

Co-op Energy news release

Co-op Energy announces new targets for community energy development

Co-op Energy has confirmed its position as the leading supporter of community energy in the UK by launching a range of new targets to increase its contribution to the sector.

The energy supplier – which is part of The Midcounties Co-operative, the largest independent co-operative in the UK – commits to progress in a number of areas, including power purchase support, local supply innovation, customer engagement and lobbying for good.

Co-op Energy, which has already increased the number of power purchase agreements it has in place with community energy generators from nine in 2014 to 40 today, has now targeted to increase that to 60 over the next three years.

It has also outlined how it is supporting the trialling of innovative new ‘time of use’ and ‘local energy’ tariffs and will work with schools and local groups to demonstrate the positive impacts of community energy on local communities.

More broadly, the business has pledged to continue the lobbying of policy makers and influencers at the highest level for a more balanced legislative and regulatory regime – one that recognises the value of fair, low carbon co-operative solutions – not least via a fourth year of sponsorship of Community Energy Fortnight and full membership of advocacy bodies Community Energy England and REScoop.

Mark Billsborough, head of renewable energy at Co-op Energy, said: “Innovative, community-based projects are a fantastic demonstration of the power of working together at a local level.

“Projects like West Solent Solar and the Schools Energy Co-operative have proven that they can have a significant impact on the nature of energy generation, both in their own communities and in the UK, and we are committed to helping the sector to grow.

“Our support for community projects and the volunteers that drive them is unique, but we believe there is potential to take them to even greater heights if people continue to work together.”

The commitments form part of a new Community Energy Strategy that will be reviewed annually, with progress reported within The Midcounties Co-operative’s annual Social Responsibility Report.

Emma Bridge, chief executive of Community Energy England, said: “We welcome Co-op Energy’s new Community Energy Strategy as a powerful contribution to the development of the sector.

MANCHESTER | BIRMINGHAM | LONDON | EDINBURGH | LIVERPOOL | www.citypress.co.uk

"We of course applaud the exciting commitments to increase usage of local energy generation and the trialling of time-of-use tariffs, but it's also great to see a supplier wear its membership of Community Energy England and REScoop so proudly and pledge to lobby for good.

"After a period of rapid growth, community energy now faces a number of hurdles in the UK and so the launch of this new strategy from Co-op Energy is a timely and significant boost."

ENDS

Created on behalf of Co-op Energy by Citypress.

For more information please contact:

Chris Marritt

chris.marritt@citypress.co.uk

T: +44 (0)161 235 0314

M: +44 (0)7540 047837

Notes to editors

The Co-operative Energy Community Energy Strategy is available at www.cooperativeenergy.coop/Community-energy-strategy

.

About Co-op Energy

Co-op Energy launched in 2010 and now has 400,000 customers. It is the first major British energy supply business to be co-operatively owned. Co-op Energy employs over 500 colleagues and is part of The Midcounties Co-operative, the largest independent Co-operative in the UK. From inception, a primary aim of Co-op Energy has been to facilitate the expansion of community energy generation projects. Via power purchase agreements we provide a secure market for community energy, and now have numerous agreements in place (or under development) with community energy projects. Supported community energy projects range from co-operatives through to charitable trusts and crowd-sourced debt offerings. Supported technologies include wind, solar PV and hydroelectric. More information at www.cooperativeenergy.coop