



# MESS news

Marple, Mellor & Marple Bridge Energy Saving Strategy No. 8 Winter 2014

*"An opportunity to face and plan, together as a community, the challenges that Climate Change will bring."*

## LIFESTYLE CHANGE — FRACKING — DIY INSULATION

When MESS was formed five years ago the aim was to raise awareness of climate change and find ways in which by working together we could reduce the amount of carbon being emitted in the local area. The need to keep working at this is still pressing. Indeed, according to the UN Climate Committee, if we do not change our lifestyle the future is terrifying. So our article on lifestyle, while offering very simple adjustments to the way we live, really will make a difference.

The question of the pros and cons of Fracking is still a matter for heated discussions. Meanwhile Lancashire has called for a further delay in making their decision to allow the Fracking companies to get started on their land. When many states in America have now banned Fracking and France and Germany have refused to follow the Fracking route, will we in the UK put a quick, temporary and carbon rich solution before the long term care of our land and its people? You may want to sign the Green Party or Greenpeace petitions.

At our recent Save Money & Energy evening we had a most enlightening demonstration of how to repair and renew the insulation of your home. See overleaf for a detailed account.

In February 2015 we are again holding our Energy Showcase. These annual Showcase days are a great opportunity to find out about new products and methods for caring for our homes and to talk to the expert stallholders. Feedback from those who came last year include: *"Good to learn about different ways in which energy can be saved. All stalls informative. Excellent!"* Whether or not you have been to a Showcase before do come along and see how it can help you.

*MESS members are enthusiastic local people who are trying to offer ideas, knowledge and solutions and experience to the challenges that we all face in these changing times.  
Call on us if you think we can help you or you have ideas to share.*

[www.marplemess.org.uk](http://www.marplemess.org.uk)

MM

## MESS ENERGY EFFICIENT SHOWCASE

2015

Saturday  
28 February

Senior Citizens Hall,  
Marple

10.30 - 1.30

### COMMENTS FROM LAST YEAR'S SHOWCASE

Thanks for very interesting exhibition

Good to learn about different ways in which energy can be saved. All stalls informative. Excellent!

Very good. Full of wide range of ideas

Excellent range of products and applications

A good display of energy savvy devices

## MESS MEETINGS

MESS meets every month at 7pm in the Community Room at **Marple Fire Station**, Hollins Lane, Marple SK6 8AL  
Next meetings are: 12 January, 9 February, 9 March, 13 April, 11 May, 8 June, 14 July, 11 August, 14 September, 12 October, 9 November, 14 December and every 2nd Monday of the month  
Everyone welcome

### MESS Contacts

Email: [marplemess@gmail.com](mailto:marplemess@gmail.com)  
[www.marplemess.org.uk](http://www.marplemess.org.uk)  
0161 663 0402  
41 Ecclesbridge Road  
Marple SK6 7PF

## Do busy roads put you off cycling in Marple?



We are keen to promote and improve quieter routes around the town that may help you choose two wheels instead of four for some of your local journeys. If you would like to help please contact : 0161 449 0037



AS

## Changing our Lifestyle

Your lifestyle has a major impact on how much energy you use and on how much it costs you. There is no point paying for heating and having windows open because it is too hot! Turn your thermostat to a comfortable temperature to match what you are doing. Here are a few more things to consider doing to reduce your bills. When cooking on a hob consider steaming things above the main thing you are cooking, you can get another three extra layers of food cooked for the price of one. If you struggle to remember to turn electric things off (or on again) consider using a timer. When washing, consider using a low temperature



detergent, some can now do a good wash at 15 degrees! Give them a try. When drying your washing, try to dry it outside as a tumble dryer is one of the most expensive things to run. If you are addicted to that TV advert softness that tumble drying gives, try drying your washing outside and then tumble drying it for 5 minutes - it's just as good. Travelling also uses a lot of energy - so why not consider walking or cycling, not only do they use less energy. but they are good for you - exercise has been shown to reduce the incidence of heart disease, obesity, diabetes and cancer. If you have to use your car, why not stop short of where you are going and walk the rest (you may even save on parking costs as well!) CB

## Cavity Wall DIY Repair . . . Possible or not?

A case study by Andrew Bispham

### History

Many people will remember the first energy crisis; sparked by the Middle East conflicts in 1973 and again in 1979, energy prices rose dramatically which prompted many people to look at ways of reducing their energy consumption and keeping bills down. Double glazing, loft insulation are easy to monitor and replace or enhance as time passes. Cavity wall insulation is something that was supposed to be fit and forget with lifetime guarantees. Unfortunately, after 50 years, this is proving not to be the case and many house owners are finding out that their insulation has shrunk, deteriorated or simply disappeared.

### The Problem

Early cavity wall insulation was supplied by many installers during the seventies and there were several systems of foam and beads. Now 50 years on none of these installers are still around to honour their guarantees and service their systems. In the case of my property the system was a loose polystyrene bead fill supplied by a wholly owned company of Shell Chemicals. This type of fill flows like water and will run out if a window frame is removed or a hole is drilled in the brickwork.

Over the years most of the insulation in my house has disappeared for various reasons. I still have the certificate from Shell but trying to contact anyone to come and top the cavity up is impossible as no one uses a loose white bead system today. The only offer from the industry watchdog was to send a loss adjuster to settle with a payment.

This would leave me with the problem of finding someone to suck out the remnants of the beads and then reinstall a different system. The cost of this is prohibitive so I looked around for a DIY alternative to top the cavity up myself. Searching the internet I came across a site by a New Zealander who had insulated his house using loose beads recycled from the prop snow used in the Lord of the Rings films using a vacuum cleaner converted to blow as well as suck.

### The Solution

Reasoning that if he could do it, so could I, then why not have a go? Polystyrene beads are readily available, the most convenient supplier is Dunelm Mill who sell several size of bags for refilling bean bags. All that remained was sourcing an old vacuum cleaner which had the capacity to blow the beans into the cavity. I looked at several methods using a venture on "blow only" models, but eventually found an old Hoover hand vac which would suck beads in at one end and blow them past the motor and out of the back if the dust collection bag was removed.

It was a fairly simple task to remove the dust bag on the "blow" end of



Vac set up for blow filling cavity on the gable end of my bungalow surprisingly quickly.

the vacuum and replace it with a length of flexible aluminium ducting from B&Q. By flattening the open end of the ducting I was able to force it down the cavity. Putting the other end into a bag of beans it was very easy to empty a large bag of 10 cubic feet in around 15 minutes. This was very effective and filled the cavity

The walls were a bit more problematic. I cut the bottom off some old gallon plastic containers and fitted two lengths of rigid vacuum cleaner pipe to the screw outlet. I then put the end of the pipe over the cavity in the wall and filled the plastic container with beads. These simply flowed down the pipe and into the cavity by gravity. It took longer to fill the cavity, but was just as effective as the vacuum.

Following the success of my efforts, Craig Wright decided to redo his bungalow which was suffering from the same problem and had an extension which had no cavity fill. Having checked that his house was fitted with the correct air bricks and beads wouldn't simply flow out everywhere, he opted to fill his walls with the vacuum by drilling a series of holes large enough to take the rigid vacuum pipe, about 40mm diameter, 300mm below the gutter line, one hole between each window.

Again this proved to be remarkably effective in filling the cavity with beads at a reasonable speed.

### The Conclusion

Can you do DIY cavity fill or top up? . . . Yes

Is it effective? . . . As effective as the original fill.

Is it expensive? . . . No

A 10 cu ft bag of beads from Dunelm Mill costs £21.99.

I used about 4 bags, 40 cubic feet. Depending on the width of the cavity, mine was 2", that equates to 6sq ft of wall per cubic foot. One bag equals 60sq ft of wall. I therefore needed 240 square feet.

Are there any risks? Possibly. If you have problems with damp make sure they are sorted out before you try this. Make sure that you already have the correct air bricks. If not they will need to be replaced.

## To Frack or not to Frack — problems and benefits

**An urgent warning from the latest UN Climate Change report:**  
*"Our Climate Change future is terrifying and emissions need to stop completely as soon as possible"*

### Problems —

**Earthquakes:** It can cause earthquakes but these are usually minor. However when they occurred near Blackpool the government stopped the fracking, investigated and then declared fracking safe; ignoring all the other more major problems!

**Pollution of groundwater:** This is possible but given the geology of the UK it is unlikely.

**Surface pollution:** Large quantities of water and chemicals needed to frack have to be stored on the surface. In the event of a leak, or flooding leading to overflow then serious pollution could occur. Transportation of chemicals is also a pollution risk.

**Gas leakage:** Following fracking the amount of methane liberated into the air increases not only from the drill head but also from the surrounding area. Methane is a greenhouse gas far stronger than carbon dioxide, this will add to climate change.

**Climate change:** Gas obtained by fracking is a fossil fuel intended to be burnt to produce energy but in so doing it produces carbon dioxide, the commonest greenhouse gas.

**Benefits —** Gas produced may be slightly cheaper in the short term but there will be a rise in carbon emissions. The very thing we are urgently warned to avoid.



CB / FT

## Not enough roof for solar

If the roof of your house is not suitable for solar panels you might try putting them in your garden.



The National Trust property of Trengwainton in Cornwall supplies all the required electricity for the excellent tea-room from two solar panels in the garden.

Could this work for you?

MM



MESS meets monthly to discuss the scheme and matters arising and to plan the way ahead. If you would like to be part of the group and / or keep in touch with the group & other issues of Carbon Reduction in the area please complete this form and send to: MESS 41 Ecclesbridge Road, Marple, SK6 7 PF Email: marplemess@gmail.com

### YOUR DETAILS

NAME: .....  
 ADDRESS: .....  
 POST CODE: ..... TEL.NO: .....  
 Email: .....