



DAREN HOWARTH

# Whistle down the wind turbine

Another first for our self-styled eco-city, as domestic wind turbines get the go-ahead Words by **Jo-ann Hodgson**

**Daren Howarth** last month became the first Brighton resident to fit a domestic wind turbine to his home. The turbine cost £1500 including installation and protrudes on a three-metre high pole on the roof of his house in Hanover. Daren is a leading member of carbon footprint organisation C Level and the Earthship developments in Brighton. His was the first turbine to receive planning permission from Brighton and Hove City Council. "It was tough because it was the first", he explains. "We all want to see how it performs from all angles: power, noise and vibration.

"It's too early to judge how much household energy it will provide, but people should remember that it's always hard to "win" free energy for your home so you have to downsize your use, as a carbon and cost saving priority."

C level are currently developing "Our Generation", a web portal featuring local information, ideas and experiences of all aspects of home energy generation. "The idea is to demystify it – make it easy to understand – and get people involved," says Daren, "It's about solar, wind and what you can do to slash back at energy use and bills."

"The idea is very much emerging and other partners are coming in. If it flies, it will be an interactive community resource in its own right but we have made a start on [www.clevel.co.uk](http://www.clevel.co.uk). We are getting a lot of interest in it and are looking for development backing to make it really happen. It won an award last week at the South East Renewables Awards."

Daren encourages people interested in installing domestic wind turbines to investigate grants on the C Level website or email the organisation for advice on planning requirements and to arrange necessary surveys. He hopes that people will buy into the idea of being "carbon balanced", making the effort to reduce their energy use and investing in solar, wind and wood energy. "Our Earth receives free power from the sun," says Daren: "It's up there shining on us all so I'm optimistic for the future."

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