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Net Zero Community Strategy

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Contents

This strategy was produced by National Grid supported by Regen

Foreword

Faithful Chanda, Community Energy Engineer, National Grid

Reflecting on my first year as National Grid's Community Energy Engineer, it has been truly inspiring to see all the amazing community-led projects advancing a net zero future.

The Community Energy Engineer is a role that we created in response to your feedback to ensure consistent high-quality engagement with community-led groups across our region. We are pleased that the introduction of this role has been successful in achieving the goals that you set for us.

You wanted to see us support new entrants into the sector. We have focused on creating new content like our 2022 YouTube series that supports new entrants to the sector, and publicising resources that raise awareness about the support available for community- led projects.

You wanted to get a better understanding about heat and transport and increased access to data that supports your projects. We published our 2022 Low Carbon Heat Strategy, produced a video guide for connecting community projects and provided data about connections and reinforcement that helped connect five new community-led projects to our network.

You wanted us to continue to engage, understand your needs and amplify your voice with Department for Energy Strategy and Net Zero (DESNZ) and Office for Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem).

We returned to in-person forums, enabling community groups to engage with us face-to-face to explore the opportunities and challenges of community energy, and ensure that your messages are heard by the regulator and government.

I would like to thank every one of the 136 individuals and community organisations that joined our six Net Zero Community Forums over the past year. Your input is vital and helps shape how we grow and evolve the support we offer to community projects.

It is thanks to your feedback that we are proud to publish our 2023 Community Energy Strategy, which sets out our plans to significantly step up the support we offer to local groups and community projects.

The strategy is a measure of the scale of ambition that we have set out in our 2023-28 business plan and as we embark on the next five years, our priorities are clear. We will:

- Support new and existing community energy organisations
- Engage with and amplify the voices of community energy
- Grow understanding of how to decarbonise heat and transport, and prioritise energy efficiency
- Increase access to data and collaboration on innovation projects.

This strategy sets out how we will meet those key priorities. It outlines how we will provide more policy insights to community groups to influence decisions, produce more guides and education materials to grow sector knowledge, deliver more events and engagement opportunities to gather your feedback and focus on innovation in heat, transport and energy efficiency to ensure that you are kept up to date with the latest technologies and solutions.

I have complete faith and trust in our combined efforts to be able to deliver results in 2023 that will increase resilience in our communities, network, drive innovation and net zero.

I would like to thank you all again for your engagement and ongoing support.

All the best and please take care,

Kind regards,

Faithful Chanda
Community Energy Engineer

Get in touch

Contact Faithful to discuss your project, what support is available from National Grid and how community energy fits into our strategic priorities.

T: 01332 827448
M: 07595 434811
E: fchanda@nationalgrid.co.uk

Introduction to National Grid

National Grid and National Grid Electricity Distribution

In September 2022, Western Power Distribution (WPD) became National Grid Electricity Distribution (NGED) – part of the National Grid Group. This strategy has been delivered by National Grid Electricity Distribution. Other parts of National Grid Group, such as National Grid Transmission, have separate approaches to communities, but we are committed to spreading best practice in this area across the Group.

National Grid Energy Distribution is the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) that serves 25 million customers through eight million connections or metering points, from the Lincolnshire coast, across the Midlands, South Wales the South West and the Isles of Scilly. Our network is the largest of the six DNOs, with Distribution System Operator capabilities, that deliver electricity to homes and businesses across Great Britain.

At National Grid, the critical role we play in society is changing. In the past, our main job has been keeping the lights on by looking after a network of wires, poles, pylons, cables and substations delivering power to homes and businesses across our network.

Now, we are committed to supporting the UK's ambition to achieve a fully decarbonised electricity system by 2035, as set out in the government's Net Zero Strategy. This will involve mass uptake of low carbon technologies in homes, such as heat pumps and electric vehicles (EVs), and significantly increasing the amount of renewable energy generation.

Integrating our distribution system into National Grid makes us the largest electricity transmission and distribution business in the UK, meaning we can work faster to meet the huge increase in demand for electricity we will see in the years ahead.

We know that we cannot achieve the scale of change necessary without bringing people and communities with us. It is our mission to respond to the changing energy landscape and our customers' needs, while protecting the most vulnerable in our society.

Community-led projects have a vital role to play in championing the connection of renewables, as well as demand reduction and flexibility schemes.

Through community energy schemes, local communities benefit from a range of social, environmental and economic benefits, including:

- Alleviating fuel poverty;
- Energy engagement and education;
- Community funds from renewable energy projects.

We want to continue to help ensure a just transition, with community energy at the heart of our future energy system.

As part of our commitment to enable a more sustainable future in the fairest way possible, we have undertaken a programme of community and local energy engagement since 2014 alongside community energy experts, Regen.

This strategy sets out our continued commitment to support community and local energy organisations across our region.

How this strategy impacts other areas of our work

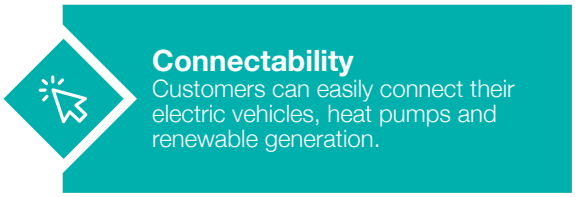
Our focus is to achieve the best possible positive outcomes for our customers, by utilising innovative solutions and smarter working practices to drive efficiency in all we do.

This strategy forms part of a suite of wide-ranging, ambitious and interconnected strategies that we will be implementing in our price control period 2023-2028 (RIIO-ED2) - (Revenue = Incentives + Innovation + Outputs in Electricity Distribution).

Each one is designed to contribute towards the delivery of the same four overarching strategic outcomes we will achieve for customers. Each of our strategies is embedded across our operations and never delivered in silos.

This will lead to joined-up delivery, utilising opportunities to share knowledge and expertise across various National Grid teams and achieve maximum benefit for customers.

By doing so, we will ensure each of our strategies has a far-reaching impact and identifies opportunities to improve service, performance and efficiency in every possible area of our business.



The following table provides a snapshot of some of the extensive impacts of this Net Zero Communities Strategy, and signposts to other areas of our business plan upon which its successful delivery will be dependent.

Strategy	Reference to communities
Network visibility	Supporting communities to access local electricity data through schemes that are installing low voltage network monitors.
Customer vulnerability	Collaborating with community energy organisations to leverage their role as trusted community agencies to specifically identify, engage and support people in vulnerable situations and ensure they are not left behind in a smart future.
Digitalisation Strategy and Action Plan	Use digitalisation to support community groups in producing the most cost-effective solution for their projects.
Distribution System Operator (DSO)	Making flexibility markets more accessible to domestic customers and local communities.
Innovation	Supporting communities to actively participate in, and benefit from, National Grid's innovation projects.
Social contract	Supporting National Grid employees to volunteer with community energy organisations.

Current community energy activity in the region

The gas and cost of living crises mean that power generation and energy efficiency emerged as the two key focuses moving forward for the community groups, building on the strong work already put in place.

119 community energy groups operate in NGED's distribution licence area, with a majority of these in the South West region. 2021 showcased a steady increase in electricity generation amongst the organisations that responded to the **State of the Sector survey**, as well as more considerable growth in heat generation, storage and electric vehicle charge point deployment.

2021 Insights

Energy efficiency

2,421 number of people receiving energy efficiency funding

£2.1m saved through energy efficiency activities

Funding

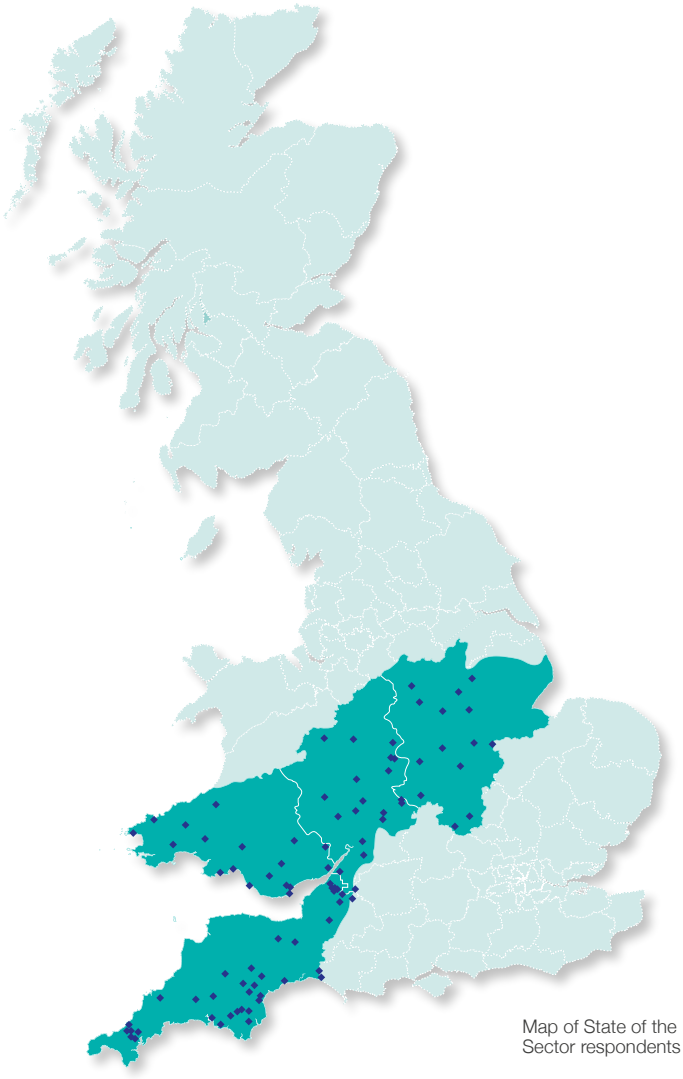
35 organisations managing a Community Benefit Fund

£1.1m total value of Community Benefit Funds

Low Carbon Transport

15 number of EVs purchased

£1.1m number of charge points purchased



Map of State of the Sector respondents

>120 organisations involved in community energy

19,381 people receiving energy advice in 2021

19,000 members of energy groups in 2021

150 MW of total electricity generation

Case Study: Repurposing an old landfill site into a community owned solar farm

Plymouth Energy Community, a well-established community energy organisation, has had planning permission approved for its new **13 MW Chelson Meadows solar farm**, in partnership with Plymouth City Council.

The solar panels will cover around 17.8 hectares of land on an old landfill site to the east of Plymouth and will be able to generate enough electricity for around 3,800 homes each year, saving up to 3,330 tCO2e each year. The funding for the project will be raised in part through a community share offer, with surplus income used for local and community benefit.

Their planning application was approved at the end of June 2022 and commits to 25% biodiversity net gain, managing an additional 20 hectares on top of the solar farm's 17 hectares.

There are several key learnings gained from the project so far. This includes the importance of starting conversations with National Grid early and regularly providing updates to best understand the current practicalities of grid connections. This was reiterated in this **connections video** that was published this year with **Exeter Community Energy**.

The scale of the Chelson Meadows project also required significant project management time, which needed to be carefully budgeted for, and finding the right construction partners to work with to ensure successful delivery.

How we will support community energy in 2023/24

Following on from the work we have delivered since 2014, we want to show our continued support for the community energy sector.

We continue to recognise the added social, economic and environmental value community energy projects have for our customers and communities, and therefore want to build on our work from last year to provide even more support to the community energy sector.

The following actions have been created through a collaborative process with you, our key stakeholders. We have listened to the feedback you've given to us through forums, surveys and one-to-one conversations and designed these actions to support you as best we can.

Supporting **community energy via...**

- Contact with our Community Energy Engineers
- Community energy forums
- Amplifying views to Ofgem and DESNZ
- Data access support
- Supporting innovation projects
- Videos and podcasts
- Quarterly newsletters
- Plain speaking guides

How we will support community energy in 2023/24

Supporting newer community energy organisations

As the climate and energy crises have come to the forefront of public consciousness, interest in community energy has sky-rocketed, with more individuals, businesses, local authorities and others interested in t h e benefit i t could provide to their local communities.

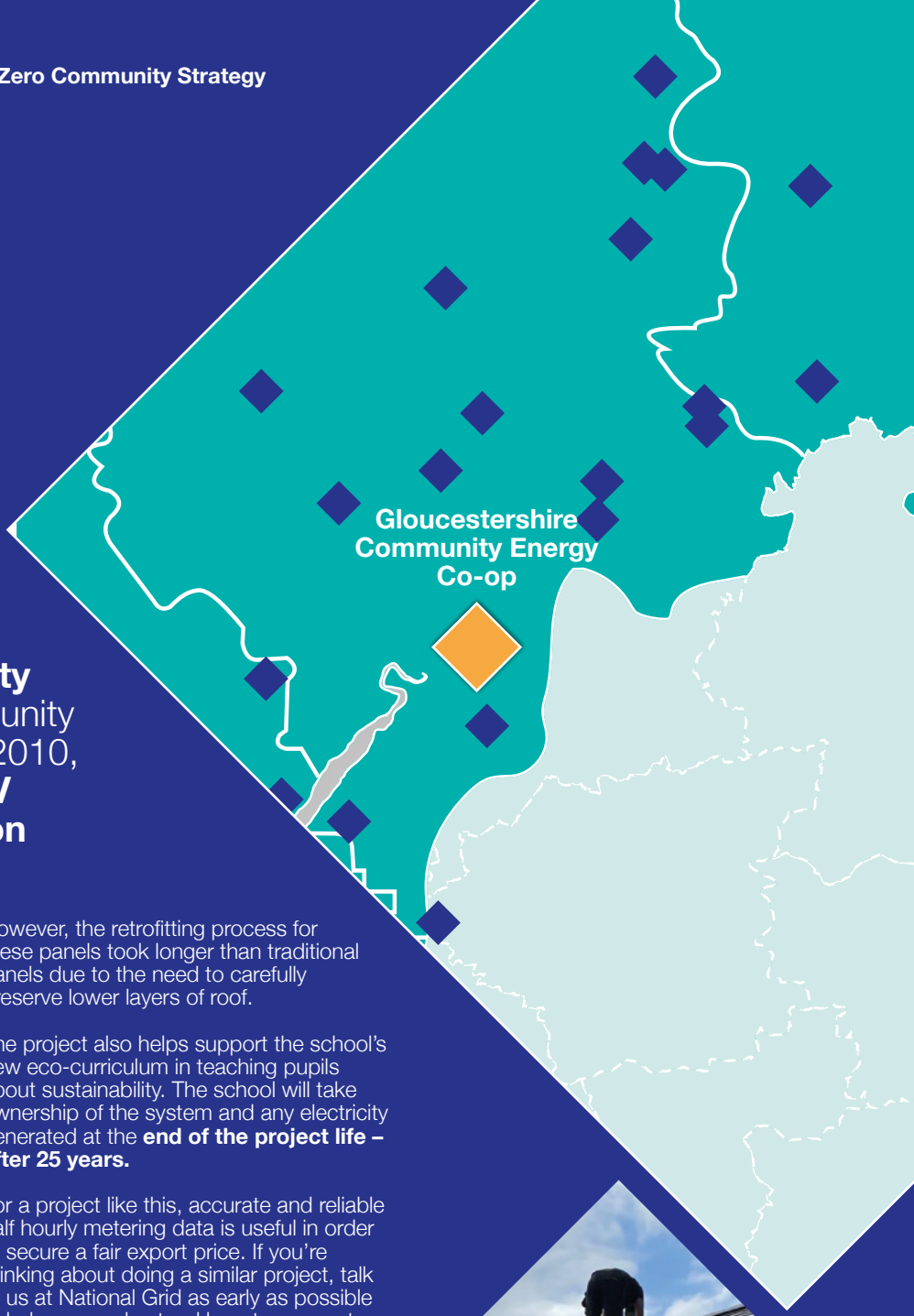
To up-skill these new entrants and ensure they are learning from those who have come before them, we are committed to providing accessible guides, case studies, and opportunities for knowledge sharing.

We will…	Measure of success	Timeframe
Re-promote our series of guides and resources for community energy organisations through newsletters, forums and social media.	Guides re-shared either online, via email or at forums at least once per month.	Throughout 2023/2024
Support community energy organisations to identify funding opportunities from other sources through our Community Energy Engineer and newsletter.	At least two funding opportunities for community energy organisations shared in each newsletter.	Throughout 2023/2024
Deliver accessible forums that cater for new entrants and cover introductions to community energy in plain English, with any energy-specific terminology explained.	At least one agenda item in each forum catered towards new entrants.	Throughout 2023/2024
Publish the recordings from our online forums, alongside relevant resources discussed on our website.	Two video recordings of forums published online alongside list of relevant resources discussed.	Throughout 2023/2024

"Accessible webinars that go very much back to basics" **Community energy stakeholder**

"Share resources and funding opportunities" **Community energy stakeholder**

Case Study: Bringing community owned solar power to a local school



Gloucestershire Community Energy Co-op Ltd, a community energy group established in 2010, completed a **51 kW solar PV system on Minchinhampton CofE Primary Academy**.

The scheme was fully installed and operational in September 2022 after reaching their community share offer goal of **£70,000 on the 31st January 2022**.

The in-roof solar panels are reducing the school's carbon use, furthering its transition towards net zero.

In-roof panels were chosen for several reasons: their more streamlined appearance helping to get planning permission in a protected landscape area, their reduced weight on a weaker roof as they replace existing tiles and reduced maintenance costs.

However, the retrofitting process for these panels took longer than traditional panels due to the need to carefully preserve lower layers of roof.

The project also helps support the school's new eco-curriculum in teaching pupils about sustainability. The school will take ownership of the system and any electricity generated at the **end of the project life – after 25 years.**

For a project like this, accurate and reliable half hourly metering data is useful in order to secure a fair export price. If you're thinking about doing a similar project, talk to us at National Grid as early as possible to help you understand how to connect, and the information you will need.

Image source: Minchinhampton CofE Primary Academy Completed East Roof. Gloucestershire Community Energy Co-op.

How we will support community energy in 2023/24

Support from our community energy engineer

Over the past year, Faithful, our community energy engineer, has been out and about travelling across South Wales, the East and West Midlands and the South West meeting and supporting community energy stakeholders.

In 2023/2024, we are going to maintain our contact with community energy groups and organisations to help them meet their desired goals and ambitions across our region.

We will…	Measure of success	Timeframe
Continue to champion community energy in National Grid and act as a point of contact for all community and local energy stakeholders across our licence areas.	At least two contacts with community energy representatives per week.	Throughout 2023/2024
Highlight the stakeholders our community energy engineers have spoken to through our quarterly newsletters.	Reporting of at least one interaction between our community energy engineers and stakeholders in each newsletter.	Throughout 2023/2024
Facilitate conversations between local authorities and community energy organisations through our community energy engineers and new local authority partnership staff.	At least one community energy organisation introduced to a relevant contact at a local authority per quarter.	Throughout 2023/2024

"National Grid could do more to network with intermediaries such as Local Authorities, Combined Authorities, VSCO councils."
Community Energy Stakeholder

"Let's see National Grid out and about speaking to stakeholders and reporting on this in newsletters."
Community Energy Stakeholder

How we will support community energy in 2023/24

Engaging, networking and amplifying the voices of community energy

In 2022, we ran two online, and four in-person forums with topics ranging from energy efficiency to connecting to the grid. **We are committed to providing you with a space to network and learn from each other** as well as a range of ways in which you can access our expertise.

For example, we have listened to your feedback asking for more opportunities to talk to network planners by inviting network planners to all our in-person forums.

We will…	Measure of success	Timeframe
Hold one in-person local net zero forum in each of our licence areas each year (four in total), and two online Net Zero Communities forums per year.	Attendees rate the forum 7.5/10 or more.	Throughout 2023/2024
Invite local network planners to all in-person forums to provide insight into the planning process and provide advice on how to get the most out of network planning meetings.	One local planner attending each in-person forum.	Throughout 2023/2024
Deliver at least 60 community energy surgeries per year with our local connections teams to offer greater levels of support and hand-holding for low resourced groups. Surgeries will be publicised on the communities' pages on our website, and bookable online.	Minimum of 60 surgeries held, arranged within three days of a request for a meeting and carried out within three weeks.	Throughout 2023/2024
Through our Community Energy Engineer, engage with Ofgem and DESNZ on key barriers for community energy organisations that come up in forums, surgeries and meetings with stakeholders.	Each relevant consultation submission from NGED to contain a section on response on behalf of community and local energy stakeholders.	Throughout 2023/2024
Publish a guide and run an online forum collecting community energy stakeholder views for two relevant consultations in 2023.	Guide published and forum attendees have inputted their views into two relevant consultations.	Throughout 2023/2024

"Hold meetings in local areas online or in-person to share ideas and help each other." **Community energy stakeholder**

"Real life physical meetings with network planners" **Community energy stakeholder**

"Regular plain English updates on system and policy developments" **Community energy stakeholder**

How we will support community energy in 2023/24

Understanding how to decarbonise heat and transport & prioritising energy efficiency

Decarbonising our homes and the way we get around are two of the greatest challenges we face in getting to net zero. Changing our lifestyles and homes can be deeply personal and require householders across the country to make low carbon choices.

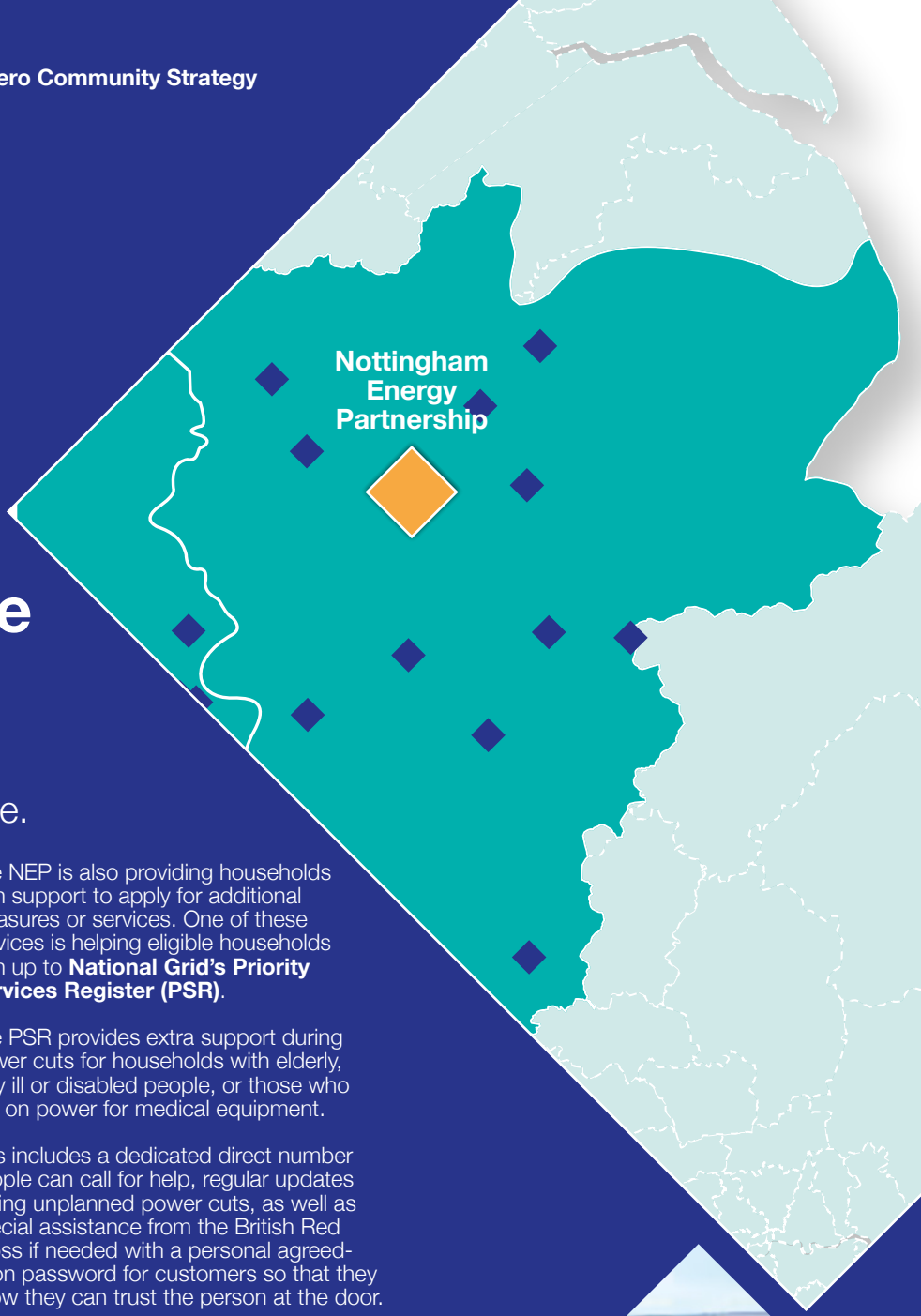
We value the role of community energy organisations and want to support your position in being intermediaries who can provide trusted advice and solutions in their local area.

We will…	Measure of success	Timeframe
Publish an accessible guide for communities on options and models for low carbon heat.	Guide published on our website and promoted through our newsletters and social media channels.	December 2023
Align this Net Zero Communities Strategy with stakeholder priorities and clearly communicate options for connecting EVs, heat pumps and renewables to our network in forums and through circulation of existing and new guides on these topics.	Circulation of relevant guides and updates via community energy newsletter and forums.	Throughout 2023/2024
Present case studies of heat and transport decarbonisation projects at forums and publish case studies on our website.	Case studies published online and shared through our mailouts and forums.	Throughout 2023/2024
Actively promote our Affordable Warmth Partnership and Priority Services Register (PSR) to community energy organisations to help them identify opportunities to partner with us, through our website, newsletter, forums and working with existing community energy networks.	At least 50% of stakeholders at forums aware of these services.	Throughout 2023/2024
Signpost training and support for community energy organisations on energy efficiency retrofit and provide expertise on this through our forums.	At least one expert speaker or facilitator on energy efficiency or retrofit at each of our forums.	Throughout 2023/2024
Provide the option for National Grid Staff to volunteer at community energy organisations to share expertise via our corporate social responsibility scheme.	At least two National Grid employees volunteering at community energy organisations in the region.	Throughout 2023/2024

"Proactive approach to engaging with community energy organisations." **Community energy stakeholder**

"Really simple and logical step by step guides." **Community energy stakeholder**

Case Study: Home energy improvements for low-income homes in Nottinghamshire



The **Green Grants project** is a scheme offering free home improvements to low-income homes across Nottinghamshire.

The project is being supported by the **Nottingham Energy Partnership (NEP)** in which councils across Nottinghamshire are offering **home energy improvements** such as insulation (external wall, loft and cavity wall) as well as air source heat pumps and solar PV.

Target homes are those with older, poorly insulated properties that are expensive to heat and are prone to damp and mould.

The project has a 'fabric first' approach which focuses on insulating the property walls and roof first to reduce heat loss thereby lowering the running costs, improving energy savings and reducing carbon emissions.

The NEP is also providing households with support to apply for additional measures or services. One of these services is helping eligible households sign up to **National Grid's Priority Services Register (PSR)**.

The PSR provides extra support during power cuts for households with elderly, very ill or disabled people, or those who rely on power for medical equipment.

This includes a dedicated direct number people can call for help, regular updates during unplanned power cuts, as well as special assistance from the British Red Cross if needed with a personal agreed-upon password for customers so that they know they can trust the person at the door.

The Green Grants project is also running in Derbyshire, where the **Marches Energy Agency** is supporting. The project is funded by **DESNZ**, co-ordinated by the **Midlands Energy Hub** and installed by **E.ON TrustMark registered installers.**

Image source:
Green Grants Case Studies. Nottingham Energy Partnership.

Image source:
Green Grants Case Study: Mr and Mrs J. Nottingham Energy Partnership.

How we will support community energy in 2023/24

Accessing data and taking part in innovation projects

Accurate and complete datasets are vital to understanding how to decarbonise local areas. However, we understand that existing datasets can often be inaccessible and are therefore keen to provide this data as simply as possible.

We have also seen the impact community energy organisations can have on innovation projects and look forward to supporting more groups take part by providing easy-to-understand information on applying for innovation funding.

We will…	Measure of success	Timeframe
Support more communities to access local electricity data through engaging with existing National Grid schemes that are installing additional low voltage network monitors. Re-promote our OpenLV guidebook for communities to help them understand how to make use of the data.	At least three more communities accessing local substation data through an easy to use online platform.	Throughout 2023/2024
Provide more accessible information on network connection costs and network reinforcement costs for communities via our website, surgeries and forums.	At least five community energy organisations connecting low carbon technologies to our network.	Throughout 2023/2024
Have one dedicated session for communities to understand and input into the distributed energy scenarios (DFES).	Attendees rate the session 7.5/10 or more.	June 2023

"We would like to understand future energy scenario modelling and regional implications."
Community energy stakeholder

Case Study: Creating a low-carbon community hub

Awel Aman Tawe, a community energy charity originating in the Upper Amman and Swansea Valleys, is creating a low-carbon community hub: **Hwb y Gors**.

The hub is being created by refurbishing the Cwmgors primary school, a key building that has been a much-loved part of the community for over 110 years.

They have raised over £1.5million towards both the building and the community arts projects that run from it. The building includes 90 kW of solar PV, a 50 kW ground source heat pump and a 50 kW battery.

The project was funded by over 22 funders, including **Awel** and **Egni co-ops** (both community energy organisations set up by Awel Aman Tawe).

Other funders include **The National Lottery, Welsh Government, Neath Port Talbot Council, Arts Council, Heritage Lottery, Ashley Family Foundation, Wales Council for Voluntary Action, Clothworkers Foundation and Moondance**, a charitable foundation giving grants to help provide transformational changes in communities.

The eco-centre was opened in April 2023 with many facilities including a creative café, foodbank, community garden, pottery, education rooms, artists' studios and electric community transport scheme.

Image source: Aerial image of Hwb y Gors. Awel Aman Tawe.

Image source: Artwork of Hwb y Gors. Awel Aman Tawe.

Over £1.5 million has been raised towards both the building and the community arts projects that run from it. The building includes 90 kW of solar PV, a 50 kW ground source heat pump and a 50 kW battery.

Case Study: Bristol Energy Cooperative

Bristol Energy Cooperative, a community-owned energy cooperative established in 2011, has recently completed what's believed to be the largest community-owned solar rooftop project in the UK.

The 1 MW array, comprising 2,380 panels, started generating electricity on 16 November 2022. This project, installed on the rooftop of the new Bottle Yard Studios film production facility in south Bristol, aims to help both reduce fossil-fuel dependencies and benefit local communities, the creative arts sector and local governments.

Due to the scale of this project, collaborating with different partners was essential. The rooftop project is on a council building, leading to Bristol Energy Cooperative working closely with the council to make the most of this space, and scale up ambition.

They also worked closely with the roofing contractors to coincide installing the panels with refurbishments of the roof, significantly reducing scaffolding costs.

A big part of the success of the project included a 25% increase in members of the cooperative, with more people learning about the benefits community energy can bring to local communities.

A part of the capital funding was raised through a community share offer, attracting investor members, and another part was raised through a loan via Younity.

Image source: Aerial image of The Bottle Yard. Bristol Energy Cooperative.

Image source: The Bottle Yard roof. Bristol Energy Cooperative.

Case Study: Setting up Wales' first low carbon village

The Low Carbon Communities is a project by Bridgend County Borough Council in **partnership with Challoch Energy, NuVision Energy Wales, the Welsh Government and Passiv UK.**

This demonstration project focuses on the community of South Cornelly and examines how a Local Energy Market could work by seeing how electricity used within the community can be managed effectively to help balance the demand from households, with both generation from rooftop solar photovoltaic (PV) and from the electricity grid.

The project has seen installations of ten solar PV systems, 13 solar ventilation systems, 21 environmental monitoring systems and six batteries, with around 30% of homes in the village now involved in the project.

These systems help to demonstrate how home energy management shown at the centre of the left diagram in the figure below can co-ordinate the demand and generation of different home energy devices with the wider electricity grid management system.

If successful, this has the potential to reduce the need for reinforcement and create a more efficient network.

The Low Carbon Communities project team consistently engaged with and was supported by National Grid. This led to monitoring equipment being installed on their substation to help understand energy flows within the village.

The team found that community engagement and trust were key to progressing the project and they consistently consulted and employed local people, thereby supporting the local economy and helping to strengthen community ties. Phase 3 of the project ended in March 2022 with monitoring and community engagement still ongoing and hopes to get funding for continued work and a network attached battery to further South Cornelly's transition to becoming **Wales' first low carbon village**.

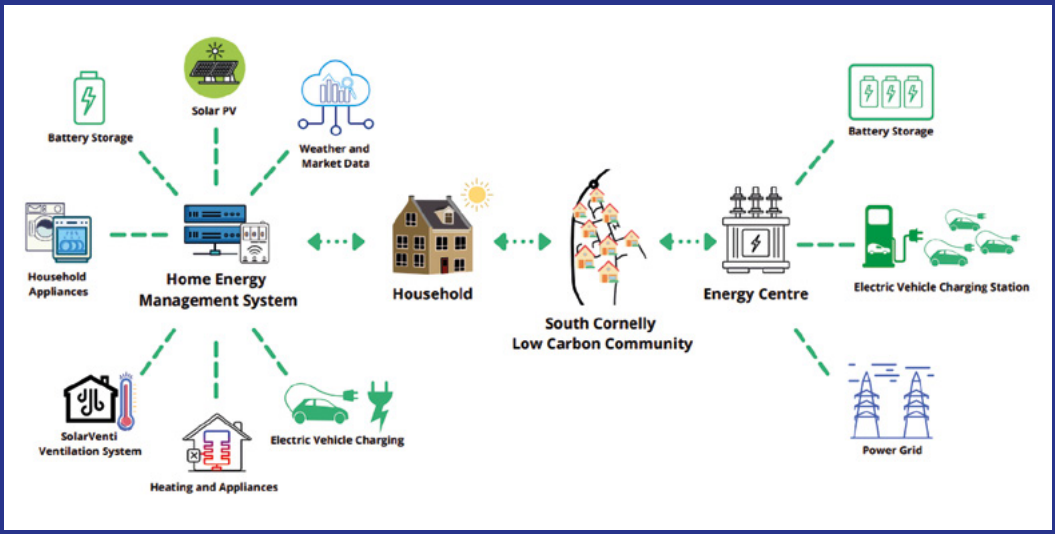


Image source: South Cornelly Low Carbon Community. Bridgend County Borough Council.

Our RIIO-ED2 Business Plan

Every five years the energy regulator Ofgem decides how much DNOs like us can earn and what we can spend.

These are known as price control periods. The current price control started on 1 April 2023, going up to 31 March 2028, called RIIO-ED2.

To create our Business Plan for these five years, we engaged 25,000 stakeholders to make sure our plan meets your needs and provides value for money for our customers.

We see community energy as central to net zero. These projects are key to tackling our climate emergency locally, so during RIIO-ED2, we are planning to further build on our work to engage community and local energy organisations with an extensive programme of support.

Our core commitments from this business plan relating to community and social contracts are highlighted below.

Community energy

Core commitment		Commitment type	Change from RIIO-ED1	Timeframe
8	Actively support the expansion of green, renewable energy generation and help local communities to decarbonise and lower their bills, by connecting at least 30 community energy groups to the network each year. We will hold 60 community energy surgeries per year with the assistance of the community energy engineer.	Bespoke Output Delivery Incentive – Reputational (ODI-R)	150% increase in connected groups	Community groups with less knowledge and expertise of the connections process receivetailoredsupport to develop their schemes and connect to the network. This will increase their confidence and understanding of our processes, so that they find it easier to gain access to our network.
9	Support a growth in community energy schemes by facilitating their access to available funding streams.	Bespoke ODI-R	New	Support community energy schemes with viable and ambitious low carbon schemes to secure funding to make them a reality.

Our RIIO-ED2 Business Plan

Social contract

Core commitment		Commitment type	Change from RIIO-ED1	Timeframe
8	Support and add significant value to our local communities via a 'Community Matters' social initiative associated with the smart energy transition, vulnerability, environment and sustainability. This will include a shareholder-funded annual £1 million community support fund and 14,000 volunteer days per year for National Grid staff to support local causes.	Bespoke ODI-R	New	Act as a socially responsible business that will support the needs of the local communities we serve – delivering key corporate social responsibility initiatives to help people in vulnerable situations.
9	Build decarbonised communities and local energy schemes by providing £540,000 shareholder funded support per year to install solar PV on schools in areas of high economic deprivation.	Bespoke ODI-R and Customer Value Proposition (CVP)	New	Establish community energy schemes enabling schools to reduce their carbon impact and lower their energy bills, enabling the redistribution of savings to spend elsewhere on education resources.

We are therefore committed to delivering all the planned activities from the proposition and have added these as commitments where relevant. This includes:

- using our Community Energy Engineer to act as the interface between NGED and community energy groups.
- setting ourselves a challenging target of enabling 30 community energy groups to connect to our network or secure a flexibility offer within RIIO-ED2
- a robust and comprehensive monitoring function, tracking progress against our targets throughout RIIO-ED2
- undertaking an intense training programme including business awareness, and communication skills - ensuring we can immediately provide support and add value to community energy groups
- delivering training through a mixture of internally delivered courses, internal briefings from existing staff who have extensive knowledge of the community energy sector and using expert external providers to provide competency training.

Recap of work delivered in 2022

You said:

We want a named point of contact for community energy

Last year's action	Measure of success	2022 Outcomes
Make the most of the Community Energy Engineer to champion community energy in NGED and act as a point of contact for all community and local energy stakeholders across our licence areas.	At least two contacts with community energy representatives per week.	In 2022, the Community Energy Engineer had 74 engagements which were a mixture of in-person discussions, telephone calls and presentations. This translates to two to three interactions per week.
Through our new community energy engineer, proactively engage with communities with ideas for network innovation projects.	At least one innovation project proposal with community energy organisations as a partner for NIA funding.	Our project with **Marches LEP**, which covers the areas of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin funds the installation of additional LV network monitors to support the connection of additional low carbon technologies and community use of data.

We want a named point of contact for community energy

Last year's action	Measure of success	2022 Outcomes
Clearly communicate our support for community energy organisations and regularly share what resources we have available through quarterly newsletters sent out to community and local energy stakeholders.	Publicise the resources we have available to community energy stakeholders.	Existing resources were publicised via our community energy newsletter and social media channels.
Support community energy organisations to identify funding opportunities from other sources through our Community Energy Engineer and newsletter.	At least two funding opportunities for community energy organisations shared in each newsletter.	Existing resources were publicised via our community energy newsletter and social media channels.
Re-promote our series of guides and resources for community energy organisations through newsletters, forums and social media.	Guides re-shared either online, via email or at forums at least once per month.	Relevant resources shared in forums verbally and via chat function in forums, via social media channels and the newsletter.
Publish a series of short interviews with NGED staff, asking questions that new entrants to this space want answers to. These interviews will feature network planners, the social obligations team, the education team, and data experts.	Four videos published on YouTube in 2022.	Four videos were published online.

Recap of work delivered in 2022

You said:

Help us understand how our community can decarbonise our heat and transport

Last year's action	Measure of success	2022 Outcomes
Publish an accessible guide for communities on options and models for low carbon heat.	Guide published on our website and promoted through our newsletters and social media channels.	The **2022 Low Carbon Heating Strategy** was published in April.
Align this Net Zero Communities Strategy with stakeholder priorities and clearly communicate options for connecting EVs, heat pumps and renewables to our network by updating our 'Connecting Community Energy Guide'.	'Net Zero Connections Guide for Communities' published on our website and promoted through our mailouts and social media channels.	A **video on connections** was published and recent changes in connections were discussed in the **December forum**.
Support communities to partner on innovation projects aligned to our innovation strategy priorities on the decarbonisation of heat and transport, and share learnings from these to help communities understand the opportunities. We will collate existing case studies and add new case studies to our website, present these at forums, and develop a process of referrals for suitably innovative projects from the community energy connections surgeries and events.	Innovation case studies published online and shared through our mailouts and forums.	A video on an innovation case study was published online and shared through mailouts. Any new innovative projects are recommended to the innovation team at National Grid.

Take a fabric first approach to energy efficiency and fuel poverty

Last year's action	Measure of success	2022 Outcomes
Actively promote our Affordable Warmth Partnership and Priority Services Register (PSR) to community energy organisations to help them identify opportunities to partner with us, through our website, newsletter, forums and working with existing community energy networks.	At least 50% of stakeholders at forums aware of these services.	41% respondents at the December 2022 forum were aware of these services.
Signpost training and support for community energy organisations on energy efficiency retrofit and provide expertise on this through our forums.	At least one expert speaker or facilitator on energy efficiency or retrofit at each of our forums.	One expert speaker and/or facilitator on energy efficiency at each of our forums.

Recap of work delivered in 2022

You said:
Help us access more data for our projects

Last year's action	Measure of success	2022 Outcomes
Support more communities to access local electricity data through the OpenLV model, and re-promote our OpenLV guidebook for communities to help them understand how to make use of the data.	At least three more communities accessing local substation data through an easy to use online platform.	A package of measures to achieve this action have been included in our **RIIO-ED2 business plan**.
Provide more accessible information on network connection costs and network reinforcement costs for communities via our website, surgeries and forums.	At least five community energy organisations connecting low carbon technologies to our network.	We provided information about connection costs and network reinforcement costs in our forums. Five new low carbon generation projects connected in 2021.

Help us amplify our voice to Ofgem and DESNZ

Last year's action	Measure of success	2022 Outcomes
Through our Community Energy Engineer, engage with Ofgem and DESNZ on key barriers for community energy organisations that come up in forums, surgeries and meetings with stakeholders.	Each relevant consultation submission from NGED to contain a section in the response on behalf of community and local energy stakeholders.	Community energy stakeholders' views gathered throughout the consultation process were included in our **RIIO-ED2 business plan**.
Republish a guide and run an online forum for communities on Ofgem's proposed changes for network access and forward-looking charges.	Guide published and forum attendees have increased understanding of Ofgem's changes and their impact on local energy projects.	Feedback from the forum in December suggests attendees had an increased understanding of Ofgem's changes and their impacts on their project.

Continue to engage with us online and in person

Last year's action	Measure of success	2022 Outcomes
Hold one in-person local net zero forum in each of our licence areas each year (four in total), and two online Net Zero Communities forums per year.	90% of attendees satisfied with these forums.	All four in person forums delivered in Cardiff, Nottingham, Exeter and Birmingham and two online forums held, with 136 attendees overall.
Deliver at least 20 community energy surgeries per year with our local connections teams to offer greater levels of support and hand-holding for low resourced groups. Surgeries will be publicised on the communities' pages on our website, and bookable online.	Minimum of 20 surgeries held, arranged within three days of a request for a meeting and carried out within three weeks.	This data is not currently available. In the future, specific community energy enquiries will be captured through a new data capture mechanism.

National Grid Electricity Distribution plc
Avonbank
Feeder Road
Bristol BS2 0TB
United Kingdom

nationalgrid.co.uk

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