

March 2023 | Issue 4

National Grid community energy newsletter

Quarterly news on support available
to community energy organisations

Welcome to the first National Grid
community energy newsletter of 2023.

We're looking forward to continuing to
support the community energy sector
in our region throughout this year.

Read on for the latest updates from
National Grid, as well as plenty from
across the community energy sector
you can get involved with.

What's included in the newsletter:

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- Meeting organisations in the region
- Connecting to the National Grid distribution network
- Net Zero Communities Strategy
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- The Community Energy Awards
- Getting Started Guide from CEE
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- National Grid: Net Zero Communities Forum
- SW Net Zero Hub: Local Energy Advice Demonstrator
- Pre-Launch Webinar
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From the archive

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- National Grid: Affordable Warmth
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News

Meeting organisations in the region

It's been great to meet so many of you over the past few months. We recently met with Dorset Community Energy to discuss their **Energy Local Bridport project**.

This project enables local energy customers to buy locally generated renewable energy from the Salway Ash wind turbine.

We were pleased to share how the new charging arrangements, resulting from the Significant Code Review (SCR) (explained further below), could reduce connection costs for future generation projects.

We also valued meeting with many other organisations from across our region, including Harbury Energy Initiative (Warwickshire), Marshfield Energy Group (Gloucestershire), Sustainable South Hams (Devon), Harborough Energy (Leicestershire), Cardiff City Council, Devon County Council and West Midlands Combined Authority.

If you're interested in meeting with us, booking an appointment with our team, or if you're hosting an event you'd like us to attend, contact us at fchanda@nationalgrid.co.uk.



News

Connecting to the National Grid distribution network

Update from Kyle Smith, Connections Strategy Engineer, **National Grid**

2022 saw National Grid achieve some significant milestones in its journey, including the launch of our **online self-service budget estimate tool** for low voltage connections, engaging with a wide range of stakeholders and community energy groups at multiple events, and enhancing our **connections website** to provide better support and guidance for customers through the application process for generation and demand connections.

Changes in connection costs

In 2023, the way we charge for connecting to our network is changing. Following Ofgem's Access and Forward-Looking Charges Significant Code Review (SCR), a new approach to connection charges will be effective for applications received on or after 1 April 2023.

These changes mean customers applying for demand connections (e.g. heat pumps and EV chargers) will no longer pay a proportion of network reinforcement costs, and electricity generation customers will only pay a proportion of reinforcement costs at the same voltage level as their connection (for a beginner's guide to the electricity network, **see here**).

Both, however, may still need to pay for reinforcement if they are calculated to be very high cost. In addition, a network installed just for a particular site will still be fully charged to the customer, either by the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) or an Independent Connection Provider (ICP).

For more information regarding these changes, please visit our **website**.

We will also discuss these changes at our next Net Zero Communities forum on 31 March 2023. You can learn more and sign up **here**.

You can book an appointment to speak with an engineer about these changes and what they might mean for your project by contacting us.

Self-service web tools

This year we will be rolling out further self-service web tools for our customers. We have recently launched our domestic electric vehicle charger application tool which instantly acknowledges the installation of an EV charger without needing an application to be sent to our teams for processing.

We've had nearly 500 applications in the three months since the tool went live. We'll also enhance the self-service budget estimate tool to give customers the option of receiving a firm connection offer that can be accepted and progressed to construction.



News

Net Zero Communities Strategy

Our 2023 Net Zero Communities strategy will be coming out shortly. This will outline our commitments for the next year and how we are planning to support the community energy sector in our region. Keep an eye on [our website](#) for more information.

Videos for community energy organisations

We've created a series of videos highlighting opportunities for community energy organisations to get involved with National Grid. In each of the videos, we feature a key National Grid team member from the following departments: Innovation, Social Obligations, Open Data and Connections.

We also feature a community energy organisation that has worked with us in each department: Plymouth Energy Community, Bath and West Community Energy, Wadebridge Renewable Energy Network and Exeter Community Energy.

If you're interested in understanding more about:

- **connecting** new technologies to the network, [click here](#)
- **supporting residents** with energy bills, [click here](#)
- partnering with us on **innovation** projects, [click here](#)
- working on projects using **open data**, [click here](#)

The Community Energy Awards

Faithful attended the Community Energy Awards in January, a wonderful celebration of the sector's achievements.

A huge congratulations to all the organisations who were nominated.

We were delighted to see community energy organisations and individuals from our region were shortlisted for awards:

- Ambition Community Energy won the Finance and Innovation award
- Exeter Community Energy received a 'Highly Commended' award in the Fuel Poverty Action category and was shortlisted for four awards in total
- Plymouth Energy Community & Art and Energy Collective were shortlisted for the Community Energy and Engagement Award
- Egri Coop was shortlisted for the Scaling Up Community Energy Award
- Rachel Moffat from Bristol Energy Coop was shortlisted for the Community Energy Champion (Individual) Award

See details of all the winners [here](#), watch a short interview with Ambition Community Energy [here](#), and watch a short roundup video of the awards evening [here](#).



News

Getting Started Guide from CEE

This new guide provides new entrants to community energy with an overview of the latest national resource and links across the Community Energy England website. The guide was created by Community Energy South, Community Energy England and commissioned by Lancashire County Council and The Net Zero Hubs. See more [here](#).

Ofgem local energy consultations

Two consultations that are relevant to community energy stakeholders have recently been announced.

The first is the “Future of Local Energy Institutions and Governance” consultation. This is a consultation on how to provide stronger, clearer allocations of local responsibilities concerning the planning, market facilitation and operation of energy.

The second is the “Future of Distributed Flexibility” call for input. This is a call for input from stakeholders across the industry to build a “common vision for distributed flexibility” and help tackle the market access and coordination issues.

The closing date for both consultations is 10 May. Find out more about the consultations [here](#).



Events

2023 National Grid events

After our first online forum in March, we will host more events throughout the year to support the organisations in our region.

We'll be hosting in-person forums in each of our four licence areas:

West Midlands (12 May)

South West (19 May)

East Midlands (10 November)

South Wales (17 November)

And an online forum towards the end of 2023. Please let us know if you have any particular topics you would like to cover or speak about at any events.

National Grid: Net Zero Communities Forum

Online, 31 March 13:30-15:30

This online forum with National Grid is for all individuals, local authorities and community groups supporting their local area to achieve net zero. No matter where you are on your journey, we welcome you to join our first Net Zero Communities Forum of 2023.

Find out more [here](#).

Community Energy Spring Series 2023 (CEE)

Online, 29 March 12:00 - 14:00

These lunchtime events will focus on renewable energy technologies that communities are using.

The aim of this year's Spring Series is to give the CEE network the opportunity to connect, collaborate and find space to support each other.

Register [here](#).



From the archive

In the coming year, we will use these newsletters to highlight some supportive resources we've developed over the past few years. This time, it's the carbon tracer app.

National Grid: Carbon tracer app

We wanted to create an application that uses real, live data to calculate what contributes to the locally generated energy that powers the electric items in your home.

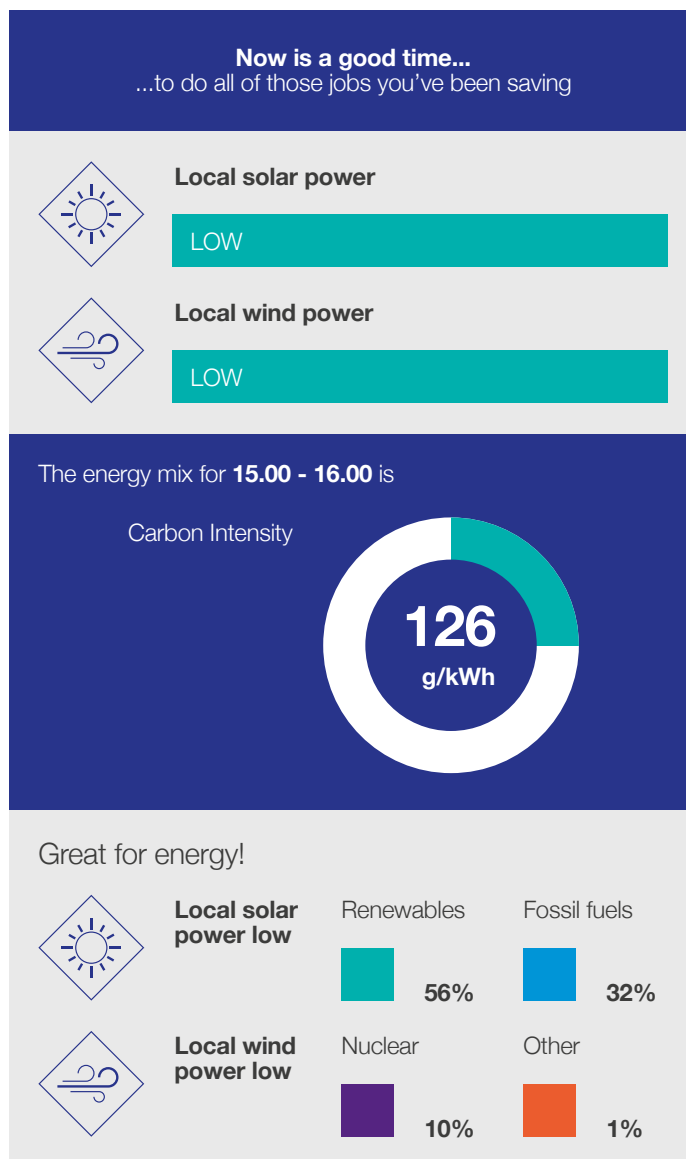
Carbon Tracer helps users understand where their electricity comes from and how much CO₂ was produced from its generation.

This app also informs users on how the carbon intensity of their electricity changes within the day and across the week.

Users could try moving their use of energy intensive appliances (e.g. washing machines, tumble dryers, dishwashers, or water heaters) to periods of lower carbon intensity (green times on the forecast screen).

Access the Carbon Tracer App on our website [here](#).

Our app is also available on [Google Play](#) and the [App Store](#) on Apple Devices



Funding

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.

National Grid: Community Matters Fund

Our Community Matters Fund has awarded £4.3 million to grassroots organisations since its launch in 2021, including £3 million to tackle fuel poverty in the communities we serve.

Applications to the fund are currently closed but will re-open for our next round of funding in spring 2023. Details will be posted [here](#).

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

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,

You can get in touch if your community is hosting an energy themed event and would like your DNO there.

Best wishes,



Faithful Chanda

Development Engineer (Community Energy)
Electricity Systems Management/
System Development

