

SET UP A LOCAL PRO-WIND GROUP

Starting a local group Fundraising

Starting a local group is a great way to mobilise support and increase the effectiveness of local pro-wind campaigning. It's also important for moral support and for spreading the workload at critical points. Also, decision-makers and the media will be more likely to give serious consideration to the views of a group. Setting up a local group can be challenging and time consuming but if you're prepared to put in the time and energy it can be an effective way of demonstrating public support for wind power locally. This will send a powerful message to the media and decision-makers and can make a real difference as to whether a wind farm actually gets built.

Starting a group

- The first step is to **seek out like-minded people**. You may have already done this through previous campaigning or you may have friends or acquaintances whose support you can rely upon. Even if you have a core of people interested in taking action in support of their local wind farm, then if it is still worthwhile trying to recruit others. Remember that people may drop out because of other commitments and that the more people that are involved the lesser the load will be for everyone. **Try putting recruitment adverts in local shops, libraries etc.**
- **Decide on a name for your group**. Keep it simple and direct. Ideally, you want people to know what you stand for just by hearing or seeing the name.
- **Contact your local Greenpeace or Friends of the Earth** group to find out if anyone is interested in campaigning in support of their local wind farm. You could go along to one of their meetings and speak directly to people. Make it clear that you are not trying to compete with their group.
- Find out if there **are any other local groups or forums that you can approach** for support or people to help out. It doesn't necessarily have to be directly connected with wind power or the environment – groups such as the WI and students' unions could also be fertile ground for recruiting helpers.
- **Don't worry if you do not have many people in the group at the start**. The more that the group does, the more visible you will become and the more people will become interested in being involved.
- **Decide on a time and place for the first meeting and publicise it as widely as possible**. Download fliers and posters and ask to put them in local shops/libraries/student union/public areas. Remember to ask permission.
- **Try to make sure that everyone at the meeting leaves with something to do**. In this way the workload is spread evenly and everyone feels useful. This doesn't mean overloading people or making them feel guilty if they're too busy to contribute a lot to the group. Be positive about everyone's contributions and avoid personal criticism. It can be useful to

find out if people have particular skills or have access to facilities such as a PC, photocopier etc

- **Try to meet regularly at the same time and place**, so that people always know where to go if they are away or lose contact with you.
- **You may want to get a post office box mailing address** at the post office or a separate email address for the group that everyone will check.
- **Some larger groups find it useful to have a 'phone tree' system** to avoid one person having to spend all their time calling people. For example, you call three people, who each call three other people and so on.

Fundraising

It may be that your group needs funds to produce materials, hire venues for meetings etc. In any case, fundraising can also be a useful way of raising awareness about your group and wind power in general. Some groups find it useful to open a bank account for group funds. Here are some fundraising ideas that you might find useful. Remember that if a collection is made in a public place you will need to get a permit from your local authority i.e. the district council or London borough.

- Sponsored activities, such as walking, running, climbing, swimming, cycling etc. You don't have to stick with these ideas, the more original the better.
- Collections in pubs, events and/or gigs. Remember to ask permission from the landlord/venue/organisers first.
- Raffles
- Jumble/car boot sales in your local school yard/church car park etc. If they are sympathetic then you may even get the venue for free.
- Give something up for a week/month like smoking, drinking or your own personal vice and donate the money that you save
- Whenever you buy or pay for anything for the campaign say that you're a community group and try to get a discount. You could also ask people with specific skills to donate their time, for example artists, web designers etc.