy audit of the school.

Achievements

SH have organised 5 very successful and inspiring events over the course of the project which have attracted over 350 people. Feedback from the events has been very positive, and they have attracted a healthy string of new recruits to the group. This is enabling SH to gather momentum, as the group's credibility rises, and the issues that it is promoting are gaining a higher profile in the community

Project

Working towards a lower carbon community

Grant

£7710

Relevant, practical and financial help have been provided to approximately 40 households and 17 households, who live in the 8 core housing types assessed, have received £250 to put towards approved energy efficiency improvements. They have all committed to provide their energy data from 12 months before the improvements (such as boiler upgrades, under-floor insulation, thermal blinds and draught proofing to name but a few) until 12 months after so that CO₂ savings can be monitored.

Pensioner Joan Hall who has benefitted from the project explained that "The money's been really useful, it's helped me to install thermal curtains to reduce cold draughts at windows and especially at the back of the door. I am also putting radiator reflectors in to improve heat retention".

And the busy Blundell family joked "Buying the energy monitor was the worst purchase we ever made; it's completely changed our behaviour. Now rather than watching TV the children prefer to watch the monitor to see how much or little energy we are using".

A comprehensive energy audit of the school has been carried out leading to a recommended action plan, prioritised into stages 1, 2 and 3. The school has agreed to match fund



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all of the stage 1 actions (and some stage 2 actions) which will be carried out before Easter 2012.

In the final energy event, the school, as well as launching their carbon reduction plans, also pledged to become a Green Flag Eco School.

Impact on the Wider Community

As so many households have become involved with the projects and started implementation of energy saving initiatives, then the community of Hayfield can hope to make reductions in their energy consumption and carbon footprint.

The food growing event seems to have sparked a resurgence in 'growing your own' in the village and the Hayfield Gardening Club has been re-born. Other village groups are beginning to get involved with SH such as the church and Civic Trust.

As the school is now beginning to focus on becoming a Green Flag Eco School and reducing its carbon footprint, sustainability issues will be more fully integrated into the curriculum and ethos of the school, contributing to the development of a well informed, responsible and enlightened youth.

Challenges Faced / Lessons Learned

SH originally felt they had to tackle all issues of sustainability at once and developed a very wide-ranging project. The group has now realised that they cannot 'spread themselves too thinly' and as particular interests have sprung up around food and energy, SH have really honed in on these two issues.

Reaching out to all areas of the community to provide them with advice and support has proved difficult, especially in terms of engaging those householders who are not as economically well-off, but who it is felt would have benefitted from the project the most. SH have identified the need for more systematic and regular communication, using publicity vehicles already adopted in the village to ensure that everyone in the area can be reached.

In the Future?

SH will continue to work with the school to help them make continuous progress in implementing their stage 2 and 3 recommendations and on their journey to becoming a Green Flag school.

All of the energy from home owners who have implemented energy efficiency improvements will be collated once the 12 month period is up, to try and assess which improvements are having the most impact, and to assess CO₂ savings of this project. SH hopes to share this information with the community to inspire some form of collective community action i.e. if 17 houses can make this difference, what if 100 houses did it, or 1000?

SH has formed a food sub-group that is working on funding bids to help with the launch of a Village Garden Project next year.

SH's energy sub-group is planning on building on this project and a previous Village Energy Project by undertaking comprehensive energy surveys of poorly insulated ex-council properties within Hayfield leading to the development of property-specific energy improvement packages including external wall insulation and double-glazing. These homeowners would then be supported to implement these improvements via the provision of group purchasing, green deal applications and project management services.

The energy group is also now looking at investigating the potential of using the River Sett to generate micro hydro power – exciting times lie ahead!

Further Reading

Sustainable Hayfield's Energy Report and Resource Pack.
(email Catherine Moss)

Contact Information

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Useful Web Addresses

Sustainable Hayfield

www.sustainablehayfield.com

Climate East Midlands

www.climate-em.org.uk

Groundwork East Midlands

www.eastmidlands.groundwork.org.uk

Planning for Climate Change

www.planningforclimatechange.org.uk