

A MONTPELIER RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT – Dan Weisselberg. Jan 2010

Standing on the stall at the various events we have held a common “energy” question is “Can we build a turbine?” The answer is bittersweet. “Yes we can, but not in Montpelier”.

Responding to global warming as well as developing energy security is why more and more communities are setting up their own renewable energy generating projects. We need to think about this, together.

Peak Oil, resource depletion and resource management (think of Russia shutting off the gas supply to East Europe and the Tories’ supply scare last month) make this attractive. In response to climate change, reducing our carbon emissions by switching to a supply of locally, renewably produced electricity and hot water obviously makes sense too. (See below)

These issues are fairly obvious and not very political. This is why Ed Milliband, David Cameron, the BNP, UKIP and Transition groups are all talking about them! How and how quickly we are able to respond is where it starts to get complicated.

Individuals can take action reasonably well; increasingly people do the necessary in house, turning down thermostats etc and installing solar thermal or photovoltaic (electricity producing) panels is becoming more common. This is all great, cutting down emissions and supporting a green economy.

However the degree of change required to meet the reduction targets identified, means that close-knit communities can play a significant role (acknowledged by both national and local governments) in stimulating change and groups such as Transition Montpelier can build awareness and mobilise the necessary efforts to work towards projects to achieve this. (See home energy auditing below).

Community involvement schemes such as part or full ownership of a turbine can both reward and strengthen the community by providing a steady stream of income and also allow people to be members of a co-operative committed to maximising social, economic and environmental benefits.

Groups in [West Oxford](#), [Swindon](#) and Market Harborough have shown this is possible and have schemes currently underway. [The Energy4all](#) website gives a lot of idea of what is possible also. Amongst Montpelier residents there are more than enough people with the skills and experience through their own work to enable us to do this too!

We can tackle this extraordinary challenge together. I believe we can be successful, be inspiring and even leave a legacy. I therefore ask you to join me and others in taking this on, now. Take part in the Energy Group at the meeting 10th February, Fairfield Resource Centre.

In the meantime...

Click [here](#) to Switch to a renewable electricity supplier AND get £25 for Transition Montpelier

Click [here](#) to learn how YOU can help others and be a home energy auditor for Montpelier

- www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk/index.php
- http://www.westmill.coop/westmill_home.asp
- http://www.energy4all.co.uk/energy_home.asp