

Welcome!



Lunchtime webinar: Seeing is Believing - The role of community energy in decarbonising public buildings

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

Today, we will also be hearing from:

- Marian Kempson from North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub
- Mike Smyth from Energy4All
- Ben Atkinson from North Lincolnshire 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

330+ members

- Community energy organisations, sector stakeholders and other supportive organisations



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

Seeing is Believing



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

Collaborating on community energy

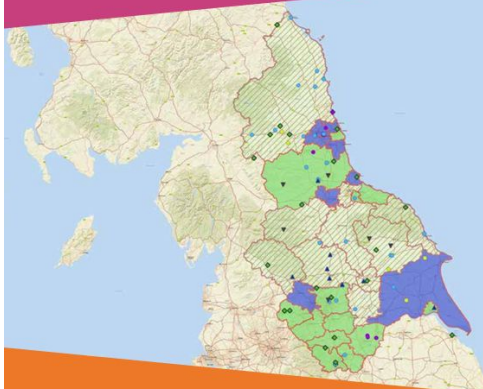
A guide for local authorities on working with community energy groups

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



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

Public Sector Estate Energy Reduction & Decarbonisation

- Team provides support for Estate-wide Strategy development, Energy Reduction, Planning, Funding and Delivery

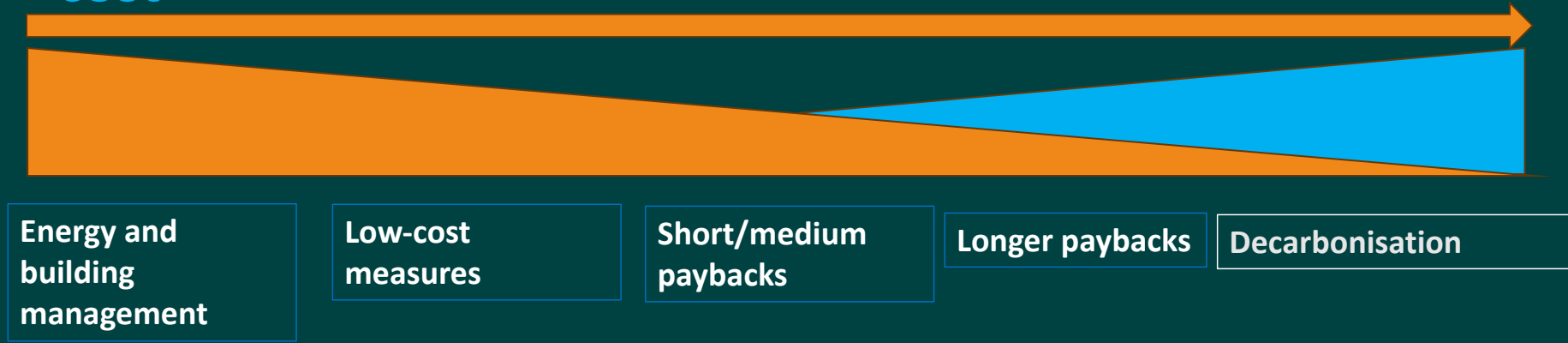


Public Sector Estate in the Northeast and Yorkshire

- **26 Local Authorities, 6 Mayoral Authorities**
- **Approx. 33 NHS Trusts:** acute, community and mental health
- **Police and Emergency Services**
- Several thousand maintained **schools**, academies, multi-academy trusts and free schools
- Town and Parish Councils
- Further education providers
- Nursery schools
- Central Government Departments



Decreasing annual carbon emissions/**Increasing capital cost**



Decreasing annual energy costs

Decreasing energy costs in the long term



Solar PV

- GB Energy Programme 25/26
 - 75 schools in NE and Yorkshire
- 15 NHS Trusts
- Mayors Renewable Fund: over 60 solar projects
- LAs/public sector organisations
 - Developing decarbonisation/solar strategy, solar ready buildings
- Solar carports



NHS and Emergency Service Support

- Estate Energy Reduction and Decarbonisation Strategy
- GB Energy Solar for NHS Support
- Sharing best practices

York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



Hull University Teaching Hospital NHS Trust



Public Estate Support

**Energy &
Decarbonisation
Strategy
Development**



Planning



Delivery



Hub support

- Energy Reduction and Decarbonisation **Strategy Development**
- Building & Energy **Data** Collation & Analysis



Hub support

- **Plan and pipeline Development**
- Area Based Approach : **Mapping Public Estate across the region** & LAEPs
- Heat Networks



Hub support

- Plan **Delivery**
- **Business case support**
- Support for PSDS funded projects and lessons learned
- **Funding** and Finance options
- **Collaboration/skills/Knowledge**

Key elements of Team support for Local Authorities

- Estate Decarbonisation Strategy Development for public sector organisations
- Business case development support for Local Authorities
- Mapping Public Estate across the region
- Regional workshops and collaboration

Happy to answer any questions about Public Estate
Decarbonisation

NEYPED@westyorks-ca.gov.uk

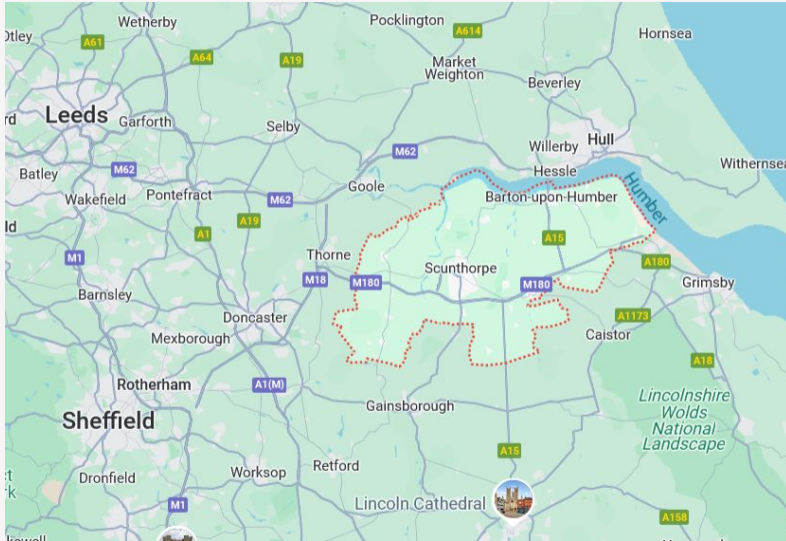


North Lincolnshire Community Energy – in partnership with Energy4All and North Lincolnshire Council

Mike Smyth, Energy4All

Community Energy England Conference,
January 2026

North Lincolnshire Council



- Small Unitary authority, Conservative controlled, based around Scunthorpe
- Difficult area for green groups
- Under stress
- Intensely industrial in Scunthorpe and along parts of Trent and Humber; also very rural
- Council net zero policy – despite the steel works



Benefits of a community energy/local authority partnership

- Plenty of unmortgaged freeholds and electricity consumption
- Creditworthy
- Contacts and introductions
- Same mission – just transition to net zero; support community; significant financial savings
- Trust and mutual support; transparent
- External skills, time and funds
- Focus on delivery and not swamped by rules and processes
- Monitoring and maintenance provided
- In partnership we deliver more renewable energy, more quickly, and more cheaply than either can do alone



Achievements since launch – January 2023



- 23 sites delivered; 2MWp; capex c £2 million
- 5 non-Council sites in that total, introduced by Council
- 1,600 MWh per year
- £330,000 aggregate energy savings to schools and Council in last 2 years
- £1.35 million raised from 2 community share offers (including £100,000 investment from Council)
- About 20 educational presentations given; one experiment running; active community engagement programme
- Pipeline: 6 sites committed (one very large – the main council depot)
- Significant developing pipeline: including all remaining suitable maintained schools
- Profitable: 2025/6 post interest surplus c£25,000 to community fund



The Towns Fund – Local Power Plan could be similar

- Clean growth, catalyst for more external funds, creative

- How we used it:

Feasibility external costs (surveyors)

Fill the roof with solar, not scaled for internal use

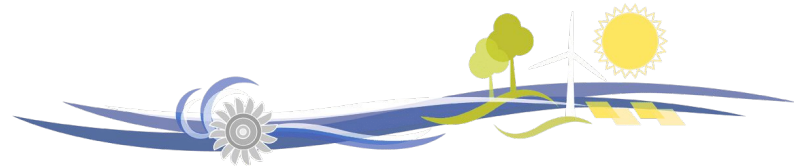
Attractive PPA

Higher than normal projected returns to NLCE (8% IRR) to build community fund



Support from Council

- 2 able officers providing considerable support; senior officer buy in
- Support on site finding and site delivery
- Support from most other departments
- Financial investment in shares
- Determination to overcome all the obstacles of local authority bureaucracy
- Political support, including senior councillor on NLCE board
- Standard documents (licence, lease, grant claim) and processes agreed
- Good news stories
- Delivery – far more quickly – it works
- Not perfect though!



Support from Energy4All

- Experience and resources to support and develop NLCE
- Provision of community engagement officer (part time); project developers; communications, accounts, admin etc – supporting volunteer board and giving Council confidence
- Share offer support
- O&M provision
- Comprehensive support to board and society: accounts, billing, export PPAs, REGOs, monitoring, education etc; manageable board role
- Feasibility and contracts support
- Enables delivery – far more quickly – it works



The Baths Hall



Energy4All

Energy4All are experts in developing community-owned renewable energy projects. We currently support a network of more than 30 renewable energy societies across the UK.

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**North
Lincolnshire
Council**

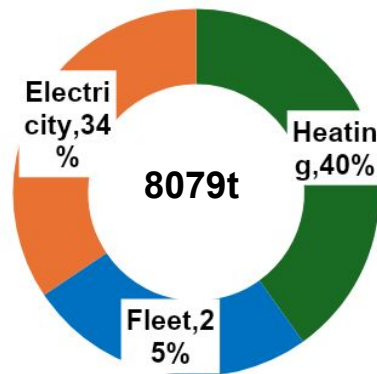
**Ben Atkinson
Energy and Sustainability Manager**

A bit about us;

Responsible for **213 sites** exc. commercial property.

- Consumed 14,000,000 kwh of grid supplied electricity
- Generated 870,000 kwh
 - 520,000 kwh via NLCE
 - 350,000 kwh via our own systems
- Consumed 15,500,000 kwh of gas
- Consumed 5,000,000 kwh of biomass
- Consumed 1,500,000 kwh of oil (no. of schools)

NLC Scope 1 and 2 emissions (tCO₂e)
Financial Year 2024/25



What do we want to do?

Simple - stop burning stuff.

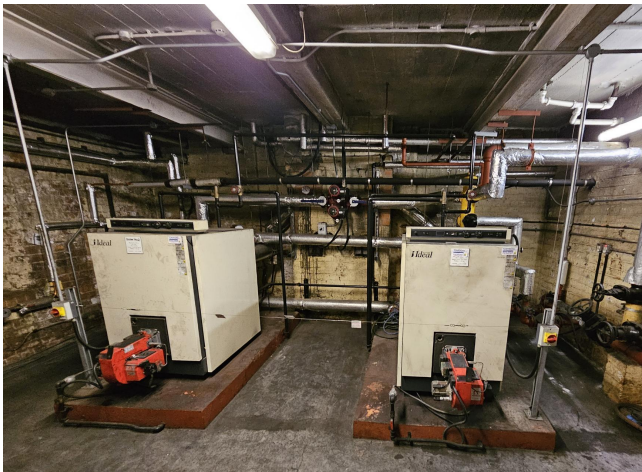
- Lead by example.
- Reduce our dependency on fossil fuels.
- Improve local air quality.
- Reduce energy costs.
- Educate and engage residents.
- Retain funds locally.

How do we do it?

Now that's the challenge we all face!

1. Sort out electricity supplies (reduce market exposure).
2. Upgrade buildings
 1. Address heat losses, roof repairs, upgrade controls.
3. Plan effectively
4. Carefully assess all technical options
5. Build strong business cases, secure finance
6. Work together cross sector

... push boundaries, work at pace, but don't rush.



Role of community energy

- Proven delivery model (elec)
- Backed by people that care
- Widely accepted
- Attractive to councils
- Ability to access finance (grants)
- Less bureaucracy
- Resource

Moving forwards;

1. Work out how community energy can address other aspects preventing projects (i.e. roof costs).
2. Continue to upskill – heat decarb.
3. Push on in developing generating assets (our consumption is growing!)
4. Simplify the messaging and legals.
5. Work cross sector





Ben Atkinson

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**Even better, register an interest
in becoming a member of NLCE**

[Register Interest - North
Lincolnshire Community Energy
\(nlce.coop\)](#)

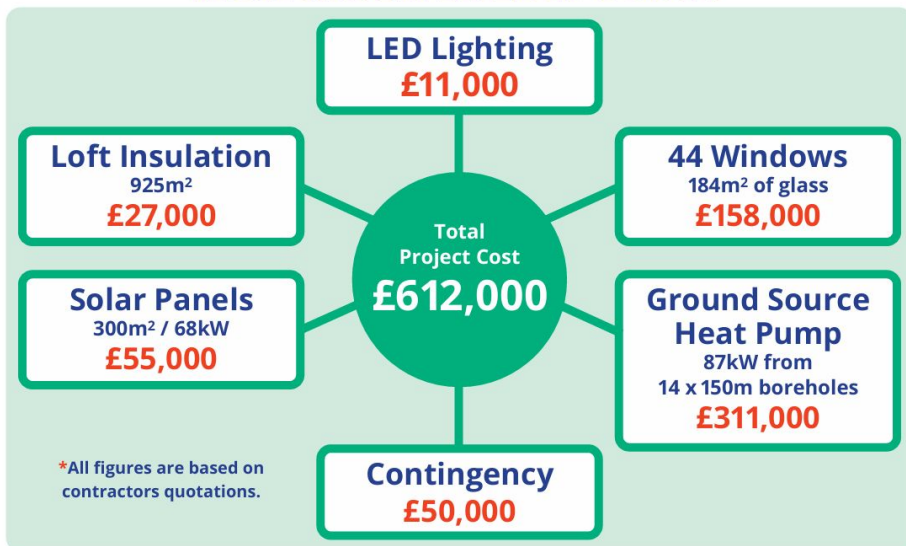
Community Energy and LA examples



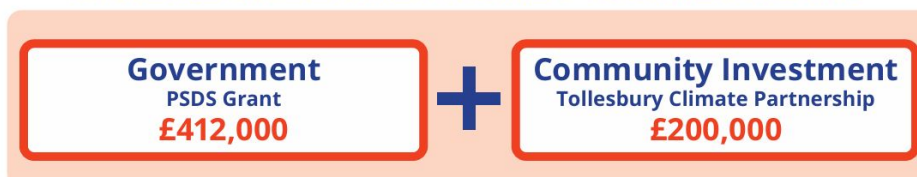
TOLLESBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL DECARBONISATION PROJECT



HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?



WHERE WILL THE MONEY COME FROM?



HOW IS THE INVESTMENT PAID BACK?



Community Energy and LA examples



[HOME](#) > [A CLEAN ENERGY REVOLUTION FOR TOLLESBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL](#) >

A clean energy revolution
for Tollesbury Primary
School



Community Energy and LA examples



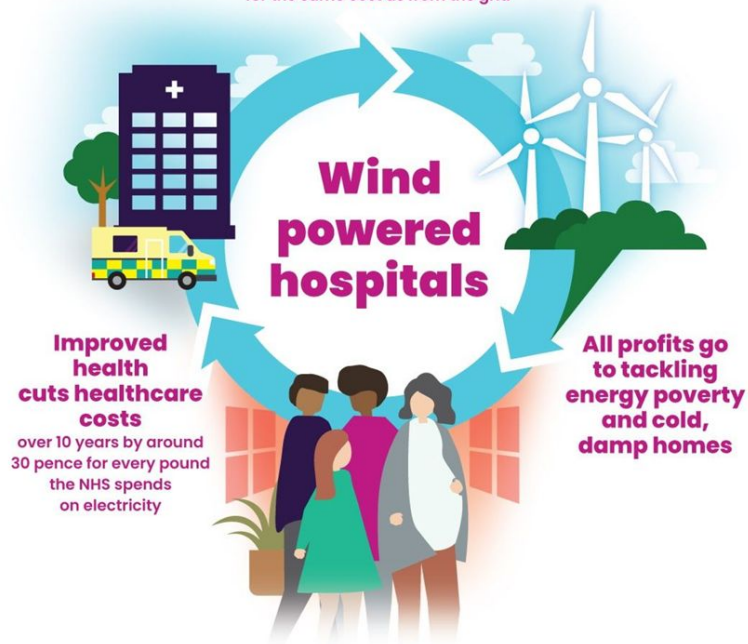
Wind Powered Hospitals

How climate friendly community energy could power the NHS and tackle health problems from energy poverty

December 2020



NHS Trusts buy electricity from community wind projects for the same cost as from the grid



Wind powered hospitals

Improved health cuts healthcare costs
over 10 years by around 30 pence for every pound the NHS spends on electricity

All profits go to tackling energy poverty and cold, damp homes

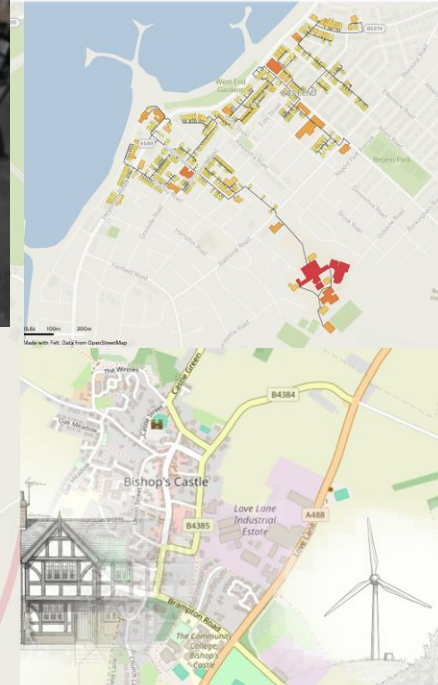
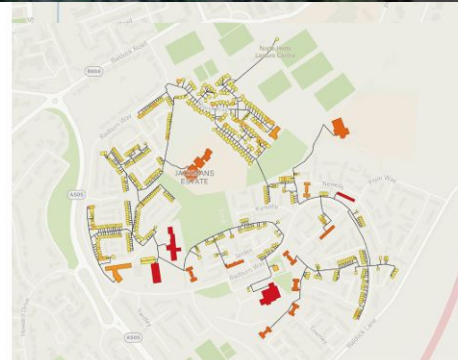
Community Energy and LA examples



The Community Heat Development Unit

Community wind turbines powering district heat networks - with public sector buildings as anchor loads.

<https://communityheat.org.uk>





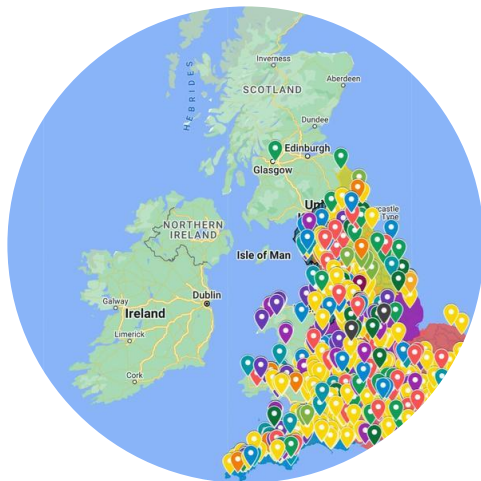
Any questions?



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.



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.

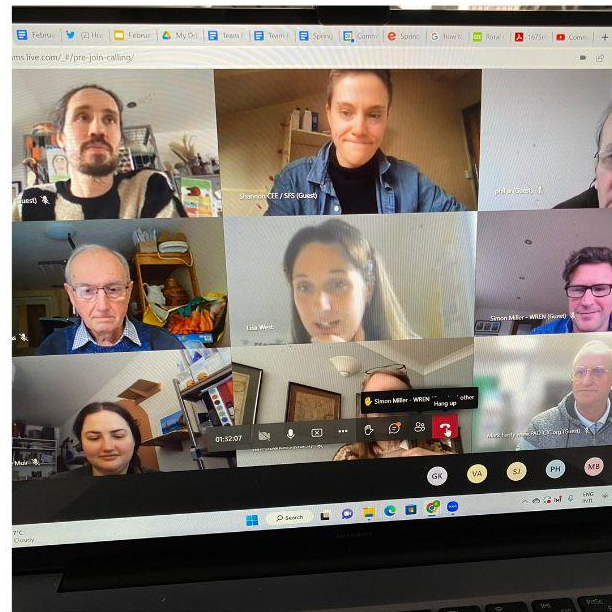
Membership brings:

- 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

Our upcoming events



- **Love wind webinar, 12 February (Online) - Register now**
- **Understanding public procurement for community energy: Social value and community wealth building** (Seeing is Believing lunchtime webinar: North East and Yorkshire), 26 February (Online) - **Register now**



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