

FELLOWS ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS UPDATE – 16 FEBRUARY 2012

1.1 Schemes

Local Energy Assessment Fund provides £10million

The first 82 recipients of the LEAF were announced for the Fund set up to promote low-carbon projects aiming to power local communities. Various organisations including parish councils, voluntary associations, development trusts and faith groups are all eligible to apply for LEAF funding, which amounts to approximately £50,000 for each successful bid. The first 82 winners came from England and Wales, and include show homes demonstrating energy efficiency and renewable energy and schemes to check the energy performance of UK homes within local communities. All projects need to be completed by end of March 2012.

Malaby Biogas Becomes First Recipient of AD Loan Fund

Based in Wiltshire, Malaby Biogas has become the first company to receive a loan from the newly formed AD Loan Fund launched by Defra last July. They have received a one-off £800,000 loan to add to the equity funding and support from Clydesdale Bank which has already been secured for the 12 acre site. Commissioning is due to start in March this year.

Small Scale Anaerobic Digestion Technology (SSCF-Tech) Platform

The SSAD-Tech has been launched to encourage greater uptake of AD technologies among rural and small businesses. It is designed to generate income and power for farms and food manufacturers and resolve the issues of biomass waste disposal by reducing the capital costs of a small AD plant and so delivering a method to accept biomass streams, save landfill tax and generate power/revenue.

The scheme aims to accelerate the development of technologies for <250kWe systems and see how various feedstocks behave in AD reactors. Centre for Process Innovation (CPI), CNG Services and Wardell Armstrong are part of the consortium leading the £880,000 budget, 2-year scheme.

Weekly Collection Fund Criteria Released

The £250 million fund created by Eric Pickles is available to separate food waste collections, infrastructure upgrades and incentive schemes so long as they support weekly collection practices in some way. Weekly residual waste collections are also targeted if accompanied by fortnightly recycled material collection. The department said that it was “particularly keen” to promote new technologies such as MBT and AD, the use of recycling 'reward' schemes such as RecycleBank in Windsor and Maidenhead and Nectar points in Birmingham and to promote better procurement and joint working.

The Fund is now open for applications. Expressions of interest must be submitted by 16 March 2012 www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/weeklycollectionsprospectus, outline bids by 11 May and final bids by 17 August. Decisions will be announced in October with successful funding received in the 2012/13 financial year. £50m is available to local authorities for the first year and £100m in the next two years. Grant payments are available for revenue or capital expenditure. DCLG has stated that there is more limited scope for bids requesting >£5m with Technical Advisory Groups being set up to lead the bidding process. Pickles believes waste collections to be the most visible return of people's council tax and so the system should be as efficient and unobtrusive as possible.

European Biofuels Tax

EU Biofuels-use targets are set to rise and rise, the result of which will be a hefty cost for road-users. Motorists will pay approximately an extra 18 billion Euros per year for petrol and diesel. Shockingly, research by Global Subsidies Initiative has shown that the extra focus on biofuel-use will have no effect on the amount of emissions. Their report also claims that demand for biofuels is pushing up the price of food and driving millions of poor people off their land into hunger. 37million hectares of land worldwide has been saved for biofuels with 60% of African land grabs for biofuel depriving local communities of land and water



1.2 Documents Released

#DenierGate Document Names Anti-Climate Change Companies

A [document](#) accidentally published by The Heartland Institute has revealed that a number of companies, thought to have green credentials, are financially supporting the organisation which campaigns to refute scientific claims of climate change and oppose green policy. The DeSmogBlog website released the funding plan showing that The HI aims to raise more than \$7.8M in 2012 from private (and supposedly anonymous) donations to finance its anti-environmental ventures.

The document showed that The HI supports controversial fracking for shale gas and is planning to spend \$100,000 on an alternative curriculum to raise doubts about global warming. Companies named include Microsoft, General Motors, GSK and the US Chamber of Commerce amongst many others including various Environmental Advisory firms. #deniergate went viral on Twitter.

Water White Paper – Water for Life 2011

The 5 month overdue white paper states how the demand for water is set to increase due to changes in energy supply such as increased dependence on nuclear power stations and biomass plants as well as the unknown effect from water-intensive CCS.

Pioneering Report Maps UK Waste Infrastructure

[England's Waste Infrastructure](#) created by the EA is the first document of its kind to give info on all the waste activities in the UK listed under environmental permits providing a clear overview of the UK's waste infrastructure. It shows registered infrastructure up to the 31 March 2010 and will be updated annually to provide a level of assurance to investors that facilities are up and running but required.

1.3 Waste and Recycling News

3rd Company Achieves PAS110 Digestate

Lower Reule Bioenergy, based in Staffordshire, have become the third Anaerobic Digestion plant in the UK to be awarded PAS110 certification for its digestate as well as becoming the 2nd recipient of AD Quality Protocol compliance. The Gnosall, farmland plant is capable of handling up to 30,000tonnes of waste a year which it receives from local authorities and businesses in the hospitality and retail sector. There are plans in the pipeline to add two more digesters to the 1.3MW system to increase the capacity to 60,000tpa.

The first two PAS110 compliant Anaerobic Digestion facilities are the AnDigestion plant in Devon and Scottish Water Horizons plant in Deerdykes, Cumbernauld.

Research puts England's Recycling Rates at 42%

For the rolling year of July 2010 to June 2011, Lord Taylor has revealed that England recycled 42% of household waste which is a 2% rise on the last year's equivalent result. Defra's data also states a 360,000tonne reduction in the amount of waste created which is also a piece of news for the industry to be proud of. 1.2million tonnes less of waste was sent to landfill by local authorities than last year. The East of England had highest recycling rates (49.06%) whilst London performed worst (32.09%)

Europe Set for Higher WEEE Targets

European Parliament MEPs voted to confirm plans to increase the targets for collected electrical and electronic equipment. Once given approval by the Council of Ministers, the current target of 4kg collection per person per year will change so that, by 2016, 45 tonnes of WEEE is collected for every 100 tonnes put on the market in the preceding three years.

The new regulations will also state that consumers will be allowed to take back small WEEE items to electrical retailers with >400m² shop space free of charge and in a bid to cut down on the illegal export of WEEE, exporters will have to prove that goods are being shipped for repair or reuse.



Paper Mill Produces First Paper

SAICA Paper UK has produced the first paper at their new £300million mill in Partington, Manchester after successful trials with PM11. This marks the return to Manchester of the once-prevalent papermaking industry and does so using 100% recycled paper to produce 400,000tonnes of recycled containerboard per year. Operational status is targeted in the next few months.

Avondale's Cutting Edge MRF Unveiled

A £20m recycling and RDF facility is a step closer to going live after the Avondale MRF was opened by Richard Lochhead on 1 February in Polmont, Central Scotland. Capable of processing 200,000t of waste per year, 60% will be recycled or turned into fuels for energy use. Onsite landfill gas engines will power the facility using renewable methane as the MRF serves industrial, municipal and private sector customers. Avondale are traditionally a landfill operator so it is encouraging to see such an alternative to black bin waste processing.

Further work is set to introduce a thermal drying facility in 2015 to produce high quality fuel for resale to other facilities such as kiln-users or EFW plants and will enable the Avondale facility to divert 90% of its incoming waste stream from landfill.

Liverpool's Mixed Recovered Plastic Site

Centriforce have opened a –acre waste plastics sorting facility in Liverpool to handle mixed recovered plastic for the first time. It will sort pre- and post- consumer mixed plastics from retail and construction sectors. The company produce recycled plastic products such as walkways and advertisement boards and the investment in sorting should promote high quality streams of HD, LDPE & PP plastic waste.

Midlothian's Advanced Glass Recycling Plant

Viridor have opened what they claim is 'one of the most hi-tech' glass recycling facilities in the world, being one of only three sites to use this latest technology. The latest investment in the already existing 100,000tpa Bonnyrigg glass recycling site, now offers the ability to colour sort mixed glass back to original streams for a high quality recycle. It has cost £6million to perform the upgrades.

Cheshire's Incinerator Bottom Ash Recovery Plant

Covanta have gained planning permission to build an Incinerator Bottom Ash Aggregate (IBAA) plant to recover bottom ash from a planned incinerator in Cheshire. Covanta will build the IBAA facility to process the by-product from a 95MW energy recovery plant, also to be built by Covanta, on the same site at Ince Park. Vehicular transportation will be minimal and the IBAA will have the ability to process 250,000tpa, avoiding the necessity to otherwise landfill the material. Covanta and Peel Environmental are jointly developing Ince Park into the UK's largest Eco Park to increase waste recycling, reprocessing and energy recovery as a centre for industry excellence.

Defra to Consult on Lessening Bin-Fines

Councils may no longer be able to impose fines up to £1,000 for overfilling bins or leaving rubbish out for collection on the wrong day. Government wants to amend Section 46 of the EPA 1990 which sets out the currently used penalties. Fines will still be allowed but only if local authorities can show that households are causing harm to local amenity. On the spot fines are to be reduced from £110 to a level more proportionate with offences such as parking fines and shoplifting.

London Restaurant Straw Wars

London restaurants are banning the use of straws in a bid to reduce the extraordinary amount of waste plastics produced. As an example, McDonald's sell 3.5million drinks with a straw each day.

1.4 Energy News

DECC's Solar FiTs Appeal Rejected

Government refused DECC the right to appeal against the holding of a judicial review regarding its early, radical cuts to the FiT level provided to Solar PV energy production. Three judges unanimously



agreed the 12 December 2011 cuts were illegal so, providing Chris Huhne does not take the matter to the Supreme Court, the Government will have to pay their original higher rate of 42.5pence/kWh for installations made before 5 March 2012.

Smaller, less noticed aspects of the incoming FiT levels include business having to demonstrate a building has a level C or above in the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) System prior to being awarded 21p/kWh. Otherwise, solar PV systems would only be given 9p/kWh. This is a move to promote energy efficiency rather than just focussing solely on maximising green energy production.

There is now worry that this short period of semi-unexpected high FiT rates will cause a boom and bust for the solar industry. The vast media coverage of FiT cuts has brought to the attention of the public that the 42p/kWh FiT level is the easiest and most viable way of installing renewable energy production systems into a household. This new defined period until 05 March 2012, where high rates are once-again allowed, is expected attract an immediate rush for solar PV installations and gives an opportunity for a very high proportion of installations before a undoubted lull post April the longevity of which is unknown and depends on how quickly solar businesses adapt their strategies.

Solar FiTs Cont

DECC has announced that it is to announce staggered FiT cuts on 9 February to sort out the current confusion engulfing the solar industry.

The Big 6 Reduce Energy Prices

Following unhappiness at the continual sharp rises in energy and electricity prices, all of the Big 6 energy companies have reduced some version of price cuts approximately 5%.....

Chris Huhne Steps Down from Cabinet

Chris Huhne, Energy Secretary as Head of DECC, has quit as a member of Cabinet due to the looming trial he faces against claims that he asked his wife to take driving license points on his behalf for speeding. He claims innocence but believes the trial will form too big a distraction from the role. Huhne has overseen a tumultuous time as Energy Secretary which has included rising energy prices, falling investment in green energy, the Fukushima accident, rising fuel poverty and fractious climate change negotiations. However, on the whole he has been seen to do a good job, securing funds for DECC from the sceptics in the Treasury whilst leading projects such as RHI and the Green Investment Bank, raising public awareness and strengthening Britain's Fourth Carbon Budget after bettering his Cabinet colleagues. He was always approachable and led an active twitter feed.

He has been replaced by Ed Davey, another Lib Dem, who has a track record of speaking out over controversial issues and is thought to have been selected to carry on Huhne's good work at battling with other Cabinet members and The Treasury in order to secure funding and media exposure for the key issues in the energy and, more importantly, renewable energy sector.

Scotland to Receive £7billion Upgrade

Regardless of whether Scotland gains independence from England, it is line to receive £7billion from Ofgem to upgrade its ageing high voltage network. Ofgem is "fast tracking" and "cutting red tape" to get the network upgraded at a cost of 35p/year on each energy bill up to 2021. This is seen as excellent value. Ofgem say the funding will be a political decision should the referendum lead to a split but at the moment they must carry on as usual as it is their responsibility to maintain the industry.

Nuclear Fuel Recycling

Swedish researchers, headed up by Chalmers University of Technology, are investigating ways to recycle nuclear fuel for fourth generation power systems. They aim to produce a fuel that is safe for 80% recycling rather than the current 1%. Germany is the only European nation which has decided to phase-out nuclear energy so if this study leads to a useable breakthrough in twenty years, a large burden would be taken of the approaching dependence on renewables.

