

## Community Energy and Transport Projects

Training with Centre for Sustainable Energy (CES) 18 September

[Video of the training](#)

### CES supports:

- Energy efficiency in houses
- Works with government and advisory bodies and charities
- Has a Community Team providing funding and support

The context being the energy crisis, volatile market, changing infrastructure - becoming more aware of energy use and actively supporting new ways forward.

### Community Energy

The potential is to have community-led groups to work in partnership with other bodies.

- Raise funds through shares
- Create assets such as through solar or wind energy
- Used to be able to sell back to the grid and collect subsidies & receive bonuses - however subsidies have ended, there is less or not enough profit to create a community benefit fund now for users but community-led groups can gain an income for volunteers and investors. Tends to be supported more by wealthier or those who have time i.e. it is not very inclusive.

### Fuel poverty

- Installing community owned energy generation assets
- Advice
- Transport projects
- Retro-fitting
- Community energy = Community ownership, leadership and control

Read the [Community energy state of the sector report 2021](#) - community energy England website.

A [national map](#) has been created of initiatives across the country.

### Benefits of Community Energy

- Greater local income generation and environmental improvements
- Builds trust within the community
- Address concerns and problems

### Challenges

- Lack of funding
- Supportive policies at national government level
- Retro-fit - skills gap

- Fairness - not all have the skills & capacity
- Not an inclusive sector in terms of age, gender, race and ethnicity
- Capacity constraints on local grid infrastructure
- Complex interconnection of systems, industries and transport

### Opportunities

- More support (signs of) for onshore wind projects and community energy
- £10m Community Energy Fund should be available in the autumn for existing and new community energy groups
- More attention on addressing the retro-fit skills gap and making homes efficient
- Innovation and technological advances in energy systems, renewables and low carbon technologies: heat pumps and heat networks, smart technologies, time of use tariffs ..
- Greater awareness

### Considerations

Does Priddy have a community energy group?

Consider forming a retro-fit project

### Examples

- [Lawrence Weston](#) in Bristol has a community owned largest wind turbine funded by a local loan fund administered by CSE and share offer that supports 3,500 homes. CSE has a [case study](#) on this - a good example of a less wealthy community being able to create a substantial project.
- Brighton and Hove have an [energy co-op](#) providing public buildings with solar, funded by a community energy bond offer. Have completed over 50 community projects.
- York Community Energy [retro-fit](#) - has house warming parties with diy floor insulation workshop, with advice and liaison with local trades people. They also offer whole house retro-fit assessments for retrofit (paid for service) and thermal imaging surveys.
- [Exeter](#) Healthy Homes for Wellbeing has an active fuel poverty support group that accesses people that may not otherwise come to them. Work closely with local councils.
- Transport projects include [Tisbury car club](#) - Pay as you Go
- [Yealm community](#) provides electric transport, set up a CIC for an electric ferry reducing vehicle use. Worked a lot with local communities and parish councils.

Smaller projects start small through engagement - run an energy day. Insulation or retrofitting workshops - thermal energy day etc.

### Role of parishes

Recipe for Success =

- Local drive and passion
- Knowledge and skills, CSE can share resources. No community energy training program yet
- Join networks through NALC / SLCC for example
- Money - not always a huge amount is needed
- Supportive national and local policies - helpful to lobby
- Support from the community and key stakeholders - parishes can help to facilitate / co-ordinate
- More networking - could source funding for feasibility studies - National Lottery funding are creating provision for energy projects and network through that
- **Find people locally who are driven!!**

#### **Parish as an enabler**

- Plays a convening role - bring people together - parish would not usually community energy projects, but would facilitate
- Funding any access to funding provision
- Community engagement
- Planning and lobbying powers - be proactive
- Develop a Neighbourhood Development Plan

#### **Convening and Community Engagement**

- Provide a place to meet
- Facilitate with workshop / events
- Recruit volunteers
- Learn from existing initiatives
- Consulting with the community

#### **Planing / Lobby**

- Site allocated through Neighbourhood Development plan must currently have supportive policies in the NDP in order to go forward
- Feed into it!
- National level support
- Local Electricity Bill - Campaign run by Power for People for electricity producers to sell directly to local people IMPORTANT

#### **Examples of PC initiatives**

- Woodley Town Council - solar panel installation
- Bridgwater Town Council - community forum to discuss topics incl. reducing reliance on fossil fuels
- Ide Parish Council working with local school to provide solar panels and a learning tool for pupils and teachers
- Frome Town Council supported setting up a community energy group and policies for energy efficient building design in their NDP.

- Tatham Parish Council carbon committee and community members set up an energy survey and community thermal imaging project
- Draughton Parish Council are looking at feasibility of local community owned generation of renewable energy.

Being owned by the community is helpful especially where there can be resistance to, for example, wind turbines. Rooftop solar can be difficult in conservation areas, there are restrictions and can be dependent upon the local plan but it's not always impossible, parish input to NPD and Local Plan is very helpful.

### Community level advice

- Energy champions
- Advice providers to an event CSE?
- Local plan - designate an area to have renewables - if it is in there it will happen, if no provision is allocated it definitely will not happen
- National Policy Framework has made it a bit easier - support for rooftop solar in panels in the plan

### Practical next steps

- Share this training with council
- Work with local community energy groups - facilitating them
- Survey the community
- Newsletter article or event to generate interest. Have -
  - An energy day / eco day
  - Bring in local groups
  - Map of possible schemes
  - Who might be involved
- Support the Local Electricity Bill
- [Big Solar Co-op](#) - look for big users and help them to get solar - volunteers nationally can join to identify potential sites, get training or join as an investor. They provide good training and support projects.
- Run a Future Energy Landscape workshop

### Future Energy Landscapes

- Bottom up
- With workshop and consultation
- Public opinion is generally positive on renewables, but in reality, less supportive often because decisions are remote from the community i.e. they hold no propriety so communities don't benefit enough.
- UK planning system is adversarial
- Future Energy Landscape workshops - home maps to look at acceptable projects. For example Peasdown and Wellow were able to identify several types of energy despite local precious area.

### Future Energy Landscapes process

- Select target area with greatest potential - county will have had a renewable energy study done for potential for renewables - ask Somerset Council for their study. Being in an AONB may not restrict potential sites. Working with community enables them to come up with the site(s) themselves.
- Planning constraints - work around
  - Avoid areas with live renewable applications
  - Public enthusiasm helps
  - Works best in rural areas because of land availability

### Community Engagement

- Create Community Engagement Plan - by listing all groups and contacts in area
- Then sending posters and Facebook, newsletters etc.
- Invite skilled people to events
- Cross section of community - need those who are less sure about renewables. Make publicity inclusive.

### Running the workshop

- Have a very large map (CSE can provide) that attracts people to talk about possibilities - have post-it notes for people's opinions
- Menu of possible choices in the area for instance that the area could have capacity for x-number wind turbines, different sizes of solar farms etc.
- CSE has a tool that helps people see what their preferred renewable choice would provide in terms of energy
- Then it needs to be drilled down in response to people's concerns

### Follow-on engagement

- Widen results of community and invite response
- Report back to the community

### Support

- [CSE have an open source toolkit](#) for people to run themselves. This can be difficult for groups to manage - CSE can provide support from £2,000 - could be funded through county??
- Could the principle authority run this??
- Could use the Community Engagement Fund / National Lottery to fund it
- [Project page at CSE](#)
- [Community Energy England](#)
- [Retro-fit guide](#)
- [Green open homes](#)
- [Nex-generation.org.uk](http://Nex-generation.org.uk)
- [Ambition Lawrence Weston](#)
- Other organisations - Climate Outreach; Ashden Trust; Hubbub; The Community Works; Possible

CSE will be talking at the SLCC summit on 22 November

[Resources page](#)

Email CSE through [communities@cse.org.uk](mailto:communities@cse.org.uk)

sign up for [e-news from the website](#).

[Fact sheets](#) are on the website. Can direct email to the training leaders.