

Chairman's statement for year ending 31st December 2017

The report is for the year 2017 during which all the member's funded sites were operating for the full year.

Key Developments

- The installation of LED lighting in a number of classrooms at Imberhorne Upper School. The community fund was used to finance the project with the school covering the cost of installing using their own electrician.
- The installation of the 12Kw of battery storage at Turners Hill School.
- The installation of LED lighting at West Hoathly School.
- Preparation for the legal arrangement for the installation of 20Kw of solar PV at Holy Trinity School in Cuckfield.
- Launch of Riding Sunbeams report, a project which started with REPOWERBalcombe to supply solar power directly to the trains.

Financial Performance and Accounts

The financial performance continues to improve, however a very poor year for solar and an accounting error last year means that the proposed interest rate is only 3.70% this year. Without the accountancy error our interest rate to members over the last three years were 2.08% for 2015, then should have been 3.61% for 2016 and 4.35% for 2017, showing clear improvement. It will take a few more years before we are in a position to pay the target rate of 5%.

We had some higher costs this year as we paid for 3 years' worth of monitoring for 3 of the school sites. In addition, we are now paying a more realistic fee to E4A for services provided. Expenses increased due to paying volunteers expenses which should have been done in previous years.

Some of the shading problems at Turners Hill School have been removed and this helped increase generation.

Interest Payable for 2017

We have a proposed interest rate to members of 3.70%.

If members pass the resolution we will aim to pay the interest in early June.

Community Benefit

The LED project at Imberhorne School is due to provide significant savings of 19,500kWh per year. In fact the school's main supplier contacted them to ask why their consumption was much lower. At time of installation the energy savings to the school were due to be in the region of £2,100 with many local schools having electricity price rises of 16% and 11% over the last 2 years, this saving is set to rise further. The directors find the school excellent to work with and we are considering spending future community funds on a modest extension to the school's own PV system once the FIT has ended.

Many members got to see our battery storage system at Turners Hill School last year. After some minor issues in the first few weeks, the battery system has proved very reliable. However, the data monitoring has proved more difficult. Problems connecting to the school's Wi-Fi have meant we

have been without data for long periods. This has coincided with West Sussex County Council changing suppliers and data collectors for the school's electricity which is an issue at all our school sites. The result is that I don't have the information about the system performance that we were keen to share. All the data will be available at some point in the future. For brief periods in June, when all the data was available, the school was using between 1kWh and 2kWh per day from grid with the lowest weekly use being 11kWh. A weekly use from the grid of 800kWh was not uncommon when I first became involved with the school.

We also installed LED lighting at West Hoathly Primary School. The project should save 5540kWh per year and the co-op was very keen to spend some community funds in the village that hosts the solar farm.

For the year 2018 we have used the remainder of our community fund to install a 20.52kW PV system at Holy Trinity School in Cuckfield, which started generating in February. The very modest income from this will add to our community fund. We also plan to install some LED lighting at Crawley Down School when we receive our next community funds payment.

Administration

Energy4All continues to provide accounting and administrative support which is essential to the Co-op. Our small team of directors are reliant on the skills and backup they provide. I attended the E4A conference in September which was both inspiring and informative.

Electricity Generation

Our five generating sites were operational for the whole year and there were no breakdowns at any of these sites. 2016 was below par for solar generation and 2017 was worse as the figures below indicate.

Site/Predicted yield before installed.(kWh)	Capacity in kW	2015 Generation kWh	2016 Generation kWh	2017 Generation kWh
Grange Farm (18,514)	17.94	17,298*	18,045	16,950
Balcombe School (9,163)	9.75	1,659*	7,864	7,338
Turners Hill School (13,968)	16.00	2,128*	12,188	11,920
Crawley Down School (41,752)	49.92	-	33,887*	39,296
Imberhorne School(46,475)	49.92	-	36,660*	42,449
TOTAL	143.53	21,085	108,644	117,953

*system installed partway through year.

The Team

We were sorry to lose Rachael's skills and dedication to the co-op this year but hope she is enjoying her travels. Laura Moreno has replaced Rachael as our E4A director and started by spending a few hours in a dark and freezing outbuilding to restore our data link to Grange Farm. Laura was a Project

Officer at Joju working with other E4A co-ops and we are delighted that she has joined the board. Julian Wilkins has drafted and negotiated all our legal agreements, the co-op would not be moving forward without his dedication.

Our volunteers continue to represent the Co-op, take meter readings, update the website, liaise with local sites, take minutes and more. The directors rely heavily on their support and help.

Future Developments

The Co-op is looking at opportunities to install solar at track side sites as well as with a water utility company. We are working closely with Community Energy South on these projects and also with 10:10. Feasibility studies are to be undertaken if we can secure funding from the Rural Communities Energy Fund. As renewable subsidies are fast coming to an end, these projects will need to be viable by site use payments only. If suitable sites can be found then the co-op will hope to be in a position to bring forward a share offer to members.

Despite the opportunity to make use of the Feed-in-Tariff until March 2019, the co-op is not looking for further school sites. It has come increasingly difficult to find suitable sites in this area and the time taken to do the legal and other work to get the Holy Trinity School installation complete has not represented good value in terms of directors' time. With only three directors we will have to choose carefully which projects we can pursue. We would be delighted to talk to any members that would consider getting more involved with the Co-op.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Parker', written in a cursive style.

Tom Parker
Chairman