

Notes from Basingstoke Area Sustainability meeting Thu 8 Apr

Attendance:

Daniel Ayres -B&DBC - guest speaker
Barbara Bedford - Oakley
Richard Carrow - Burghclere (Acting Chair)
Alan Cox - Ashmansworth
Tony Flahive - Tadley
Elaine Kearney - Ecchinswell
Vanessa Richards - Silchester
Sam Taylor - B&DBC Climate Emergency Project Officer
Linda Wain - Oakley
Alison Zarecky - Overton

1. Any points arising from the last meeting. None.
2. Presentation by Daniel Ayres (B&DBC) re energy efficiency in listed buildings/ conservation areas.
 - Energy efficiency increasingly important.
 - Historic buildings - important contribution. 80% of buildings in 2050 are already built.
 - The way we think about energy is fundamental. Energy efficiency:
 - embodied energy consumed in its construction and maintenance
 - operational energy (daily consumption)
 - demolition energy
 - Old buildings do not work the same way. Modern buildings are machine made with lots of cladding etc. Old buildings may have had low energy consumption in its development. Consider how building works - old ones need to breathe. If you stop it breathing moisture cannot leave.
 - Any alterations must take these as well as historic factors into account.
 - Solar panels are not generally supported but could be sited in the grounds if not intrusive.
 - GSHP/ASHP. Do not work to same temperature as oil/gas - need bigger radiators or pipes.

- Carbon neutral is a 'high' goal (unlikely to get carbon free). Rely on carbon capture. Try to improve insulation and more sustainable ways to heat building.
- Renovations no longer exempt VAT but pressure on govt to have listed buildings zero rated. Green homes grant might be rerolled out more locally.
- Hydrogen under development but more likely for business use. Likely to have to move to one of these sources of heating in due course (GS/ASHP). May work better for the building if running full time at a steady temperature (e.g. church or village hall). Trickier for houses where a higher level of heat is required. Old buildings can retain heat better.

Q&A

VR asked about a checklist. DA suggested:

- keep in good state of repair
- repair rather than replace with new (windows)
- replace insulation
- secondary glazing (can be better than double glazing)

AC noted that heat pumps are trickier with existing buildings. How to persuade owners to change? Cost is prohibitive for many when measured against for example boiler replacement. DA agreed it was very difficult to persuade people to see the value of historic buildings. Little the Borough Council can do. Undertaking this work is still a personal choice but peer pressure may come to bear in future.

AC asked about double-glazing in listed buildings and solar farms. In respect of double glazing DA said extensions can most likely be ok. It can also be considered if windows are beyond repair or aesthetically poor. But be very careful not to lose historic glass. He also noted that double-glazing can be a high energy product and can fail. Need to think about the collateral impact as a factor when installing new windows. Regarding solar farms, need to consider benefit to environment against setting to buildings, landscape etc. Some experts consider UK is too far North for solar and that nuclear is better. AC wondered whether storage batteries could deliver heat when needed? DA thought this feasible but according to consultants used by AZ these are not yet ready. Nevertheless EK said this could be done and knows a local company who can support and offered to put people in touch on request.

EK asked when is a building considered 'historic'? DA said that these included listed buildings, conservation areas and locally listed buildings. However some

buildings as young as 30 years old can be listed. Planning term: 'significant' i.e. degree of heritage value, age, association with events etc are factors all of which carry weight in planning considerations. Locally listed buildings (buildings of architectural and historic interest (BAHI)) were discussed. Some residents may like this designation but some may not. However it is B&DBC that make the final decision.

ST emphasised the need to consider incentives such as the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), Feed in Tariff (FIT) etc. The non-domestic RHI is now closed, domestic RHI will end in 2022. The 'Clean Heat Grant' will replace RHI subsidy (although only proposed for non-domestic installations). Home Upgrade Grant: £150M pledged for this year for those in fuel poverty living in homes off the gas grid - awaiting details from the government. Green homes grant - or its successor - may move to local authorities to control. B&DBC has some funding available as part of the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (LAD) scheme. This targets low income and inefficient homes and provides grant funding for energy efficiency, solar PV and heat pump systems.

RC raised the issue of social housing where those in fuel poverty might live. AC noted that one housing association in his parish has installed ASHP, the other hasn't. ST noted that mandated efficiency levels for social housing have improved. B&DBC are engaging with housing associations. LAD Grant will cover 2/3 of the costs up to £5k.

AZ queried how energy efficiencies etc could be delivered locally? Consultant advice varies and costs are significant. Could we establish an energy Trustmark? Chippenham may prove a helpful model to consider (and those involved gained a discount).

She noted that 7 in parish are now trained as energy champions with Energise Sussex Coast (through Community Energy South). The cost was £320 whatever number for 2 x 1.5 hrs plus 8 hours mentoring. Some have also had training in energy efficiency and giving support to local residents. Many in the country are paying too much as on the wrong tariff.

4. Future of these meetings.

All supported the value of these meetings. TF felt strongly the Borough Council should be supporting its own Climate Change Action Plan. RC agreed to draft TORs for the group. These could be reviewed if membership increased.

5. Any other issues

Issues for future consideration:

- Future homes?
- How to measure effectiveness?
- Sharing what works.

The group agreed to meet every 2 months and the Chair would be rotated in alphabetical (parish name) order. Next would be Ecchinswell. The proposed date would be Thursday 10 June at 3.30 p.m.

The group thanked Daniel Ayres for his very interesting and helpful contribution.