



POWERING UP UPDATE

Happy New Year everyone! Thank you for showing an interest in the Powering Up project. We have been intending to send out a newsletter for some time, but events have got in the way! However, it is high time that we brought you up to date with what has been happening, so here goes!

HEADLINES

A lot has been happening so, in case you don't have time to read the whole newsletter (the holidays are a busy time after all), here are the headlines:

- Our initial Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF) grant application has been rejected, but we have been encouraged to re-apply.
- We have reviewed our options and decided to re-submit the **Thedden Grange** renewable heating project to RCEF in February, with support from [Community Energy South](#) (CES).
- We will investigate the possibility of applying for a grant from CES to progress the **Coomers** solar PV project.
- We are also investigating the possibility of hiring an administrator with support from CES.
- We are talking to the Copse Close solar farm developers with a view to Powering Up being involved in the proposed 50MW solar farm to be built on the Selbourne Road.
- **We need more volunteers for the Powering Up committee.** In particular, we need a Secretary, and we always need help with ad-hoc tasks such as publicity, project site visits, research etc. If you think that you could provide any relevant skills or support, please contact [Chris](#) or [John](#).

THE DETAILS

Back in the summer we worked hard to complete a grant application to the Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF). Our grant application was to set up a new community Cooperative to own the Powering Up projects and for feasibility studies for 4 potential projects (see [our leaflet](#) for more information):

- Solar PV to be installed on the roofs of the flats at **York Mews**;
- Clean heat and possibly EV charging to be installed at the **Community Centre**;
- Solar PV to be installed at **Coomers**;
- Clean heat to be installed at **Thedden Grange**.

We submitted the grant application in August and then waited...and waited...until November! Then we finally heard that we had failed the grant application but we were encouraged to re-submit a less complex application.

Since November we have been taking further advice from Community Energy South (CES) to help us to identify the right way forward. Since the summer the energy market has changed significantly (you may have noticed the many energy companies going bust for a start!). This has caused us to re-evaluate the four proposed schemes. We have decided to submit an application for an RCEF grant for just the Thedden Grange project in February, with support from CES.



We are also talking to CES about the possibility of obtaining a grant from them to conduct a mini-feasibility study of the Coomers project. CES believe that this project would fit their Community Renewal Fund and this would be quicker and easier than applying to RCEF.

In the meantime, another potential project has emerged. A new solar farm (called [Copse Close](#)) has been proposed near West Worldham. We have been talking to the Brock Family, who are proposing the scheme, to see if there is some way that we could be involved. Unfortunately, the scheme is likely to be too big (at 50 MW!) for Powering up to practically own a proportion of the farm, which would have been our first choice. Copse Close have nevertheless agreed to have a call with ACAN and Energy4All to listen to any proposal that we might come up with. **We need someone to take this on and work with Energy4All to come up with a workable shared-ownership proposal.** There is also a good chance that we could be involved in a community fund attached to the scheme if no shared ownership scheme can be agreed. Watch this space!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

As you can see from the above, there is a lot going on at Powering Up and plenty planned for the future. The good news is that CES are strongly supportive - they have funding support from HCC and are able to give direct staff input to us for the first half of 2022 to manage the RCEF resubmission. However, **we do need more local volunteer input too** - so we want to hear from you even if you can only manage a small time commitment - it will all help! In particular, Andrew Sweeney our present secretary, who was instrumental in submitting the RCEF grant in August, will have to take a back-seat for a while as he pursues a renewable energy related degree. This means that we are looking for a new secretary. We will also need a treasurer and other directors for the new coop when it is formed and we always need help with ad-hoc tasks such as publicity, project site visits, research etc.

So, if you think that you could help out on the committee in any capacity, or just want to find out more about what we do, please contact [Chris](#) or [John](#). **Powering Up cannot press forward without your help!**