

THE GREEN PAGE

HB Alternative Technology Centre, Hebble End Mill, Hebden Bridge, HX7 6HJ
daytime tel: 01422-842121 • fax: 01422 84 31 41 • info@alternativetechnology.org.uk • www.alternativetechnology.org.uk

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3 STREAMS HYDRO

The dream of producing their own renewable energy has come a step closer for the communities of Lumbutts & Mankinholes who have successfully gained government funding for a feasibility study into hydroelectric power. (Hydroelectric power is generated when energy is extracted from falling water.)

Tim Wyatt, a Lumbutts resident, originally approached Yorkshire Renewable Energy Network (YREN) earlier this year to investigate the potential to power his house from the stream at the foot of his garden. An initial assessment showed that there was good potential for developing a wider scheme that could bring benefit to the whole community, so other households were leafleted, a series of public meetings were held, and 3 Streams Hydro was born. Currently, hydroelectric power accounts for around 2% of the UK's installed electricity generating capacity but this is mostly from large scale systems which are unlikely to be built in the future due to environmental considerations. Small scale schemes which do not involve collecting water behind dams or in reservoirs have very little impact on the environment and can last for decades with suitable maintenance.

Hydro power has a long history in the Calder Valley in powering the industrial revolution. Lumbutts Mill was unusual in that it had three waterwheels mounted vertically on top of each other. As Tim says, "three rivers originally powered mills in the 1790s before steam power, and these villages only exist because of them. In many ways we're going back to our roots; many of us are homeworkers and we're perhaps the modern equivalent of three-loom

homeweavers"

YREN supported 3 Streams Hydro in submitting an application to the government's Clear Skies initiative, for funding to commission a feasibility study into a community hydro project. This study will enable them to see the potential costs and benefits of generating clean, sustainable energy from their local resources; how such a project could be funded; and what type of financial returns they could expect to see for investing in such a project.

The Youth Hostel at Ennerdale replaced its old diesel generator with a hydroelectric system which now provides enough clean, renewable electricity for the hostel, manager's house, and adjacent camping barn even during dry spells.

YREN is part of the Countryside Agency's Community Renewables Initiative. Based at the Alternative Technology Centre in Hebden Bridge, YREN helps communities across the whole Yorkshire & Humber region to develop their own renewable energy projects. Project manager, Barnaby Fryer said, "Renewable energy is more important now than ever before, in view of the issues currently facing fossil fuel supply. At YREN we can help communities become power generators, rather than just consumers, and help people enjoy a cleaner, more sustainable life, whilst cutting ever-increasing fuel bills. In this region we have the potential to lead the country in the uptake of renewable technology. If you have any questions about renewable energy, or perhaps an idea for a project, then please get in touch with us at YREN to discuss how we can help you." Barnaby can be contacted on 01422 846648 or at info@yren.org.uk

URBAN WINDMILLS

Just two days after the offshore wind farm at North Hoyle began generating electricity, Windsave, a small company based in Scotland launched a unique slow-turn wind turbine, endorsed by Energy Minister Brian Wilson, that can provide supplementary electricity to households and does not involve the use of storage batteries.

Windsave believe that their turbines, which measure approximately 60cms by 90cms, and are designed for use by homes in urban areas could supply up to 15% of the annual electricity needs of an average household. They start generating electricity at winds as low as 3mph and work most efficiently in winds of 20mph, which are common throughout much of the year across most of Britain.

The system does not sell excess power to the National Grid but users will receive a dividend from their local energy supplier, courtesy of the Government's Renewable Obligation Charges, according to how much energy they have supplied. Their electricity bills will also be reduced thanks to the power being generated by the turbine. Initial estimates suggest that the amount of time it will take to save/recoup the initial cost of the turbine will only be approximately 30 months.

The turbines, which have even received support from Country Guardian, the anti wind farm pressure group, will be produced in Scotland and should become available to households within the next three months.

BEYOND THE VALLEY

– positive green news stories from outside the Calder Valley

ELECTRIC STORM

Wind energy was recently brought to the very heart of the capital with the launch of the Electric Storm arts project. A single 225KW wind turbine, approximately 100 feet tall, has been sited on London's South Bank, near to Hungerford Bridge and the London Eye, to provide the electricity supply to an innovative light and sound show which guides visitors between two rows of decorated trees for almost half a kilometre. It has been described as an "ethereal show of mist, light and music" and a display "evocative of the Northern Lights"! The show is running for the next four months.

SUSTAINABLE PEAT FREE COMPOST

The New Smithfield Market in Manchester is home to a unique sustainable waste management system that converts fruit and vegetable waste, non-reusable cardboard and pallets into locally produced peat free compost. In just 3 months it has diverted 147 tonnes of material away from landfill and produced 77 tonnes of compost that is currently being used in Manchester parks, by the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, and for landscaping projects around the market. The system uses a Vertical Composting Unit that produces immature compost in 7 days which is ready to use after a further 6 weeks. Contact www.gmcomposting.co.uk

CAR FREE AND HAPPY

It might have escaped the notice of much of the media but there were 62 different events organised throughout Britain that celebrated September 22nd as International Car Free Day. In London, Camden Council's decision to close Museum Road, opposite the British Museum, for a day was so popular that it's staying closed for the next six months! Albert Square was closed to traffic for three hours in Manchester, and Heathrow Airport offered all of its employees free tickets for the day on rail, bus and coach routes. Elsewhere 160 square kilometres of Brussels were closed for a massive car-free street party!

CHANGING NAPPIES

Research compiled at East Surrey Hospital has demonstrated that if parents are encouraged to use reusable cotton nappies whilst they are in a maternity unit, they are more likely to carry on using them when they leave hospital. When introduced to cotton nappies for the first time over 30% of parents who had never considered using them said they would carry on using them if a nappy laundry service was available. Babies need approximately 4,500 nappy changes before toilet training and 3 billion disposable nappies are currently being discarded each year in the UK alone. Contact "Change", Calderdale's nappy laundry service on 01422 847080.

PANDEMONIUM

A selection of beautiful handmade crafts from local artists will be on sale at the Pandemonium Craft Market, Hebble End Mill, Hebden Bridge (along the canal towpath behind the Co-Op) between 11.00AM and 4.30PM this Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th of December.

PERMACULTURE WORKSHOP

Since its conception almost 25 years ago Permaculture has demonstrated that it is a highly useful and successful approach to designing sustainable systems in every climatic and cultural area. A 2 day course on Permaculture principles and design is being held at the ATC this Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th of December. Book now to avoid disappointment. Contact Emma or Andy on 0845 4581805.

SUSCHOOL WEBSITE

Full of facts and figures on sustainability, the recently launched SUSchool website is a fun and informative resource. Take a look at the SUSchool poster's 71 steps to sustainability, make the Starters your first step to making a real difference, and revel in the most comprehensive list of young person and teacher friendly sustainability based websites! Head for www.suschool.org.uk



DREAMING OF A GREEN CHRISTMAS

Waiting to be given a good home this Christmas! These trees are part of the Christmas Tree hire scheme that will be at the Hebden Bridge Farmers Market this Sunday 7th December. Trees up to 4 feet tall will cost £5,

larger trees will be £10, and a returnable deposit of £10 will secure the tree of your choice! For more information contact

hilltopfarm@fsmail.net



Without a protestor in sight Greenpeace's campaigning flagship the Rainbow Warrior sails peacefully past North Hoyle's wind turbines to celebrate the official switch on of Britain's first major offshore windfarm.

OFFSHORE WIND POWER HITS HOMES!

Just over two weeks ago Britain's first major offshore wind farm began to deliver electricity ashore. The North Hoyle wind farm is located about 7 and a half kilometres off the North Wales coast between Prestatyn and Rhyl, and its thirty turbines have the capacity to supply clean, renewable power for approximately 50,000 households.

This wind farm will be the sole generator for NPower Juice, a pioneering green electricity product

from a partnership between Greenpeace and NPower. Although energy generated at North Hoyle cannot be supplied directly to homes signed up to Juice, for every unit of electricity taken from the National Grid by Juice customers it will be replaced by a unit of electricity from the North Hoyle wind farm. The North Hoyle wind farm will offset the release of 160,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each year, the equivalent of

removing about 80,000 cars from UK roads.

Britain is the windiest country in Europe. Theoretically our offshore wind resources could meet the UK's entire electricity requirement and three times our needs could be supplied by all of our wind capacity.

Npower has also committed itself to making an annual contribution of £10 for every customer that stays with Juice, in order to create a fund specifically designed to assist the

development of projects in other renewable energy areas.

Households throughout the UK can switch their electricity supply to Juice by telephoning 0800 3162610 or through www.switchtojuice.com. Juice is available at the same price as Npower's traditional energy supply and in some parts of the country is cheaper than local electricity costs.

A to Z of recycling

Staff, parents and pupils at Stubbings School know that recycling works. Recycling is now part of their everyday school life. From disposing an average of 20 black bins full of "waste" per week just two years ago they are now only responsible for 2 bags a week! A lesson for us all ...onwards with the A-Z of recycling

S's

S is for

Saucepans - Stainless steel, aluminium, cast iron and copper pans should all be recycled when damaged beyond repair. With Kerbside in suspended animation the nearest recycling amenity for scrap metals is Eastwood Waste Transfer Station.

Second-hand goods - Salvage and reclamation are essential elements of recycling and whenever possible we should always consider buying second-hand before buying new. Though a touch on the expensive side, Hebden

Bridge is awash with good quality second hand and charity shops.

Seeds - Seed saving is an environmentally friendly and money saving option for anyone with a growing space. For advice contact Susy 01422 842121.

Sewage - Up to 99% of sewage is water! By storing your grey-water (from washing machines, washing up and baths) and using it in the garden you will not only be saving water but also reducing the amount of sewage which is increasing every year throughout the world.

Shoes and Boots - Over 260 million new pairs of shoes are bought each year in the UK. Some will be incinerated, others dumped. When most footwear materials are burnt they release harmful dioxins, when dumped they generally fail to biodegrade. White Lightning Dry Cleaners, West End, Hebden Bridge currently collect shoes for recycling. For your nearest collection point contact the European Recycling Company at ecoltd@aol.com.

Shorlife goods - We use many necessary items with a short lifespan. It is essential that all of these goods, such as toilet paper are made from recycled materials. Other short

lifespan disposable goods should be avoided whenever possible.

Sitting Comfortably - Use the new furniture recycling service and charity shop managed by Sitting Comfortably at Calderdale Business Park, Ovenden, Halifax. They currently supply furniture, electrical goods, clothing, household goods, babywear and flooring. Contact them on 01422 329895 or 01274 731909.

Slapstick - Currently not being very successfully recycled by miscreants such as the Chuckle Brothers.

Stamps - Used postage stamps are worth money to charities and are collected at various shops and the Post Office in Hebden Bridge.

Steel - Steel is the most commonly used metal in the world and also Europe's most recycled packaging material. The raw materials of steel are all finite resources and energy savings of approximately 75% are made when steel is recycled. Recycling steel is far less environmentally damaging than making new steel!

Straw - An excellent mulch in the garden and very useful addition to the compost heap.