

SUMMARY

This is an area based approach that has been successful in engaging whole communities to act to reduce their carbon footprint and reduce the amount of fuel poverty. The project is managed by the Energy Agency on behalf of South Ayrshire Council. Over 4,500 households in South Ayrshire have been included to date with one of the biggest successes being the very high level of participation. Hard measures, such as cavity wall and loft insulation, have been installed in 35% of all properties.

BACKGROUND

The project went beyond a simple insulation project by considering the total carbon footprint of the households and the community as a whole with the intention of informing a future long term sustainable energy strategy as well as ensuring all the fundamental insulation measures were installed. Households are offered free insulation measures and discounted renewable energy measures.

The project was designed by South Ayrshire Council drawing on the experience and lessons learned from the Warm Zones in England and the Dundee Community Energy Partnership. The first area targeted was in the vicinity of a new wind farm (Hadyard Hill) and the developer (Scottish and Southern Energy) provided the majority of funding. Funding has also been received from the Scottish Power Energy People Trust and Scottish Hydro Electric. The project was developed and managed on a day to day basis by the locally based Energy Agency that covers South West Scotland.

Before the project started, insulation was generally poor in the majority of households despite there having been a number of campaigns to get people to install insulation locally.

The aims of the project were:

- To establish base data for assessing potential to improve energy efficiency and to reduce fuel poverty
- To establish the carbon footprint for the community
- To inform long term strategic community energy planning and consider sustainability of any larger community energy projects
- To identify other funding sources which could be levered in to deliver community energy projects in the area
- To install energy efficiency measures for both low and higher income households
- To increase take-up of entitlements and maximise income



Hadyard Hill windfarm

Source: Scottish and Southern Energy

PV panels and energy game Barhill

Source: Ashden Awards

FURTHER INFORMATION

Andrew Marnie, Energy and Resources
Group Leader, South Ayrshire Council.
Andrew.marnie@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

Ashden Awards Case Study and film:
www.ashdenawards.org/winners/energy_agency08

Energy Agency:
<http://www.energyagency.org.uk/page.php?id=386>



Source: Ashden Awards

Source: Energy Agency

LOOKING AHEAD

Results

- CO2 emissions down by almost 2,000 tonnes
- Investment in the area of £800,000
- Properties with measures installed 1,600
- 50% of households that are in fuel poverty are not in receipt of the entitlements where they would normally receive insulation for free. This project gives them these measures at no cost to the householder.

The project has received recognition with three major awards. An Energy Action Scotland, Energy Savers Award, a National Energy Efficiency Award and an Ashden Award 2008.

The project methodology has been rolled out to other local authority areas with projects in Stirlingshire and Dumfries and Galloway.

Future work

Funding has been secured from the Scottish Government Climate Challenge Fund and Scottish Hydro Electric for a Community Energy Project covering the villages of Barrhill, Ballantrae, Colmonell and Lendalfoot. This is due to launch in October 2009.

The future roll out of the project to other community areas is dependent on securing funding. The model of including all households, regardless of ability to pay is very successful and ensures much higher take-up rates than if any financial contribution, no matter how small, from the householder is required.