

# Welcome!



## Lunchtime webinar: Seeing is Believing - Local Authority Matchmaking (North East & Yorkshire)

- John Taylor, Head of Capacity Building & Strategic Development, Community Energy England

**Today, we will also be hearing from:**

- Abbie Rodger, Net Zero Hub Project Manager (North East and Yorkshire region)
- Sarah Burgess, Grand Union Community Energy
- Issy Burkitt, City of York Council



*And there will be a chance for questions at the end...*

# Community Energy England (CEE)



Community Energy England (CEE) is the national network and representative body for community energy.

- A voice for the sector
- We provide opportunities and mechanisms for active community energy practitioners in all parts of England to connect, learn, share business models and help each other overcome obstacles

## 340+ members

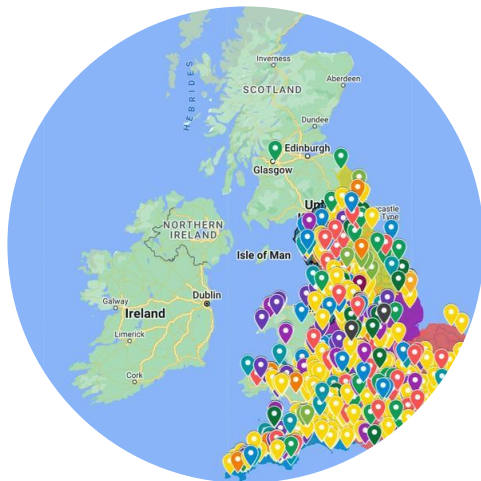
- Community energy organisations, sector stakeholders and other supportive organisations



# Community Energy: Nationally and regionally



Our national map represents the most comprehensive dataset of community energy groups, projects and their locations, that we know to exist nationally.



# An introduction to “Seeing is Believing”



- Funded by the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub
- Delivered by Community Energy England, Ashden, and Centre for Sustainable Energy
- Sharing inspiring stories (site visits, networking, events, etc.)
- Showing how collaborations got started, what's worked well, and how you can get involved
- Brings together politicians, local authorities, civil servants, voluntary sector organisations, and community energy enterprises

# Community Energy in the North East and Yorkshire

Abbie Rodger – North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub

## The North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub

- One of 5 Hubs in England
- Funded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero – (DESNZ), with programme funding from GBE.
- Our aims:
  1. Attract commercial investment into projects and help to develop investment models which accelerate progress to net zero.
  2. Increase the number, quality, and scale of local Net Zero projects being delivered across the region
  3. Develop and support Net Zero elements to wider programmes and initiatives delivered across England
  4. Support a national knowledge transfer programme to improve information sharing, training, and evaluation
  5. Raise local awareness of opportunities for and benefits of local Net Zero investment



## Why is Community Energy Important?

- Supports in the move towards renewable and clean energy generation and use.
- Reduces reliance on the grid.
- Profits for local people.
- Can help to tackle rural fuel poverty.
- Builds community resilience.
- Empowerment and unity for local communities.
- Reduction in carbon emissions.
- Job creation.
- Development of innovative technologies.
- Can protect the local landscape.



## How is the Hub Supporting Community Energy?

- Great British Energy Community Fund
- Community Energy Steering Group
- Capacity Building:
  - Carbon Literacy Training
  - Video Case Studies
  - Community Energy Surgeries
  - Community Energy Workshops
  - Seeing is Believing Programme



## Seeing is Believing Programme

- Delivered to show the art of the possible for CE
- Build a more self sufficient and resilient sector
- Connect CE Groups with their Local Authorities
- Highlight the importance of CE to decision makers
- Encourage community leaders to be more involved in CE
- Prove that CE needs a place in local energy plans
- Includes:
  - SiB tours
  - Networking events
  - Match-making programme
  - Community Engagement



## CE Workshops and Surgeries

- Beginner level workshops delivered in 2024 focussing on:
  - Low Carbon Tech
  - Net Zero Project Planning and Development
  - Commercial Case Development for CE Projects
  - Procurement and Financing for CE Projects
- Intermediate level workshops delivered this year on above topics, with the additions of a beginner lever Grid Connection Process workshop.
- All recordings will be available on our website or by using the QR code.
- 1:1 technical surgeries still available – can be booked via the link on our website, or by using the QR code.
- Delivered by Scene Connect.



Workshop Recordings:    Book a Surgery Session:



## Carbon Literacy Training

- Delivered to 84 CE and LA members in 2024
- Now open to VCSE/CE, Local Authority Officers/Leaders, Elected Members, and the Private Energy Sector.
- Focus on Community Energy throughout
- Courses running until February next year
- All dates and sign-up links can be found on [Carbon Literacy for North East & Yorkshire | Eventbrite](#) or through QR code,
- Delivered by Change Agents UK and certified by The Carbon Literacy Project.



## Great British Energy Community Fund

- £5m grant scheme for urban and rural communities to develop community energy projects.
- The GBECF funds are for community-based organisations, which are developing projects for the benefit of the local community.
- Funding is for the development of projects from concept to investable scheme – no Capital funding available.
- Project proposals should ensure **at least 50% community ownership** and must benefit the local community in their final project.
- Up to £40k available for Stage 1, and £100k available for Stage 2.
- Closing date for applications to NEY is 12<sup>th</sup> November.
- All information, guidance, and applications forms are on our website.



## Community Energy Team



Abbie Rodger

Net Zero Hub Project Manager and  
Community Energy Lead



Sue Manson

Community Energy Development  
Officer



Emma Dowson

Project Officer for Community Energy

All enquiries sent to the inbox  
will be passed on to one of the  
Community Energy Team who  
will respond ASAP.

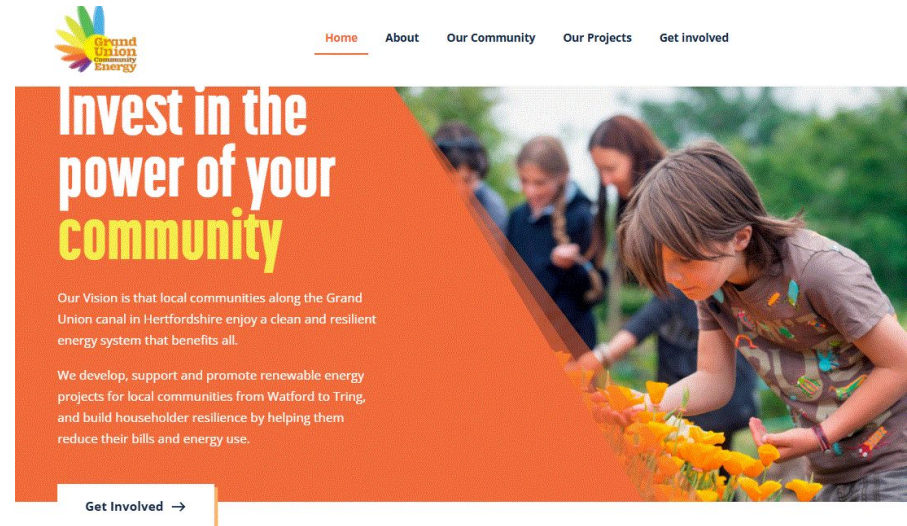
[enquiries@NEYnetzerohub.com](mailto:enquiries@NEYnetzerohub.com)



north east & yorkshire  
**NET ZERO HUB**

# Grand Union Community Energy (GUCE)

- Community Benefit Society 2012
- Volunteer Board
- South West Herts
- 40 members
- Paid contractors for projects
- Community benefit driven
- Power Up and Power Down



# Partnerships are key



Fast Followers/Innovate UK, Healthy Hubs, Warmer Homes Support



Healthy Hubs, Healthier Homes Project, Warmer Homes Support

# Our journey with Three Rivers District Council

**Nov 2022** - Met Councillor for coffee

**Feb 2023** - Call from Sustainability Officer for bid partnership

**April 2023** - Won the bid!

**July 2023** - Innovate UK 2 year project kicked off

**Dec 2023** - Solar Canopy Project bid, won, delivered

**Oct 2024** - Data Centre speculative bid, won, kicked off

**July 2025** - Community Engagement Partner for IRS

**RESULT:** Oct 2025 - Sign off two contracts directly with TRDC for continuing support

# Questions

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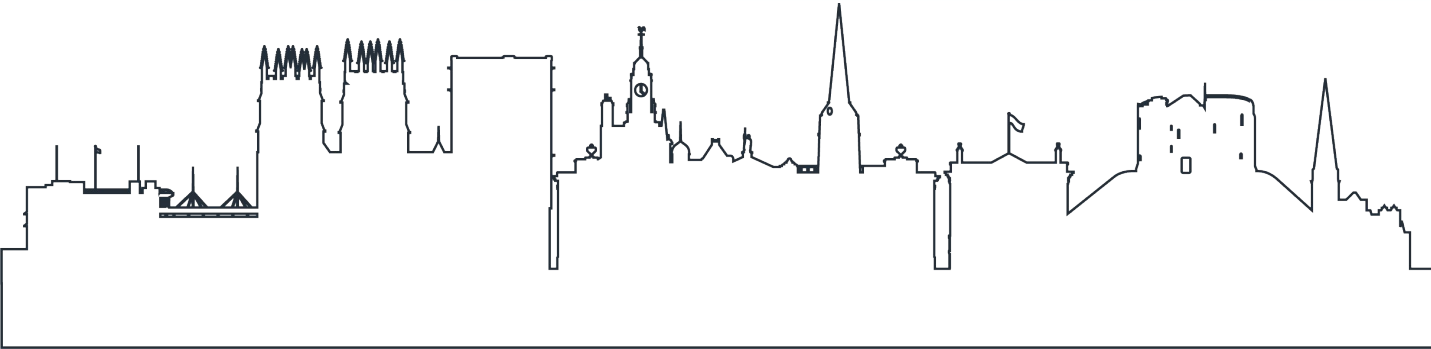
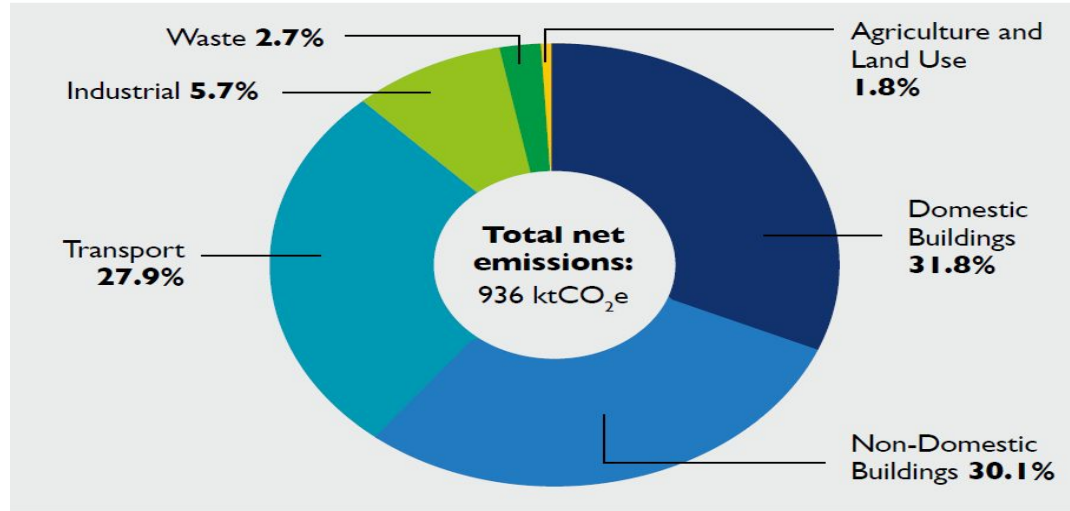
**[Sarah.Burgess@guce.org.uk](mailto:Sarah.Burgess@guce.org.uk)**

# City of York Council

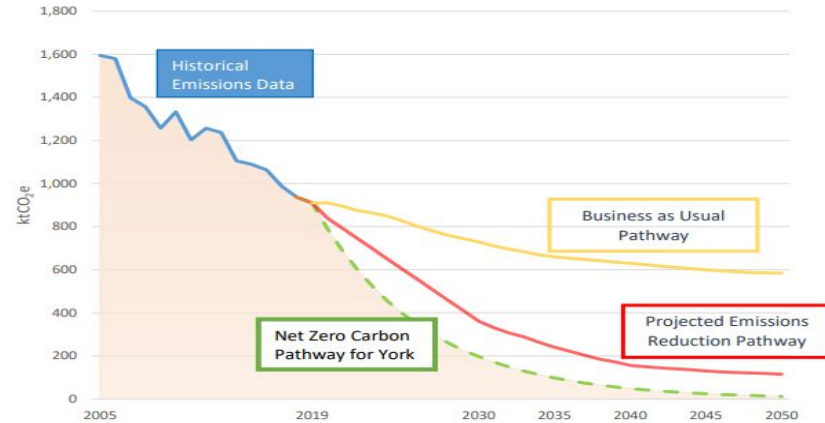
Issy Burkitt – Carbon Reduction Project Officer



# Climate Change



# Climate Change Strategy

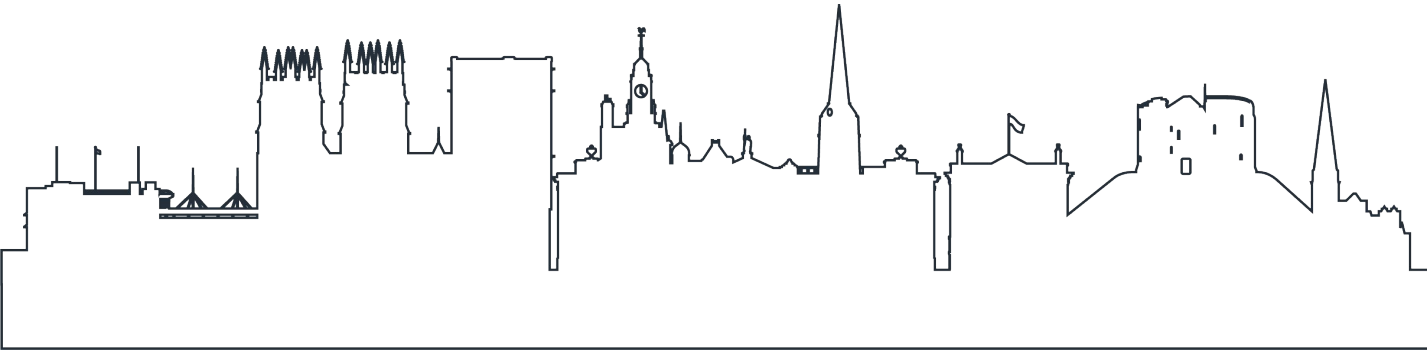


## Engagement

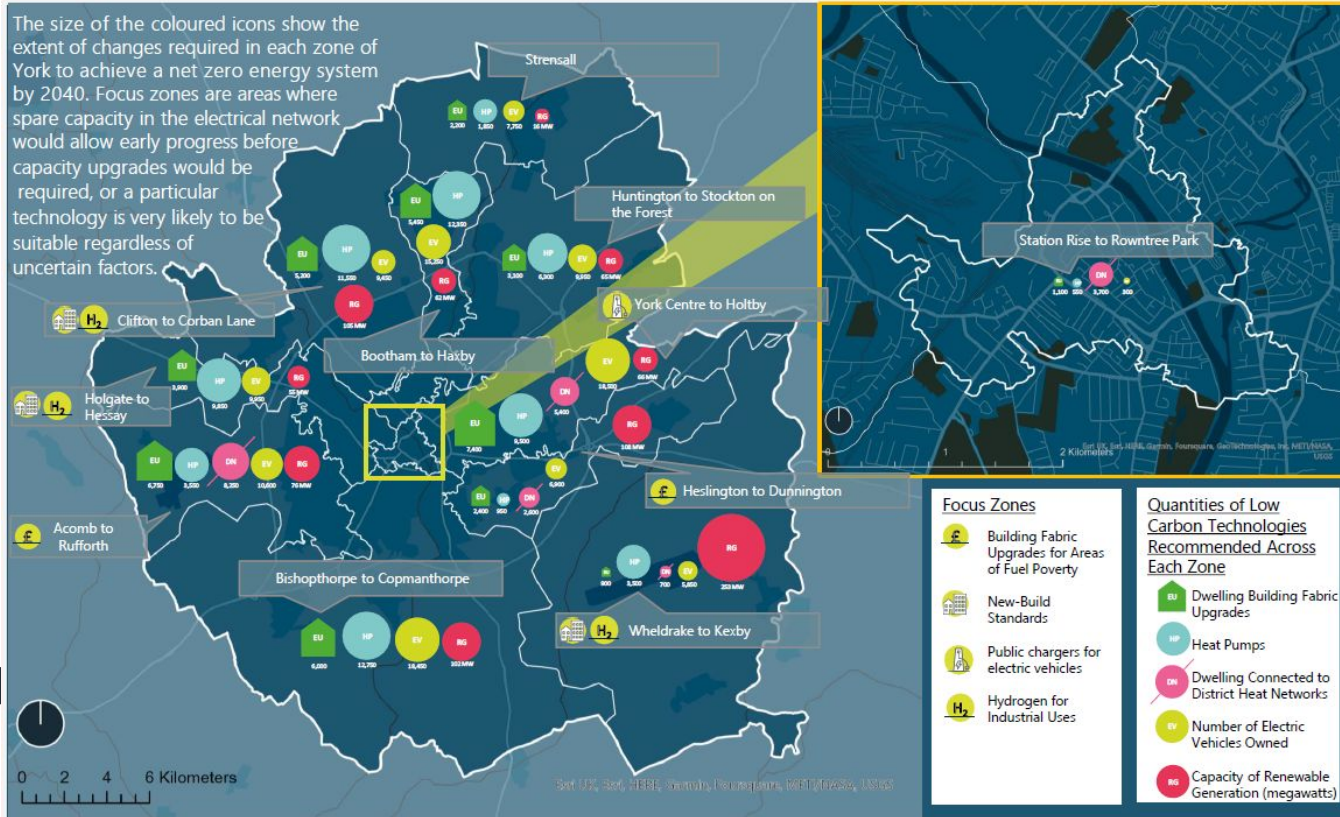
- 1.1 Clear communication and information
- 1.2 Increase awareness and understanding
- 1.3 Build strong relationships and networks
- 1.4 Identify best practice

## Energy

- 7.1 Increase renewable energy generation
- 7.2 Improve energy flexibility and storage
- 7.3 Support increase in local community energy ownership



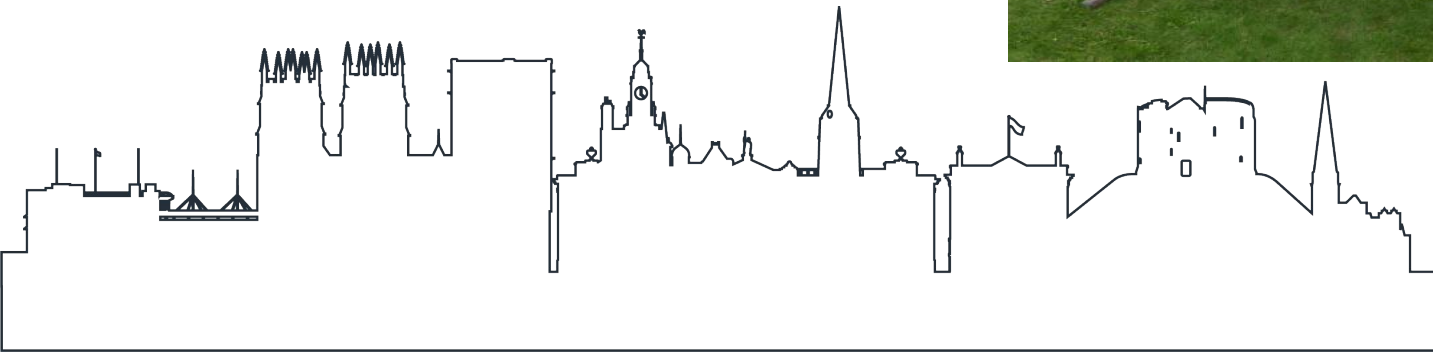
# Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP)



# York Community Energy and City of York Council

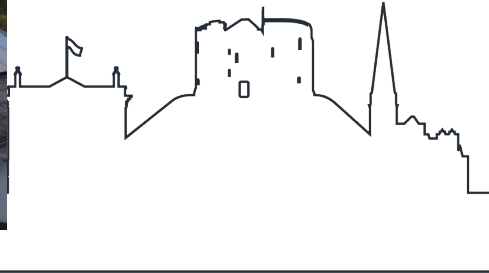


- Retrofit projects
- Solar for Schools
- Community Energy



# Solar for Schools

- Technical knowledge
- Promotion/marketing
- Expert advice



# Seeing is Believing



Prepared by the Centre for Sustainable Energy on behalf of the Greater South East Net Zero Hub.

## Collaborating on community energy

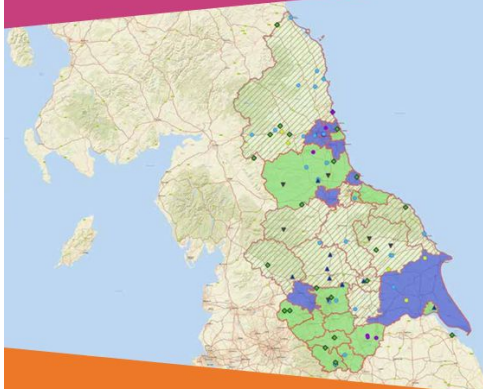
A guide for local authorities on working with community energy groups

Mary Anderson, Ailsa Gibson, Rhona Pringle (all CAG Consultants) **March 2025**



## Community Energy Support in the North East and Yorkshire Region: How it can move forward

May 2023



# Seeing is Believing

## Local authority matchmaking work:

- Local authorities and community energy enterprises have increasingly shared priorities and values when it comes to local net zero delivery.
- Community Energy organisations across the country have already mobilised over £24 million of investment over the past year.
- Increasing collaboration and resources coming forward through the Local Power Plan via GB Energy. (early 2026)



# Seeing is Believing

## Common Challenges:

- Public Sector procurement rules
- Obtaining legal permissions.
- Agreeing long term power purchase contracts.
- Internal capacity to manage projects.
- Blending grant funding and investment (i.e. PSDS, local climate bonds)



# Seeing is Believing

## Local authority matchmaking work:

- Connect local councils and community energy groups
- Site visits and tours

## Upcoming events:

- 26 November, 10 am - 4pm, York: Tour
- 4 December, 10 am - 4 pm: Newcastle: Tour and networking



# Other programmes



## The Energy Learning Network:

- Free insights, resources and connections for existing community energy groups
- Mentoring and peer learning opportunities
- Collaboration between CEE, Ashden, the Centre for Sustainable Energy, Community Energy Scotland, Community Energy Wales, and Northern Ireland's Action Renewables.



**Energy Learning Network**  
**Rhwydwaith Addysg Ynni**

## Community Energy GO:

- Connect community groups across England with expert advice, practical tools and hands-on support.
- Free, tailored to help develop renewable energy or low-carbon projects.



**Community Energy Go**

# Upcoming events



- Winter Conference, 17 November (Sheffield) - join the waiting list
- Community Energy Awards, 17 November (Sheffield) - RSVP now
- Maximising income from your community energy project - 2 December (Online)
- The next phase of community energy: Supermarkets and warehouses - 4 December (Online)



# Join us



CEE's membership network includes active practitioners, stakeholders and supporters across the country. Join us to connect to other organisations in the sector, learn, create collaborations and overcome barriers. Our network is vibrant and determined and we'd love you to be part of it.

## *Membership brings:*

- Access to our regular Member Newsletter
- Your organisation featured as a supporter on our website and member map
- The opportunity to promote your news/projects/services, job vacancies, events and share offers through our newsletter and social media channels
- Voting rights at our AGM and the opportunity to stand as a Director
- Exclusive access to our Practitioner and all-member Discussion Forums
- The opportunity to feed into our consultation responses and shape our advocacy agenda
- Nominate yourself and others for the annual Community Energy Awards



Any questions?



**We would love your feedback and suggestions**

Please answer our poll or email us with any other feedback, suggestions for events, or questions:

**[j.taylor@communityenergyengland.org](mailto:j.taylor@communityenergyengland.org)**