

## Notes from Basingstoke Area Sustainability Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021

### Attendance:

Louis Notley – Neutral Home -guest speaker  
Elaine Kearney -Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green - Host  
Richard Carrow - Burghclere (Acting Chair)  
Linda Wain - Oakley  
Vanessa Richards - Silchester  
Alan Cox - Ashmansworth  
Tony Flahive - Tadley  
Sam Taylor - B&DBC Climate Emergency Project Officer  
Cllr John Buckley, Whitchurch Town Council

### 1. Any points arising from the last meeting. None.

### 2. Presentation by Louis Notley – Neutral Home Ltd – technologies for net zero homes

- Set up as an integrator of energy management and sustainability technologies for individual homes and social housing stocks
- Both ends can have large energy bills for different reasons
- Different drivers – carbon reduction and net zero aspirations for the former; affordability for the latter
- Start with measurement of energy consumption and then identify the right combinations of technologies, tariffs and behaviours to deliver the best outcomes.
- Help householders to take advantage of lower priced off-peak and demand response tariffs
- Three steps to reduce energy bills:
  1. 'Home Brain' to measure and optimise energy use – 20%
  2. Add technology such as storage – 40%
  3. Add higher impact technologies such as solar pv; manage generated power, active demand management – up to 80%
- Dextra Court in Basingstoke. 56 flats managed by Vivid. Participating in funded R&D project to identify ways to improve efficiency and lower bills. Discussed ways to manage room and water heaters.
- Plans to develop app so that users can see their costs and use more usefully than in-home devices with smart meter currently do.

### Q&A

VR asked about Octopus tariffs – are there others? Octopus Agile is currently considered the best but the expectation is that other time of use tariffs will emerge. However half-hourly (HH) tariffs aren't necessary to reap advantages. Dual/tri band tariffs will yield savings.

*TF asked about Vehicle to Grid (VtG).* Louis mentioned Fuuse as a developer of the technology and chargers to allow bi-directional flows. Still lack of vehicle with VtG enabled. Japanese makers more advanced as mandated by Japanese Gov; EC not obligating this capability yet.

*ST What about the middle income households?* Louis reported that the recommended spend for the social housing was £10k per flat, and £25k - £40k for the large individual homes. Basically they have segmented the market as the business grows and when ready to scale will look at other types and sizes of domestic properties.

*ST: Any other Housing Associations engaged including others with other types of properties and tenant leases?* No others signed up yet, they are focused on their D and E rated properties so quick wins prioritised just now. The Neutral Home model could still support those scenarios and many others. Smart heat is looking particular popular.

*TF: The complexity of technical integration of the hardware and software – is there a product available yet to do that?* Neutral Home couldn't find one suitable in the marketplace so are developing their own 'Brain'. This draws data from devices that are API connected, then applies logic models to work out what to do when. Means homeowner doesn't need to manually switch things on and off, happens automatically.

*AC: Are there common standards for these control systems and who is responsible for developing?* Not formal standards as yet, but Louis reckons more developers are adopting the "IF THIS, THEN THAT" protocol to get things started. Gamechanger will be 5G; which will enable data to come directly from individual appliances to servers, and then control instructions can go straight back.

*AC: What about rural properties with 2-phase supply?* These are discussions that need to be ongoing with DNOs, including how they will design and manage local networks to support the transmission of energy from local generation and storage.

*AC: Replacement of oil-fired boilers – are air and ground pumps a viable alternative yet? What about [Caldera](#) system?* Neutral Home have two projects considering Caldera heat stones. Still in early development; only 8 being made in 2022, they hope to get one of them. Would like to team with a heat pump to benefit from increased CoD with the storage. Costs still high.

*RC: For a community starting from scratch, important to establish baseline first. Is the IR survey discussed earlier to identify heat loss of a good enough standard to enable decisions regarding improvements. Should only use IR survey as part of a suite of methods. Many variables can arise – time of day, equipment used, building material, etc, so need to integrate with lots of types of data to work out why energy use is as it is and what can be done about it.*

*RC: are there standards to enable comparison of different methods by different 'experts'.* There are ISO standards for this type of energy modelling. BRE also advise. EPCs still drive decision-making, although Louis doubts their efficacy as they can get very different results with their methods.

### 3. Update from Sam Taylor

Post elections, got new portfolio holder for natural environment and climate improvement: [Cllr Mark Ruffell](#). New climate strategy will lead to better guidance and tools for orgs such as the Parish Councils.

Local Authority Delivery Scheme (LADS) now in place of Green Home Grants. BDBC is part of a consortium led by Portsmouth Council with access to up to £6m of grant funds to improve energy efficiency and fuel poverty for low income and inefficient homes. Requested help to publicise. Available to households with gross income <£30k, EPC rating of D-G. Up to £10k per household, including solid wall installations, low carbon heating, solar panels, heat pumps, etc. Available for social and private rental properties too, but landlords must contribute 1/3 of cost. Measures must be installed by end September 2021. There will be a phase 2 to follow. Next scheme will focus on off-gas grid properties. There will be a targeted mail drop to properties that could be useful. Asked PCs to verify that the message about LADS is real.

RC: Asked for this to come via BDBC Communications Officer, as that really helps to get news out to the PCs. Also mentioned that during Covid the PCs would receive regular Council briefings up to 4 times per week. RC found these very useful for info on grants, initiatives, etc. Would then post on NextDoor or other local social media.

ST will feed back the request to the new Communications Officer to ensure messages are shared. Agreed with attendees that BDBC will produce posters.

ST asked about plans for Green Week – are there plans? More likely to promote and share other schemes rather than organise one by the Council. LW replied that waiting on instructions from Gov but still going ahead with plans and will share when available.

AC – grants helpful but what about the many rural properties that will need to replace and upgrade expensive heating systems in the near future? ST said there would be a Government Heat and Building Strategy and although not every household can be funded, there may be innovative (green) financing to help.

### 4. Terms of Reference

The Group discussed the proposal by AC to upload meeting notes and accompanying materials to the [BDAPTC](#) website. EK will add the following text to the Terms of Reference and the Group agreed it is then finalised: “Notes of meetings, presentations and working conclusions may be placed for open reading on the BDAPTC website, under the control of its webmaster.”

### 5. Plastics recycling

In advance of the meeting AC raised the issue of plastic recycling with the Group. This highlighted the issue that a high proportion of plastic products cannot be recycled via the BDBC kerbside service. Instead, the plastics placed in general waste are separated and incinerated. While West Berks are installing sites to accept these plastics, AC was informed by Cllr Hayley Eachus (Cabinet Member for Recycling, Waste and Regulatory Services), BDBC won't do the same.

AC then discovered that Sustainable Overton, has facilities at St Mary's Church for people to deposit and separate unrecycled plastics. While we are welcome to use those facilities, it would be a substantial round trip for many.

So AC's question was could the Borough do the same as Overton?

LW: The service at Overton is organised by the Church and supported by Bead Recycling, There have been some glitches with collections but back to normal now. Bramley also uses Bead.

Information on Bead Recycling: [www.beadrecycling.co.uk/](http://www.beadrecycling.co.uk/). They provide containers and sacks for cleaned plastics to be separated, and they then collect on a monthly basis (or fortnightly by arrangement).

VR: Silchester has been trialling Bead on an individual basis, but it is also possible to sign up as a community. Initial fee is £15. Bead say everything is recycled with few exceptions. VR later pointed out that paying for the sacks and cleaning everything doesn't suit everyone.

ST: Doesn't know BDBC's reasons, but will take the question back.

## **6. Any other business.**

RC: received email from Community Energy South regarding event on 17<sup>th</sup> June "How can Parish Councils and Communities benefit from solar farms?" RC will attend.

TF to AC: Asked BDAPTC to include links to other websites including Sustainable Overton (<https://www.sustainableoverton.org.uk/>), Sustainable Silchester (<https://www.sustainable-silchester.org/>) and Tadley Town Council (<https://www.tadleytowncouncil.gov.uk/>). AC asked all to send him material and links.

## **7. Next meeting**

Allowing for summer break, next meeting will be on 9<sup>th</sup> September, 3.30 pm – 5pm, hosted by Oakley. EK or ST can provide Team link if required. Please provide topics to LW.

Link to recording: [Watch 'BDBC Climate Change and Sustainability Group meeting' | Microsoft Stream](#)