



Colwall Greener – Home Energy Advice & Assistance Service

4 Phase Project Plan

Phase 1 Idea Development and Accreditation of Lead Advisor

Now completed all based on volunteer effort.

General Advice

Initial research on what is the nature of current provision and obstacles regarding uptake.

Meeting with Hereford Council on what they provide and their Carbon Calculator

Web research on:

Other Schemes that already exist in other parts of the country e.g. Marches Energy Agency, Ovesco

Website carbon calculators and questionnaire based advice schemes with rather generalised reports e.g., utility companies

Insulation grants and subsidies offered by utility companies.

More expensive investments

In particular we looked into Solar Thermal and we identified that the high cost was associated with National Contractors who by the nature of their operations have very high marketing and installation costs. The geographical spread of their customers also means it is very hard for them to provide an effective/responsive after sales service.

We investigated a local supplier and an installer and worked with them to survey 8 local residents. We found that many were problematic due to roofs not facing appropriately or shaded, existing combi boilers or the buildings were listed. In suitable situations our combination of local supply and installation resulted in quotes from £2500 compared to the cheapest national contractor of £4500.

Accreditation

We realised residents would need to trust the service not just because it was friendly and provided by a Colwall group but that there was also some form of accredited advice. We approach the AONB and they provided a grant that supported Deb Turnbull (Structural Engineer with previous training in sustainable building design) and she attended the NEA Energy Awareness course and NEA/City & Guilds Energy Awareness 6176 qualification. This qualification is recognised as relevant training in the Domestic Energy Efficiency Advice Code of Practice.

Phase 2 Research and development of key tools, processes and means for carrying out the work, together with initial trialling with “Friendly Householders” (AONB Grant awarded on 23rd June 09)

We now need to:

- Do more thorough research on the available tools and choose or modify these to suit our situation.
- Prepare formatted trial questionnaire and feed back report
- Train adviser on handling difficulties
- Prepare posters, flyers and publicity approach
- Approach village societies so they have some engagement and ask them to suggest households for initial “friendly trials”
- Test tools face to face and through this process identify
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Patterns of obstacles householders face to see how to develop the service
- Identify local contractors and sole traders who could carry out some of the tasks to an appropriate standard.
- Initial thinking about tasks that could be carried out by community volunteers
- Identify possible community volunteers
- Research CRAG’s (Carbon Reduction Action Groups) as a potential method of maintaining householders commitment to continuous improvement
- Research “Flyover” (aerial heat imaging photos) and ground Heat Imaging Cameras.

Phase 3 Expert Led Advice and Enabling service for first 20 householders (AONB Grant awarded on 23rd June 09 for first 10 homes)

Trial service on an expert led basis to simultaneously;

- Deliver the service in terms of initial advice with project managing to enable the changes (where the householder needs this level of assistance).
- Identify what works and doesn’t work particularly in terms of the householder’s relative readiness and ability to follow through to do the needed modifications.
- Identify what parts of the service volunteers advisors could do and what level of support and training they are likely to need.
- Assess whether the addition of neighbourhood CRAG’s would be viable and helpful in Colwall.
- Experiment with demonstrating heat loss and power wastage with detectors.
- Introduce devices that would help the householder to better manage their power usage.

Phase 4 Training and supporting volunteers to expand the scheme with strategically devised expert interventions at key stages. (To be developed when the difficulties and opportunities are better understood).