



Renewable Energy Case Study

Community Renewable Energy Project

As part of the Sustainable Development Commission's dCARB-uk initiative to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a Community Renewable Energy (CRE) project was launched in the North York Moors National Park in June 2004. The aim of this project is to facilitate the development of community-based energy projects within four communities namely Danby Parish (Upper Esk), Appleton-le-Moors and Spaunton, Staithes and Botton Village.

The project is staffed by one full-time officer, Peter Jones, who is supported by Judie Holliday. This is being funded by Yorkshire Forward and the National Park until August 2007 with the Park contributing £25,000 for each year of the project. On-going and capital funding is currently being sought through Intelligent Energy Europe and the Sub-Regional Investment Plan.

Key Achievements

- Establishment of two main energy groups, each with a Community Energy Action Plan
- Incorporation of one group as a Community Interest Company – the long term goal is that each community company will own and run a range of decentralised renewable energy installations in their local area, bringing economic benefits to the community
- Baseline study of carbon dioxide emissions from buildings and transport
- Energy efficiency programme – through training local people to advise their fellow residents
- Feasibility Studies – Appleton and Spaunton are looking at a biomass district heating scheme and the Upper Esk group are looking at suitable sites for hydro-power installations (both studies funded by the SDF)
- Building awareness and understanding across the community
- Empowering communities – the project has actively encouraged local people to take the lead in the future of their communities

Planning Implications

The successful progress of this project will result in a number of planning applications for renewable energy installations within the Park. At the moment we expect these to include hydro-power, wind and biomass. This will present an interesting situation for the Authority. Indirectly, they will result from the Park's own project. Moreover, they are likely to have strong local support. However, we do not anticipate an application for a wind farm, for example. Even though a number of applications are anticipated from each group, each proposed installation will be looked at separately within its own context. Also, the groups themselves are sensitive to what is more likely to gain planning approval within the National Park and so are currently focusing on non-wind projects, though there has been much discussion of wind.