

CAN HOLLYWOOD SAVE THE WORLD?



Panellists (left to right) Alex Steele, Catrin Maby, John Hunt and Nigel Jones MP at the Day After Tomorrow film showing

Is the world doomed? The answer is yes according to recent Hollywood blockbuster 'The Day After Tomorrow'. In the film global warming causes the Gulf Stream current that warms Western Europe to suddenly shut off, producing catastrophic storms and condemning the planet to a new ice age.

Although a somewhat extreme vision of the consequences of climate change 'The Day After Tomorrow' brought the issue to the attention of the public like never before. To mark the film's release SWEA organised a free showing attended by over 80 people from local authorities, environmental organisations and the

University of Gloucestershire. Following the showing SWEA's director Catrin Maby chaired a lively panel discussion on the issues raised in the film. Panellists were Nigel Jones (MP for Cheltenham), Alex Steele (University of Gloucestershire) and paleoclimatologist John Hunt (University of Gloucestershire)

Catrin and Alex were both back in action a few weeks later at a discussion on 'Can Gloucestershire Save the World?' as part of the Cheltenham Festival of Science. The discussion covered issues such as nuclear power, renewables and energy efficiency from a wide range of viewpoints. However everyone agreed that whilst Gloucestershire couldn't stop climate change all by itself positive action on a local and individual level was a major part of the solution.

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Current SWEA Projects Include:

- The Gloucestershire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre
- WISE Homes
- Solar Warm and Well
- Lydney Local Power
- The Local Authority Support Programme
- The Community Renewables Initiative

STRATEGIES TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

Local authorities can be effective local leaders in meeting the challenge of climate change. An increasingly popular way of setting out action at a local level is to produce a climate change strategy.

SWEA has been working with a number of local authorities to help them

produce these strategies. These include Cheltenham Borough Council who recently launched their strategy, with SWEA's director Catrin Maby speaking at the launch event.

We are now working closely with Tewkesbury Borough Council to help

them develop their strategy. Internal and community workshops have been held and the strategy document is now being drafted.

The latest news on our strategy development work is available on our website, www.swea.co.uk

NEW CASH FOR ENERGY SAVING “REACHES THE PARTS THAT OTHER GRANTS CAN’T REACH”

WISE Homes is a new project offering support to people with ‘hard to treat’ properties where improving energy efficiency is relatively difficult. The project is a partnership between SWEA, Stroud District Council and Cotswold District Council.

Traditionally energy saving schemes have focussed on lower cost, simple energy efficiency measures such as loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and gas condensing boilers. However in Gloucestershire there are many properties with solid stone walls, no traditional loft space and/ or no access to

mains gas. A large proportion of these properties are in rural areas.

WISE Homes will provide advice and grants aimed specifically at these kinds of properties. Home visits will be offered to carry out a NHER survey and provide personalised energy efficiency advice appropriate to each property. Grants will be available for measures such as internal wall and sloping ceiling insulation.

Measures such as solar hot water systems are especially



An example of a ‘hard to treat’ property

relevant to homes using expensive fuels like oil or LPG. The project will therefore encourage the use of renewable energy sources by providing extra grants in addition to the governments Clear-Skies grants.

SENT TO COVENTRY – BY BIKE!



Left to right—Jo Badham (Wiltshire EEAC), Kaye Welfare, Ed Dearnley (both SWEA)

In an effort to buck national transport trends SWEA staff used pedal power to attend the national EEAC conference held at the University of Warwick during June.

The UK has an insatiable

appetite for transport. Road traffic increased by 142% between 1970 and 2002, whilst over the same period the number of air trips by UK residents more than quadrupled. These increases have more than doubled emissions of carbon dioxide from the transport sector, against a

background of falling emissions from homes and industry.

As car usage increases walking and cycling are in decline, contributing to growing obesity amongst UK

residents.

SWEA’s Kaye Welfare and Ed Dearnley were joined by Wiltshire colleague Jo Badham for the 60 mile ride from Cheltenham. They enjoyed a sunny ride through the beautiful Gloucestershire and Warwickshire countryside, stopping off for a pub lunch and luckily only hitting a single mild shower. They arrived weary but jubilant after completing the ride in a brisk seven hours.

The riders estimated that they had saved nearly 50 kg of carbon dioxide compared to individual car use, the equivalent emissions of a 100 watt lightbulb left on continuously for a month.

SUNSHINE FOR THE WILDERNESS CENTRE

During February 2004 a roof integrated 2.73kW demonstration PV system was installed on the Eco-house at the Wilderness Centre near Micheldean.

The PV system generates electricity from sunlight; the system also provides a weather proof material (replacing tiles on the roof). It is estimated that this system will generate around 2040kWh a year (around half of the electricity demand of an average UK household); this is anticipated to make the Eco-house self-sufficient on completion. It will also offset 0.87 tonnes of CO₂ a year.

When the Eco-house is fully re-furbished it will complement the environmental educational

resource at the centre providing living experiences for young people across Gloucestershire.

The Severn Wye Energy Agency provided support to the project through the Community Renewables Initiative. SWEA provided technical support and advice on system selection, SWEA also provided help identifying funding and securing funding.

Sharon Hockey Centre Manager said "Locating funding sources and completing the applications was the most time-consuming



Graham Ayling – SWEA Renewables Project Manager pictured next to the PV array

part of the project and we were grateful for SWEA's help and expertise in this, especially in adding detail."

The system was funded by the DTI Major Photovoltaic Demonstration Programme, Gloucestershire County Council and the SWEB EDF Green Energy Fund.

ENERGY SAVINGS ARE 'LOCKED UP'

The Severn Wye Energy Agency has recently obtained funding for an innovative project working with prisons, prison officers and prisoner's families to promote energy efficiency and carbon saving technologies through new routes to market.

Working closely with Gloucester Prison we plan to increase energy awareness by providing an on site energy survey and a prison energy policy. This will increase the profile of energy efficiency issues throughout the prison.

As well as this we plan to develop a toolkit that can be

used to deliver energy efficiency education to inmates.

Promotion of the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre will help to reduce prisoner's families' daily living costs through improved energy awareness.

A part of this project will also be to investigate the need to provide additional funding for prison officers and families of prisoners to encourage the installation of energy efficiency measures.

The feasibility study for this broad and ground-breaking initiative is planned to

commence in early September in partnership with HMP Gloucester and Gloucestershire County Council.

This project represents an ambitious and exciting opportunity to reach new markets and target those groups that can benefit most from the quality advice and support that is available.

Visit our website!

www.swea.co.uk

IT'S OFFICIAL - KAYE IS OUTSTANDING!

Useful Websites

- www.swea.co.uk - The SWEA website
- www.savenergy.org.uk - Useful energy efficiency tips and grant information
- www.practicalhelp.org.uk - Help and advice on sustainable energy for Local Authorities and their partners
- www.nea.org.uk - National Energy Action are a charity campaigning for the eradication of fuel poverty
- www.greenenergy.org.uk - General information on renewable energy
- www.uswitch.com - a website to help you compare electricity and gas tariffs, including 'green' tariffs

Those of you who have met Kaye Welfare, SWEA's Energy Efficiency Advice Centre manager, will know she is rarely lost for words. However, Kaye was stunned into silence when she was presented with an award for outstanding achievement in energy efficiency.

Unknown to Kaye the EEAC team had nominated her to recognise her tireless work to improve delivery of energy efficiency initiatives in Gloucestershire. Kaye was presented with the 'Timmins Award' (named for the trophy's resemblance to EST's Colin Timmins) in



Kaye celebrates winning her award with the Energy Saving Trust's Dominic Francis

front of colleagues from across the UK at the annual EEAC conference.

In addition to her trophy Kaye received a voucher to spend on activities such as rally

driving, flying lessons and health spa visits. A rumour has reached us that Kaye intends to use it to drive a Chieftain tank; our renewables team are presumably hard at work on a biodiesel conversion.

SWEA INFORMATION

The Severn Wye Energy Agency is one of a network of agencies across Europe set up to stimulate the development of sustainable energy through local and regional action for energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy resources. It is an independent not-for-profit company and registered charity.

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