

Newsletter

June 2009



Hello,

As you will see below, we shall soon be Sheffield Renewables, rather than Sheffield Community Renewables (a decision taken at our Spring General Meeting). This does not change anything about what we do or how we go about it, our community ethos remains the same. The new name is less of a mouthful and so hopefully less likely to be shortened to a three letter acronym. There is lots still going on as we head into the summer. To find out more visit our new website, or come and say hello at one of the festivals/fairs - see below.

Kelham Island Update

Following the positive outcome of the pre-feasibility study at Kelham Island the full feasibility work is now ongoing. Working with Sheffield City Council, discussions are underway with the Environment Agency to agree an appropriate amount of water to divert through the goit and our water wheel in order to maximise the power output and minimise the ecological effects in the main river channel. Along with the hydro engineer from Pico Energy, flow tests will be carried out in the goit to ascertain how much water can realistically be diverted through it considering the constraints of the culverts below the wheel pit and the sluice above. These flow tests were due to be carried out in early May. However, several ducklings and their mother decided that the goit would be a fine place to nest and the tests were postponed to prevent any harm to them. Working jointly with Sheffield City Council a 'duck ladder' has been put in place in order to enable the ducklings to leave when ready, and it is expected that the flow tests should now take place in mid-June. Despite the ducklings causing havoc with our time plans, everything is progressing well and we are hopeful that the wheel will be installed by the summer of 2010.

Sheffield Renewables Incorporation

We are on course to incorporate as an Industrial and Provident Society (a form of company) by the end of June. With assistance from our solicitors we have drafted the rules the new society will operate by. The rules are designed to allow us to retain the democratic volunteer ethos that we enjoy at present, but within the context of a social enterprise that can raise share capital to fund projects. The rules will be finalised shortly, and then all that remains is to register Sheffield Renewables with the Financial Services Authority.

New Website and Information Materials

We now have a new website! www.sheffieldrenewables.org.uk. complete with our new logo! Do visit it and let us know what you think. We have also produced some booklets and bookmarks to hand out at festivals, etc. If you know of somewhere it would be good to put them, please let us know by emailing info@sheffieldrenewables.org.uk. We are collecting a list of people who want to invest when our first share offer is announced. If you are thinking of investing, please visit the Pledge section on the website for more details.

Office !!

Yes, we now have a proper office at South Yorkshire Energy Centre next to Heeley City Farm. We are working on funding for a paid part-time co-ordinator – further details soon, when we hear back on the outcome of our bids.

Campaigning

We felt it was important to support the proposed windfarm at Sheephouse Heights near Stocksbridge and sent a letter to the planners in support of the planning application. You can see the letter on our website - go to 'Rob's Resources'.

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Work Day

We spent a useful Sunday afternoon in early May. The accessible venue had space outside where we did most of the work, so didn't have to worry about making a mess. We were working on a solar collector – made from an old satellite dish. We got as far as making some of the wooden assembly on which the dish will pivot, and covered the dish in thin aluminium foil. Even on a cloudy afternoon, you could feel the warmth generated. Now Robin has to work out the focal point and finish the wooden support stand. Excuse my lack of technical jargon, but it shows you don't need to be technical to help. If you want to see the finished product, come along to our stall at one of the festivals below.

Events

In spite of the dreadful rain in the morning we took our stall to Peace in the Park on June 6th. As we now have a gazebo we managed to stay mostly dry and the weather cleared up later in the day. Thank you to those who came to say hello or joined us for the first time, we met some very interesting and enthusiastic people. We signed up 24 new supporters, 9 people interesting in volunteering and 7 potential investors! A very big thank you to those who helped on the day. We still need volunteers to help staff our stall at the Green Fair (St Mary's, Bramall Lane) on June 27th, Cliffhanger on July 11th/12th, Sheffield Fayre (Norfolk Heritage Park) August 30th/31st and Whirlow Hall Farm Fair on September 20th. No experience necessary - all necessary information supplied. Please ring Jean on 0114 233 6804 or Rob 0777 273 0137.