**In March 2020 Dorset Community Energy (DCE) working with Energy Local CIC and Octopus Energy set up Energy Local Bridport (ELB), a cooperative that allows the trading of lower-cost renewable electricity between local generators and consumers. Energy Local Bridport finally went live in September 2021 with the first pilot group of 14 households supplied with electricity from a local 50kW wind turbine @9.5p/kWh- the first example of real-time local renewable electricity trading in England. A further 40 households joined ELB in Jan-Feb 2022. DCE made a successful application for a stage 1 RCEF feasibility grant for the installation of 250kW of ground-mounted solar PV to supply an additional 300 householders and/or local businesses. The feasibility study indicated a very positive financial model and enabled the selection of a suitable site. The stage 2 grant is still live and assists with the funding of the pre-construction phase of the project. Grid connections have been agreed and the planning application submitted.**

There has been general widespread support for this innovative project seeking to decentralise and decarbonise energy production. While the site is relatively small in terms of area covered, the application has encountered some orchestrated opposition from the owners of the one property adjacent to the site and people using the adjacent footpath. Considerable time and effort have been necessary to respond to the demands of the planning authority. These discussions are ongoing.

**Stage 1 funding successfully enabled the feasibility study to be undertaken. Stage 2 is on going with the outcome of the planning application awaited. If there has been one lesson learned from the exercise to date it would be the need to receive the most comprehensive planning assessment possible including an understanding of the range of potential subjective assessments likely, in addition to the standard objective observations on the merits of the application.**