

## NATTA 1981 #12 July/August abstracts

"[Interesting articles]

NATTA News: Latest publication 'Community Action and Alternative Technology' now available. 'NATTA International' Newsletter supplement available now. Date set for NATTA Conference: "Renewable Energy: New technology options for the UK," 7th Nov 1981. NATTA Women and AT Group- details & contact addresses of local 'Women in Manual Trades' groups. New NATTA slide service- summary, Appropriate Technology Exhibition (17 slides- colour) Standard 34-slide AT set- solar, wind etc, for exhibitions and AT talks. NATTA working groups- Enabling Legislation Group, Alternatives to the Fast Breeder Group, Speakers Group, CA-AT Co-ordination. AT Forum- "Alternative Technology- Political and Institutional Problems." By Dave Elliot. 10 yrs. ago many alternative energy enthusiasts believed all they had to do was build windmills to save the world. There was an underlying dream of a decentralised utopia. Reality, however, seems to be that under any conceivable energy scenario, we will need to retain & develop large scale centralised energy systems. During any transition to 'soft path' we will need to rely on existing large-scale fossil fuel plants although some can be scaled down. In newsletter 6 it was calculated likely balance between large and small renewable systems might be 50/50 both contributing around 100mtce by 2030AD. There is clearly a need for more democratic control over large systems. It is not necessarily true that small systems can be controlled any more democratically, always with same potential as larger ones to fall into parochialism, self-interest or elitism. If the transition to renewables is to be achieved, won't we need more than local initiatives? Alternative Technology Information Group Newsletter, detailing Reader Survey Report, results & info on providing temporary input for the NATTA newsletter, however NATTA has an information overload & ATIG contributions are being held over until later issues. More work needs to be done to improve this. List of publications including journals such as 'Abstracts of Selected Solar Energy Technology' produced as part of UN conference on New & Renewable Sources of Energy & aims to cover renewables of interest to developing countries. Each issue has conference news, detailed abstracts of journal articles, reports & conference papers. 'Minority Press Group.' Takes critical look at distribution of journals in the UK & aims to explain why radical publications are not sold in High Street shops. Describes commercial magazine sector & points out importance of advertising revenue. Contracts with alternative publications revenue & distribution are made. Well researched study including history of Publications Distributions Co-operative. Awkward questions for AT optimists. A.T? by Tony Small, look at frequent Qs on A.T. incl. won't solar collectors & windmills require more energy in their construction than they will ever produce? Comparisons made including work by Peter Musgrove.

[Solar]

"Sun shines on city enterprise" Devon Businessman April 1981- Exeter-based co-operative on verge of major breakthrough in solar-powered heating. Following exhaustive testing programme Exeter Energy Enterprise gearing up to install 2 full-scale domestic prototypes of its innovative, sophisticated solar-powered water heater. If all goes as well as previous trials full production of the system to start in April 1982. "Ministries differ over energy aid scheme"- Guardian 11/5/81? Scheme called Neighbourhood Energy Action to organise volunteers & unemployed to insulate the homes of elderly, poor & handicapped in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. was launched with Whitehall divided on how far to support it. The energy minister & health minister support the idea. "Solar Survey" Survey carried out by Solar Trade Association of London showed UK solar

heating industry is in a healthy state with a goodly proportion of current production finding its way overseas. A major Solar Energy demonstration & monitoring centre in London has been proposed recently with support from, amongst others, the GLC, Department of Energy & Polytechnic of Central London. Chosen site is alongside St. Pancras & Kings Cross stations, on former Somers Town Goods Depot in Euston.

[Wind]

US: "Energy From Wind. 7.5MW wind array starts to turn." - 1st cluster of MW capacity wind turbines has begun turning on site near Goldendale, Washington State, USA, with three 2.5MW aerogenerators, built by Boeing, under contract to the Department of Energy were officially inaugurated last week and are being connected to the utility grid. UK: "Setback for Orkney wind power scheme." Delay by the Department of Energy is threatening a 12-month set back to completion of the 2 biggest aerogenerators ever planned for the UK. Original deadline for completion & operation of 3MW wind turbine generator for Burgar Hill site in Orkney was 1984, but Dept. has yet to finalise details of the £5.6m cost reimbursable contract. "Windmill Tilt at Power Men." - British Aerospace technical author in Christchurch, Dorset, who can't afford to have mains electricity installed built a windmill in his garden which supplies his hillside bungalow with the power he needs. On windless days he uses 12v heavy duty lorry batteries that are charged during windy days. His windmill cost £900 to build, mains installation would have cost £2,625. "Private Wind Farm Generates 1MW." - Located high on mountaintop in southern New Hampshire, the Crotched Mountain wind project is ideally sited due to consistent winds. For the Crotched Mountain Center, a nonprofit facility providing care & training for handicapped children this venture concludes a long search for alternative energy source. "Reaping Power from windmills" - Financial Times, April 25 1981, Answer to a letter to a newspaper this week asking why modern wind mills could not be designed with charm invested by Venetian engineers in windpumps irrigating the Lasithi plain (plateau) & Island of Crete.

[Water: wave etc.]

"UK wavepower programme heads for stormy waters." Electrical Review May 22 1981. Minor hornet's nest stirred up in Britain's wavepower community by reports the Dept. of Energy is planning to withdraw from funding wavepower projects in '82. Fear originated in remarks made by Energy Secretary David Howell at Institute of Energy meeting, announcing Dept.'s energy research spending to be 'critically reviewed.' Dept. already has cut back on no. of wavepower projects, with some believing Dept. wants to fund more wind power projects. "Wavepower studies may be dropped" Financial Times May 13. 1981. Wavepower once believed to be most promising of 'benign & renewable' available energy sources, may be abandoned altogether by government next yr. Letters in Financial Times dating May 16, 18 & 27 1981 following David Fishlock's report on UK wave energy research programme (May 13) quoted to be "running off the track" as no official decision of this kind has been made. "Energy establishment steps up its attack on alternative energy sources." Tribune, June 5, 1981. - 'With official nuclear programme in tatters, energy establishment is stepping up its campaign against alternative energy sources.' "UK Wavepower Cuts" by Alexi Clarke- incl. one of the only technologies in which Britain has an undisputed lead is wavepower. Wave Energy- Newsletter no. 3 May 1981. By David Ross- government is 'preparing to surrender to the energy establishment- principally the CEBG & the

UKAEA- by abandoning its wave energy programme. 2 objections raised to funding programme, 1st- technical problems (e.g. power take-off in Salter's Duck) were insoluble, cost became big problem, oil fired power stations produce cheaper electricity. So, plan is to destroy wave power research & implementation in Britain. Wave energy will can be used for small or large-scale generation of electricity.

[Water: tidal etc.]

Tidal: "Severn Up" - Brian Price on the environmentalists' view of the Severn Barrage, history of the idea of having a barrage across Severn Estuary to generate electricity, with idea 1st emerging around turn of 20th century, & PM Baldwin in 1925 appointed a special sub-committee to examine its practicability, with many other such committees over the following decades. Although financial cost would be high this could be a successful venture with indications that this may happen over the next few years. Many environmentalists in favour, many against due to environmental problems resulting from construction & operation.

[Local groups' activities etc.]

Oxford Local Energy Group- aims- local initiative, founded with conviction energy policy is too important to be left solely to governments, also to stress social & economic need for energy conservation. Projects- home insulation, tank & loft insulations. Schools project- promote education about energy by running competition for Oxfordshire schools leading to major competition. Consumer's directory- analysis of advertising in Oxford newspapers shows while several firms promise cavity wall insulation & double glazing, many low cost-conservation items are not represented at all. Few adverts deal with loft insulation materials & services, none mention cheaper DIY alternatives to high-cost double glazing. Compiling a directory of cheaper alternatives could help consumers. The Urban Centre of Appropriate Technology- founded in autumn 1979 UCAR has drawn together a core of active members with objective of establishing a working & practical experiment in the use of renewable energy sources within Bristol. Recent FoE study 'Earthworks' took another look at insulation (& bicycle ways & recycling) and calculates a 30-year building insulation programme could save 7.2-9.6% of our primary energy per annum, at a cost of £7200 - £9000 and create 141,000 person-years of direct work.

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