

TRANSITION BLACK ISLE  
ENERGY GROUP MEETING 14<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011  
MINUTES

Present

Martin Sherring, Julian Paren, Frank Kremer, Anne Thomas, Jess Christman

Apologies

John Wood, Jim MacLeod

Minutes of Last Meeting

Accepted as a true record.

Actions Points from the Minutes

- Martin had NOT sent Anne contact details for the farmer at Black Stand
- Anne had spoken to Tim, who after three year's of monitoring windspeed had not thought his site viable. Yet our consultants had highlighted the vicinity as one of the best in the Black Isle. Suggestions were that Tim's anemometer was poorly exposed being in a rather sheltered place on their smallholding. Meeting decided that subject to agreement from Tim and Trish we would install a TBI anemometer on a more representative site on their land for three months and relate the two wind records together. The comparison should decide the potential of Tim's land and Black Stand for wind turbines. Martin thought it should be a half hour's work on site for five people to get the TBI anemometer up and running. Anne would continue to liaise with Tim and Trish and Julian would see whether he could talk to Trish independently.
- Jess had circulated his draft – Discussed later
- Anne had circulated PDFs of lesson plans but no one had contributed to any further progress
- Frank had not tried out the lesson plans on his children
- Frank was not needing assistance yet for the talk to Ferintosh WRI
- Martin had not sent the Carbon Free Report to Jess
- Martin had contacted Richard Robinson but it seemed likely that Richard would not be so active in the group

Jess's information on the Renewable Heat Initiative

The document had been posted on the web. Julian raised some queries with the text and said he would check them out so that the web version could be updated. Jess had learned a lot from preparing the paper, and had realized there were inconsistencies between what was agreed for the non-Domestic Sector and what was probably planned for the Domestic Sector. In particular air source heat pumps were part of the non-Domestic initiative but were to be excluded from the Domestic initiative. He hoped consultations with OFGEM would rationalize the schemes. There was an indication that the Domestic Sector might be asked to install a heat meter once they qualified for a Premium payment in 2011-2012 in advance of the start of the Renewable Heat Incentive for domestic customers in 2012. It was unclear who would pay for the meter and its installation (potentially £100). Jess also noted that the demand for logs for the Balcas pellet plant was driving up the price of logs. Finally he mentioned that under the small business scheme the Energy Saving Trust could grant loans for 8 years for eligible installations that would be interest free if the installation was renewable.

Julian thought Jess's analysis demanded a wider audience and wondered if the information could be made more accessible. Jess mentioned there was a glossy magazine for the

Dornoch/Dingwall area Ross Life and that they were to have an Energy Issue in October. Martin proposed to speak to Teen with a view to seeing how information on the RHI could be brought to more attention in the community.

As an AOB on the RHI, Martin said he was attending a two-day event "Creating a Bioenergy Economy in the Highlands". The incentive for the meeting was possibly related to the proposed new UHI development on the campus outside Inverness. The meeting asked Martin to consider taking a TBI stand if that would not interfere with his day.

### Wind Farms

Anne had nothing to add to her Action. Martin mentioned the progress with the Ring Scheme discussed at earlier meetings. After a delay they had found a suitable person to run the study but it required matched funding. Martin had a sense that this problem would be overcome.

### Community Markets

Anne thought that energy concerns should be more prominent on the TBI stall at Community Markets and had some ideas to highlight them. FoE Alness had constructed a display of different light bulbs and used these for engaging the public. She proposed to contact Peter Elbowne and see if it could be borrowed. Additionally the TBI anemometer was currently unused and this too could be exhibited on a stand and provoke discussion.

Martin wondered if Energy Saving Trust could provide bulbs of different size/brightness and fitment that could be loaned out so that householders could try out a few bulbs at home to see if they really had any problems with them.

Meeting agreed Martin would contact Alan Grant at Energy Savings Trust (or failing that B&Q) for a range of bulbs, and Anne would contact FoE Alness.

Meeting also agreed to be proactive when the three Community Centres (Ferintosh, N Kessock and Munloch) were officially opened after their renovation and installation of pellet stoves. Julian bemoaned that all the delays of the refurbishment might put folk off installing wood pellet stoves.

### Publicity

Julian thanked Martin for his concise Energy Newsletter received as an e-mail and asked who would have been its recipients. He said that the general TBI e-mail Newsletter of which Anne had written three, go to TBI members, participants of Grown North and the Highland Food Challenge and stall holders at the Community Markets. Many of the recipients had ticked a box saying they were interested in Energy Matters, and they received the Energy Newsletter that gave contact details for our group.

Another potential contact list was the farmers John Wood had been talking to, and those whose details appeared in Our Local Larder. These groups did not get direct TBI information.

### Frank's Tips

Julian hoped that Frank would continue to provide tips for TBI in general. Jess agreed that the dryness of woodfuel was an important topic. Vanessa was doing the next newsletter so Julian agreed to ensure Frank and Jess could contact her directly for the next e-newsletter. Frank's tips and Jess's tips would be a good combination.

### Improving information flow

Martin said the objective must be to get folk who say they are interested in energy matters more involved in some activity. The Energy Newsletter had gone to those who had attended some previous meetings. Martin said he could talk with Neil Sutherland who was installing Warmcell in some house refurbishments to publicize the way these homes could become better insulated.

The meeting congratulated John Wood on his new fame of having a Superhouse saving 80% or so of his original carbon footprint. His house would be Open on certain days. The meeting hoped that there could be a feature in the Ross-shire Journal explaining how much work John had done in a conservation area and what the Old Home to Superhouse transformation actually meant.

Martin mentioned that good newspaper or magazine "stories" needed a personal perspective. He wondered if there were more Case Studies where homeowners would be prepared to be the focus of an article. Wendy had a Ground Source Heat Pump and Sue and Hugh Collins had both PV and Solar-thermal. Could a U-tube video be created on these projects with a link from the TBI site? Food for thought.

Jess commented that there was still a lot of negative reporting on green issues, especially when things appeared to go wrong. He thought that there could be justification in correcting "bad news" in addition to promoting good news.

Next meetings

Wednesday 18 November at Frank's (Munlochty)

Wednesday 11 January at Jess's (Muir of Ord)