PRESS RELEASE
Eurosolar UK Awards

The winners of the 2006 Eurosolar UK Awards were announced on Monday 3rd April at the Lord Mayor's reception at the International Solar Cities Congress in Oxford.

These prestigious Awards are made annually for inspiring renewable energy projects in the UK and presented by Energy21, the UK branch of Eurosolar, which is also the UK National Network of renewable energy groups.

Eurosolar, the European Solar Energy Association, has as its goal the replacement of nuclear and fossil fuels with environmentally sound energies such as sunlight, wind energy, biomass, hydropower and ocean energies - collectively know as "solar" energies. Eurosolar maintains that the development of renewable energy is the issue of key importance in the 21st century, as the basis of new lasting economic policies.

The 10 award winners, who have produced inspiring renewable energy projects, will be put forward for consideration for the European Eurosolar Awards. Through these real projects, they have given outstanding service to the promotion of renewable energy.

They are Sefton Council for Southport Eco Centre (Category A, Local Authorities); Jacobs Babtie for Brill Church of England Combined School (Category B, Commercial Projects); Will Anderson for the Tree House Clapham and John and Mary Twidell for their Renewable Energy House (Category C, Private Owners or users); **The Cohousing Company for the Springhill Cohousing Community** and West Beacon Farm for Hydrogen and Renewables Integration (HARI) (Category D - Non-profit Organisations); Warwickshire County Council for the Optima Innovation Centre (Category E, Solar Architecture); Aubrey Meyer for Contraction and Convergence Communication (Category F, Media); Somerset County Council for the Somerset Biofuel Project (Category G, Transport); and the late Robert Rippengall (awarded posthumously) for inspirational leadership for biomass energy (Category H, Special Award for Extraordinary Personal Commitment).

In addition, 7 projects were commended for their renewable energy work. These are Hydrogen Solar for their Tandem Cell and npower renewables for the North Hoyle Offshore Wind Farm (Category B, Commercial Projects); The Youth Hostels Association for the Locton Youth Hostel PV Project and Severn Wye Energy Agency for the Brockweir and Hewelsfield Community Shop (Category D - Non-profit Organisations); Somerset College of Arts and Technology for Genesis (Category E, Solar Architecture); Media Generation Events Ltd for the All-Energy Exhibition and Conference (Category F, Media); and Ford Motor Company for their Bioethanol Ford Focus Flexi Fuel Vehicle (Category G, Transport).

2006 EUROSOLAR UK AWARDS – DETAILS

The Eurosolar UK Awards are awarded to those who, through real projects, have given outstanding service to the promotion of renewable energy. Energy 21, the UK branch of Eurosolar, is an educational charity whose mission is to unite action for renewable energy. Energy 21 is the National Network of renewable energy groups in the UK and represents over 70 sustainable energy centres, renewable energy groups and small companies.

The members of Energy 21 believe that the development of diverse renewable energy systems using energy from the sun, wind, water and crops, especially at the community level, is essential for improving the quality of life in the 21st century. Renewable energy will help reduce global warming, climate change and pollution, offering a better environment for current and future generations. It will provide energy security for the future linked to many more local jobs.

Eurosolar, the European Solar Energy Association, has as its goal the replacement of nuclear and fossil fuels with environmentally sound energies such as sunlight, wind energy, biomass, hydropower and ocean energies - collectively know as "solar" energies. Eurosolar maintains that the development of renewable energy is the environmental issue of key importance in the 21st century, as the basis of new lasting economic policies. Energy 21, as the UK branch of Eurosolar, organises the annual Eurosolar UK Awards which give recognition to inspiring renewable energy projects.

The judges this year were Jackie Carpenter and Daniel Kenning. For the Awards, the judges looked for systems that are inspiring and can be reproduced. The selected projects are real projects that have been delivered and demonstrated rather than plans and ideas. The winners selected have demonstrated vision, persistence, and the ability to introduce and succeed with their project. The aim is to promote renewable energy for widespread replication and public acceptance. The awards will bring the subject of "solar" energy (in the sense of renewable energies driven by the sun) to the attention of a wider public and activate people towards the uptake of renewable energy systems of all kinds. The winners will all go forward to be considered for the European Awards.

Category A Local Authorities

WINNER Sefton Council for Southport Eco Centre

A ground source heat pump provides space heating for the Eco visitor centre in Southport, which is the terminus for the park-and-ride service and a showcase and teaching centre explaining sustainable construction and renewable energy. Over 500,000 visitors a year are expected. The centre was funded by Sefton Council with grants from the National Lottery and Clear Skies.

JUDGES COMMENTS This centre will inspire many people

Category B Commercial Enterprises

WINNER Jacobs Babtie for Brill Church of England Combined School

The three-classroom extension to the school augments the continued development of the school as a sustainable enterprise. Renewable energy has been maximised with the use of a ground source heat pump, wind turbines, photovoltaic and solar heating, developed alongside energy saving within. The approach has been used to educate the pupils and local community and to influence other schools.

Contact: Mark Robinson 01296 737000

JUDGES COMMENTS Influencing the children and educating them about renewable energy is key to a sustainable future for us all. So many technologies and ideas in one place!

COMMENDED Hydrogen Solar for Tandem Cell

The Tandem Cell converts lights and water directly into hydrogen fuel.

Contact: Scott Voorhees, swv@hydrogensolar.com
JUDGES COMMENTS This innovative technology offers a bright vision for the future, with the potential for rooftops everywhere to produce hydrogen on a renewable basis.

COMMENDED npower renewables for North Hoyle Offshore Wind Farm

npower renewables developed and now operates the UK's first major offshore wind farm. It is located 7 – 8 km off the coast of north Wales between Rhyl and Prestatyn and began generating in 2003. It generates enough clean electricity to meet the average needs of some 40,000 homes each year. It also prevents the annual release of some 160,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas contributing to global warming and climate change. The wind farm comprises 30 wind turbines each rated at 2MW.

Contact: Rachel Narraway, rachel.narraway@npower-renewables.com

JUDGES COMMENTS This "first" for the UK is a powerful icon for the future.

Category C Private Owners or Users

WINNER Will Anderson for the Tree House Clapham

The Tree House Clapham aims to be self-sufficient, generating more heat and power on site than is consumed throughout the year. This is primarily achieved by radically reducing demand. The power needs are met by a 5kW PV array and the heating and hot water needs by a solar thermal panel on the roof and a ground source heat pump. The building aims to be self-sufficient, not autonomous. It is connected to the grid in order to export surplus electricity and buy it back when required. This project was remarkable in that it was linked to a regular column in the national "Independent" newspaper, called "Diary of an Eco Builder". This spread the message about the possibilities of eco building and the results of building a real house to a very wide audience.

Contact: Will Anderson, will@treehouseclapham.org.uk

JUDGES COMMENTS A column about how to carry out eco building in a national newspaper was a significant achievement, bringing new ideas about sustainability and renewable energy to a huge number of non-green people. The house is good too!

WINNER John and Mary Twidell for their Renewable Energy House

John and Mary's house is now 95% fossil-carbon-free for heating; 100% fossil-carbon-free for electricity (PV and Green Electricity); and they export ~850 kWh/y of fossil-carbon-free electricity per year. They have used biodiesel in their car and are searching a supplier of 10,000 litre at reasonable cost for a domestic storage tank. A wood/straw-bale fired boiler from Denmark has been installed which is the main source for central heating and potable-water heating in winter; and they have a wood fired 'range and oven'. A solar water-heater is fitted on the south side of the main roof. The heat goes to a compatible (tall) water cylinder with 2 heating coils. This tank stores the hot water and is well insulated. The lower coil is heated from the solar water heater, the higher coil by the wood fired boiler and Stanley Range. 40 BP Solar panels (crystalline Si) of 3 kW total nominal capacity are fitted to the south-facing garage roof. In addition there is an autonomous solar home / summerhouse in the garden, with 5 x 30 W photovoltaic solar panels charging a 12 volts battery through a controller. Some lights are 12 volts with internal inverter. There is a 500 W, 12 V / 220 V, 50 Hz inverter for main supply. A 50 W wind turbine also charges the battery in parallel (but the site is obviously not windy

because of the trees). The summerhouse also has a demonstration solar water heater. The whole property has a wide range of energy saving and other sustainability features to complement the renewable energy. The second edition of John's text book 'Renewable Energy Resources' by J. W. Twidell and A.D. Weir, published by Taylor and Francis came out at the end of 2005. The book is widely used in University technical courses.

Contact: John Twidell, amset@onetel.com

JUDGES COMMENTS John and his wife Mary are to be congratulated on putting so much theory into practice. Writing university text books in one thing, but living an exemplary life is something else! The whole approach to energy in their house has been extremely well thought through.

Category D Not-for-profit Organisations

WINNER The Cohousing Company for the Springhill Cohousing Community

This scheme in Stroud, Gloucestershire, was the first new build co-housing community in the UK. It received planning permission in 2001 and was built and lived-in since 2003. The main renewable energy feature is a large PV roof. This is complemented by the whole approach to social sustainability, which includes private houses built round a car-free area of common land with a central communal house.

Contact: David Michael

JUDGES COMMENTS The dedication by the group to achieving the vision is much to be admired. This community demonstrates the important link between renewable energy and sustainable living.

WINNER West Beacon Farm for HARI

Hydrogen And Renewables Integration (HARI) is a research project into providing a continuous source of power from a variable source of renewable energies. Renewable energy from 2 x 25kW wind turbines, 9kW PV, 4kW hydropower, a heat pump and 200kWh battery storage was supplemented with a 42kW electrolyser to produce hydrogen from collected roof water, a hydrogen storage facility and two fuel cells of 2kW and 5kW to produce electricity, heat and water.

Contact: Tony Marmont, tonym@beaconenergy.co.uk

JUDGES COMMENTS As the world depletes its oil stock, something has to replace oil for transport, and hydrogen is a strong contender. This practical demonstration of diverse renewable energy capture integrated into a hydrogen system is truly inspiring.

COMMENDED YHA Locton Youth Hostel PV Project

The Old School in Lockton has been refurbished by the YHA as the first Green Beacon Youth Hostel in the country leading the way in sustainable tourism in the heart of the North York Moors National Park. YHA Lockton is now a 21 bedded self-catering Youth Hostel graded by VisitBritain as 4 Star and Mobility 2. Amongst a wide range of environmental features the Youth Hostel features a rainwater harvesting system, live sedum roof, solar panels and photovoltaic cells, plus a host of other features designed into the building with the aim of reducing the Youth Hostel's impact on the local environment. The building also has a comprehensive interpretation package to educate and inform visitors.

Contact: Tim Butcher, yorkmanager@yha.org.uk

JUDGES COMMENTS The outstanding feature of this project is the potential impact on tourism, setting an example as a Green Beacon.

COMMENDED SWEA for the Brockweir and Hewelsfield Community Shop

This is a new community-run shop and post office which sells local produce and provides services to the community. The shop also has an IT suite with internet access. The project features PV and a ground source heat pump as well as sustainable construction techniques. The local team was supported by the Severn Wye Energy Agency under the Community Renewables Initiative.

Contact: Graham Ayling, graham@swea.co.uk

JUDGES COMMENTS This community shop is a wonderful example of an inspiring renewable energy project which is helping to provide vital local services in a sustainable way.

Category E Solar Architecture

WINNER Warwickshire County Council for the Optima Eliot Park Innovation Centre (EPIC), Nuneaton.

EPIC, owned by Warwickshire County Council, incorporates 105kWp of building-integrated photovoltaic panels on its southern façade. As a first for the solar industry in the UK, the panels have been mounted onto a curved array using bolted glass technology. The solar installation will eventually generate solar electricity for over 50 up to 46 businesses based and provide between 15 and 20% of electricity demand in this highly energy efficient building. The curved panel was designed by architects SMC Corstorphine & Wright based in Warwick

Contact: Jonathan Horsfield, jonathanhorsfield@warwickshire.gov.uk

JUDGES COMMENTS What an inspiring place for businesses to be based! The link between money-making business activity and clean energy from the sun is clear for all to see.

COMMENDED Somerset College of Arts and Technology and the Somerset Trust fro Sustainable Development for Genesis

The Genesis project consists of a series of pavilions constructed of earth, straw, clay and timber with living roofs, and a water pavilion demonstrating the latest water-saving devices. It utilises both solar and biomass renewable energies. The aim of the project, which was funded by the South West of England Regional Development Agency and the learning and Skills Council, is to explore, explain and evaluate cutting edge thinking in sustainable construction, by introducing the use of sustainable practices and materials into mainstream construction industry. The community is involved through the Somerset Trust for Sustainable Development.

JUDGES COMMENTS Genesis will surely help to change the mindset of the construction industry.

Category F Media Award

WINNER Aubrey Meyer for Contraction and Convergence Communication

Aubrey Meyer is a musician and composer. In 1988 he was looking for a subject for a musical and came across the story of Chico Mendez and his assassination in the Brazilian Rainforest. Aubrey co-founded the Global Commons Institute (GCI) in 1990

through which he developed the principle of “Contraction and Convergence” (C&C) which has become a central feature of the debate about our common future under the conditions of global climate change. C&C is now the subject of a Private Member’s Bill before the UK Parliament. The GCI website contains very clear information www.gci.org.uk.

Contact: Aubrey@gci.org.uk

JUDGES COMMENTS: The concept of Contraction and Convergence introduces a sane dimension to the politics of energy, and forms a backdrop against which renewable energy projects can be developed.

COMMENDED Media Generation Events Ltd for All-Energy Exhibition and Conference

The All-Energy Exhibition and Conference is a major event in Aberdeen’s conference calendar and has become the UK’s premier renewables event. Their next event in May 2006 will be the 6th in a series and features a free-of-charge conference and the largest all-renewable energy exhibition ever to be held in the UK. “Cars of the Future” will be an unusual feature. All-Energy has developed a strong list of partners and supporters to build on All-Energy’s strong reputation.

Contact: Judith Patten, info@all-energy.co.uk

JUDGES COMMENTS: The organisers are to be congratulated for their drive and commitment in creating a first class conference. The buzz at this Show increases each year.

Category G Transport Systems

WINNER Somerset County Council for the Somerset Biofuel Project

Biofuels have a key role to play in a low carbon economy, with the potential to deliver significant savings in greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector. The Somerset Biofuel Project evolved from a Conference of local stakeholders hosted by Somerset County Council, with partner organisations Green Spirit Fuels, Ford Motor Company, the Energy Saving Trust, Imperial College, Avon & Somerset Constabulary, and Wessex Water. The Somerset Biofuel Project provides a network of 5 high blend bioethanol (E85) pumps on forecourts, demonstrates and promotes the use of bioethanol vehicles and supports the installation of bioethanol production plant in Somerset. The Somerset Project is now the UK Partner in the EU funded Bioethanol for Sustainable Transport (BEST) Project coordinated by the City of Stockholm, with other bioethanol project partners in Italy, Spain, Holland, the Basque Country, Ireland, Sweden, Brazil and China.

Contact: Ian Bright, IXBright@somerset.gov.uk

JUDGES COMMENTS: Bioethanol has hardly begun to penetrate the consciousness of British consumers. This project is ahead of its time and will make a real difference to the growth of renewable transport fuel.

COMMENDED Ford Motor Company for Flexi Fuel Vehicle

Ford is the leading manufacturer of environmentally advanced bioethanol powered Flexi Fuel Vehicles in Europe and is part of the BEST project (Bioethanol for Sustainable Transport). Ford has developed their Ford Focus to run on bioethanol.

Contact: Andy Taylor, ataylo17@ford.com

JUDGES COMMENTS: Congratulations to a major vehicle manufacturer for committing to new car designs, recognising that the world will not always run on petrol.

Category H Discretionary

Special Award for Extraordinary Personal Commitment: Robert Rippengall (post humous) for Biomass Inspiration

Dr Robert Rippengall was Commercial Director of Econergy Ltd. His vision, enthusiasm, vast industry knowledge and optimism were pivotal in the rapid growth of the biomass industry throughout the country. Tragically he was killed in a mountain accident in northern Spain on 19th February 2006. He made Econergy a member of the Energy21 Network in September 2005, at the time that he was contributing to the "Energy Grows on Trees" conference in Braintree. He also helped set up the Anglia Woodfuels Ltd suppliers network, a model of supply chain development that could be emulated much more widely.

JUDGES COMMENTS: Robert’s death was a tragedy but his life was an example to everyone working in the biomass industry. He remains an inspiration to all those involved in renewable energy.

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