



News Information

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Renewable Energy for the South East of England

The South East of England Renewable Energy Partnership and TV Energy, the regional renewable energy agency, have resolved 2004 will be the year that renewable energy development in the south east lifts off.

TV Energy has published an 8 point action plan for 2004 to support new renewable energy sources using wind, solar, hydro and biomass. The action plan comes as a result of the discussions and feedback from the successful South East England Renewable Energy Conference held in Reading in December 2003.

The 8 point action plan commits to supporting innovative flagship energy schemes to provide locally generated renewable energy to consumers, providing greater education to councillors and other key decision makers following the rejection of two major wind energy schemes in the Thames Valley area by councils earlier in the year and developing local renewable energy targets to further encourage councils to be supportive of new schemes. It is also planned to channel more support to help smaller scale community green energy projects off the ground. The full action plan can be obtained from www.tvenergy.org.

Alison Parker of the Government Office for the South East presented three renewable energy achievement awards at the conference to Slough Heat and Power in the best industry group, East Meon Sustainability Centre for best community project and Bracknell Forest Borough Council for the best local authority. Alison Parker said: "Things are happening in the South East region but we need to do much more."

Keith Richards of TV Energy said: "2004 is really a make or break year for renewables. We need to apply zero tolerance to the 'tokenism' and 'humbug' that we have seen so much of during the past couple of years during renewable energy planning decisions."

Mike Gwilliam of the South East England Regional Assembly which has produced the region's new Renewable Energy Strategy said: "We need to get good schemes through the planning system now if we are to stand a chance of meeting the government's renewable energy targets in the South East. Although we made progress last year with the extension to the Renewables Obligation, too many schemes are still being refused in the region and supply chains are developing too slowly. We need a change of attitude in some quarters."

Ends

**TV Energy, The Enterprise Centre, New Greenham Park,
Newbury, Berkshire, RG19 6HS
www.tvenergy.org**

TV Energy Limited registered in England. Registered Office: Liberty House,
New Greenham Park, Newbury RG19 6HW.
Company Number: 4181231. VAT number: 776 1276 07.

For all press enquires contact:

Annette Deveson

TV Energy, Liberty House, The Enterprise Centre, New Greenham Park, Newbury, Berkshire, RG19 6HS.

Tel: 01635 817420

Fax: 01635 552779

Email: annette.deveson@tvenergy.org

Web site: www.tvenergy.org

Notes for Editors:

1. The South East Renewable Energy Conference was organised by TV Energy and the South East of England Renewable Energy Partnership, sponsored by the Government Office for the South East, The South East England Development Agency and the South East England Regional Assembly. 180 delegates attended on each day from across the south east of England. Day one focused on security of energy supply and action needed to achieve a sustainable energy future for the UK with speakers from industry, regional and European government. The second day featured exemplar and flagships projects taking place throughout the region.
2. The vast majority of the energy we use for our homes, workplaces and transport, comes from fossil fuels – like coal and oil – which generate the ‘greenhouse gases’ that are a major cause of global climate change. Experts agree that climate change is under way – seen in hotter, drier summers and wetter, windier winters in the UK for example – and is likely to get worse unless we take action now to slow greenhouse gas emissions.
3. Renewable energy uses free and renewable sources of energy to generate heat and power, such as energy from the wind, sun and water, or from materials which can be renewed, such as wood or animal wastes. These sources of energy do not produce polluting greenhouse gases and are carbon neutral over their life cycle, so they can make a large contribution in slowing the impact of climate change. Examples of renewable energy are solar panels on roofs, wind turbines, and using wood fuel instead of oil or gas, for individual boilers or larger heating schemes.
4. Renewable energy targets reflect an increasing need to find cleaner, sustainable and carbon neutral methods of energy generation. Climate change is one of the most serious issues to face the world and reducing emissions of the main greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide drives national and international policy.
5. TV Energy works to educate, promote and deliver renewable energy solutions to communities, individuals and businesses. It is sponsored by the Association of Councils in the Thames Valley Region and the south east of England, the European Commission, 17 Local Authorities and a wide range of other public and private sector organisations. The Government has set a target of 10% of the UK’s electricity from renewable energy sources by 2010 and TV Energy is working closely with regional governance to ensure that the potential for renewable energy in the south east region is fully developed.

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