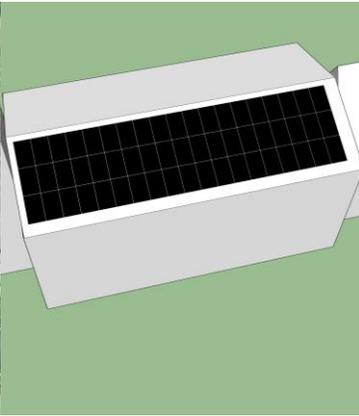


Net Zero Carbon Wetherby

RCEF Stage: 1



The Story

Centering around Wetherby Parish Church, in the heart of the West Yorkshire market town, the aim was to create vision, purpose and community impact. Nationally, the Church of England is seeking to be net Zero Carbon by 2030. This feasibility study by Environmental Strategies Ltd (ESL) examined 8 community spaces as well as business and residential premises. 1,000 homes and businesses in the market town were informed, offers of help given; consultation forums and an Eco-Day held. An embryonic zero-carbon group formed alongside other eco initiatives. Premises were thermographically surveyed and analysed for energy use. Practical recommendations were prepared. These included a Road Map for community premises, phasing the stages 2022-2030. These include draught proofing, LED lighting, destratification fans, wall insulation, large solar panels, wind turbines and air and ground source heat pumps. Local Authority Planning and the Church Buildings Council were consulted. The planning advice proved extremely useful in establishing the practical boundaries of possibility. Orders of cost given in the Road Map allowed us to assess priorities. The project was supported by the Town Council, Civic Society, Green Groups, other churches, Leeds City Ward Councillors, LEP and residents.

Challenges & Risks

There was general support. A lot of organisations came together. The biggest gain was a complete understanding of merits/demerits of alternative technologies. The biggest challenge was finding the capital investment to undertake the work and to inculcate further community consultation. The survey concluded that our ambitions of providing others in the community with solar/wind energy from a central resource were unfeasible because of connection protocols by the Northern Power Grid. We had hoped to explore Ground Source Heat pumps further in a Stage 2 project but the Stage 2 bid, though approved, could not be granted through lack of overall central funding. We have applied for Energy Project Enabling Funding.

Lessons learned

We consulted other groups who had benefited from similar RCEF funding. Our consultant ESL was chosen well (3 strong tenders). Our community consultation encouraged a lot of interest and coincided with COP26. We suggest a way ahead: a standardised survey process that is widely shared, lowering the overall survey cost – similar to the Groundwork Trust advisers but for communities; a wider scale would enable more to benefit at less cost. Too many complained of the futility of a survey without funds to implement the recommendations. More help is needed with capital investment. And how can the National Grid more easily facilitate local energy networks? Can BEIS funding schemes be longer-lived, consistent and better funded?

Key Facts

Road Map for these community premises	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draughtproofing & LED lighting 2. PV on Church Room, Destratification fans 3. Electricity supply, EV chargers, Wind Turbine, second PV array on church, wall insulation, Air source heat pumps 4. Further wall insulation, heat pumps and wind turbines 5. Ground source heat pumps and wall insulation
Buildings surveyed	Church, Church Room, Church Centre meeting rooms and office, Innersense Health, Mews café, Mango Restaurant, Old Manor House, former curate's house, Vicarage and self help for others

Key Figures

Energy Generation	Potential for c40+ KWp
Energy saved	Potential 271,821 KW pa
Potential CO2 savings	56.56 tpa
RCEF grant	Stage 1 £36,821

Further notes

LEP area:	Leeds
Consultant: Environmental Strategies Ltd (ESL)	
Selby Business Centre	
11 The Crescent, Selby, North Yorkshire. YO8 4PD	