



Newsletter - March 2017

Celebration to mark the completion of our Solar PV panel installations

At 2.00pm on Friday 7th October, about 40 of the members of the Co-op met in the library of Currie High School to celebrate the completed installation of solar PV panels on 24 buildings by the Edinburgh Community Solar Co-operative. Richard Dixon of Scottish FoE, Chair of the ECSC and Councillor Bill Henderson welcomed us all and expressed our thanks to those who had initiated the programme and then, working to a very tight deadline, led it through to its successful conclusion,. In particular, project manager Paul Phare of Energy4All, Chris Clarke of Emtec and board member Johanna Carrie.



We drank tea or coffee, chatted to each other and were introduced to Currie H. S. Headteacher Doreen MacKinnon and the head boy and girl, who added to the sense of occasion – not by cutting a tape but by cutting a cake, which was a model of one of the

buildings, solar panels and all. Chatting to some of the other Co-op members they described their own, recently-installed domestic system which, as well as roof-mounted panels, included a battery storage block, thus allowing them to use their own generated power over a 24-hour period. This is undoubtedly a useful addition and we also discussed the possibilities of people who had electric vehicles connecting them in a three-way link to their own solar panels as well as to the Grid to improve flexibility of integrated linked battery storage.

Then the head boy and girl took us up 5 stories to the top of the school where we could look down on a very impressive array of 130 panels, the final element in the whole scheme to be completed.. As we realised this was just one installation out of 24, it brought home to us just what a huge job it had been (thought to be the largest community owned renewables solar project in the UK). To complete it on time and within budget is a considerable achievement and all of us as shareholders should be grateful to the initiators, contractors and managers.

Barry and Helen Hughes



Green Energy Awards. 1st December 2016

On December 1st over 1000 renewable energy enthusiasts met to celebrate the achievements of the year. It was a grand affair, black tie, glamorous frocks (perhaps only 10% of those present were women but some men were in kilts to add to the colour).

It started with drinks at 18.00 and the full programme finished with carriages at 1.00, at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre in Morrison Street. Seven hours of networking! At first I feared that such opulence was out of keeping with renewable energy but I was wrong. The event had a great feel of so many people sharing being proud of our work. There was delight also in how much the event has grown. Ten years ago the ceremony hosted about 300 people in the National Museum of Scotland. Now the numbers have out grown that venue.

There were eleven groups of award. We were short listed in the Best Community Project group but sadly the award went to Aberdeen Community Energy, Donside Hydro. Our installers, Emtec, hosted us at their table. They had worked with North Ayrshire Council biomass heat project who won the Sustainable Scotland Award. It was a pleasure to see that an Edinburgh firm,, Nova Innovation, received the Engineering Excellence Award for their Shetland Tidal array. There is a lot going on in renewables!

We can try again next year, I hope.

Johanna Carrie

Account of AGM Feb 11 2017

The minutes of this AGM are provided by Energy 4 All. These notes are comments to supplement the minutes.

Decision not to distribute interest due to share holders, rather to hold it over to add to 2018 distribution. Our accounts run from September to September. The first panels were only installed at the end of June. The last installation was well into September. This means that the period for income generation was short and the profit accumulated was so small that dividing it between the share holders and then distributing it would have been much effort for few pennies.

At the AGM questions were asked about generation figures. The metering process is only just now being finalised, inevitably a more difficult operation than first imagined. I have extracted a couple of examples to give us an insight into the situation in September when the accounts were produced and by December – three winter months, expected to generate less than summer months.

The electricity generation from our panels earns money from City of Edinburgh Council who pay for what is used by the buildings. This is all in order. We are also due money from the Feed in Tariff, this has been delayed by metering problems but we expect it to be sorted by April. What is not used on site is exported to the grid, but that is less profitable and less efficient than using the electricity on site.

Oaklands School was our first installation, at the end of June. Between the end of June and September 39,939 kWh was generated, but only another 9,742 kWh in the next three months. So summer does produce more than winter, what a surprise !

Tumbles was one of our last installations in September, another big one. September generation readings total 1,778 kWh – very little compared with Oaklands which was working all summer. Tumbles shows generation of 11,710 over the next three months, too late to be in the accounts at the AGM.

I hope this goes some way to explain why generation earnings, based on September figures, were too low to distribute, but gives you confidence that there will be gains from a full year of operation.

Johanna Carrie

Election of Board members.

There were 9 nominations for 7 members of our Board. The board now is:

Richard Dixon, David Hawkey and Johanna Carrie re-elected, Lesley Hinds, City of Edinburgh Council representative until May.

Elected to board. Kate Studd, Drew Murphy and Ian Fairlie are our new members.

The new board decided that Lesley Hinds shall be our Chairperson. Jim Lee from Energy4All has been co-opted to the board and will act as secretary. A decision has not yet been made on

Treasurer. This will be an oversight role as Energy4All keeps the books for us and gives a financial report to our AGM.

After the May Council elections we will find out who will be the Councillors on the board
I am pleased that the two nominees who were not elected to the board have chosen to be engaged with the work of ECSC. Clement Luciani is on the newsletter group. Brian White has now joined the education sub-group.

I was delighted to be elected as a director of ECSC at the AGM in February. The AGM was a great opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the coop so far and to be challenged and inspired about what the future might hold. I'm excited to be working alongside my fellow board members to ensure the coop continues to be managed diligently, and explore opportunities for further development - **Drew Murphy**

ECSC has delivered a huge amount in such a short time. It's a real testament to what can be achieved when committed people come together. I'm really looking forward to working with other members of the Board, Energy4All and our members to take the project forward, and creating a cleaner, greener Edinburgh - **Kate Studd**

I'm very pleased to have been elected to the ECSC Board, as it's a privilege to work with such a good team of dedicated and experienced people in this area. The Co-operative is the largest energy co-op in the UK and its success in getting solar panels up and running in 24 schools and local centres throughout Edinburgh is a great example to others. Although I presently reside in London, I'm a born and bred Scot and shall enjoy my visits to Edinburgh - where I have many friends and family. I hope my organisational, technical and educational skills will be of use to the Co-op. - **Dr Ian Fairlie**

Comments from schools

Teachers in our host buildings have responded favourably to having access to inverter records of electricity generation . These can be displayed on white boards in class rooms. Each teacher usually has a planned programme of work for the year, renewables and sustainability will have their place. It is expected that there may be some reports from individual schools when the system has been up for a year.

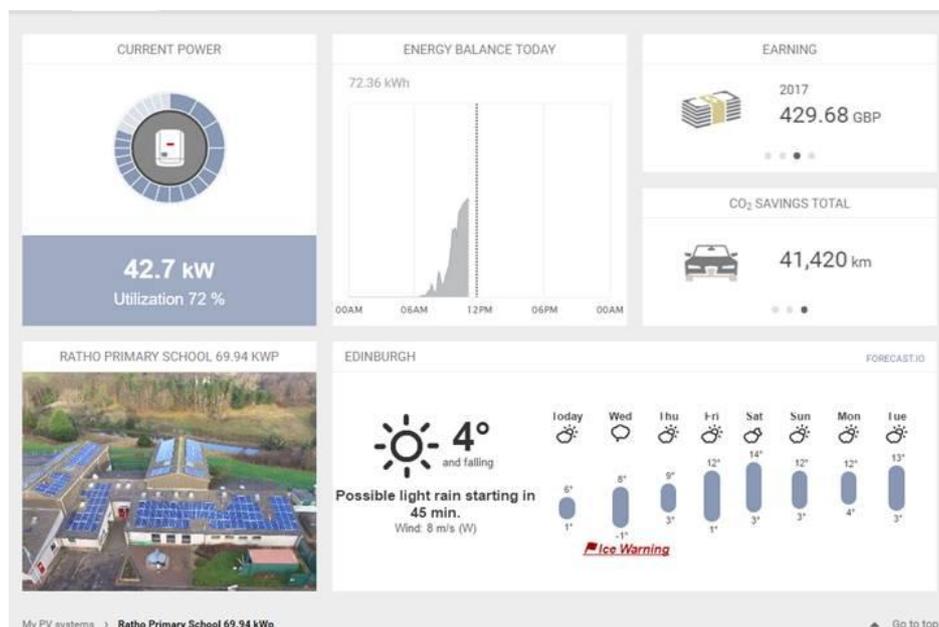
In March there was a surprise request from a school wanting a talk about renewables, and our project in particular. The Primary 6 class were full of questions. I hope that they will come up with imaginative asks for more inclusions to our resources page on our web site.

They and their teacher asked to be considered as our 25th building. We will have to look into the suitability of that site. Watch this space !

Update on display panels in the reception areas of our host buildings

Richard Witney has been appointed to install reception display panels in all the host buildings that have the space and want them. They will show the inverter data so that they match information available in classrooms. There is much still to be decided. A school could use pictures produced by the pupils instead of photos of their panels. We may be able to help relate the generation figures to electricity use by the building and in some cases also the energy performance certificate of the building which includes how it could be improved.

Some grant funding for these panels has been found and the AGM agreed to use some of the Coop's money also. The intention is to install one display system as a pilot and check that it works well before aiming to have them in almost all our host buildings by the end of June. Our pilot school will be Buckstone Primary in Fairmilehead.



Display from Ratho Primary School

Display Panels Cont..

Edinburgh Leisure is looking forward to having these reception displays in the three relevant buildings, Drumrae, Ainslie Park and Tumbles. They already have an incentive scheme to encourage the managers of each leisure centre to reduce their energy consumption. We will investigate the feasibility of having something similar in our host schools and community centres.

Community Benefit Fund.

It was agreed at our first AGM and this recent one that the community benefit fund should contribute to providing displays in the reception areas of our host buildings.

The Community Benefit Fund is not expected to grow fast, and will only be modest at first. The agreement with City of Edinburgh Council is that it should be used in the host buildings for the first

five years of our project. After that any community will be able to apply for funding.

Stuart Hay Community Benefit. Presentation at AGM

This presentation covered much more than the Community Benefit Fund and using it, much more

Where next and why ?. The whole presentation is now on our web site.
Stuart suggests these two objectives

Objective A

Be involved in and support the development, installation, management, operation, generation, transmission and provision of the supply of energy from renewable energy and low carbon sources;

Objective B

To reduce climate change emissions, alleviate fuel poverty, improve energy security and help to foster sustainable development in and around the City of Edinburgh, by working with like-minded organisations, through supporting projects and educational work.

The first board meeting after the AGM spent some time considering future plans. We think that we should run for at least a year before starting any major new activity. However most initiatives take a year or two of discussion and exploration before they are publicly started. By our next AGM we should have possibilities to present for discussion.

This board meeting decided to appoint Richard Witney of OnSite Generation to monitor the whole project for us and be the point of contact for our host buildings.

If you want to contribute to our next newsletter please contact one of the newsletter team through Jim Lee jim@energy4all.co.uk

We hope you enjoy this newsletter. Do get in touch if you want to contribute to the next one.

Barbara. Chris. Clement. Drew. Helen. Johanna. Sally. Seamus