

# Innovation and funding

# Ross Jones: Energy Saving Trust

<b>12:30</b>	Introduction	Ross Jones
	Community Energy Strategy	Liam Cantwell
<b>12:40</b>	<b>Project innovation case studies</b>	
	Energy Local / Ynni Lleol	Mary Gillie
	Glasgow Community Energy	Joe Smee
<b>13:00</b>	<b>Future trends and opportunities</b>	
	Using technology to optimise generation and income	Mike Kelly, <b>Ricardo AEA</b>
	DSO Flexibility services	Elin Williams
	Investment and innovation	Andras Nemeth
<b>13:35</b>	Q&A session	
<b>13:55</b>	<b>Project funding - knowledge sharing</b>	
<b>14:05</b>	Funding and sources	Ross Jones
	Steps to take to get a secure project finance	Robert Hobbs, <b>Radio City</b>
	Financing community energy projects	Otis Harrison, <b>Thrive Renewables</b>
	Community shares and bonds	Morven Lyon, <b>Democratic Finance Scotland</b>
<b>14:35</b>	Q&A session	
<b>14:50</b>	Closing remarks	Liam Cantwell

# Community Energy Strategy

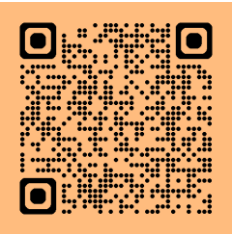
Liam Cantwell  
Community Energy Engagement Manager  
SP Distribution

## Who are we?

- Our role within the SP umbrella
- Government – Ofgem – SP Energy Networks
- Community Energy Strategy



Community  
Energy Webpage:



Register as a  
Stakeholder:



Community  
Energy Strategy



Capacity Building  
Workshops



Connections Support



State of the Sector  
Report(s)



Case Study  
Development



Creating Partnerships



Engagement

## Growing the Community Energy Sector:

In order to sustain and encourage the growth of the community energy sector, we must focus on **innovative** strategies, effective engagement with new and existing partners, and fostering collaboration across various sectors to ensure long-term success and resilience in our energy communities.



### Accessibility

- Information
- Opportunities
- Guidance



### Identification:

- Existing Projects
- Communities/Groups
- Sectors
- Organisations



### Building Partnerships

- Internal engagement
- Industry engagement
- Innovative engagement



### Local Authorities

- Shared experiences
- Strategy alignment
- Option awareness
- Informed of developments



### Education:

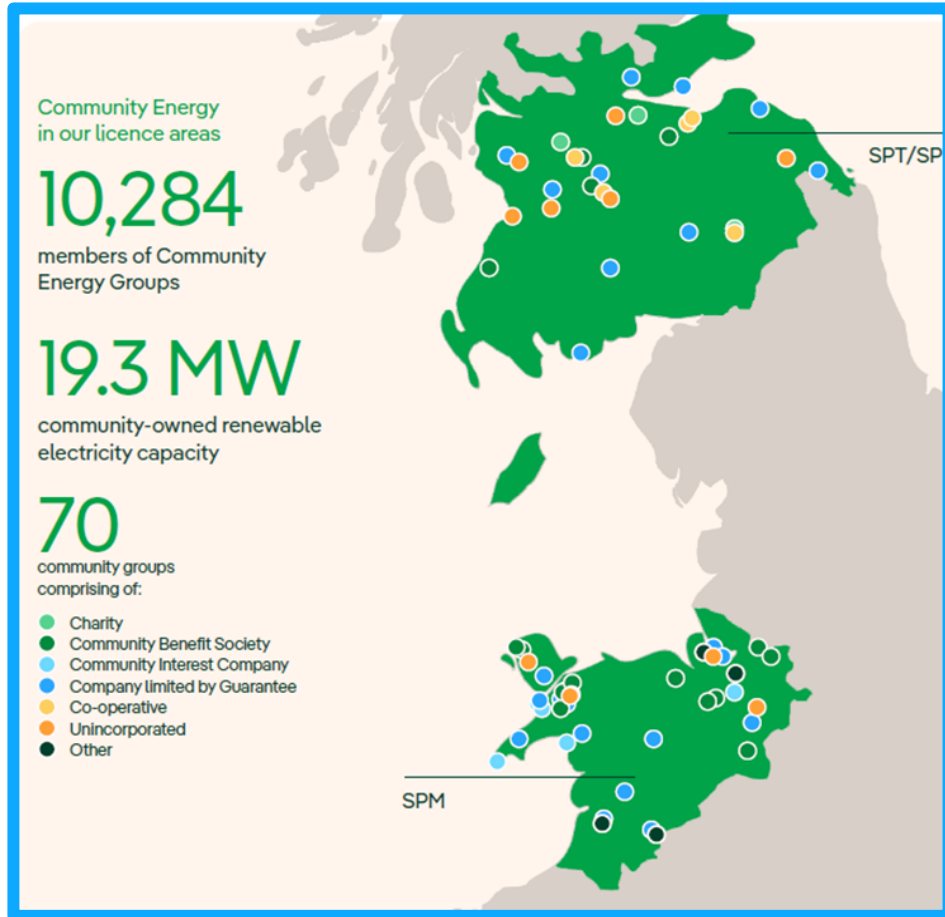
- Channels of engagement
- Targeted strategies
- Youth Engagement



### Innovation

- New Technologies
- Research and Development
- Process/barriers

# SP Energy Networks: What next?



## Engaging with us:

- Community Energy Strategy
- Community Energy Partnerships
- Connections Support
- Flexibility Opportunities
- Development of LHEES

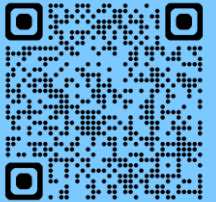
## Our engagement:

- Strategy Development
- Community Energy Webpage Development
- Wider Sector Support
- Sharing Success (Case Studies/Workshops)
- Workshop information/content

## CE Webpage



## Register as a Stakeholder:



## Connections Workshop



# Project innovation case studies



# Mary Gillie: Energy Local / Ynni Lleol



# Energy Local

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Local energy markets Community  
Energy and Networks

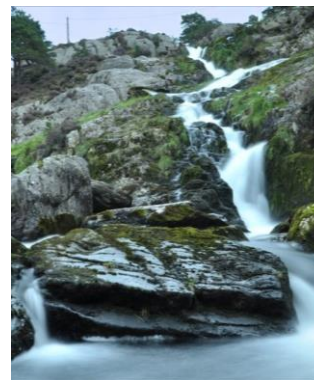
## Our Vision

See the establishment of thousands of local, not-for-profit, Energy Local Clubs (ELCs) that allow local renewable generation to be used locally.

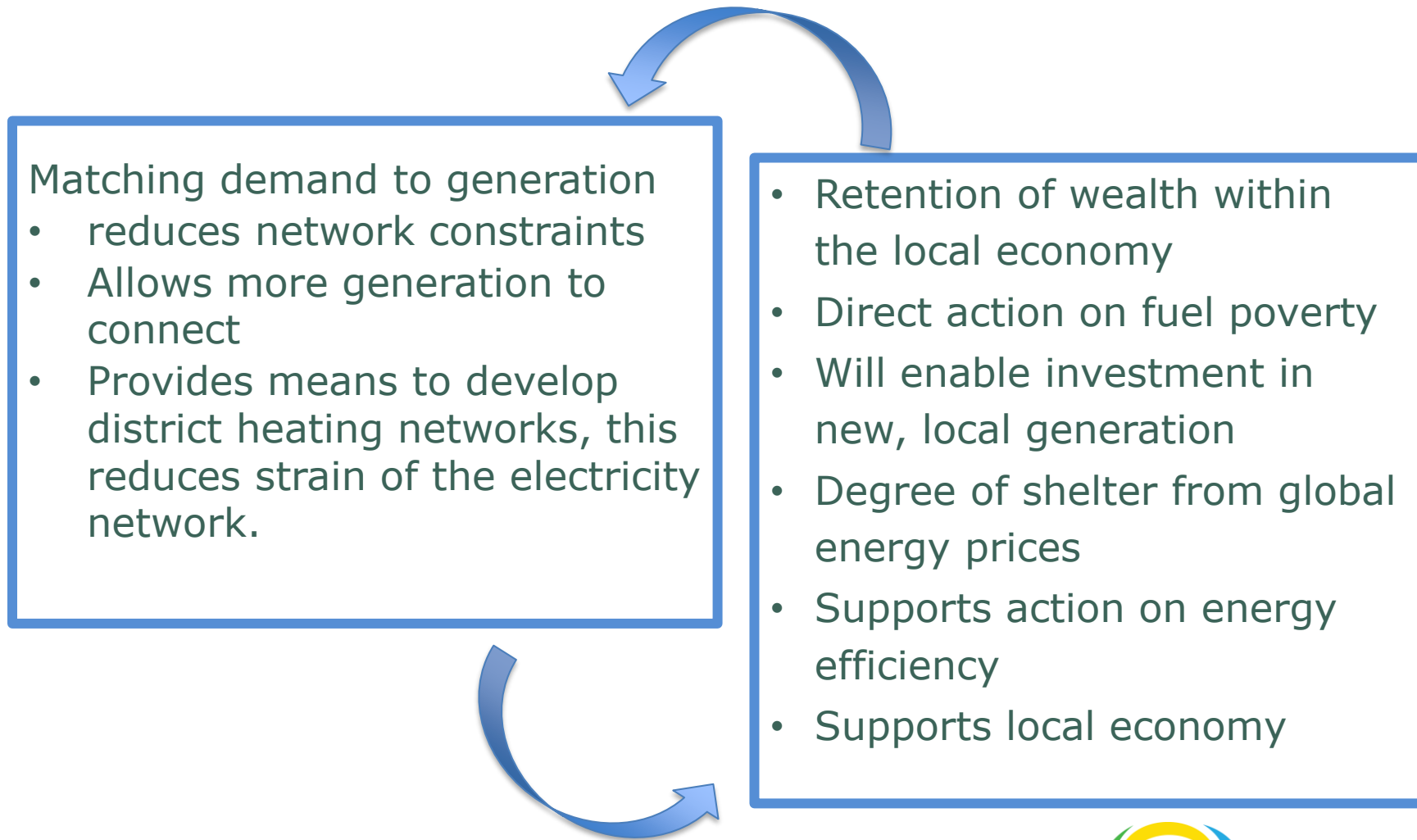
Benefitting communities and local renewables networks and the national system.

## What we do - An Example....

- Local hydro Arfon Berthen near Bethesda is sold for ~9p/kWh and residents still pay up to 25p/kWh.
- Participants and the hydro form an Energy Local Club.
- The supplier will install smart meters which show when power is used as well as how much. Club members can show how much they are using when the hydro is generating.
- Members will agree the price for the local hydro they use when it is generating, e.g. 15p/kWh.
- Households get cheaper power and the hydro plant receives a higher income – more money for the community.

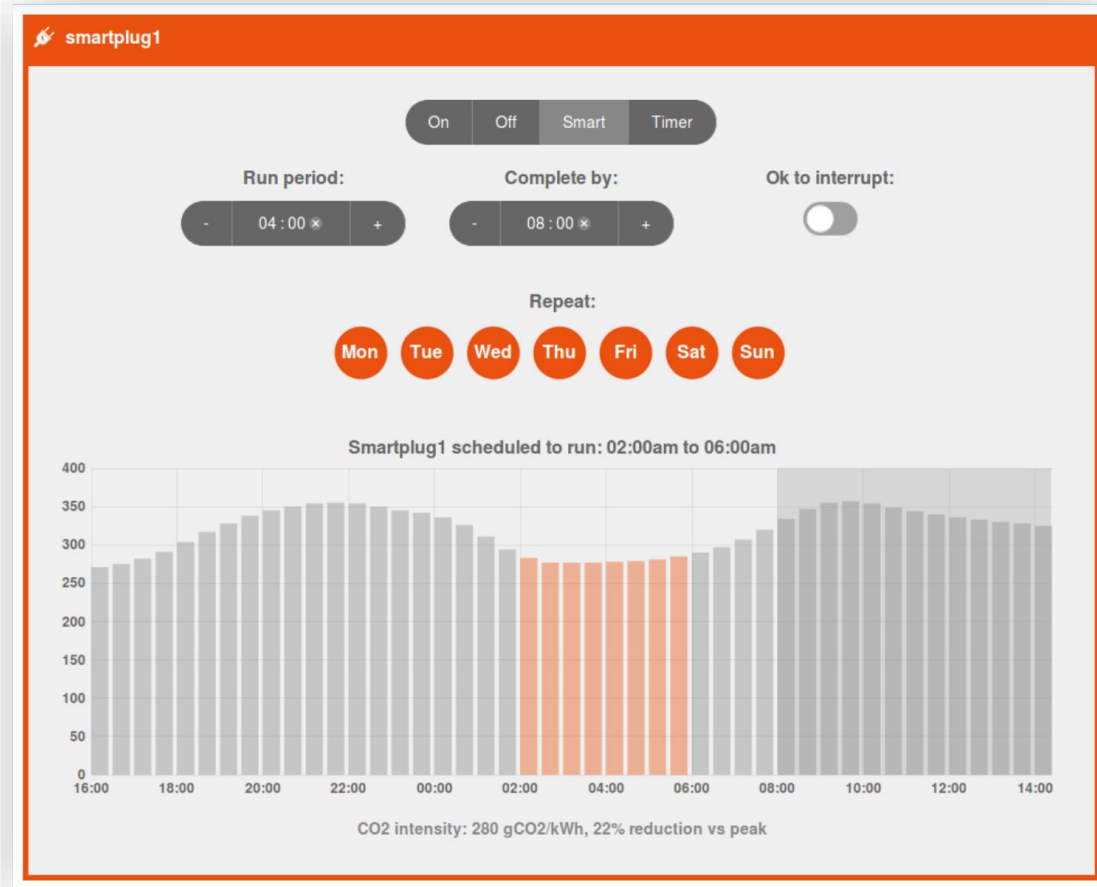


# Network Benefits of the Model – virtuous circles

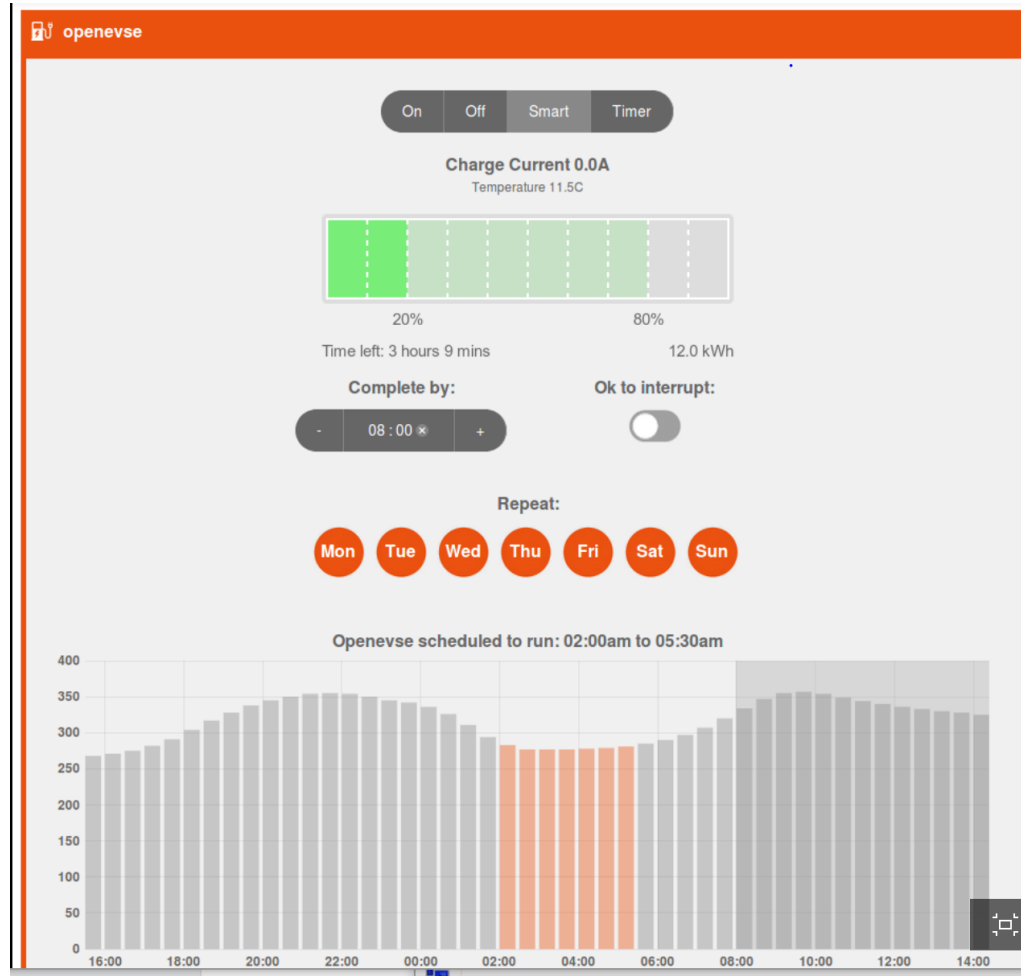


# The scheduler

I need this done by x time, it take x hours –  
find the best time to do it.



# The scheduler – for EVs



I need X charge by  
Y time

Aim to 'play nicely'  
with other home  
devices

# What difference can we see?

- Difficult to tell as we haven't got 'before and after' data or a big enough sample yet.
  - Matching hydro that may operate at
- However, the peak in demand seems to have shifted to 8pm
- We have also trialed a collective emergency turndown over an above the Energy Local Club
  - this reduced peak load by another 5%.



# Shifting

Scenario name	Max HH demand before	Max HH demand after	% change	Average HH demand before	Average HH demand after	% change
1 – Bethesda	46.87	42.96	-8.35	20.49	19.89	-2.91
3 – Low heat pump penetration	65.35	60.13	-7.99	26.44	25.81	-2.36
5 – high heat pump penetration	147.11	154.91	5.30	38.92	38.87	-0.13
8 – high EV penetration	62.73	57.25	-8.74499	30.95	30.68	-0.87664





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## Community ESCO

*groundbreaking means to provide local energy services*

A Social Enterprise that removes barriers to low carbon systems (heat, power and transport) and provides a new means to finance housing stock improvements.

# The Problem

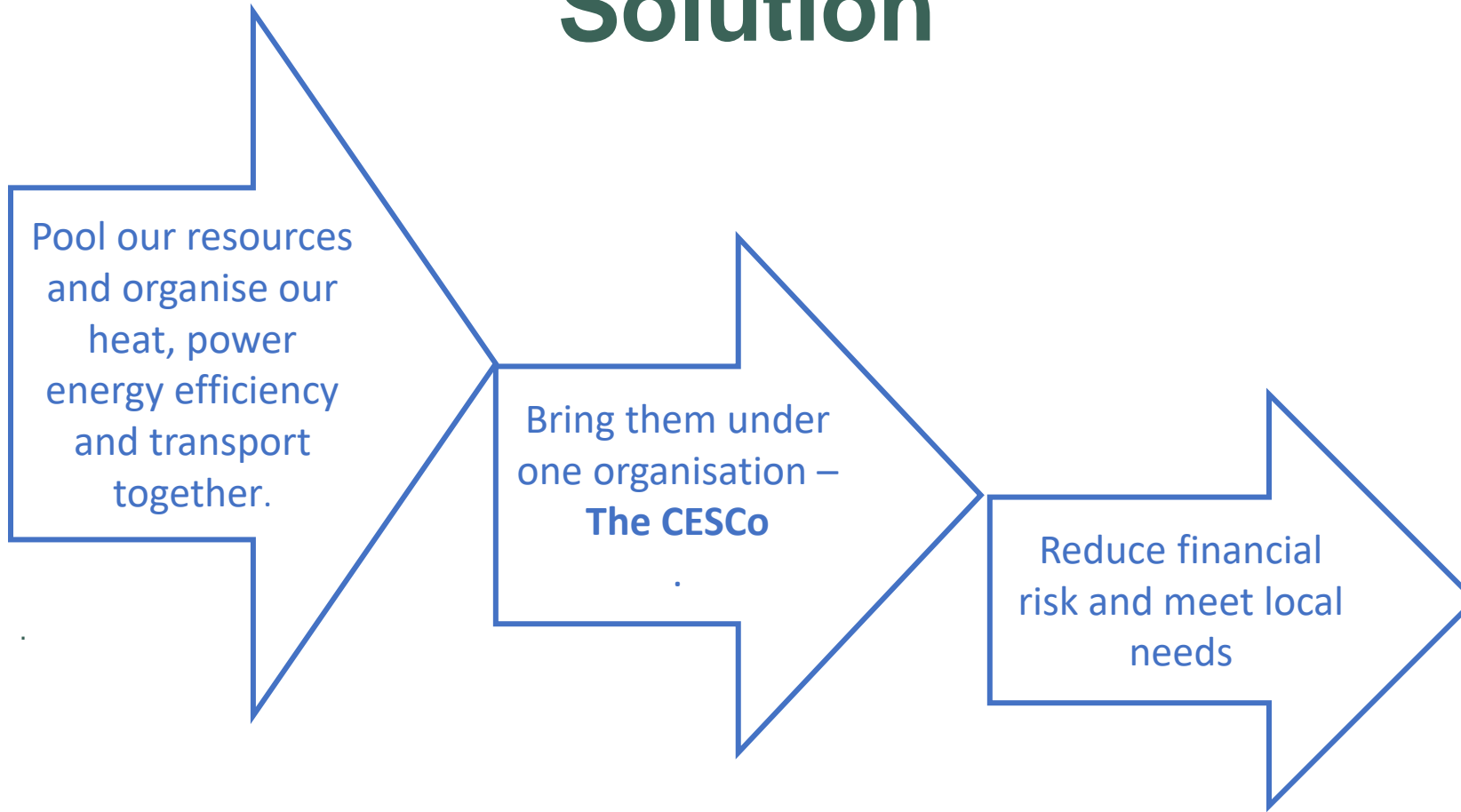
We have abundant renewables resources to

- decarbonise our power, heat and transport.
- tackle widespread fuel poverty

**But its not happening!**

The perceived regulatory and financial risks make raising capital very difficult, holding back potential to decarbonise and benefit local economies.

# Solution



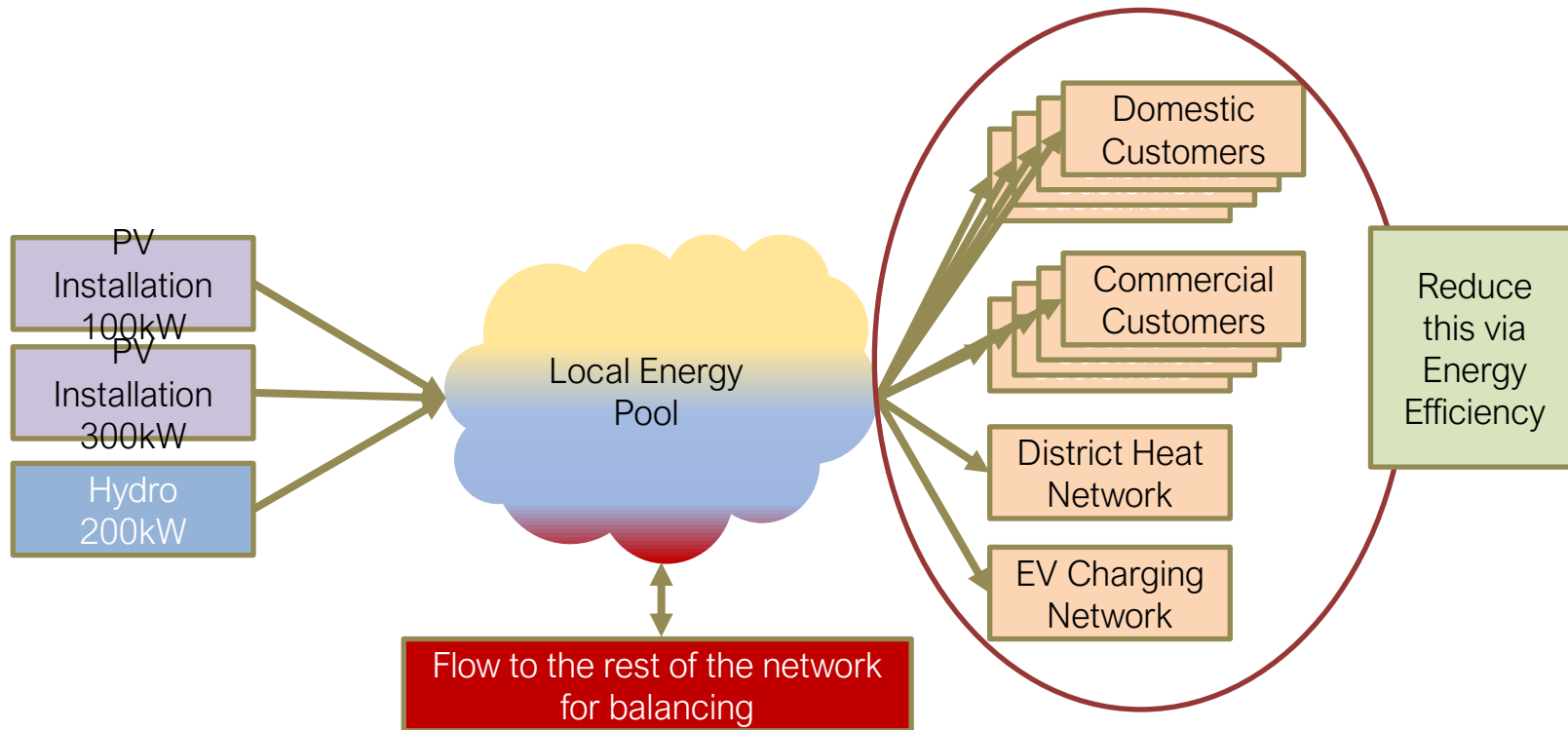
# So how would this look?

Mrs Jones has struggled to find a way to insulate her house. She is trapped with high heating bills so can't save to improve her home. The CESCo offers to upgrade her home and provide her with heat from the local community heat network with a standing charge to pay for the improvements and heat.

.The local hydro and solar power runs the heat pump to for the community heat network and charges local community transport to help people get to work and college.

The CESCo is more attractive to investment as there are multiple sources of income. They try to get a mix of demand for power that uses as much power as possible locally.

# So how would this look?



- Throughout the year the CESCO will maintain a pool of energy for its customers to buy via Energy Local.
- The energy pool is created from assets owned and managed by the CESCO using imported grid energy to cover demand spikes. Battery technology and Smart Metering can be used to reduce imports and exports.
- Any excess energy is sold back to the national market but the key goal is to minimise export; use local energy locally.

# 1st Project Tanygrisiau

- Working to combine local hydro with a water source heat network and retrofit.
- Working with SPEN to understand how a heat network can reduce strain on a network – taking heat to homes not power and using generation locally?
- Including a battery, how could this help the network.
- BUT – DNO flexibility contracts are currently for 5 years – this is a project over 20 years.



# Contact

**Mary@energylocal.org.uk**

**07757900408**

**[www.energylocal.org.uk](http://www.energylocal.org.uk)**

# Joe Smee: Glasgow Community Energy





Innovation in a big city context

# Challenge 1: Legitimacy

The logo for Glasgow Community Energy, featuring three overlapping circles in orange, green, and pink, with the text "Glasgow Community Energy" in white.

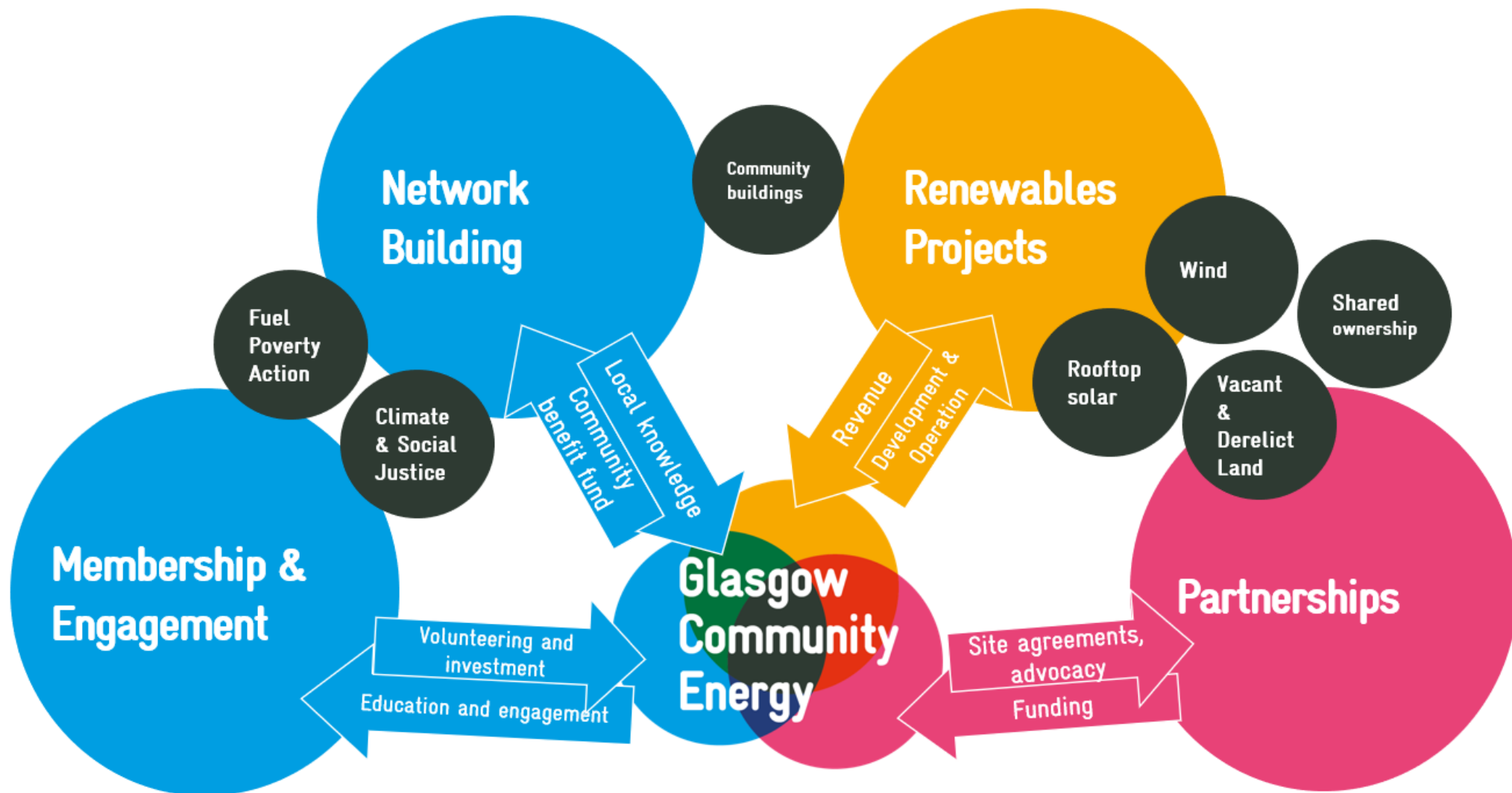
Glasgow  
Community  
Energy

- 
- A background image showing a group of people sitting around a table in a meeting or workshop. A man on the left is looking towards the right, and a woman in the center is looking down at a notebook. The image is slightly blurred and has a light blue overlay.
- **Scale and complexity**
  - **Diversity and inequality**
  - **Genuine impact**



# Partnership approach





# Our vision



- **Community energy workshops**
- **Intersectional engagement**
- **Deep engagement**

Engagement

# Challenge 2: Projects

**Problems we'd love to have**

**vs**

**Problems we actually have**



## Bottom-up projects

- Small rooftop PV
- Support community buildings
- Offgrid hubs

## Chameleon engagement

- Being political
- Being commercial
- Staying grassroots

Making projects happen

# Future trends and opportunities

# Community Energy Projects: Using Technology to Optimise Generation and Income

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**Mike Kelly from Ricardo**

# Community Energy Projects

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A mixture of different technologies can form a Community Energy Project

For example:

- Rooftop solar PV on a community hall



# Community Energy Projects

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A mixture of different technologies can form a Community Energy Project

For example:

- Rooftop solar PV on a community hall
- Heat pumps in community buildings





# Community Energy Projects

A mixture of different technologies can form a Community Energy Project

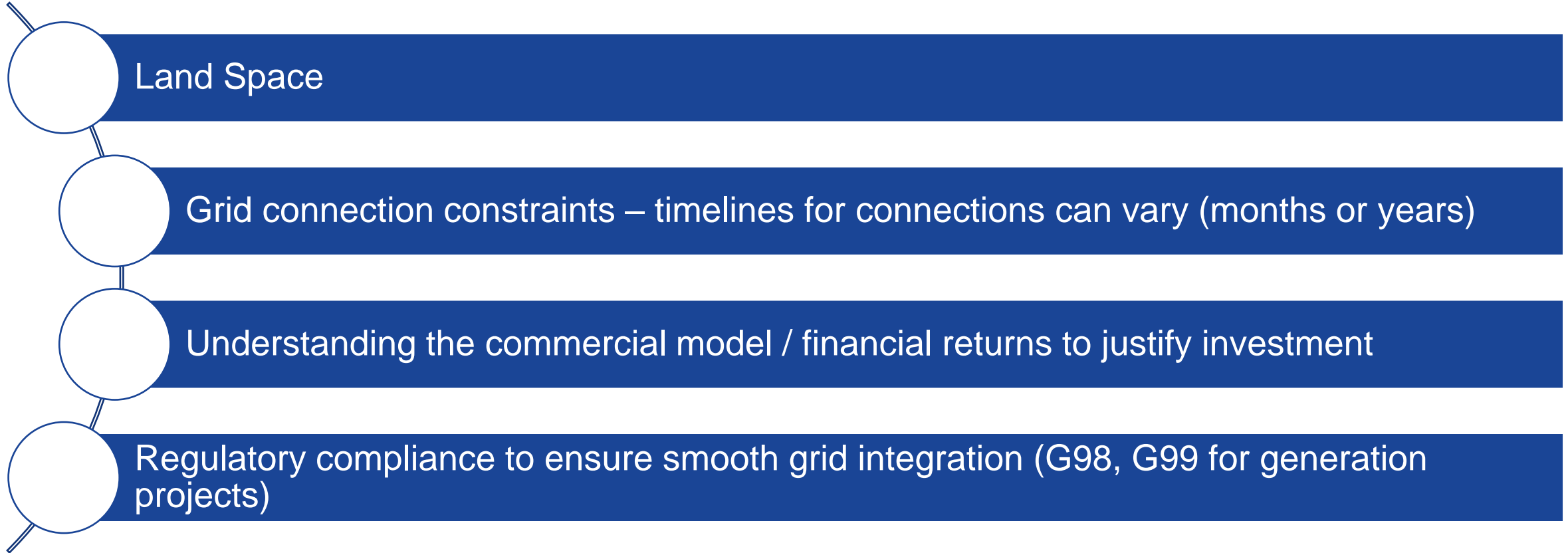
For example:

- Rooftop solar PV on a community hall
- Heat pumps in community buildings
- Large-scale wind / solar projects that:
  - Supply a community via PPA
  - Export to the grid



## Challenges often faced when deploying them

Challenges that will be encountered.



## Example of Space



Battery Storage Example



Solar Farm Example

<https://www.sunsave.energy/solar-panels-advice/solar-energy/largest-solar-farms-uk>



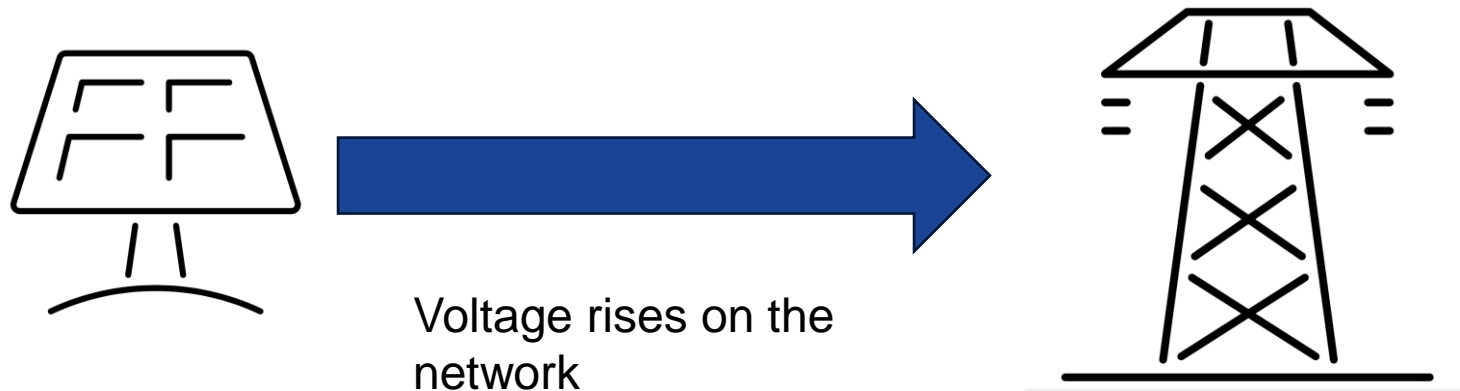
## Grid Connection Challenges

Small, medium and large-scale renewable sites are applying for a grid connection.

In some cases, 100% grid connection or a grid connection + private wire.

DNOs undertake a network impact assessment to assess any issues with accommodating new technology onto the network.

- For example:
  - Thermal constraints caused by assets overheating (new connection > rating of transformers)
  - Voltage Constraints (are voltages within correct + and – tolerances).
  - Harmonics (inverted connected technology can distort the power quality)

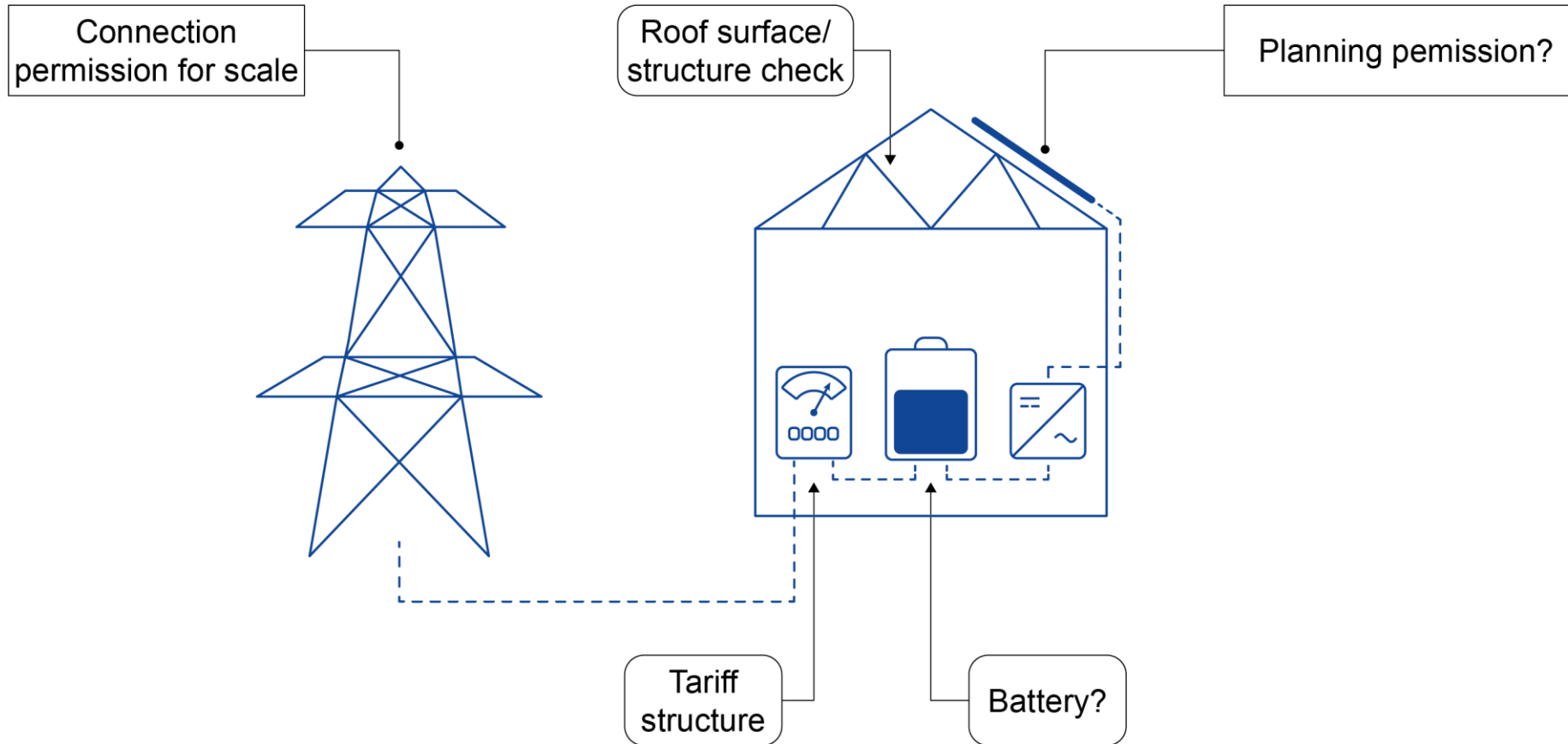


We have talked about the challenges – how can we overcome these challenges to optimise generation and income?

## Some examples

Innovative Solutions	Description
1. Onsite Generation and self-consumption	Size the renewable site to meet onsite demand to ensure less is exported to the grid. Benefits – using more generation to generate income or reducing energy bills for the community
2. Using battery storage devices	These are crucial devices for the energy transition. Co-locating with renewables can help optimise generation and income.
3. Private Wire Agreement	Sign an agreement with an industry or high demand user at a fixed price.
4. Community Energy Islanding & Microgrids	Implementing a private network with renewables behind the DNO meter.

## Battery Storage – supporting self-generation



One example of battery storage working in conjunction with solar PV.

Extra solar production = charging the battery.

The battery can be discharged during low generation production.

Benefit = more renewables being used to offset demand.

There are other **bigger examples.**

## Demand Response using Renewables

Battery Storage offers the ability to flex generation and consumption.

DNOs are looking to procure flexibility services to manage their networks during peak demand periods.

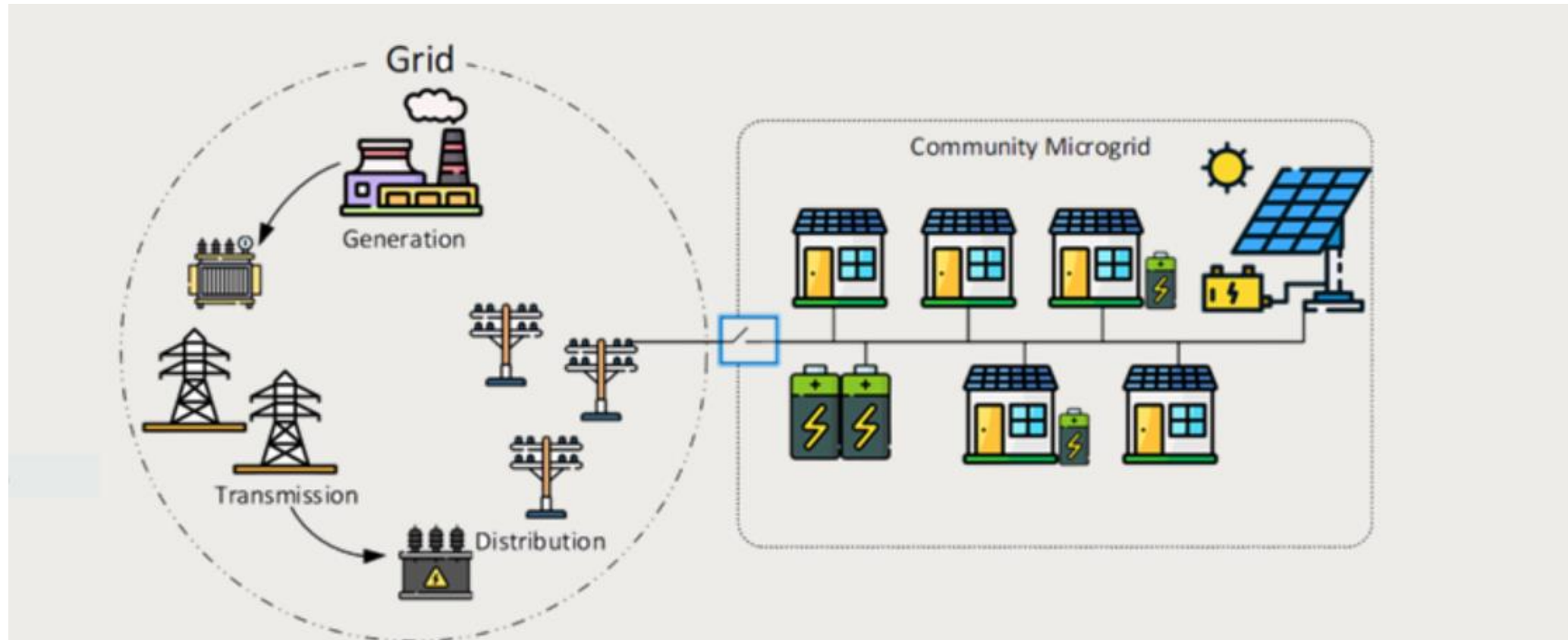
Investment in batteries could help with optimising the times when energy is used and stored. Simple example:

- Using renewable sites (wind farms) to charge a battery during periods when the grid cannot handle the excess renewable generation.
- The battery could supply communities at times when the grid is constrained.

Benefits:

- Increasing local consumption
- Increasing income for the generation site directly via a PPA and through a flexibility contract with the DNO.  
2-way income – extending the duration of renewable generation / consumption onsite and helping to balance the grid.

# Community Islanding and Microgrids



Source – <https://www.gencellenergy.com/resources/blog/microgrids-empower-communities-to-enjoy-sustainable-and-resilient-energy/>

## Example

Northern Powergrid is looking at Community microgrids via their Community DSO project.

Link is here - <https://www.northernpowergrid.com/community-dso>

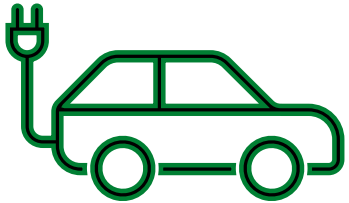
# SP Energy Networks - Flexibility services



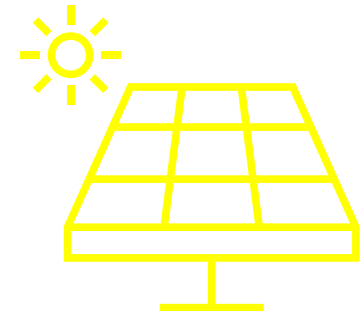
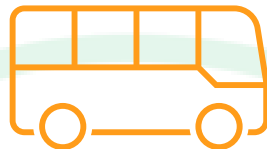
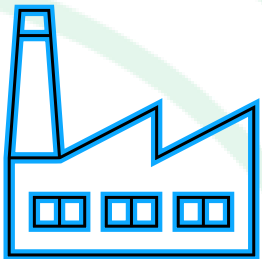
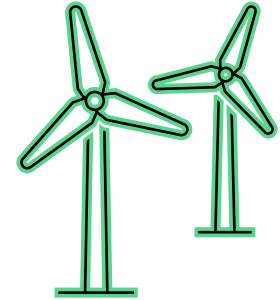
# What is DSO Flexibility?

Elin Williams – DSO Flexibility -  
Lead Energy System Specialist

# What is Flexibility?



‘Flexibility’ is the ability to change electricity generation or consumption patterns to support our network. It means participating assets and businesses can earn payments, while saving costs for everyone and helping more low carbon technologies to connect to the network.

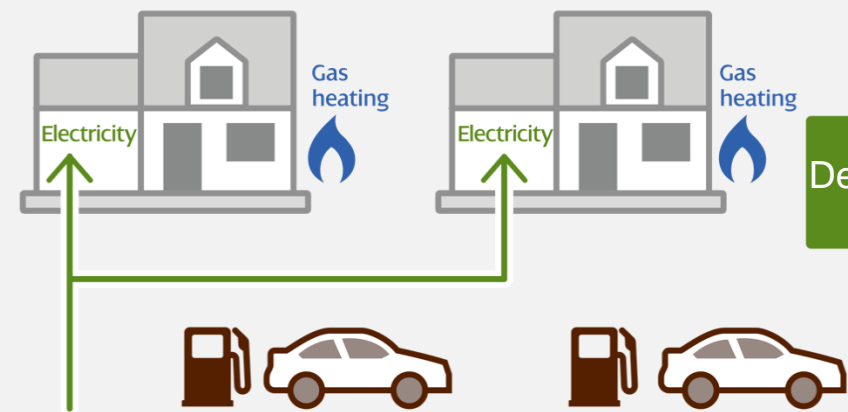


# Planning our network to facilitate Net Zero



## ❌ Old needs

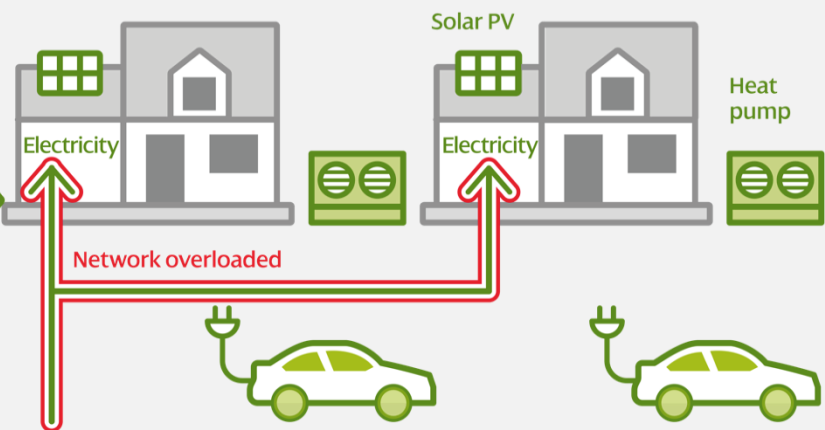
A household's energy is provided by three routes: **electricity**, **gas**, **petrol/diesel**.



The electricity network is designed for this level of electricity usage.

## ✅ The new normal

A household's energy is provided by one route: **electricity**.



As electricity use increases – the network is not currently designed for this. We must intervene...

### DFES



Granular Forecasts up to 2025;  
Developed with Stakeholders;  
Demand, Generation & LCT.

### Network Planning



Whole Network Review;  
Location & Scale of Constraint;  
Options Assessment.

### Flexibility Services



Location, & Capacity;  
Service Window (Time)  
Service Type (ENA Product)

## Facilitating Net Zero

GB



SPEN







Electric Vehicles  
~39m ~5m

Heat Pumps  
~25m ~3m

Generation  
~4x ~5x

# How Flexibility helps to facilitate Net Zero



	DSO Flexibility Use Case	Consumer Benefit
	<b>Manages Network Congestion</b> by optimising use of existing infrastructure	Reduces risk of outages.
	<b>Enhances Grid Resilience</b> By providing additional capacity and backup during network events / faults	Fewer voltage fluctuations > increasing power quality > less disruption
	<b>Supports a Just Transition</b> making efficient use of existing assets reduces need / cost of expensive infrastructure reinforcement	Lower overall system cost to consumers; Opportunity to earn incentives for adjusting demand or revenue stream for generation
	<b>Accommodates New Connections</b> by optimising use of existing network capacity and avoiding extensive reinforcement upgrades	Quicker and more cost-effective connection processes for new customers; Ensures new connection do not lead to network overloads.

## Facilitating Net Zero

GB



SPEN



**Electric Vehicles**  
~39m ~5m

**Heat Pumps**  
~25m ~3m

**Generation**  
~4x ~5x

# Market Prospectus – Summary of Opportunity

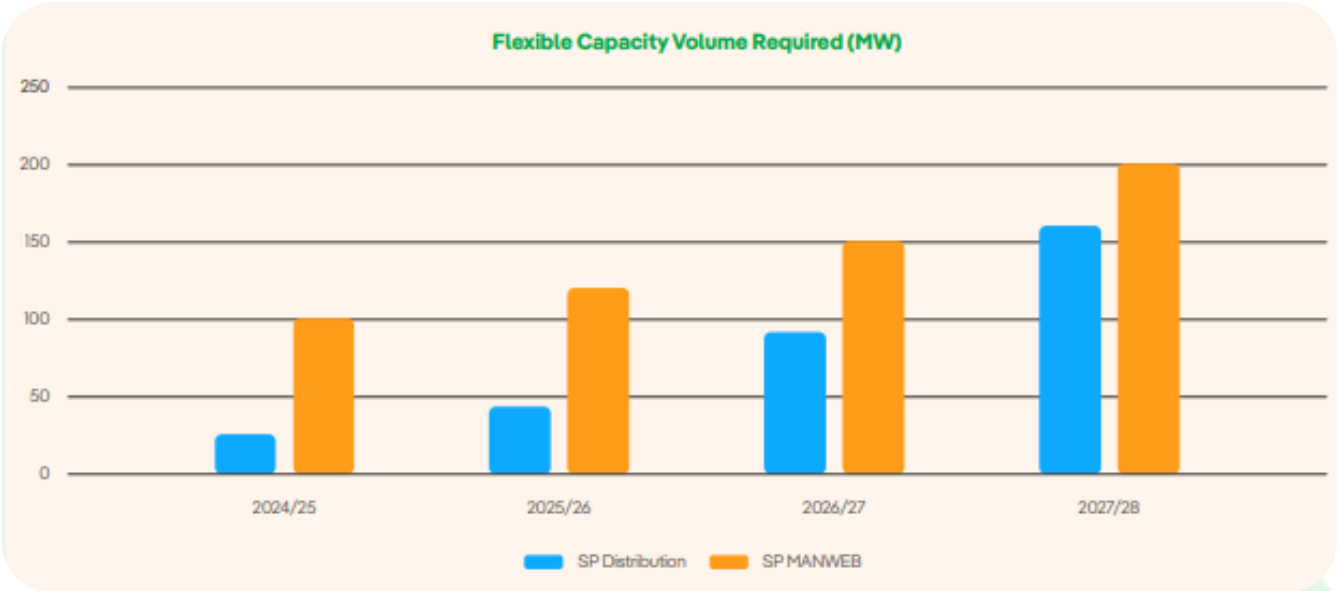


We have developed a Market Prospectus which aims to provide a clear monetary signal on the scale of our flexibility requirements per location.

We have a published Market Prospectus summary report alongside associated supporting data which providers can assess in further detail and on a per location basis.

Our Open Data Portal also now has an interactive heat map in which providers can view a summary of Peak MW capacity required, Estimated MWh volume and estimated total value of £ incentive available per location.



The overall value of the SPEN Month Ahead Market from 2024 to the end of the ED2 period in 2028 is estimated to be **£11.3m**



Facilitating Net Zero

GB

SPEN



Electric Vehicles

~39m

~5m

Heat Pumps

~25m

~3m

Generation

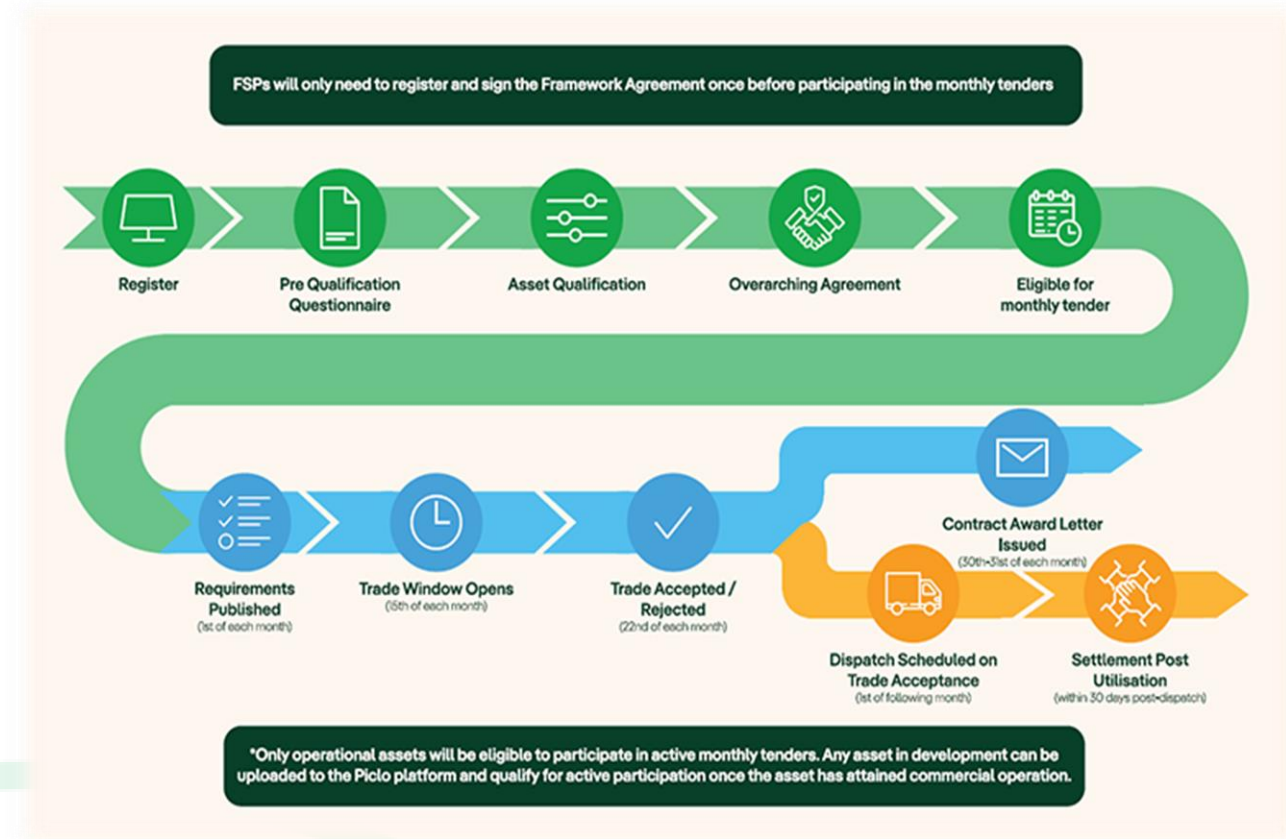
~4x

~5x

# How to Take Part?



- All types of operational assets can take part in our tenders if they fall within a Constraint Management Zone.
- We can help you through the process of signing up to our marketplace on Piclo.
- When a Month Ahead tender comes up, you place a bid and if successful, secure a flex contract for the following month.



If you want to learn more, join our What is Flex Webinar on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February:  
<https://spen.engage-360.co.uk/events/754>



# SP Energy Networks – Network development and priorities

# **Network development and priorities in the SPEN network and the influence and impact on future project development**

Andras Nemeth

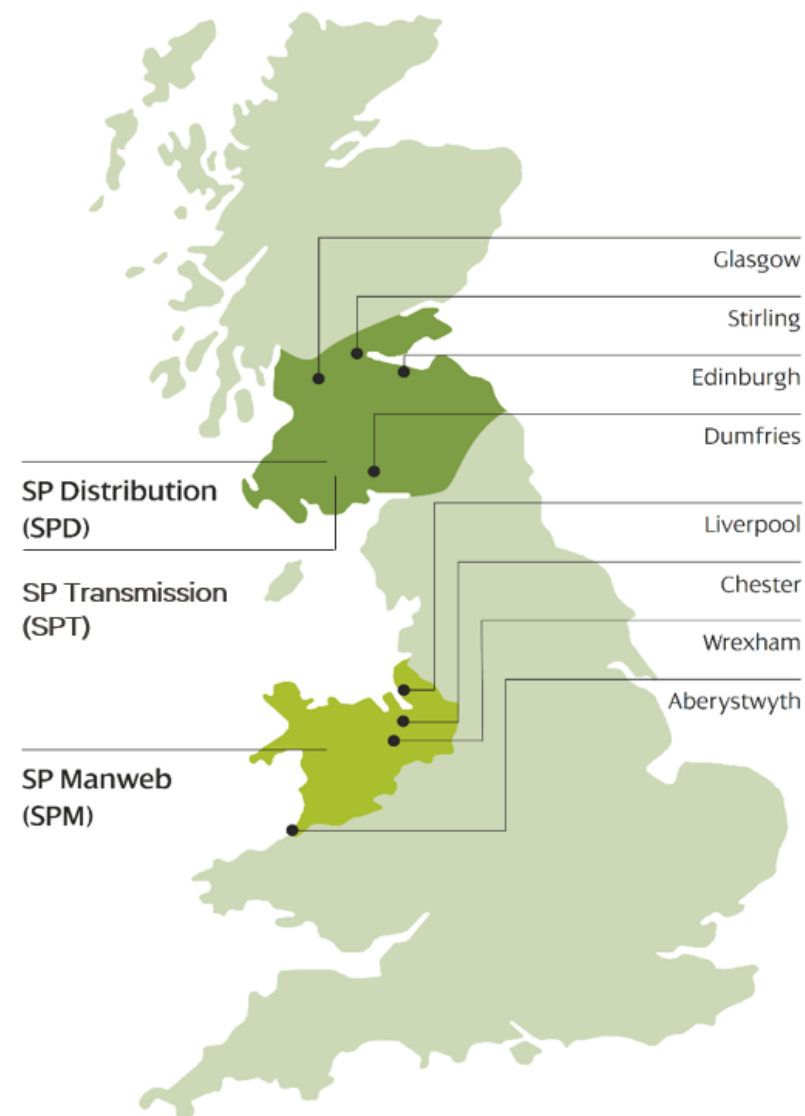


# Who We Are

We own and operate two regulated distribution networks, SP Distribution plc (SPD) and SP MANWEB plc (SPM). We are the only DNO group to operate across all three nations of GB – Scotland, England and Wales. We also own and operate one transmission network in Central and Southern Scotland, SP Transmission plc (SPT).

**Our business is crucial to the delivery of the UK's Net Zero targets and the transition to a more sustainable future.**

**We are committed to making this happen and placing our customers and stakeholders at the heart of this journey.**



# Accelerating Distribution Connections

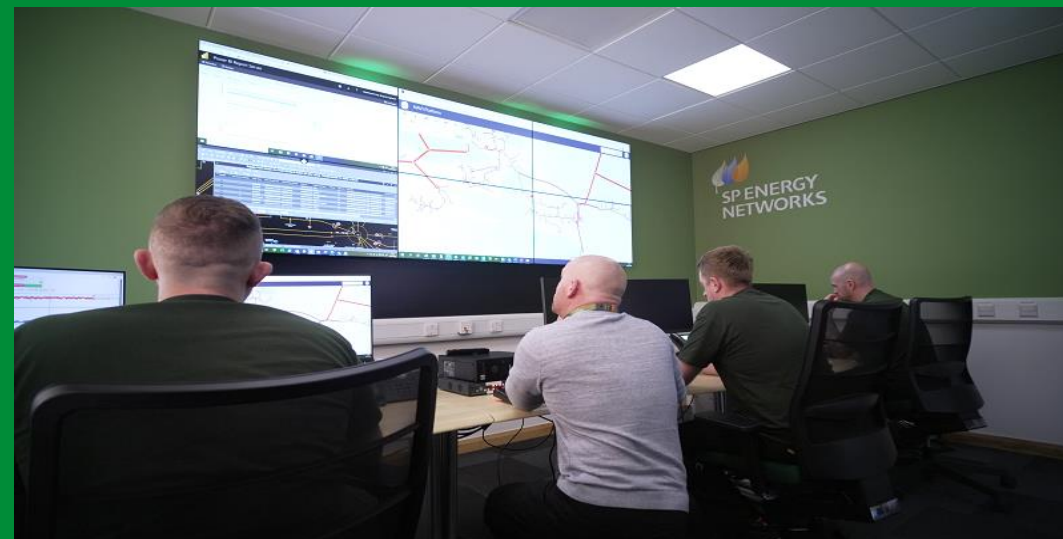
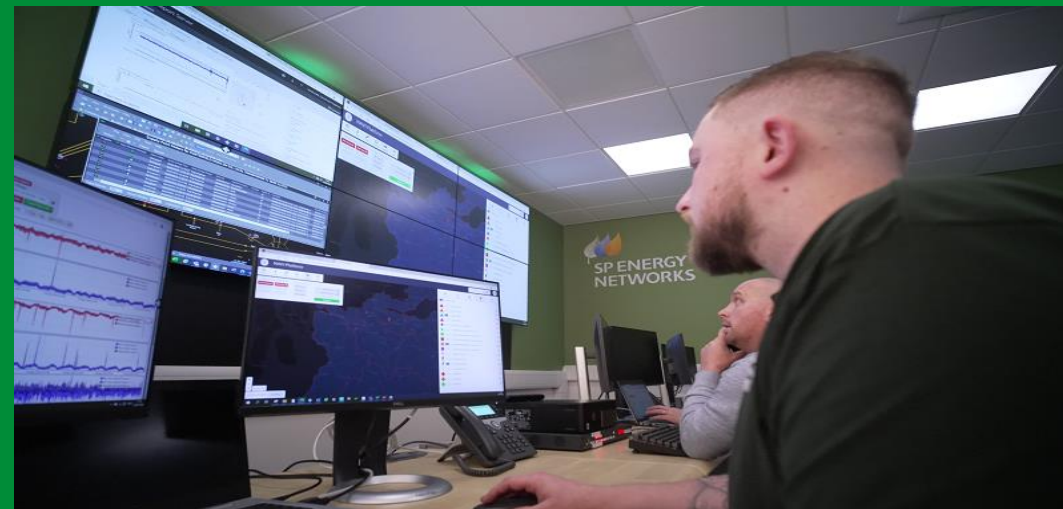
- **Challenge:** Long wait times for connecting generation due to a large queue.
- **Current Status:** 500GW contracted by end of 2023, over 8 times peak demand.
- **Impact:** Some connections delayed over 10 years.
- **Collaboration:** ENA's SCG working with ESO, TOs, and DNOs to speed up connections.
- **Solution:** Technical Limits at transmission/distribution boundary for temporary flexible connections.
- **Management:** Managed through Active Network Management (ANM) with uncompensated curtailment.
- NESO has announced a "Pause" on all transmission connection applications, approved by Ofgem, in effective since 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025.
- For any accepted generation application 1 MW and above (SP MANWEB) or 200kW and above (SP Distribution), SPEN are unable to apply to NESO.

# LV Monitoring

SPEN has launched the UK's first LV Support Room at Cambuslang depot, Glasgow.

Benefits:

- Advanced monitoring technology provides real-time supply information.
- Smart meter and substation data forecast potential faults before power drops.
- Enhances fault detection and understanding, preventing unnecessary power cuts.
- Supports future power network plans by assessing impacts of EVs and heat pumps.



# LV Monitoring

- As per RIIO-ED2, SPEN plans to target LV monitors at  $\geq 200\text{kVA}$  secondary substations and their associated LV circuits.
- As per RIIO-ED2 Business plans, SPEN plans to deliver LV monitoring on the LV circuits in 14,102 secondary substations.
- RIIO-ED2 intervention plan is built on RIIO-ED1 plans, which plans to install LV monitoring at 2,438 secondary substations by the end of RIIO-ED1.
- Combined, these programmes mean that 52% of secondary substations  $\geq 200\text{kVA}$  will have LV monitoring by the end of RIIO-ED2, up from 8% at the end of RIIO-ED1. This will increase customer coverage from 14% to 76%.



## ENZ Platform

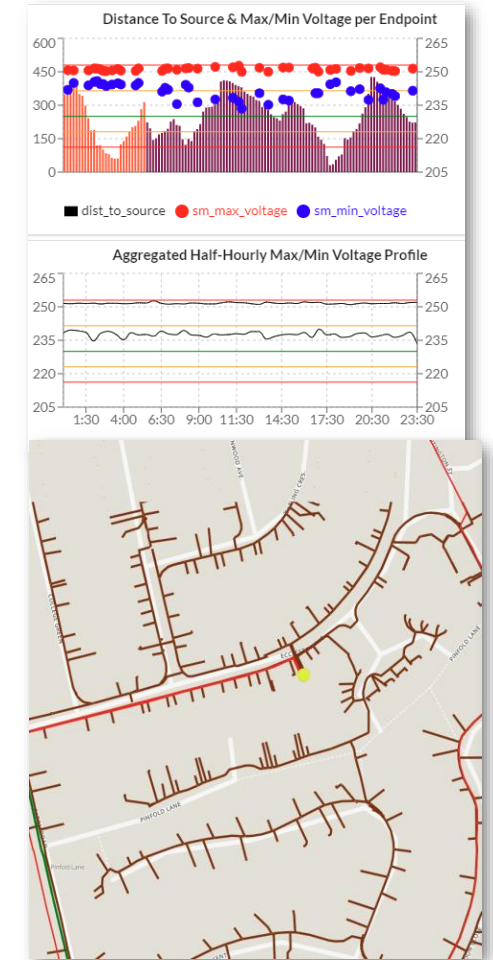
- Integrates data monitoring, smart meters, enhanced forecasting, and asset condition, with a full connectivity model of SPEN's entire distribution network.
- Provides master view of asset health, criticality, and risk.
- Real-time visibility of the network.
- Integration of asset risk management tools within the ENZ Platform to enable holistic whole-lifecycle asset management operational and planning decisions

## NAVI

- NAVI stemmed from SPEN's award winning NCEWS innovation project26 and now has been implemented into our digital ecosystem as BaU.
- Platform for automatic creation of connected network models from SPEN's GIS data for network analysis.
- NAVI utilises network visibility to improve SPEN's connectivity model supporting increasing requirement for analytics, modelling and simulation for RIIO-ED2.

## LANIT

- LANIT is developed to support Local Authorities in developing their Local Area and Regional Energy Plans.
- Provides a view of current cable and substation capacity, constraints and associated indicative costs for reinforcement work.
- Promotes a shared knowledge around future network requirements.
- LANIT Version 1 is now available via SPEN Open Data Portal.





## D-Suite

- LV network is expecting a large uptake of LCTs.
- Develop LV Design tool for a suite of low-cost, high volume, D-Suite products with modular design.
- Capable of meeting the future challenges of decarbonisation in LV networks, so they become an attractive solution to network operators.

## LV Optimiser (LVOE)

- Focused on LV PED with its novel control algorithm designed to address LV voltage quality and imbalance, enabling the vast adoption of Low Carbon Technology (LCT) connections within the LV network.
- It signifies a paradigm shift where traditional substation located PEDs have been the norm, LVOE investigates PEDs specifically located and designed for LV feeders to improve operational flexibility.

## LCT Determinator

- Development of a software solution which identifies the number of LCTs (initially HPs and EV chargers) using data gathered from LV feeders.
- Validation of future LCT uptake trends and modelling.
- Improvement of accuracy of intervention plans, to maintain efficient system operation.
- Inform future investment decisions for network operators.



# Innovation in community energy projects

Question and Answer session

# Break

# Funding community energy projects

- Funding mix, support and information
- Steps to take to get a secure project finance
- Financing community energy projects
- Community shares and bonds

# Funding mix, support and information

Three sources of finance available for a community:

- Equity
- Grants
- Debt finance

How a project is funded will depend on:

- the size/cost of the project
- access to the sources of funding
- level of risk the group and funder are prepared to manage

A group will need to consider when financial advice is required.

- **Equity**

- money a community may already have that can be used to invest
- a debt raised against land already owned or an asset
- a share offer used to raise funds required by a community to raise and retain the capital required

- **Grants**

- provided to projects to fund a particular service or activity
- a wide range of providers, a good starting point are the government funded services:
  - Wales: [Welsh Government Energy Service](#) (WGES)
  - Scotland: [Community and Renewable Energy Scheme](#) (CARES)
  - England (regional based): [North West Net Zero Hub](#), [Midlands Net Zero Hub](#)
- Ofgem strategic grant funding such as [Strategic Innovation Fund](#) (SIF) and [Network Innovation Allowance](#) (NIA)



- **Debt**

- Typically, lenders will provide *non-recourse finance*. Debt secured against the actual physical assets and the future cash flow stream
- Providers include:
  - commercial banks (typically focussing on larger investments)
  - social enterprises that provide business loans (and grants) such as:
    - [Social Investment Cymru](#) (SIC)
    - [Social Investment Business](#) (SIB)
    - [Social Investment Scotland](#) (SIS)
  - development loans to assist communities to an investment ready stage in addition to grant funding such as:
    - [Community and Renewable Energy Scheme](#) (CARES)
    - [Welsh Government Energy Service](#) (WGES) through Development Bank of Wales (DBW)

- Funding opportunities are always changing. The following links are good sources that are regularly updated:

[Community Energy England](#)

[Third Sector Support Wales](#) and [Wales Council for Voluntary Action](#) (WCVA)

[Community Energy Scotland](#)

- Funded support programmes that provide free support to groups to consider and progress community shares (and in some cases, bonds) within the SPEN Network include:

Scotland: [Democratic Finance Scotland](#)

England: [Co-operatives UK](#)

Wales: [Community Shares Wales](#)

- UK-wide: [Energy4All](#) A private organisation that charges fees to support groups for community share management and registry services, plus access to their pool of resources

# Robert Hobbs: Radio City



# RADIO CITY ASSOCIATION

*"CREATING OUR ELECTRIC VALLEY"*



## ABOUT RCA



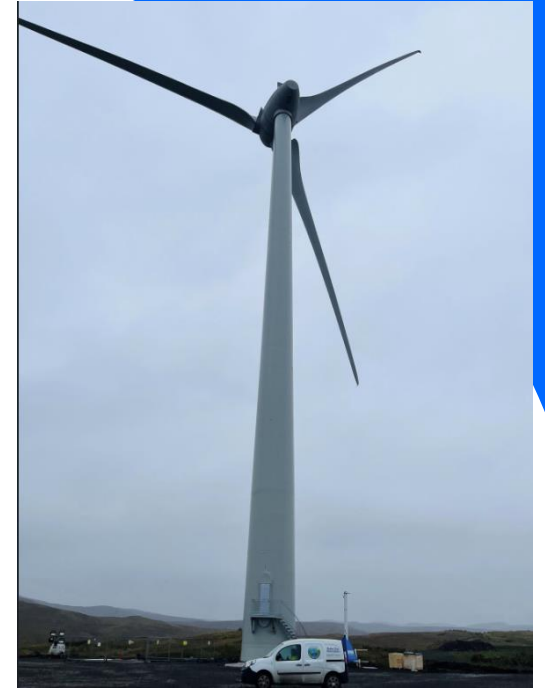
- Established charity in 1999 to redevelop the listed Radio City building as a millennium project.
- Based in Garnock Valley area of North Ayrshire with around 21,000 people
- Post Industrial Area, traditional industry closure in 1980's and long-term inequality as a result, with some of most deprived areas in Scotland



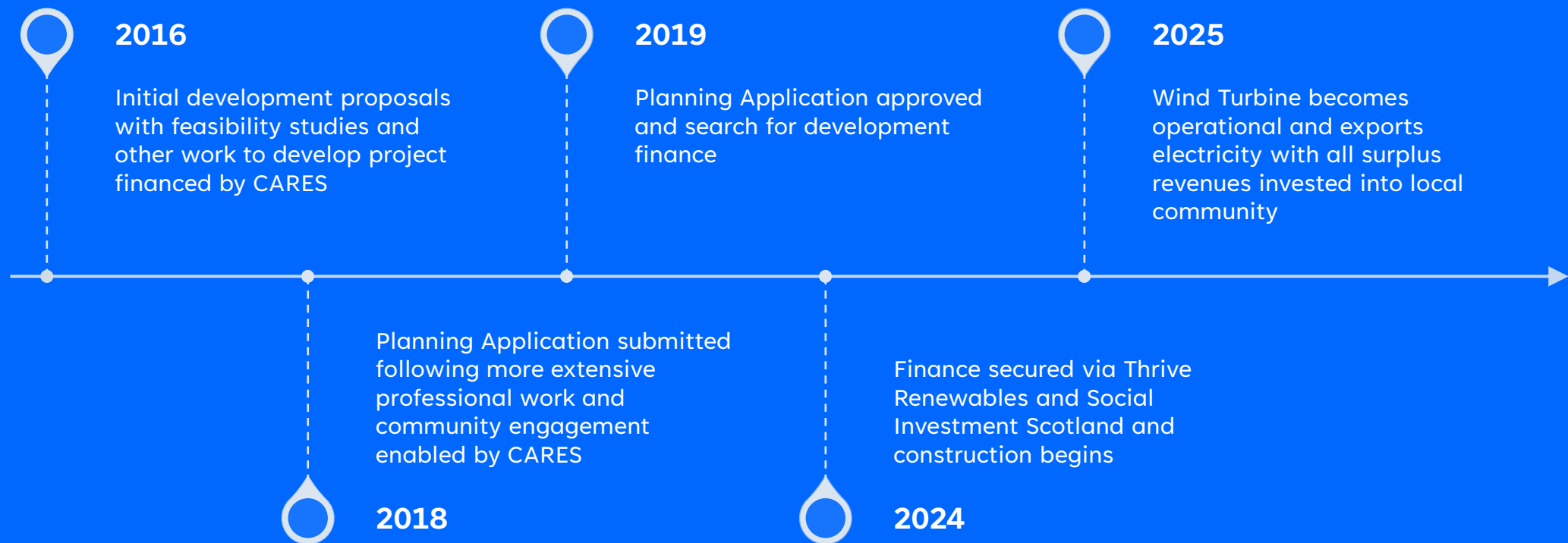


# Wind Turbine Development

- 100% of profits returned to be invested in our community
- Enercon E82-E4 - 3MW capacity turbine.
- Development financed by CARES programme.
- Total of around £7.3 million investment via Social Investment Scotland, Thrive Renewables and Local Energy Scotland on subsidy free model
- Multiple local companies benefiting from construction works in Community Wealth Building model.
- Turbine operational via a CIC on subsidy free model with community ownership returning more in community benefit than 42 turbines in local vicinity combined community benefit.



# Timeline: Community Wind Development



# Pre-requisites for Project Funding

- A positive Feasibility Study
- A team of Commercial, Financial & Legal members and or external advisors that are experienced in securing funding (Grants & Debt Finance) & developing a complex project from start to finish.
- A suitable, accessible site for your project, that you already own or can secure by purchase or lease agreements (with a confirmed energy resources – wind yield assessment report), this for Loan Security & Business Plan/Financial Modelling purposes.
- Full Planning Consent for your project and confirmation of a Grid Connection (preferably unconstrained and close to the existing Grid).
- Identify future Energy Off-takers for your project along with any Government Support.
- To reach Financial Close, secure suitably qualified OEM Suppliers, Contractors & Project Managers to deliver the Project (On-time & Budget) with Fixed Terms for same if possible.





# Securing Project Funding

- Speak to an Advisor (as a Scottish based project = CARES)
- Assess any available Grants to help fund the Development & Construction Phases.
- Use Financial Modelling Tools (CARES) to assess your project Financial Viability.
- Identify any Private (High Worth Individuals), Public (Government or Trusts) and Traditional Lenders (Banks).
- In our case worked with Thrive Renewables and Social Investment Scotland to negotiate the best possible T&Cs to suit your project lifetime.
- Important Note – incorporate a significant (well above inflation rate) Contingency Fund allowance in your Financial Models to cover unforeseen cost over-runs and timeline slippage!





**Be Resilient & Tenacious**

**Thank you**

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Feb 2025

# Financing Community Energy Projects

Otis Harrison  
Investment Manager



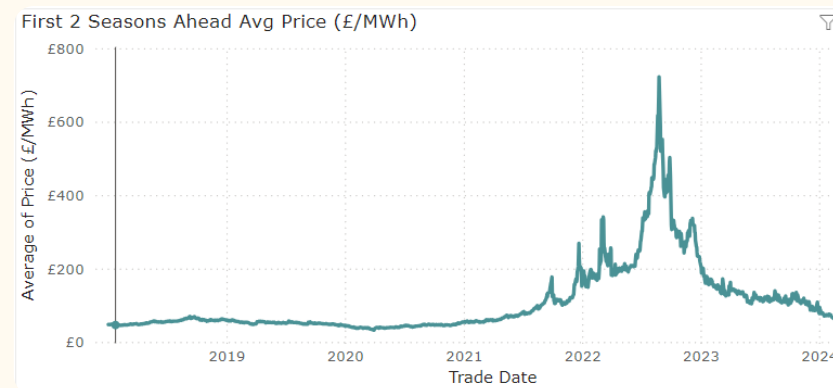
Thrive  
Renewables





# UK Market Update

- **UK Power prices** – fallen from peak.
- **Macro Outlook** – base interest rates at 4.50% and inflation at rate 2.5%.
- **Route to Market** – CfD (5MW+), corporate PPAs, private wire, consortium PPAs, supply licence exemption.
- **Grid connections** – facing delays of many kinds.
- **Larger projects** - due to increased costs, economies of scale more important than ever.
- **Labour and skills shortages** - has meant that supply is stretched across big installers.
- **Regulation** – REMA has the potential to impact many projects.

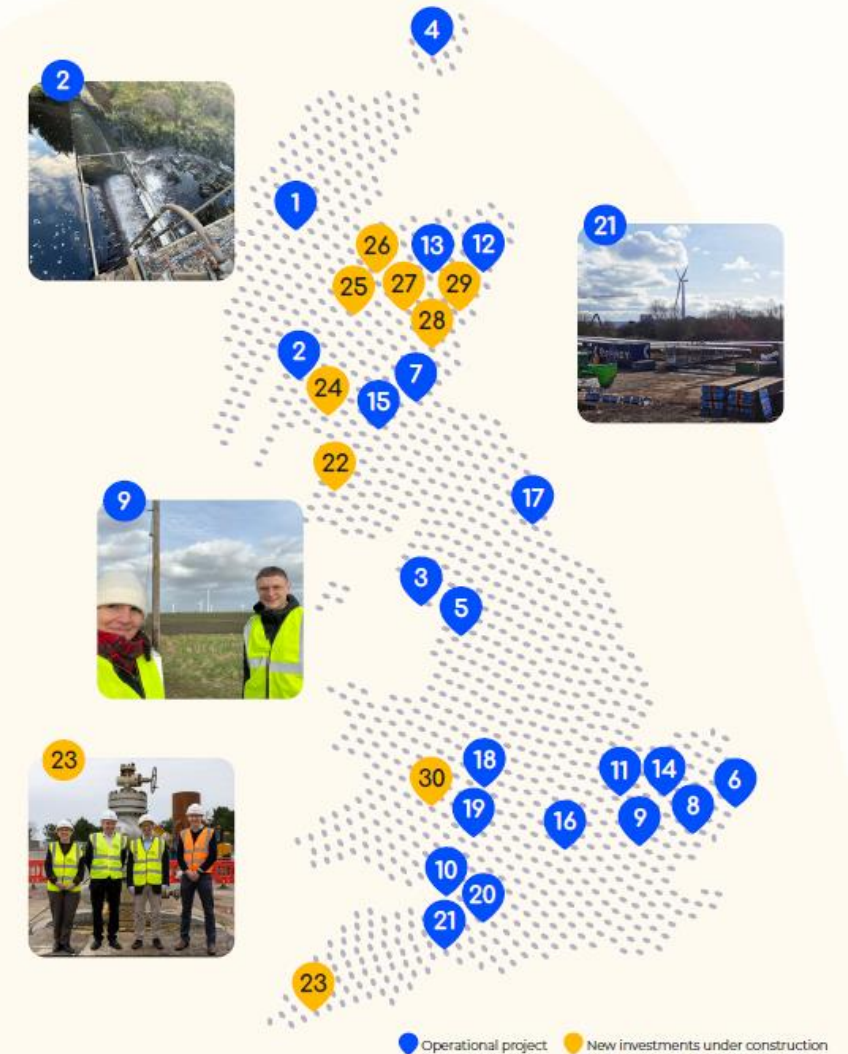


# What we do

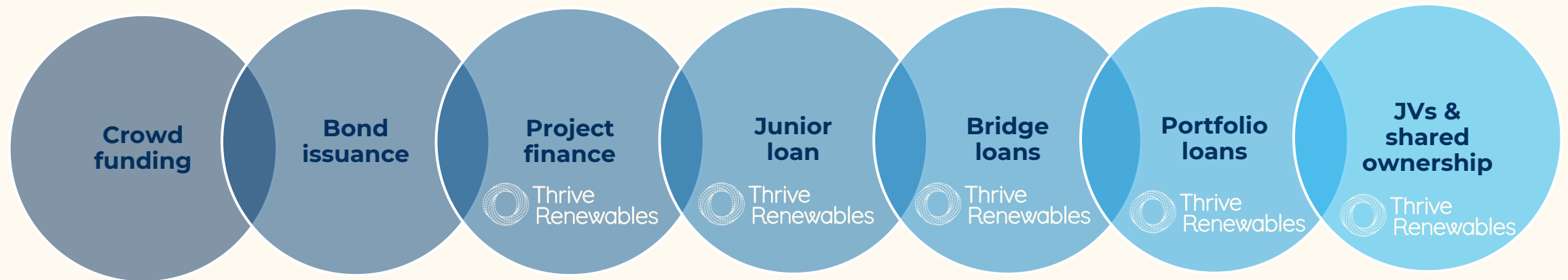
- Sustainable energy investment company with 30-year track record
- Backed by many sources of capital including crowd funding
- Collaborative capital for new UK renewable energy capacity
- Developed, built and/or funded 44 clean energy projects in total
- Current portfolio of 34 projects - onshore wind, hydro, battery storage, heat and solar. Assets under management of £129 million in 2023
- Provide facilitating capital and plug funding gaps to build new renewable energy capacity in the UK
- £21m funding for community energy projects using collaborative approach

## Our projects

Projects combined electricity capacity	286MW
Of which Thrive owns or is funding	130MW



# Ways to fund community energy



# Getting projects funded

- Project viability and economics are key.
- Engaging the right advisors will save time later.
- Engaging advisors early could be a worthwhile investment.
- Look for a supportive and collaborative funder.
- Maximise support for those who want to help communities.







## Thrive Renewables plc

Deanery Road, Bristol BS1 5AS

[www.thriverenewables.co.uk](http://www.thriverenewables.co.uk)

Tel. 0117 428 1850

[info@thriverenewables.co.uk](mailto:info@thriverenewables.co.uk)

Registered in England and Wales 2978651



[linkedin.com/company/thrive-renewables](https://linkedin.com/company/thrive-renewables)



[facebook.com/thriverenewables](https://facebook.com/thriverenewables)

# Morven Lyon: Democratic Finance Scotland



# Democratic Finance Scotland

Supporting community and social enterprises to  
**secure their long-term financial sustainability**  
by developing:

Long-term, independent funding  
sources

+

Community power and control

Ensuring communities have the  
**financial control** and the **community power**  
to take **ownership of important community assets**  
and run **democratic community led businesses**

# Type of Funding and Finance

Local, citizen-driven sources of money:

- Community shares
- Community bonds
- Grassroots legacy giving
- Local philanthropy and donation-based crowdfunding
- One-off community lotteries
- Common Benefit Funds and Common Good Funds

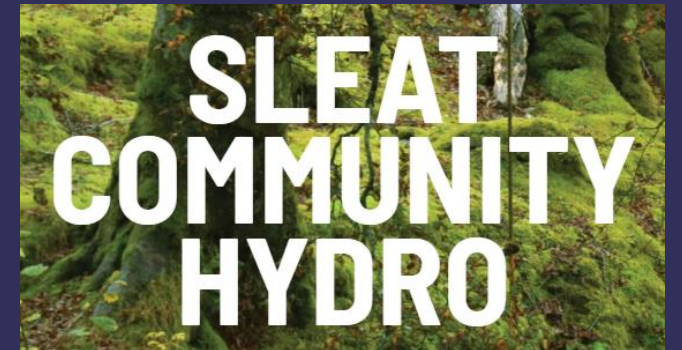
# Community Shares Key Features and Benefits

## Key Features

- Investment crowdfunding from your community
- Equity/ownership model
- Interest typically 2-6%
- Not transferable
- Flexible withdrawals - typically from Year 5
- Tax relief for investors (renewables not eligible)
- Community Benefit Society required

## Key Benefits

- Embeds community control and encourages engagement
- Democratic – control not linked to amount invested
- Accessible – shares from £10
- Flexible and patient
- Levers other funding and finance



# Community Bonds Key Features and Benefits

## Key Features

- Investment crowdfunding from your community
- Debt model / no ownership
- Fixed interest - typically 2-6%
- Fixed term – typically 10 years
- Tax relief for investors (innovative finance ISA)
- Community Benefit Society required or option to use Scottish Communities Finance Ltd

## Key Benefits

- Encourages community engagement in enterprise
- Accessible – bonds from £25-50
- Semi flexible and patient



# Community Shares and Community Bonds - Comparison

- Bonds are debt
- Shares are equity/ownership
- Bonds have a fixed term repayment and fixed interest rate
- Shares slightly more flexible on repayment and interest
- Bonds offer tax relief for investors (innovative finance ISA)
- Shares not currently eligible for tax relief for energy projects
- Both require a Community Benefit Society
- Shares and Bonds can be used at the same time

# Our Support

Our support is fully funded and in two stages

## 1. Early Stage

Support to explore what democratic finance sources are the best fit for your community

## 2. In Depth Development

- Governance expertise and training
- Community engagement and consultation
- Business planning and financial modelling
- Marketing and PR incl. £5k Micro Grant available



# Get in Touch!



[www.democraticfinance.scot](http://www.democraticfinance.scot)



[info@democraticfinance.scot](mailto:info@democraticfinance.scot)

# Funding community energy projects

Question and Answer session

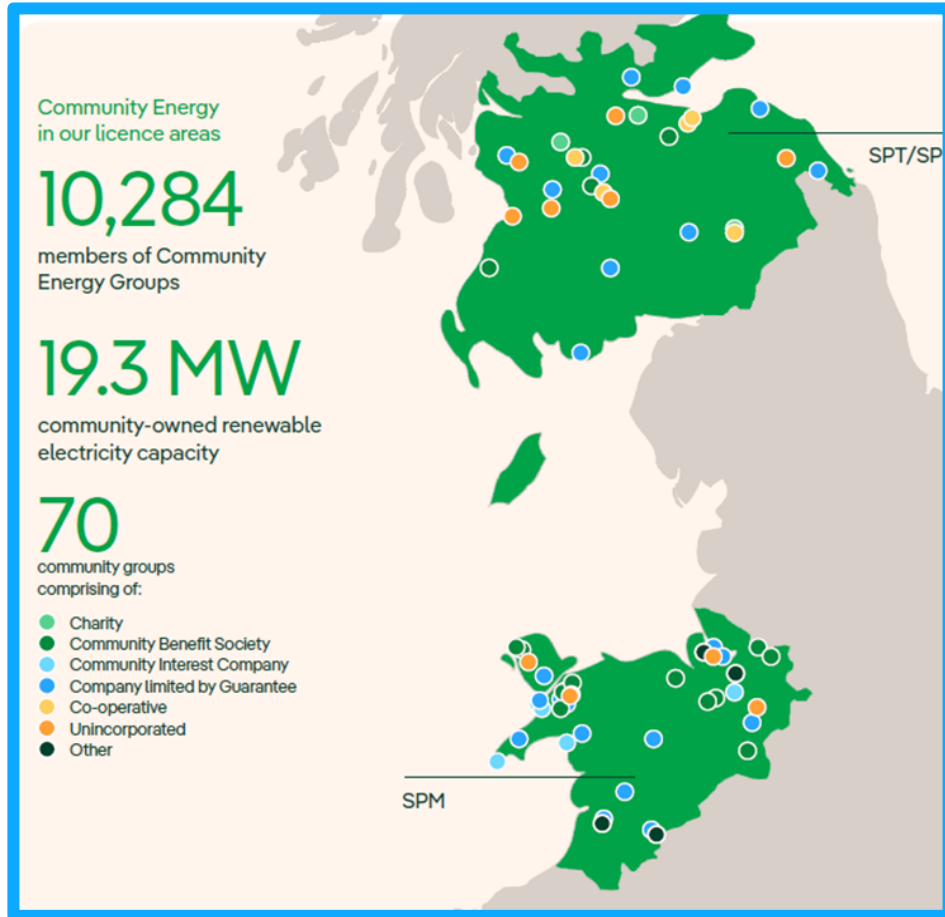


**Community Energy Workshop:** Innovation and funding webinar

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# Closing remarks

# SP Energy Networks: What next?



## Engaging with us:

- Community Energy Strategy
- Community Energy Partnerships
- Connections Support
- Flexibility Opportunities
- Development of LHEES

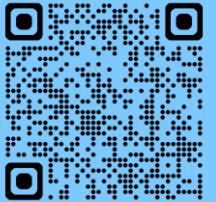
## Our engagement:

- Strategy Development
- Community Energy Webpage Development
- Wider Sector Support
- Sharing Success (Case Studies/Workshops)
- Workshop information/content

## CE Webpage



## Register as a Stakeholder:



## Connections Workshop



## Connections workshops:

**Chester**

10:00 - 12:00 12 March 2025

[Register](#)

**Glasgow**

10:00 – 12:00 19 March 2025

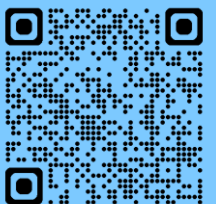
[Register](#)

- Everything you need to know about the connections process, including different types of connections, applications, support, and contacts
- Designed to help you expand your knowledge and understanding
- Hear case studies and learn about managing expectations to help you make informed decisions

CE Webpage



Register as a  
Stakeholder:



Connections  
Workshop

