



Best practice review of community action on climate change

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Centre for Sustainable Energy on behalf of the Energy Saving Trust

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1. Introduction

This best practice review provides a 'snapshot' of current community activity on climate change. The review does not provide an exhaustive list of UK initiatives or comprehensive details of the schemes identified. The study has been designed to specifically focus on initiatives driven by energy and carbon reduction objectives – as opposed to the far wider spectrum of community environmental initiatives which could claim to be related to the climate change agenda but are driven by other objectives (such as waste reduction and recycling, sustainable transport, local food initiatives etc).

The review has built upon the knowledge imbedded in existing recent reports, studies and research relating to community action on climate change. The report has been separated into three sections:

1. Collating information on community action on climate change (section 2)
2. Establishing a framework for the evaluation of community initiatives (section 3)
3. Reviewing best practice (section 4)

The desk based research of community initiatives performed in section 2 helped inform the selection of case studies for the best practice review. The analysis in section 3 provides a framework for classifying community initiatives and a method of exploring the engagement techniques individual initiatives have employed.

The review aims to help stakeholders from both the energy and community sector gain:

- A deeper understanding of the engagement models and delivery tools employed by successful projects
- An insight into the critical success factors that underpin successful initiatives

2. Collating information on community action on climate change

2.1 Literature Review

CSE undertook a review of existing recent reports, studies and research on community action on climate change. The documents reviewed are summarised here.

Identifying community climate change action groups

CSE and ACE undertook a review of 'community partnership programmes', for the Energy Efficiency Partnership for Homes, and in the context of the Government's recently announced Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) in 2008. This review identified, classified and mapped a range of schemes operating across Great Britain. This focused on schemes and projects driven by the climate change agenda, and more specifically, energy efficiency/fuel poverty alleviation, and included an element of partnership working. The schemes were classified according to the nature of leadership and level of community participation. The majority of schemes identified were 'area-based', being focused in a specific geographical area, with advice

provision and the deployment of insulation measures being the two main streams of activity. The area-based schemes identified demonstrated two main approaches to the delivery of advice and/or measures, either adopting a systematic 'ward-by-ward'/'street-by-street' approach or wider promotion of the availability of advice and/or measures at a larger scale. Such schemes tended to be led by sustainable energy charities or the public sector, drawing on funding from energy suppliers (for example, through CERT) or referring to local authority insulation schemes.

The review of community partnership programmes also identified community-based schemes led by energy suppliers and those led by community groups. The latter tended to demonstrate a more informal approach, often reliant on a few individuals and volunteer time and focussed heavily on raising awareness of climate change and encouraging behaviour change to reduce energy consumption. Any deployment of measures tended to rely on linking in with a local authority scheme – a progression that was evident in several of the community-driven projects, which had gradually evolved and formalised over time.

Whilst area-based schemes led by charitable organisations or local authorities dominated the mix of schemes identified in the review by CSE and ACE, and such schemes demonstrate greater capacity to install measures than community-led projects, the report highlighted the added value of the community approach (where community is interpreted as more than just a geographical unit). Capacity building and community empowerment, which result from engaging with 'grassroots' community projects, were identified as strong mechanisms in sustaining behaviour change in the long-term, ensuring that action does not stop with the installation of measures.

Research by ruralnet|uk (2008) into low carbon community projects in the UK focuses on energy efficiency and renewable energy installations in rural areas (including ongoing work to map their distribution¹). The report notes the synergies between rural communities and the potential for energy projects: a lack of a gas network, unreliable electricity supplies, and the physical characteristics of rural areas correlate strongly with the potential for renewable energy installations, which could also provide an alternative source of income for farmers and land owners. As with the research by CSE and ACE (2008), ruralnet|uk acknowledges the range of different 'structures' evident in low carbon community groups, from the more formal, Parish Council-led to a few individuals driving local action.

Ruralnet|uk (2008) distinguishes between community projects according to 'motivating dimension', defining these as: carbon emissions reduction (with a long term 'carbon neutral' aim); a transition away from fossil fuel dependence (the 'Peak Oil' concept); projects stemming from local issues, for example for social rejuvenation; and local energy generation to meet local needs. The report illustrates how this initial motivation can evolve and develop to encompass other objectives over time and thus widening the scope of activity (for example, a renewable energy project initiated to provide a reliable source of energy to the community may develop to include funding energy efficiency measures). Ruralnet|uk conclude that the evolutionary process is often dependent on the availability of external support, particularly financial, a finding that is echoed by several of the community groups interviewed for this piece of research.

¹ <http://rccn.communitycarbon.net/category/homepage/>

Friends of the Earth (FOE, 2007) undertook a large scale survey of community groups in the South West. Following on from this, a report by the Wildlife Trusts in the South West, funded by Defra and the Co-operative Group, provides a comprehensive overview of community action on climate change in the South West region. The research distinguishes between 'local level' and county level action. The latter is seen to have a role in providing a supportive framework, sustaining and ensuring the success of local level action. This includes coalitions or networks which aim to encompass a range of different groups and activities, providing a forum for discussion, ideas and knowledge sharing, and joint working. The range of 'local level' groups identified in the research again demonstrates the breadth of community-level activity in relation to climate change, and the different approaches and group structures adopted, with some striving to evolve to a more formalised structure (and some having done so successfully), and others opting to remain informal. Awareness raising, promoting behaviour change and/or campaigning are the prevalent activities of these local level groups, with limited emphasis on 'measured' outputs, which mirrors the findings reported by CSE and ACE (2008). Successful projects are presented as those that have achieved a high profile and the community is actively involved in implementing practical carbon reduction measures. However, community-driven activity is often heavily reliant on volunteer time and a few local enthusiasts, the danger being that without the required support or visible achievements, activity and interest will wane. As such, the report suggests that whilst 'energy and enthusiasm' are a notable strength of the 'bottom-up' grassroots climate change community groups, measureable outputs are key to delivering change, and this may require support (financial and/or 'tools') from a higher level. This finding is evident in the case studies presented in this research, where a number of community groups themselves highlighted the importance of monitoring and publicising the impact of the actions.

Further research by Hurth (2009) on behalf of the South West Wildlife Trusts draws on a review of relevant literature to identify key issues associated with climate change community groups. One issue highlighted is a lack of clear and unambiguous definition on what constitutes a climate change community group. Indeed, CSE can concur with this, based on our experience in attempting to classify community projects for the purpose of this, and previous, research. This lack of definition is considered to be directly linked to a lack of clear goals and focus which is often a feature of climate change community groups. This limited understanding of community group motivations and aims limits the development, successful targeting and uptake of tools and support from a higher level – support that is often essential to the long term success of these community groups.

In addition to a lack of clear understanding as to what constitutes and motivates a community climate change group, Hurth (2009) also highlights a lack of evaluation of a group's impact as a key issue. A number of barriers limit the effective evaluation of costs and benefits of climate change community groups, including a lack of motivation/ interest, time, skills and understanding, and tools available (Hurth, 2009). As such, the benefits of the actions of climate change community groups often remain unquantified and unknown, by the group itself and the wider general public. This has important implications for the evolution and progress of these groups, which is often reliant on accessing support, tailored to specific group needs. Indeed, the successful implementation of an impact evaluation process is highlighted as key factor of the success of the community groups interviewed for this research.

In highlighting the lack of evaluation as a limiting factor for community climate change groups, Hurth (2009) suggests that potential benefits could be considered under four categories, namely: direct climate change mitigation (i.e. reduction in emissions); indirect climate change mitigation (e.g. engaging local residents, businesses, politicians to take action); direct or indirect adaptation to climate change (e.g. understanding weather changes related to climate change and their potential local impact); and broader socio-economic and environmental benefits/ contribution to sustainable communities (e.g. skills, social capital, increased biodiversity). The latter is an important element of community group's acting on climate change, and one that may be particularly difficult to quantify.

A final issue identified by Hurth (2009) relates to a lack of joined-up working and understanding between climate change community groups and supporting organisations, stemming from language misalignment; lack of awareness by community groups of activities and support at a higher level; and different approaches to tackling climate change, with higher level funding often requiring quantifiable outputs which do not align with the activities of community.

Community action groups: processes

In addition to the literature identifying and classifying different types of climate change community groups, a number of studies have focused on the processes involved in forming, setting up and maintaining a successful climate change action group. A model for organisations working at a local level, with and to empower communities and progress sustainable living practices was developed and tested by WWF-UK in its Community Learning and Action for Sustainable Living (CLASL) project. The model was based on four main assumptions that stemmed from research on theories and principles of behaviour change for sustainability, community development, action research and action learning (Warburton and Carey, 2008). These assumptions included: individual and collective attitude and behaviour changes, close social relationships, and collective working at a local level, are all required to reinforce sustainable behaviours and rebuke unsustainable behaviours; and expert input and discussion can help develop a communities understanding of what constitutes sustainable living.

WWF-UK worked with four local communities to test and develop its model for supporting community groups working towards sustainable living. The modelled process commences with the 'Set-up' stage, which principally involves identifying and engaging community groups, developing trust and mutual understanding between the group and support organisation. Both sides need to be clear about the role and capacity of the support organisation, maintaining a focus on the aim to empower local communities through support and guidance rather than directing and leading.

The next step in the CLASL model, 'Levelling and Motivation', relates to developing a common understanding of the groups aims and expectations, individual motivations for joining the group and the skills and knowledge they bring. 'Understanding' proceeds this stage, but is considered a crosscutting theme in the CLASL model, providing opportunity to further understanding and knowledge of the aims of the group and issues at hand. As would be expected, 'Planning' is a vital stage in the process and provides opportunity to formalise a plan of action based on the outcomes of previous stages, refining the groups aims and objectives, and the specifics for delivering these, for example, through organising events, long term campaigns, and awareness

raising methods. This then leads to the stage of 'Action', where the group takes ownership of its activities, independent of the support organisation, and implements the plans developed. As activities progress, evolve and potentially cease, 'Review and Reflection' becomes an important stage in the process. Evaluation, as noted by Hurth (2009), is crucial in identifying achievements and opportunities for future development and is often overlooked by community groups, with an eagerness to focus on continuing action. The CLASL model specifies the necessity to ensure evaluation remains focused on the groups overall aims and objectives, rather than measuring what is easily measurable, or relevant to the current political agenda.

Finally, the CLASL model highlights the importance of an 'Exit' strategy for the support organisation, whose role is essentially to help the community group to develop a foundation for tackling issues of sustainability on which they can build and sustain without external support.

The CLASL model was considered successful by WWF-UK: the groups involved in testing the model and process demonstrated a range of achievements including implementing practical measures (principally in the local school and church) and raising awareness on a wide scale. It demonstrates the additionality of external support in progressing community groups focused on sustainable living, whilst at the same time highlighting the fundamental benefits of sustaining community-ownership of such initiatives.

Capener and Cranidge (2008) have developed guidance and a toolkit for the Energy Saving Trust (EST), designed to support the advice centres in delivering two key outputs integral to the success of low carbon communities, namely: a Carbon Reduction Action Plan and community led action plan for future activity.

The process outlined by Capener and Cranidge draws a number of parallels with that modeled and tested by WWF-UK. For example, the intention is for EST advice centre's to support Low Carbon Communities in such a way that ensures short term carbon emissions reductions are delivered whilst at the same time the community is empowered to act independently of support and sustain progress towards low carbon living into the future. As such the advice centre's role is one of facilitation, community capacity building and encouraging reflection and evaluation to ensure lessons are learned and achievements recognised – a key issue identified by WWF-UK (2008) and Hurth (2009).

The process outlined by Capener and Cranidge (2008) for the EST advice centres to achieve the Low Carbon Community aims follows five key stages, which again show some similarities with the WWF-UK model. 'Project set up and planning' is the first stage outlined, and encompasses aspects of strategic planning, action planning for implementing carbon reduction measures and developing an exit strategy for advice centre support. This stage is preceded by 'community selection and set-up', whereby communities with high potential to engage with the process are identified, selected and a baseline established. The next stage, 'maximising short term carbon reduction' sees the Carbon Reduction Action Plan developed and delivered in partnership with the community, the aim being to achieve short term carbon savings. Having implemented a Carbon Reduction Action Plan and achieved some tangible outcomes early on, the advice centre then steps back from the process to enable the community to take ownership of action, by 'negotiating an advice centre exit strategy'. This stage sees the community taking leadership,

empowered by the short term gains of carbon reduction measures implemented in the previous stage and establishing a longer term plan for action into the future. Community confidence in its ability to drive and lead activity; understanding of and commitment to long term goals; and recognition of roles and responsibilities are important aspects of the exit strategy. With the community having taken ownership of activity, the advice centre maintains 'ongoing light touch support' to follow progress with carbon reduction, broadening understanding of key factors in the success of community action, and supporting communities in overcoming any problems encountered.

Summary

The literature review has identified the following key themes, which are explored further by the case studies in this research:

- Evaluation of the impacts of community action on climate change can be a barrier to progression and results in a lack of evidence on the effect of community action. Research suggests that community group members who give their time voluntarily may have a limited ability – in terms of time and funds – or interest in collecting evidence and documenting the impacts of the groups' actions, preferring to focus on continuing action instead.
- Community led initiatives add significant value to sustainable energy activity, enhancing levels of trust, empowerment, engagement, longevity and the capacity to evolve and progress to encompass all aspects of sustainable living. In particular, such initiatives are not usually solely driven by the 'quick wins' associated with installing measures, as per local authority and energy agency led schemes, but strive for a long term sustainable living.
- External support and guidance is an important component of ensuring that community led initiatives result in action 'on the ground' i.e. they move beyond awareness raising. In particular, helping groups make links with local authorities and energy suppliers for funding of measures, guidance and tools for measuring impacts and evaluation for funding purposes.
- It is important to dovetail community action with the wider policy context, legislation and government action to avoid a sense of apathy and trivialising worth of local activity.
- Processes have been identified for supporting communities in delivering action on climate change, which include:
 - a planning process that is staged and iterative, with plans being revisited as the project progresses;
 - measures and actions identified often cover cross-cutting themes (e.g. renewables cover both energy security and climate change);
 - there is considerable overlap between stages in the process (i.e. the stages of community engagement and feasibility);

- third sector and public bodies that provide a supporting role to community groups should concentrate on facilitation, encouraging self-sufficiency, building confidence and empowering communities to act alone;
- the external support provided to community groups needs to be tailored to the nature and needs of the group and this is likely to require a very informal approach, to reflect their structure

2.2 Current community action on climate change

The team reviewed nine different publications and funding programmes to identify those initiatives that involve community groups and directly or indirectly impact on climate change. The review identified a total of 187 initiatives across the UK. The review hoped to identify those initiatives that are genuinely community led rather than community involved. Table 1 reflects this with 106 of the 187 (57%) initiatives being genuinely community led; however, it is important to note that a broader study of community involved projects would identify significantly higher numbers of initiatives led by other actors, namely sustainable energy charities, public sector and energy suppliers.

Table 1: Identified initiatives by lead actor

Lead Actor	Total	Including deployment	% including deployment
Community group (genuine community-led)	106	17	16%
Energy supplier	4	4	100%
Other (Housing associations, faith groups etc.)	21	3	14%
Public sector	10	8	80%
Social enterprise	22	17	77%
Sustainable energy charity	24	19	79%
Total	187	68	36%

Table 1 also shows the count of projects that involved the deployment of energy efficiency measures, micro-generation at the household level or community levels ('Including deployment'). The proportion of initiatives that identify the deployment of measures within their activities is significantly higher for initiatives led by the public sector, energy suppliers, sustainable energy charities and social enterprises. The high proportions for these actors reflects the priorities and targets of those organisation, and in the case of social enterprises is a direct function of their business model i.e. the initiative needs to generate referrals and / or installations to raise revenue.

Community led initiatives tend to focus on awareness raising and education with only 16% of those identified in this study deploying measures directly or accessing established referral routes for schemes i.e. energy supplier funded schemes (Annex I contains a detailed table of lead actor by stimulus for activity). However, the review only represents a 'snap shot' of current activity and many of these groups plan to move from a phase of engagement to the implementation of actions to mitigate the impacts of climate change. The identification of the tools and support required to make this transition will be a key component of addressing the issues identified in section 0.

The initiatives identified included several projects covering communities of faith, international communities and projects with national coverage. The international projects had all received European funding and focussed on specific geographical areas of the UK. The National projects were led by energy suppliers and relied on community partnerships for their delivery. Interestingly the communities of faith could also be classified by an area of geography i.e. dioceses or area of congregation. The analysis of the 106 community led initiatives has shown that a village or town is the most popular area of coverage with 63 (59%) in total, with the area of coverage ranging from street by street to county level.

3. Establishing a framework for the evaluation of community initiatives

3.1 Classifying community projects

CSE and ACE (2008) recently carried out a review of the market for community partnerships for the Department of Energy and Climate Change's proposed Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP). As discussed in section 0, the review focused on area based energy efficiency initiatives and categorised them by their level of community engagement. The majority of community partnerships identified which are currently deploying energy efficiency measures were initiated and led by sustainable energy charities, local authorities or energy suppliers. The review highlighted the potential of the growing number of grass roots community led projects that are stimulated by the issues of climate change and / or energy security (i.e. peak oil and social rejuvenation). The majority of these groups is currently in the engagement and planning phase and has yet to begin deploying sustainable energy measures in significant numbers; however, many of them are members of networks that have their own emerging or predefined pathways for community engagement and action.

Community projects taking action on climate change cover a far broader range of approaches and activities than area based energy efficiency initiatives alone. Community projects contain several dimensions that define their stimulus for action, level of engagement and their overall approach. The challenge for this best practice review is to produce a classification system that enables a broad analysis of current approaches whilst capturing this complexity.

Community projects generally have four overall dimensions:

1. Lead actor: Community group (genuinely community led), sustainable energy charity, public sector, and energy supplier;
2. Stimulus for activity: Climate change, sustainable energy (climate change & fuel poverty), energy security (including peak oil), health inequalities & social inclusion (also fuel poverty related);
3. Level of engagement: This may include awareness raising, advice provision, deployment of measures (energy efficiency, renewables or both), or ownership of commercial scale renewables;
4. Scope of community: A community of common interest, geographical community and online community.

The majority of community projects are defined by an area of geography rather than one of interest (see section 0). Community groups that identify with a community of geography are often created in response to a single issue or as a result of the influence of a wider network, for example, Community Reduction Action Groups (CRAGs), Transition etc. This best practice review plans to capture the geographical coverage of community groups and as such has also flagged those communities that sit outside of this definition e.g. communities of faith or online forums.

The best practice review therefore classified the community projects identified by:

1. Lead actor
2. Stimulus for activity
3. Level of engagement

The third tier of the proposed classification level of engagement represents the current position of a community group's activity. It is a 'snap shot' of their current position on a pathway for their initiative's development and delivery. The Energy Saving Trust is currently developing the concept of a community pathway for delivery and it is therefore important to understand how the differing stimulus for activity (known as 'pathway streams') influence levels of engagement. For example, the table in Annex I shows that a higher proportion of initiatives result in the deployment measures for those community led initiatives whose stimulus for activity was sustainable energy. These initiatives include several designed to support the development of community owned renewables, such as the Isle of Eigg and Knoydart Hydro.

3.2 Community Change Models – Low Carbon Communities Guidance and Toolkit

Table 2 below shows the variety of community participation models identified by the Energy Saving Trust's Low Carbon Communities Guidance (Capener and Cranidge, 2008). The table does not provide a guide to the level of community participation, although the higher the level the better; it is designed to identify the different approaches taken to achieve differing outcomes.

This review of best practice, as discussed in 0, has focused on supported and solely community led initiatives. These initiatives set their own priorities and goals in consultation with the community, and as such generate a higher level of long-term commitment to their achievement. WWF's CLASL report highlights the need to be clear about the role and capacity of a support organisation, maintaining a focus on the aim to empower local communities through support and guidance rather than directing and leading. The survey of best practice used in this review has therefore attempted to discern the engagement models employed by successful initiatives.

Table 2: Approaches to Community Participation (from Capener and Cranidge, 2008)

Approaches to Participation ²	Energy Related Examples
Informing communities	Traditional EEAC activities
Consulting with communities	Wind energy development or other large energy project development
Deciding together (delivery independent of community)	Traditional warm zone or area based activities
Acting together (delivery in partnership with community)	Isolated examples of energy supplier activities e.g. Scottish & Southern Energy (as part of smart meter trials) and British Gas (Green Streets)
Supporting individual community led initiatives	EE RDA (Cut Your Carbon), LA Climate Friendly Community initiatives e.g. Northampton, NESTA (Big Green Challenge), NGOs e.g. Marches Energy Agency, The Greening Campaign,
Solely community led initiatives	Examples include Transition towns and some isolated communities

4. Best practice review

4.1 Survey of best practice initiatives

Table 3: Best practice initiatives by lead actor and stimulus for activity

Initiative	Lead Actor	Stimulus for activity
Ashton Hayes	Community group	Climate change
Caithness Energy Advice Project	Community group	Sustainable energy
Energy4all	Community group	Climate change
Green Sroughton	Community group	Climate change
Greening Petersfield	Community group	Climate change
Household Energy Service (HES)	Community group	Climate change
Julie's Bicycle	Social enterprise	Climate change
Low Carbon West Oxford	Community group	Climate change
Sustainable Youlgrave	Community group	Climate change
Talybont on Usk Energy	Community group	Energy security
Transition Town Totnes	Community group	Energy security

² Adapted from Wilcox D. *An A to Z of Partnerships*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation 1999 & Arnstein S. *A Ladder of Citizen Participation*, the Journal of the American Planning Association, Vol. 35, No. 4, July 1969, pp. 216-224

The case studies have been chosen to reflect a range of stimuli for activity and engagement levels i.e. awareness raising, deployment of energy efficiency measures, community ownership of renewables and micro-generation at the household level. The project team interviewed twelve out of the thirteen community initiatives which were seen to demonstrate best practice. Community Energy Scotland provides a support service for community groups and therefore thought that they provided a model for facilitation rather than a single initiative.

4.2 Case studies

The interview outline used to review best practice has been included in Annex II. A write up of the twelve case studies has been included in full below.

Ashton Hayes Going Carbon Neutral

Overview

Ashton Hayes 'Going Carbon Neutral' aims to become England's first carbon neutral village, by raising awareness amongst the community of climate change issues and developing understanding of how simple actions can make a big difference to emissions. The project has successfully engaged and captured the imagination of the local community and politicians alike.

Model for engagement

The project started in 2005 when one local resident of Ashton Hayes – Garry Charnock- first came up with the idea, and received strong support from friends and family. The idea was then presented to the Parish Council at a public meeting, attended by representatives from Chester City Council, the EST, University of Chester and local residents, and the response was again resoundingly positive: the Parish Council voted in favour of adopting the project.

The project was then officially launched in 2006, with an event to mark the occasion, sponsored by local businesses, attended by over 400 local people and attracting significant media attention. As a result, around 20 additional active members were recruited to the group. The project has maintained momentum and interest by ensuring a high presence in local events- for example, the pub quiz now has a carbon neutral element – and by generating a great deal of media coverage.

The Ashton Hayes core group consists of 20-30 individuals. Activities are structured into five working groups, to ensure decision-making is quick and efficient and individuals can work on areas related to their interests and skills. The groups work autonomously, with a 'media' team providing a central point, bringing all activities together and publicising them to the community.

Method of delivery and tools used

Initially the priority for the Ashton Hayes project was to simply encourage people not to waste energy. With assistance from the EST and Chester University, advice was delivered on how to reduce energy consumption, without investing in measures. The group then initiated a household energy survey to establish a carbon emissions baseline and provide tailored advice to each household for reducing energy consumption. The survey is being repeated annually to monitor the impact of Ashton Hayes' activities. A toolkit has been developed for this purpose which includes survey forms and footprinting calculations (based on Defra's carbon calculator) and is available for other communities to use freely. Monitoring devices have also now been installed in some residents' homes to provide continuous measure and feedback of consumption levels.

Solar panels and a wind turbine have been installed on the local school to provide an educational focus for pupils and to provide a visual stimulus demonstrating the potential of these technologies to the community.

The Ashton Hayes group is now embarking on a micro-grid feasibility study to develop a model that could be applied in any community considering installing micro-renewables. Weather stations have been established to measure the potential for harvesting wind and solar power in the village. Working groups have been set up to focus on different elements of this project, including

technical issues and options for generation and metering, and approaches to management and operation, such as setting up an Energy Services Company.

Partnerships

Ashton Hayes has followed a democratic process in presenting its idea of 'Going Carbon Neutral' to the Parish Council, who then voted on it. Having the support of the Parish Council, with whom the group has Articles of Association, enables them to draw on its governance structure.

Ashton Hayes has also established partnerships with: the University of Chester; the University of East Anglia carbon education team; the EST; Defra for funding; Cheshire Community, Chester City and Cheshire County Councils for funding and support. Sponsorship has also been provided by local businesses, providing a vital source of funds and demonstrating the wide community engagement Ashton Hayes has achieved. The group has also developed close relationships with other community groups, sharing experiences, knowledge and information.

The group is also looking at setting up its own power company (linked to the micro-grid study) working with UK Carbon Connections and EA Technology, and with support from Scottish Power.

Benefits and lessons learned

Ashton Hayes Going Carbon Neutral has achieved a significant amount, not least generating a huge amount of local, (and national), interest in the project. The carbon neutral concept has been 'mainstreamed' in Ashton Hayes – it is now an integral part of village life and a natural topic of conversation for residents. This is being reflected in residents' behaviours - the footprinting survey shows emissions are down by up to 20%, and behavioural change is big part of this.

In addition to energy savings, community cohesion is an additional benefit of the project, as it provides some common ground for all residents to engage with and discuss, transcending any age or cultural barriers, and ensuring the flow and sharing of information, providing opportunity to learn from and help each other. Engaging the local school has in particular been hugely beneficial, providing a focal point and engaging the children such that the message feeds through to all family members. Although the group chose not to set specific targets, seeing the project as a journey towards carbon neutrality, the group recognises the importance of monitoring impact and people's opinions, and publicising this to the community, to maintain interest and motivation.

Pressures on volunteer time can be an issue, with volunteers having to fit in activity with full time jobs. The group has found that contacting local authorities during working hours can be particularly difficult, and having a single point of contact in the local authority – a 'Carbon Ambassador' – acting as a conduit for all local authority departments, and channelling information and knowledge sharing would be beneficial to community groups like Ashton Hayes.

More information:

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Caithness Energy Advice Project

Overview

The area of Ormlie in Caithness was stigmatised as an area of high unemployment and deprivation. The Ormlie Community Association therefore embarked on a broad regeneration project, targeting economic, social and environmental aspects of deprivation in the area, in partnership with the Ormlie Regeneration and Social Inclusion Partnership (ORSIP). Stemming from this was the need to ensure sustained funding and the potential for a community-owned wind turbine was explored. Whilst this was prevented from fruition by difficulties securing an appropriate site, micro-renewables were successfully installed in six local council houses. These provided a visual stimulant to increase awareness of energy issues and drive forward local sustainable energy initiatives.

Fuel poverty was identified as a significant issue for the area, heightened with high fuel prices, low incomes, extreme weather conditions and poor quality housing all being prevalent in the area. This resulted in a pilot energy efficiency advice project ('Energy SOS, Shout out Savings!'), initially started in September 2006, with student placements from North Highland College and the Environmental Research Institute (both part of the University of the Highlands and Islands) and with funding from the European Social Fund. Following the success of this pilot, the Caithness Energy Advice project was established. Reliant on grant funding, the scheme has received contributions from a variety of sources including: Scottish Power Energy People Trust; Energy Saving Trust; Communities Scotland Wider Role; Highlands & Islands Community Energy Company; Caithness and Sutherland Enterprise; and UKAEA (United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority) on behalf of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority.

Model of engagement

As the Caithness Energy Advice project stemmed from work by an existing Community Association and partnership, volunteer advisors were recruited from the existing base of active volunteer members. In addition, word-of-mouth is an important mechanism in generating new interest and volunteers in the small community where the project operates.

Method of delivery and tools used

Initially the focus of activities for Caithness Energy Advice was on marketing, to raise awareness about the project around the county. This included partnering up with other organisations, such as local authorities and housing associations in particular, to establish a referral network. The project also relies heavily on word-of-mouth for raising awareness of the service in the local community.

Caithness Energy Advice is primarily aimed at delivering free energy advice to any household in Caithness and North Sutherland. The service is freely and equally available to all households, with no specific targeting. The project also offers, (subject to funding and household eligibility), low-energy light bulbs, LED and halogen lights, power down plugs, room thermometers and stand-by busters. Caithness Energy Advice now has four staff posts and a team of volunteers who receive energy efficiency training.

The Caithness Energy Advice team offer home visits and energy assessments, providing advice to households on: insulation; draught proofing; stand-by; the efficient use and control of heating

systems; interpreting bills; fuel tariffs and switching supplier; and micro-renewables. It also refers households to relevant agencies for further assistance with income or house-related issues (see '*Partnerships*' below). The project team have developed their own method for logging measures installed and calculate CO₂ savings from this, by using the EST's online calculator.

Caithness Energy Advice also gives presentations to local groups and schools and offers 'drop-in' advice services. With two staff now fully trained in thermal imaging, it is now hoping to use this to detect and analyse heat loss from homes, improve targeting of advice and recommendations for improvements to minimise loss.

Partnerships

The Caithness Energy Advice project works with partner organisations to provide 'a coordinated, long range approach to reducing fuel poverty'. These include: Pentland Housing Association; SCARF; HomeAid; Highland Energy Efficiency Advice Centre; Caithness Citizens Advice Bureau; Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service; Key Housing; and Home-Start. Help the Aged also supply Winter Warm packs. Low energy light bulbs, power-saving plugs and room thermometers are provided by energy suppliers (Scottish Hydro Electric, E.ON). These partnerships offer opportunity for raising awareness about the range of support services available, and provide a means for cross-referral.

Benefits and lessons learned

Caithness Energy Advice project stemmed from community development work and is built on community support and partnership working. This approach has proved successful at tackling fuel poverty in the local area and, unlike national or regional energy services, addresses wider social issues: community involvement in the project, particularly the training of volunteers, builds capacity in the community in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy. This provides individuals with the skills and knowledge to address personal fuel issues, and also presents opportunities for employment and has wider benefits for well-being and social inclusion.

Being a true 'grassroots' organisation presents both benefits and challenges for Caithness Energy Advice. Funding is a significant challenge and the team are continually looking for new opportunities. However, despite this, the service is still expanding and aims to work with two new communities each year. The key advantage of the grassroots approach is that the service is truly embedded within the community - the advice team have detailed local knowledge and experience of the issues faced by households in the area and it has a true community presence. Word-of-mouth is a vital mechanism in raising awareness of the project and is a big part of a small community such as this. This is particularly important in reaching the most vulnerable and isolated members of society and building trust in the service. Furthermore, the issue of fuel poverty, being inherently linked to low income, can be a sensitive one for some households; therefore having a local contact for support in addressing this can make this process easier.

More information:

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Energy4All

Overview

Energy4All supports the development of community-owned renewable energy projects. It aims to encourage people from all walks of life to become part of the renewable revolution, fighting climate change while maximising the social, economic, and environmental benefits of renewable energy schemes for local communities.

The not-for-profit company is owned by the co-operatives that it supports. It was formed in 2002 by Baywind Co-operative, the UK's first community-owned wind farm, in response to the many enquiries it received from people who wanted to replicate their experience. Currently Energy4All incorporates seven co-operative ventures and has 5,500 unique members. As additional co-operatives are established, they too will take a share in the organisation.

Model for engagement

Energy4All seeks to create co-operatives that will own complete sites or buy a stake in a site from a commercial developer. It responds to demand from community groups but also seeks potential projects or groups to support. The extent of this support ranges from initial advice and information all the way through to co-option into the organisation once a community co-operative has been founded.

Method of delivery and tools used

The first point of call for enquirers is the Energy Steps website (www.energysteps.coop) which helps groups to assess where they are in the process of starting up a community renewable energy project. Once a renewable energy project is established, they advertise in the local area for directors to sit on a co-operative board. Energy4All supports this board as it takes responsibility for running the project and preparing the launch of the initial share offer. This includes assessing local interest, identifying potential partners and preparing a share prospectus. People who invest in the co-op become members and in time receive benefits such as dividends from excess energy that is generated and sold to the National Grid. The directors may decide that a percentage of dividends should go to a community scheme such as a sustainable energy trust fund.

Partnerships

The seven co-operatives that currently make up Energy4All are Baywind Energy Co-operative Ltd, Westmill Wind Farm Co-operative Ltd, Boyndie Wind Farm Co-operative Ltd, Fenland Green Power Co-operative Ltd, Isle of Skye Renewables Co-operative Ltd, Kilbraur Wind Energy Co-operative Ltd and Great Glen Energy Co-operative Ltd.

Benefits and lessons learned

The wholly community-owned Westmill Wind Farm in Oxfordshire demonstrated the potential size of public support for local wind energy projects by raising £4.6 million in three months. It started producing electricity in March 2008. The Kilbraur Co-op, which shares ownership of a wind project with a developer, raised £1 million by October 2008 during the start of economic crisis.

Many of the members of the founding co-operative, Baywind, have gone on to invest in the projects that followed – some members have invested in all seven projects.

Local opposition to renewable energy projects such as wind farms is always a potential barrier. Energy4All helps to overcome such opposition, for example by taking groups to on educational visits to existing wind farms. Baywind support regular free visits from schools.

As a co-operative not-for-profit company, funding is always a challenge. A key lesson from experience to date is to tailor any marketing strategy to the location and the characteristics of the local community. Despite funding challenges, Energy4All hopes to continue to expand, developing a larger nationwide co-operative incorporating many more local schemes.

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Green Sproughton

Overview

Green Sproughton was formed two years ago by a group of residents of Sproughton, interested and motivated to take local action on climate change. The overall aim of the group is to cut the village's carbon footprint, by achieving a 2.5% reduction in emissions annually.

Model for engagement

The initiative started following a presentation by the Parish Council on 'Carbon Sense'. Motivated by this presentation, a few villagers approached the Parish Council with their idea for Green Sproughton. This proposal was accepted and the group formally became a panel of the Parish Council which now includes representation from the local primary school, Brownies, church and WI. A core group of 5-10 members meets regularly and reports monthly to the Parish Council.

When the group first formed their priority was to engage the wider community in their aim. A competition was set up to devise an identity for the group and they engaged with existing community groups, such as the WI, church and schools, and held stalls at local fairs.

Method of delivery and tools used

Green Sproughton focuses on research into, and raising awareness of, environmental issues in the local community. The group developed an action plan, which includes timescales, who will be leading on each action, and what external partners will be needed. This action plan forms the basis for prioritising activities and applying for funding and external support. The village's Tithe Barn was identified as a key priority for Green Sproughton, recognising that the building was currently economically and environmentally unsustainable – with such poor insulation the barn was unusable in winter months and was costing the Parish Council money. The group secured grant funding for insulating the Barn, which provides a focal point for community action and is used to host campaigns and local events, including an Energy Day in 2007, which was attended by over 400 people and considered a great success.

Green Sproughton has also undertaken a carbon footprinting survey, with support from CRed Suffolk Climate Change Partnership, who provided and processed the survey. As part of this, households were offered personalised feedback, and a carbon footprinting surgery, providing tailored advice on action to reduce consumption. The results of the footprinting survey were also useful to the Green Sproughton group in identifying priority areas for action. Transport was one of these, being accountable for nearly half of all the villages' emissions, so the group have initiated a further survey to find out where, how and when people are travelling. Green Sproughton had to develop their own survey for this purpose, as existing ones were not considered suitable for the small community level. The group is now sharing this with other communities via Suffolk County Council and the CRed Suffolk partnership, and have already done so with 17 Parish Councils.

The full carbon footprinting survey is also being repeated, and now has a competitive aspect to encourage participation, with a local holiday prize incentive. The survey will also provide a measure of progress and impact over the last year. The group considers it very important to monitor and publicise the impact of local activity, in order to maintain interest and momentum.

Partnerships

Green Sroughton is a panel of the Parish Council, who provided £200 to help with start up costs, and the group reports monthly to them. Green Sroughton also received a £200 award from Suffolk's Greenest County ambition early on, which provided an important motivational boost. CRed Suffolk has also been a key partner, notably in executing the carbon footprinting survey. Green Sroughton secured £150,000 grant funding for insulating the Tithe Barn and related community engagement activities, from the East of England Development Agency 'Cut You Carbon' campaign, with a 25% contribution from Suffolk County Council's green fund. Suffolk Association for Local Councils, Suffolk Action for Communities in Rural England and the District Council, (which is part of the Carbon Reduction Partnership), all provide advice and support to Green Sroughton. In turn, Green Sroughton gives talks to other community groups and Parish Councils. Expert advice has also been sought from the EST and Renewables East.

Benefits and lessons learned

General scepticism about the ability of a volunteer group to achieve tangible outcomes was apparent when Green Sroughton started, but having the support of the Parish Council at the outset provided a positive kick start. In addition, having an action plan and undertaken a footprinting survey proved highly beneficial in securing funding from the 'Cut Your Carbon' campaign, (both were stipulated as eligibility requirements). Securing additional funding for future projects is a key challenge. The group has ambitious plans, including converting an outbuilding at the Tithe Barn to a local shop, to help reduce short journeys, and developing sustainable transport. Green Sroughton has identified potential to build on past successes of other local community groups in securing funding for renovation and regeneration projects, and to develop a 'green' strand to these. Through its achievements to date, particularly the insulation of the Barn, Green Sroughton can demonstrate a track record of successfully working with different partners.

Green Sroughton established a common focus and action plan for the group's activities early on, which ensured members were clear on what the group aimed to do and how they were going to do it. The group builds on people's strengths, enabling them to do what they are good at and enjoy, thereby helping to maintain engagement, interest and motivation. Green Sroughton has gone beyond awareness raising and community engagement to successfully achieve a number of tangible outputs from their efforts and considers this critical to maintaining volunteer and community interest; building on and promoting successes, no matter how small, can significantly help to maintain motivation and leverage in additional funding.

By May 2009 the work on the community building will be complete, providing an example of what can be achieved and a focal point for community engagement - an important aspect of the project is in strengthening community cohesion, bringing people together in different ways and building new relationships, which has benefits well beyond the potential for energy saving.

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Household Energy Service

Overview

The Household Energy Service (HES) is managed by Light Foot, a registered Community Interest Company. The scheme aims to increase energy efficiency, lower emissions and provide financial benefits to 'ordinary' households, by offering free energy surveys, reports and advice; support in securing reduced cost low carbon goods; and contact with a professional Energy Officer. The long term aim of the HES is to work with the 1,500 households of the Bishop's Castle area to reduce the town's carbon emissions by 85% by 2050.

Model of engagement

The Household Energy Service initially stemmed from an idea by members of the Wasteless Society for a community-owned wind turbine. Whilst this idea was not pursued, due to concerns over securing planning permission, the group instead decided to focus on energy efficiency. Light Foot was set up to run the HES following an initial 2 year pilot period that was funded by the Energy Saving Trust and delivered by the Wasteless Society and Marches Energy Agency. The Household Energy Service now relies on a team of volunteer energy surveyors, with a further team of coordinators to provide support and management. As the HES was first started by the Wasteless Society, which had been running for about 10 years and already had around 160 members, the original volunteers of the HES were recruited from this membership base.

The HES is very much a community-driven initiative and principally relies on interested, existing community groups approaching them, and as such new volunteer surveyors are usually recruited from these groups' existing members. Light Foot has also been working in a number of different areas, with different partners and has made concentrated attempts to broaden awareness of the service. It also encourages its own clients – i.e. people who request a household survey – to get involved and become volunteer surveyors themselves.

Method of delivery and tools used

The focus and priority of the Household Energy Service is delivering free household energy surveys, and follow-up support, to individual households, on request. This is available across southwest Shropshire, the Shropshire Hills AONB, northwest Herefordshire and eastern Radnorshire and Montgomeryshire. Several other communities across the country are also looking at setting up HES schemes. The team also organise events alongside this service, for example, debates, film showings, and an electric bike day, but as these do require significant time and effort to organise, in a group with limited resources, efforts are primarily focused on delivering the free household survey.

As noted above, the HES relies mainly on interested community groups approaching Light Foot, who then oversees training of the new volunteer surveyors, who are usually existing members of the community group. Once trained, the surveyors do not actively approach households (e.g. through door-knocking) but individuals are encouraged to request a survey. The community angle is crucial here, as word-of-mouth and neighbour-to-neighbour relationships are a key factor in ensuring take-up of the service. The HES is not currently connected with an energy supplier but this is something the scheme would like to pursue, for funding of insulation measures. At present customers are referred to Keep Shropshire Warm or Domestic and General for installation.

The original survey tool, designed by Marches Energy Agency, was laptop-based, and brings together the Household Energy Check form and carbon footprinting. However, volunteer surveyors found the original tool complex and difficult to apply and this has therefore been modified, not least to be a paper survey. All households undergoing a survey receive a personalised report, summarising carbon emissions and recommendations for action. Light Foot are starting to undertake follow up surveys, to monitor the impact the service is having. Furthermore, as part of the Big Green Challenge they are required to resurvey a representative sample of their client base to assess their impact on emissions.

Partnerships

After the initial 2 year EST funding came to an end, HES secured grants from Environment Wales, the Waterloo Foundation and the Sustainable Development Fund of the Shropshire Hills AONB. HES is also a finalist in the Big Green Challenge (funded by NESTA) and has received a development grant of £20,000 and advisory support alongside this. This is considered particularly positive by the HES team – whilst any funding is hugely beneficial to the scheme, there is significant added value in having the support and ongoing communications.

Unlike any other energy agency or advice service, the Household Energy Service only works with existing community groups to deliver its service. The scheme is widely publicised through the CAfE network, Low Carbon Communities, Shropshire AONB, and general marketing events, to ensure a high level of awareness of the service.

Benefits and lessons learned

The approach adopted by the HES ensures that there is a strong buy-in from the community, as it is existing community groups that initiate contact with Light Foot with an interest in delivering the service in their area. This approach has been key its success. Interest by community groups has been very strong and uptake of the scheme by, and then within, communities is increasingly widespread. However, there is an issue of funding associated with expanding the service and a significant proportion of time has to be dedicated to applying for grants.

Maintaining and increasing volunteer numbers, particularly in the core area, is also a challenge for the Service. Light Foot has adopted an approach to the survey process that ensures follow-through for both client and volunteer surveyor: the latter receives feedback first hand from the client on how useful the service has been to them and provides opportunity to offer further advice and support to the client. This is considered important in ensuring volunteers remain motivated and both customer and surveyor are fully satisfied with the service.

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Julie's Bicycle

Overview

Julie's Bicycle works with the music industry to identify and address the many ways in which the industry contributes to climate change. The overall aim is to achieve low carbon music industry.

The organisation was founded in 2007 by Alison Tickell who brought some colleagues together and began a conversation which has since turned into a significant force for change within the industry. The organisation's role is important because there are many small companies in the music industry which have few regulatory incentives to change the way they do business. Although the larger companies must respond to environmental legislation, such as the new Carbon Reduction Commitment, they have traditionally been reactive to regulation and slow to change. Julie's Bicycle seeks to pre-empt legislation and get the industry off the back foot.

Julie's Bicycle is a not for profit organisation with charitable objectives, but is not a registered charity.

Model for engagement

Julie's Bicycle has a core working group of senior, strategic figures in the music industry. This gives the organisation enormous authority and influence across the industry. The organisation aims to work at both corporate and community levels, with individual companies and across the sector as a whole.

Method of delivery and tools used

Research has been a priority for Julie's Bicycle from the outset. A focus on scientific evidence and analysis helped the organisation to gain the confidence of the industry and has provided a necessary starting point for developing strategies for carbon reduction that are achievable and measurable. Their first report, produced by the Oxford Environmental Change Institute, was an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK music industry. This was followed by more focussed work on CD packaging and travel to music festivals, with further research into touring, digital media and audience impacts currently underway.

A key intervention was the development of a Green Standards Framework which provides companies in the creative industries with a comprehensive account of the emissions reduction challenges they face. Based on recognised national and international environmental standards, it integrates existing emissions reduction standards of relevance to the creative sector, with new standards for areas that are not currently covered.

Drawing on the skills of an experienced team of environmental scientists and facilitators, Julie's Bicycle provides audits, benchmarking, training and seminars to enable companies to deliver on both the strategy and the 'nuts and bolts' of reducing energy consumption. Their four over-riding principles in this work are engagement, measurement, reduction, and disclosure.

Partnerships

Key partners of Julie's Bicycle include the London Development Agency; the MCP-PRS Alliance; SustainAbility; Arts Council; and the Greater London Assembly. The organisation also has an ongoing research partnership with the Environmental Change Institute at Oxford University.

Benefits and lessons learned

Julie's Bicycle has brought a clear focus on environmental issues to a fragmented and fraught industry undergoing huge change. It has provided an account of carbon emissions across the entire industry, not just individual companies, and has demonstrated the scope for reducing carbon emissions in such diverse areas as CD packaging, building performance and audience travel.

The organisation hopes to consolidate its work on research and standards, exploit the influence that artists and the industry have over audience behaviour, expand into other countries and establish a bi-annual carbon footprint check for the industry.

The Julie's Bicycle Trust is being established for companies that want to pay for their emissions, but also contribute to emissions reductions in their industry and community in a transparent, accountable and sustainable way.

Julie's Bicycle works in an industry that is not a traditional priority area for sustainable energy policy-makers and government. This has made it difficult to raise funding for its work. The current shift in the overall business model of the music industry has made it difficult for other concerns to be heard.

A key lesson from the activities of Julie's Bicycles is the important of managing expectations of how long things take to deliver and emphasising results in the long-term context. The organisation also highlights the importance of 'doing' before 'talking about doing' and in recognising what is already happening in the industry, to avoid duplication, over- or unfairly claiming credit for action. Working in partnership is a vital part of this.

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Low Carbon West Oxford

Overview

Low Carbon West Oxford (LCWO) addresses climate change and wider sustainability issues, with the long term aim of achieving an 80% reduction in carbon emissions by 2050. LCWO is also aiming to install renewable heat and power technologies that can provide a steady income for funding retrofitting of houses and establishing the area as an exemplar sustainable community long into the future. The group is constituted as a community association, but is in the process of becoming a Community Interest Company, with a view to later becoming a registered charity.

Model for engagement

Low Carbon West Oxford started in the Autumn of 2007, following the summer floods which sparked climate change demonstrations by the local community. This one significant weather event was enough to alert people to the seriousness of the issue and motivate them to act. The project was initiated by a local resident who had significant personal experience in reducing carbon emissions through household measures and a desire to share this with others. The group grew from this, to a few individuals with the common aim of reducing the community's carbon emissions. By taking advantage of an already active community and established networks the group has grown to a membership of around 150. A key pathway was through the local primary school, which provides a focal point for a number of active community members.

Method of delivery and tools used

Low Carbon West Oxford has an overall aim of achieving sustainable living in the local community. It has established working groups covering five different areas, namely: renewable energy, transport, food, waste reduction and a virtual 'eco-shed'.

As a finalist in the Big Energy Challenge, LCWO is piloting two main projects. One involves 38 households in the community and exploring the best ways to help them to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions. This includes a carbon footprinting survey and EPC, both of which contribute to a Home Action Plan. Meter readings are being taken monthly to provide real and reliable data on each household's energy consumption.

A second, longer term project aims to generate a reliable and secure income stream through community renewables, the aim being that income generated could be used to fund future sustainability projects. The group is currently looking at the potential for micro-hydro, solar panels and wind and, with the introduction of the renewable heat incentive, will expand to explore biomass potential. A full feasibility study for a micro-hydro plant has been completed, and a lease has been signed with a large scale warehouse to use their roof space for solar panels. The latter is an important step towards LCWO's ambitious plans to install solar panels on the rooftops of the 15 largest buildings in West Oxford by 2013.

LCWO priorities for activities at the household level were based largely on group members personal experience and expertise in reducing household emissions. On the renewables side, technologies are prioritised primarily on the availability of resources locally. In addition, a survey was undertaken in 2001 of public attitudes to climate change and renewables, with an overwhelming response in favour of a local hydro scheme.

LCWO has also established an eco-library, which enables residents to borrow energy saving devices, including light bulbs and solar chargers, and a pilot street car project, which has already enabled a few residents to get rid of their own cars. Campaigns also run alongside these projects, to encourage new volunteers to become 'street representatives', providing information to the immediate community on reducing its carbon footprint. The group has also planted over 300 trees and a further 300 are planned for another area of recreation ground.

Partnerships

Low Carbon West Oxford has formed a number of partnerships, aiming to ensure all the main actors in the community are involved in the project. These include: the City Council; Midshires Co-op, which has its headquarters in the area; local schools; local media, for coverage in the press and for installing renewables on its building; local businesses, retail and industrial estates to target for renewable installations; Christchurch College, as a major landowner in the area; local residents and community associations; and a local solicitors who have provided support in developing the leases for roof space for PV installations and with the process of establishing the organisation as a Community Interest Company. The latter has proved a lengthy and complex process and LCWO's experience suggests that other community groups could benefit from access to advice on legal requirements of setting up a long term community-owned entity.

Benefits and lessons learned

Being a finalist in the Big Green Challenge is a great achievement and has provided Low Carbon West Oxford with essential funding. Furthermore, the group has successfully recruited 38 households to the pilot project, established a baseline from the carbon footprinting survey and engaged householders such that they are taking regular meter readings. LCWO is also making significant and pioneering progress with the installation of micro-renewables.

However, LCWO has encountered significant institutional and bureaucratic barriers to its activities, not least in attempting to secure funding for the community micro-renewables through the Low Carbon Buildings Programme (LCBP), for which they were told the group is not eligible. Planning issues have also caused delays to the installation of the micro-hydro plant, and as a result efforts had to be concentrated on this for far longer and more intensively than envisaged. Such barriers put added pressure on already limited volunteer time and send the wrong message to a community, where enthusiasm, energy and drive should be recognised for the asset that it is.

The experience of Low Carbon West Oxford has shown the importance of being sensitive to the different attitudes, motivations, tolerances and capacities of individual households to take action. Being sensitive to these facets may require a different approach to how a project is framed; how advice is delivered; and the level on guidance and information required on an individual basis, which is where the small scale, community approach to delivery has many advantages.

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Sustainable Youlgrave

Overview

Sustainable Youlgrave was founded in February 2006 when a group of 'like-minded' villagers met to discuss "doing their bit" to combat climate change and make their rural community more sustainable. It is currently constituted as a voluntary association, with a core group of activists and around 130 supporters. The project covers the area of the Bradford River Valley, which has a population of around 1,600 people, and the project takes its name from the largest village in the area.

Sustainable Youlgrave (SY) has an overarching aim of being 'carbon zero'. It aims to reduce the environmental impact of the area, and has economic and social sustainability goals that include maintaining and improving local services and encouraging young people not to migrate out of the area, as well as encouraging energy efficiency in homes and transport, and generating enough renewable energy locally to go beyond carbon zero.

Model for engagement

Sustainable Youlgrave was initiated by two individuals in the village, who, concerned by the lack of action on climate change by Government, decided to adopt the 'think global, act local' notion. Through personal contacts and friendship groups, an additional 3-4 members joined the founding two, and the group devised a 'road map' for action. This included three core pathways to focus attention, namely, sustainability, energy saving and renewable energy. Having established a road map, attention was then focused on securing funding, hence the group set up a bank account and constituted themselves as a voluntary association.

Method of delivery and tools used

Activities of Sustainable Youlgrave include setting up a car sharing scheme; helping homes and businesses to access solar power; and organising a Climate Change Day. The latter included providing cotton bags, carbon calculators, energy saving light bulbs, information on composting, recycling and renewable energy and showing climate change related films. It also heavily involved the local primary school and pupils exhibited work on climate change issues, soon to be published.

The activity of Sustainable Youlgrave has encouraged some local people to install solar water heating equipment and ground source heat pumps, and one person has received planning permission for a 20kW wind turbine. The Haddon Estate, which owns the local river, is currently installing one micro-hydro project (35kW) and is considering the potential for further micro-hydro on the river.

In 2007-8 Sustainable Youlgrave also undertook a doorstep household survey, which aimed to assess people's current energy saving behaviour, recycling habits, and interest in a variety of proposed projects. These have now been written up by SY and an agreement has been reached with the University of Sheffield to continue the doorstep survey work. The survey will cover footprinting, (insulation, heating fuels, and consumption) and attitudes on wider sustainability issues, including the acceptability of different solutions. SY hopes this survey will be the start of a sequence, first establishing and then providing ongoing monitoring of carbon emissions. To date,

the ability to establish a baseline has been limited by the lack of response to the first household survey and lack of data available on public buildings.

Sustainable Youlgrave prioritises its activities based on opportunity and suitability. A major area of focus has been developing the potential for an Anaerobic Digestion (AD) plant, considered particularly suitable for a community dominated by farming and livestock. With grant funding, SY has commissioned a large scale feasibility study for an AD plant, now being undertaken by three consultants working in collaboration and overseen by SY volunteers managing the project. Three authorities, 40 farm businesses and a major factory have been interviewed. This £40k project should report in early summer and has been funded partly as a replicable exemplar.

Partnerships

SY has been working with 18 different agencies. All have been supportive in principle, but some more effectively than others. In particular, it has received money and/or technical advice from: the Peak District Sustainable Development Fund; the East Midlands Regional Assembly (Community Renewables Initiative); Derbyshire Dales district council; Derbyshire county council; the Forestry Commission; and it won Future Friendly's Community Action Award for 2008. SY also has links with the local Parish Council, the Village Plan group and the local primary school.

Benefits and lessons learned

Sustainable Youlgrave's experience so far has shown that, for the activists it was easier to progress community action on renewable energy than work on energy efficiency of the housing stock. SY could have benefited from external support (particularly funding) for a street-by-street survey that can be applied to a smaller area, rather than a whole district. Sustainable Youlgrave is an example of a community-led initiative that local people trust and are engaged with. Households and farmers have demonstrated willingness and interest in participating in home energy surveys and installing measures in their homes and farms if this service could be made available.

The commissioning of the AD feasibility study is a big achievement for this community group. SY has also successfully engaged the local school in incorporating climate change issues into lessons. One member of the SY group has also completed a mapping exercise of local woodland to identify opportunities for wood fuel heating and a district heating scheme.

A key challenge for a community climate change action group like Sustainable Youlgrave is maintaining momentum and enthusiasm. The groups' achievements to date are the result of significant perseverance and patience on the part of a few individuals. Demands on volunteer time can be very intensive and SY highlights the importance of ensuring succession, so that work loads can be shared and roles passed on. Recruiting new active volunteers is also important in ensuring new ideas develop and are actively pursued.

More information:

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Talybont on Usk Energy

Overview

Talybont on Usk Energy (TOU Energy) is a not-for-profit community enterprise and company limited by guarantee that has successfully installed the first community-owned hydro-electric power station in Wales. The organisation aims to promote: understanding of renewable energy sources, uses of alternative energy and related ecological and environmental issues; renewable energy schemes in, and for the benefit of, the community of Talybont on Usk, including the provision and maintenance of a hydro-electric generating turbine at Talybont on Usk reservoir; and the efficient use of energy and use of renewable sources of energy. A long term, overarching aim also includes helping the TOU Energy community council area to become carbon neutral.

Model for engagement

The group first formed in 2001 following a series of public meetings by Brecon Beacons National Park Authority on the potential for communities to develop renewable energy projects in a protected area. This generated a great deal of interest amongst community groups and a number of interested individuals followed this up. For two years the project was dependent entirely on volunteer time. Grant funding from Powys Association for Voluntary Organisations later enabled a part time post to be established for a Project Development Officer to oversee the installation of the turbine, but volunteers remain vital to the project.

Full membership of the group is open to all residents or employees in the Talybont on Usk community council area. Individuals or organisations outside of this area wishing to get involved can do so as 'associate members'. The group promotes the scheme as widely as possible, for example by handing out leaflets, which includes a membership form, at events. The group also makes particular efforts to get email addresses of interested people so they can be kept up to date via an e-newsletter.

Method of delivery and tools used

TOU Energy has undertaken a number of different projects, aiming to have a combination of 'short wins' and long term goals. Campaigns are often seasonal, for example, people respond better to insulation campaigns in the winter (although the group recognise it is better to promote insulation in the summer from point of view of installers!).

A significant focus of TOU Energy's work has been the installation of a community-owned micro-hydro plant. A feasibility study was first undertaken for this in 2003, funded by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Sustainable Development Fund and this identified a potential site, in an existing turbine house. This was followed by a detailed design and implementation study, funded by WDA, Mid Wales Energy Agency and Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Sustainable Development fund. The turbine was then fully installed and commissioned in November 2005, with energy being exported to the grid by February 2006. The community-owned turbine was officially launched in April 2006, with an event attended by the First Minister and with coverage on the national news.

Electricity generated by the hydro plant is sold to the grid (to Good Energy) and the revenue generated is used to fund further renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in the community, led by Talybont on Usk Energy.

TOU Energy has undertaken a great deal of promotional work for insulation and solar, including a solar surgery event. TOU Energy has also distributed free energy saving light bulbs which were taken up by 15-20% of the community and explored the potential for bulk buying solar water heating panels for installation in the community. It is also now part-funding the installation of PV on the village hall. This will include a display monitor showing how much energy is being generated and carbon emissions saved; this data will be collated and monitored by TOU Energy.

TOU Energy did undertake a carbon footprinting survey, which showed that the community was below average in terms of emissions, but transport accounted for a higher than average proportion of these. TOU Energy would like to repeat the footprinting survey on a regular basis but this a time and resource intensive exercise and capacity to do so has so far been limited.

Partnerships

TOU Energy has received grants and funding from Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (Sustainable Development Fund); Welsh Development Agency; Mid Wales Energy Agency; Awards for All; Powys Association for Voluntary Organisations; Clear Skies; Powys SECRET (a community renewable energy ERDF Objective 2 fund managed by Mid Wales Energy Agency);

It has also worked with Dulas Ltd, who carried out the feasibility studies. Inspiration for the community-owned turbine originally came from the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and TOU Energy considers them instrumental in helping the project progress to be the success it has.

Benefits and lessons learned

TOU Energy successfully installed the first community-owned micro-hydro plant in Wales, which at the time, was also only the second such plant in the UK. This is a significant achievement, but being at the forefront of development did bring challenges, mainly in that the lack of precedence on community-owned, or indeed micro-hydro, installations limited the availability of information and advice. The group found communications with engineering companies a particular challenge and found their status as a community group disappointingly hindered this.

TOU Energy has so far focused its efforts on renewable energy and energy efficiency and is now looking to broaden its remit to address other issues of sustainability in the area, for example with an electric bike scheme, to help progress further towards its carbon neutrality goal. TOU Energy hopes that broadening its remit will also help to recapture the imagination of the community – noting that interest wanes overtime and levels of community involvement gradually diminish.

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The Greening Campaign

Overview

The Greening Campaign is a community-focussed project which aims to motivate people to cut their energy consumption and reduce their personal and community carbon footprint. It encourages energy efficient behaviour in homes, businesses and public organisations.

The Greening Campaign evolved from a project initiated in Petersfield, Hampshire, in 2007 which developed a practical model of local carbon reduction. The success of the model led to its adoption elsewhere and there are now over 140 communities involved. The Campaign offers a programme of structured support to these communities.

Model for engagement

The Greening Campaign seeks to identify and support local people who are committed to promoting a lower carbon economy. It targets everyone in the community including individuals, groups, schools, businesses, churches and local councils (from parish councils to regional bodies).

Method of delivery and tools used

The approach promoted by the Greening Campaign begins with advice delivered through branded information cards which list ways of saving energy in the home and at work. These cards are made available throughout the community and households are encouraged to take one, follow one or more of the suggestions and display the card in their window to demonstrate their commitment to the Campaign. The Campaign is also publicised through film shows, public meetings and displays in shops and libraries.

The next step of the Campaign is to evaluate its impact through public surveys and card counts. This provides an account of the annual carbon dioxide saved, which is reported through local media and so encourages wider adoption of the methods. The Campaign aims to inspire people and organisations to take further independent action: householders may identify their own ways of saving energy; businesses may start looking at energy management and ways of recycling and reducing waste; schools can use the campaign as a catalyst for a range of activities linked to the National Curriculum.

The Greening Campaign offers support at every stage of local development: supporting individuals to motivate their communities; helping with the funding and organisation of community meetings; supporting the launch of local Greening Campaigns; and helping communities to count their carbon dioxide savings. Following this initial development phase, the Campaign goes on to support communities to establish their project across their communities and to explore issues of adaptation.

Partnerships

The Greening Campaign receives funding from East Hants District Council, Energy Footprint, Hampshire Association of Local Councils, Morgan Everett, South Downs Sustainable Development Fund, South East England Development Agency, the Sustainable Business

Partnership and the Sustainability Centre. The Campaign is also supported by many local authorities around the UK.

Benefits and lessons learned

The Greening Campaign has developed a structured programme which addresses every step of the development of a community-based project to reduce carbon emissions. This follows a mass engagement of the local community in the programme. In Petersfield alone, the saving was 23 tons of carbon dioxide.

There have, however, been few issues encountered and some of the methods developed have been used inappropriately by other organisations. The key lessons learned from the Campaign include: the benefits and necessity of engaging the community early on and as widely as possible; trying to bring all levels of community and local government into one programme to avoid confusion; and make activities enjoyable, fun and something that puts a smile on people's faces.

On the whole, the Greening Campaign is working well and future plans are to expand the scheme using the existing model.

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Transition Town Totnes

Overview

Transition Town Totnes aims to support community-led responses to peak oil and climate change. It has a two-fold mission: firstly, to explore and follow pathways of practical action that will reduce the town's carbon emissions and dependence on fossil fuels; and secondly to build the town's resilience – its ability to withstand shocks from the outside and its capacity to be self-reliant in terms of food, energy, employment and economics.

The organisation avoids tactics of scaring or guilt-tripping people, but seeks to be a catalyst for change, unlocking the collective genius and enthusiasm of the community and harnessing the power of engaged optimism.

Transition Town Totnes was the first Transition Town, founded in 2006, following a series of local talks and films about peak oil. Its success has inspired the creation of the Transition Network, which supports the application of the model across the world. It is a limited company currently seeking charitable status.

Model for engagement

Transition Town Totnes was launched at a community event, the 'Official Unleashing', which was attended by 400 people. Since then, the group has used a variety of engagement tools including networking, training and creating themed groups to explore specific issues.

Method of delivery and tools used

There are ten themed groups and twenty project groups within Transition Town Totnes. Each group defines its own objectives and interests and then initiates projects. The group leaders sit on the Transition Town Totnes management team.

Projects use methods appropriate to their aims, which are diverse. They include training (for the Great Re-skilling), research (for Oil Vulnerability Audits), innovative finance (for the Totnes Pound) and digging (for Planting Nut Trees).

The 'Open Space' technique has been widely used to engage the public to share their concerns and identify ideas for community solutions. This has also brought many more members into the themed groups and led to the initiation of new projects.

Special events have been run for local stakeholders, such as 'World Cafe' sessions for people working in parish and county councils and a day event called 'Estates in Transition' for local landowners. These events aim to enable local people to explore the implications of peak oil and climate change for their work and planning, and to better connect with Transition Town initiatives. 'Transition Tales' is a programme bringing local writers together with schoolchildren to imagine what 2030 will look like.

A core activity is developing an Energy Descent Action Plan, a vision for a low carbon future which integrates all the interests and activity of the participants in the movement.

'The Transition Initiative Primer: Becoming a Transition Town, City, District, Village, Community or even island' was developed as an internet guide for groups aiming to start the Transition process.

Partnerships

Transition Town Totnes has built good working partnerships with Totnes Council, Totnes Chamber of Commerce, Totnes and District Strategy Group, Totnes Development Trust, Dartington Hall Trust and the Schumacher College. Links with regional and national organisations include the University of Liverpool; the Oil Depletion Group; the Centre for Alternative Technology; the Soil Association; and the New Economics Foundation.

The funders of Transition Town Totnes include: 'Artists' Project Earth (APE); Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation; Esmee Fairburn Foundation; Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation; Ashden Trust; and the Funding Network. The Transition Network is funded by the Tudor Trust.

Benefits and lessons learned

Transition Town Totnes has developed a model of community-led action that has inspired hundreds of other communities around the world. There are over 100 formal Transition Initiatives established and over 1,000 communities at an early stage of development. The twelve step model described in the internet Primer and the published Transition Handbook provides a clear path for local community development which is flexible enough to allow groups to set up in ways appropriate to their needs.

Once completed, the Energy Descent Action Plan will set the agenda for the future of the organisation. This will involve becoming a re-localisation agency working with organisations that can deliver this agenda, such as a bank, food co-op or energy company. A new programme, 'Transition Together', also aims to work with groups to cut carbon and build resilience.

Key challenges for Transition Totnes have been the time and energy required to generate action; maintaining the energy and motivation of volunteers; the management demands of the growing Transition Network; and the media attention that the town has received (resulting in 'film crew fatigue'). A lack of financial backing has also been a challenge, but the initiative has shown energy and enthusiasm thrive in spite of this.

Transition Town Totnes has made huge strides in initiating community action on climate change and by effectively using the internet has spread their model all around the world. The groups experience has highlighted the importance of framing and communicating the climate change and peak oil message in such a way that involves people and their ideas, through an empowering and exciting process, that is accessible to all.

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5. Conclusions

This review of best practice has highlighted the potential for community led climate change initiatives to stimulate significant reductions in emissions and normalise pro-environmental behaviours. For example, Ashton Hayes have estimated a 20% reduction in carbon emissions so far with the broader benefits of the project being an aspect of wider social narrative i.e. it has become 'normal' for villagers to openly discuss climate change issues and the actions taken to reduce their carbon emissions.

The potential for community led initiatives to create embedded behavioural change across several strands of sustainability (i.e. energy use in the home, transport, recycling, and food) is an important one. Whilst the Energy Saving Trust is primarily concerned with energy use in the home and transport, meeting the Climate Change Act's target to reduce emissions by 80% by 2050 will require a broader adoption of pro-environmental behaviours. The majority of environmental campaigns implemented by NGOs and the Government tend to focus on the simple steps we can take to live a greener lifestyle or targeted measures, such as loft or cavity wall insulation. These campaigns, particularly those focussed on simple steps, rely on the adoption of one pro-environmental behaviour increasing people's inclination to adopt others: a concept known as 'positive spill over'.

The recent report 'Simple and Painless' (Crompton and Thøgersen, 2009, on behalf of WWF-UK) identifies the need for a wider adoption of pro-environmental behaviours that goes beyond simple changes, such as switching the lights off and turning the thermostat down by 1°C. The report argues that campaigns focussing on simple steps and single actions are unlikely to result in positive spill over, with the combined impact of several simple and painless steps on emissions being relatively low. Whilst the research itself does highlight some differences in opinion regarding the levels of positive spill over associated with pro-environmental campaigns, it is important to note that the majority of the best practice initiatives surveyed for this report have achieved a significant level of spill over amongst the householders they have engaged.

Whilst no two initiatives demonstrated the same model of engagement, the majority of community led initiatives interviewed for this research were initiated by one individual who first engaged their peers to form a central nucleus of members with an aligned goal. This group then engages other local community groups and political decision makers e.g. Friends of the Earth and Parish Councils. These groups typically contain other 'mavens'³ that generate further interest and community support for the group. Initiatives then enter a phase of wider consultation and action planning via foot print surveys, events and workshops. The best practice case studies interviewed here have moved from the action planning phase to the deployment of measures: a move that community groups often encounter difficulties with. The interviewees typically identified the role of external support and a core team of committed individuals as key components of successfully making this transition.

³ Malcolm Gladwell used the term Maven in his book *The Tipping Point* (Little Brown, 2000) to describe those who are intense gatherers of information and impressions, and so are often the first to pick up on new or nascent trends.

Furthermore, maintaining a positive mission focus, such as that demonstrated by Ashton Hayes and Transition Totnes, is a critical component for success. Maintaining this focus and engaging the community in this vision enables the group to engage local political structures, maintain interest and make real progress towards their goal. Conversely, if a community group moves away from its mission focus, for example if it is sidetracked into campaigning on a local, immediate issue (such as a proposed airport expansion), this can have a negative impact on the level of engagement and interest. If a community group diverts its focus in this way, members may be deterred from involvement by the volatility associated with campaigning and local politicians become a lobbying target. When the campaign draws to a close it is very difficult for the group to then divert back to its original mission focus: levels of community interest have dropped and working relationships with political structures will be more difficult to establish. It is therefore important for community-led initiatives to ensure a positive mission focus is maintained, providing consistency in their message to the community and politicians alike.

The following points summarise the key lessons learned from the best practice review interviews:

Key factors for engaging communities and sustaining involvement

- **Succession:** community-led initiatives are heavily reliant on volunteer time, and this can be very intensive, particularly when volunteers also have full time jobs (which many do). Furthermore, the successes of community initiatives are often the result of high levels of enthusiasm and energy amongst volunteers. There is a risk that over time this will diminish. To ensure the long term sustainability of the community group, it is therefore important to ensure that additional volunteers are recruited along the way and there is someone to 'handover the reigns' to, particularly for leadership roles (e.g. the Chair). This also brings the added benefit of new ideas that may arise with 'new blood'.
- **Build on people's strengths:** identifying the different skills and interests of community group members and building on these, enabling them to do what they are good at and enjoy can also help to maintain interest, motivation and passion for the cause, whilst at the same time maximising resources of the group.
- **Build on and publicise successes:** establishing a community group to pursue action on climate is a slow and long term process. Therefore it is important to build on any successes and milestones achieved, no matter how small, to demonstrate to volunteers and the wider public the impact of the group's efforts, helping to maintain and enhance motivation and interest.
- **Trust:** a key benefit of community groups acting at a local level and led by local residents, is the implicit level of trust that the group can entail. People are more likely to trust and listen to their neighbour than instruction from a higher level.
- **Sensitivity to individual needs:** As with any initiative that requires households to change behaviour or install measures, it is important to be sensitive to the different attitudes, motivations, understanding, tolerances and capacities of individuals in the community.

Planning activities and monitoring achievements

- Establish an action plan: an action plan sets out the groups aim(s), how the group is going to deliver this aim, including timescales and allocating responsibilities. This ensures that all members of the group are working to same agenda, avoiding the potential for conflict or misunderstanding at a later date. Having an established action plan can also help with securing funding.
- Streamline activities: Groups with a wider agenda (for example a broad climate change and peak oil focus) can benefit from establishing themed working groups. This can help widen involvement whilst at the same time streamlining the planning and decision-making process, (for example, as demonstrated by Ashton Hayes and Transition Totnes).
- Provide a physical focal point: having a focal point in the community, for example insulating a well-known community building or installing renewables on community buildings, such as the church or local school, can significantly help with awareness raising. Having a physical feature in the community provides a visual stimulant, topic for discussion and a clear example of what the community group is capable of achieving.
- Monitoring impact: A footprinting survey is popular method for establishing a baseline, and monitoring progress and impact of the group's actions. Having some tangible outputs in the way of carbon emission figures can also help with funding application. Despite the reviews focus on best practice, several initiatives weren't able to provide details of the tools they use to monitor their impacts i.e. reductions in emissions. Several groups had received external support to design and implement foot printing surveys with local householders. The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) Community Footprinting tool, Marches Energy Agency's online carbon calculator and the Energy Saving Trust's online calculator were all identified as useful monitoring tools.
- Follow-through: Linked to the need to monitor a groups impact is the importance of ensuring follow-through in any initiative. This can ensure both active volunteers and the passive community are aware of the impact of any action taken and help to maintain interest and motivation.

Partnerships and support

- CAfE: a number of community groups interviewed for this research noted the usefulness of CAfE, both for providing materials, training and networking opportunities.
- A few of the community groups interviewed for this research are finalists in the Big Green Challenge and they noted the added value of the approach used, whereby financial support has been coupled with advisory support, providing the community groups with assistance in general operations and establishing processes.
- One community group did identify an issue with making contact with relevant local authority departments, both in terms of fitting in with working hours and having to contact departments separately. In view of this, they suggested there is a potential role for a 'carbon ambassador' in local authorities, who could see community groups out of hours and provide a single point of contact for all climate change-related issues.

Barriers

- Perseverance and patience: processes often take longer than expected or different challenges than anticipated may arise. However, it is often the case that there is someone who has already faced and overcome these challenges, highlighting the importance of community groups sharing experiences and knowledge.
- Funding: the communities groups interviewed for this research had quite different experiences in securing funding. However, it became clear that significant volunteer time usually has to be directed at sourcing funding and the application process is often complex and time consuming; adding to pressures on already limited volunteer time.
- Institutional and bureaucratic barriers: these can be significant for community groups – efforts could be much better spent than on form filling and box ticking. Such barriers put added pressure on volunteer time and send the wrong message to communities, where the enthusiasm, energy and understanding that they exhibit should be recognised and rewarded for the asset that it is. In this way support community led groups could benefit from readily available external support with such procedures (for example planning and funding applications).

Uptake of measures and actions

- Narrow vs. broad focus: A narrow focus or stimulus for activity is more likely to lead to the installation of measures but this does not necessarily transcend to other pro-environmental behaviours. A wider focus on the other hand is more likely to lead to spill over between actions but in a smaller number of households. Activities typically begin with awareness raising and auditing, with groups then developing individual projects to stimulate the take up of energy efficiency measures locally and / or renewables at the household or community level.
- Energy hierarchy: Initiatives with wider climate change or energy security (peak oil) agendas often do not apply an energy hierarchy to the order in which they prioritise activities and deploy measures. For example, a group may focus its activities on installing a wind turbine or solar panels for a local school rather than the insulation of its members lofts i.e. the more cost effective measure with the higher carbon impact. However, the wind turbine or solar panels provide a focal point and visible stimulus for further community engagement and also a potential source of revenue through exported electricity.

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Annex I – Analysis of schemes by lead actor and stimulus for activity

Lead Actor	Stimulus for Activity	Total	Including deployment
Community group (genuine community-led)	Climate change	53	3
	Energy security (inc. peak oil)	19	5
	Fuel poverty	1	1
	Other	22	
	Sustainable energy*	11	8
Energy supplier	Health, inequalities & social inclusion**	1	1
	Sustainable energy	3	3
Other	Climate change	4	
	Fuel poverty	1	1
	Other	12	1
	Sustainable energy	4	1
Public sector	Climate change	2	1
	Fuel poverty	3	3
	Health, inequalities & social inclusion	2	2
	Other	2	1
	Sustainable energy	1	1
Social enterprise	Climate change	4	1
	Fuel poverty	13	13
	Other	1	
	Sustainable energy	4	3
Sustainable energy charity	Climate change	1	
	Fuel poverty	6	6
	Health, inequalities & social inclusion	7	6
	Other	2	
	Sustainable energy	8	7
Total		187	68

* Sustainable energy is used here to describe measures designed to alleviate climate change and fuel poverty i.e. energy efficiency, micro generation and community scale renewables

** Social inclusion refers to measures to alleviate fuel poverty

Annex II – Best practice review survey

1. Can you tell me a bit about the background to your community group?
 - a. Main motivation for forming the group (climate change, security of supply, sustainable energy, fuel poverty)
 - b. How is your group structured? (For example constituted/ membership based/ Community Interest Company/ registered charity, with board of directors/trustees/ steering group etc.)
 - c. Is the group part of any networks (for example, Transition Towns, Low Carbon Communities, a local energy forum) or affiliated to any member-based organisation (for example, FOE, Greenpeace etc).

2. How did the people involved in the group/initiative become involved?
 - a. Did you involve people who were initially unengaged?
 - b. If so how?
 - c. How successful was this?
 - d. Did you use any particular tactics?

3. What is/are the main aim(s) of your group/initiative?
 - a. What outcomes are you trying to deliver?
 - b. What activities are you carrying out to deliver these?
 - c. What information/evidence/experience did you draw on when designing these activities, in order to maximise the delivery of the intended outcomes?

4. How did your group prioritise its activities (*this may not be applicable – if only pursuing a single aim and activity*)?
 - a. Did you discuss a range of potential activities first?
 - b. Did the group conduct a survey of the community to help set priorities?
 - c. Has the group reviewed potential opportunities to help set an action plan?
 - d. If so is this formally documented?

5. Have you monitored/ are you monitoring the impact your group is having?
- a. If so, how?
 - i. Have you used any tools to help measure a change in energy use or carbon emissions?
 - ii. Were the tools free to use?
 - iii. Did you find the tools helpful and easy to use?
 - iv. Have you got recorded energy savings from this? How were they calculated? Have you shared these for reporting purposes or publicity?
 - b. If not, why not?
 - i. What are the barriers to evaluating your impact?

6. What are/what do you consider are the main successes/achievements of you group/initiative?
- a. How did they come about?

7. What were/are(?) the barriers or challenges your group/initiative has faced?
- a. What were the reasons for these?
 - b. Did they occur at a particular stage of development?
 - c. Were you able to overcome these barriers?
 - i. If so, how?
 - ii. If not, is there anything that would have helped you to overcome these barriers?

8. What are the key lessons from the groups activities/ the project so far [from project design and set up to delivery and evaluation. For example, what are the top 3 things learned?

9. How has the group funded its activities?
- a. If you have installed measures to reduce energy use and or emissions, how were these funded?

10. Have you needed to form any key partnerships to help deliver your groups objectives?

- a. If so, who with?
- b. What has been particularly positive/ the key benefits?
- c. And challenges?

11. How do you see your group's activities evolving in the future? *(only prompt if needed)*

- a. Are you planning to engage a larger proportion of the community?
- b. Are you planning a new project to encourage the take up of specific measures?
- c. Expanding aims and objectives to cover other areas?

12. Is there any additional support or tools that you think your group/initiative would find useful?

- a. If so, what would this be do to?
- b. Why would this be useful?

13. Any further comments?