



Newsletter of the Wadebridge Renewable Energy Network

December 2015

Contents



**Merry Christmas &
a Happy New Year**

- £50,000 for Community Projects
- Warm Home Discount Scheme
- Cornwall Sustainability Awards
- The True Cost of Energy
- Scotland Corner Wind Project

£50,000 for Community Projects

The St Breock Wind Farm Community Fund 2015 is now open for applications. The closing date is 12th February 2016.

The Fund is for not-for-profit organisations in the parishes of St. Breock, St Wenn, Withiel, Egloshayle, St Issey, St Columb Town and Wadebridge Town. Priority will be given to projects concerned with energy conservation, or the installation of renewable energy generation, or renewable energy related education initiatives. However, other projects that have environmental, socio-economic and educational purposes will also be considered.

£50,000 is available for projects, broken down by area as follows:

St. Breock £12,500 ; St Wenn £12,500 ; Withiel £7,500; Egloshayle £5,000 ; St Issey £2,500 ; St Columb Town £2,500; and Wadebridge £7,500.

Organisations can obtain application forms and further details by:

- email to communityfunds@wren.uk.com
- the website <http://www.wren.uk.com/community/apply-for-funds>
- visiting WREN at the Energy Shop, Hamilton House, The Platt, Wadebridge, PL27 7AE
- telephoning WREN on 01208 812992.

Warm Home Discount Scheme

For winter 2015 to 2016, you could get £140 off your electricity bill through the government's Warm Home Discount Scheme.

The money isn't paid to you - it's a one-off discount on your electricity bill, usually between September and March.

This is an income-based benefit and various eligibility rules apply. Look on the government's website <https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme/eligibility> for more information, or call into the Energy Shop on the Platt for help finding out more.

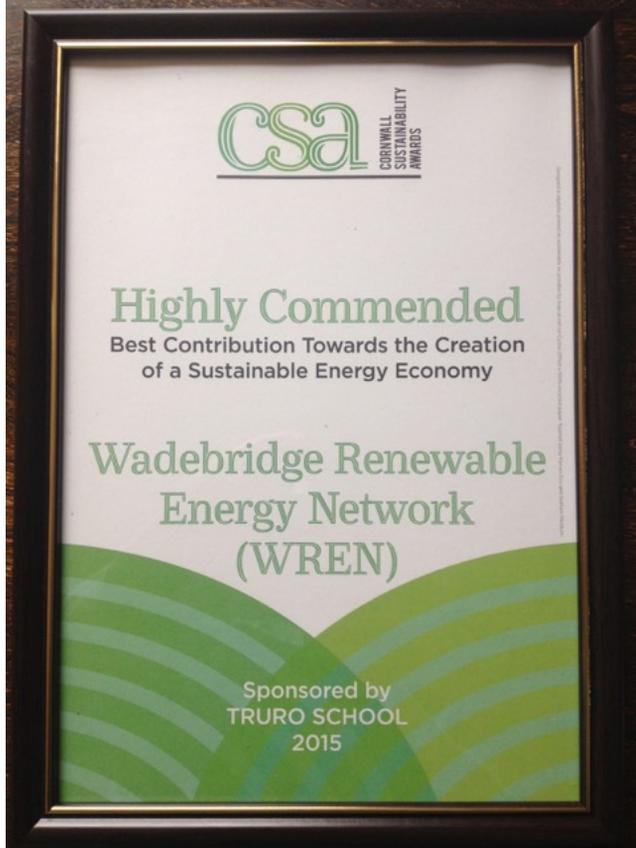
The discount won't affect your [Cold Weather Payment](#) or [Winter Fuel Payment](#). You can also qualify for the discount if you use a pre-pay or pay-as-you-go electricity meter.

Cornwall Sustainability Awards 2015

Friday 4th December saw the annual Cornwall Sustainability Awards presentation and dinner at the Headland Hotel, Newquay, with main speaker Jonathon Porritt, CBE, environmentalist and writer.

A lot of companies in Cornwall are making great strides in using less resources, particularly energy and water, and reusing and recycling more. This was an opportunity for us all to celebrate, and as the evening went on, and more awards were presented, the celebrations became louder.

WREN was shortlisted in the "Best Contribution Towards the Creation of a Sustainable Energy Economy" category. We were "highly commended", which means we came second. Congratulations to the winner - Verto Homes, a Newquay-based company that builds energy-efficient new homes, which also won the overall "winner of winners" award.



The True Cost of Energy

When people start talking about the high costs of renewable energy, here are some facts from the New Economics Foundation you might mention to them.

In the last month, for the first time, analysts calculated that onshore wind is the lowest cost energy source in the UK and Germany - [click here](#) and solar isn't far behind - [click here](#).

This is a watershed moment in a series of long-term trends: the cost of fossil fuels changing unpredictably, nuclear getting more expensive, and renewables getting ever cheaper. Adding in the very real costs to our health and the environment makes clean energy even more economic in comparison - see [this chart](#):

Scotland Corner Wind Project

At this year's AGM we discussed the prospect of WREN developing, in partnership with local stakeholders, the Scotland Corner wind project as a 100% community owned facility.

WREN does not propose generation projects to you, our membership, unless the local benefits are so substantial that the impact upon the landscape could be acceptable to most local people. We have not to date promoted any wind developments.

This project was worth considering as the output would have been more or less the same as the domestic consumption of the entire Wadebridge, Padstow and St Columb areas, so that we could have been able to control our own cheaper, and inflation-proof, electricity supply over the twenty year life of the facility.

All profits would have been for local use, so, in addition to supporting local good causes, we could potentially have helped fill the funding gap for valued local services like libraries and public toilets where local budgets are likely to be increasingly stretched over coming years. In addition, local people would have been able to get a good return on their savings if they had wanted to invest in the project.

Something of this scale clearly requires the collaboration and support of key local bodies. So, before putting the options to the WREN membership for a decision on whether to explore this further, we have been in discussion with all the local town and parish councils around Scotland Corner.

They have all been asked whether they would consider collaborating on investigating the merits of the project, and invited to appoint one of their number to the board of the dedicated community energy company that would progress the project. This arrangement was designed to give local councils unprecedented influence not only on the planning decision, but also upon the subsequent decision on whether the achievable benefits were sufficient for building the project.

Many of these discussions have been very positive, and members of the public at meetings were keen to see if the project could be progressed. However the councils themselves did not wish to engage further, so the project cannot be developed in a collaborative way.

WREN will therefore step back and not engage with this project any further, as opportunities like this, however strong may be their merits, only have value where there is also strong local support.

This process has been very positive. It has facilitated discussion with a wider circle of the merits of taking back greater control of our energy, and our economy, as was normal not so long ago. It has helped to affirm that WREN is indeed only interested in projects that have the support not only of WREN's membership, but also the wider population.

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