

Energy Local Bridport

RCEF Stage: 1&2

Dottery Close layout drawing



Key Facts	
Ground mounted solar array	388 solar panels on 12 arrays covering <1200 sq m.
Energy Local Bridport	Innovative scheme providing cheap green electricity for local households
Community benefits	Direct supply of green electricity to local households with creation of a community fund for other local projects

Key Figures	
Project size: Tech type	250 kW solar array
Energy Generation	<300 kW.. Local distribution contract with Octopus
Partnerships	Dorset Community Energy Energy Local Bridport Octopus Energy
Savings	Up to 300 households receiving electricity at approx. 12p kWh 65 tonnes CO2 est saved

Further Notes	
LEP area: Dorset	
Link for further info: Bridport Energy Local Dorset Community Energy	

The Story

In March 2020 Dorset Community Energy (DCE) working with Energy Local CIC and Octopus Energy set up Energy Local Bridport (ELB), a cooperative that allows the trading of lower-cost renewable electricity between local generators and consumers. Energy Local Bridport finally went live in September 2021 with the first pilot group of 14 households supplied with electricity from a local 50kW wind turbine @9.5p/kWh- the first example of real-time local renewable electricity trading in England. A further 40 households joined ELB in Jan-Feb 2022. DCE made a successful application for a stage 1 RCEF feasibility grant for the installation of 250kW of ground-mounted solar PV to supply an additional 300 householders and/or local businesses. The feasibility study indicated a very positive financial model and enabled the selection of a suitable site. The stage 2 grant is still live and assists with the funding of the pre-construction phase of the project. Grid connections have been agreed and the planning application submitted.

Challenges & Risks

There has been general widespread support for this innovative project seeking to decentralise and decarbonise energy production. While the site is relatively small in terms of area covered, the application has encountered some orchestrated opposition from the owners of the one property adjacent to the site and people using the adjacent footpath. Considerable time and effort have been necessary to respond to the demands of the planning authority. These discussions are ongoing.

Lessons Learned

Stage 1 funding successfully enabled the feasibility study to be undertaken. Stage 2 is on going with the outcome of the planning application awaited. If there has been one lesson learned from the exercise to date it would be the need to receive the most comprehensive planning assessment possible including an understanding of the range of potential subjective assessments likely, in addition to the standard objective observations on the merits of the application.