

# Getting your community project up and running

## Cara Naden, Somerset County Council and Transition Langport

### Problems

- Planning
  - o Particularly conservation
  - o Lack of knowledge
  - o Conflict
- Cost of skills & abilities
- Lack of knowledge in local group members
  - o Lack of joined up thinking
  - o Campaign to Ed Milliband to address this problem
  - o Need top down support
- Communication / difficulty engaging with 'non eco' people
  - o Why (e.g. peak oil and climate change)
  - o Finances
  - o Need to engage with local councils
  - o Networking
- Lack of time, money, resources
  - o Encourage those in your community who have installed energy efficiency measures or renewable energy in their homes to share their expertise
- Other issues
  - o NIMBYism (especially for wind turbines)
  - o Difficult to measure / benchmark
  - o Number of schemes is confusing
  - o Can be difficult to get answers to specialist questions

### Outcomes and actions

- Enthusiasm
  - o People energy to make changes
  - o Promote the financial incentives – e.g. FIT, saving energy = saving money
  - o DIY options
  - o Work in groups
  - o Green Communities support
- More visits and experiences of Renewable Energy projects as well as educating and experiencing the vulnerability of UK energy supply

## Keeping the momentum going

### Lucy Lloyd-Price, CSE

#### What has worked :

##### Engaging families:

- Family Fun Day
- Stall at local fair – planters and ‘guess the food miles’ quiz
- Wedmore Green Group Green Fair
- Community Woodlands
  - o planting days, wassailing, ‘adopt a tree’

##### Engaging those who aren’t interested in ‘green agenda’

- Personal stories in newsletters
- Parish Council funded competitions
- Involving local celebrities – eg football players – for publicity
- Open homes ‘eco-homes’ weekend
- Patrick Whitefield talk - invited gardening clubs – good means of ‘outreach’ and raising awareness of permaculture

##### Others:

- Soup lunch
- Persistence – regular articles in community newsletters etc
- Freecycle days – see [www.wedmoregreengroup.co.uk](http://www.wedmoregreengroup.co.uk)
- Linking with other groups
- Freeskilling / skills swaps / LETs schemes
- Heart & Soul Group – Transition Groups

#### Motivations for volunteering/getting involved in a group:

- Cause / interest in sustainability agenda
- Social factor – meeting ‘like-minded’ people
- Training – formal (home energy volunteers) or informal training (through ‘skills swaps’ etc)

#### Other suggestions:

- **Attend training and conferences:**
- **[www.capacityglobal.org.uk](http://www.capacityglobal.org.uk) – organise seminars (some are free)** 17 Nov in London: ‘Hard to Reach? - Engaging diverse and excluded communities in work on climate change and the environment.’
- **Green Communities Conference** – 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009
- Bespoke Green Communities training or ‘Make It Happen’ training
- Apply to Green Communities ‘Community Chest’ for travel expenses
  
- **Awards for social entrepreneurs**
- **[www.unltd.org.uk](http://www.unltd.org.uk)** - UnLtd's Millennium Awards provide practical and financial support to social entrepreneurs in the UK. Level 1: Awards of between £500 and £5,000 (expected average of £2,000) Level 2: Awards of up to £15,000

## Sharing knowledge on funding for community energy projects

### Louise Rutterford, Green Communnities

#### What energy projects would you like funding for?

- Microgeneration – domestic
- PV on village hall
- Hydro – CESP / LCBP
- Community Wind – Chewton Mendip
- Energy saving in schools - including staffing
- New build research
- Potential income generation

#### If this was my own money would I do this?

- Before applying for funding, make sure you're clear what you want to spend it on
- Make sure you've done the basics first (e.g. insulation before renewable energy)
- Don't reinvent the wheel

# Marketing your project

## Bridget Newbery, CSE

### What are the main considerations?

- What are your aims?
- Who are your audience?
- How will you reach them?

### What are the barriers?

- Fuel poverty
- 'Environmental' language doesn't appeal
- Lack of understanding about
  - o the issues
  - o the advantages
- Difficulties marketing insulation schemes:
  - o Loft space already full (Difficult / expensive to empty, can turn into big DIY job)
  - o People don't believe it's free
  - o People are worried about having people in their home
  - o Bad experiences of pushy salespeople
- Lack of statutory support – need to have
  - o Better financial incentives
  - o Penalties
  - o Statutory incentives
- Funding

### What works?

- Be clear what your message is
- 'rule of three' – reinforce your message three ways (e.g. conversation + local newsletter + newspaper)
- Face to face is better than leaflet drops
- Build trust
- Start with people who know you
- Use the right language
  - o Talk about what people want (e.g. comfort not carbon)
  - o Use language that people can understand
- Freebies to engage people – especially at events
- Money talks
  - o Talk about financial incentives
  - o Explain rising cost of fuel
  - o People want to know that it's value for money
- Address people's concerns about energy efficiency schemes:
  - o Trained advisers
  - o No catches
  - o Free survey before committing to any work
  - o Be clear about the subsidies, processes and timescales
  - o Explain that Warm Streets installers are approved