

Biogas Regions Advisory Group

Meeting held at the Newport Civic Centre, Newport, South Wales.
2nd July 2008

Present: Andy Bull (SWEA), Kierson Wise (SWEA), Mark Brown (Powys CC), Sue Thompson (Glasu), Adrian Jones (WAG), Sandra Esteves (University of Glamorgan), Richard Dinsdale (UoG), Lucy Lewis (Greenfinch), Steve Rist (Merlin Biofuels) and Richard Baines (Royal Agricultural College)

Apologies for Absence: Oliver Harwood (CLA), David Williams (Potters)

1. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as accurate.

2. Matters Arising

Richard B. mentioned that Cotswold District Council (CDC) had very recently introduced source-segregated food waste collections but he did not know how this was being treated. Andy undertook to follow up with CDC to see if there were any opportunities for AD.
ACTION AB.

3. Country Specific Framework Conditions

Group members had received a draft of the Country Specific Framework Conditions for Biogas in England and Wales prior to the meeting. Andy reported that “experienced partner” colleagues from Austria had offered suggestions that would be incorporated into the report. These related mostly to the need to make reference to the specific legislative background to some of the relevant regulations. The Advisory Group agreed that this was important and wished to see a table/matrix that included EU Directives as well as resultant UK legislation. It was noted that legislation and policy is changing very quickly and that this point needs to be highlighted along with links to key web sites that would provide up-to-date information. **ACTION AB**

It was noted that section 4.2.1 needed to be revised already as new regulations had been introduced very recently. **ACTION AB.**

It was also noted that the “State Veterinary Service” had changed its name to the “Animal Health Agency” and references needed to be changed. **ACTION AB**

Other comments and suggestions would be forwarded to Andy within 2 weeks.

ACTION ALL.

4. Regional Strategy and Action Plan

Group members had received a draft of the Regional Strategy and Action Plan prior to the meeting.

Richard B had some suggested additions to sections 3.4 and 6.2 and undertook to forward the suggested wording to Andy. **ACTION RB**

It was suggested that the Executive summary be moved to the front of the document.

Other comments and suggestions would be forwarded to Andy within 2 weeks.
ACTION ALL.

The meeting was advised about the partnership that had been formed between SWEA/Biogas Regions and the University of Glamorgan (with financial assistance from WAG) and how this would seek to deliver the aspirations set out in the Action Plan, particularly on the Welsh side of the “region”. Arising out of this discussion, Richard B suggested that the Royal Agricultural College could form the focus of activity in the English part of the “region”, possibly involving the University of Southampton. There had been a Greenfinch digester constructed within a few miles of the College. It was agreed that Andy and Richard meet to develop this idea. **ACTION AB & RB**

5. UK Shining Examples

Copies of the 3 UK case studies as currently compiled were circulated largely for information. It was noted that Andy had some doubts about one of the figures on the Bedfordia case study and this was being checked. Lucy expressed a wish to up-date the Ludlow case study with a little more text describing new commercial waste feedstocks. **ACTION LL.** Sandra informed the meeting that a much more in-depth case study of the Ludlow digester had been prepared by the UoG.

6. Study Tours

Following a discussion about the possibilities for study tours and the likely participants, it was agreed that the approach should be to arrange something that would cater for all likely interested parties - potential commercial developers, farmers, waste disposal authorities, waste treatment organisations and regulators (including planning authorities). It was felt that a mixture of UK and Swedish or German plants would be ideal and that the programme should include challenging the participants to come up with ways of working together. It was agreed that Andy and Sandra would meet quite soon to work up a proposal and that this would be brought back to the Advisory Group. The plan would be to undertake the tour in March or April 2009. **ACTION AB & SE**

7. Regional Seminars

The meeting noted that Knowledge West was prepared to support another AD seminar in the South West of England (probably Taunton) in December of this year. The meeting felt that a seminar in June 09 at the University of Glamorgan would be potentially very valuable. **ACTION AB & SE.**

8. Potential Sites in Project Region

Andy asked to be kept informed of any potential developments that people hear of – particularly but not exclusively in circumstances where the project can provide assistance.

9. Membership of the Advisory Group

The meeting felt that Guy Hitchcock from “Sustainable Transport Solutions” should be invited to the meetings in order to provide expertise on vehicle fuel potential. **ACTION AB** Lucy was going to see people from Gloucestershire CC in the near future and would ask them for a named contact. **ACTION LL** Adrian said that he would approach WAG Agriculture division to see if there was interest there. He would also try to find an appropriate person from the EA in England (Bristol office). **ACTION AJ** SWEA would seek to invite a representative from Wiltshire CC. **ACTION AB (KW)**

10. Date and Venue for Next Meeting.

The meeting was very satisfied with the venue of the meeting and expressed the hope that it could be used again. Adrian suggested that if we used the venue again then the relevant officer from Newport CC be invited to attend – this was agreed. **ACTION AJ**
No date was set for the meeting which would be during the autumn of 2008.