



Newsletter of the Wadebridge Renewable Energy Network

February 2015

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Minister supports WREN expansion

The Minister for Local Government and Communities was so enthusiastic about the progress that WREN is making in bringing economic benefits to the town, that she has allocated additional funds from the Coastal Communities Fund, which will allow WREN to employ another person.

The Minister, Penny Mordaunt, who visited Wadebridge last summer, said "I was very impressed by the determination in Wadebridge to show how market towns can recreate their prosperity by embracing new opportunities. By allocating some additional funds we've ensured WREN can secure the support that will help this splendid organisation move into a strong and self-sustaining future, and bring new businesses and jobs to this beautiful part of North Cornwall."

The Fund has previously supported WREN to take forward initiatives that have

helped retain over £1m per annum in the local economy and enhance employment opportunities in the town. This additional money will enable WREN to increase the capacity of its team to deliver the larger community energy projects now getting going, such as the solar PV portfolio (see “Free Electricity” below).

WREN Chair, Professor Stephen Frankel, said: “This additional funding demonstrates support for what we are doing and comes at an incredibly exciting time with the imminent establishment of the Wadebridge Energy Company.”

Wadebridge Energy Company is a not-for-profit organisation which will own increasing proportions of local electricity generating installations. Shares will be offered to local people, giving the local community the ownership and benefits of the company.

WREN is also working to deliver a local tariff for electricity which will enable consumers in the area who sign up for it to benefit from much lower prices at times of peak renewable electricity generation.

Free electricity

After our first announcement about Wadebridge Energy Company, we received about fifty applications from householders wanting us to install solar panels on their roofs. They would get free electricity from the panels and the company would receive the feed in tariff as income, to pay running costs and interest to shareholders (who will be for the most part local residents), with any surplus going to the WREN Community Fund.

Around twenty turned out not to have suitable roofs and so regretfully we had to decline those, but thirty went through to the more detailed assessment phase.

We are now looking for more roofs for a second wave of investment, not only of houses this time, but also commercial buildings, farms, sports clubs and the like. If you have a suitable roof - unshaded, facing between southeast and southwest - please contact us.

Zero cost insulation

Surprising as it may seem, the government-funded initiative to provide zero cost loft and cavity wall insulation to homes is still going on.

The government’s intention is to improve the energy efficiency of Britain’s housing stock, so the personal circumstances of the householder do not matter. You can be poor as a church mouse or as rich as Bill Gates. If you already have some loft or cavity wall insulation, you can’t get more of the same under the scheme, but even then, it might be worth your while to pay to upgrade what you have.

This is not the first time we have promoted this initiative, but since the funds are still available it seems a shame not to try for more for Wadebridge.

WREN now has an agreement with GHE Solar Ltd to carry out assessments and installations. Speak to us and we will refer you to GHE. For each installation referred through us, the householder will receive 25 Wrens, the local Wadebridge currency, to spend in local shops and businesses.

Landlords be aware

New energy efficiency regulations to help tenants living in cold, inefficient homes were presented in Parliament on 5th February by Ed Davey, the energy and climate change secretary. The regulations will force landlords to upgrade the energy efficiency of hundreds of thousands of homes currently rated F and G to a minimum of E by 1 April 2018.

[Read a report here.](#)

[And here are the regulations themselves from the Department of Energy and Climate Change.](#)

The **zero cost insulation** offer applies to rental properties as well, so this is an ideal opportunity for landlords and tenants to upgrade their properties at no cost.

Funding for community groups

WREN has been asked to run, on behalf of Pengelly CE Wind Ltd, a fund to support the work of voluntary and community groups in the St Breock and Wadebridge area. The fund will be launched within the next few weeks and has £10,000 to distribute each year.

A Committee is being formed to decide on applications to the Fund. This will consist of representatives from Pengelly CE Wind Ltd, WREN, St Breock Parish Council, Wadebridge Town Council, Tina Yardley (Head of Wadebridge School) and Sergeant Andy Stewart (Devon and Cornwall Police). The Fund will be advertised through the local press once details have been finalised.

In the meantime email communityfunds@wren.uk.com and we will send you details as soon as they are available.

Win a lighting audit and makeover worth £'000s

Two lucky households could win a lighting audit and LED bulbs with a value of up to £250 each and one business similarly up to £500. This could be just switching from incandescent, halogen or compact fluorescent bulbs to the equivalent LEDs, or changing the light fittings as well.

But the lifetime value of the prize could be worth well over £250. In the best case, if you replaced 60W incandescent bulbs with their 7W LED equivalents, then over the expected lifetime of the LEDs you could save over £4,000. (This also means that even if you don't win, it's still worth paying to replace 60W incandescent bulbs and 50W halogen spots with 7W and 5W LEDs.)

£1,000 has been received from the Hawkey family in respect of the solar PV installation at The Olde House, Chapel Amble. The Hawkey family has been at the forefront of renewable energy generation in the area and through this fund would like to help local residents and businesses to reduce their own energy bills.

Entry is simple. Send your name, phone number, e-mail address and home address to WREN via e-mail to dominic.comonte@wren.uk.com quoting "Lighting Audit Competition", or visit the energy shop in Wadebridge, or telephone us on 01208 812992. Business entries should give the name of both the business and a contact person, and the business address.

Entries are free and are limited to one per household or business located within the Wadebridge and Padstow network area, postcodes PL27 and PL28. Entries must be received by 28th February 2015.

[Click here for more information and terms & conditions.](#)

Student visits

We have had two recent contacts with students from the University of Exeter, arranged by our director for academic liaison, David Atfield. The first, at the end of November, was a visit to Wadebridge by five politics students from the Penryn campus with their tutor, Dr Lei Xie.

The students were interested in the way that WREN has connected with the Wadebridge community and in researching issues around facilitating behavioural change. For more info and photograph, click here.

<http://www.wren.uk.com/news/83-exeter-students-visit-wren>

More recently, David together with Kevin Smith, the communications director, visited the Penryn campus to speak to second year politics students and their supervisor Dr Owen Thomas. WREN is offering the students four projects to enable them to develop their research skills and at the same time give us something of value in return. Two other organisations, the Green Party and Cornwall Council, also had projects on offer. We'll see how this develops and let you know.

Free environmental workshops

What is the market for rainwater harvesting & water reuse?

Dr Sarah Ward, a specialist from the University of Exeter, discusses what the future holds for this sector and how diversifying into this area can benefit your business.

The Centre for Business and Climate Solutions at the University of Exeter has received funding to help businesses in the South West region on the topic of environmental technologies and renewables. As part of this they are putting together a programme of workshops that businesses in the South West can attend for free, focusing first on rainwater harvesting and water reuse. Dr Sarah Ward, a specialist at the University of Exeter will be leading these workshops and it is a great chance for businesses to explore the rainwater harvesting market and how this can benefit their company.

This is a free one-day workshop open to SMEs in the South West who are already working within the environmental technology sector or are looking to diversify.

17th February 2015 - Plymouth

Book here <https://waterexeter.eventbrite.co.uk/>

19th February 2015 - Paignton

Book here <https://waterpaignton.eventbrite.co.uk/>

All workshops will run from 09.30 - 16.30 with a free lunch included.



... was held at POP Café Gallery in December, with about fifty people attending. We were having such a good time, no one remembered to take any photos...

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