

## **14 July 2016 - Brigg Renewable Energy Plant; at the cutting edge of developing new fuels**

**This month the Brigg Renewable Energy Plant hosted a visit from scientists and farmers to explore the use of Miscanthus as a fuel for renewable energy and support ground breaking research into Miscanthus growing.**

The visit marked the finale of the six year 'Giant Link' project, a £6M DEFRA, DECC and BBSRC Miscanthus project which has successfully delivered new commercially acceptable varieties and raised awareness amongst the farming community of the opportunities growing this crop has to offer. This work will now lead to the commercial development of seed based varieties of Miscanthus; the future of perennial energy crops.

This ground-breaking project is aiming to see the costs of Miscanthus production reduced and so make it a more economically viable option for farmers considering renewable energy crops. To meet Governmental targets the UK will need to increase the area of land where bioenergy crops are grown by over 1 million hectares. According to research commissioned for DEFRA (2012), this is readily achievable as the UK could grow up to 3.63 million hectares of short rotation coppice and Miscanthus without affecting food production, because these crops are ideal to grow on lower grade, marginal land.

During the visit BNLL highlighted why they believed energy crops are important to the Brigg Renewable Energy Plant as an auxiliary fuel to wheat straw, as it both extends the growing season and helps mitigate the risk of reliance on a single source of fuel. It also provided an opportunity for the energy plant owners to talk to interested farmers and better understand some of the issues they might be facing when choosing to start growing Miscanthus.

George Robinson, Managing Director at Terravesta who organised the trip says "The team who toured the plant at Brigg have spent years working on these projects and were totally delighted to see the real opportunity in action. Simply brilliant! There will be much to come from the demonstrable enthusiasm the scientists will take back to the laboratories and various government departments and Terravesta look forward to working with everyone involved and assisting in every way we can". Mr Robinson went on to say "We were all extremely impressed by the design, build quality and performance of the plant and moreover the dedication and professionalism of the team. A tribute to the future of agri-biomass in the UK."

Colin Jones, Managing Director, BWSC North Lincs Ltd says "We are already committed to the use of this new crop and have contracts in place for Miscanthus to supply 10% of our annual fuel requirement, with an option to increase this to 22% once a consolidated local supply market is in place. Hosting this tour was really valuable for us and gave us the opportunity to explain why the plant has to have exacting quality standards for the fuel we purchase; to ensure there is no loss in power generation in the power plant. We are really excited to be exploring the potential of this new fuel and working with such an innovative research team".

ENDS

## Notes to Editors

1. Colin Jones, Managing Director, BWSC North Lincs Ltd. is available for media interview - Please call Peter Sills, Sillson Communications, Stakeholder & Community Liaison Consultants on 07976 437 467 to arrange an interview.
2. The Brigg Renewable Energy Plant, is generating around 40MW of renewable energy, enough green electricity to supply 75,000 homes and save over 250,000 tonnes of polluting CO<sub>2</sub> per year.
3. BWSC North Lincs (BNLL) are the project developers. They are a company owned by a joint venture of Burmeister & Wain Scandinavian Contractor A/S (BWSC) and a Danish infrastructure fund managed by Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners K/S. For more information please look at [www.bwsc.dk](http://www.bwsc.dk) and [www.cipartners.dk](http://www.cipartners.dk). They contracted BWSC to build and operate the renewable power plant at Brigg. They are a leading building contractor and operator of biomass, medium & large scale diesel and gas based systems. Their experience and expertise ranges from all aspects of plant design to refurbishment, operation and maintenance and financing.
4. GIANT-LINK is a joint project between DEFRA, DECC and BBSRC for the genetic Improvement of Miscanthus as a sustainable feedstock for bioenergy in the UK

**DEFRA** - The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, is the government department responsible for environmental protection, food production and standards, agriculture, fisheries and rural communities in the United Kingdom. Defra leads for Britain at the EU on agricultural, fisheries and environment matters and in other international negotiations on sustainable development.

**DECC** -The Department of Energy and Climate Change is a British government department created on 3 October 2008 by the then-Prime Minister Gordon Brown to take on some of the functions related to energy from the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform and those relating to climate change from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. It is led by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change.

**BBSRC** - Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council is a UK Research Council and is the largest UK public funder of non-medical bioscience. It predominantly funds scientific research institutes and university research departments in the UK. Further information can be found at [www.bbsrc.ac.uk/](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/)