



Newsletter

Winter 2002

### Gloucestershire Energy Advice Centre

SWEA is celebrating its first year as the Gloucestershire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (GEEAC), serving residents throughout the county. Over the year we received over 2,200 telephone enquiries, dispatched 6,750 individual energy advice reports to our clients, and provided energy awareness sessions to 129 community or relevant staff groups.

Recent research carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of the national network of EEACs indicates that on average every household in the South West completing the EEAC home energy check and receiving an advice report saves an annual £28 on their fuel bills, equivalent to 1,306kWh of energy, and 318 kgs of carbon dioxide emissions as a result.

On this basis we estimate that during our first year of operation GEEAC has helped Gloucestershire residents to save at least £175,000, 8,489 kWh and 2,067 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year.

GEEAC has already made its impact nationally, with Catrin speaking at the national EEAC conference last July, and Kaye (who took over management of the GEEAC in January) speaking at regional DEFRA/NEA/TRANSCO workshops, and representing the South West EEACs on numerous working groups.

The EEAC looks set to go from strength to strength in the coming year, and has recently received funding approval from the Energy Saving Trust to join 19 other EEACs in providing the Local Authority Support Programme (LASP).



Kaye, Becky and Barbara from Gloucestershire EEAC with Martin from BBC Radio Gloucestershire with spring bulbs collected at the Eaga Big Red Bus

### Local Authority Support Programme

The LASP aims to support local authorities by helping in the coordination and enhancement of local delivery of HECA and other sustainable energy activities. With many HECA officers able to allocate less than a day a week to this sector, LASP will offer a valuable additional resource, as a source of expert help and advice and a driving force for new projects and partnerships with a wide variety of organisations.

**LASP** aims to improve understanding and commitment to sustainable energy at all levels, including elected members and senior management, to foster a whole organisation approach to energy and a move away from the idea that it is solely the interest of the HECA officer and building energy manager.

### From strategy to practical action

SWEA has facilitated the development of a joint **affordable warmth strategy** for Gloucestershire, through a participative process involving around 80 people in two public workshops. The strategy has been published, with full formal corporate commitment from the six District Authorities, the unitary South Gloucestershire Council, the Health Authority, South Gloucestershire Primary Care Group and the County Council (Social Services).

The strategy was launched publicly in October 2001, along with a new project designed to start to roll out the strategic action plan. The message is that energy efficiency is good for you: it is good for your health, your wallet and your planet. **'Warm and Well'** is the name of the new project.

If your home is not warm enough, this is uncomfortable, but it can also be bad for your health, through low indoor temperatures and condensation damp. The latter can result in mould growth. Health problems related to cold homes include respiratory and cardiovascular illness. We are highlighting the issues of condensation damp and carbon monoxide in particular as they are not obviously energy efficiency issues, but have very close links to issues around heating, affordable warmth and ventilation.



**Warm & Well**

The Warm and Well project aims to improve energy efficiency and reduce the levels of associated health problems and health risk. It is developed and managed by the Severn Wye Energy Agency, and funded by the Energy Saving Trust, all six District, City and Borough Councils, and three of the 5 Primary Care Groups in Gloucestershire. This is achieved through:

- awareness raising and promotion of issues to health and social care professionals and relevant clients/patients
- advice on measures to take in each home
- referrals to grant schemes for the main energy efficiency measures according to eligibility

During its first year of operation, the Warm and Well scheme gave advice to 2,180 residents and installed energy efficiency measures in 774 homes.

The project consortium was delighted to welcome South Gloucestershire Council into the scheme in October 2002.

## All for one and one for all.....

At SWEA we combine the twin objectives of sustainable energy and affordable warmth, for protection of the environment and for social welfare. Central to our ethos is a dedication to the pursuit of both of these objectives.

We also present an integrated approach to the detail of sustainable energy, promoting both energy efficiency and renewable energy at every opportunity.

## Renewable energy is good for you

Renewable energy can be good for local communities, bringing new skills and employment, and opportunities for greater local control of resources, as well as global environmental benefits. This is the message carried by SWEA's Renewable Energy Development Initiative (REDI), which aims to raise awareness, and assist communities in Gloucestershire to plan and install renewables in their own localities. Partnership and cooperation are essential, and together we joyfully leap the hurdles of credibility, planning and financing the resulting projects. REDI is entering its third year, and links to the schools renewables project run jointly with partners in Austria, Spain and Norway.



As the next step in its renewables support programme SWEA is delighted to have been selected to deliver one of ten pioneering Local Support Teams in England as part of the Countryside Agency's Community Renewables Initiative. SWEA serves Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, in cooperation with the District and County Authorities, the Rural Community Council, and other interested parties such as the Environment Agency, Wiltshire Agenda 21 and Energy 21.

## Power to the People

Following on from the technical feasibility study, SWEA have carried out a public consultation exercise regarding renewable energy in the Severn coastal town on Lydney. The results indicated a positive interest in achieving a level of renewable supply locally, and a project worker has been appointed to facilitate the next stage of development, working closely with the Lydney Regeneration Partnership.



Kierson Wise with Toni Fagan of Lydney Area Partnership with the winners of the "Draw a renewable energy home" competition. 1st prize—Owain Jones; 2nd prize—Matthew and Simon Betts & 3rd prize—Sam Howley

Photo from Nick Davies, Forester

SWEA has recently embarked upon a similar initiative in the lower Wye valley, in association with the Wye Valley AONB.

## The first and the last...

SWEA was established in 1999, taking forward the work of the Forest of Dean Energy Team. The Energy Team was formed in April 1997, and the first member of staff appointed was Graham Ayling, who now leads the renewables work of the organisation. Graham came from a background in Sustainable Energy Policy and Earth Science, and worked at Friends of the Earth and The Franklin Company in Birmingham before coming to the Energy Agency.

SWEA has just celebrated the appointment of its tenth member of staff, representing a factor five growth since company formation. Number ten is Kierson Wise, who joins SWEA with a degree in Renewable Energy Technologies and nearing completion of a Masters degree in Climate Change and Sustainable Development at De Montfort University. We note that Kierson also has a pilots licence and scuba divers certificate, but we haven't yet worked out how to take advantage of this. We are glad that he has a first aid certificate too.

## 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.

SWEA is based at: The MEWs, Brook Street, Mitcheldean Gloucestershire GL17 0SL  
Telephone: +44 (0) 1594 545360  
Fax: +44 (0) 1594 545361

Visit our website at [www.swea.co.uk](http://www.swea.co.uk)

## SWEA staff

Director:	Catrin Maby
Renewable Energy Projects Manager:	Graham Ayling
Renewable Energy Adviser:	Ben Sang
Renewable Energy Project Worker (Lydney):	Kierson Wise
Energy Efficiency Advice Centre Manager:	Kaye Welfare
Energy Advisers:	Barbara Moreton Keren Price
Project Coordinator:	Sarah Giff
Local Authority Support Programme Coordinator:	Ed Dearnley
Administrator/Project Assistant:	Avril Peppard

## SWEA Trustees

Bart Venner, Heather Watts, Martyn Andrews & Roger Brown

## SWEA Volunteers

SWEA also have a network of volunteer energy champions – if you are interested in joining, contact Kaye Welfare.