

Monk Fryston and Hillam Sustainability Project



Update no 15 July 23rd 2023

Are Predictions and Hope becoming reality?

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Hope At the start of our Community Buildings Project in late 2019 and early 2020 – before we heard of Covid 19, the Pandemic or Lockdowns the Project Partners had agreed that one of the objectives was to provide our youngsters with some reason to hope that a sustainable future could be achieved.

At that time a lot of people doubted that Climate Change was happening or that Carbon Emissions were the cause of the increasing number of abnormal weather events and the general heating up of the earth's atmosphere. World leaders didn't appear to be listening to scientists or doing anything.

We wanted to demonstrate that no matter how small and seemingly insignificant Monk Fryston and Hillam are on any national scale, we could make a difference – in fact everyone could contribute to reducing carbon emissions. We wanted to make our community buildings into exemplar carbon neutral buildings and most importantly share our learning and experience with our local residents and others further afield. Above all we wanted to try to raise awareness and influence others to take their own steps to live in a more environmentally friendly way.

Over 98% of village residents who responded to our community survey supported the project and its aims but we were still told 'that's all very well but until China, India or the USA do something – you're wasting your time'.

Listening and watching the news in the past couple of weeks, it would be easy to think there is nothing much to provide anyone with any hope. Generally, we seem to be fed just the bad news by the main media streams, but dig a little deeper and there are things to be optimistic about as we will report later.

Monk Fryston School wins plaudits

Despite the Pandemic at the end of Summer Term in 2021, the school did exceptionally well to be awarded the Eco Schools Gold Standard Award. They had progressed rapidly by attaining first the Bronze Award, followed quickly by Silver and Gold Awards. This was a 2year qualification, so in academic year 2021-22 a new school eco-committee, and eco warrior group was appointed and they set themselves targets based upon the previous year's Gold Standard requirements. This proved to be a very good move, more good work was done again and momentum was maintained in preparation for this academic year.



We are delighted to be able to report that the school has just been awarded the Eco Flag again with Merit. Well done everyone at the school.... But it goes further

The Assessor made particular comment about how the school curriculum and how lessons had been designed to incorporate the chosen specialist topics into lesson plans – this is truly imbedding a culture and hopefully a future way of life.

But is this really working? – well there is nothing like anecdotal evidence to act as a testament. Recently Steve Venables, chair of the Cricket Club and I were chatting about the project in the Cross Keys when our conversation was interrupted by someone who wanted to tell us that the project was great and that what the school was doing was fantastic! It transpired he had two children at the school and they regularly came home to tell him what they had done ... and how they needed to change at home. He didn't moan....he applauded the fact that the school was incorporating the environmental learning into the lessons and felt it would 'stay with them forever and become part of their future life... *and added because we all need to do it*'.

Just before the end of term Headteacher Rick Weights awarded badges to every member of school in recognition of the contribution they had made to retaining the Eco Schools Award on behalf of all the Sustainability Project Partners. It may be small but the recognition counts. From acorns, oak trees will surely grow.....



.....and that's not all.... further recognition of the school's achievements has come from Salix, by being featured as a case study. It showcases the successful Ground Source Heat Pump installation and measures the school has put in place to achieve net zero. Salix provide and manage the public sector funding schemes on behalf of the government to enable the country to become net zero by 2050. You can read more at: <https://www.salixfinance.co.uk/insights/case-studies>

End of gas at the Community Centre – carbon neutral already?

Please note this date – Tuesday 11th July 2023 – this was the day we stopped using gas for anything at the Community Centre and moved towards using a newly installed Air Source Heat Pump for our hot water and heating.



In actual fact we turned off the Centre's heating two months ago on May 7th when we celebrated the Coronation Village Lunch – with all the doors wide open, and about 2 weeks later we turned off the gas completely. Since then, we have only used our solar powered immersion heater for hot water. Overall, during the 2-month period we have been broadly carbon neutral, exporting far more electricity from our solar panels than importing it.

After the ASHP is installed, we expect to increase the amount of electricity we consume and so, to maximise our self-generation and rebalance our electricity production with our consumption we will be installing another battery in the next few months. We will probably continue to export some electricity at various times as amazingly we have exported some electricity every month of the year – we expect that will cease but we will probably be completely self-sufficient from around late February/ March to October/November despite not using any gas. We look forward to seeing the data as the year passes.

Up For Yorkshire provides free access to National Fund Finder Portal

We know how frustrating it can be to look for Grant Funding and then to complete those forms when you want to secure some money for your organisation. For some time, Selby AVS have helped local organisations find funding which might be suitable and helped applicants produce a winning application.

Now, for any organisation in North Yorkshire and some other areas, we have some good news and are very pleased to share with you that the recently rebranded Selby AVS, now known as **'Up For Yorkshire' are offering free open access to an online, national fund finding search engine.** There are no catches, in fact, Up For Yorkshire are also offering free 1-2-1 consultation and coaching sessions to help organisations determine what they want to do, refine their approach and generally help them get started.

You can access Up for Funding directly from the 'Funding' tab on the website homepage -

www.upforyorkshire.org.uk and here: <https://funding.idoxopen4community.co.uk/upforyorkshire>

If you have any problems, please do contact Jamie Cole, at jamie@upforyorkshire.org.uk. who will contact with anyone who requested follow-up support for their organisation.

Community Project Partner News

In the last edition, we said 'Rome wasn't built in a day'. When it comes to making the changes needed to reduce our carbon emissions, 'pragmatism and patience pay dividends' and this is the case for our project partners.

St Wilfrid's Church We have previously reported that this organisation has taken a pragmatic approach and another step forward has been made with the replacement of some of their old, fluorescent lighting with LED lights in the Church Hall. Their facility managers are examining what can be done next to further reduce the carbon footprint of these difficult to manage and improve buildings.



The Cricket and Football Clubs are making good progress in securing all the permissions required to install a direct connection to the long main drains for their combined waste water which is currently being taken away by tanker. We hoped to be able to report that work was completed pre season **BUT** our British climate managed to thwart us by making the ground too wet to work pre-season and to compound the delay by a reoccurrence of ground water seepage into the cess pit as the water table rose. Let's hope September and October provides the window for the ground works to happen.

Monk Fyston School is planning further carbon reduction work during the summer and early autumn. The thermal imaging survey showed that the main hall windows were a major source of heat loss and so the windows will be replaced with more energy efficient glazing. Also, following the success of the Ground Source Heat Pump the challenge is to fine tune the system by adapting the school and GSHP control systems to become more flexible and user friendly... thus reducing the amount of heat extracted from the ground to meet the school's immediate needs.

The Community Centre is currently installing more energy efficiency measures in the form of additional LED lighting to the external areas and sheds, plus movement sensors across the whole site, except the main hall. In the past lights have been left on in sheds, along paths and in unoccupied rooms such as the meeting room, conservatory and kitchen. Also more insulation will be added into the loft area and a better insulated main hall fire door will be installed.

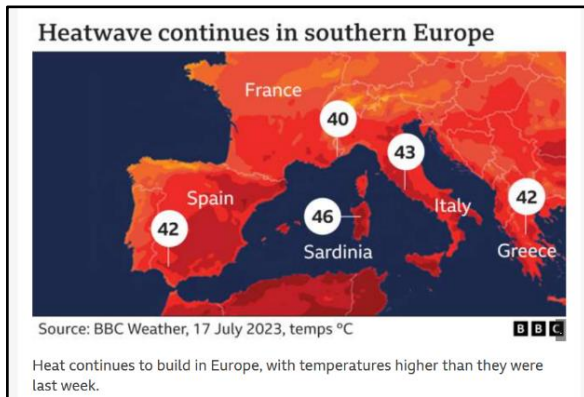
Going Forward

The Lottery Funded Sustainability Project has been extended until December 2024. This will allow us to hold 4 more showcase events featuring each of the Project Partners work over the period Autumn 2023 to Autumn 2024. We will also issue a full project update booklet in Autumn 2023 to summarise all that has happened since the project began in Spring 2020.

Hope: Pessimism or Optimism? What's changed since Autumn 2019

Our project was conceived in the late Autumn 2019 and Winter 2020. It was launched as the pandemic started in Spring 2020.

Four years on – we have droughts and record temperatures across Europe, flooding in India and the USA, melting glaciers and ice caps. The earth in 2022 registered the highest ever average temperature and in early July this year the highest average weekly temperature since records began was registered. In the UK we hear of political uncertainty about building on shore windfarms, and we hear of problems of building more off shore windfarms.



If we do produce more electricity, then we don't have the infrastructure to deliver it to where it is needed, nor do we have enough vehicle charging points to service the planned transition to electric vehicles either.

Bad News is not surprising. We have record temperatures, abnormal weather events and melting ice caps with all the resultant outcomes – droughts, crop failures, water shortages, flooding and changing flora and fauna. The scientists have long predicted these things.

Yet if you are optimistic and dig a bit deeper to consider things a bit more, it is possible to make sense of what is happening. Renewable Energy production and energy efficiency measures are both expanding rapidly across the world but such news doesn't make the front pages. **Bad news makes headlines!**

National Infrastructure nearer home The Community Association were recently contacted by a body working on behalf of the government, to provide a view on how any grants arising from a major infrastructure investment by the National Grid as part of the Yorkshire Green Project (the doubling of the Rawfield Lane sub-station and power cables carrying capacity) should be targeted. This is very encouraging as the Rawfield Lane development is a key component in the upgrade of the whole of the National Grid and is targeted to be completed by 2028.

Other Important Developments North Yorkshire Council have published their Net Zero strategy and one of our early funding bodies, the Rural Communities Energy Fund, now known as North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub, are creating a steering group to advise on Community Energy strategy and sharing of information to encourage more community groups to develop.

The underlying message from all the above news items is 'Have hope, things are happening'. We and many others are doing things and consequently, our children and our grandchildren can have hope, we just need more people to join us and act sustainably.

Thank you for your support - the Steering Group and the Project Partners

Monk Fryston and Hillam Community Association. St Wilfrid's Church and Church Hall

Hillam Cricket and Football Clubs. Monk Fryston Primary School

For Your information

The Community Centre website now has a section dedicated to the project, our embryonic *Sustainability Information and Energy Advice Centre* – where you can find the Interim and Final Feasibility study reports by Locogen and the Community Survey [Monk Fryston and Hillam Community Association - Sustainable Buildings Project \(mfhcc.com\)](https://mfhcc.com) and other project updates [Monk Fryston and Hillam Community Association - Latest News \(mfhcc.com\)](https://mfhcc.com) If you have any feedback or comments to share or require further information, please contact Ray Newton on 01977 682084 or 07706 795334 or via [Monk Fryston and Hillam Community Association - Contact Us \(mfhcc.com\)](https://mfhcc.com)