

# News Winter 2005/06



Creative Environmental Networks

Issue 4



## Major players come together at the South East Renewable Energy Conference



**Milling Around Kent**  
page 3



**Two Award Winners Powered by CEN**  
page 7

**Other Stories...**  
Warm Streets.....page 6  
Energy from Sticks.....page 8

## Editorial

Happy New Year! Welcome to the first CEN News of 2006.

Traditionally a busy season for CEN's Energy Efficiency Team, this winter has been no exception. Responses have been rushing in as a result of a number of marketing and installation programmes, including our new project aimed specifically at landlords and private tenants, which is described on page 5. In total, our Advice Team has received a massive 20,939 telephone enquiries since 1 October.

Continually looking at new ways of engaging the domestic sector, we successfully secured funding during the last quarter for the Kent 'Did You Know...?' project, which you can read all about on page 6, and for the 'Prescribing Warmth' project, which will feature in the next edition.

During November, we ran two regional renewable energy events: the Renewable Energy Action London (REAL) Annual Review, which celebrated the initiative's second birthday, and the South East Renewable Energy Conference, a two day event which we organised on behalf of the South East Sustainable Energy Group. Both attracted a wide range of energy professionals and acted as useful fora for information dissemination and the exchange of ideas.

Just before Christmas, the Renewables Team heard that seven of their applications to the Clearskies programme had been successful, including funding for installations for schools in Lincolnshire, Oxfordshire and London and a hydropower project in Kent.

With these and a number of other new projects coming on line, the year ahead looks bright. During 2006, sustainable energy will become an even higher profile subject for politicians and the media. Householders in the UK will become more and more aware of the issues surrounding climate change. Let's hope we can look forward to a more sustainable future.



Dominic Gooding, Chief Executive

## A REAL Birthday Party

The Second REAL Annual Review and Conference took place on the 30th of November at the Royal Horticultural Halls in Westminster. REAL has grown considerably since its inception on a cold November day in 2003 and, while around 25 local authority officers attended last year's, this year's attracted 110 delegates. These included representatives from across the whole energy spectrum, including local authority and housing officers working in the fields of planning, energy, sustainability and regeneration.

It was a packed agenda, covering all aspects of renewable energy, including the role it will play in securing a low carbon future, making community renewable energy installations happen, and implementing building integrated renewable energy planning policy.



REAL Conference and Annual Review

Speakers at the event included Cllr. Darren Johnson giving the keynote speech, Gavin Killip of the Environmental Change Institute at Oxford talking about the considerable challenges ahead and Paula Kirk of the GLA discussing London's pilot Energy Action Areas. There were also sessions with planners and architects, discussions on the financing of renewable energy schemes across the capital, as well as presentations from St. James Catholic High School and Spa Hill Allotment Society regarding successful community renewable schemes.

The day included a pledge workshop, where local authority and housing association officers were invited to put forth their plans for the coming year in terms of sustainable energy. Pledges ranged from the development of new biomass projects and the investigation of potential for new and renewable

technologies on existing stock, to ensuring that the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change is signed or that more stringent policies on sustainable energy in new developments are adopted. There was also the opportunity to map all those installations currently in place, the final product of which is now available on the CEN website.

For more information about REAL and the conference, please contact Phil Jackson at philipj@cen.org.uk, or visit the website at www.cen.org.uk/REAL.

## Allotment's Clean, Green Electricity Machine

For once the windy weather brings a smile to the faces of Croydon gardeners.

One of the first wind turbines of its kind to be installed in an urban environment, Spa Hill Allotment's newest piece of equipment is now up and running and is generating clean electricity for free.

Jack Dudley Swale, the allotment society's honorary secretary, said "We wanted to reduce our electricity bill and do our bit for the environment. CEN managed to get us some funding and found an installer. Now that our turbine is up and running, its



*Allotment goes Greener as Wind takes Over*

very satisfying to see the wind pick up and the blades turning. It feels great to know you're saving money and the environment at the same time!"

Planning permission had to be sought from Croydon Council who were careful to make sure the 2.5kW, 11 metre high turbine would not be a nuisance to local residents – both in terms of noise and

appearance. Since installation, comments about the site's latest addition, which was painted dark green to blend with the leafy surroundings, have been entirely positive. Each year the generator will prevent over 2 tonnes of carbon dioxide from being released into the atmosphere and will produce £250 of green electricity for the allotment society. This great saving for the allotment is only possible because of grants obtained through EDF Energy's Green Fund, the Government's Clear Skies fund and, for the mast's foundations, Croydon Voluntary Action.

CEN's Tom Vosper commented "What Spa Hill have perfectly demonstrated is that renewable energy can be used effectively in an urban environment – to reduce energy bills, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to meet local and national energy targets. Each year as energy prices rise, Spa Hill will make a greater saving. I believe as time goes on, more and more people will realise what a good idea it is and follow suit."

If you would like to know more about this project, or would like to learn how you can use renewable energy, please contact Tom Vosper on 020 8683 6661 or tomvosper@cen.org.uk.

## Milling Around Kent

Kent has a long history of exploiting waterpower to its full potential in corn mills, paper mills and for other industrial processes. Many of these mill buildings, often prominent in local communities, still exist but almost without exception no longer exploit this huge potential. Most are also extremely energy inefficient in terms of the thermal quality of the building.

In order to address this problem, the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) has recently provided funding to CEN to carry out an assessment of the capacity for hydroelectricity in Kent. This follows on from considerable early scoping work and assessments completed during the past 18 months. Some of this work is already complete, and three mills are being progressed towards installation.





Turkey Mill in Maidstone is moving forward with their installation, which, due to the high head (fall height of the water), may pay back within 7 years. Church Mill in Maidstone and Crabble Corn Mill in Dover have also had full feasibilities carried out and are in the process of securing funding for installation.



*Crabble Corn Mill - Dover*

In total, we will be carrying out pre-feasibility assessments at over 100 potential sites for hydro-electric generation, with an aim to deliver 5 full feasibilities at the best sites with an action plan for installation.

The team is hoping this exciting project will help raise the profile of sustainable energy through the development of sustainable energy beacons, provide case studies of best practice in renewable energy and demonstrate the installation of innovative new technologies exploiting a key resource for the generation of green electricity. It will show how the integration of renewable energy measures into listed, historic and/or existing buildings can be achieved cost effectively, and with minimum fuss through the planning process.

For more information about the Kent Hydropower Project, please contact Phil Jackson at philipj@cen.org.uk, or David Shewan at david@cen.org.uk.

## A Breath of Fresh Air for Medway Asthma Sufferers

Over the past 12 months, CEN has been working with Medway Asthma Self Help (MASH) and Alpine Environments to make life a little easier for asthma and allergy sufferers. Eight homes have now been treated to kill the house dust mite, a well known asthma trigger, and ventilation systems have been installed to provide clean, filtered air. The homes

were selected by MASH, who skin tested the asthmatic residents for allergic reaction to house dust mites. Those that tested positive were referred for the Alpine treatment.

The 'Alpine Experience' is based on the eradication of the house dust mite. This unique treatment has been clinically tested and is completely drug free. The treatment not only kills the mites, but also drops the allergen levels below those set by the World Health Organisation for triggering allergic asthma.

The first step is the installation of a ventilation system to provide fresh, clean, filtered air to the home. This reduces the humidity to 55% or lower, below which the house dust mite cannot survive, preventing re-infestation. The second is the unique method of treatment of soft furnishings, bedding and mattresses with heat and steam to kill the mites. Mattresses and duvets are then fitted with anti-allergen bedding barriers and all pillows are replaced.



*A duvet is heated to over 100 C to kill the house dust mite and to denature its allergens.*

To complete the process and help maintain a healthy environment, all homes are assessed for energy efficiency with all opportunities for improving insulation followed up.

This project has led to a greatly increased quality of life for the families whose homes have been treated. One family to benefit are the Masons from Rainham, whose home was treated in October 2005. Tracey Mason's son Connor (9) was diagnosed with asthma at just six months old and suffers from house dust mite allergies.

Tracey said "For years Connor has suffered from a permanently runny nose and frequent chest infections. Although his asthma has always been well controlled, the change since the Alpine system

was installed has been fantastic. His runny nose has stopped completely and his peak flow is much higher.”

For further information please contact Meroë Blackford at CEN on [meroe@cen.org.uk](mailto:meroe@cen.org.uk), MASH on 01634 855844 or Alpine Environments on 01924 227783 or at [www.alpine-environments.co.uk](http://www.alpine-environments.co.uk)

## Battersea Dogs and Cats Home Goes Solar

Battersea Dogs' and Cats' Home has become one of the first community organisations in Wandsworth to install renewable energy. The 1.5-kWp photovoltaic (pv) grid-connected array was installed in November and will result in 516kg of carbon dioxide emission savings each year. The REAL project team was successful in securing 100% of the funding from the Powergen GreenPlan Fund and the Government's Major Demonstration Programme.

Founded over 140 years ago, Battersea Dogs' and Cats' Home is a nationally renowned animal care charity, with a very prominent central London location. The Home's aims are to 'Rescue, Reunite, Rehabilitate and Rehome' the lost and abandoned



*The Generation gap - new solar electric panels take over from old fossil fuel power station*

dogs and cats that come into care and promote responsible pet ownership to adults and children alike. The Home has over 70,000 visitors a year, all of whom will be able to see and learn about the solar panels through a display unit and posters that are in reception. The display unit gives details of exactly how much energy the solar panels are producing and the amount of carbon dioxide that they are offsetting.

Battersea Dogs' and Cats' Home are now looking at a host of other ways to improve their energy consumption and overall environmental performance. A launch event for the solar panels is planned in early 2006.

For further information, contact Susan Gleeson on 020 8683 6614 or [susan@cen.org.uk](mailto:susan@cen.org.uk).

## Encouraging Action in the Private Rented Sector

This winter saw the launch of a new programme specifically for private sector landlords throughout Kent. CEN has secured funding from the Energy Saving Trust's Innovation Fund to implement this new marketing programme that aims to encourage landlords and their tenants to install energy saving measures.

Working in partnership with the Southern Private Landlords Association, EDF Energy and Kent's 13 local authorities, the initiative raises awareness of the plethora of energy efficiency and heating grants, discounts and advice that are available but which have not been widely accessed by this sector in the county.

The project has been designed following a successful feasibility study where the idea of launching an accreditation scheme for landlords was tested. As part of the study, 2000 landlords and 130 letting agents were consulted on their views of energy efficiency and accreditation and we received some interesting responses: 64% of landlords stated they would be encouraged to install measures with a 50% grant. 94% said they would be moved to action by a 100% grant. Tellingly, 76% were not aware of the 50% and 100% grants that are currently available to both landlords and tenants.

The feedback also told us that 90% of landlords do not get involved in accreditation projects. Letting agents were also reluctant to enforce any kind of accreditation for fear of losing custom.

As a result of this feedback, we have designed a comprehensive marketing programme which aims to reach landlords directly and via their tenants and local letting agents. As well as encouraging landlords to install measures, we are working with 15 letting

agents to provide tenants with advice focusing on heating controls, reducing condensation, damp and mould, together with 'no cost' ways of keeping their fuel bills down. It is getting more and more vital that this sector is tackled in an appropriate and effective way: not only is it the least energy efficient sector resulting in high carbon emissions, but it is also home to the largest proportion of fuel poor.

For more information, contact Mike Bundy on [mike@cen.org.uk](mailto:mike@cen.org.uk).

## DID YOU KNOW?

In October, CEN's Energy Efficiency Team were awarded funding from the Energy Saving Trust Innovation Programme for the 'Did You Know?' project.

Aiming to increase cavity wall installations, 'Did You Know?' is based on the fact that a very large number of people who have uninsulated cavity walls seem to think they have solid walls. They would therefore be inclined to ignore the traditional cavity wall insulation marketing, thinking it irrelevant.

As a result of this finding, an approach has been devised which aims to seek out and target these households using home energy check and census data. Specifically designed marketing information will then be delivered by hand to houses in target areas that can be seen to need cavity wall insulation from a brief external inspection. The work is being carried out in partnership with local authorities across Kent, and we hope that the presence of the local authority brand will increase the impact of the project.

We also aim to encourage the installation of cavity wall insulation to other groups of householders through the project. This includes householders on benefits and those with electricity and coal as their main heating fuel who will be able to access free insulation through the scheme.

For more information about the project, contact David Shewan on 020 8683 6682 or [david@cen.org.uk](mailto:david@cen.org.uk)

## South East Renewable Energy Conference and Exhibition

This year's South East Renewable Energy Conference and Exhibition took place in Kent during November. Organised by CEN on behalf of the Government Office for the South East, the South East England Development Agency and the South East England Regional Assembly, the event succeeded in gathering together over 300 key professionals for some intensive exchanging of information and ideas.

Delegates really got a feel for the challenges and obstacles this sector presents through a series of excellent presentations, many of which are available on our website [www.cen.org.uk/serc](http://www.cen.org.uk/serc). Workshop sessions included in-depth discussions on specific technologies, planning issues, community-owned projects and master planning. For renewable energy novices, there was a popular introductory course to each technology introduced by some of the many exhibitors present over the two day event.



*(Left to right) MEP Caroline Lucas, Meroë Blackford (CEN), Graham Tubb (SEEDA), and Louise Whall (GOSE)*

Examples of achievement and practical innovations were displayed at the conference, and veteran BBC weatherman Ian Macaskill proved to be a very entertaining host to the South East England Renewable Energy Awards 2005, which took place during the evening of the first day (see article titled 'Two award winners powered by CEN' for further information on the Awards).

For further information, please contact Wendy Goddard on [wendy@cen.org.uk](mailto:wendy@cen.org.uk) or 01233 646686.



## WarmStreets

This winter, areas of Canterbury and Tunbridge Wells are benefiting from the WarmStreets project, funded by the local authorities and the Energy Saving Trust. Through the project, CEN is joining forces with the local home improvement agencies and Help The Aged to provide a number of joined up services in specific areas of need. Aiming to help address social exclusion, the project looks to ensure that a raft of home improvement services are made available in the simplest way possible for the client.

Working together, the agencies have devised a simple referral management process to ensure a seamless service to the householder. Residents are visited first by a CEN surveyor who completes a free home energy assessment and who then makes referrals as appropriate to the partner agencies for insulation and heating, security and fire safety measures and general home improvements.

To date, over 40 homes have been visited with referrals made to help the residents access each of the services available. WarmStreets will continue until March when the results of the initiative will be assessed.

For further information on the WarmStreets project, contact Mike Bundy on 01233 646806 or [mike@cen.org.uk](mailto:mike@cen.org.uk).

## Two Award Winners Powered by CEN



*Solar technology being installed at Wildwood*

The end of 2005 saw two of CEN's renewable energy installations receive awards in the Annual South East Renewable Energy Awards 2005. Organised by the

Government Office of the South East and SEEDA, the awards aim to celebrate success, innovation and inspiration in the region. The Wildwood Centre in Herne Bay was awarded the prestigious first prize in the Community Category and Petham Village Hall near Canterbury was highly commended during the ceremony in November, presented by TV weatherman Ian Macaskill. Committed to doing their bit to protect the beautiful Kent woodlands and actively reduce their carbon footprint, The Wildwood Trust enlisted CEN's Renewable Energy Team to identify which renewable technologies would provide the optimum benefit to their Education Centre.



*The Ground source heat piping at Petham Village hall*

Following an options appraisal the team then secured 100% of the funding required for the project from Powergen, Clearskies and the Energy Saving Trust's Photovoltaic Major Demonstration Programme grants. Now the Wildwood Centre is enjoying the environmental and financial benefits of solar thermal panels, solar photovoltaic panels and biomass log stoves.

Nearby, residents in Petham, a small village close to Canterbury, are also benefiting from a renewable installation. The local villagers contacted CEN to seek our help in identifying renewable technologies for their new village hall, and following a site assessment the ingenious and simple technology of a ground source heat pump was chosen. This renewable tool works by harnessing the Earth's stored solar warmth for heating. The project was facilitated by the Department of Trade and Industry, which provided 50% of the funding required for the project, with the remaining 50% raised by the proactive Petham Villagers.

Together, these installations have offset 87.7 tonnes

of carbon per year – a fantastic achievement for the sites, for CEN and for the South East.

For more information contact Neil Turner on 020 8683 6625, [neil@cen.org.uk](mailto:neil@cen.org.uk)

## Energy from Sticks

In early December, the south east of England was witness to some cross county learning as individuals from Medway travelled to West Sussex to see woodfuel heating in action. The visit was organised by CEN, with support from Medway Council, and included a visit to West Dean Estate and Buchan Country Park.

West Dean has had biomass heating for over 20 years and the two boilers currently heat most of the college buildings and several estate cottages. Fuel is supplied from thinnings from the estate's own woodland management and is chipped on site.

Simon Ward is Estate Manager at West Dean and has been consistently impressed at the success of their self-sufficient fuel supply and use model. "The estate chose to install biomass heating during the last oil crisis and it's enabled us to have security from the erratic oil price increases we've seen over the last few decades."

In the afternoon the group visited Buchan Country Park, where the visitor centre and two ranger cottages are supplied from a single boiler attached to a small district heating system. John Bryant, the project manager, provided an interesting insight into the development process "There are more elements



*Medway learn first-hand about woodchip heating at West Dean in front of Dean Estate Fuel Store – (left to right) Simon Ward, Helen Morley, Carly Stoddart, Wayne Norris, Barry Owen.*

to take into account with a woodfuel installation than fossil fuel, however the end goal of getting energy from a cheaper, local supply has been worth the extra effort. In addition, we've had so much interest including several of the neighbouring private households asking if they can be connected up."

One of the visiting delegation, Helen Morley of Plantlife, is looking at the possibility of the Ranscombe Woods providing local woodchip. "The projects we saw today showed that fuel provision on a certain scale can make woodland management sustainable. This will lead to improved biodiversity and secure our local woodlands now and into the future."

If you would like further details on heating with woodfuel and possible grant support available please call Anna Halcro - Johnston at CEN's Biomass Team on 020 8683 6681.

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