

Findon Hall Solar Thermal and Energy Reduction Project

Introduction

The Findon Hall Management Committee are a non-profit distributing, constituted voluntary group with charitable recognition. Based in the Black Isle in the north Highlands, their aim is to manage the community hall for the benefit of the community and for the use of all local organisations.

The hall was experiencing a number of problems; rising fuel costs, an ageing electric heating system, a poorly insulated building and inefficient lighting. To address these issues, the group decided to improve the energy efficiency of the hall and also install solar thermal panels.



Equipment

2 x 1000-10 Genersys Solar Thermal Panels, loft insulation, internal fibreboard insulation, T5 energy efficiency fluorescent lighting.

Findon Hall are part of the Black Isle wide Community Buildings Energy Forum who, supported by Community Energy Scotland, the Highland Council and LEADER representatives, commissioned comprehensive building energy audits for interested community buildings in the Black Isle.

Cost and Grant Funding

Total project cost	£ 26,608	The remaining funding was obtained through: Own resources £1,805
CARES grant	£ 24,803	
CARES grant percentage	93%*	

**65% CARES grant intervention on the solar thermal technology and 100% for the accompanying energy efficiency measures*

Fuel Bill Savings

The group has had a 50% reduction in electricity costs despite a 3% rise in unit costs, which is in line with estimated savings of 43% and £1,360 at 2009 electricity unit costs.

Emission Savings

Estimated kWh savings p.a.	2,400
Annual CO ₂ savings (kg)	5.33
Lifetime CO ₂ savings (kg) (assuming 25 years)	133.25

This project has been funded by the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES).



Project Monitoring

A Resol WMZ DL2 Data Logger Kit was installed to monitor the solar production. The group can access this monitored data, and it is also downloaded and collated by Community Energy Scotland.

Local Impact

This project was important for this community building as it created a more comfortable and desirable location for user groups and also reduced the electricity costs by almost half. These savings allow short term benefits from the release of capital for development of the local hall, and also long term sustainability for a valuable community asset.



It was important to the management committee of the hall to show the community the benefits that energy reduction measures can bring, with the hope that local residents can also implement some of these measures in their own homes to reduce their yearly bills whilst having a positive impact on the environment.

Lessons Learned

This project was started through community working across the Black Isle with other similar facilities, from a momentum initially created by Community Energy Scotland and other local authority based funders. It became clear very quickly that without this joint approach that the delivery of both small and larger projects may have been difficult to realise. This collaborative, supportive approach allowed the delivery of energy efficiency projects and also empowered the community to develop further, larger scale community projects.

From a practical perspective there have been lessons learned about the delivery of larger projects in managing several contractors at one time, how to manage a project through committee working and contracts management relationship between the community, contractors and funders.

Les Robinson, Findon Hall Management Committee said:

"We are delighted with the results of this energy efficient project both for current users of the hall and for those that will use the hall in the future. The project brings a significant reduction in on-going running costs to the hall which will allow release of funds to create an even better facility and asset for the Community".

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