

The Grange Wind Farm Community Liaison Group (CLG)**Meeting Note, Thursday 1st August, 2013**

In attendance: John Grimwood (JG) – Sutton Bridge Parish Council
Mary Preston (MP) – Sutton Bridge Parish Council
William Knott (WK) – Tydd St Mary Parish Council
Graham Lewis (GL) – Tydd St Mary Parish Council
Nicolette Evans (NE) – Community representative, Tydd St Mary
Karen Treacher (KT) – Tydd St Mary, Long Sutton & Sutton Bride PCs
Rex Mallett (RM) – Tydd St Giles Parish Council
Ian Clark (IC) - RES
Samantha Mayes (SMa) – RES
Stephen Milloy (SMi) – RES
Sue Fortune (SF) – Lincolnshire Community Foundation
Rosemary Day (RD) – Bellenden
David Hendy (DH) – Bellenden

Venue: Tydd St Mary Village Hall

Date: 1st August, 19:00 – 20:15

1. Welcome and Introduction

The Chair of the CLG, RD, welcomed the attendees to the final meeting of The Grange Wind Farm Community Liaison Group (CLG).

RD asked members to introduce themselves for the benefit of the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Simon Booth, South Holland District Council.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Approval of Minutes of the Last Meeting

Hard copies of the unconfirmed minutes from the last meeting on 4th October 2012 had been circulated to the Group. Soft copies had previously been emailed to CLG members, as well as the clerks of all six parish councils invited to the CLG.

RM's Parish Council membership was incorrectly listed as Tydd St Mary, rather than Tydd St Giles, and he requested that this be changed. Otherwise, no changes were made to the minutes.

The minutes were approved for publication on The Grange Wind Farm project website: <http://www.the-grange-wind-farm.co.uk/about-the-project/community-liaison-group.aspx>. SMa and RD indicated that a hard copy of the minutes would also be sent to all six parish council clerks.

5. Overview of the Construction Phase – Stephen Milloy, RES

SMi re-introduced himself as the Construction Site Manager for The Grange Wind Farm and explained that his brief presentation would provide an overview of the end of the construction work on the wind farm.

SMi mentioned that the last meeting of the group had been the site visit to Wadlow Wind Farm in March, at which point the work on site had been almost entirely complete. He explained that since then, full testing at The Grange Wind Farm had been completed and the wind farm was fully operational from Tuesday 16 April 2013. From that point forward, the turbines had been generating electricity.

The last remaining pieces of work – the completion of North and Long Road widening works and a range of ecology mitigation tasks, encouraging wildlife to return to the site – had now been completed, and the site offices were fully demobilised in June.

SMi then invited questions. WK asked whose responsibility it was to maintain the trees on the site in the future. SMi explained that RES are responsible for the trees they have planted and the grass verges. Trees planted out with the ecology mitigation scheme are the responsibility of the landowner.

RD thanked SMi for his presentation, and introduced IC, the new RES Asset Manager for The Grange Wind Farm.

6. Introduction to Operations Asset Manager – Ian Clark, RES

IC introduced himself as the new Operations Asset Manager for The Grange Wind Farm, having taken over from the Construction team and SMi once the wind farm had become fully operational. He informed the group that he managed two wind farms for RES: The Grange Wind Farm and Roos Wind Farm in East Yorkshire. He explained that he lived in East Yorkshire, but would be travelling between the two sites as required, indicating he would be onsite at The Grange Wind Farm at least once every other week.

IC talked briefly about his background, explaining that although he was new to both RES and the renewables industry, he had spent over 20 years working in the military on marine engineering – and so while wind farms were new to him, the principles and technology of the work was not.

Moving onto the wind farm, IC mentioned that the group may have seen the odd turbine not turning since the site went operational, and he explained that this was a result of an initial maintenance period required for all wind farms. He described how engineers arrived on site, took one wind turbine offline at a time, ran a series of tests and carried out a number of maintenance adjustments – such as changing oil – and then restarted the turbine before the end of the working day. He reported that no serious problems of any kind had been found.

IC invited questions. GL asked about the capacity of the wind farm and whether or not it was running at full capacity. IC confirmed that The Grange Wind Farm was capable of generating 14MW of power (2MW per turbine) in full operation and explained that how much power generated at any one time depends entirely on the wind speed. GL asked whether or not there was a market for the generated electricity, and IC replied that all power generated was exported directly to the National Grid.

JG then asked whether there were times that the turbines were shut down. IC responded that if maintenance was required, they would shut them down; but that this would happen at maximum once or twice a year, for one or two days at a time. JG asked how efficiently the turbines had been running since going operational. IC indicated that they had been operating at 98% availability.

GL enquired as to whether there was going to be a tour of the newly operational wind farm. SMa responded to advise that while RES was keen to organise site visits wherever possible, The Grange Wind Farm is located on a very busy farm, which would make organising a site visit particularly difficult. SM explained this is why RES had considered the trip to Wadlow Wind Farm as beneficial earlier in the year. MP indicated that she would like an opportunity to visit a site, since she was disappointed she had to miss out on the March site visit to Wadlow. SMa said that should there be potential for an open day at a nearby RES project in 2014, she would extend an invitation to MP and other CLG members who missed out, if at all possible.

GL asked whether the 110 tonne figure for the weight of the turbines was correct, and IC confirmed this. SMi described how, as a result, the lifting operation to get the blades in place was very complicated, and that operation required the cranes to operate at 98% of their lifting capacity. GL also asked whether the wind farm had the latest model of turbines, and SMi replied that the model in use was very new, and a good model.

JG then requested information regarding what would happen at the end of the lifetime of the wind farm's operational lifetime. SMi responded that the planning process for new wind farms required that decommissioning funding was in place before construction started. He explained that it was hard to tell what effect technological advances and other factors would have on wind farms after the 25 year life of The Grange Wind Farm but that any attempt to keep the wind farm operational beyond this point (i.e. by replacing the number of turbines with fewer possibly larger models) would require another full planning application process.

RD thanked IC for his presentation, and introduced SF from the Lincolnshire Community Foundation.

7. Community Fund Update – Sue Fortune, Lincolnshire Community Foundation (LCF)

SF announced that the closing date for the first round of applications for funding from the Community Benefit Fund had been on Saturday 1 June, 2013, and that the LCF had received requests for £38,000 of funding. She explained that the annual fund provided by RES was allocated by panels twice a year, and that the next application funding deadline would be on Wednesday 1 January 2014.

SF ran through a number of the projects that had been allocated funding, including the Tydd St Mary Pre-School and Wisbech Lawn Tennis Club. Approximately £15,000 had been allocated in this round, some applications had been refused and one was subject to the applicant securing match funding. SF informed the group that with the exception of this grant, all monies had been paid out by the Fund.

She reminded the group again that the closing date for the next funding round was in January 2014, and that while projects within ten miles of the wind farm would be considered, priority would be given to eligible 'good' projects within five miles. She said that very few applications for the next round had been received, but that the majority would come in closer to the closing date. The LCF would place a press advert for the funding round as the closing date approached.

SMa inquired as to the currently balance of the Community Benefit Fund, and SF confirmed that this was £14,068.15. SF mentioned that if all funding was not allocated inside the twelve month period, the fund would roll over to the next year, and SMa confirmed that any unallocated funding would not be lost.

GL asked whether there was a restriction on groups entering in consecutive years, and SF replied that there was not – but there was a limit that any applicant group could only apply for - £5,000 of funding within any funding year. GL then asked whether or not the fund was index linked, and would increase over time. SF confirmed that it was, and SMa responded that she wasn't certain whether the fund was linked to the Retail Price Index (RPI) or Consumer Price Index (CPI), but that she would find out. It can now be confirmed that CPI has been applied to The Grange Community Benefit Fund.

7. CLG Members' Feedback

RD thanked SF for her presentation, and thanked the CLG members again for attending the meetings and working with RES over the lifetime of the planning process. She requested that CLG members complete the provided feedback forms, and announced that there would be a brief break for members to discuss with the team their experience of working with the CLG, and anything they felt could be improved about the process.

8. Any Other Business

After the break, RD resumed the meeting, and asked whether there was any other business. The group indicated that there was not.

The meeting ended at 20:15.