

CARNO RECREATION CENTRE, POWYS, WALES

BIOMASS BOILER

Installation date: September 2008
Project value: £56,457
Grant value: £19,760



Images courtesy of RES, Glasu and Alan Humphreys

"The overall installation has been an interesting process and has changed the way we view our energy use.

Using a range of funding bodies including the LCBP Phase 2 helped meet funding requirements."

Alan Humphreys, Centre Manager

Project background

Carno Recreation Centre was established for the benefit of the inhabitants of Carno village and the surrounding district. Run by Carno Recreation Association, the centre consists of a large hall with various ancillary rooms and shower facilities.

The management team were looking at alternative options to replace the ageing oil fired system. Taking the potential for future fossil fuel price rises into consideration, it was agreed that a biomass boiler was the logical solution to provide heating and hot water for the centre with minimal environmental impact.

After examining the potential of various fuels including oil, gas and wood, the committee decided on a pellet boiler. Pellets were chosen over wood chips or logs because it was felt that they would be simple to source and manage.

Application process and grant claim

The Carno Recreation Association completed the grant application with guidance obtained from the Low Carbon Buildings Programme (LCBP) Phase 2 website. The project received a 30% LCBP¹ grant to the total installation value quoted in the application, with the balance funding obtained from a number of sources.

Centre Manager, Alan Humphreys, employed an independent consultant to help with the application process. "Although consultants add an extra cost to the project, I believe that they are worth it in the long run as their technical expertise for the feasibility study and input to tender documents proved invaluable", said Humphreys. "It is also worthwhile sorting out the VAT criterion for your chosen technology and getting involved with the Local Authority at an early stage."

Once the installation was complete, the committee sent the relevant documentation to BRE to be processed and then the grant was claimed quickly and easily.

The installation

A 45kW biomass boiler was installed in September 2008. Installation was easy with very little disruption due to appropriate phasing just in time for summer. The existing oil fired boiler was left in-situ while the installation took place.

The financial benefits are already significant. Pellets cost £170/tonne whereas oil costs £500/month. The centre currently uses 1 tonne of pellets per month, resulting in cost savings of £330 per month.

There are additional environmental benefits in the form of CO₂ savings. Based on 50,000kWh, the boiler system will save roughly 12 tonnes of CO₂ per year, assuming oil is the alternative fuel.

¹ The application was made prior to April 2008 when all technology grant levels were increased to 50%.

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