

Calderdale's Energy Future



Blackshawhead Environmental Action Team (BEAT): Promoting community energy efficiency

Blackshaw Environmental Action Team is creating a more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable Blackshaw Parish. This is to be done by producing more of our own food and energy, raising awareness on sustainability among all generations, but particularly the young, and generating an income that can be reinvested in the community to further our aims.



OUR PROJECTS

- Pennine Community Power: Producing more of our energy locally using renewable energy technologies.
- Work with the Energy Saving Trust on home insulation issues and with British Gas/UKFM regarding installing air source heat pumps.
- Insulation of a local chapel to create significant energy savings.
- 'Visit your neighbour' events where the public can visit local households with renewable energy technologies.
- Extended projects with other local organisations around sustainable buildings and power.

SUCCESSES AND SAVINGS

BEAT has been active since 1998 and has helped raise awareness on sustainability issues, including climate change. This might have led to several households installing renewable energy technologies or taking other steps who would not otherwise have done so. However, it is difficult to identify how much BEAT's activities have led to a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Blackshaw Parish. BEAT has been very successful in raising money for our many activities.

DIFFICULTIES

It takes a lot of organising to have so many types of activities running as BEAT does not have any paid staff members. We are all doing it in our free time. We have a committee that meets monthly to organise the work although the attendance at our public meetings can be uneven.

LINKS

Our website: www.blackshawbeat.org

Power in the Community: www.powerinthecommunity.org

CONTACT DETAILS

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THE FULL STORY

BEAT undertakes quite a wide range of projects; first those relating to energy saving and sustainable generation. We have helped our local chapel – which also acts as a community centre – to become better insulated in order to reduce their energy bills and make the building more comfortable in the winter.

We have worked with the Energy Saving Trust on home insulation issues and with British Gas/UKFM regarding installing air source heat pumps. Over 40 households requested a survey to find out if a heat pump was suitable for their house.

We have organised ‘Visit your neighbour’ events where the public can visit local households with renewable energy technologies (wind turbines, solar panels, heat pumps and biomass heating systems) where they could speak to the house owners about their experiences.

We also took the initiative to set up Pennine Community Power (www.powerinthecommunity.org) in order to produce more of our energy locally using renewable energy technologies. So far we have one community wind turbine – owned by 65 local residents. See the separate CEF Story on this [\[link\]](#)

We are happy to help other communities become more sustainable. For example we are exploring with the Hippodrome Theatre in Todmorden the possibility of issuing community shares to finance the installation of photovoltaic solar panels on their roof.

We’re creating two community orchards and has been supporting Charlestown community allotments and the Great Rock Coop – with the aim to produce more of our food locally as this will reduce our food miles and promote healthier living. To create wind breaks for the orchards we have planted 1500 trees and organised two workshops to graft 100 fruit trees.

More widely for the last three years we have held public meetings every month (except in August) with speakers talking about various sustainability issues. Some of these meetings have been held in Heptonstall and Hebden Bridge. We produce a newsletter every two months and have so far produced 27 issues. These are all available on our websites: www.blackshawbeat.org and www.blackshaw.net/BEAT. We organise a village clean-up every six months and have an exhibition at the annual village fete. BEAT is also represented on the Calderdale Energy Future panel.

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