

## Harborough Community Energy A Proposal March 2025

### Background

It is well established that in order to meet Net Zero targets set by national and local government, a key requirement will be to reduce carbon emissions relating to household energy. Community Energy projects could well prove to be key in delivering both the 'Power Up' (i.e. producing more renewable energy) and the 'Power Down' (i.e. using less fossil fuel energy in our homes) aspects of achieving Net Zero.

In November 2024 Ben Dodd from the Greener Future Leicestershire Programme gave a presentation to a Harborough Climate Action (HCA) Open Meeting. Ben talked about Community Energy Projects, and after his talk those present got together in small groups to discuss his ideas further.

There was good deal of enthusiasm for the topic, and many really great ideas for potential local Community Energy projects suggested.

HCA would now like to take these ideas forward and are proposing the setting up of Harborough Community Energy. To start with at least, we are proposing that Harborough Community Energy will be a group within the Sustainable Harborough Community umbrella – along with Harborough Climate Action and Harborough Transport Action.

### Proposal for Harborough Community Energy

#### 1. Purpose of the group

- To consider options for Community Energy projects that could be set up in the Harborough area
- To assess feasibility of potential projects
- To draw up more detailed plans, including funding requirements, for projects deemed to be deliverable
- Set up separate groups, or find other suitable groups, to deliver projects. *(The precise mechanism for delivery of projects is yet to be determined)*

#### 2. Make up and working methods of the group

- Details of the make up and working methods of the group will be defined by a Constitution
- The group will be open to anyone living or working in the Harborough area with an interest in developing and delivering Community Energy Projects
- There will be elected officers, including Chair, Secretary and Treasurer
- Harborough District Council, Leicestershire County Council, Harborough Energy, Harborough Climate Action and Green Fox will all be invited to be part of the group

- The group will meet monthly to start with. Meetings will have agendas, and minutes will be taken and circulated
- The group will have representation on the Leicestershire Community Energy Hub Forum
- To begin with, HCE will need the support of Sustainable Harborough Community and Harborough Energy to provide some 'admin' support, such as access to a bank account, website, email accounts and facebook page.

### *3. Projects the group might consider*

- Power UP Projects
  - ID and assessment of potential solar PV community energy projects
  - ID and assessment of potential wind turbine community energy projects
  - ID and assessment of other projects for delivering renewable energy
- Power Down Projects
  - Set up a network of Energy Champions
  - Build resource library for sharing knowledge – physical and/or on-line
  - Organising Green Open Homes events
  - Retrofit workshops/conference – as part of Harborough Big Green Week

### **Next Steps**

- Start getting members signed up to HCE
- Set up a small committee (3 or 4 volunteers?) to take things forward, and arrange future meeting of HCE
- Identify potential Chair, Secretary and Treasurer (roles need defining)
- Start work on developing a Constitution
- Put in a bid for funding from the Readiness Fund (part of Greener Future Leicestershire)
- Create a Job Description for part time paid co-ordinator(s), and appoint suitable person/people
- Get volunteers involved in 2 or 3 projects as set out in section 3 above
- Organise 1 or 2 training days for Energy Champions in April or May
- Support the work to develop/enhance Harborough Energy, to enable it to take on more CE projects in due course
- Work with Green Fox and Harborough Energy to establish how these bodies can work together to support Harborough Community Energy
- Meet with Helen Chadwick from HDC