



## Community Renewables Initiative Newsletter

CRI — Newsletter : Number 4

January 2003



Community  
Renewables  
Initiative

### This Newsletter:

**CRI Up-date**

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### The CRI

The CRI aims to encourage community involvement with renewable energy and maximise the local benefits from renewable energy projects. Severn Wye Energy Agency manages the CRI for Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and South Gloucestershire and provides help and support to community groups and local organisations interested in developing renewable energy projects.

### CRI Update

Seasons greetings from the Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire CRI team.

Since the last newsletter, the Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire CRI team has been continuing to provide advice on various renewable energy issues. As some of our development work we have been exploring different community business structures and met with Co-operative futures. We have also been looking at the procedures that are necessary for connection of small scale renewable to the local distribution network.

There was a *Community Renewable Energy and the South West* seminar hosted by ESD (national coordinators of the scheme) at the SW RDA offices on the 13th of December, this was to introduce the CRI to some of the key regional organisations in the South West, and to look at how the CRI can integrate, and work positively with regional strategies and other organisations in the South West.

Forthcoming events in the CRI diary are:

- The next CRI advisory group is on the 15th of January.
- The Next Wiltshire Renewable Energy Strategy meeting is due to be held in Trowbrige on the 21st of January.
- Launch of the Community and Household Renewable Energy Grants Scheme on the 14th January
- New SWEA web site to be launched imminently....A news flash will be sent out upon the official launch of the site.
- It is hoped that the seminar on renewable energy opportunities for farmers should take place before the end of March, however will be dependant on the confirmation of funding.

**BS**

**Project Focus : Wood Fuelled CHP Energy Station**

## **ROVES ENERGY**

### **“Farmers and Foresters Fuelling the Future”**

Plans are well forward to create the UK's first dedicated wood-fuelled CHP energy station near Swindon – on the Wiltshire / Oxfordshire / Gloucestershire borders. Funding has been sought from the NOF / DTI's Capital projects scheme for £960,000 towards the renewable electricity generation part of the project, the result of which should be heard in January.

If successful, a planning application will be made to Swindon Borough council in the early Spring 2003 to build the project on Roves Farm, home of Rupert Burr – one of a handful of farmers trying to pioneer biomass energy and the growing of energy crops on farms. The chosen site is adjacent to the A420 Swindon to Oxford road and the London to Bristol railway line. Rupert already has a Farm Visitor and Education Centre on his farm.

He says “One of the advantages of building the project at Roves is the remoteness of the site. It will only be seen by one household – and that is in the middle of a 150 acre new woodland plantation. It is screened from the south by a 6 metre railway embankment and from all other directions by the natural hedgerow vegetation and topography of the river Cole valley, with it's associated corallian limestone ridges.”

90,000 tonnes of harvested wood (50% moisture) from forest residues and dedicated energy crops such as Short Rotation Coppice (SRC) will be required annually to fuel the project. This will be sourced as locally as possible and will be delivered as woodchips to the site. These will be dried using the heat produced as a by-product of the power generation process. One third of this fuel (15,000 dried tonnes) will fuel the process, which will produce 2 Megawatts of renewable electricity for sale under the Renewables Obligation.

The remainder, some 30,000 tonnes, will be processed into graded woodchips, sawdust or pellets and be available to fuel other renewable heating schemes. Initially, it is intended to transport this material to coal fired power stations (a process known as co-firing displaces coal with wood as a fuel) by rail, using the new rail freight terminal one mile to the west of the project site.

*However, other wood-fuelled heating opportunities are being sought, including domestic pellet stoves, municipal buildings and community heating schemes. Rupert is currently discussing local opportunities including a 4,000 home greenfield development, highly suitable for a wood-fuelled community heating scheme, on the edge of Swindon. A new police and ambulance headquarters site (proposed close to the project) and the Science Museum's planned expansion on Wroughton airfield, together with the National Trust's new headquarters in the centre of Swindon are typical examples of the type of development where wood –fuelled systems could easily be installed.*

Rupert would be keen to hear from anyone who is considering installing wood-fuelled heating systems or, indeed, who has suggestions of alternative sites for replication of the CHP process. His vision....one of this scale of project every 20 miles across the country, providing an opportunity for every farmer to diversify into a new crop, every forester to have a market for his low quality wood and for every person to buy locally produced renewable energy – isn't that part of what sustainable development is all about? Oh, and by the way, the crop is hugely beneficial to all forms of biodiversity. Rupert can be contacted on [jb@rovesfarm,freeserve.co.uk](mailto:jb@rovesfarm,freeserve.co.uk) or by telephone on 01793 763939.

**Rupert Burr**

### **Project Focus in Brief: Brockweir and Hewelsfield Community Shop**

Work is beginning at the Brockweir and Hewelsfield community shop. The community shop will sell produce which has been grown locally , with the aim of reducing food miles (the distance food is transported before consumption), the initial target is that 20% of the produce on the shelves at the shop will be locally grown. The community shop will also host a café with internet access as well as an IT suite which will be used for IT training.

The community shop will also be powered by renewable energy in the form of a 4.5kW PV array which will be installed in March. Work is also due to start shortly on installation of the ground loop for a ground source heat pump which will heat the shop via an under floor heating system. The building is also of a sustainable design using green oak construction and incorporating high levels of insulation.

The group has secured an array of different sources of funding for the project, which includes funding from DEFRA under the Rural Enterprise Scheme, the DTI PV grants Scheme, Scottish Power, the Countryside Agency, Forest of Dean District Council and the Shell Better Britain Campaign.

Severn Wye Energy Agency has provided advice on the renewable energy aspects of the project under the Renewable Energy Development Initiative. In addition to technical support SWEA provided information on funding sources for renewable energy and is assisting with interpretation materials at the site.

This project is great example of community renewable energy with a huge amount of volunteer time provided by local people and with local ownership through a “bonds” system. There will be a full feature on this project when construction is complete later in the year.

**BS**

### **Contacts for further information on the CRI :**

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