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Portobello and Leith Community Wind Turbine wins Energyshare funding

Community groups in Portobello and Leith were celebrating yesterday (Saturday) as their renewable energy project won the public vote in the Energyshare.com contest. The project, a collaboration between neighbouring community groups Pedal – Portobello Transition Town and Greener Leith, aims to build a community-owned wind turbine on the Seafield Waste Water Treatment Site in Edinburgh.

The project won the online Energyshare.com vote, beating off competition from nearly 1,000 other community renewables projects from around the UK. They are awarded funding to complete feasibility work on the wind turbine, which is expected to go to planning permission during 2012. The Energyshare.com contest is a collaboration between River Cottage and British Gas which awards a total of £500,000 to community renewables projects on the basis of online votes.

Eva Schonveld, Chair of PEDAL – Portobello Transition Town said, “We’re delighted to have won so much support for the project, and would like to thank everyone who took the time to vote for us. The funding is very welcome and will allow us to complete the final stage of feasibility work but just as valuable is the massive support from local people that this vote represents.”

Charlotte Encombe, Chair of Greener Leith said, “A big thank you to everyone who voted online, tweeted, facebooked, blogged and badgered their friends and colleagues to support the project. We’re delighted to be the most popular project in the Energyshare.com contest, but the turbine is not built yet. We still have a number of hurdles to overcome, but this vote gives a clear message that the project has widespread support, for which we are extremely grateful.”

ENDS

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Notes to editors

1. Greener Leith is a Scottish Charity (No. SCO40838) and not-for-private profit Company Limited by Guarantee (No. 365095). It was formed in 2009 by local volunteers, and aims to make Leith greener in every sense. The organisation is developing a number of projects focused on transport, green

space and a community orchard. More information on Greener Leith is available from www.greenerleith.org

2. PEDAL – Portobello transition town is a Portobello-based community organisation. Formed in 2005, we are a company limited by guarantee (No. SC353557). We are working to create a vibrant, sustainable Portobello which can help combat climate change and reduce fossil fuel use through a process of relocalisation. More information is available on our website: <http://pedal-party.org.uk/>

3. The energyshare launch fund has up to £500,000 available to support renewable energy community projects across Great Britain. A total of 19 groups have been selected out of hundreds that applied. Funding has been donated by British Gas, the parent company of Scottish Gas. Four projects were successful in the public vote:

Large category - Hexham River Hydro

Medium category - Portobello & Leith Community Wind Energy Project

Small category (2 winners) - North Devon Hospice and Shrewsbury Hydro

You can find out more at <http://www.energyshare.com>

Find energyshare on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/EnergyShare>

Follow energyshare on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/energyshare>

4. A wind turbine of between 500 kW and 2,300 kW rated capacity at the site might generate between 1 million kWh and 4.5 million kWh of electricity per annum, enough to meet the average power needs of 300-1300 households and offset between 430 and 1935 tonnes of CO₂ per annum (based on a mean average household electricity consumption of 3,300 kWh/year, and 0.43 kg/CO₂ per kWh electricity).

5. The proposed turbine is between 80 and 125m high, from the base of the tower to the tip of upright blade. The final height of the turbine will be decided following the detailed feasibility study and local consultations.

6. Initial feasibility studies have been funded by a Community Energy Scotland CARES grant: <http://www.communityenergyscotland.org.uk>

7. Pedal and Greener Leith now have all the funds in place to complete the feasibility work on the turbine and take it through to the planning application stage.

8. A creative commons licensed image of how the wind turbine may look is available from Chas Booth on request – contact details above.

9. PEDAL and Greener Leith are in discussions with Scottish Water, the site owner, and Stirling Water, the site operator, with a view to the partnership gaining exclusive access to the site to develop a wind project.

10. PEDAL have already completed detailed feasibility studies into other renewable energy generation projects including a solar panel system on the roof of the Lothian Buses depot at Seafield Road, and a wind turbine on

Portobello Promenade. Greener Leith have completed detailed feasibility studies into the scope for micro-hydro generation on the Water of Leith. None of these projects have proved practical to date.

11. A full 'Frequently Asked Questions' document on the project is available online here:

<http://scr.bi/uxhf0W>