

bio-power news

Issue 1

April 2003

INTRODUCTION

This is the beginning of something new. It is our first e-circular of news about what is going on in bio-power. Please send us your comments and ideas. This is an opportunity for everyone to get involved and tell us what is important to you and how you are progressing with your own bio-fuels project.

Positive Publicity brings us a record number of new inquiries

You may have seen the featured article about Bio-power in the current issue of 'Reader's Digest', and there has also been an article in 'Positive News', the 'green magazine'. Largely as a result of this exposure we have received very many new inquiries from people either wanting to buy our fuel or wanting to get involved as fuel makers as part of the bio-power network. In the last month 80 new members have been added to the bio-power mailing list, bringing our total listed supporting group to just under 400 members. I am aware that there are very many more people who make their own fuel having seen our web site.

We have so far run twelve Introductory Seminars, and over 100 people have now attended seminars or training sessions. In the next few weeks I expect the first Bio-power companies will be setting up in production. I am not sure who will be first. Bio-power Manchester, Bio-power Sheffield, Bio-power Plymouth or Bio-power South London. Please let us know who sells their first 1000 litre consignment!

Our **Programme of Introductory Seminars** will continue to run on average every two weeks throughout this year. These two day events generally take place over a weekend starting with a social gathering on the Friday evening and the seminar then running throughout the Saturday and Sunday morning. These seminars are intended for those who are considering setting up to make our form of bio-fuel on a commercial basis as part of the bio-power network. We explain the whole context for the need for bio-fuels, the seriousness of the issue of climate change and Global Warming, the need to change the way we all work with and use money, and the practicalities of the structure and ethics of the bio-power network. We also describe the method we use to make the bio-power fuels and how this compares with other methods. We also deal with all the necessary forms of regulation, permissions and licenses that are needed. These seminars are normally run in North Wales, but I will be arranging seminars in Essex, Birmingham, Manchester and the South West in the next few months. If you can guarantee at least 8 to 10 people will attend a two day seminar then I will endeavour to come to you.

I find ten people to be the maximum I can cope with, though I often include people who have done the seminar before. The average group size is therefore between ten and sixteen including those who help with the running of the seminar.

THE NEXT INTRODUCTORY SEMINAR DATES will be as follows...

25, 26 27 April, North Wales

9, 10, 11th May, North Wales

23, 24, 25th May, North Wales

The cost of the seminar is £150 per person, which includes the lunch on the Saturday and Sunday, and tea and coffee during the day, but does not include the cost of overnight accommodation.

The First BOARD MEETING Bio-power (UK) Ltd

With several members missing, our first Board meeting was rather low key event, but several very important decisions were made.

Firstly we discussed the format in which local agents will be integrated into the network and how they will be allowed to trade. It was decided that instead of licensing the use of the name 'Bio-power (location) Ltd', we would license the right to trade as 'Bio-power (location) Ltd'. This may seem a very marginal difference, but there are many legal implications. We therefore propose that members actually form individual operating companies in the form of 'Fat Factory (location) Ltd.', and that this is owned by the

directors. Bio-power(UK) Ltd will then through a license contract allow the member to trade as part of the 'Bio-power group'.

We also discussed the format of the relationship between the membership and the organisation, and decided that Bio-power(UK) Ltd., will become a membership organisation. We are already a membership organisation, but there is no charge for membership. In future there will be a charge, and initially this is set at £15.00 per mailing address. This will represent one vote at any formal open meeting. I now include a membership application form with our mailings, and people are already returning them with subscriptions. This income will be used to cover the costs involved in serving the membership, and publishing these and other circulars. As the membership increases so I hope we will be able to employ a secretary to do the day by day administrative work. Membership is seen as an annual commitment, but the initial payment will be taken as membership up to and including the first year of the Association.

Please send in your membership subscription

If you wish to continue your membership of this network then please print the membership application form attached to this mailing, and send it by post to Bio-power with your cheque for £15.00. The terms of membership are explained on the application form.

SUMMER CONFERENCE

We will be arranging a series of events through the summer which will include larger scale open conferences. One event will be the **First Bio-power AGM** which will be held at the 'Power of Wales' conference centre Llanberis. It will be a weekend event and will include workshops for all the related activity groups, as well as a public conference on the development of bio-fuels with guest speakers. I very much hope there will also be a programme of social and cultural activities including sailing on the lake, walks in the woodland of Padarn park, a visit to the Llanberis Slate Museum, and also guided tours of the subterranean electricity generation plant that is known as 'The Electric Mountain'.

Please send me any ideas or suggestions for this event. It is intended to be both a social and a business event, that will enable people to participate with their families. It would be useful to know how many people would be able to camp alongside the lake in the summer. Also how many people have their own sub-aqua, sailing boats, also hang-gliders or 'wings'. Yes, Llanberis has facilities for all of these pastimes and many more! I would also like to know if you or your partners can help with running workshops, looking after children, stewarding, hosting, or running children's events for all ages. This event could easily involve over 500 people, and will require a lot of planning.

In addition to our Summer AGM, we are proposing to run similar **Open Conferences** in Manchester, Bristol, Birmingham and maybe in London during the year. Again these events will include Activity Workshops and Introductory Seminars as well as the main programme of speakers aimed at local authorities, potential funding agencies, and environmental groups who may share our ethical aims. There will not be a programme of social activities at these events.

Get involved in subject activity groups

We are now forming a number of **Activity Groups** within the bio-power network. These groups are to enable people to work together with a common shared interest. A copy of the questionnaire called Groups is attached to this e-mail message. Please print and complete the form and send it to us by post if you wish to become involved in any activities. We are now planning the first meetings of these activity groups, and I am hoping to convene special meetings of people who wish to become involved in organic chemistry, processing plant, transport and electricity generation very soon.

BIO-POWER MANCHESTER

It is difficult to believe how rapidly bio-power Manchester has taken off. The project grew from the inspiration of Nick McPhee who saw a feature on the web about making fuels from used cooking fats and a solvent. He decided to try it and run his Volvo diesel car on vege fat. He invited his friend Jason Taylor to smell his exhaust. 'It's like the smell of cooking chips!' said Jason, and a year later Jason would be seen by thousands of drivers on a TV feature on 'Top Gear' in interview with formidable Jeremy Clarkson.

Within a few months Jason, Nick and partner Beverly Trafford were collecting fat in the Manchester area and processing to make fuel. Nick then took a sabbatical in Israel and returned to find Jason and Beverly now had two new recruits, engineer Bryan Dalton, and business man Wilf Isaac, and they had taken a lease of a large factory site in Rochdale which they christened 'The Fat Factory'. They have now nearly completed the construction of their preliminary production plant, and expect to be making fuel for commercial sale by May 2003.

Bio-power (Manchester) Ltd is one of the first bio-power companies to get into production, despite a great many problems in finding suitable premises, and then with a break-in and theft. Bio-power (UK) Ltd. may be running Introductory Seminars and also Technical Training Courses at The Fat Factory (Rochdale) as soon as this is possible.

JASON TAYLOR appears on TOP GEAR

'It was really all through a contact of mine in the media', says Jason Taylor with a grin. 'He was working for the BBC as a researcher and had heard about our antics with fat as a fuel. At first he did not believe it, but when I showed him my Landrover running on our processed fat fuel he was determined to get a feature on us on the Top Gear programme. The week before the actual shooting was a bit of a nightmare, there was so much communication between us at bio-power, the BBC and HMC&E, who clearly did not want us to broadcast anything that might encourage the public to make their own untaxed fuel. The BBC also did not want to be seen broadcasting information that would entice or encourage the public to break the law (yet ironically the programme also included another feature which essentially showed that you could avoid being caught by a speed camera if you drove through it at over 100 mph. - which is hardly a responsible thing to suggest to anyone!) Top gear and Jeremy Clarkson do not in any way represent our views on the use of non-fossil fuels or the need to protect the environment or avert the effects of Global Warming. But the feature was seen by a huge number of people, and we received thousands of e-mails and calls as a result of the programme. It is said that there is no such thing as bad publicity. Certainly, any publicity helps people to know about you, and this was true of the Top Gear feature. It then led to many other programmes and articles about our work in the Guardian and on radio in the UK and in the USA, and on TV.

ALAN COLLINS, Bio-power Sheffield, successfully sues the Daily Star

We met Alan originally in February of 2002 after he had successfully converted his Audi to run on Straight Oil using a self made twin tank system. His ingenuity was featured in a copy of his local paper, and then in the Daily Star. The articles carried a picture of Alan, and both articles made the point that he was paying tax on the fuel he made and used. Alan then attended one of the first Seminars in 2002, and became converted to our MWVF process.

However, when the story was run about people being arrested for using SVO in Swansea his local paper ran another feature on the theme, in which the same picture of Alan was included. The article was written in such a way that suggested that Alan was one of the tax evading fuel makers. Alan decided to sue.

His letter of complaint, supported by letters from his solicitor brought an immediate apology and an offer for settlement in the form of a cheque for £6,000.

Moral of this story. Every publisher has a responsibility for accurate reportage. Failure to get facts right or any form of suggestion of an untruth or defamation of character is a matter that can be challenged by an aggrieved member of the public and compensation can be sought.

Well done Alan!

Alan Collins is one of the first companies to be making Bio-power fuels in Sheffield and has his own website at www.bio-powersheffield.co.uk

NO-ONE WAS ARRESTED IN SWANSEA

Most people will have heard the news about people being arrested in the Swansea area for running vehicles on non-tax paid fuel. In fact we first heard about this by a phone call from our friendly local tax inspector who had seen the programme and was concerned that I had been arrested. I was very concerned by several issues in this story. Firstly I noticed that the trees in the background of the film clip were not in autumn mode but looked more like spring time trees. This suggested that the film clip was library footage. I was also concerned because we drive around on non-tax paid fuel because we do not have to actually pay the tax of the fuel we make until the 15th of the month following the month in which the fuel is finally 'set aside' for use. On this basis anyone buying our fuel would run the risk of being arrested and having their cars impounded even though they will have paid the tax on their fuel when they purchase it from us. This was in my view harassment. It means that members of the public who wish to exercise their ethical choice to buy a renewable organic fuel that does not add to the effects of global warming as opposed to buying fossil fuel would have to run a gauntlet of prosecution by the police and customs officials. This was hardly in the interest of the development in the use of non-fossil fuels.

I therefore contacted the Dyfed Powys Police, and the HMC&E in Swansea. The Customs people assured me that there was no such thing as the 'Frying Squad' as was reported in the news, and in their view this was all a news story. The senior solicitor for the Dyfed Powys Police also replied agreeing with my view that they do not have any power to stop members of the public on the basis of the smell issuing

from the exhaust of a car. There was no basis by which the police can tell the difference between legally purchased and tax paid bio-fuel and the use of SVO from the supermarket shelf. Even if a motorist was running on SVO there was no grounds for prosecution on the basis that the person might not pay tax on the SVO before the time when that Tax would become due for payment. You can't be arrested for may be not doing something that is not yet required by law.

We note that features like this that are intended to discourage the public use of bio-fuels so often include an interview with someone from ASDA, who seem so eager to point out that anyone stupid enough to even think of running their cars on SVO risk blowing up or gumming up their engines, invalidating their warranty, and will be caught by the police out with sniffer dogs, and they are likely to have their car impounded. Well, Asda, which is it? Will SVO make engines clog up or blow up? Where is your evidence to support this allegation? And where are the piles of blown up or clogged up engines?

The fact is that motorists in Germany have been able to run their Mercedes on SVO for many years. It is even possible to have SVO delivered to their home garage by tanker just as we have kerosene delivered to our home for use as a central heating fuel.

We very much want to hear from any motorist who has been stopped by the police or by the Customs people for using bio-fuels. We also need to know if anyone has had problems for engines blocking up or blowing up as a result of the use of our form of bio-fuel.

GUARDIAN ARTICLE

As well as the Top Gear programme, we have had several other featured articles about our work, firstly in the guardian, and Bella Magazine, in the 'Positive News' and currently in the Reader's Digest. All this publicity has brought an enormous amount interest, inquiries and e-mails. I currently receive on average 100 e-mails every day. However, it is a great concern that these articles still perpetuate the myth that the police are out there with sniffer dogs ready to arrest anyone with an exhaust smelling of chips. We have yet to find anyone who was arrested in South Wales, and we have heard that those who had their cars confiscated have had them returned and their fines repaid as well. We believe there are no legal grounds for anyone to be prosecuted for exercising their right to buy or use bio-fuels in the UK.

Broadcast on National Radio

As a result of the Guardian article, I received an invitation to do a live broadcast on National radio in the USA. This was then arranged by telephone and I had to explain our work in the development of bio-fuels from our kitchen whilst cooking our girls a mushroom omelette, with the ducks quacking in the garden outside. Again it was incredible how many people contacted us as direct result of this broadcast.

NTL contract

We are currently discussing a contract with NTL for the provision of a special form of our fuel for use in their standby generators throughout their TV and radio signal relay transmitter network. These generators have to start immediately and come on line within a matter of seconds if there is a power outage. Because the fuel use levels are relatively low, there is a need to make a special fuel to overcome the difficulties of bio-degradation if fuel is left unused for a period of time. We are also discussing the use of standby generators to provide electricity into the grid on a semi permanent basis as an additional revenue stream.

BIO-POWER CELLS Essex, West Country, Greater Manchester, Sheffield

We are encouraging the formation of regional 'cells' or people who have expressed an interest in the development of bio-power projects, either a fuel makers or buyers of the fuel. When people join the network our task is to bring them together in such a way that enables co-operation rather than competition. By this means there is a wider spread of skills and resources.

LINGUISTIC SKILLS INDEX

We get many inquiries from companies overseas wanting to use our technology, and I would very much like to be able to reply when possible in their own language. We are currently discussing projects in Portugal, Italy, Spain, Poland, Lithuania, Romania, Malaysia, South Africa, USA and China. I am therefore calling for help from anyone who is good at languages from any area of the world to translate our basic literature and also to help reply to inquiries. Please contact John Nicholson on if you are able and willing to help.

What other Green Sites or services do you use?

Do you buy 'Green' products through the internet? Do you know of helpful 'Green' web sites? If so then please tell us. If people are drawn to our site because OF OUR 'Green' or ethical position then it is likely that they will be able to share our interest in all kinds of issues. We are planning to include on the Bio-power web site an index of links to web sites about other 'Green' products or services that people find useful. Please send us your links.

SUBJECT ACTIVITY GROUPS

We will very soon have a new bio-power web site, and also a closed, password protected web site for members. This will include a great deal more information that will be available on the public web site, and will also enable people who are members of activity groups to communicate with each other as a e-mail circle. The format used may vary from one group to another. I am compiling lists of people who have expressed an interest in participating in the work of activity groups. If you have not already completed a form then please download a copy, print it and send it to me by post.

The sad loss of one of our members, Howard Fawcett.

The first Board Meeting of Bio-power (uk) Ltd., was held in the face of the tragic news that Board members Simon Fawcett lost both one of his close friends in a motor cycle accident and his father that morning who died whilst on his way to London by train. Simon and Howard Fawcett both came to one of our seminars and Howard will be remembered for his lively and sometimes controversial view points on many issues. Howard came to us as an experienced long distance haulier and HGV driver. His vision was for a mobile processor network by which Bio-power solvents would be delivered to local agents and then blended with their collected fat stock whilst the delivery is made. This would overcome so many problems with the storage of solvents, the quality control of the product and the monitoring of the tax point. After the seminar, Howard worked to find and buy several suitable second-hand tanker trailers and equip them for this purpose. This is now a most important task, and we still need someone who can take over where Howard left of.

Obituary Howard Fawcett

Howard and his son Simon Fawcett attended one of the Introductory Seminars held in Llanberis early in 2003. Howard was an HGV lorry driver and haulage contractor for many years, and was interested in the use of bi-fuels. He became more interested in the idea of actually making the fuel when he realised through Simon how beneficial this form of business may be. Howard quickly realised the importance of our getting a suitable form of tanker to delivery fats and also solvents around the UK to all of our local operators. This vision then expanded to the idea of a travelling processor that would help many people to get into operation very quickly without the need to set up expensive production plant.

Howard collapsed unexpectedly on 14th February on his way to meet Simon in London. Howard will be remembered especially for his jovial character and good humour and his sincere Christian faith. He was a larger than life personality in more ways than one! He will be dearly missed. Our condolences go to Simon and Fiona in London.

Howard's Mobile processor concept

One of the most positive suggestions to come out of the seminar programme is the idea of a mobile processor. The concept originated by Richard Osbourne and Howard Fawcett was for a tanker that would be used to deliver the Bio-power solvents to local operators would be fitted with the necessary equipment to gauge and blend the solvent into the prepared and cleaned fat. The fuel would then be polished and measured for quality and quantity. The equipment would consist of computer controlled geared pumps and meters, with an automatic monitoring system to regulate the consistency of the finished fuel product. This would ensure that the correct amount of solvent is used for whatever quality of fat stock to ensure a consistent viscosity and SG of the fuel made. The equipment would be powered by a diesel engine slung under the tanker. The tanker itself would carry solvents and also would have some capacity to collect or deliver surplus fuel from one local operator to another. Howard suggested that the trailer would be operated by a pair of drivers using a twin berth tractor unit on a 24/7 basis. Each bio-power local operator could be visited by the mobile processor every two to four weeks as necessary. This would enable operators to concentrate upon the task of collecting the fat stock and selling ready made fuel. It would reduce the need for a large premises for processing equipment. Local operators would need some tanks for the collection and primary separation of fat stock, and a means to receive the ready made fuel in IBC's ready for dispatch. It would also reduce operator's capital outlay for purchase of processing equipment.

However, just at the point when Howard had located and agreed terms for the purchase of some suitable second-hand equipment, we heard the tragic news of his sudden and unexpected death. This is however, a project we very much want to continue with, and I would like to hear from people who would like to help to further this project by purchasing, and equipping a trailer (of trailers) for this purpose.

UNIVERSAL FAT SEPARATION DECANter

We have had preliminary discussions with a midlands manufacturer for the building of a universal primary settlement processor. This would be about the same size and delivered weight as a 20 ft steel container, and would be delivered on a flat bed lorry. The unit would consist of a partitioned tank through which the fat stock passes very slowly in expanding chambers to allow different separation rates as the fat

becomes cleaner. There would also be a simple fat reception tank or bunker at the supply end with a screening sieve, and filter. At the dispatch end there would be a reception tank or buffer tank from which the clean runny fat is pumped. Each separator section would have a means of draining out the precipitated heavy fats and debris, and some form of heating. These units will be an essential part of the fuel production process for operators turning over in excess of 5,000 litres a week.

LEVELS OF MEMBERSHIP and types of participation within Bio-power

We often get asked about the way the bio-power community operates. This may explain some of the levels of membership and ways of participating with us in the development of bio-fuels.

The wider bio-power community = everyone who is recorded on our data base as a result of a telephone call, letter or e-mail.

Supporting Community Member Those who have expressed a desire to work with us by way of direct support by the signing of the charter. The Charter itself is not a legal document. It is not in any way an enforceable undertaking. It is simply a way by which people can articulate their ethical value as a statement of commitment in principle.

Subscribing or Ordinary Paid Member is someone who has signed the Charter and has paid a current membership fee. Members receive a password giving access to the closed bio-power web site, they receive our mailings, and they are invited to attend the AGM and open conferences or gatherings. Members are able to elect representatives to an independent 'college' which is not anything to do with the commercial side of Bio-power business community, and this college elects two representatives to the board.

The business community = all companies or groups that are involved in the work of bio-power as local fuel producers or as associate companies. Some members of the business community will be Local Operators, other will be involved in other non-fuel making operations like printing, services, manufacturing plant or equipment, making heat exchangers, or supplying solvents etc. Every member of the bio-power business community is automatically a member of the bio-power business college which elects the members of the Board of Directors or bio-power (UK) Ltd.

Board of Directors Bio-power (UK) Ltd. Bio-power (UK) is a not-for-profit company which has no share allocation and therefore cannot be taken over or sold to any other company or party. Bio-power (UK) is therefore exists to serve the needs of the membership

Local Agents / Operators are all independent trading companies (or co-operatives) that collect fat stock and are licensed to make and sell bio-power fuels within a prescribed geographic area.

Use of the name 'Bio-power'

Please be aware that you must not trade as a bio-power company or use the bio-power logo or formula without first being admitted to the group formally as a member of the company. We do provide full company registration and documentation as part of the service to new members, but it is essential that the trading partners all attend at least one Training Seminar before approval is considered.

Keep us informed about your work

If you have been on a seminar or are already working towards the setting up of a bio-power fuel processing plant, then keep us informed of your progress. This is a two way process, and it is essential that we are able to help through networking between everyone.

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