

Sustainable
Westbury
on
Trym



www.suswot.org.uk

SusWOT QUARTERLY

SusWot using less living more

Summer Equinox

July 2012

Get Growing Garden Trail leads to two Westbury events

Inside this issue:

2012 Get Growing Trail	1
Grassroots innovation	2
Up-date on the Feed-in Tariff	3
What is the return on PV if there is no Feed-in-Tariff?	3
Bristol's Green Capital Award	4
The Bristol Pound £	4

Welcome to the June Quarterly edition

SusWot's ability to further sustainability is limited by the number of people willing to help. Since you are on our mailing list you have some interest in improving the quality of life and a sustainable Westbury.

We are less concerned with finding funding for our initiatives than having extra pairs of hands to help. If you would like to find out how you can give us some practical assistance please contact suswot2050@gmail.com

Mike Crabbe, Editor
mjcttc@gmail.com

Diary Dates

Local Produce Market
9.00am – 1.00pm

Saturday 28th July
Saturday 25th August
Saturday 27th September

Saturday 8th September
Westbury Flower Show

All photographs in this edition by
crabchick



SusWot provided two successful locations for the Get Growing trail in June - the tomato and plant sale at 47 Abbey Road and a range of events around the newly created Community Garden behind the Stoke Lane shops. The Garden Trail reflects the interest and increasing prominence understanding how Bristol feeds itself and the role of the local communities. At the SusWot open meeting in June it was decided that as an organisation we should build on our existing initiatives in Westbury and focus on food. A number of ideas have already been put forward such as a wider selection of plants for sale, preparing printed recipes using low cost ingredients and sharing garden space. If you have an interest in any aspect of food from growing to eating and would like to help please, contact us: suswot2050@gmail.com

Bristol's Green Capital Bid

Runners up to Copenhagen for the European Green Capital Award 2014. Should the City rebid? see page 4

Grassroots innovations for sustainable development

This is a short article taken from a new website that attempts to give a perspective to many of the issues facing organisations such as SusWoT.

To mark the website of the launch the Grassroots Innovations principal, investigators Dr Gill Seyfang and Dr Adrian Smith introduce the concept of grassroots innovations.

Grassroots innovations for sustainable development take many different forms. Examples include furniture recycling schemes, local produce markets, low impact self-housing developments, farmers' markets, cycle networks, local car clubs, and community composting schemes. Since 1992, local authorities in the UK have produced over 400 sustainability strategies that promote these kinds of activities. Shell Better Britain's network of groups grew from 10,000 in 1992 to 26,000 in 2002.

Local innovations may involve networks of activists and community groups, such as SusWoT, generating novel, bottom-up solutions for sustainable development, and that typically respond to the local situation and the interests and values of the communities and the people involved. In contrast to mainstream business greening, grassroots innovations operate in civil society and social enterprise arenas.

Some Important points about grassroots innovators are :

- Conventionally, government policy and support for sustainable development has considered 'innovation' separately from 'community involvement'. Sustainable innovations are led by firms and market settings; community involvement encourages participation and behaviour change.
- This division misses an opportunity for considering local communities as sites of innovative activity for sustainable development. Social enterprise and community involvement can be considered as sources of innovative potential.
- The kinds of innovation that take place in communities are not limited to greener technologies. More usually, it involves novel organisational arrangements, new values and lifestyle practices that facilitate the use of greener technologies.
- Government Policy to promote sustainable innovation should extend its view and consider how it can support grassroots innovation in and between communities.
- Communities can provide niche settings, out of which grassroots innovations can spread, scale up and be adopted into more commercial and market settings (though this process is far from automatic). Grassroots innovators provide green ideas, not sustainable blueprints.
- Small initiatives, repeated many times over, can add up to significant environmental improvements. Local knowledge and capabilities help develop tailor-made sustainable solutions where top-down sometimes measures fail.
- The local roots of grassroots initiatives can make scaling up and diffusion difficult. Amongst socially excluded groups, the initiative is a means to another end, such as the skills to enter employment, or wealth to purchase goods and services.

- Certain communities can champion unpopular and difficult issues because it matters to them. This provides a vital source of innovative diversity when similar issues become salient more widely.

- Grassroots innovations mobilise collective solutions to sustainability, which helps overcome a sense of powerlessness or futility when sustainability is considered merely a matter of individual consumer choices.

- However, many grassroots innovators struggle to obtain resources for their projects. Raising grants to survive can eclipse investment in long-term development of an initiative.

- Many grassroots initiatives fail. Risk aversion amongst policy-makers means they are reluctant to support these ventures. But failure and, more importantly, learning from failure is a positive part of the innovation experience. Policy-makers need to take risks, but to do so with effective mechanisms for learning in place.

- Many grassroots initiatives are technology takers – the production of modern technologies makes it difficult to adopt and develop locally appropriate forms.

- Significant change relies on forces that operate way above the local level. Grassroots innovators alone are unable to drive sustainable development, but they are able to provide diverse seeds for change when conditions in the wider society and economy are right.

- Finally, our understanding and policies for innovation, developed in commercial and market settings, may be inadequate for grassroots community initiatives. Research is needed to develop our understanding of local communities as sources of sustainable innovations.

The new [Grassroots Innovations](http://www.grassrootsinnovations.org) website provides a one-stop shop for news and updates on research into sustainability from the bottom up. Combining a blog, news updates and a research library, the website makes it much easier to find publications and news for specific projects and across the Grassroots Innovations portfolio of research.

[Gill Seyfang, University of East Anglia; Adrian Smith, University of Sussex](#) www.grassrootsinnovations.org

Do you spend time correcting emails before sending?

If so read on.....

Accodrign to a rsearch sduty at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a toatl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.



Illuminating Newsletter - May 2012 Learning@Work

Up-date Feed in Tariff For PV electricity generation

The recent government review covered two areas. Firstly, the level of Feed-in Tariff (FIT) rate as of the next reduction (DECC refers to these as degression's) would be, and secondly, how would the FIT payments be controlled for future installations. As a result of the consultation process, and the feedback received from both the industry and homeowners, the government has delayed the next reduction in tariffs until 1st August, which is widely seen as the government backing the industry and reacting to the effects previous change.

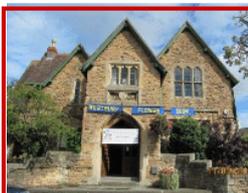
By moving back the timeframe for the changes, this gives consumers an extra 31 days to get a system installed and benefit from the current FIT scheme before the changes, highlighted below, come into effect.

The proposed changes to come into force from 1st August:

- The generation payments for PV systems 0 – 4kW will be reduced to 16p/kWh from 21p/kWh
- This is to reflect the ongoing reductions in the cost of installations
- A full list of rates can be seen below
- The export tariff for new installations will rise from 3.2p/kWh to 4.5p/kWh
- This is to reflect a more accurate value of the energy exported to the grid
- The duration of payments will reduce to 20 years from 25 years
- This is to keep the payments in line with other technologies in the scheme

Future changes to the Feed-in-Tariff

- Future reductions will be set for every three months (November, February, May and August) starting from 1st November 2012 following the August cut.
- Depending on uptake the reductions can be delayed for up to six months
- By integrating quarterly reductions DECC hope to offer a smooth reduction over time
- The government have set an average reduction of 3.5% every three months, however this will depend on installed capacity during the three months prior to the announcement
- The announcement will be made two months before any changes are to be made
- The reduction can range from 0% to 28%
- There will be separate rates of reductions for 0-10kW,



Westbury Flower Show
Saturday 8 September
11am-5.30pm
[www..wotfs.co.uk](http://www.wotfs.co.uk)

What is the return if there is no Feed-in-Tariff ? Is it worth spending the money?

What follows is a step by step process that looks at the financial position if feed-in-tariffs were totally withdrawn.

It's easy to establish how much each watt from the grid is costing you in cash terms (today, if not tomorrow): you just look at your bill. But working out what solar might save you? That requires some sums. In essence, you'll slowly recoup your initial capital outlay, watt by watt, according to how much electricity your system generates. This depends on its conversion efficiency, and the 'solarisation rate' – that's how many rays it will receive in your latitude, climate and location.

The figure you end up with, for costs divided by watts, is known in the trade as your **levelised cost of energy (LCOE)**. It may sound arcane, but this is exactly the same calculation that a generating company does for any new power station – which is, after all, what your solar panels are. To do the sums properly you need to factor in things like maintenance and costs of financing, and specify an expected lifetime of the system.

Using a typical 2.5 KW PV system in our area it is possible to give an idea of the possible return excluding any Feed-in-Tariff payments. Since the calculation looks ahead for 25 years the assumptions can only be illustrative and you will have to make up your own mind as to their validity.

- Unsubsidised capital cost: £6000 up front for a 2.5 kw system, including installation, plus at least £1000 to replace the inverter after 10 to 12 years.
- Useful life of system: 25 years
- Ongoing maintenance: although PV systems are claimed to be very low maintenance this has yet to be established and £500 may be included in the calculation to cover contingencies
- Inflation: 3% per year (used as the 'discount rate', which values future costs and benefits less than immediate ones)
- Tax treatment: neutral and ignoring any small costs associated with stamp duty on value of the house
- End-of-life costs: recycling value equal to removal cost
- Panel performance: on a well-oriented unshaded roof, 2250 kWh in year 1 (when panels are new), declining at 1% per year. This assumes a starting level of 90% efficiency arising from the orientation and the actual rather than claimed output of the panels.
- Grid electricity retail prices: 13p per kWh in 2012 rising by 5% per year.

Working through the numbers suggests that PV is worth considering. Although the above assumptions may be disputed but the ever rising cost of electricity and the falling costs of the panels presents a strong argument in favour of installation.

Bristol's bid for the Green Capital Award

Bristol made it to the final three cities thanks to its strong green performance. Most of you will know that we were beaten by Copenhagen. The Commission's panel of experts ranked Bristol second out of the 18 cities that entered the Award, and highlighted several of Bristol's achievements and plans, including:

- Good progress with action on climate change. The Council has been investing in energy efficiency in thousands of homes and many public buildings, helping to reduce emissions by 20% per person since 2005.
- Improvements being made to transport through Cycling City and investment in public transport, and particularly the improvements to road safety in recent years
- The importance of green business to the city and the improvements that businesses have made to their energy and carbon efficiency
- An excellent reduction in the amount of waste produced by residents over the past 5 years, recycling improvements leading to a recycling rate of around 50%, and an overall reduction in the amount of waste going to landfill – down to less than 20%
- Improvements to parks and the urban environment and the concentration of development on 'brownfield' sites
- The good work being done by local water companies in ensuring a secure, high quality supply of water, and the investment being made to improve infrastructure to protect the environment
- The good work in the city's energy planning – in particular, the judge commented "Bristol is likely to lead the development in Britain over the coming decades".

Bristol also entered the award for 2010 and was the only UK city to reach the finals.

For more information about the Bristol Green Capital Partnership, go to www.bristolgreencapital.org.

Close enough to try again?

The unofficial feedback was that it was a very tough decision, and the jury had to refer back to the technical assessment. In this regard Copenhagen were quite a long way ahead of us, leaving the presentation team just a little too much to do in the final. Bristol's social media strategy was especially praised, as was the work with communities and the plan for 2014.

The good news is that Bristol's performance on some issues has improved again since last year - recycling rates is a good example where the City is well on track for zero waste to landfill. A much better story on eco-innovation can now be told. However, there are some bigger conversations that we need to have - about transport and water in particular.

An immense amount has been learned through the process - and Bristol profile across Europe and the UK has definitely been raised. This is good news for Bristol's reputation as THE place for green investment and represents good value in terms of money and time spent.

Darren Hall - BGCP Manager asks can we keep building the momentum towards a low carbon city? Entering for 2014 has given the Partnership greater ability to push for real improvements. Entering for 2015 might make the issues unavoidable - keeping them high on prospective decision makers agenda for some years to come. The Momentum Group met on 17th July - and plans for the future will be announced in due course.

For more information on the bid go to:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/applying-for-the-award/index.html>

Bristol Pound to be launched in September

SusWot has consistently expressed the view that we should shop locally. A local currency increases the likelihood that money spent in Bristol stays in Bristol, retaining and multiplying the benefit of every pound spent for ordinary people and businesses.

Bristol Pounds are purchased for sterling and then can be spent with other business members in the region. Bristol Pounds are not intended to fully replace sterling but work alongside it. Business membership is available to businesses that are independently owned and based in or around Bristol. Anyone will be able to pay with or accept paper Bristol Pounds as they will be in free circulation. The Bristol Pound will be spent like pounds sterling and is backed pound for pound by sterling deposits so taking part incurs no financial risk.

While there are some rules for taking part in the scheme, local currency is not legal tender like sterling and so accepting Bristol Pounds is voluntary. So using Bristol Pounds will help to plug a major leak of money out of the Bristol economy.

You can get Bristol Pounds either by exchanging them with pounds sterling or accepting them as payment. By doing so you will be making a clear demonstration of your support for the local Bristol economy. One Bristol Pound has the value of one pound sterling in any transaction, but many other benefits make it worth much more!

How does it work?

Bristol Pounds can be used to pay at Bristol Pound member businesses either with paper or electronic currency via an sms text by mobile phone, or over the internet. The Bristol Pound is easy yet secure and an innovative way to show loyalty to businesses and to Bristol. The Bristol Credit Union is the key organization where pounds sterling can be changed for Bristol Pounds and Bristol Pounds changed for sterling

More details on the internet, search 'Bristol Pound', 'Bristol Credit Union'



SusWot acknowledges, with thanks, the continuing support from the Partnership.