

Introduction

This month's Regional Energy News bulletin takes a look at the recently published White Papers on energy and planning. Our publications section includes a new research report on sustainable energy in Regional strategies and in response to your feedback we have included a section on transport services initiatives.

News

Energy White Paper: Meeting the energy challenge

This White Paper sets out the Government's international and domestic energy strategy to address the UK's long term energy challenges and deliver its energy policy goals. These include putting the UK on a path to cutting carbon dioxide emissions by 60 per cent by 2050, with real progress by 2020. The nine Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) have welcomed the White Paper and fully endorse its twin-track approach to addressing energy security and climate change. However, there is some disappointment that there are no significant new initiatives to address the major problem of the energy performance of existing housing stock which RDAs consider to be vital in tackling climate change.

As part of this White Paper consultations have been launched including one relating to the renewables obligation. Further information can be found [here](#). The Energy Saving Trust has also produced a briefing note on the 2007 Energy White Paper which can be found [here](#).

Planning white paper: Planning for a sustainable future

This White Paper sets out the Government's detailed proposals for reform of the planning system, building on Kate Barker's recommendations. It takes forward proposals for reform of major infrastructure planning, such as how decisions should be taken on nationally significant infrastructure projects, responding to the challenges of economic globalisation and climate change. It also proposes further reforms to the town and country planning system, building on the recent improvements to make it more efficient and more responsive.

A consultation was launched alongside the White Paper. Further information can be found [here](#).

Energy Saving Trust funded regional activity plan

The Energy Saving Trust have agreed to 2007/08 activity plans with six regions. These are now available on the website [here](#). Please visit the individual tabs for each region. Information is provided on expected outputs of activities, milestones and the funding provided.

Sustainable energy network forges ahead

The Energy Saving Trust is accelerating the roll out of its sustainable energy network. This is our response to the challenge laid down in the Government's Energy White Paper and represents a more strategic, joined up approach to sustainable energy that is required to meet the UK's ambitious carbon reduction targets. We are now recruiting managers for Wales and London to help with strategic engagement activities. At the same time we will begin tendering for organisations to provide advice centre services in these areas.

In addition, we are in discussions with Government about the roll out of the network across the UK. In preparation we have been co-ordinating consultations around the country, which have included the creation of sustainable energy process groups that have been tasked with agreeing the most appropriate sustainable energy network structure following consultation with stakeholders. For more information contact Matthew Knight on 020 7227 0326.

Major Tender Opportunities - London

The London Development Agency (LDA) is procuring delivery partners for two new and innovative services which are central components of the Mayor's Climate Change Action Plan. Full details are available [here](#) or call 0207 593 8000.

The Green Homes Concierge Service aims to provide home owners in London with a single point of contact that will organise a range of services on the homeowner's behalf to improve energy efficiency and reduce the overall carbon footprint of the household. The deadline for expressions of interest is 28 June. Please contact Kate Pender katepender@lda.gov.uk or Jim Fielder jimfielder@lda.gov.uk for further information.

The Green Badging Service aims to provide a 'start to finish' service to London's businesses and other organisations. The service offers tailored advice on how to reduce their carbon footprint and then organises the steps and actions to be taken by facilitating and coordinating the services of other contractors on the organisation's behalf. The deadline for expressions of interest is 27 June. Please contact Fiona Gibbons fionagibbons@lda.gov.uk for further details.

Publications

Update on progress of sustainable energy in regional strategies in England

In January 2007 the Energy Saving Trust commissioned the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) to update its previous research into the degree to which the English regions' statutory strategies were addressing sustainable energy issues. The current report analyses the regional strategies that have been updated in the interim, provides the results of stakeholder interviews and updates the 'star rating' for each region based on thirteen key sustainable energy targets. The executive summary and final report can be found [here](#).

Yorkshire and Humber Assembly - Evaluating the contribution that key regional strategies make towards addressing climate change

This report evaluates the impact of current regional strategies in tackling both production and consumption related greenhouse gas emissions. The findings are intended to inform how the emerging integrated regional framework can tackle climate change as one of seven regional 'landmark' issues. Further information can be found [here](#).

East of England renewable energy statistics

Renewables East has published its renewable energy statistics which show that the region has some 419MW of installed renewable energy capacity, which is a significant increase on recently published figures from the DTI. This report can be found [here](#).

Transport

The Energy Saving Trust's transport advice programme is available to both public and private sector organisations in England. The programme offers practical solutions to help reduce costs and improve the environmental performance of car and van fleets. For fleets of over 50 vehicles, a free comprehensive review of transport operation is available. Those organisations which receive Green Fleet Reviews and are keen to commit to longer term carbon dioxide reduction can opt to join Motorvate, an accreditation scheme which offers advice, auditing and recognition of achievements in reducing the carbon footprint of vehicle fleets. Smaller fleets can benefit from our wide range of publications, nationwide training sessions and telephone advice. Further information can be found [here](#).

Connecting Cities: Local transport, national connectivity, and economic growth

This is a report which draws on seminars held in Newcastle, Birmingham, Liverpool, Bristol and Reading to set out a case for greater investment in local transport, before the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review and the arrival of a new Prime Minister in Downing Street. Issues covered include road-user charging, better local bus services, strengthened city-regional transport authorities, and greater financial freedom for cities to invest in key transport links. The report can be found [here](#).

Darlington's success in boosting sustainable transport

Transport Minister Gillian Merron has recently congratulated Darlington on its success as a sustainable travel town. Highlighting some of the town's achievements in increasing cycling, walking and use of public transport, she urged other local authorities to follow their example. Research from the first three years of the project show a 14 per cent increase in public transport trips, a 29 per cent increase in walking trips, a 79 per cent increase in cycling trips and car trips are down by 11 per cent. Further information on sustainable travel towns can be found [here](#).



Funding

E.ON SOURCE

The E.ON SOURCE fund is a new resource that replaces that Powergen Green Plan fund which offers grants of up to £30,000 to community groups and not-for-profit organisations that wish to pursue and implement sustainable energy projects in their buildings. More information can be found [here](#).

Community Energy Efficiency Fund

The aim of this fund is to assist 300,000 of the most vulnerable pensioner and other vulnerable households in England to achieve affordable warmth, using an area based approach to provide coordinated advice and measures. £6.3 million is available to be distributed and spent by March 2008. Further information can be found [here](#).

News from the regions

North West

£23.5m portfolio of investment to tackle climate change

To mark World Environment Day, the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) has announced that approval has been granted in principle for £23.5 million of investment over three years to implement the continued delivery of the North West climate change action plan. One of the key threads of the action plan will be the delivery of a North West energy strategy. The aim is, by 2010, to secure a reduction in greenhouse gases emitted, an increase in low carbon heat and electricity generation and have a number of sustainable travel schemes deployed across the region.

North East

LIGHT – Lincolnshire Green Heat

LIGHT is a new project to kickstart the use of biomass renewable energy in Lincolnshire. The services offered include one-to-one advice on all aspects of wood and biomass heating, site visits and feasibility studies, and advice on fuel production for farmers, wood processors and waste recyclers. So far the project has offered grants to 24 schemes of £450,000, resulting in over £2.5 million investment in biomass and approximately 6MW capacity. Nearly 8,000 tonnes of Carbon dioxide will be saved each year when these schemes are implemented. Further information can be found [here](#).

North East biofuels project

A £230 million bioethanol plant is due to be constructed at Wilton, south of the River Tees. It will be built by Ensus, a company working with Renew Tees Valley (RTV), the organisation set up three years ago to develop the renewable energy and recycling industries in the North East. With the local biodiesel distribution chain - 'One green route' - continuing to expand and planning permission obtained to construct a large-scale oilseed crushing plant also at Billingham, the North East is well on course to implement its ambitious 'farm to forecourt' biodiesel strategy - and a carbon footprint reduction of up to 94 per cent.

East Midlands

Regional climate change awareness projects

Working hard to raise the awareness of climate change, the East Midlands Regional Assembly has been touring the shopping centres of the East Midlands showing a short film about the impacts of climate change and what the public can do to help combat the rise in greenhouse gas emissions.

In Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire people are being encouraged to join in with the 'Everybody's talking about climate change' project. Residents can visit the [website](#) for more information about climate change and have the opportunity to join their community in making pledges to tackle the issue. Communicating the campaign has involved a variety of methods such as radio announcements, an events bus and a beautiful climate change themed well dressing in Ashford, Derbyshire.

East of England

Reducing the region's carbon footprint

'Are you doing what you can to reduce your impact on the environment?' This is the question that the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) asked its key partners, businesses and local communities in the region at the launch of Offsite 07 in June. The East of England has the biggest carbon footprint in the country and the 4 day event co-hosted by EEDA and the Building Research Establishment (BRE), exhibited some of the solutions to reducing that footprint. It showcases a school and 6 houses, including the most carbon neutral house in the world, which demonstrate how modern methods of construction and advanced technologies together can deliver higher performing low carbon buildings.

As well as working in partnership with regional government bodies, the Energy Saving Trust's Practical help team provides free advice and support to local authorities and housing associations. This includes an enquiries service, presentations and workshops.

Practical help:

practicalhelp@est.org.uk

0870 241 2089

We'd like to keep you up to date with our activities in your area and as such will be contacting the regional key contacts to notify them of relevant work.

If you have insights on activities in your region that you would like to share in this e-bulletin, contact Sheila Keating, Programme Manager, Regions, at sheila.keating@est.org.uk or call 020 7654 2609.

Coming up...

Next month's Regional Energy News will focus on policies and solutions to help build low carbon housing.