



COMMUNITY ENERGY PATHWAYS

Nicola Davidson

COMMUNITY ENERGY SOUTH



COMMUNITY ENERGY PATHWAYS

Step-by-step approach to develop an area or county wide community energy movement

Communities can build and invest in their own renewable energy and energy saving projects

Supporting local leadership towards Net Zero targets – supporting existing groups and building new

Growing community led local energy awareness and advocacy



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

What does the sector need to increase renewable energy generation?

Powering Up

Communities developing and owning their own energy projects which save money and reduce carbon emissions: **heat networks, renewable energy and low carbon transport**

Harnessing community finance

Powering Down

A network of **community energy champions** who provide trusted and impartial local advice on energy and cost savings and support households struggling with their energy bills

Enabling community resilience

Energy planning

Communities working together to coordinate and develop local **energy / decarbonisation plans** led by the community and encourage participation and ownership e.g. CommuniHeat

Enabling community participation

Increasing community renewables

3 needs...

Create a community energy strategy

Capital development funding

Create a Community Smart Export Guarantee to provide revenue certainty

Bring back tax mechanisms e.g. Social Investment Tax Relief to prompt investors

Work with communities to help remove barriers to commercial renewables

Prioritise demand reduction

Behaviour change through community leadership in retrofit/energy advice

Joined up skill building in retrofit

More people in paid Energy Champion roles

Smart energy systems

Reserve grid capacity for community energy and reduce connection cost.

More engagement with Local Area Energy Planning.

Build community energy into social value procurement evaluation

Government targets

15% energy saving (from 2021 levels) by 2030
70GW of solar by 2035
Advanced community engagement

LA targets?

Decarbonising own assets
Reduce emissions - wider community
Addressing fuel poverty

Powering Down (energy saving projects)

How to address the skills and workforce challenges?

400,000+ retrofit professionals plus many more trusted volunteers

A national retrofit strategy

More local, place-based approaches

Councils to set out long term retrofit plans to instill confidence in supply chains and education about jobs

How can community energy groups help with LA targets?

Help residents gain confidence in upgrades needed

Help residents trust the retrofit market

Support volunteers and paid staff to train and move into this career path

Build on groups strong sense of place

How to address the skills and workforce challenges?

Encourage more people to form/join a community energy group – ALL skills are valued

Teach engaged groups how to deliver projects through our capacity building service

Encourage private sector to donate time/skills that compliment projects e.g.

- Financial modelling
- Legal document review
- Marketing, engagement, admin...

How can community energy groups help with LA targets?

Deliver community owned capital projects on LA or other assets

Remove barriers to commercial renewables by early-stage involvement (and asset sharing)

Input into Local Area Energy Planning

Opportunity for councils to max the benefits of community energy

**LA net zero strategies /
Local Area Energy Plans**

Local plans / health / housing / infrastructure / transport....

**Net Zero
together**

Public finance
Community finance
Attracting grants
Innovation
Social value via procurement



Public participation
Consultation
Community support
Resilience

**Establish community energy
network within LA areas**

Sustainable lives, healthy engaged people empowered by progress brought about by collaboration, innovation and investment

COMMUNITY ENERGY PATHWAYS

**How can councils support
community energy groups meet
their potential?**

**Use our Pathways mentoring
programme**

Essex

Surrey

Hampshire

Lancashire

Suffolk

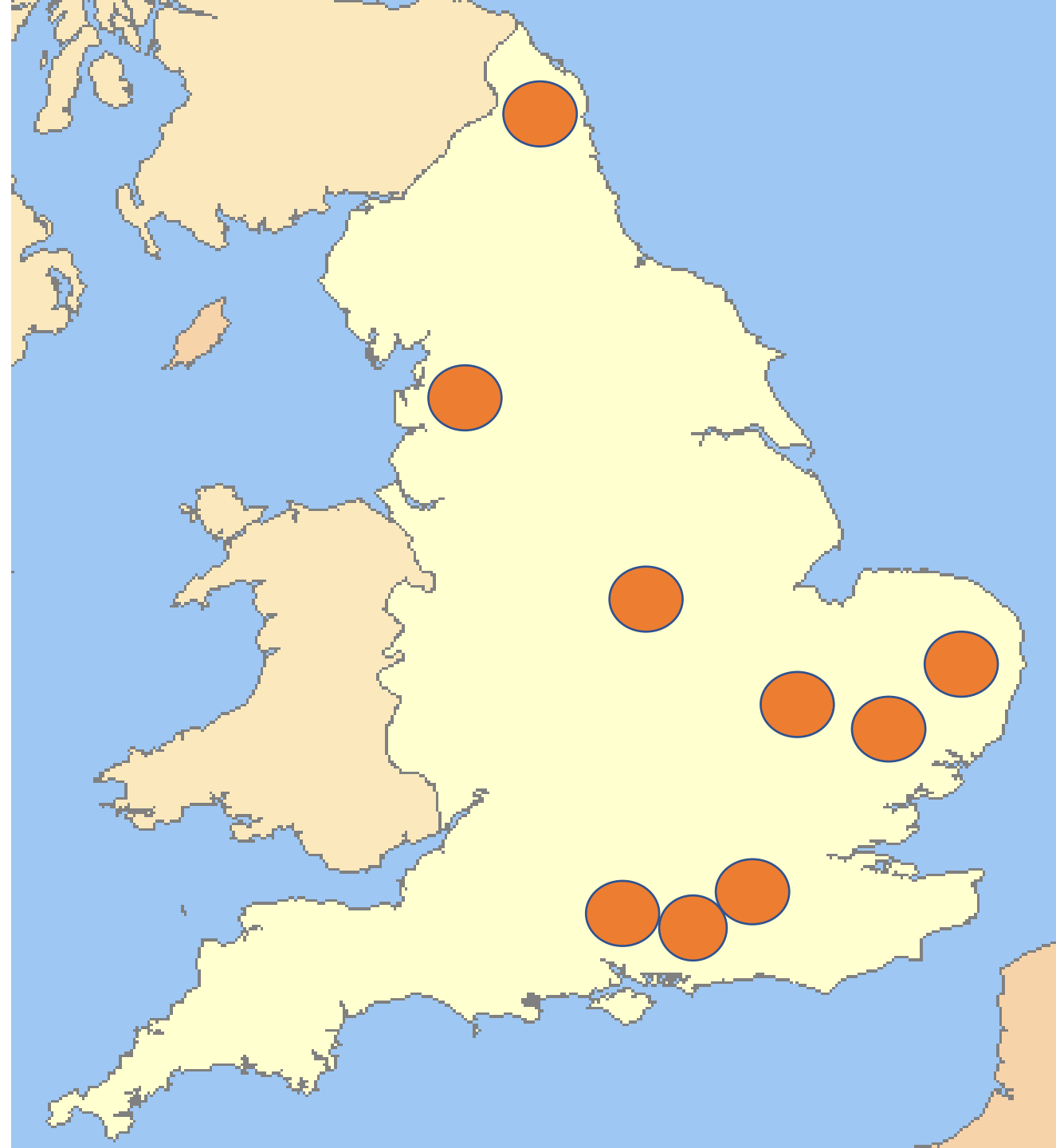
South Downs

Leicestershire

Central Bedfordshire

Northumberland

... and 30 more enquiries...



Powering Up Example

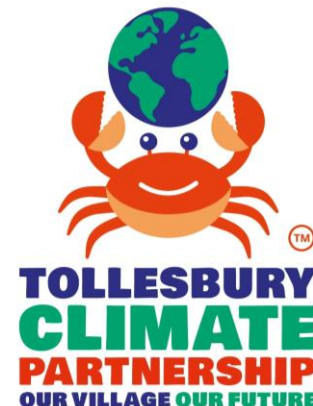
Harnessing government & community finance

Tollesbury Community Energy

Established August 2021

Leading on the Tollesbury Primary School Decarbonisation project

- First Essex community energy share offer launched in April to raise £250,000 match funding (solar panels, heat pumps, insulation, LEDs)
- Combined with £400,000 external funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund



Powering Down Example

Enabling community resilience

Community Energy Colchester

Established July 2021

Home energy advice: installation of FREE energy saving measures in homes

Primary school energy saving and educational activities

Helping Parish Councils with installing EV charge points

Leveraged £30k external funding

Motivating Parish Councils in duplicate initiatives



Community
Energy
Colchester

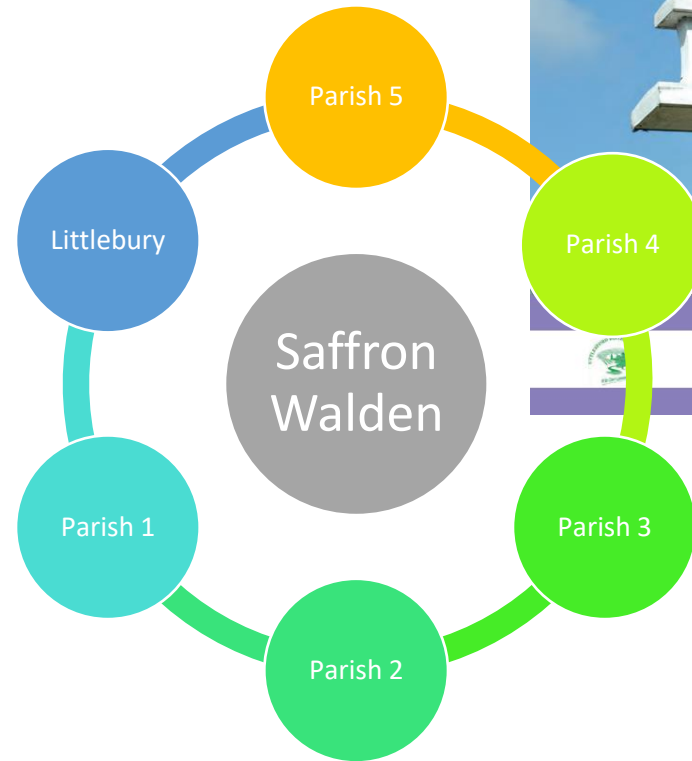
Energy Planning Example

Enabling community participation

Saffron Walden Community Energy

CommuniHeat Project

- Community-led Parish cluster project
- Local retrofit advice system (hard-to-treat properties, hard-to-reach residents)
- Rural off-gas areas -creating a plan to move away from oil
- Retrofit supply chain development
- Digital mapping, community finance
- Highly collaborative



SAFFRON WALDEN
COMMUNITY ENERGY

LITTLEBURY – PLANNING FOR DECARBONISATION



Nicola Davidson

nicola.davidson@communityenergysouth.org

07456 901501

Community Energy

AWARDS



Local Authority Collaboration Award

Scaling Up Community Energy Award

Community Energy Organisation of the Year

WINNER 2022

