

Community Energy Action Plan

Herefordshire

July 2026



Glossary

Distribution Network Operator (DNO). A licensed company responsible for owning, operating, maintaining, and investing in the regional electricity distribution network that carries power from the national transmission system to homes, businesses, and other consumers. DNOs manage substations, transformers, overhead lines, and underground cables, typically operating at voltages below 132kV. They do not generate or sell electricity; instead, their role is to ensure a safe, reliable, and efficient supply, respond to power outages, and provide new or upgraded connections for consumers and generators. GB DNOs operate within defined geographic areas and are regulated by Ofgem, which sets performance standards and controls how much they can charge through regulated network fees. The DNO for Herefordshire is National Grid Electricity Distribution (West Midlands) PLC.

Feed in Tariff (FiT). A UK government scheme (2010–2019) that provided guaranteed, long-term payments for renewable electricity generation and export. FiTs underpinned the early growth of community energy by offering stable, predictable income, enabling share offers and long-term planning. When FiTs closed to new projects in 2019, many community energy business models became unviable. Whilst the Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) replaced FiTs for exports, its lower and variable rates limit SEG's usefulness for many community-owned projects. As a result, the sector has shifted towards on-site use and long-term PPAs.

Memoranda of Understanding (MoU). A non-legally binding agreement that set out how organisations will work together toward shared objectives. It can provide a light-touch but formal framework for cooperation, covering areas such as governance, information sharing, joint project development, and decision-making processes, without the complexity of contractual arrangements. MoUs are particularly useful in coordinating activity across multiple organisations, providing continuity during periods of change, and enabling partners to align resources and expertise whilst retaining organisational independence.

Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). A long-term contract (typically 15–25 years) under which an organisation agrees to buy electricity from a specific renewable energy installation at a pre-agreed price. A third party (such as a community energy organisation) finances, installs, owns and maintains the system, whilst the building owner or occupier purchases the electricity on-site typically at a price lower than or capped against grid rates. PPAs require no upfront capital from the Council and provide long-term price certainty, carbon savings, and community benefit. They are commonly used alongside roof or land leases.

Executive Summary

Herefordshire Council is one of six local authorities taking part in a community energy capacity-building study funded by the Midlands Net Zero Hub (MNZH) and delivered by Energy Saving Trust in partnership with Marches Energy Advice. The exercise is designed to prepare councils and partners for anticipated growth in community energy activity associated with the Government's Local Power Plan¹ and forthcoming GB Energy funding.

The research involved desk-based analysis, a survey, and three workshops exploring the local community energy landscape, opportunities and barriers. The aim was to identify how the Council can best support community energy activity without duplicating existing efforts. This document sets out the resulting action plan.

This action plan sets out how Herefordshire Council and its partners can enable community energy to support net zero, reduce energy costs, strengthen resilience, and deliver wider local benefits.

There is strong potential for community energy in Herefordshire, supported by committed organisations and individuals including Pomona Solar Co-op, Big Solar Co-op and Herefordshire Green Network. However, several projects have struggled to progress beyond feasibility due to grid constraints, funding gaps, procurement challenges, fragmented coordination and a lack of clear delivery pathways.

The immediate priority is to move from fragmented, project-by-project activity to a more coordinated and strategic delivery model. This includes strengthening county-wide coordination, developing a pipeline of investable projects aligned with grid capacity and local demand, and enabling the Council to act as a trusted intermediary between community organisations, businesses and delivery partners. Improving access to development and bridging finance, alongside addressing procurement and asset-related barriers, will also be critical to accelerating delivery.

Longer-term opportunities may extend beyond renewable energy. Herefordshire's public-sector estates, community buildings and regeneration sites could support future heat network development, whilst battery storage could help maximise the value of rooftop solar, reduce energy costs, improve resilience and strengthen the business case for community energy investment.

Overall, Herefordshire has an enthusiastic and experienced community energy ecosystem, spanning generation, energy efficiency, and advice services. Existing generation activity already supports wider community benefit and grassroots delivery through trusted local partners. With improved coordination, targeted support and clearer routes to delivery, this foundation has significant potential to contribute to net zero ambitions whilst delivering wider social, economic and community benefits.

¹ Local Power Plan | Great British Energy

Background and current state

Introduction

The Midlands Net Zero Hub (MNZH) provides funding, grants, and strategic support to accelerate net zero projects across the Midlands, including community energy, public sector decarbonisation, and building retrofit initiatives.

Funded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) and hosted by Nottingham City Council, MNZH offers free strategic, technical, and financial support to local authorities, public sector organisations, and community groups to help take net zero projects from concept to investment-ready delivery. It covers sub-regions including the Black Country, Coventry and Warwickshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, Greater Birmingham and Solihull, Greater Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, The Marches, Stoke and Staffordshire, and Worcestershire.

The MNZH commissioned a Community Energy Capacity Building Study across six selected Midlands local authority areas, with the aim of strengthening local capacity and accelerating net zero progress through community-led energy initiatives.

Part of the commission involved engaging stakeholders through a series of three workshops in each local authority area to develop bespoke community energy action plans. This report provides the bespoke community energy action plan for Herefordshire Council.

Herefordshire Council

Strategic context

Herefordshire's approach to energy and decarbonisation is framed through a combination of council-led strategies and partnership-based delivery structures, with a strong emphasis on collaboration across sectors and communities. The *Herefordshire Council Plan 2024–2029* sets out a strategic ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030/31, alongside wider objectives to protect the environment, deliver sustainable transport and housing, and improve resilience to climate change. This positions decarbonisation as a core priority within a broader agenda focused on place-making, economic development and environmental stewardship.

At the heart of Herefordshire's governance approach is the *Climate and Nature Partnership Board*, a multi-stakeholder body established by the council to guide the county's response to the climate and ecological emergencies. The Board brings together expertise from across sectors and has identified priority actions across six key themes, including energy, housing and buildings, transport, food, waste, and land use. This reflects a recognition that achieving net zero in a largely rural county requires coordinated, system-wide action, rather than delivery by the local authority alone.

In the energy sector, strategic priorities focus on strengthening the electricity network, increasing local renewable generation, and building public support for the transition. This includes ambitions to significantly expand locally generated renewable energy – especially solar and wind – and to develop clear, long-term pathways for energy system change. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that

infrastructure is sufficient to meet both growing demand and new generation, highlighting the importance of grid capacity as an enabling factor for local decarbonisation.

Housing and buildings are another central pillar of the strategic framework, with activity focused on retrofit, skills development and public engagement. Initiatives such as participation in retrofit programmes and the promotion of a “fabric first” approach underline the importance of improving energy efficiency as both a carbon reduction measure and a means of addressing fuel poverty and health outcomes. This is complemented by efforts to build local skills capacity and raise awareness through events and engagement activities, reflecting the need for a workforce and supply chain capable of delivering large-scale retrofit.

Herefordshire’s rural context significantly shapes its strategic approach. Policy documents highlight challenges including dispersed settlements, dependence on private transport, and limited access to infrastructure, all of which can make decarbonisation more complex and costly. In response, transport strategies emphasise improving public transport, enabling active travel where possible, and supporting the rollout of EV infrastructure to reduce emissions in areas where car use is difficult to avoid.

Herefordshire has developed a strong focus on tackling fuel poverty and supporting vulnerable residents, recognising the close links between energy, health and wellbeing. Programmes such as affordable warmth initiatives bring together partners to deliver advice, access to grants, and practical support for households, whilst embedding decarbonisation within wider social outcomes. This reinforces a broader strategic narrative in which the transition to net zero is also a means of improving quality of life and reducing inequality.

These strategic documents provide a clear mandate for community-based and partnership-led approaches to energy system change. The emphasis on collaboration, local engagement and integrated delivery creates a strong enabling environment for community energy activity, notably local renewable generation, retrofit support and behaviour change.

Community energy in Herefordshire – the current landscape

Energy Saving Trust carried out a survey across participating local authorities, and the findings below reflect responses received for Herefordshire. However, these should be considered alongside engagement through workshops and other activities, as some perspectives may not be fully captured in the survey.

Community energy activity in Herefordshire is supported by several organisations, including regional co-operatives such as **Big Solar Co-op**, local networks such as **Herefordshire Green Network** and **Pomona Solar**, with delivery support provided by specialist intermediaries such as **Shareenergy**.

Herefordshire has a long history of community energy development, including **Leominster Community Solar**, established in 2012 and among the earliest community-owned solar projects in the UK. Other notable projects include **Sunrise Solar** at Leominster Primary School and **Ledbury Solar** at Ledbury Health Centre.

In recent years, ownership and management of some legacy projects have evolved. Both Leominster Community Solar and Sunrise Solar have been incorporated into Big Solar Co-op to ensure their continued operation and long-term sustainability as local volunteer capacity has reduced. This transition was facilitated by Shareenergy, which had already been providing financial administration

support, enabling a relatively straightforward transfer following consultation and agreement with original shareholders. Ledbury Solar remains a locally significant community energy asset².

Community Energy Group	Role	Projects
<u>Pomona Solar</u>	Asset owner with one main local generation site – shareholders drawn from the surrounding community. Distributes surplus through community fund.	Operates a 300 kWp ground-mounted solar PV system on leased land, supplying low-cost electricity to four local businesses, with export to the grid where possible.
<u>Big Solar Co-op</u>	Enables rapid deployment of large-scale rooftop solar on commercial, public, and community buildings.	Targets sites in Herefordshire, focusing on leisure centres, large businesses, and other high-demand premises. Owns, maintains and develops community solar assets across Herefordshire and beyond. Current Herefordshire assets include <u>Leominster Community Solar</u> (300 kWp), <u>Leominster Primary School</u> (90 kW) and <u>Bridge Street Sports Centre, Leominster</u> (49 kW), alongside a pipeline of larger rooftop solar opportunities.
<u>Herefordshire Green Network (HGN)</u>	Provides the core county-wide infrastructure for retrofit, energy advice, and climate engagement.	<u>Building Sense</u>
<u>Sharenergy (support organisation)</u>	Provides technical, legal and delivery support to community energy cooperatives.	

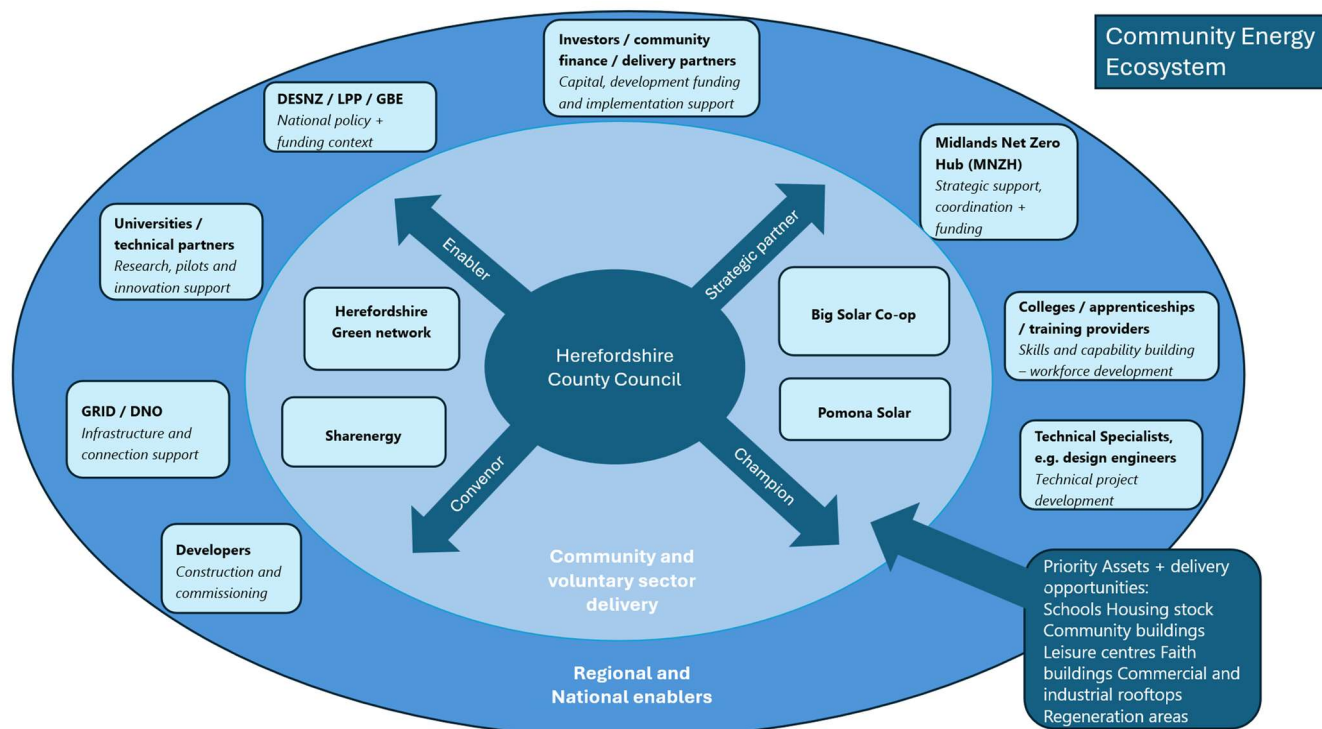
Pomona Solar reinvests surplus funds into the local community. Examples include:

- Grant funding for a solar PV installation on Almeley Village Hall
- Funds for energy audits and early-stage development for other village halls.
- Financial support to Building Sense to deliver retrofit advice, webinars, and community engagement.

² Ledbury Solar

Workshop participants highlighted that **Big Solar Co-op** provides an investable delivery model that councils and large organisations can confidently engage with, helping to overcome procurement delays and risk aversion. Big Solar Co-op's regional approach allows Herefordshire projects to remain community-benefiting whilst being delivered at pace and scale. Support is typically aimed at local volunteer-led community energy groups with no capacity to originate and deliver complex projects.

HGN is a recognised “front door” for residents and community groups navigating a fragmented landscape of programmes and funding streams. During the workshops **HGN's** convening role was highlighted as critical in a rural county like Herefordshire, where capacity is dispersed and delivery is often led by small numbers of volunteers across wide geographies.



Challenges

Access to short-term capital loans

Community energy organisations in Herefordshire can develop viable projects in the 50 kW to 5 MW range, with feasibility studies often supported through grant funding. However, a persistent gap exists in accessing capital finance for medium-scale projects (£1 – 5 million), which fall between community-level funding and institutional investment. As a result, bridging and development finance is a more critical constraint than feasibility funding.

Public support and market engagement

Community energy is not yet consistently positioned as a delivery model for energy cost resilience, local economic benefit, and social value. Local authorities are not always able to act as trusted intermediaries between community groups and businesses, due to uncertainty around procurement rules and perceived risks of endorsing specific delivery approaches. As a result, community groups often struggle to engage effectively with the private sector.

Information availability and clarity

Workshop participants highlighted persistent confusion around building ownership, programme responsibilities (e.g. schools, GB Energy schemes) procurement processes. This lack of clarity leads to delays, missed opportunities, and stalled projects, particularly where roof condition, asset ownership, or delivery pathways are uncertain. Procurement rules and lease arrangements were frequently cited as barriers that community energy groups lack the capacity to navigate.

Repowering and continuity

Many earlier community energy projects are approaching the end of their FiT-supported period, requiring repowering, refinancing, or new operating models. At the same time, groups face challenges around volunteer fatigue and governance succession, raising concerns about long-term sustainability. Programme churn and shifting delivery structures further undermine continuity, public recognition, and trust, particularly in retrofit and fuel poverty initiatives.

Rurality, grid capacity, and resource constraints

Severe constraints on export capacity across Herefordshire continue to limit the viability of new community energy projects. As a predominantly rural county, Herefordshire is characterised by dispersed demand, lower population density, and comparatively weaker grid infrastructure, which together increase the cost and complexity of developing energy projects. Workshop participants highlighted that, in many areas, network capacity is already saturated, restricting the ability to connect generation at scale and constraining project development options. This is compounded by limited visibility on where new generation would best align with local demand, making it difficult to prioritise sites effectively.

Access to DNO support was also described as inconsistent, often depending on individual relationships or localised engagement rather than a systematic or transparent process. Whilst some areas benefit from proactive support, others face significant barriers due to limited information sharing and variation in approach, creating uncertainty for community groups seeking to progress projects.

These challenges are further intensified by capacity constraints within the local ecosystem. Rurality also limits access to technical expertise, delivery partners, and funding opportunities, meaning that existing coordinating bodies and community organisations operate with limited resource relative to the scale of demand. This restricts their ability to respond effectively to grid constraints, develop projects, and engage with key stakeholders.

Opportunities

Coordination and network capacity

There is a clear opportunity to strengthen coordination through the establishment of a Herefordshire Community Energy Network, providing a single point of engagement for councils, businesses and delivery partners. This would help to reduce duplication, improve information sharing, and create a more coherent pipeline of projects. Establishing a formal network would enable more consistent coordination and provide a platform for aligning local initiatives with regional and national opportunities.

HGN is well positioned to host or coordinate such a function. It already plays a key role in connecting grassroots groups and promoting programmes such as Building Sense and could act as a bridge between local community groups, regional delivery bodies (e.g. Big Solar Co-op), the local authority and wider partners.

Public sector leadership and market facilitation

There is an opportunity to reposition community energy as a means of delivering energy cost resilience, local economic benefit and social value, rather than as grant-dependent activity. The Council can play a key role as a trusted intermediary by convening businesses, clarifying delivery pathways, and presenting credible models for investment, such as cooperative solar and shared ownership approaches.

Through existing business engagement channels, the Council could also promote community-owned renewable energy as a practical route for businesses to reduce energy costs and improve resilience. This could include signposting organisations to trusted delivery partners and providing clear guidance on the types of sites most likely to be suitable for community-owned solar, including factors such as roof ownership, available roof space, access to electricity consumption data and levels of on-site energy demand. Providing this information upfront would help businesses self-identify viable opportunities, reduce abortive development work and enable community energy organisations with limited resources to focus on projects most likely to proceed to delivery.

Strategic use of data, asset pipelines and local energy supply

There is an opportunity to adopt a more strategic, data-led approach to community energy development. Improved access to data on asset suitability, grid capacity and energy demand would enable better targeting of viable sites and support the development of a clearer pipeline of investable projects.

There is also an opportunity to move beyond traditional generation projects towards local energy models that enable households and businesses to benefit more directly from electricity generated within Herefordshire. Emerging approaches, such as Energy Local Clubs, can link local renewable generation with local electricity demand, helping communities retain more value from locally generated energy whilst increasing awareness and support for the energy transition. Stakeholders highlighted the forthcoming Pomona Solar pilot, which aims to supply surplus locally generated electricity to homes and businesses connected within the same local network area. If successful, this could provide a replicable model for future community energy developments across

the county, combining lower-cost electricity, stronger community participation and enhanced local economic benefit. Over time, similar approaches could be combined with new renewable generation, battery storage and smart demand management to create a more resilient and locally focused energy system.

Repowering and long-term asset management

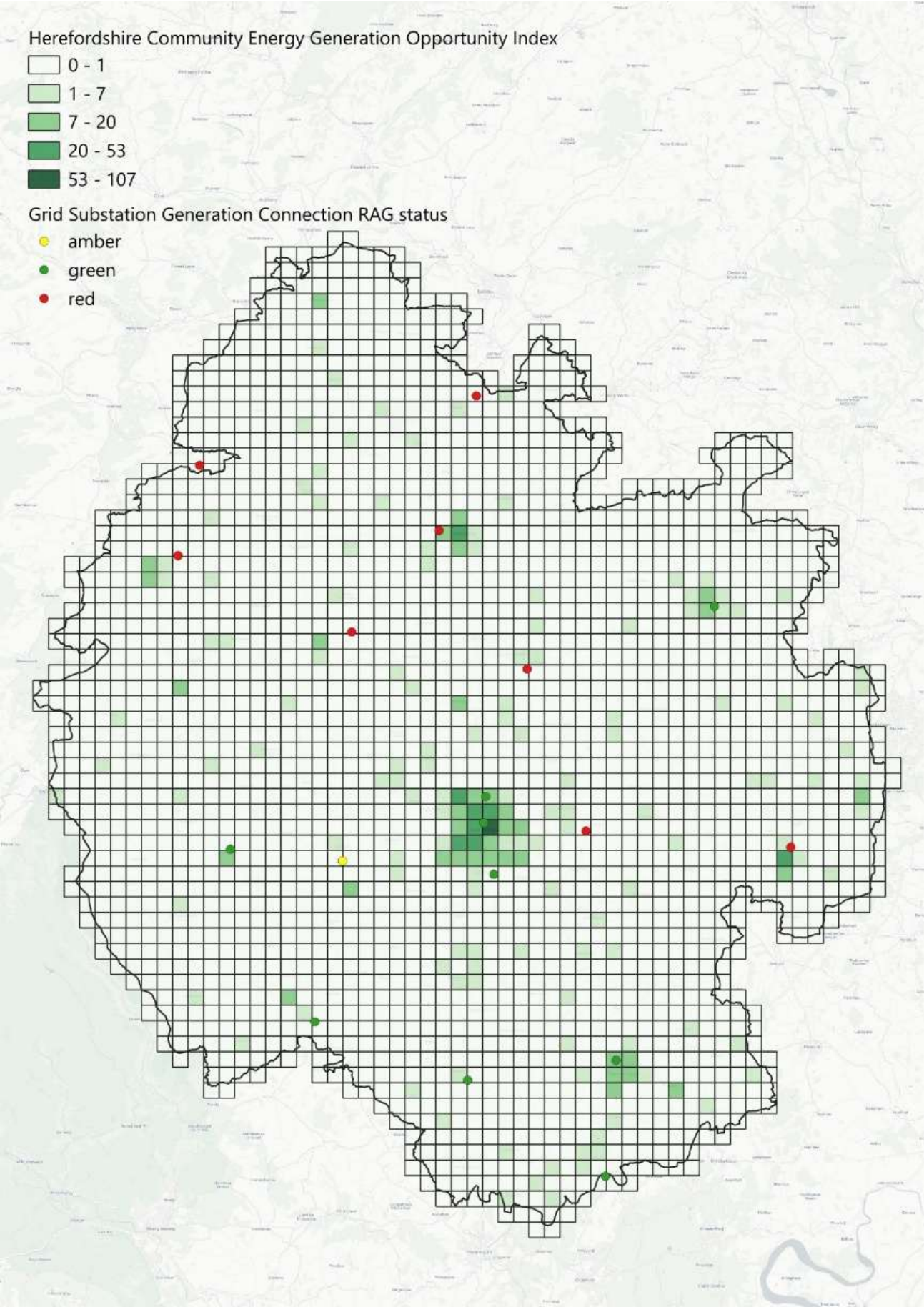
The upcoming need to repower or refinance older community energy assets presents an opportunity to modernise existing schemes, improve performance, and strengthen long-term organisational sustainability. This could also support the transition to subsidy-free models and reinforce links between generation, local benefit, and wider energy services.

Unlocking potential of rooftop solar PV on community buildings and council-owned assets

Although local government reorganisation presents short-term challenges, there remains significant untapped long-term potential for rooftop solar PV on community buildings, leisure centres and council-owned assets. Community energy audits offer a practical entry point to identify viable sites and develop investable projects.

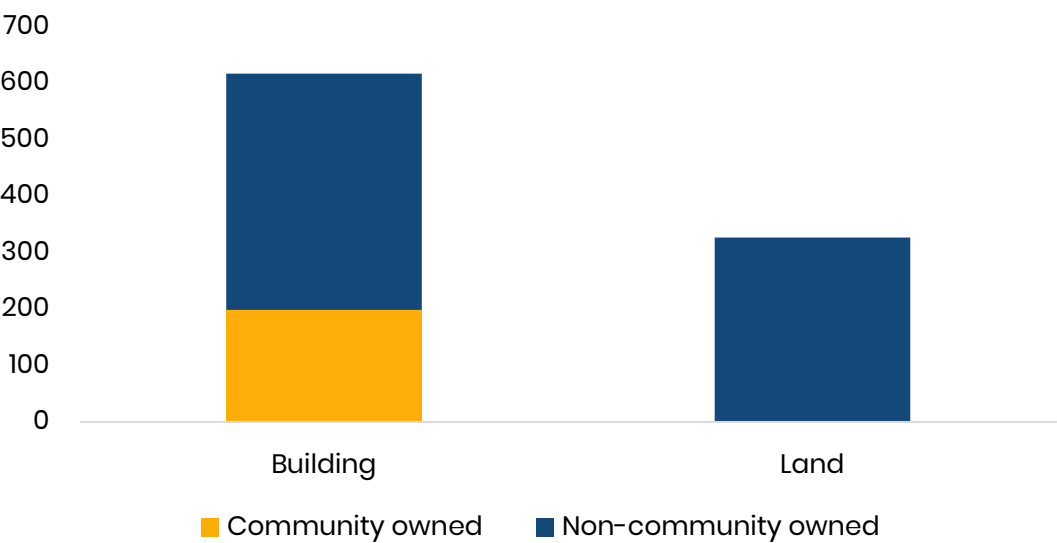
As a starting point, Energy Saving Trust's in-house non-domestic analytics database was used to identify buildings suitable for community energy generation projects. The building categories are informed by insights and learnings from the CARES programme in Scotland, which is administered by a partnership led by the Energy Saving Trust and funded by Scottish Government. These categories include community buildings, public buildings, faith buildings, educational facilities, and healthcare-related buildings. In addition, we incorporated several publicly available datasets, including the Local Authority Land Database, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) dataset, the Renewable Energy Planning Database, and National Grid's Network Opportunity and Development Map.

The potential number of opportunities across both buildings and land was analysed, excluding existing renewable installations and areas designated SSSI. The resulting map, shown on the following page, highlights the potential number of community energy projects across the study area. We also mapped out the electricity grid substations and their contracted generation RAG status, providing an indication of the likelihood of obtaining a generation connection in each location.



The opportunity profile is strongly focused on buildings, particularly community and public-sector assets, highlighting the potential for rooftop renewable energy projects as a practical and scalable route for community energy deployment in Herefordshire (Chart 1).

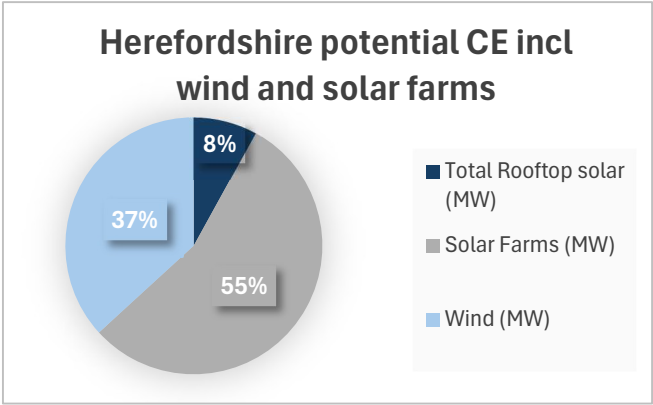
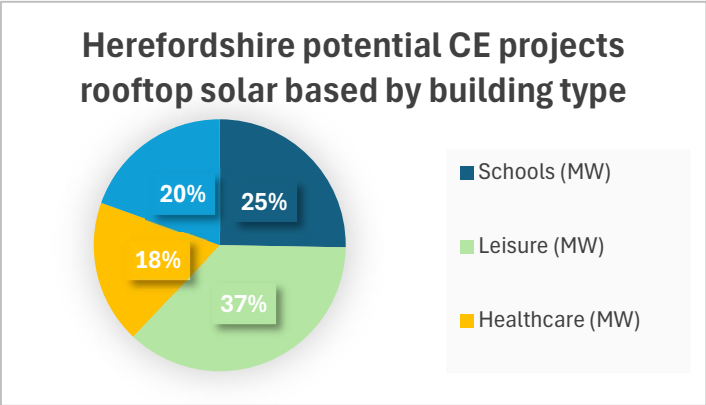
Chart 1: Ownership and Site Type Distribution of Green RAG Sites (Herefordshire)



An assessment of the available community or publicly owned buildings, based on the lowest end of probable capacity reduced by 40% to allow for non-participation, and including only assets which are noted as green in terms of grid mapping, showed the potential for getting some community energy projects off the ground quickly in Herefordshire to achieve around 4.35 MW capacity – generating around 3.9GW per year. The conservative assessment of wind and solar farm potential in rural areas was also considered, and this offers significantly more capacity, of an additional 50MW but could take significantly longer to deliver and could inform a longer-term target.

The following table shows conservative estimates for potential rooftop solar capacity on different types of community buildings in Herefordshire, and the same for ground based rural community solar and wind projects. They have used only sites which are green on grid mapping, used the most conservative estimate of capacity and lowered this by 40% to allow for non-participation.

Local Authority	Schools (MW)	Leisure (MW)	Healthcare (MW)	Community Buildings (MW)	Total Rooftop solar (MW)	Solar Farms (MW)	Wind (MW)	Total (MW)
Herefordshire	1.1	1.6	0.8	0.85	4.35	30	20	54.35



Although not covered directly within the workshop discussions, Herefordshire presents a number of characteristics that could support future heat network and battery storage opportunities. The county combines large towns, significant public-sector estates, growth and regeneration locations, and an active community energy sector. These factors create potential for heat network development around areas with concentrated heat demand and suitable anchor institutions.

Potential heat network opportunities could focus on town-centre regeneration areas, hospital campuses, universities, schools, leisure centres, social housing and local authority buildings. Publicly owned land may offer opportunities to establish energy centres and future network infrastructure whilst reducing delivery risks associated with fragmented ownership. Community energy groups operating across Herefordshire could support local engagement, project development and community benefit arrangements, helping to build public support for low-carbon heat solutions.

Battery storage may offer particularly strong opportunities when paired with the growing deployment of rooftop solar on schools, community buildings, faith buildings and public-sector estates. Many of these buildings experience periods where electricity generation and demand do not align, with surplus energy exported during the day and imported again during evening periods. Storage could improve self-consumption rates, reduce energy costs and strengthen the financial case for community energy investment.

There may also be opportunities to develop shared or community-scale battery assets linked to clusters of public buildings, local energy hubs or neighbourhood energy projects. Batteries could support resilience, flexibility services and electric vehicle charging whilst helping communities maximise the value of locally generated renewable electricity. In particular, schools during holiday periods, faith buildings outside core usage hours and community facilities with intermittent occupancy could benefit significantly from solar-plus-storage models that shift daytime generation into periods of higher demand.

Actions

Short-term delivery (Quick wins)

	Action	Owner	Target Deadline
1	Identify and publish a prioritised pipeline of council-owned or private sector buildings with potential for third-party-operated renewable energy generation in the short term.		
2	Review opportunities to connect – and establish links – with neighbouring Midlands authorities to learn from more advanced areas (e.g. Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire). Forest Community Energy (cross-border) provides transferable lessons on political engagement, motions, and community buy-in that are highly relevant to Herefordshire.		
3	Develop and approve legal and commercial frameworks for community energy delivery, including template leases and PPAs that can be reused across projects (drawing on examples from Brighton, Bristol and others).		
4	Submit and maintain expressions of interest to GB Energy for identified opportunities.		

Building the sector (Strategic actions)

	Action	Owner	Target Deadline
1	Map solar and retrofit opportunities across public estates, housing stock, and private/commercial buildings. Focus first on bundled projects (e.g. multiple roofs/streets/estates) to de-risk blended finance and enable scalable delivery.		
2	Review previously refused renewable energy planning applications to identify opportunities for reconsideration, particularly where grid capacity, policy context, or delivery models have evolved.		
3	Pilot “procurement light” approaches for council-controlled assets, testing routes to enable faster deployment of community energy projects.		
4	Define and communicate clear roles and responsibilities across the delivery ecosystem, including the Council, community groups, delivery partners, contractors, and investors.		

	Action	Owner	Target Deadline
5	Develop clear guidance for when community energy is the appropriate delivery route, compared to direct council investment or private sector delivery.		
6	Develop and promote a simple business engagement pathway for community-owned renewable energy projects, including eligibility criteria and referral routes to trusted delivery partners.		
7	Establish and embed a Herefordshire Community Energy Forum as part of the Council's engagement and delivery approach, providing a consistent interface between the Council, community energy organisations, and delivery partners.		
8	Support community energy organisations to access development funding, blended finance, and skills development, including training in project development, finance, and governance.		
9	Develop a strategic, data-led pipeline of investable projects aligned with grid capacity and local demand, building on existing datasets and mapping work.		
10	Establish dedicated development capacity to support pipeline creation and project origination, including initial engagement with asset owners, site identification, feasibility screening and progression of viable opportunities. This could include a shared resource between Herefordshire Council, Big Solar Co-op and other delivery partners to help create a stronger pipeline of investable projects.		
11	Strengthen engagement with the DNO through a regular programme of community energy workshops, surgeries and project development sessions involving Herefordshire Council, community energy organisations and network operators. The programme should focus on improving access to grid capacity information, identifying priority locations for community energy development, and exploring opportunities to better align local generation, storage and demand with network needs. This will help communities and delivery partners target projects in areas most likely to secure viable connections, whilst supporting wider network objectives, reducing reinforcement costs and facilitating smarter local energy systems.		
12	Explore and support local energy supply and demand-matching models, including Energy Local-style approaches, that enable households, businesses and public-sector organisations to benefit more directly from locally generated renewable electricity. This should include learning from the Pomona Solar pilot and identifying opportunities to replicate successful models elsewhere in the county.		
13	Build internal council capacity and capability to support community energy delivery, including training for officers and alignment across planning, procurement, and estates teams.		

Creating the conditions for growth (Policy areas)

	Action	Owner	Target Deadline
1	Embed community energy more explicitly within core council policy frameworks, including local energy strategy, procurement policy, planning policy, and regeneration programmes.		
2	Develop and implement policy mechanisms to support community energy delivery, such as social value weighting in procurement, community energy commitments within planning and regeneration, and MoU with delivery partners.		
3	Support the development of financially self-sustaining community energy organisations, including through access to revenue-generating projects and long-term asset ownership.		
4	Align local action with regional and national initiatives, including those led by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Solar Taskforce, and GB Energy, to maximise access to funding, influence policy development, and support scalable delivery models.		

Note that some actions may begin in the short term (e.g. early work on standard documents and processes), with their full value realised over time.

Engagement Plan

	Action	Owner	Target Deadline
1	Improve senior leadership and councillor awareness of community energy benefits, using Herefordshire and national case studies to demonstrate economic, social, and resilience benefits.		
2	Identify and prioritise one or two high-confidence, well-supported pilot areas (e.g. regeneration zones with strong local organisations), to demonstrate deliverable models and build momentum.		
3	Promote successful projects through council and regional communications channels, building visibility, credibility, and trust in community energy delivery models.		
4	Support community-led engagement, particularly targeting hard-to-reach and previously disengaged residents, to build local participation and support for projects.		
5	Develop a clear communications narrative for community energy, framing it around energy cost resilience, local economic value, and social benefit rather than grant dependency.		
6	Identify and support local champions and spokespeople (e.g. councillors, community leaders, delivery partners) to advocate for community energy across the county.		

NB A separate document is being produced focused on how Local Authorities can successfully support community energy.

Appendix 1: Governance structures

Legal form	What is its governing document called?	Can it issue shares? ¹		Does it have to register with a regulatory body?	Is it suitable for charitable status?	Does it have an asset lock? ²	Membership voting
		Standard shares	Community shares				
Company Limited by Guarantee	Articles	No	No	Companies House	Yes	No (unless charity)	One member one vote
Company Limited by Shares	Articles	Yes	No	Companies House	No	No (unless charity)	One vote per share
Community Interest Company (limited by guarantee)	Articles	No	No	Companies House & CIC Regulator	No	Yes	One member one vote
Community Interest Company (limited by shares)	Articles	Yes	No	Companies House & CIC Regulator	No	Yes	One vote per share
Charitable Incorporated organisation	Constitution	No	No	Charity Commission	Yes	Yes	As per the constitution
Co-operative societies	Rules	Yes	Yes	Financial Conduct Authority	No	No	One member one vote
Community Benefit Societies	Rules	Yes	Yes	Financial Conduct Authority	Yes	Yes (optional)	One member one vote

Appendix 2: Useful organisations and resources

National organisations and policy:

- [Community Energy England](#) – Sector body supporting and representing community energy groups.
- [Great British Energy](#) – UK Government initiative supporting community and local clean energy projects.
- [Department for Energy Security and Net Zero \(DESNZ\)](#) – Leads national energy policy and funding programmes.
- [Local power plan](#)
- [Energy Saving Trust](#) – Delivery partner for programmes such as the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES), and provider of community energy support.
- [Regen](#) – Independent organisation focused on accelerating the transition to a zero-carbon energy system, providing policy insight, market analysis, and support for community energy and local energy systems.
- [Energy Systems Catapult \(ESC\)](#) – Independent, government-backed innovation centre focused on transforming the UK energy system. ESC supports whole-system energy planning, local energy systems, flexibility markets, and innovative business models, including through Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP).

Delivery models and innovation:

- [Energy Local/Energy Local Clubs](#) – Local energy supply model enabling communities to benefit directly from locally generated energy.
- [Energy Garden/Repowering London](#) – Established community energy delivery and engagement models, particularly in urban contexts.
- [Solar for Schools](#) – Model combining solar deployment with education and student engagement.
- [Community Energy Pathways](#) – Organisation supporting the development of community energy projects and groups across the UK.

Finance and investment:

- [Ethex](#) – Platform for community share offers and ethical investment.
- [Co-operative & Community Finance](#) – Specialist lender providing finance to community and cooperative enterprises.
- [Power to Change](#) – National body supporting community businesses through funding and capacity building.

Tools and platforms:

- [Loomio](#) – Digital platform supporting the development of local energy projects and community energy schemes, including tools for project scoping and supplier engagement.
- [LAEP datasets/tools](#) – Used by local authorities to identify opportunities and prioritise local energy interventions.
- [Community Energy Go](#) – National support service providing expert guidance, resources, and capacity-building to help community groups develop energy projects from early-stage ideas to fundable proposals, including support on governance, planning, and access to funding.

Appendix 3: Herefordshire Green RAG Sites by Local Authority and Site Category

Site category	No. sites
Land	213
Public / Village Hall / Other Community Facility	131
Indoor / Outdoor Leisure / Sporting Activity / Centre	109
Care / Nursing Home	66
Children's Nursery / Creche	47
Car Park	36
Primary School	26
General Practice Surgery / Clinic	25
Residential Education	22
Place Of Worship	20
Preparatory / First / Primary / Infant / Junior / Middle School	20
Church	18
Other Educational Establishment	18
Community Service Centre / Office	16
Playing Field	15
Museum / Gallery	13
Health Care Services	12
Misc	11
Industrial	10
Special Needs Establishment.	10
Village Green or Common	8
Parks & Gardens	7
Secondary School	7
College	6
Fire Station	6
Church Hall / Religious Meeting Place / Hall	5
Health Centre	5
Play Area	5
Activity / Leisure / Sports Centre	4
Community or Day Centre	4
Leisure & Sport	4
Secondary / High School	4
Further Education	3

Hospital / Hospice	3
Local Government Service	3
University	3
Waste	3
Ambulance Station	2
Cemetery / Crematorium / Chapel	2
Depot	2
Drainage & Sewage	2
Football Facility	2
Hospital	2
Job Centre	2
Library	2
Bus Station	1
Community Services	1
Law Court	1
Picnic site	1
Retail Units & Markets	1
Rugby Facility	1
Sub Station	1
Water Treatment	1