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Newsletter of the Wadebridge Renewable Energy Network

March 2021**Contents**

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Energy Equality

The project moves onwards, looking to install solar PV on more rooftops in our area and link them to local consumption through a trading system that connects neighbours (if you want to show off, you can call it ‘peer-to-peer’ trading). The latest news we have is that the owners and tenants of the eight buildings we have identified as suitable for rooftop PV have all agreed in principle to our proposal. We also have confirmation from Western Power Distribution that they can connect those rooftops to the electricity network. We are making progress on a community share issue which we would use to finance the installations, where we have a University of Exeter undergraduate, Beth Leighfield, working as an intern.

New Face at WREN - Beth Leighfield

I am currently in my final year studying Geography at the University of Exeter. Through the university internship scheme, I am interning for WREN, gaining experience in the renewable energy area. My role is to help WREN develop the community share scheme, in particular researching the views of the local community (so I may have already spoken to some of you over the phone!). I grew up around the Bude area and I am a keen surfer; being surrounded by our wonderful coastline also helped to inspire my passion for the environment. Over the past few months, being immersed in the world of community energy has given me a greater appreciation of the role local communities can play in tackling climate challenges. By collaborating together, we have the opportunity to encourage sustainable actions within our friends and family, reducing our impact on the environment. I would like to thank WREN for the internship opportunity, and hopefully the community share scheme will launch in the next 6 months, so keep a look out!



Net Zero Community

Net Zero Community (NZCom) is an exciting new project looking at how vulnerable consumers in our community may be impacted by the transition to net zero carbon emissions. As an established community energy group, we are very keen to support our community to achieve Cornwall Council’s ‘carbon neutral by 2030’ target and the Government’s aim of net zero carbon by 2050. However, this will present a number of challenges, not least for vulnerable consumers who are already in, or near, fuel poverty.

In future we will need energy bills that not only show the financial cost and the units (kWh) of electricity or gas used (as they do now), but also the amount of CO2 emitted, if we as consumers are to make informed choices about our sources of energy. Unless we have a carbon measure, we cannot tell, individually, as a community, or as a nation, how much carbon we emit. This will become increasingly important as we approach 2050 and is something that is already being adopted by the Dept for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy and others in policy making positions.

The risk we face is that vulnerable customers, both domestic and business, will find it harder to take the actions necessary to reduce carbon, or be forced into taking actions which will cost them more.

We are really keen to understand the role that WREN, as a community energy group, can take to best support vulnerable customers through this transition, finding ways to participate in the decarbonisation of the energy system to deliver benefit to our community. We have enlisted support from the University of Exeter, Community Energy Plus, Planet A Energy and Your Co-op Energy.

The project has passed the first hurdle towards becoming a Western Power Distribution Network Innovation Allowance project and we are now working with a WPD engineer and our partners to develop the proposal further.

Website Updated

We’ve updated the website so that it focuses more on the projects and other things that we have going on at the moment: Energy Equality, electric vehicles; community funds. The look and feel is much the same, but we’ve taken some of the history of WREN out, though we’re still very proud of our achievements which you will still find linked in the footer of the web pages. Take a look: www.wren.uk.com

In The News

Renewables vs Fossils

Renewable energy surpassed fossil fuels for European electricity in 2020 (Click here [CNN](#), 25 January 2021)

Dogger Bank’s giant turbines herald a wind of change in UK industry ([The Guardian](#), 2 January 2021)

The price of solar electricity has dropped 89% in 10 years. ([Fast Company](#), 12 February 2021)

Good Energy signs new subsidy-free solar power agreements. ([Good Energy Group PLC](#), 26 February 2021)

How to be insulated... or not

Green homes grant will meet only tiny fraction of target in England ([The Guardian](#), 26 February 2021)

Electric vehicles

Ovo to launch ‘half-price’ electric vehicle charging tariff ([The Guardian](#), 26 January 2021)

Electric car batteries with five-minute charging times produced ([The Guardian](#), 19 January 2021)

Electric cars hit record 54% of sales in Norway as VW overtakes Tesla ([CNN](#), 6 January 2021)

SUVs and extra traffic cancelling out electric car gains in Britain ([The Guardian](#), 26 February 2021)

Fossil fuel cars make ‘hundreds of times’ more waste than electric cars ([The Guardian](#), 1 March 2021)

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