

Sustainability Plan for Blackshaw Parish

Agreed at a public consultation of Blackshaw
Environmental Action Team (BEAT) 13/7/11

The Vision

Create a more sustainable Blackshaw Parish, economically, socially and environmentally. This to be done by producing more of our own food and energy, raise awareness on sustainability among all generations but particularly the young and generate a substantial income that can be reinvested in the community to further our aims.

Produce more food locally for the community.

BEAT will further this aim by:

- a. With Blackshaw Food Network encourage and organise landshare initiatives.
- b. Raising awareness of the benefits of producing more food locally.
- c. Assisting with funding possibilities for this aim.
- d. Establish a community orchard and allotment.

Produce more energy locally.

BEAT will further this aim by:

- a. Offering advice and support to local residents, businesses and community facilities (like the local school, pubs and church) on how to reduce their energy needs and how to produce some of the energy needed from renewable sources, working with Calderdale Council on these issues at a parish level.
- b. Promoting and initiating community owned energy projects that have the potential to raise funds to be re-invested in further initiatives. For further details see Appendix 1 at the back of this plan.
- c. Encouraging local residents to sign up to a 100% renewable electricity tariff, ideally Green Energy UK through BEAT.

Aims

Develop sustainable transport for the area.

BEAT will further this aim by:

- a. Promoting the use of more sustainable transport forms.
- b. Investigating the possibility of a community owned electrical car and bike share scheme powered by renewable technologies.
- c. Supporting improvements in collective transport for our area.

Look after our local environment.

BEAT will further this aim by:

- a. Organising six-monthly village clean-ups.
- b. Offering awareness raising activities for local children and young people.
- c. Encouraging tree planting on spare land.

Conclusion

This plan is a tall order for a small community, with no regular funding or employed workers. Instead we have some committed residents who are willing to improve their community – for the benefit of future generations. The plan will take time to fully implement and it does not rule out us taking up other initiatives along the way. Several of the things mentioned in the plan are activities we have done for years. Some of the new initiatives in the pipeline are outlined overleaf.

Appendix 1:

- **Hydro project:** An opportunity has arisen for BEAT to participate in a hydro project with Hebden Bridge Transition Town (HBTT) with the support of local landowners. A detailed survey has been done by Peter Hill from Powerfromthelandscape.org.uk at the Alternative Technology Centre. The survey is available on our website www.blackshaw.net/BEAT/BEAT archives. The project is likely to cost around £100,000, generating an income of around £10,000 per year for at least 20 years.

B. Methodist Chapel at Blackshaw Head: BEAT and the Chapel have just started working on a plan to cover the Chapel's energy needs through renewable technologies.

C. Community orchard and allotment: With the offer of help from Treesresponsibility and Calderdale Local Orchard Group (CLOG) and the offer of land from a local landowner we are now able to set up a community orchard with apple trees and fruit bushes. We have also had offers of using land for community allotments which we will make happen.

D. Community owned wind turbine: In order to generate a substantial income for the community we are suggesting getting a 5-12kw wind turbine on a 12-15 meter mast, which will cost between £30,000 and £60,000 and generate between £4,000 and £14,000 of income per year (depending on type) for around 20 years. **This will enable us to invest in achieving the aims in the rest of the plan.** With a national average of each household using 4,500kwh/units p.a. The electricity generated would be enough for between 3 and 8 households.

We have had four landowners offering us their land to be used for a community wind turbine– the exact location to be determined by Calderdale Council's Planning Department. The landowners have agreed in principle to let us have a 20-year lease if they in return can use (some of) the electricity generated by the turbine for free – but not receiving the income generated from the Feed-in-Tariff and from selling surplus electricity to the grid.

Legal vehicles: If any community owned energy projects does go ahead we would set up an Industrial and Provident Society (IPS) to run the project(s). This would enable us to issue shares if needed to raise funds for the project. We would also establish a charity arm so all profits from the IPS can be transferred to the charity.

Capital costs: We will be applying for grants for these energy projects, do fundraising ourselves, ask for donations and issue shares.

How the profits will be used: when the maintenance and running costs and dividends to shareholders or payback of loans (if these have been used) are covered the rest of the profits will go to further energy and community projects.