

November 2023

National Grid Community Energy Newsletter

Welcome to the quarterly National Grid Electricity Distribution (NGED) community energy newsletter.



Bristol Energy Annual Conference, 24 June

Successes – What have we done

Over the last few months, we have continued to communicate and meet with community energy organisations and local authorities across our license areas.

Recently we held Net Zero Community Energy Forums in Exeter and Nottingham. In Exeter, we heard from Tara Bowers, Director of Exeter Community Energy, about the fantastic work they do delivering energy advice to local residents.

In Nottingham, we heard from Ben Dodd, Director of Green Fox Community Energy Co-operative, about their experience setting up a rural electric car club.

Thanks again to all the speakers and participants.

On 24 June, we were invited to the Bristol Energy Network Annual Conference, where we were delighted to meet many practitioners and speak about the work we are doing in community energy.

On 27 June, we attended Northern Powergrid's Community DSO Network Innovation Project Conference to learn about the Community DSO project and how it could benefit communities in the area.





Dates for your diaries

National Grid: Net Zero Communities Forums

South Wales, 17 November, 12:30 – 16:30

This exciting forum is for anyone interested in supporting their local community through low carbon energy projects. Whether you're from a community organisation, local authority, parish council, small business, or another interested party, this is a unique opportunity to network and collaborate with a group of people all working towards a greener, fairer future.

From the forum, you can expect:

- Plenty of time to network and talk to people doing inspiring work in this space
- Short talks from community energy experts, with time to ask questions
- Breakout groups to discuss the topics most important to you.

Sign up [here](#).

Community Energy England Autumn forum 2023

Manchester, 17 November, 13:00 – 16:30

A half day event where organisations can learn how to get involved with the Community Energy Fund, become an effective advocate for community energy leading up to the upcoming general election and discuss the potential for huge growth in the sector arising from it. The event is followed by the community energy awards.

Find out more and sign up [here](#).

Community Energy England Awards 2023

Manchester, 17 November, 18:00 – 22:00

The annual Community Energy England Awards are back! The awards highlight those projects and people that are shaping the future of community energy across England. The 2023 awards ceremony will take place at the Lowry Theatre in Manchester.

Find out more and sign up [here](#).

Community Energy England Monthly Member Call

Online, 28 November, 12:00 – 13:00

CEE Monthly Members Calls are exclusive events designed for the CEE national network.

Join for their next monthly members call, where they'll be discussing **community energy solutions**. Speakers to be confirmed.

Find out more and sign up [here](#).

Guides

National Grid Community Heat Guide

The National Grid community heat guide will be published this autumn/winter. This will be an introductory guide for community groups who are interested in developing their own low-carbon community heat project.

The guide will provide an overview of the different types of heating projects that can be delivered by community-led groups, offering examples and best practices, covering the key steps involved in project development, including community engagement, selecting appropriate technologies, forming partnerships and securing financing.

Please look out for updates about this in our next newsletter and in Regen newsletters.

Thrive Renewables Funding Guide

Thrive Renewables have created a new guide sharing their knowledge and experience in helping communities fund clean energy projects. The guide discusses different factors to consider when seeking funding and includes case studies of projects working with Ambition Community Energy and the Bristol Energy Co-Operative.

Read the guide [here](#).

Technology Project Guides by Community Energy London

Community Energy London has developed detailed technology guides for five types of projects often taken on by community energy groups, read the guides:

- **Air Source Heat Pumps**
- **Energy Advice**
- **LED Lighting Retrofit**
- **Solar PV**
- **EV Charge Points**

Community Energy London also has a Step-by-Step project guide on their website that takes you through the stages of developing and enacting a community energy project.

Read the guide [here](#).



Other developments

UK's largest community-owned solar farm

A 30MW solar farm, spread across 120 acres of land along the England/Wales border near Chester, has been backed by the Cheshire West and Chester Council's planning committees. The project, which would generate enough electricity to power 8,400 homes, is considered a Development of National Significance in Wales and needs backing from the Welsh Planning Inspectorate.

The solar farm will be classed as a community-owned asset, and local people and organisations will be able to buy shares. This will allow them to have ownership of the project and decision-making powers to distribute surplus revenue towards community benefit projects.

Read more [here](#).

Community Energy Together

Community Energy Together (CET) is a new collaboration between five existing community energy groups: Shropshire and Telford Community Energy, Kent Community Energy, Yealm Community Energy, Wight Community Energy and Gower Power.

Together, they are acting to buy seven operational solar farms and bring them into community ownership. These projects have a combined capacity of 36MW and supply the equivalent of 12,750 homes. CET currently have four share offers open through Ethex, with a fifth coming soon.

Find out more [here](#).



Funding

UK Government: £10 million Community Energy Fund Opening date: Autumn 2023

The UK Government announced in August a new £10 million fund to support local energy projects across rural and urban England.

The funding will help to kickstart new community energy projects, including electricity generation, storage, heat networks, Electric Vehicle (EV) charging and fuel poverty alleviation. The funding replaces the Urban and Rural Community Energy Funds and will be delivered in the same way, through Local Net Zero Hubs.

Find out more [here](#).
See introductory webinar [here](#).

This funding is only available in England. Community Energy Wales (CEW) and Scotland have responded to this. Read more here (CEW) and here (CES).

National Grid: Affordable Warmth

Our "Affordable Warmth" project connects customers with various regional partners with fuel poverty projects. These local initiatives can help customers cut energy costs. For more information, contact **Tracey Cullen**, our Social Obligations Officer, on **01332 827644** or at **tcullen@nationalgrid.co.uk**

For more funding opportunities, look at the funding pages on Community Energy England's website [here](#).

Get in touch

You can find more useful information and resources on the community energy page on our [website](#), including how to **book an appointment** with one of our network planners to discuss your community energy project.

If you have any community energy news that you would like to share through this newsletter, please email fchanda@nationalgrid.co.uk, and you can get in touch if your community is hosting an energy-themed event and would like your Distribution Network Operator there.



Faithful Chanda

Development Engineer (Community Energy)
Customer Excellence/System Development