



by matt  
harvey

the  
element  
in the room

poems inspired  
by renewable energy

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# the element in the room

by matt  
harvey

poems inspired  
by renewable energy

IN COLLABORATION WITH

regensw  
delivering sustainable energy



UNIVERSITY OF  
EXETER  
Centre for Business  
and Climate Solutions

## About Matt

Poet, lyricist, enemy of all that's difficult and upsetting, Matt claims that an interest in alternative technology and cutting-edge psychotherapy has led to being involved in a project to develop a car that runs entirely on suppressed rage. They started with a scooter powered by anxiety but it used to speed up when it came to a hazard. He is also a widely published poet who performs all over the country and is often heard on the radio.

[www.mattharvey.co.uk](http://www.mattharvey.co.uk)

## Also by Matt Harvey

- ♦ Here We are Then
- ♦ Songs Sung Sideways
- ♦ Standing Up To Be Counted Out
- ♦ Curtains and Other Material
- ♦ The Hole in the Sum of my Parts
- ♦ Where Earwigs Dare
- ♦ Mindless Body Spineless Mind

### For children

- ♦ Shopping With Dad (illustrated by Miriam Latimer)
- ♦ Beastie and the Boys (illustrated by Chloë Uden)

### Song Cycles

- ♦ The Songbook of Unsingable Songs (composer Stephen Deazley)
- ♦ A Little Book of Monsters (composer Stephen Deazley)
- ♦ The Same Flame (composer Thomas Hewitt Jones)

### Musicals

- ♦ Rumpelstiltskin (composer Thomas Hewitt Jones)

*Dedicated to all those unsung souls  
quietly doing what they can to bring  
renewable energy to their communities*

## Foreword

What can we all do in the face of accelerating climate change? How do we avoid despair, and keep radiating the kind of positive energy the world so desperately needs? How do we harness unlimited human ingenuity and passion in the face of environmental calamity? Well, Regen SW has called in the poets – including the wonderful Matt Harvey, who I’ve heard on many occasions lifting, entertaining and challenging his audiences.

Through time, poets and artists of all kinds have held a mirror up to society, to help us reflect and engage with some of the fundamental questions we face. Energy cannot be considered from an entirely intellectual perspective; energy generation is the unrecognised beating heart of our culture, the invisible ingredient in our diets, the unseen web that binds us to each other, to our places of work and our places of fun, and to strange people in strange lands. We cannot hope to grasp the magnificent complexity of this without art.

Currently, more than 90 per cent of us purchase our energy from one of the Big 6 energy suppliers, and most of us are not very happy about that. We see their profits rise even as our bills increase, and levels of customer dissatisfaction are at an all-time high.

Community energy takes an entirely different approach, providing communities with an opportunity to take control of their own local energy production, transmission and storage, bringing resilience, wealth and employment, as well as reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases.

Championed by Regen SW, the Community Energy Coalition and a burgeoning army of local practitioners, this sector is growing in the UK, with local energy initiatives springing up across the country. It is the hope of everyone involved, as it is of mine, that this will continue to scale up and play a larger and larger role in moving us towards a more fit-for-purpose energy system.

Matt Harvey’s poetry, alongside some wonderful illustrations, will help us to consider some of the questions that this amazing energy revolution presents us with. It makes it all a little more manageable and a little bit more personal. Energy shouldn’t be something that is whizzed down the wire or delivered through the gas mains: it’s what makes our lives work, and we need to get a whole lot better at co-creating those benefits, for ourselves and our communities. Hopefully, the next time you are faced with a daunting conversation about energy, this little book will provide you with a little pithy material!

*Jonathon Porritt*

Jonathon Porritt is Founder Director of Forum for the Future  
[www.forumforthefuture.org](http://www.forumforthefuture.org).

His latest book, ‘The World We Made’ (£24.95, Phaidon) is available from  
[www.phaidon.com/store](http://www.phaidon.com/store)

# Contents

Introduction by Matt Harvey .....	8	<b>Turbines are Beautiful</b> ( <i>Crowd-sourced</i> ) .....	25
The Element in the Room .....	9	<b>The Effluent in the Room</b> ( <i>Crowd-sourced</i> ) .....	26
An Unchanging View .....	11	The Skywayman .....	27
An Unchanging View II .....	12	To Whom Does Energy Belong? .....	28
An Unchanging View III .....	12	A Partially Submerged Person in Somerset... ..	29
A Radiant Romance .....	13	The Ballad of Further Down the Line – Part II .....	30
Breaking News .....	14	Wind Turbines .....	30
<b>Solar Panel</b> ( <i>Crowd-sourced</i> ) .....	15	The Not-for-Profit .....	31
The Shock of the New .....	16	You Say .....	33
An Unchanging View IV .....	17	The Art of Finessing a Finer Future... ..	34
Pie in the Sky .....	18	An Unchanging View VII .....	34
Invocation .....	19	Copenhagen/Copenhaagen .....	35
Civil Dispute, Uncivil Tongue .....	21	Paris .....	35
Less is More .....	22	It's not Me, it's You .....	36
The Ballad of Further Down the Line – Part I .....	23	Because the Sun Cannot Unshine .....	37
An Unchanging View V .....	24	Old Saying .....	39
An Unchanging View VI .....	24		

## Introduction by Matt Harvey

As ‘Poet in Residence’ for RegenSW, I was invited to contemplate energy – in particular renewable energy – and the poems and pictures gathered here are all inspired by energy and our relationship to it. For the record, I wasn’t asked to write promotional or propaganda material and, if some of the content suggests otherwise, this simply reflects my own bias and taste. Though having said that, maybe that’s why I got the job.

The thing is I do have solar panels on my roof, I’ve always liked the look of wind turbines, I’d already heard about anaerobic digestion, even if I wasn’t sure what it is. So you see I felt well-suited to the role. And was always likely to be enthusiastic.

I attended various events, spoke with many people, and read books and articles. Looking at the work I produced this isn’t obvious – but I did! I made a lot of notes. Then I didn’t write the poems I thought I’d write. I wrote these ones instead. Well, all but three. Three of these poems are ‘crowd-sourced’, which is to say I invited individual lines from a crowd of people, taped them together and presto, we’d made a poem. (See pages 24, 44, and 46.) As commissioning editor, I’m entitled to include them!

One of the themes that emerged for me was the possibility of community energy. Communities who co-own their own energy source are significantly more resilient to both economic downturn and climate chaos. Turbines and solar panels are less intrusive when you part-own them and they’re keeping your white goods humming.

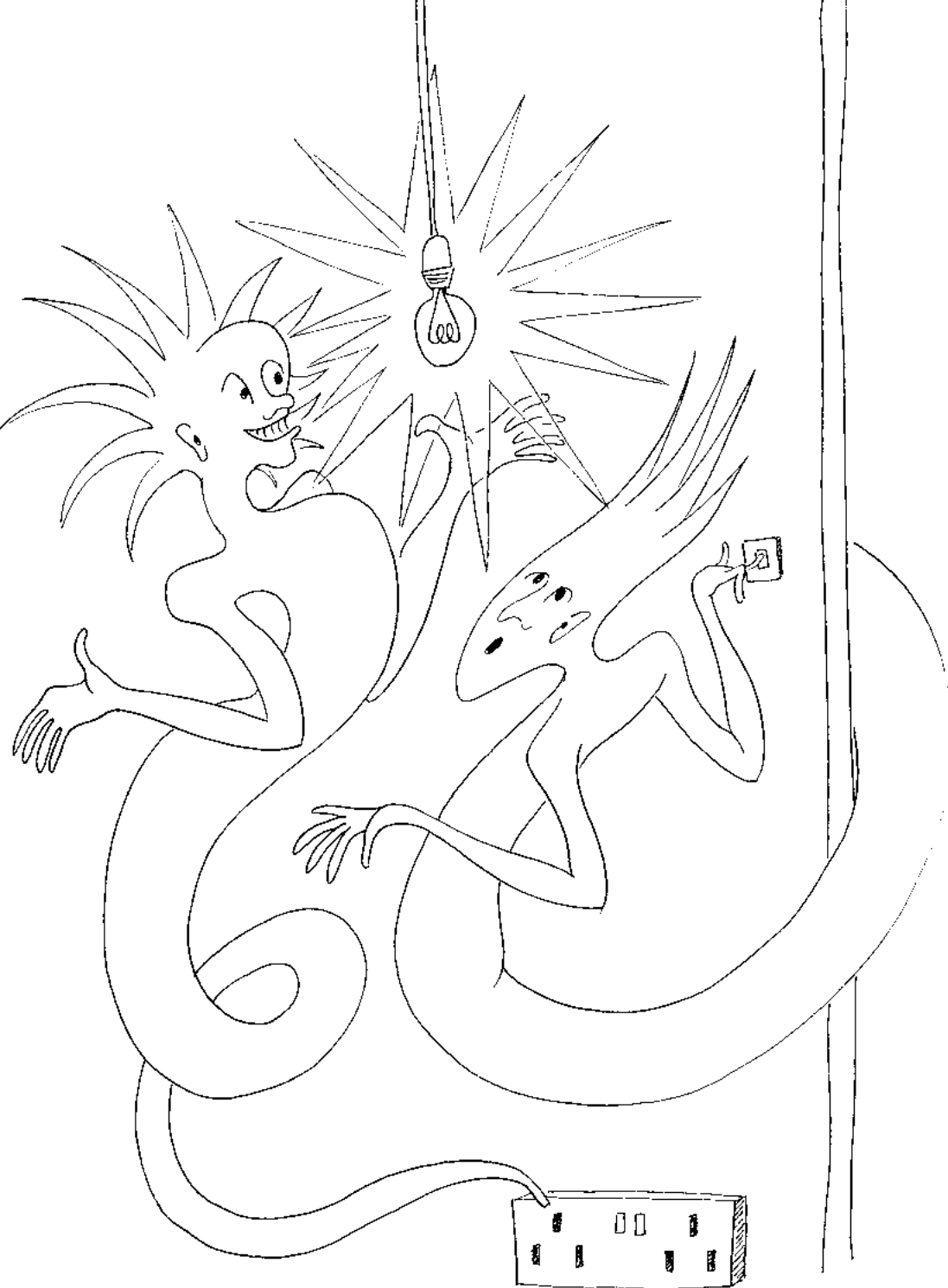
I feel I’ve barely scratched the surface of renewable energy, in fact I’d hesitate to go that far: I’d say I’ve lightly brushed the surface, tickling it a little on the way. None of these words – or pictures – are intended as a ‘last word’. They are intended for your pleasure and interest and to provoke discussion. I’m hoping some of them will be set to music. Seriously.

I want to thank the Regen team, who were open and kind, and say a particularly warm thank you to Chloë Uden who engineered the residency with tact and tenacity and supported it with energy, enthusiasm and aplomb. She also had the imagination to bring in brilliant illustrators, Tori Dee, Heidi Ball, Laura Cochón, Josie Ashe, Naomi Ziewe Palmer and More than Minutes.

I’m proud to share these pages with them, their wonderful artwork transforms this from a record of the residency into something more than the sum of its parts, collaborative and alive.

We hope you enjoy it.





## The Element in the Room

*This poem is not to scale. It does not adhere to scholarly standards or scientific exactitude. Its only apology is to Dr Seuss.*

on a blustery day, breezing in from the West  
a gust is persuaded to stay as a guest

then a biddable beam, an amenable ray  
that was just shining through is invited to stay

Element 1 and Element 2  
would like to come in and say How do you do?

tucked in behind sockets they're lurking for certain  
they're clustered in pockets behind the neat skirting  
so keen to get heating and lighting it's hurting

they've careered along cables at speeds close to thought  
now they're ready to caper, to dance and cavort

Element 2 and Element 1  
want to get busy, they want to have fun

then the Big Switch is flicked and the Elements flock  
zoom in and illumine the digital clock

and hickory dickery, ever so quickerly  
emanate oodles of bright electrickery

the charge is at large that was hid in the grid  
there's juice on the loose that will do as it's bid

put whizz in our widgets and frost in our fridge  
it's a beautiful thing when the elements come  
flat screens glimmer, white goods hum

the Elements animate every appliance  
channel the sun and the wind like a séance

it's sort of like magic but mostly like science  
the pot and the kettle have formed an alliance

the room is alive with the jiving of joules  
they gavotte with the gadgets they tango with tools

the toaster is toasting, the shaver is shaving  
the rotisserie roasting, the microwave waving

tumble dryer tumble drying  
de-humidifier de-humidifying

Henry the Hoover is out on manoeuvres

the radio rolls out a popular song  
the waffle iron goes on and on and on

our home is where the megahertz is  
the blender blends, the teasmaid curtsies

scampering amps do the waltz of the volts  
then the main fuse goes – *fhfzzz* – and everything halts

Element 1 and Element 2  
have died!? – what are we going to do????

Element 2 and Element 1  
have left the building, upped and gone

nobody pouts and nobody panics  
we trust in the *First Law of Thermodynamics*

Energy cannot die – it's just redeployed

it can't be created, it can't be destroyed  
it can't be frustrated, it won't get annoyed

it can't be upset, it can't get in a mood  
but it can be renewed and renewed and renewed

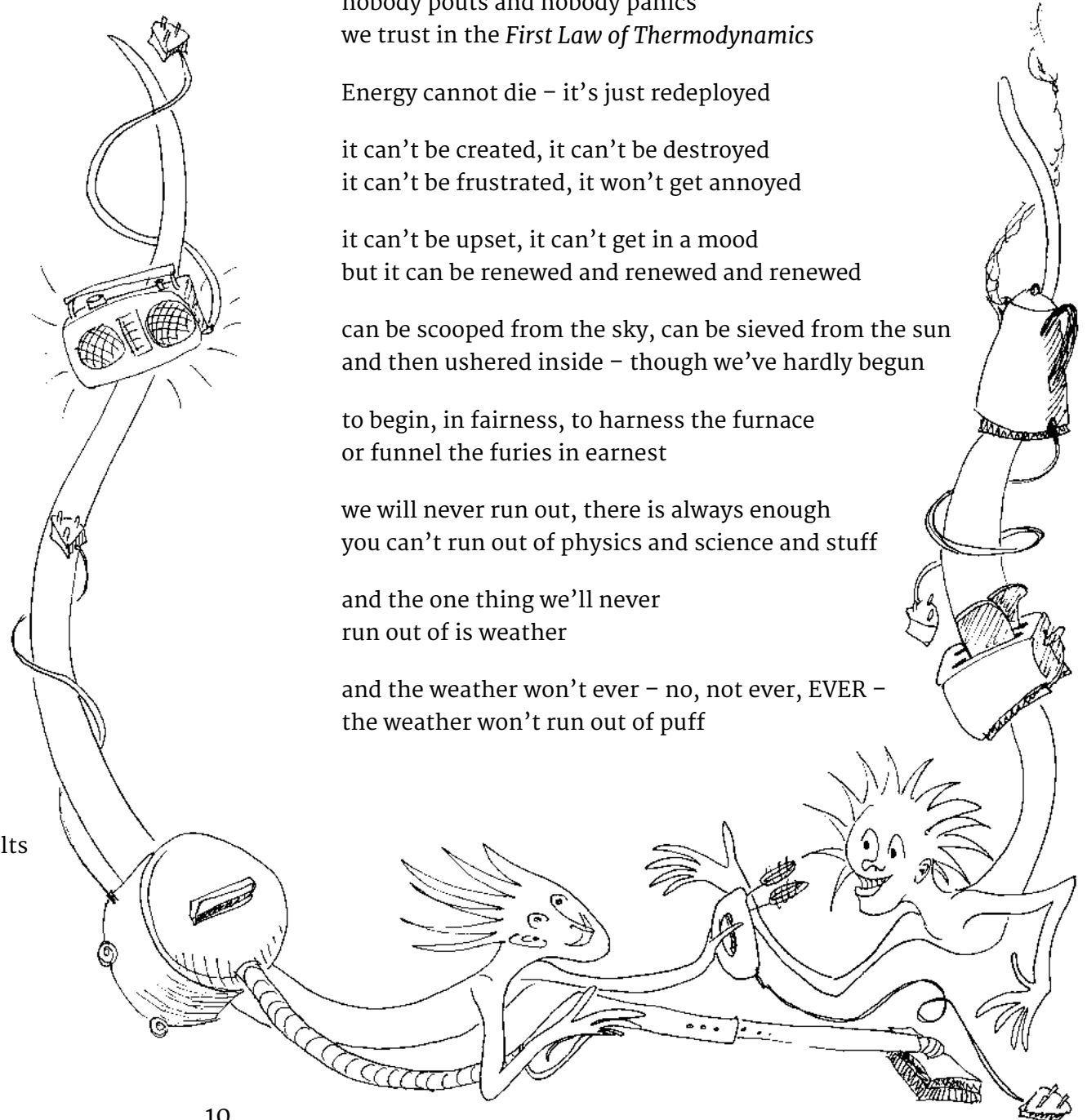
can be scooped from the sky, can be sieved from the sun  
and then ushered inside – though we've hardly begun

to begin, in fairness, to harness the furnace  
or funnel the furies in earnest

we will never run out, there is always enough  
you can't run out of physics and science and stuff

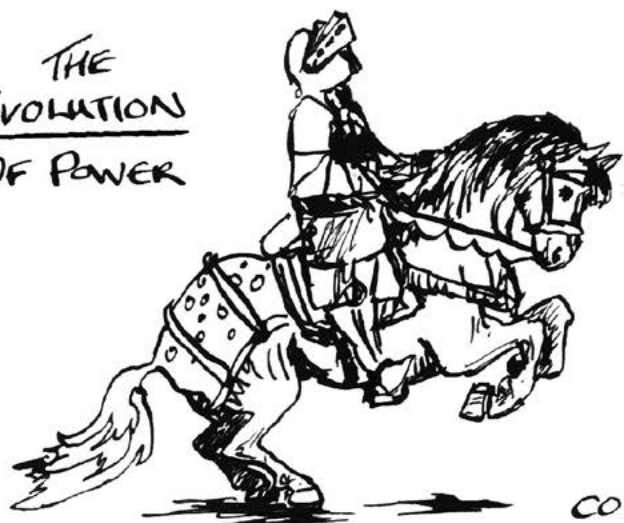
and the one thing we'll never  
run out of is weather

and the weather won't ever – no, not ever, EVER –  
the weather won't run out of puff



# SAVE ELECTRICITY

THE  
EVOLUTION  
OF POWER

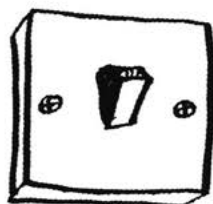


YE OLDE  
CHARGER



CONTEMPORARY  
CHARGER

CHARGE ONLY WHEN REQUIRED



Switch off  
when not in  
use



SUCCESS!

## An Unchanging View

*On doorsteps, in driveways, function rooms, civic halls  
Comes the sound of the banging of heads against walls  
There's nothing to say there's no dance they can do  
In the face of 'my Right to an Unchanging View'...*

### Part I

as a future technology it has potential  
but why can't the structures be more ornamental?

I'm as green as the next person, some would say greener  
I think fracking's obscene but I'll say what's obscener:

it's not *just* about facts, it's as much about feeling  
to change someone's view is the worst sort of stealing

there's so much in life that's outside one's control  
but my views are my own – that's how I roll

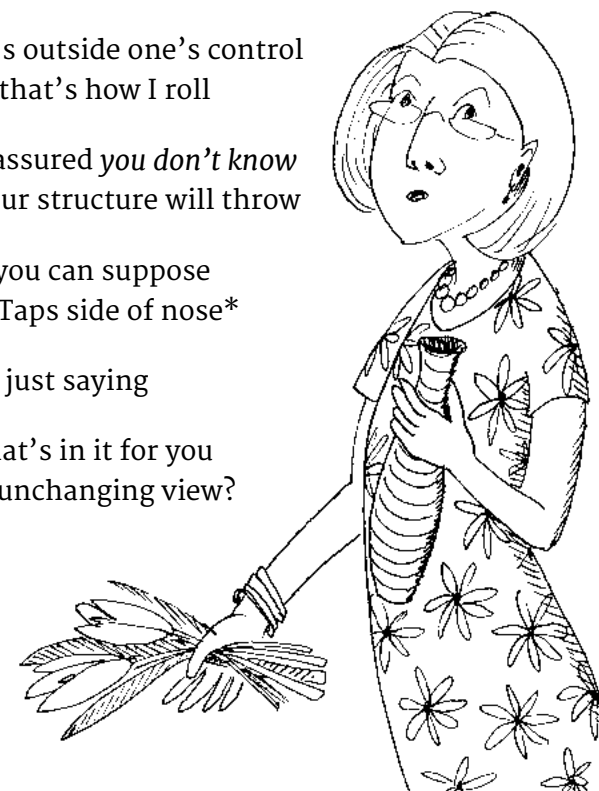
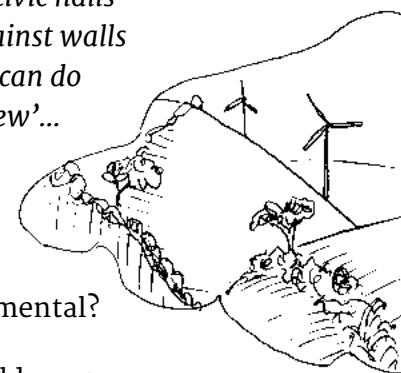
and whatever you think be assured *you don't know*  
the length of the shadow your structure will throw

the ripples go further than you can suppose  
there are forces at work... \*Taps side of nose\*

I'm not saying I know – I'm just saying

and my question is this: What's in it for you  
to challenge my right to an unchanging view?

Hmmm?



## An Unchanging View II

I don't say I agree, but there's plenty of folks  
who'll tell you this 'Climate Change' thing is a hoax  
not exactly a hoax, but, you know, not proved  
has the ice disappeared? Or has it just moved?

I'm not saying I know – I'm just saying

and let's not forget that last Winter it snowed.  
it's a myth, do the maths, Mr Smith down the road  
– a retired engineer I'm reliably told –  
he's been to the Arctic. It's still really cold

no, we don't 'throw out science' – we just pick and choose  
when it comes to our right to our unchanging views



## An Unchanging View III

it's so inefficient, a terrible waste  
most of the power goes back out to space  
I read how the energy all leaks away  
most of it's lost, at least that's what they say  
it's here in the paper – if it isn't true  
why don't the solar-tide-wind people sue?

a friend of a man who I actually know  
met man on a train who confirmed it, SO

look, I don't reject things just *because* they are new  
but I do have a right to an Unchanging View





## A Radiant Romance

To fly so far, so fast  
And land so gently

Upon a panel on planet Earth

Eight and a third minutes old  
And worth its weightlessness in gold

Fallen, faded and cooled

Then to be told,  
'Oi photon. Get your coat on.  
You've been pulled'



## Breaking News

Reports reaching us of a massive sun spill off the Devon coast... have been confirmed. And we go now to our reporter on the ground: Jennifer Willis, what can you tell us?

Well, Hugh, this is quite extraordinary – visible rays of pure almost liquid sunshine are quite literally spilling *as I speak* across the coastline and dancing like ephemeral emeralds upon the trembling surface of the sea itself.

Did no-one see this coming, Jennifer? The Met Office...?

We can't say we had no forewarning Hugh, given what has been happening every day, really, since the dawn of time, an incident of this magnificence was inevitable.

So this is not the first 'spill' of this scale?

Absolutely not – but that doesn't lessen its impact. We simply weren't prepared, Hugh, for the overwhelming sense of, um, of, uh... I don't know the word...  
...Beauty?

That is certainly one word, Hugh. A spokesperson for the Department of the Environment who didn't want to be named – or touched – said:

"Whoa. When I see something like this it just...I don't know... it kind of... makes me question *everything*".



It's thought that the clean up operation will be over by dusk.

It's hard to believe people will simply go back to their normal lives as if nothing has happened.

Meanwhile the awesome beams of dilute gold continue to wreak their quiet, incandescent havoc.

Traffic is slowed,  
jaws are slack,  
and literally thousands of sea-birds  
dazzled.

This is Jennifer Willis, in the South West,  
touched by beauty.



## Solar Panel (Crowd-sourced at Bournemouth Renewable Energy

Marketplace - 18th June 2013)

## Shiny summer sponge

Man's clumsy copy of the leaf

Dappled sunlight shining gently for the world

## Solar power pays by the kilowatt hour

Have solar not polar

You are smart and shiny and silently elegantly you turn  
sunshine into electricity

Solar PV, makes me happy, when the sun shines,  
blows my mind

Solar energy is amazing, woooooo!

Sunny side up!

It really enhances 15th century cottage roofs

Sun and air for your home to wear

You can't tax the sun and with solar you can earn a tidy sum

## DNO – Friend or foe?

I can't see why there is not PV on every roof

Longing for the black slap of sun on every roof

## Hoist the flag of energy freedom: Hail to the solar pv panels













Solar power, a gift from the gods



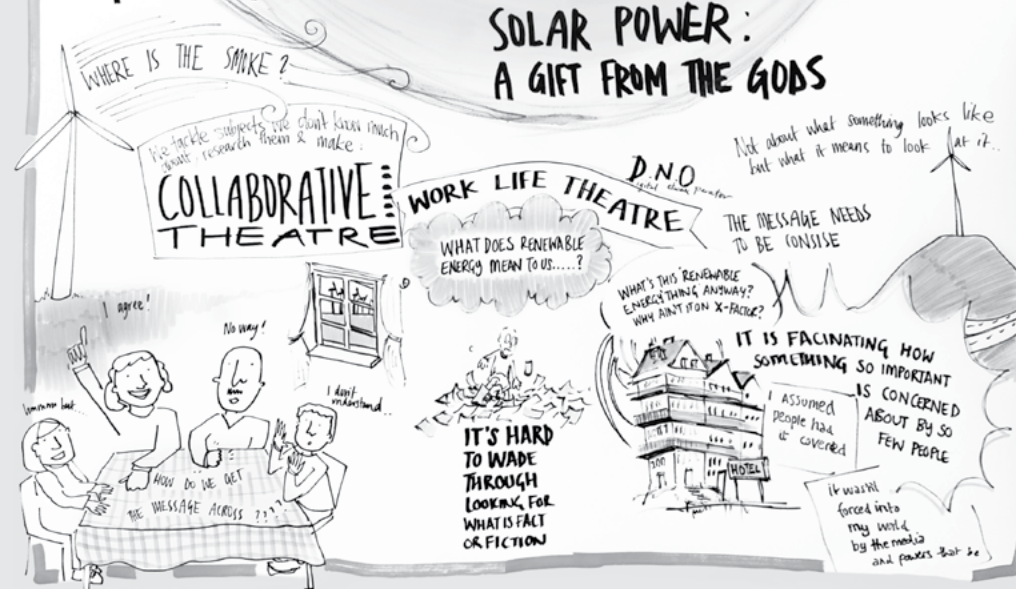
# THE SOLAR POEM

WITH POET IN RESIDENT: MATT HARVEY & THE AUDIENCE

WITH POE IN RESIDENCE: MARY HANCOCK & THE AUDIENCE

SHINEY SUMMER SPONGE  MANS CLUMSY COPY  
OF THE LEAF  DAPPLIED SUNLIGHT SHINING  
GENTLY FOR THE WORLD  SOLAR POWER PAYS  
BY THE KILOWATT HOUR  HAVE SOLAR NOT POLAR  
YOU ARE SMART & SHINY & SILENTLY, ELEGANTLY YOU  
TURN SUNSHINE INTO ELECTRICITY  SOLAR PV  
MAKES ME HAPPEE, WHEN THE SUN SHINES BLOWS  
MY MIND  SOLAR ENERGY IS AMAZING WOO  
OOOO! SUNNY SIDE UP! IT REALLY ENHANCES  
18TH CENTURY COTTAGE ROOFS  SUN & AIR FOR  
YOUR HOME TO WEAR.  YOU CAN'T TAX THE  
SUN & WITH SOLAR YOU EARN A TIDY SUM   
DNO-FRIEND OR FOE?  I CAN'T SEE WHY  
THERE IS NOT PV'S ON EVERY ROOF    
LONGING FOR THE BLACK SLAP OF SUN ON  
EVERY ROOF HOIST THE FLAG OF ENERGY  
FREEDOM: HAIL TO SOLAR PV PANELS!

## SOLAR POWER: A GIFT FROM THE GODS



## The Shock of the New

*An exploded moment of the consternation and confusion  
turning into recognition and excitement that I experienced on  
seeing my first solar farm.*

We turn a corner. Whoa. Slow down. Stop. Jaws drop.  
What is this crop?  
In ranks across a five acre field –  
an immaculately tidy, strangely symmetrical yield

*the 1<sup>st</sup> half-second:*  
the nimby in me stirs, the nimby brain whirrs  
it says: Dark wafers! On guard!  
it sees: Darth Vader's business card  
the unprepared brain, no clues or hints,  
sees an angle-poise posse of glossy super-intelligent plank life  
sees alien invasion, the first wave of frighteningly  
disciplined after dinner mints

*the 2<sup>nd</sup> half-second:*  
the nimby brain begins to calm  
sees they come in peace & mean no harm  
instead sees a huge page of redacted sudoku  
sees supplicant place mats, members of the most worshipful  
order of coasters  
an open air warehouse of flat pack goth garden furniture

*the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> second:*  
a light begins to dawn  
my skin begins to tingle  
as I apprehend their angle  
is the optimum to catch the sun

and then I see:  
synchronised sunbathers  
expectant rectangles  
oblongs of elegance  
in their very element  
siphoning off the sunshine  
creaming off the crop of sunbeams

*the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> second:*  
I say Hurray for the array  
who with silent simplicity  
turn light to electricity  
dismay into delight

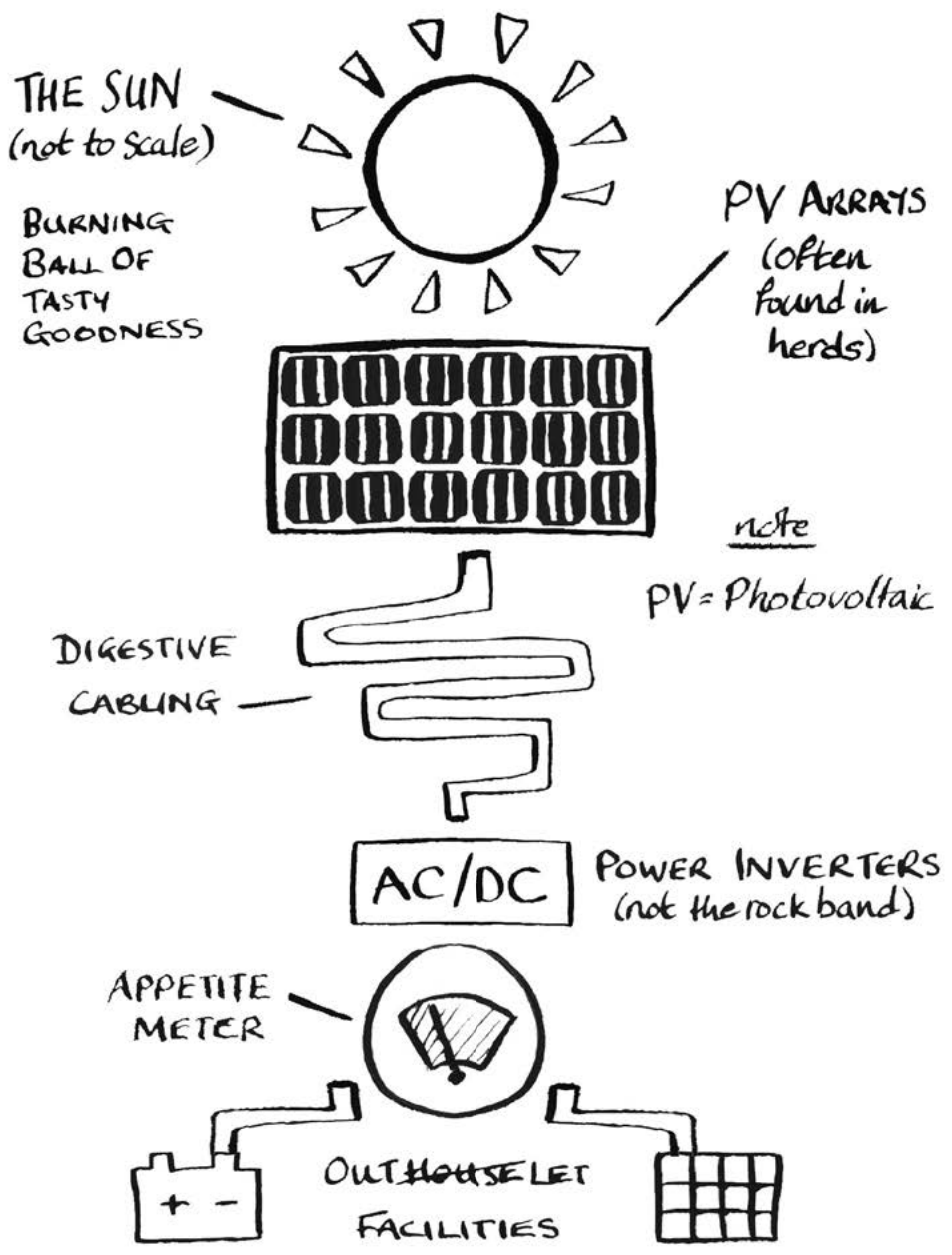
they're kin to my panels, my own PV  
that charge my smartphone, boil my cups of tea

and then I reach epiphany and see:  
a choir of angles in a cathedral of stained dark windows,  
deep as ink  
sacred insatiabiles whose job it is to drink in radiance

windows to a future not only doable  
but so much more renewable  
than the *namby pamby Nimby* in me – or anyone –  
cares to think



# SOLAR PV ANATOMY



## An Unchanging View IV

we have a right to an untroubled bubble  
an uncluttered home and an unrattled cage  
I know this renewable thing's all the rage

I know clean green energy's come into fashion  
I welcome debate and an informed discussion

but what are your sources and where's your compassion?  
have you *seen* a kestrel that's suffered concussion?

do you hold nothing dear? Do you really not care?  
we can't see them from here.  
But *we know that they're there!*

is plotting to blot out the sun not a crime?  
and *did* those feet in ancient time?



## Pie in the Sky

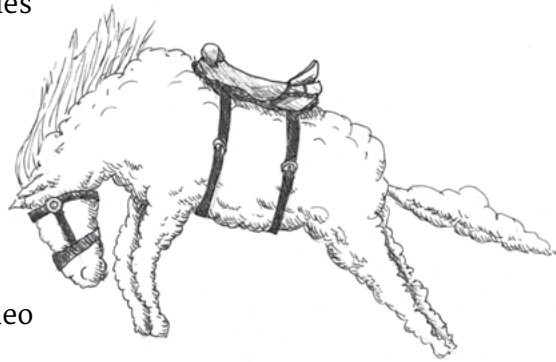
Put a saddle on a sunbeam  
Hang a bridle on a breeze  
Ride the tide into the future  
Land of Possibilities

They tell me: If you want that kilowatt  
You've gotta frack 'n' drill a lot  
And then of course you spill a lot  
And when I ask them WHY?  
They say: Don't let 'em tell you otherwise  
Those Greenies tell a pack of lies  
When will you people realise  
It's all just pie in the sky!  
Yee-ha!

Well slap my thigh,  
Pie in the sky!  
Hi de hi and Ho de ho  
It's the high-wide sky-pie rodeo

And I say: If the sky can provide  
Gee, that's kinda nice of it  
If there's pie in the sky  
Then cut me a slice of it

Serve me up a plateful  
I'll be glad and I'll be grateful  
Earth, water, wind 'n' fire are my dream team  
Let's tap the to-ing and the fro-ing  
Bag the beaming and the blowing  
Milk the movement of the ever-flowing stream  
Yee-ha!



So frack me no fracture  
And drill me no well  
And nuke me no reactor  
'Cos I'm goin' for to dwell

In the Land of Possibility  
The Land of Ingenuity  
Exploiting every property  
Of earth, sea, wind and sun  
It puts the fill in my philosophy  
A sigh in my psychology  
Adds meat to meteorology  
An' I guess it's kind of fun (Yee-ha!)

In the land where the sky can provide  
Yee ha!  
In the land where the sky's made of pie  
Yee ha!

Because the reckoning is beckoning  
The planetary auditors  
Are reeling every second in  
There's flooding and there's shortages

Put a saddle on a sunbeam  
Hang a bridle on a breeze  
Ride the tide into the future  
Land of Possibilities



## Invocation

By the briskness of the breezes, by the freshness of the days  
By the churning of the seasons and the parting of the ways

By the fleeting feral forces we can tap but cannot tame  
By the scraping of the barrel, by the fanning of the flame

By the milking of the movement of the waters and the wind  
By the deep recurring rhythms regulation can't rescind

By the rhythms of refusal, by the beating of the drums  
The complexity of physics, the simplicity of sums

By the ordinary miracle, every minute every hour  
By the muscle in the molecule, the pervasiveness power

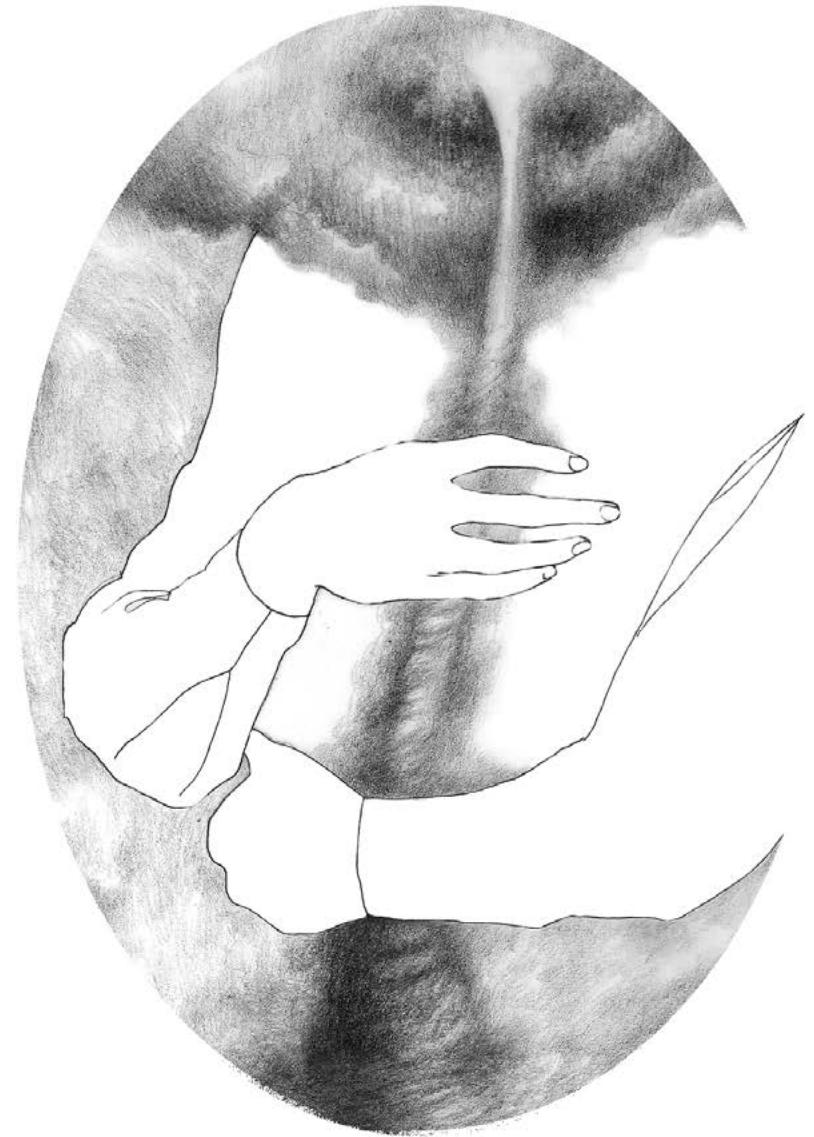
By the measure of the treasure that will always pass us by  
By the awesome orphaned portion of the wide, wide sky

By the planning applications by the placard in the hand  
By the opposition's passion, by the curving of the land

Let the blessing of the heavens and the good from underground  
Meet completely in the middle in the country and the town

May the blessing be accepted, may we know it isn't wrong  
To welcome in the guest who's waited patiently so long

By everything that flickers or flies into a rage  
By the twist in all our knickers, by the rattle in our cage





By the facts we're forced to muster in defence and in attack  
By our belief in all our bluster, by the monkey on our back

By the throbbing in the temple, by the fury and the fuss  
By the bridge across the chasm all the way from Them to Us

By the health and by the safety, by the calculated risk  
By the energy encased in our sun's ever-slipping disc

By the gifts we take for granted that may one day be withheld  
By the many trees we planted and the many more we felled

By the curbing of the carbon, by the scarring and the stains  
By the carbon in the garden, by the flooding of the plains

By the leaking of the data by the sneaking of the peek  
By the future we're afraid of and the future that we seek

May we mine the seams of sunshine, trap tornadoes in our nets  
May our account come into credit as we pay off our regrets

Let the energy be harvested and gathered safely in  
Let the argument be ended, let the reckoning begin

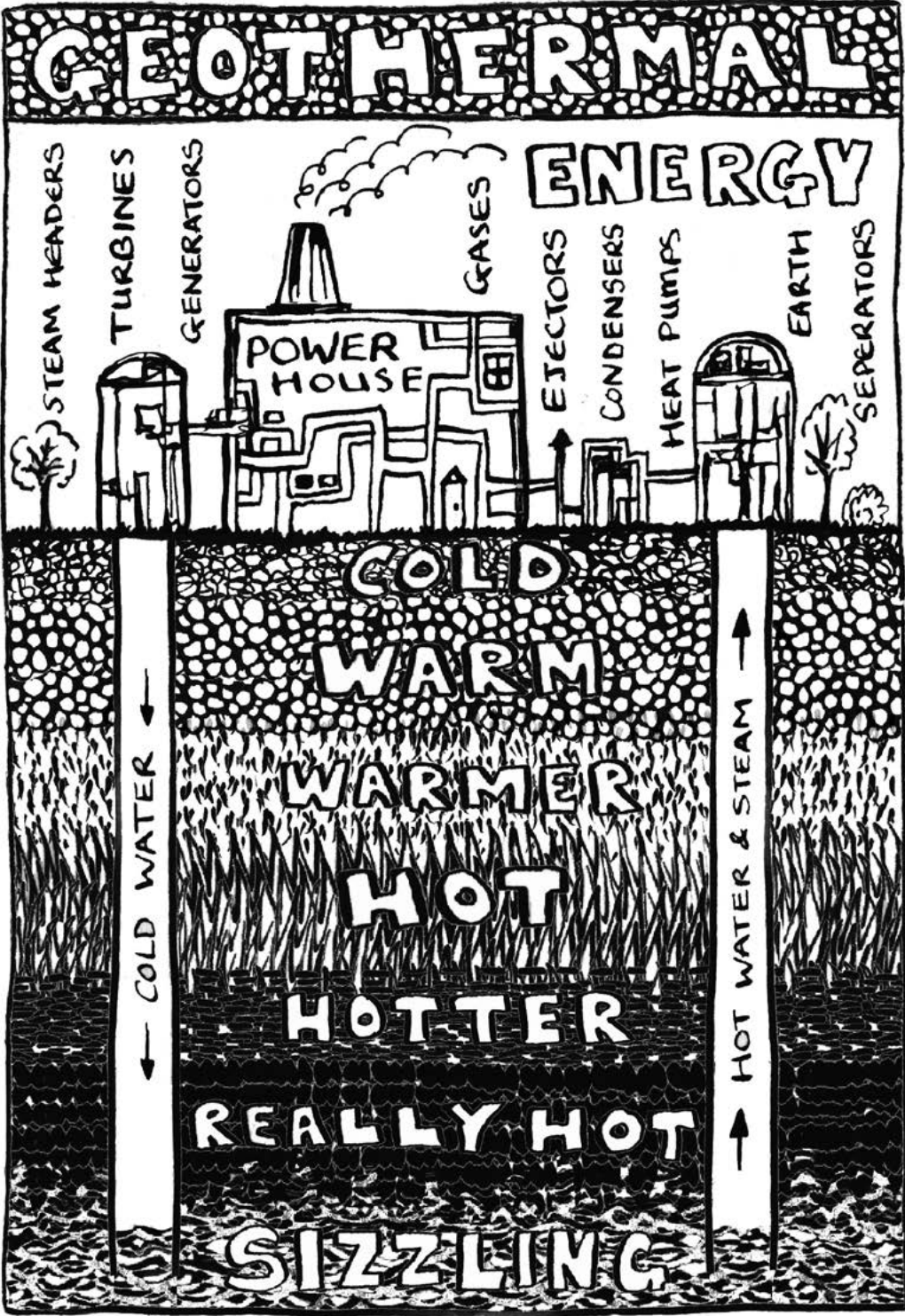
# Civil Dispute, Uncivil Tongue

there's an energy inside us, buried deep  
which, once awake, is hard to quell or curb  
it isn't minded to go back to sleep  
a nerve's been touched that lay long undisturbed

though neutral, with no ideology  
it grows between what's said and what is heard  
triggered by immigrant technology  
a yawning gap, abysmal and absurd

like all raw energy it can transmute:  
enthuse, freeze, argue, burn with fierce intensity  
turn smiles to growls, debate into dispute  
in defence of hearth, home and identity

it's power is visceral, it's fight or flight  
and always generates more heat than light



## Less is More

Can less be more, can more be less?

Well, yes and no, and no and yes – Well, more or less...

More bikes, fewer cars

Less haze, more stars

Less haste, more time

Less reason, more rhyme

More time, less stress

Fewer miles, more fresh (vegetables)

Fewer car parks, more acres of available urban soil

More farmers' markets, less produce effectively marinated in crude oil

Less colouring, more taste

More mashing, less waste

Fewer couch potatoes, more spring greens

Fewer tired tomatoes, more runner beans

More community, less isolation

Less just sitting there, *more participation!*

More stillness, less inertia

Less illness, more Echinacea

More wells (not oil ones, obviously), fewer ills

Fewer clean fingernails, more skills

More co-operation, less compliancy

Less complacency, more self-reliance

Less competition, more collaboration

Less passive listening, *more participation!*

Less attention deficit..., more concentration

Less passive listening, *more participation!*

(Less repetition)

Less of a warm globe, more a chilly one

More of a wise world, fewer parts of CO<sub>2</sub> per million

Less stress-related cardio-vascular and pulmonary failure

More nurturing quality time in the company of a favourite clematis or dahlia

More craftsmanship, less built-in obsolescence

More political maturity, less apparently-consequence-free extended adolescence

More believed-to-be-beautiful, known-to-be-useful *things*

Less cheap, pointless, petroleum-steeped *stuff*

So Yes, less is more – and enough's enough



## The Ballad of Further Down the Line – Part I

We left behind the them and us –  
divisions in the villages,  
uncivil tongues and civic fuss,  
the laws of privilege –

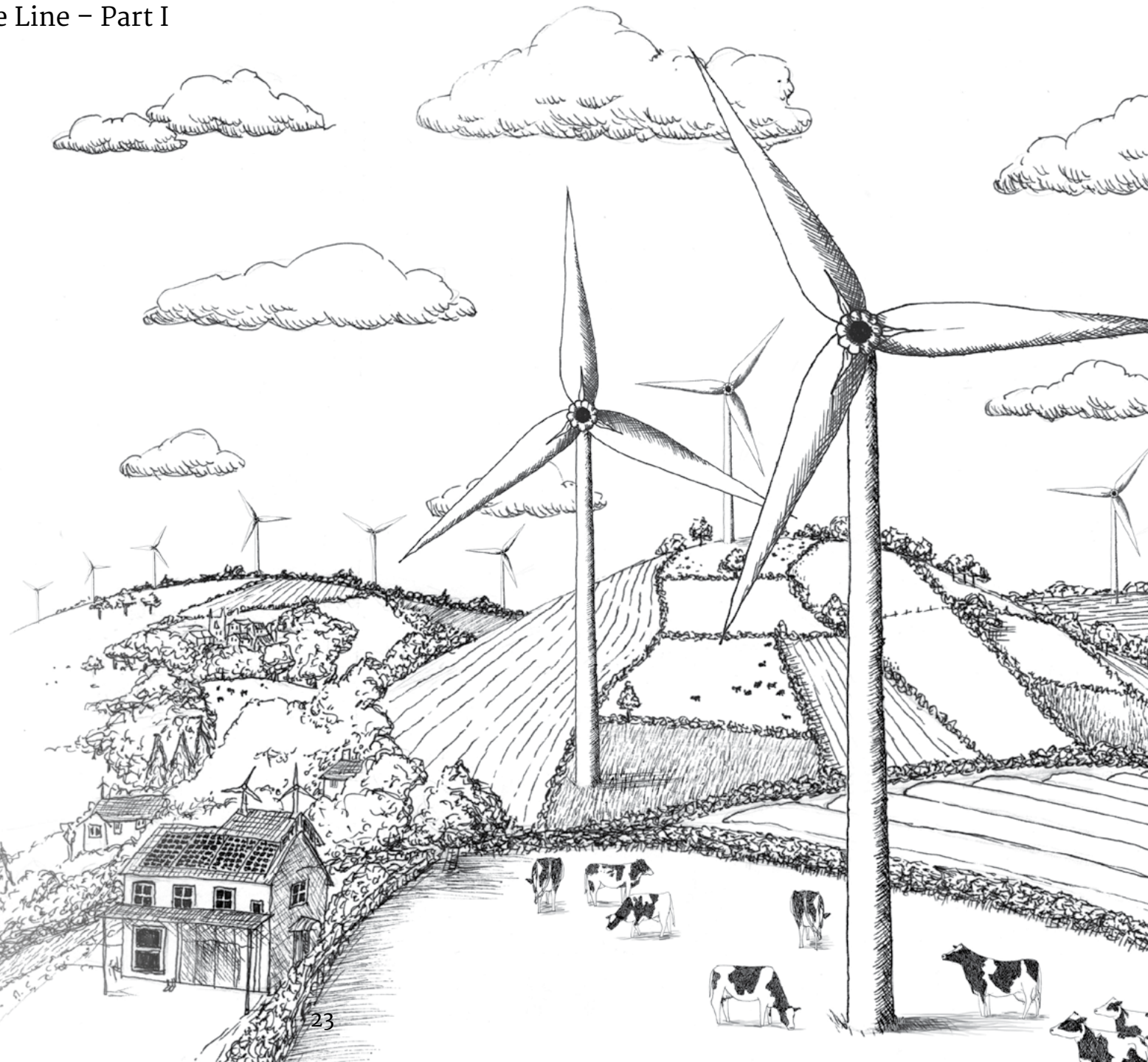
to tax the molecules that rush  
and pay their dues without a fuss  
that rush for no good reason, but  
the laws of physics say they must.

The energy that's everywhere –  
we took its measure, learned its worth.  
We pluck it from the vivid air,  
we suck it from the living earth.

Now panels tilt and turbines stand  
– familiar reassuring sight –  
around the town, across the land  
there will be heat and light tonight

And laid in fields or stood in rows  
slim sentinels stand surety –  
exposed as they themselves expose  
the myth of landscape's purity.

On country acre, city roof  
alert, unblinking compound eye –  
and standing tall without excuse  
regret-me-nots against the sky.



## An Unchanging View V

what's 'true' is what's carved in the bones and the heart  
so, what do I know? Where do I start?

widely known side effects don't get a mention:  
they cause social division and family tension  
birds get confused, sheep get depressed  
and no-one in twenty miles gets any rest

in spite of all this do you still think it's best?  
really?

soufflés won't rise, there are more traffic jams  
there's a drop in the pass rate of piano exams

I'm simply expressing legitimate doubt  
no, it's your turn to listen, it's my turn to shout  
your reasoned rebuttals can melt in your mouth  
anyway – none of the land around here faces south

correct me if I'm wrong – I can take correction  
not one of these turbines has stood for election  
it's undemocratic, they're not very nice  
they lower house prices, they throw lumps of ice

when the wind's quicker you get shadow flicker  
fit people get fits and sick people get sicker  
you don't seem concerned, don't you share my revulsion?  
do you *like* seeing pensioners having convulsions?

## An Unchanging View VI

if you're going to quote figures and point to a graph  
I think you'd better speak to my Other Half

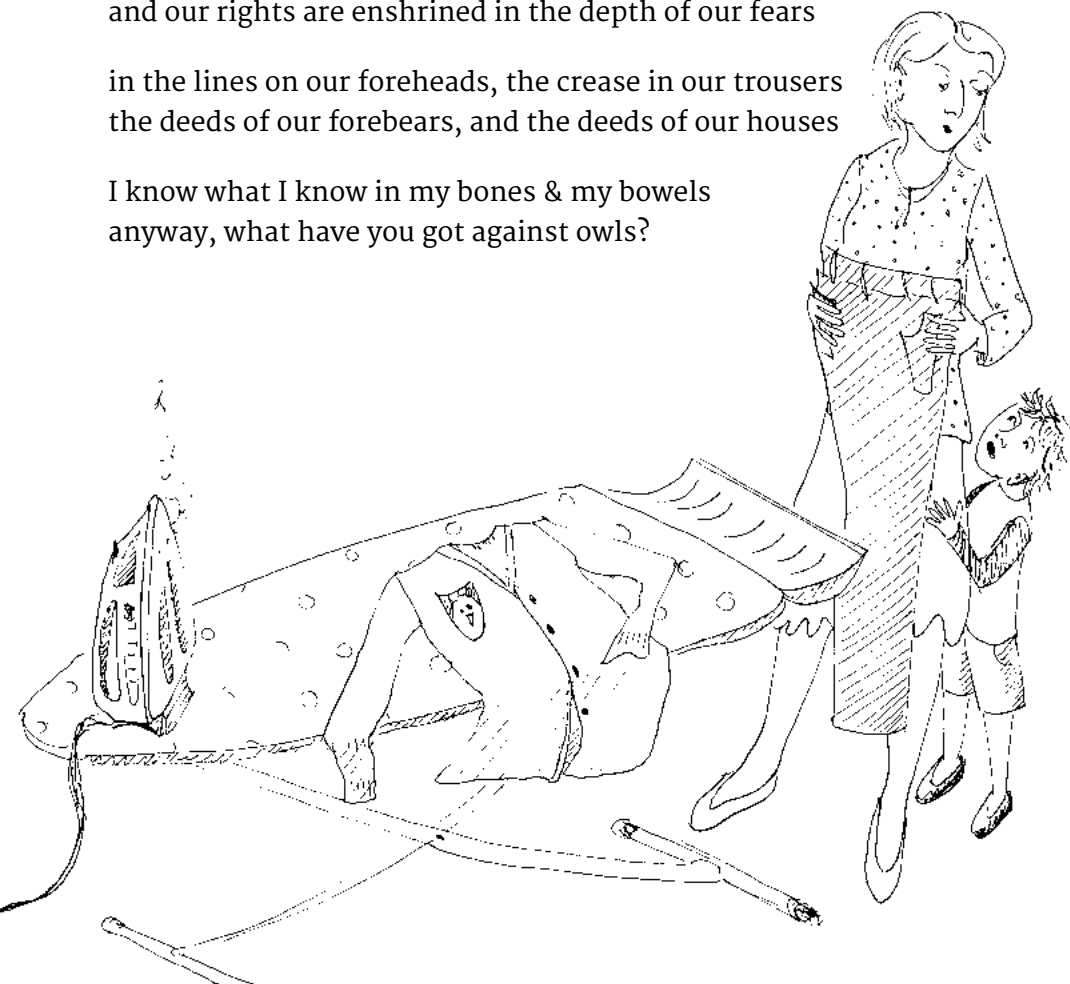
his conclusion's conclusive, you can depend on it.  
that's why it's a 'conclusion' – there's an end of it

you've picked the wrong fight and you haven't a clue  
and we have a right to an unchanging view

these plans were not passed by a panel of peers  
and our rights are enshrined in the depth of our fears

in the lines on our foreheads, the crease in our trousers  
the deeds of our forebears, and the deeds of our houses

I know what I know in my bones & my bowels  
anyway, what have you got against owls?





## Turbines are Beautiful

*(Crowd-sourced at Exeter Renewable Energy Marketplace – 19 March 2013)*

Turbine trees, tall and sleek  
White cranes talking with the wind  
Light majestic mills  
You turn my head, and turn my head

Friendly sentry standing on a hillside giving us power  
Bladed beauties, air cleavers  
Daddy! Look, a windy bine!  
What, no cooling towers?

Walkers in white, string strong, day and night  
When the wind blows the energy flows  
Are these steel totems the future... who knows?  
Quixote's foe in minimalist guise

Slowly turning electric stars  
Leading the magi who knows where  
Turbine: "Why do you stare at me and not my pylon cousin?"

A giant metal whomping willow – magician or dark lord?  
Harnessing nature or annoying the hell out of people?  
Rich people don't like wind turbines, they spoil THEIR views  
It would be great if the turbines were made in the UK  
and in colours other than grey

Three blade knife  
Elegant Catherine wheel of delight  
Dynamic majestic electric  
enchanted and peaceful and hypnotising  
Catch the breeze to make a spark flow

Wind is the only weather that can cause insanity

White sculpture, whirling power on a pole  
The spin doctor's healthy option creating rotation for the nation

No matter how much energy you take from the wind today,  
there is still exactly the same amount left for tomorrow  
A win win, wind wind situation

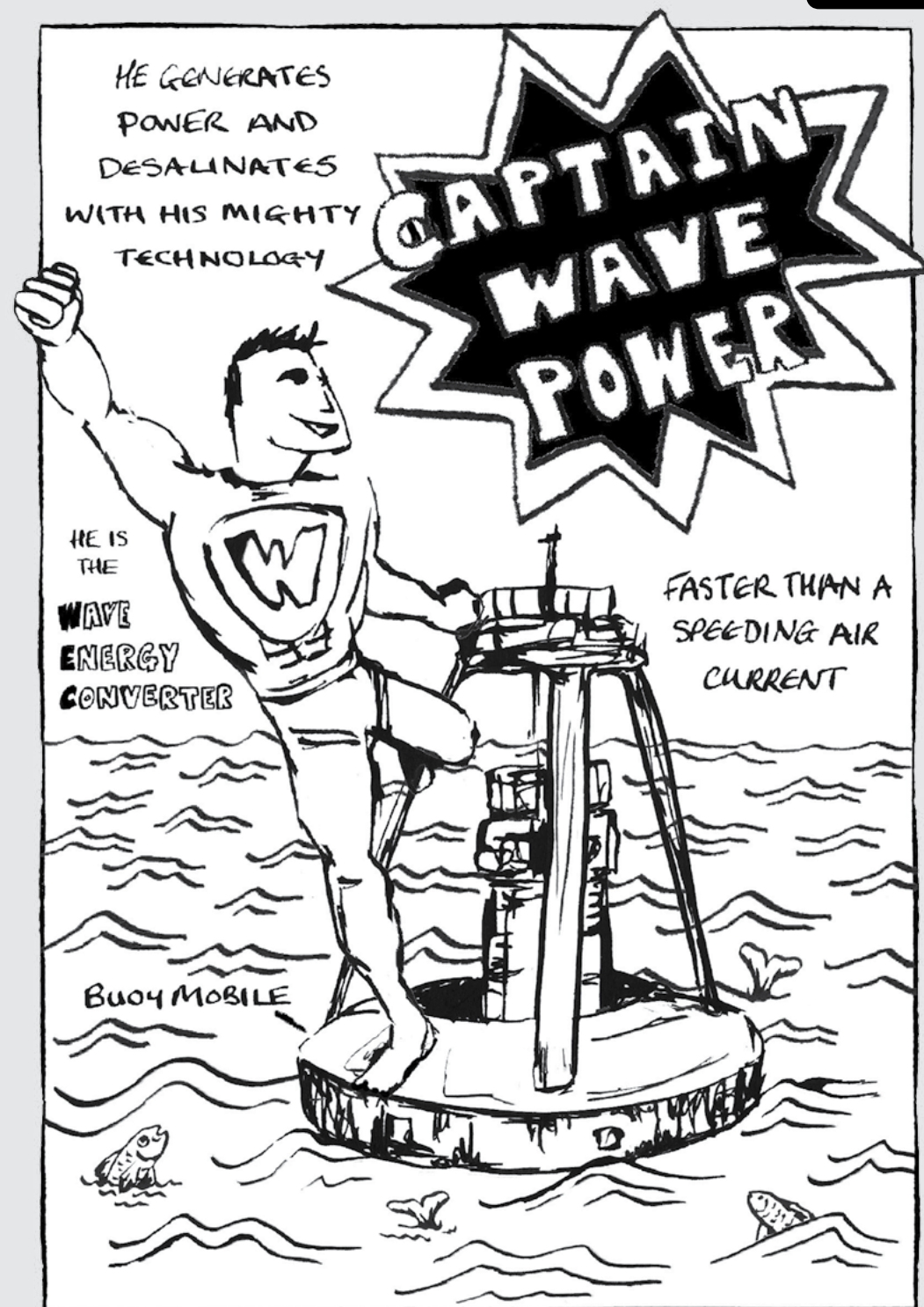
Elegant, slender, wind harvesters  
Sculpted seductive emotive endless beautiful

I'm a big fan :-)

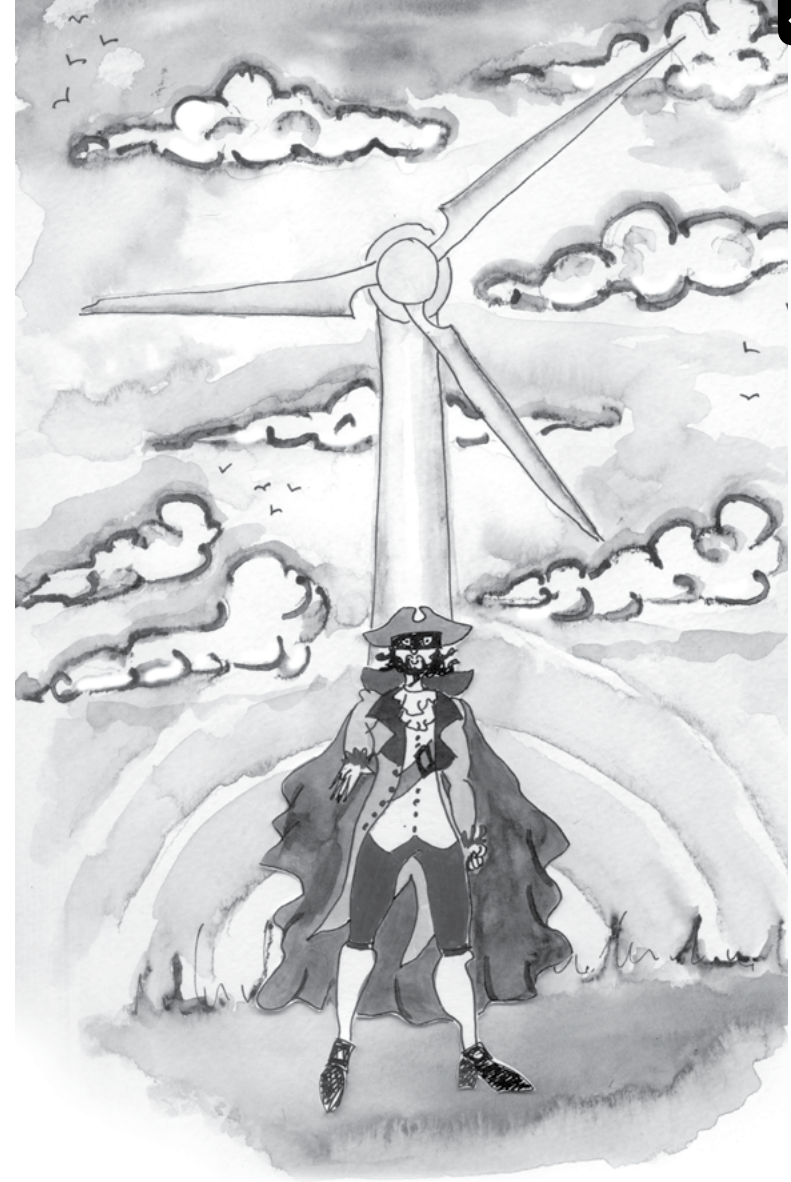
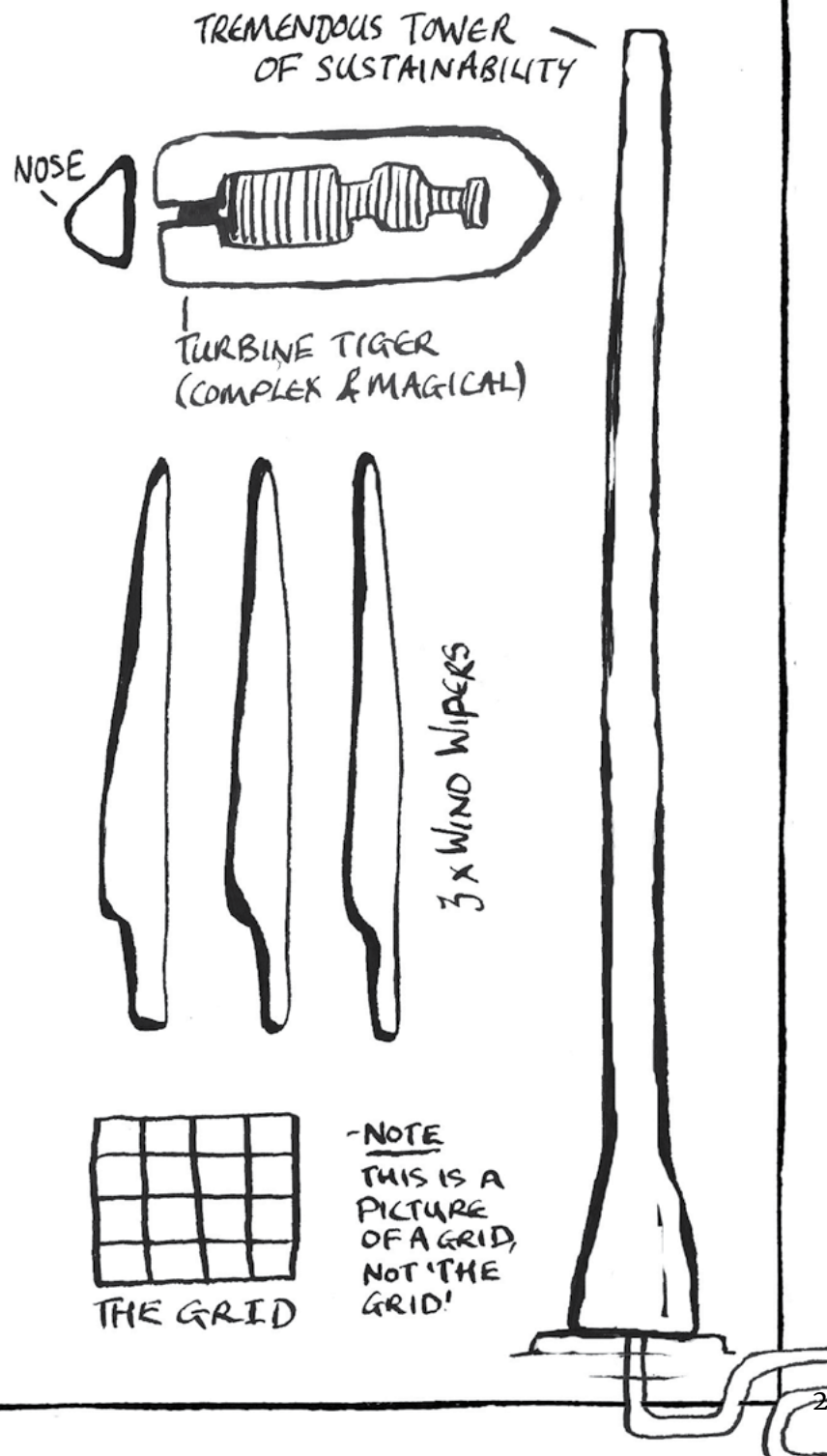


## The Effluent in the Room *(Crowd-sourced at launch of Communities Living Sustainably in Dorset Climate Week 2013)*

Ribbons of gushing, rushing flows  
 Gurgling and sluicing, diverting and engaging  
 Foaming and spuming, splashing and dribbling  
 Drains, network of pipes which flow to who knows where –  
 But do we care? We should!  
 Underground, unseen, essential, unnoticed unless blocked.  
 As a drain, not for the first time, I can no longer cope  
 I drink rain but do not allow it to be taken away.  
 Instead I hold it and it overflows.  
 Glittering gurgling vortex, beaching detritus as the whorls ebb  
 Open mouths, sated by the heavens, our salvation?  
 Busy, hungry, tired drains  
 The drains gurgle like a baby after it's had its milk.  
 Glug, glug, glug and now its beginning to stink  
 Drains do not discriminate. From muddy run off to chip fat.  
 Greed's emetic tunnels.  
 Blocked drains cause floods, which bind communities together  
 Gurgling, bubbling, too much water, overflowing, spilling over  
 Swallowing sewage and spewing it out again  
 Mysterious brown objects floating around  
 Keep it clean – Spare the rod and spoil the drain  
 Never-mind the rain in Spain landing on the plain, let's talk  
 Somerset, plain, insane no room down the drain  
 There are no drains in the drive that's washed  
 away by the flood to 3 feet deep mud  
 The drains in rain will flood again  
 Drains are necessary.  
 Drains sustain the balance of life  
 Drains: Water way to go!



# WIND TURBINE COMPONENTS



The Skywayman

Dick Turbine  
Stand and deliver



## To Whom Does Energy Belong?

*Totnes Renewable Energy Society (TRESOC) issued a share offer in spring 2014 with the opportunity to invest up to £1.5 million into six hydro and roof mounted solar PV projects, offering a collective return of £136,000 per year over 20–30 years.*

To whom does energy belong  
The energy that's everywhere?  
To you, to me, to anyone  
Who'll back TRESOC and buy a share

It flows from those who engineer  
The means, put physics to the test  
Tap elements from far and near,  
To all those willing to invest –

Invest in schemes and sweet techniques  
Both cutting edge and nothing new  
For modern geeks *and* Ancient Greeks  
Admire an Archimedes Screw

The spin-off of the river's flow  
A silver lining of the cloud  
Discreet skim from the sun's warm glow  
Embezzlement that is allowed

Afraid don't be to use the Force  
It's ethical as you could wish  
And close at hand and free at source  
It's clean, it's green, it's kind to fish

Affords the fuel-poor, cash-strapped  
(Whose rooftops catch the solar rays)  
A benefit that can't be capped  
Except by clouds and shorter days

For when it shines and when it pours  
– On one or both we can depend –  
The good accrues to you and yours  
When you're TRESOC's all-weather friend

So join the push to prime the pump  
Put pounds and pennies in the pot  
Prepare to take the plunge and jump  
And generate the Megawatt!

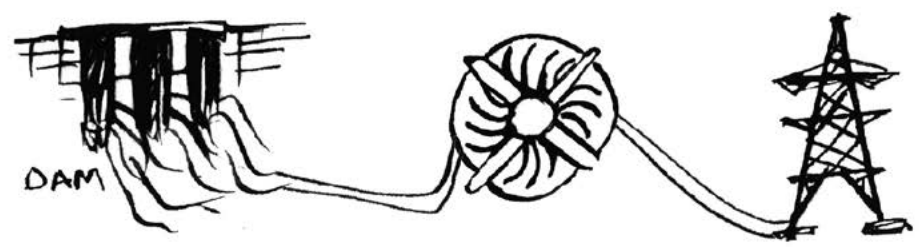
Ensure this share floatation floats  
– A buoyancy aid for everyone –  
Unfurl your twenty-one pound notes  
Step up, plunge in, splash out, shine on

# HYDROELECTRICITY

## RECIPE RECIPE RECIPE



- STEP 1. TAKE ONE RESERVOIR FULL OF WATER
- STEP 2. PRE-HEAT THE TURBINE-ASSISTED
- STEP 3. RELEASE THE WATER INTAKE <sup>GENERATOR</sup>
- STEP 4. TURN UP THE TURBINE TO FULL FLOW
- STEP 5. POWERHOUSE UNTIL GOLDEN BLUE
- STEP 6. DRAIN EXCESS WATER INTO THE RIVER
- STEP 7. SERVE ON A BED OF POWER LINES



## RECIPE RECIPE RECIPE

# HYDROELECTRICITY

A Partially Submerged Person in Somerset  
Makes an Implicit Link Between Extreme  
Weather Conditions and Climate Change  
Whilst Hoping the Latter may be Mitigated  
by Investment in Renewable Technologies

I want to go renewable  
So my streets are less canoeable



## The Ballad of Further Down the Line – Part II

We'd said that we would mend our ways  
– a promise made, a promise kept –  
and squeeze the juice from all the days.  
Adjust, adapt, accept.

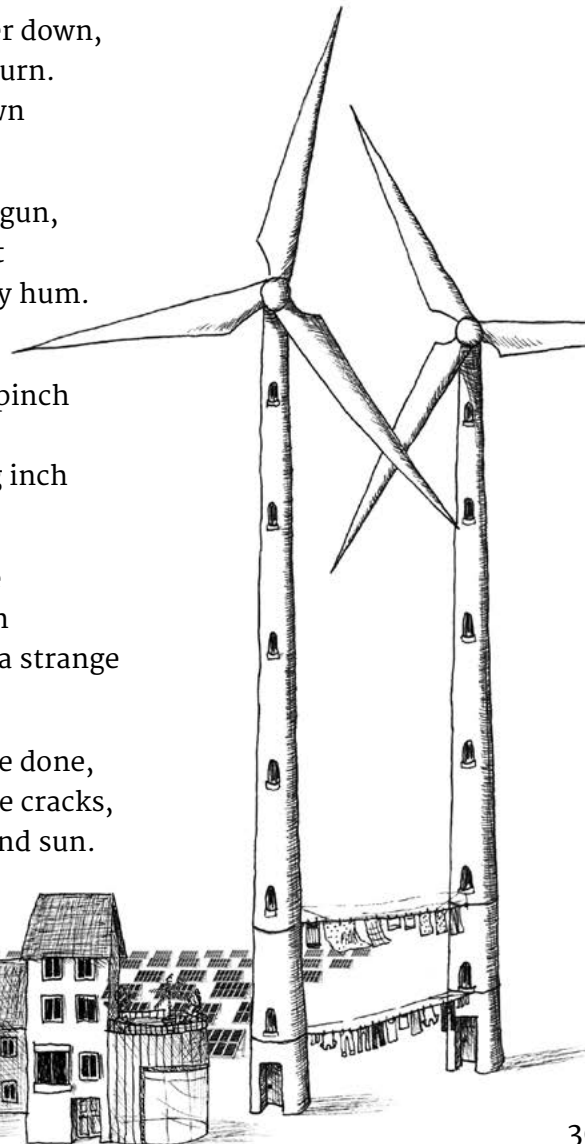
We learned in time to simmer down,  
to slow the mad, relentless burn.  
Now on the edge of every town  
the turbines turn.

The patch-up process has begun,  
we came to tolerate and trust  
their quiet cartwheels' steady hum.  
Adapt, accept, adjust.

We felt the heat, we felt the pinch  
and seized the opportunity –  
we shuffled inch by grudging inch  
toward community.

We shuffled till we overcame  
innate inertia that had grown  
within our ranks and gained a strange  
momentum of its own.

We turned to face the damage done,  
address the mess and seal the cracks,  
returned to earth and wind and sun.  
Accept, adjust, adapt



## Wind Turbines *(priming the pump for the crowd-sourced poem)*

gale gatherer, gust herder, breeze whisperer  
high riser, heaven tickler, bird brainer  
onshore – unsure off shore – of course

thrillerblots on the landscape  
unflappable flag-poles, looming lollipop sticks  
unscaleable energy blossoms, hardy perennial

blooming metal-petalled interlopers  
high whirrers, controversy stirrers  
stilted spin doctor, blade hummer  
standing guard over My Back Yard

Don Quixote monsters, fit to be tilted at  
scythe, cutting dine hicc prices,

finesser of the wind's fury:  
converting crude gusts to cordial kilowatts  
energy undrilled for,  
that no blood need be spilled for

breath catcher, speed snatcher,  
stationary spitfires whose propellers  
put the killer into kilowatts  
Revolving door into the future  
UKIP botherers, swirligigs

Fi, fie, foe fum, here they come with a whirr and a hum,  
loved by many and loathed by some, fi, fie, foe, fum

## The Not-for-Prophit

*The Not-for-Prophit has neither the depth of wisdom nor the elegance of expression of his near-namesake, because unlike The Prophet he was not written by the great Lebanese poet Kahlil Gibran.*

And the people gathered to hear the Not-for Prophit, they clustered on the steps of the eco-building where he worked, in Exeter, and said to him, “Speak to us of the Sun.”

And he said to them, “Right, so this is a sort of Q & A is it?”

And they said: “It is, yes. So... the Sun?”

And he bellowed: “Ra! Helios! Shamash! Horus! Hunahpu! Lakota!” And they shrank from him, so he said more quietly, “Generations past worshipped the Sun as a deity, as future generations will again. In your own time are those who await a benign extra-terrestrial to come and solve Earth’s problems, few yet realize this being is here, has been here all along, ready to help. The time will come when...”

And they interrupted, saying, “Okay, we think we see where you’re going with this... Could you speak to us of Wind? In a slightly more downbeat way?”

And he said, “Right, yes, wind. It’s very reliable. There will always be wind. And,” he added, “it’s good to know which way the wind is blowing.” He tapped his nose.

And they went, “Ah, you don’t just mean the turbines have to face the right way for maximum wind power, do you?”

And the Not-for-Prophit said. “That’s right. I mean the winds of change are blowing wind turbines (and other technologies) your way. It’s not a question of whether they are coming or at what speed, but where they sit and who owns them.”

And they looked at him suspiciously and said, “Hmmm,” and

he said, “Perhaps I should say something about community?”

And they said, “Go on then. Speak to us of Community.”

And one of them said, “I really don’t like the look of turbines.”

And the Not-for-Prophit said. “Would it help if they were your turbines?” And they shook their head, “Nope.”

The Not-for-Prophit ignored them and ploughed on, “if you collectively own them, rather than a company in Belgium, they become more attractive and you become more part of a community. Sometimes you don’t recognise you’re a community until you act as one.”

“Yeah. Right.” said the people as one, looking and sounding pleased with themselves.

“Yeah,” said the Not-for-Prophit, “right.”

“You sound like some sort of communist,” one said.

“But I’m talking about shareholding.”

“Well, a capitalist-communist then,” said another person.

“We’re not comfortable.”

“I’m sorry to hear that,” said the Not-for-Prophit.

And one of them changed the subject, saying, “Speak to us of Fossil Fuels.”

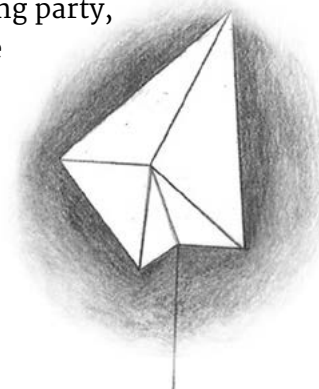
“What are you like?” said the Not-for-Prophit rhetorically.

“You’ve only just discovered them, really, and they’re two-thirds gone.”

“Not two-thirds.” said the People.

“Okay, five-eighths,” said the Not-for-Prophit. “I’ll tell you what you’re like, you’re like tenants who discover a wine cellar under your home. You’ve had an amazing party, stayed drunk for months, trashed most of the house, and it’s just beginning to dawn on you you’ll have to sober up, clean the house and make more wine yourselves.”

“It’s not five eighths gone.” said the People.



“What about fracking?”

“Huh, talk about scraping the barrel,” said the Not-for-Prophit

“Speak to us of Frugality,” they said next.

And the Not-for-Prophit said, “Are you sure you want me to speak to you of Frugality?”

And they said, “You’re right, let’s leave it. I know, speak to us of Carbon.”

“We’re all carbon-based life forms – how do you mean?”

“You know, Carbon Emissions, CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, Climate Change. That sort of thing.”

And the Not-for-Prophit said: “You don’t believe in that climate change stuff do you?”

And they said “But, but... we thought... I mean, we assumed...”

And the Not-for-Prophit said: “Just kidding. Of course I believe. The sum of money does not exist that could stop me believing in it.”

“Eeeewwww,” said the people, “get you!”

“...which economic note”, continued the Not-for-Prophit, “brings me to my point: You could start to charge for carbon.”

And the people said, “How do you mean, charge for carbon?”

And the Not-for-Prophit said: “A sum of money per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>. You know, just as you’d charge those who pollute, stain, and otherwise despoil the earth. You live in a money-driven world – so put a price on activity that damages it.”

“Okay.” they said, slowly. “This might be hard to implement”

“I didn’t say it would be easy. A set charge per tonne of carbon emissions would do more to save the planet than any amount of recycling and green poetry anthologies.”

“Well,” said the people, “we didn’t expect you to be so opinionated and political.”

The Not-for-Prophit shrugged.

“Any last thoughts?” said the People



“Don’t look a gift-source in the mouth.”

And with this the Not-for-Prophit turned and began to climb the stairs back to his office.

“Are you off then?” asked the People.

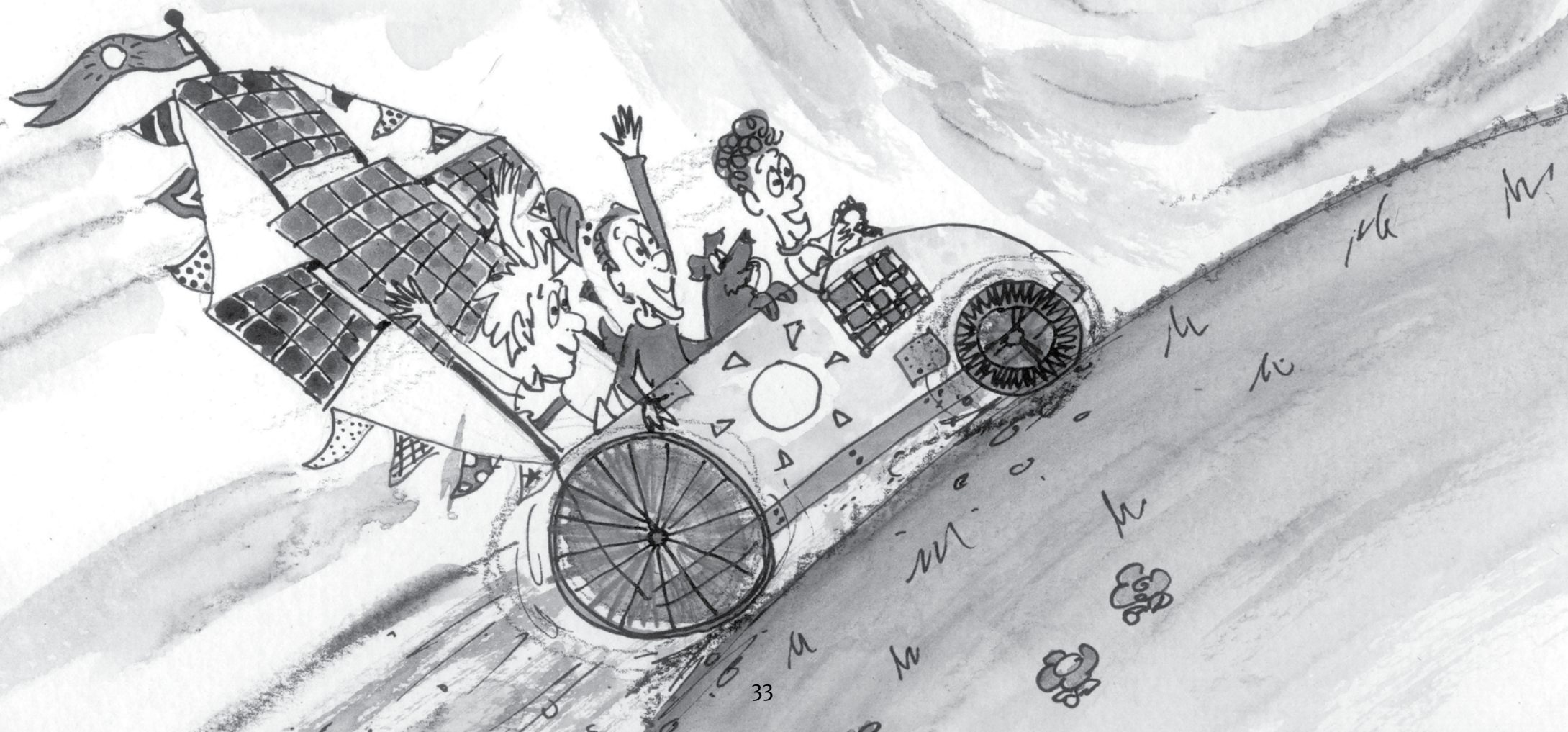
“Yes.”

And he was.



## You Say

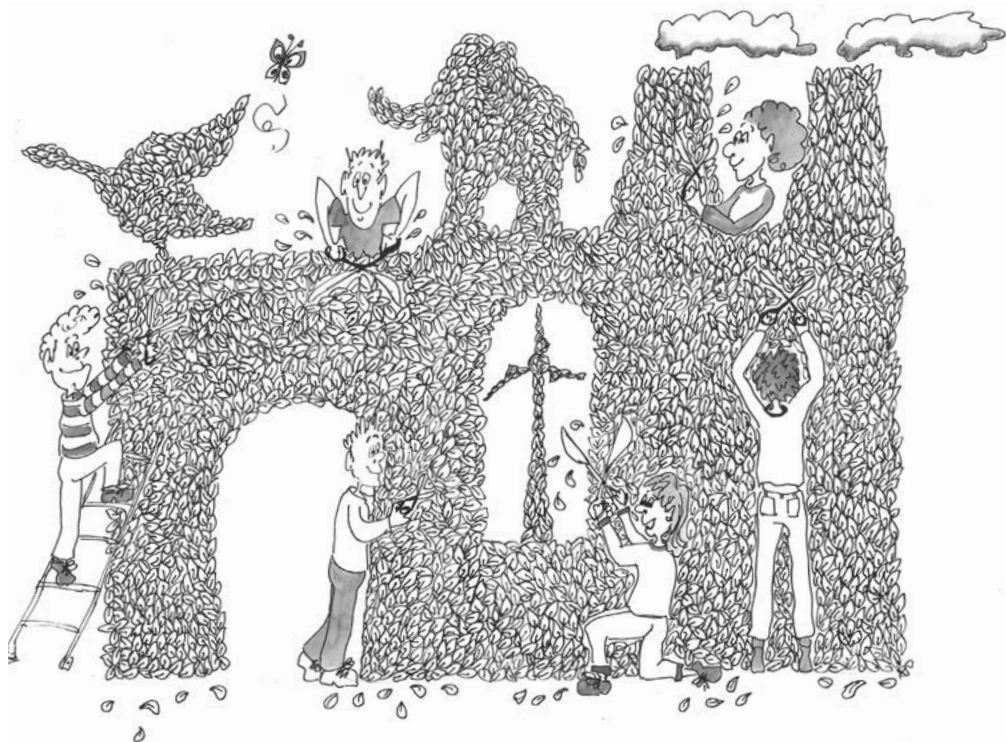
You say it's unaesthetic  
I say it's kinesthetic





## The Art of Finessing a Finer Future by Pruning the Unpromising Petroleum-Based Foliage of the Present

Utopiary



## An Unchanging View VII

I've heard all your 'facts', I have gritted my teeth  
I've stayed calm and relaxed while I seethed underneath

I've been quite coherent, it's you who's confused  
you with so much to gain while I've so much to lose

it's not just my taxes I've paid but my dues  
and I am entitled to unchanging views

I'm just sticking up for the natural order  
so go back and say to your masters at Mordor

that the jewel in the crown of my message to you  
is that I have a right to an unchanging view

yes I do

yes I do



## Copenhagen/Copenhaagen

approaching Copenhaagen  
we're all hoping that they'll harken  
to the Wave and cut the carbon  
but will they hide behind their jargon  
strike another dodgy bargain  
let the seas rise and skies darken  
on the road from Copenhaagen

or

when they get to Copenhagen  
will they do something surprising  
will they be both stirred and shaken  
look beyond the near horizon  
take a road as yet untaken  
while we still can, from Copenhagen

and whether your Copen  
is haagen or hagen  
here's hoping...

## Paris *(Paris hosts the UN Climate Change Conference in 2015)*

so on next year to Paris  
will it prove the healing chalice  
of the global village parish

will the carbon be discouraged  
and the global garden nourished  
will we frack or will we flourish

in the shadow of the Eiffel  
while the world watches and tenses  
will the outcome be so awful  
or will we come to our senses  
reach agreement and consensus?

will we prosper – will we perish  
will the wider world be cherished  
après Paris?

briefly:  
Paris chalice  
nourish parish  
perish cherish  
frack or flourish?

one worries

## It's not Me, it's You

I admit that it appalled me  
that day you first cold-called me

but you charmed me, won me over  
told me I would be in clover

and I succumbed to your advances  
thought: what the heck, I'll take my chances

I told the Doubting Thomases  
that you would keep your promises

you'd said that you would care for me  
that you'd always be there for me

oh how very wrong of me  
I should have thought more carefully

all that warmth and bonhomie  
now seems like such hot air to me

for when I called to clarify  
the startlingly high tariff I

was on, you proved elusive  
and remarkably reclusive  
for one so formerly effusive

in breach of all known etiquette  
you started playing hard-to-get

left me feeling so much smaller  
as if *I'm* the nuisance caller

with designs on *your* affection  
which is vexing and perplexing

I don't think it would hurt to see  
a bit of old world courtesy

so I'm parting from your company  
who's dumping who? You're dumping me

constructively dismissing me  
I trust you'll soon be missing me

and then you'll once again change tack  
predictably you'll call me back

and find you're waiting in a queue  
to hear, when you at last get through

Goodbye.

It isn't me. It's you.

## Because the Sun Cannot Unshine

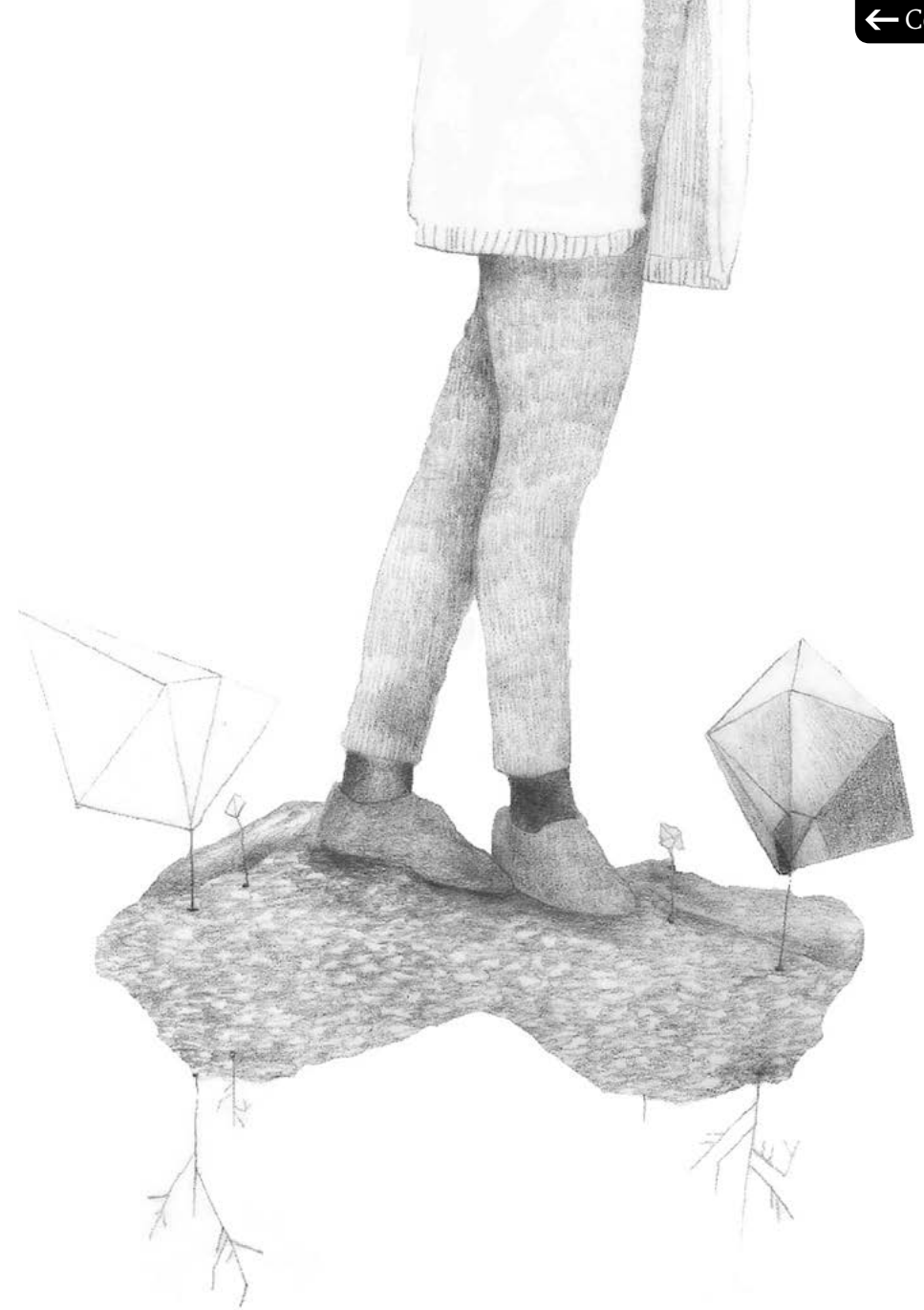
Because the sun cannot unshine  
Because the earth's core cannot freeze  
The tide is bound to toe the line  
Its restless motions never cease

The wind can drop but not unblow  
Sun can be blocked but not constrained  
Earth can't unspin, nor streams unflow  
Because the oceans can't be drained

Because the need is always there  
Because the means are all around  
Alive within the quickening air  
Within the waters, underground

Because a price must yet be paid  
For all our craft and artifice  
There is a choice that must be made:  
The Now price or the After price

Why would we not reap sun, wind, sea  
And seek to maximise the crop?  
The power is here. Why wouldn't we?  
Why on Earth would we stop?



## With thanks to our illustrators

### Heidi Ball

Heidi Ball is from Cornwall, has a BSc (Hons) from Nottingham Trent University and an MA in ‘Illustration: Authorial Practice’ from Falmouth University. She won the Atlantic Press’s Graphic Literature Prize in 2014. Her work draws on a comedic outlook and a love of narrative illustration.

*See pages 11, 13, 17, 21, 26, 27, 29.*

### Laura Cochón

Laura Cochón is a Galician illustrator who specialises in pencil drawings and currently self-publishes and designs illustrated albums and books. She saw the Regen SW project as an opportunity to shed some light through the realm of imagery on a far-reaching issue; the handling of nature’s resources.

*See pages 19, 20, 31, 32, 37.*

### Tori Dee

Tori Dee is based in Exeter. She says “This project is not just about the benefits of sustainable energy, it’s about challenging our perceptions and the underlying fear of change which lurks in us all. I’m proud to have been a part of it.”

*See pages 18, 23, 30.*

### More than Minutes

A bunch of artists, illustrators and animators who love to make minutes mean more – Regen SW regularly works with this organisation to document events. The front cover for this book was produced during one such event.

[www.morethanminutes.co.uk](http://www.morethanminutes.co.uk)

*See pages 15, 29 and front cover.*

### Chloë Uden

Chloë is an illustrator and art producer. She set up The Quixotic Press whilst caught up in the romance of noble deeds and the pursuit of unreachable goals. Chloë also works with Regen SW to generate art and energy projects renewably.

*See pages 9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 24, 34.*

### Naomi Ziewe Palmer

Energy is important in the lively business of drawing. To Devon-based illustrator (and Creative Writing teacher) Naomi Ziewe Palmer, positive imagery is crucial to communicating the importance of sustainable energy today, because engaging people in green issues is achieved by first capturing the imagination. Naomi makes pictures that are playful, fun and anchored in the magic of childhood.

*See pages 14, 27, 33, 34.*

## Old Saying

Keep your friends close  
But your energy closer

# the element in the room

by matt  
harvey

The Element in the Room is a book of poems inspired by energy – renewable energy in particular – and a book of pictures inspired by poems about renewable energy.

Some poems were prompted by reflections on the elements, some from talking with people working in the field, others from renewable technologies themselves – the look of them, their potential, people’s responses to them. Some are playful, cheeky, pithy, others more lyrical and solemn, some are just plain daft.

Among them there’s a sonnet, a country and western song and a prose poem called The Not-for-Prophit. You get the picture. None is intended as a ‘last word’, they are offered for your pleasure and interest and to provoke discussion.

The illustrations are by a range of talented artists, to be specific: Heidi Ball, Laura Cochón, Tori Dee, Chloë Uden, Josie Ashe, Naomi Ziewe Palmer and More than Minutes.