



Chair's Report 25/26

Neston Community Energy

It has been an encouraging period for Neston Community Energy as we continue to develop our ambition to build a cleaner, more resilient and locally powered energy future for Neston.

Our work is increasingly moving beyond individual renewable energy projects towards developing a wider **community energy ecosystem**, in which local organisations, residents and community groups can work together to generate clean energy, reduce costs and retain more of the benefits locally.

Our **Leahurst solar and wind project** continues to progress, with technical, environmental and feasibility work helping us understand the potential for a community-supported renewable energy scheme. At the same time, our **Neston Energy Club** is exploring practical ways to help households and organisations understand their energy use, improve energy efficiency and benefit from the transition to smarter, locally generated energy.

We are also continuing to monitor the outcome of the national consultation on changes to the energy system regulations, which will determine the future potential of our previous Clayhill solar farm feasibility work.

Perhaps most excitingly, we have begun working with **Neston Civic Hall and NCYC** to explore solar installations on their buildings. This is exactly the kind of partnership approach that we believe can make community energy work: using existing local assets to generate clean energy while helping community organisations reduce their running costs and improve their sustainability.

We are also starting conversations with other organisations responsible for public and community facilities about potential solar and shared-energy opportunities. Our ambition is to see what can be achieved by **working together rather than developing projects in isolation**.

Neston Community Energy Ltd

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Importantly, we are beginning to see growing interest from the wider community. Our presence at Neston Village Fair and the NCYC Family Fun Day generated considerable interest, new members and pledges of support. That engagement is vital because community energy is ultimately about **local ownership and participation**, not simply installing renewable technology.

Looking ahead, our challenge is to turn this growing interest and the opportunities we are identifying into practical projects that deliver tangible benefits for Neston. We need to continue developing strong partnerships, build the financial and technical capacity to deliver projects, and ensure that local people have meaningful opportunities to participate and benefit.

I would like to thank our members, volunteers, partners and supporters for their continued commitment. Neston Community Energy is still a relatively young organisation, but we are beginning to build the foundations of something that could make a lasting contribution to Neston's energy future. Thanks specifically to the local Cllrs who funded our core costs in 25

Our ambition remains simple: locally generated clean energy, locally owned wherever possible, delivering lasting benefits for the Neston community.

Andy Mills
Chair, Neston Community Energy

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