

SHREWSBURY HYDRO NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2016

Progress on the Shrewsbury Hydro project

Since we gained planning permission for the hydroelectricity scheme at the weir in Shrewsbury just over a year ago we have obtained;

- Agreement from Ofgem for the payments we will receive for generating green electricity,
- an offer of a grid connection from Western Power Distribution,
- Flood defence consent, a water abstraction licence and fish pass approval from the Environment Agency, (after they gave the scheme detailed consideration).

We have also;

- conducted some further tests on the ground structure to determine the amount of piling needed,
- been negotiating lease agreements with Shropshire Council, the Environment Agency and Shrewsbury Town Council for the land we require which is next to the weir, including the current fish pass,
- been working on finalising our outline business case for the scheme, which will form the basis of our share offer that we aim to launch later this year.



*View of the proposed hydro scheme from Sydney Avenue. The turbine is situated below the small tower.
The new fish pass will be between the weir and the hydro.*

Changes to the scheme design

Our planning permission is for an underwater turbine, as seen in the visualisation above. The alternative of an Archimedes screw was not popular when we showed our model at various local events so this was abandoned.

The underwater turbine will minimise the visual and noise impacts of the scheme, it is slightly more expensive than the Archimedes screw but is more reliable and will generate more power.

We have also allowed for a gabion wall on the river bank making it easier for otters to clamber on to the bank.

We have made minor alterations to the fish pass and screens to satisfy the Environment Agency that the new fish pass will improve the fish migration.

We have also agreed to carry out work to re-open the fish pass on the Castlefields side for the duration of the build to ensure that fish migrations are not disturbed.

Who are Shrewsbury Hydro?

Shrewsbury Hydro are a Community Interest Company set up by interested individuals who came together through the Transition Town Shrewsbury group.

The objects of the company are to “to carry on activities which benefit the community in Shrewsbury and Shropshire and in particular (without limitation) to build a hydroelectric installation in Shrewsbury”.

As a Community Interest Company we have to;

- maintain the assets of the company, ie we could not sell the hydro on to a third party,
- pay a proportion of our distributable profits to a Community Fund. This will “promote the use of carbon-free electricity and encourage energy efficiency”. The size of the fund will depend on a number of factors but it should rise to many thousands of pounds per year after the first five years of the scheme.

Who are the Directors of Shrewsbury Hydro?

We currently have three Directors, Dave Green, Len Marlow and Mark Scutt, plus John Long as an associate director and support from Philip Pool (FoE), Tim Kirby (Transition Town Shrewsbury) and Roy Kemsley. The directors work mostly in a voluntary capacity and will only benefit from the scheme to the extent of the number of shares they choose to purchase .

Dave Green has been advising the team for a number of years but has only recently signed up as a Director. He is a well known local energy adviser and he has agreed to be responsible for community liaison. He will be producing newsletters as the scheme progresses to keep everyone informed of progress.



Why are we not working on other renewable energy schemes?

Good hydro sites are very rare and the weir in Shrewsbury is a very good site. Hydro can produce electricity in the evenings and over the winter when we need it most (unlike photovoltaic panels) and when the wind is not blowing, providing a good complementary supply to existing renewable energy schemes. Hydro schemes also have a much longer life than other types of renewable energy, we hope to still be producing electricity in 2118.

Who can buy shares in Shrewsbury Hydro?

We are looking to raise £1.5m by a share issue which anyone can sign up for but local people will get priority. The details of this will be available in our share offer later in the year.

Please Contact Us

You could also check our website, www.shrewsburyhydro.co.uk or email dave@shrewsburyhydro.co.uk if you want to know more. We would particularly like to hear from you if you are interested in investing in the scheme or know of anyone else who might be.