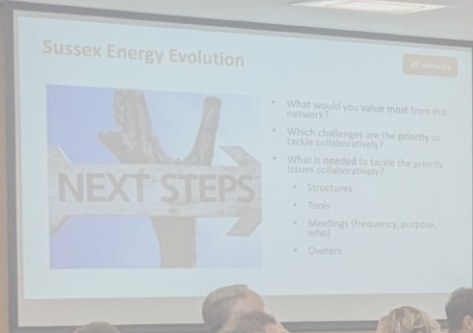


SUSSEX ENERGY

Forum

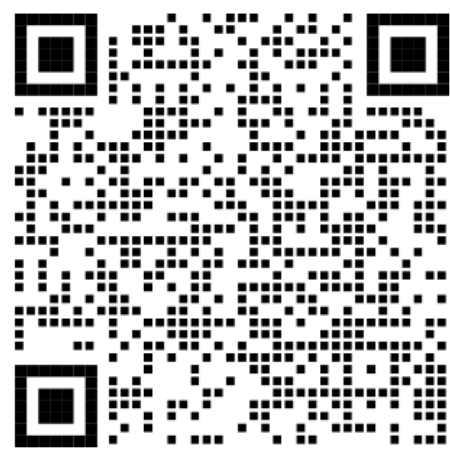
Tuesday 14th July 2026



Join the Sussex Energy
Forum LinkedIn Group to
continue discussions:



Follow the Sussex Energy
LinkedIn page for updates
and local case studies:



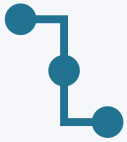
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Agenda

Start	Duration	Topic	Presenter
13:00	50 mins	Lunch & Networking	Stalls: Sussex Energy, NESO, Shoreham Port
13:50	5 mins	Welcome & Objectives of the Day	Robin Banerjee, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Global and Civic Engagement, University of Sussex Prof Tim Foxon, Professor of Sustainability Transitions, University of Sussex Energy Group
13:55	5 mins	Sussex Energy Introduction	Natasha Bridge, Business Manager, Greater Brighton Economic Board
14:00	10 mins	Energy Policy Update	Kirsten Firth, Energy Project Manager, Greater South East Net Zero Hub
14:10	30 mins	Sussex & Brighton Energy Briefing	Alice Berry, Net Zero Lead, Brighton & Hove City Council Andy Arnold, Environment Team & Climate Change Programme Manager, East Sussex County Council Daire Casey, Strategic Manager (Energy Services), West Sussex County Council
14:40	20 mins	Brighton & Hove Strategic Energy Partnership: Community Value	Prof Tim Foxon, Professor of Sustainability Transitions, University of Sussex Energy Group Carla Douglas González, PhD Researcher, University of Sussex Science Policy Research Unit
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Objectives



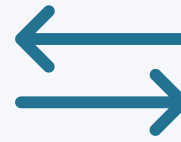
Understand

Gain an update on Sussex Energy, the changing policy landscape and the region's emerging priorities.



Connect

Strengthen relationships across the public, private, academic and community sectors.



Share

Exchange knowledge, showcase activity and identify opportunities to learn from one another.



Shape

Help influence the future direction of Sussex Energy by contributing ideas and identifying opportunities for regional collaboration.

Sussex Energy: A Regional Collaboration

A Sussex-wide public, private and community sector partnership coming together to accelerate Sussex's transition to a cleaner, more resilient and locally powered energy system.

OUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITIES



Accelerate local, clean energy generation



Reduce energy demand through energy efficiency



Align regional action to unlock investment and influence



Reduce fuel poverty and create community value

WHY IT MATTERS



Energy security



Lower energy costs



Increased resilience



Cleaner air and lower emissions



Economic growth, jobs and skills



Stronger communities and local wealth retention

HOW WE WORK



Bringing partners together across sectors and geographies



Aligning on shared priorities and evidence



Coordinating action and sharing insight



Amplifying our voice to influence policy and investment



Mobilising resources to accelerate delivery



Ensuring projects deliver real community value



OUR MISSION: By 2040, Sussex will produce as much renewable energy as it consumes each year.

A New Regional Context



Greater Brighton Economic Board Created Sussex Energy in 2024

- Collaboration across seven local authorities spanning parts of East and West Sussex, alongside Brighton & Hove.
- Brought together local government, universities, further education, business, NHS and the National Park.
- 12 years of unique cross-sector, cross-boundary forum for regional collaboration.
- Completes its role end of 2026.



Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority A new devolved regional authority for Sussex

- One strategic voice for Sussex at national level.
- Brings together long-term planning, investment and regional leadership.
- Long-term powers and funding.
- Responsible for a Prosperity Strategy setting the region's economic direction.
- Able to coordinate priorities across transport, housing, skills, infrastructure, health, rural affairs, culture, climate and economic growth.



OUR FOCUS: Embed Sussex Energy into the Strategic Authority's Prosperity Strategy so that energy becomes a long-term regional priority.

Networks

Forum (>150 ppl):

Strengthen connections and sharing to accelerate efforts and shape Sussex Energy

Annual in person ~50 ppl

Partner Group: Guide Sussex Energy



Monthly virtual 16 ppl

Comms Working Group

Bimonthly virtual 4-6 ppl

Digital Infrastructure



[Public](#) >400 followers
[Forum](#) (closed) >80 in group



Biannual newsletter >250 dist. list

Sussex Energy Workstreams

Speak with one voice / Joining policy together*



Sussex and Brighton Energy Briefing: Regional opportunities and priorities for energy, developed by net zero, energy and environment leads across the three upper-tier authorities and gaining regional alignment around this to speak with one voice to the Strategic Authority.

Speak with one voice*



Pipeline: Survey to **collate** a regional pipeline of clean energy and energy efficiency projects. This will help position Sussex as an investable region for wider public and private sector funding opportunities and inform discussions with potential investors/funders.

Stimulate demand for renewable deployment*



Solar Across Sussex: Increase large-scale solar generation by identifying viable sites, enabling viable sites to progress towards development, and identifying and implementing changes that would make future solar projects easier to deliver.

Coordinate projects to attract greater investment*



Regional Energy Finance Strategy: Assess funding and investor opportunities and recommend how Sussex can attract and coordinate finance into energy decarbonisation.

Showcasing delivery to inspire replication*



Map: Interactive map and dashboard showing energy decarbonisation projects across Sussex has been developed help build a visible identity for Sussex as a leading place for the energy transition.

Support for regional collaboration on energy transition communications*



Ready-made Energy Comms: Ready-made, pick and mix comms content aligned round themes to help coordinate and amplify the region's voice on energy.

*Priority challenges to tackle collaboratively resulting from last year's forum



Greater
South East
Net Zero Hub

Energy policy updates

Sussex Energy Forum

Kirsten Firth
kirsten.firth@gsenetzerohub.org.uk

July 2026



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

About Local Net Zero Hubs

We support projects from the earliest stages of feasibility.

The Hubs work across the public, private, educational and third sectors, building partnerships which take net zero projects to investment and delivery.

- Created by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)
- Between 2018 and 2025, we have:
 - Supported over 500 projects in our pipeline - with a combined potential capital value of more than £7bn
 - Delivered over 100 Community Energy Fund projects
 - Assisted more than 100 projects to apply for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) to reduce the emissions of public sector estates.
 - Assisted delivery of local retrofit programmes including Sustainable Warmth, the Home Upgrade Grant and Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

 north east & yorkshire
NET ZERO HUB

 north west
net zero hub

 MIDLANDS
NET ZERO HUB

South West
NET ZERO
HUB

 Greater
South East
Net Zero Hub

Our Aims

The Hubs will support the delivery of Great British Energy (GBE) and the Clean Power 2030 mission, with a focus on expanding renewable energy. This includes technologies such as solar panels with battery storage and low-carbon heat networks.



Increase the number, quality, and scale of local projects being delivered



Enable local areas to attract public or private finance for projects



Raise awareness of the opportunities and benefits of local projects



Support co-ordination and collaboration between partners

- Great British Energy is a publicly-owned and operationally independent energy company.
- HQ in Aberdeen
- GBE's Strategic Plan sets out how it will help deliver the government's clean power mission to 2030 and beyond through prioritising onshore, offshore, local and supply chain activity.
- In its first year:
 - Investments in offshore wind, supply chain, hydrogen electrolyser manufacturing
 - Grants for solar PV installations 225 schools and colleges and 162 NHS sites in England
 - June 2026 – grant applications for solar PV - £25m for up to 40 NHS sites
- <https://www.gbe.gov.uk/>

Local Power Plan



Funding and finance

- GBE Community Energy Grant
- GBE Partnerships Grant

Capacity and capability support

Policy and regulatory reform

Local Power Plan funding summer 2026

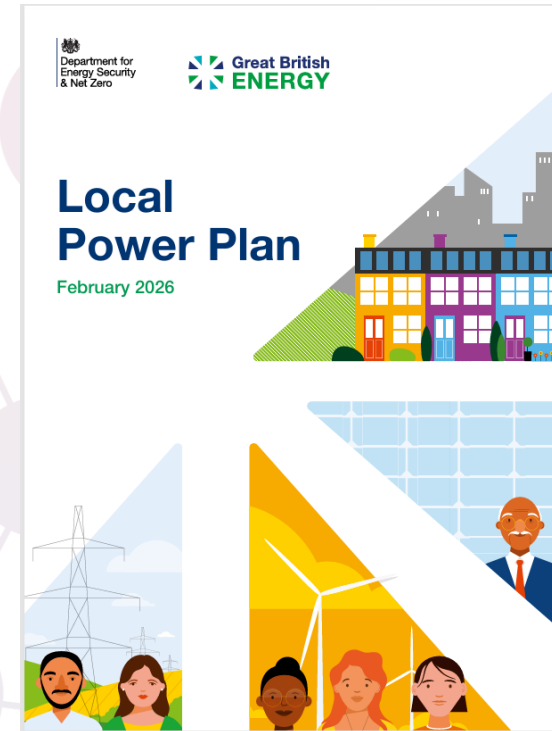
- GBE ambition to deliver at least 1,000 local projects by 2030
- Coming this summer:

GBE Community Fund for community energy groups – feasibility and pre-construction development of projects

- **Stage 1 funding:** up to £40,000
- **Stage 2 funding:** up to £100,000
- Requirement for three quotes for commissioned work

Partnership Grant

- Aimed at strengthening collaboration between local authorities and community energy groups with partnership development and early-stage feasibility
- Stage 1: up to £40,000
- Stage 2: up to £100,000
- Local Authorities will act as the **lead grant recipient**
- Webinars in July 2026: <https://www.gbe.gov.uk/blog/register-local-power-plan-webinars>



Energy planning

- Regional Strategic Energy Plans (RESP) will make sure future GB energy needs are met, to enable local net zero and growth ambitions, and help communities to access reliable, clean and affordable energy.
- Delivered by National Energy System Operator (NESO) and overseen by Ofgem
- RESPs form part of NESO's strategic energy planning activities, ensuring a joined-up approach between national, regional and local levels
- Informs investment in electricity networks and DNO investment plans (ED3 2023-28)
- Span all energy vectors – electricity, gas, and hydrogen networks – as part of one integrated energy system.
- Local authorities - ambition to integrate energy system investment and infrastructure with housing development, economic growth, transport strategies, heat network zoning
- Grid capacity is a shared challenge
- RESP is potentially powerful as it could unlock future investment in network infrastructure ahead of need
- Governance of RESPs via Regional Strategic Boards and Working Groups with LA and sector representation
- RESP website: <https://www.neso.energy/what-we-do/strategic-planning/regional-energy-strategic-planning-resp>
- Ready for RESP resources published by Net Zero Hubs: <https://www.gsenetzerohub.org.uk/what-we-do/local-energy/local-and-regional-energy-planning/>

P441 - Complex sites / local energy markets

- Modification to electricity codes (regulations)
- **Facilitates local energy markets:** P441 formalizes the concept of local energy markets, also known as complex sites, allowing local electricity generators and consumers to trade energy more easily. This simplifies the setup process and enables generators connected at different voltages to participate, expanding access to more communities
- **Reduces energy costs:** By allowing local generation to be consumed locally, P441 can lower electricity bills. Netting of imports and exports across multiple meters reduces charges like Balancing Services Use of System (BSUoS) for certain complex sites, providing financial savings
- **Supports renewable energy adoption:** Improves the financial viability of small-scale renewable generation, incentivizing households and businesses to adopt solar panels, batteries etc
- **Improves grid management:** P441 enables better balancing of local generation and demand in real time, helping to shift electricity demand away from peak times. This reduces strain on the grid, frees up network capacity, and allows more clean energy to be integrated without large-scale infrastructure upgrades
- [P441 Creation of Complex Site Classes - Elexon BSC](#)
- Final report awaiting Ofgem approval. Expected implementation date November 2026

Warm Homes Plan – key announcements



UK Government

Warm Homes Plan



- **£15bn of investment** to cut energy bills, bring households out of fuel poverty, and make our homes warmer and more efficient.
- This includes **£5 billion of public investment for low-income households** who will receive free of charge packages of upgrades.
- Up to **5 million homes reached by 2030** through:
 - Direct support for low-income families;
 - Government backed grants and innovative low interest finance available to all;
 - New protections for renters.
- Up to **1 million households lifted out of fuel poverty by 2030** through public investment and new MEES for private landlords and proposed standards for social landlords
- **180,000** additional high-quality, well-paid, future-proofed **jobs in energy efficiency and clean heating by 2030.**

Net Zero Hub support - How can we help you?

Policy Development and implementation

Provide information and updates on new existing and future Government Policy

Feedback to Government on how Policies are landing on the ground

Government funded broker to support public sector in implementation of Government Policy

Examples

- District Heat Networks and Zoning
- Warmer Homes tapping into the Prevention agenda

Connecting and signposting

Source of information:

- Link you up to other partners e.g. Local Authorities
- Information on Funding
- Provide practical help and guidance

Examples

- Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme
- GB Energy
- Understanding and developing pipelines for Solar, Wind and District Heat Networks

Strategic Planning

Provide information to support future energy needs:

- Regional Energy Strategic Plans
- Local Area Energy Plans
- Energy Planning Support
- DNO Planning: Ensure supply and resilience.
- Heat Decarbonisation Strategies
- Surveys & Feasibility:

Examples

- Mapping Solar potential on car parks and rooftops of NHS sites.
- Supporting development of Heat Decarbonisation Plans.

Trusted Partner

Support senior leaders by being critical friends (impartial and trusted partner):

- Supporting local events
- Reviewing bids
- Reviewing strategic documents
- Fit to national policies

Examples

- Reviewing Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme bids
- Reviewing Heat Decarbonisation bids
- Holding webinars on key topics

Detailed Service Offer



Greater South East **Net Zero Hub**



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

Sussex & Brighton Energy Briefing

- What is it
- Who is it for
- Why is it needed
- What's in it (so far...)
- Who drafted it

Sussex & Brighton Energy Briefing

Context Setting

- **Energy underpins SBSA priorities:** Growth, housing, transport, skills and health.
- **Economic opportunity:** Investment in energy drives jobs, productivity, cost reduction and inward investment
- **Strong regional foundation:** Established strategies, active delivery, a unique Sussex Energy partnership provide a ready platform to build from.

Early Priorities (1-2 years)

- **Governance & transition:** Maintain momentum through LGR and embed energy across SBSA functions.
- **Evidence & planning:** Coordinate LAEP and align with grid investment and spatial planning.
- **Investment & funding:** Align with national programmes and position SBSA as investable.
- **Delivery:** Accelerate priority programmes and develop a project pipeline.
- **Skills & partnerships:** Align energy skills with demand and strengthen regional collaboration.

Longer Term Opps (3-10 years)

- Informed by review of comparable strategic authorities to identify transferable interventions and effective use of SBSA powers. E.g.
- **Strategic system role:** Lead whole-system planning and influence infrastructure investment.
 - **Programme delivery:** Deliver large-scale retrofit, heat and infrastructure.
 - **Market shaping & investment:** Use aggregation, procurement and finance to unlock investment.
 - **Regional coordination:** Act as a single point of engagement for investors and partners.
 - **Skills & growth:** Build a workforce capacity and strengthen supply chains.

Investable Project Pipeline

- Pipeline of “early win” projects (2–3 years)
 - Focus on: Investment readiness, scale & replicability, contribution to economic growth.
- 👉 Currently being developed via a Sussex-wide survey

Provide the SBSA with a clear, delivery-ready energy agenda—building on Sussex’s strong existing activity to unlock early wins, demonstrate credibility, and attract investment to support resilience and economic growth.

Early Priorities (1 – 2 years)

Governance & Transition

- **Navigating a period of significant change:** Local Government Reorganisation threatens our momentum, SBSA can ensure resilience through capacity
- **Energy & Climate embedded across all SBSA functions:** A narrow view or 'siloed' mentality will miss opportunities and stymie progress
- **Develop inclusive & accessible approach toward governance:** Supporting key stakeholders to engage, recognising value of local knowledge
- **Support delivery and pace of projects:** taking on an unlocking or facilitation role as required

Evidence & Planning

- **Oversee a shared evidence base:** Supporting strategic decision-making and credible energy investment 'asks'
- **Coordinate a single Sussex-wide Local Area Energy Plan:** Linking up the Spatial Development Strategy and Local Growth Plan
- **Represent Sussex Energy on the (South East) Regional Strategic Board:** NESO to seek nominations in August
- **Work with Network & System Operators:** to align priorities with their network investment activities
- **Leadership in SE Region:** Set expectation & standard

Investment & Funding

- **Connect into national programmes of work:** Warm Homes Plan, Local Power Plan
- **Engage national funding bodies:** National Wealth Fund and GB Energy have appetite to partner with SBSA
- **Embed common approach toward Value for Money through collaboration:** Shared through community energy sector, public, and private sectors
- **Define regional investment framework for energy infrastructure:** Launch early & accessible funding mechanisms
- **Explore recyclable / shared savings funding models:** Invest-to-save model to support business decarbonisation

Delivery

- **Develop pipeline of investible projects**
- **Take on Sussex-wide Zone Coordinator role and support councils to decarbonise heat**
- **Accelerate solar PV schemes & scale what already works**

Skills & Growth

- **Strengthen energy skills:** Pathways aligned with Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)
- **Position Sussex nationally:** As an energy leader by leveraging strengths in solar, offshore wind, heat networks, etc.

Longer term opportunities



Longer-term opportunities

- Strategic energy system planning
- Major programme delivery
- Market-shaping and innovation
- Convening and governance
- Skills and workforce
- Long-term funding and investment mechanisms

Next steps

- Present the briefing to staff at the SBSA
- Include in Greater Brighton Economic Board integration plan
- Link with survey of project and investment opportunities
- Continue to develop SBSA versus Local Authority roles (appendix)
- Support delivery of immediate short-term actions

Activity – the immediate actions

Q&A



The short-term actions are listed on paper on the walls. Please add one sticker beside each of your top two **immediate** activities: that you think the SBSA should progress first, in the very-near future.

Early Priorities (1 – 2 years)

Governance & Transition

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'Supporting implementation of Net Zero energy initiatives in Brighton & Hove'.

Knowledge exchange: University of Sussex (SPRU) for Brighton & Hove City Council

Carla Douglas Gonzalez, PhD Researcher at SPRU, University of Sussex.

Tim Foxon, Co-Director, Sussex Energy Group, Professor of Sustainability Transitions, SPRU, University of Sussex.

Sussex Energy Forum
July 14th, 2026



BUSINESS
SCHOOL

SCIENCE POLICY
RESEARCH UNIT

BHCC Strategic Energy Partnership (SEP)

What is a SEP?

- A long-term partnership between the Council and a strategic partner to accelerate decarbonisation of energy and transport across the city
- The council would retain strategic control, while the partner would principally lead project delivery and capital investment
- Projects could be considered individually or aggregated into portfolios, combining higher-return and lower-return projects to allow cross-subsidy over time

Why does the Council need one?

- Scale of investment needed for net zero could exceed what BHCC could fund or deliver alone
- A strategic partner could bring capital, technical expertise, and delivery capacity
- Bundling profitable projects (like solar) with less profitable but socially important ones (like fuel poverty retrofits) could allow cross-subsidy

BHCC Strategic Energy Partnership (SEP)

- **Carbon reduction**, by delivering priority energy decarbonisation projects at pace and scale and accelerating the whole city's progress towards net zero.
- **Economic opportunity**, by supporting local supply chains and fostering growth in green jobs and skills.
- **Community benefit**, by generating wider social value through the partnership's activities.

Knowledge exchange UoS - BHCC

Main goal: Support BHCC in embedding community benefits and social value within its proposed Strategic Energy Partnership.

Social value refers to the additional social, economic, and environmental benefits generated beyond baseline requirements and the core purpose of the partnership.

Co-benefits refer to the wider positive effects of energy and climate action, such as health, wellbeing, equity, local jobs, and environmental quality, that support other policy domains like human well-being and place-based development.

(Lait et al., 2026; Lait & Foxon, 2026; Sugar, 2026)

Knowledge exchange UoS - BHCC



Two discussions
session with BHCC
officers



Parallel meetings with
CE organisations and
CE actors



Meetings with Greater
Brighton Economic
Board



Review of similar
approaches: Bristol
City Leap, Coventry
SEP and Oldham GNDP

Social value themes across SEP

Bristol City Leap, Coventry SEP and Oldham GNDP

Tackling fuel poverty

Grants, loans and energy advice targeting vulnerable and low-income households.

Community ownership

Community funds, co-ops and resident participation in local energy projects.

Local supply chains

Prioritising local SMEs, real living wage, and local procurement targets.

Green jobs & skills

Apprenticeships, net zero training and upskilling for green economy roles.

Equality & inclusion

EDI principles across supply chains and support for underserved communities.

Health & wellbeing

Retrofit reduces cold-home health risks; green spaces support mental wellbeing.

Regeneration

Investment in under-invested areas through housing, public realm and retrofit.

Innovation & finance

Pilot funding, blended finance and scalable models for low-carbon technology.

Delivery mechanisms for social value

Key approaches

1. Cross-subsidising less profitable projects:

High-return projects (e.g. solar, EV) are intended to cross-subsidise lower-return ones (e.g. fuel poverty measures), with the aim of avoiding cherry-picking and supporting more equitable delivery across the city

Avoid cherry-picking

2. Building local supply chains:

Committing a share of investment to local suppliers and SMEs, paying the Real Living Wage, and providing training to build regional capacity and retain economic benefits locally.

Local economy

3. Social & community fund:

A dedicated fund, seeded by private partners, supports community-led energy projects through grants and loans, with the potential to create a self-sustaining cycle of local benefit.

Community investment

Delivery mechanisms for social value

Key approaches

4. Supporting the CE ecosystem:

Financial, technical and organisational support for grassroots CE organisations, ensuring large-scale projects complement rather than crowd out community-led initiatives.

Community energy

5. Health and Climate Resilience Co-Benefits:

Energy retrofit and green infrastructure deliver dual benefits, reducing winter emissions while improving summer thermal resilience and mitigating heat stress.

Health co-benefits

6. Community Municipal Investments (CMIs)

Raises finance directly from residents and institutions from as little as £5. Sixteen UK councils have raised ~£18m since 2020. A CMI with CE organizations could run in parallel with the SEP.

Local Climate Bonds

Related examples

Local Area Retrofit Accelerator (LARA) - MCS Foundation initiative

Supports place-based retrofit strategies through co-design, offering a pathway for hard-to-reach households alongside the main SEP structure

Community-Led Local Energy Planning - Lesson from Oldham Energy Futures

Builds local knowledge and confidence so communities shape and benefit from the energy transition, feeding into the SEP pipeline

Potential mechanisms for Community Energy integration

Tiered bundling with CE quotas

X% of smaller-scale projects reserved for CE-led delivery, keeping risk low for private partners while ensuring local control.

Joint ventures for mid-scale projects

Contributions could flow either way. CE groups taking a minority equity stake in privately-led assets, or private partners supporting CE-led ones.

CE work counts towards SEP targets

Removes the disincentive to hand projects to CE delivery, recognising their contribution within the partnership's overall targets.

Community ownership of heat

CE organisations could own or manage heat sources within district heating networks so that revenue flows benefit the community, not only private partners.

Carve-outs from SEP exclusivity

Exemptions allow CE organisations to access grant funding unavailable to commercial partners, with those projects still counting towards SEP KPIs.

Community cohesion as a co-benefit

Shared participation in retrofit and rooftop PV rollouts strengthens neighbourhood bonds, a genuine benefit even without a specific KPI

Great British Energy Local Power Plan

- **Ownership Vision:** By 2030, every UK community will have the opportunity to benefit from and own a local energy project, with GBE supporting 1,000+ projects backed by up to £1 billion in grants, loans, and expert support.
- **Structural Support for Models:** GBE's logic model prioritises co-owned renewable assets. DESNZ is reviewing a mandatory shared ownership requirement for renewables, which would strengthen the case for joint venture and SPV delivery models.
- **Early Partnership Opportunity:** GBE has formalised agreements with ten Mayoral/Combined Authorities, an opportunity for BHCC and CE organisations to engage jointly under the new Sussex and Brighton Strategic Authority, shaping future funding products and positioning the region as an early partner.

Next steps



Finishing the report



**Supporting BHCC's
decision-making**

As a reference point and
basis for discussion, ahead
of selecting and tendering a
SEP model



**Last parallel meetings
with BHCC**

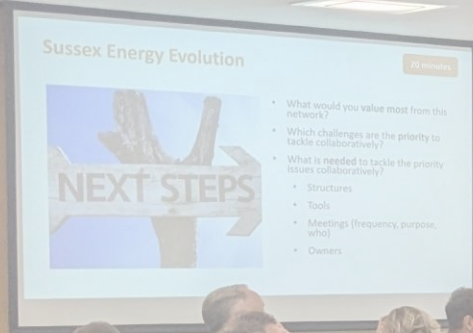


**This knowledge exchange
runs until the end of July**

SUSSEX ENERGY

Forum

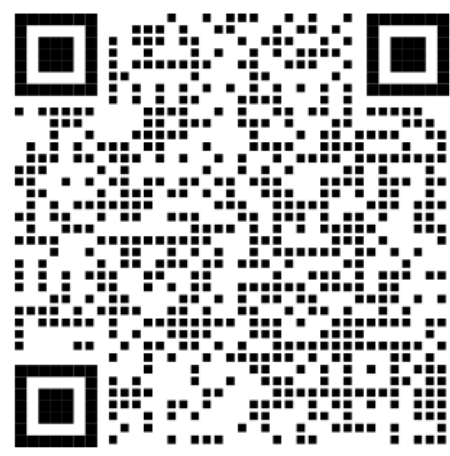
Tuesday 14th July 2026



Join the Sussex Energy
Forum LinkedIn Group to
continue discussions:



Follow the Sussex Energy
LinkedIn page for updates
and local case studies:



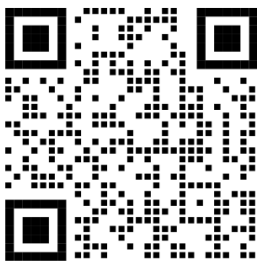
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Brighton Energy Co-Op

<https://www.brightonenergy.org.uk/>



Current

BEC's strategy is to install a target of 1MW of solar PV per year across existing and new sites.

We are also conducting a feasibility study for a community owned wind turbine on the Sussex coast.

Another trial we are running is linking second hand EV battery storage to one of our larger arrays.

We contribute minimum of 3% of our turnover to our community fund which benefits environmental education sessions in local schools.

Historical

BEC was founded in 2010 and since then has raised around £4.5M in community shares and bonds and installed over 100 solar arrays across the public and private sector adding up to 5MW.

In 2019-22 we ran a Next Generation project to trial the financial benefits of linking EV charge points to our solar arrays.

Developed phase 1 of a community energy org in Manor Royal Business Park.

Between 2021-23 we ran an ERDF funded grant programme where we provided 33 SMEs with grants worth up to £25K off this cost of solar arrays

Future Ambition

We are passionate about delivering against the Net Zero ambitions in Sussex, and look forward to collaborating with local organisations to install both rooftop and ground mounted solar arrays.

Expertise



Relevant experience: Will Cottrell (B.A.) has driven BEC forward from its inception. Overseeing both communications and fund-raising for BEC, he has experience in the technical and financial aspects of renewable energy, as well as marketing and communications

In 2014 he was awarded Community Energy Fundraiser of the Year; in 2015 he won the People's Environmental Award's prize for Energy and since then he's been a mentor for many other community energy groups.



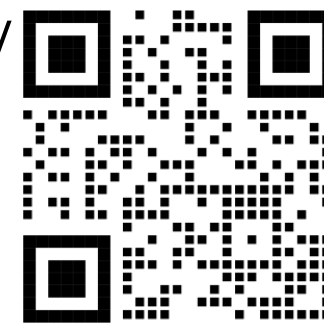
Relevant experience: Damian Tow's (B.A. M.A.) emphasis is on financial, legal and operational aspects of our organisation, he has 14 years' experience as a project and programme manager at Cable & Wireless and BT, and was also a director of a small software company.

Having originally read Business Studies at Hull University, Damian completed a Masters in Leadership for Sustainable Development at Forum for the Future in 2009. He has Prince 2, MSP and APMP project management qualifications and has been with Brighton Energy Co-op since August 2010.



Relevant experience: Matt Brown (B.A.) joined BEC in 2013 as head of new project development. Since then he's overseen lots of BEC's new solar systems – indeed, Matt has been a project manager for many years across various technical businesses. He helps BEC take a positive and pro-active approach to developing our renewable portfolio and gain a strong base of generation that will see the Co-op through the next 20 years.

He is committed to the concept of community energy and helping BEC's members to continue the move towards greater community ownership of generation



Brighton & Hove Energy Services Co-operative (BHESCo)

Current

- Delivery partner for Re-Energise Manor Royal, Crawley - industrial estate PV
- Ovingdean *Solar Powered Community*
- Ovingdean onshore wind exploration (GBCEF Stage 2)
- Saltdean Decarbonisation Plan (GBCEF Stage 1)
- *Solar Powered Communities* for 3 areas of deprivation in Sussex

Historical

- Own and operate 1MW+ solar and renewable heating across schools, community buildings, local businesses
- Recent installation of in-roof solar PV at Dyke Golf Club
- *Solar Powered Communities* pilot completed in Preston Park
- Energy Savings Service: domestic and commercial energy surveying
- Fuel poverty alleviation work (BHCC EnergyWorks, Energy Outreach)

Future Ambition

- Continued development of industrial estate solar PV
- Continued heat network exploration in Brighton & Hove
- Expansion of *Solar Powered Communities*
- Onshore wind development

Expertise



Kayla Ente MBE, MBA, BSc CEO, kayla@bhesco.co.uk

Relevant experience: BHESCo founder, developer of pay as you save finance model, primary contributor to business growth and development of services. Qualified accountant and MBA

Technologies / Skills: Extracting economic value drivers for financial modelling, contractual negotiations, project development and management, customer relations, grant applications and networking.



Richard Dow, MICE, CEng, MEng Technical Consultant (Request all enquiries to be directed to Kayla)

Relevant experience: Project manage commercial rooftop solar PV, supported development of BHESCo's battery storage tool, commercial energy efficiency surveys, reporting with recommendations for improvements. Flexibility and EV rollout lead.

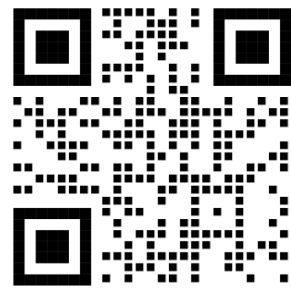
Technologies / Skills: Rooftop solar PV project development, renewable energy project management, flexibility opportunities and analysis, renewable energy provision on new developments, Heat load calculations to MCS standard, GIS/QGIS



Matthew Williams, MSC, BSc Project Developer (Request all enquiries to be directed to Kayla)

Relevant experience: Matthew joined BHESCo's Project Team in 2025 in parallel to completing a Master's Degree in Smart Energy and the Built Environment. This follows experience working in the areas of Project Management, Operations, Systems Management, and Human Resources.

Technologies / Skills: Solar PV design analysis, GIS/QGIS, onshore wind site identification, renewable heating systems, project management.



Update

- OVESCO Limited CBS **launching share offer** of Ethex in August for PV at Holmansbridge Fram, Raystede & Bevern Trust
- OVESCO continues to have discussions with GB Energy about financing of the **Ouse Valley Solar Farm**, supported by Lewes District Council
- Continue to offer **local energy advice work** funded by UKPN
- **Meadow Blue Community Energy** looking to **expand** their 5MW Merston solar farm, with support from CfR & OVESCO
- EOI's going in for next round of the **GBE Community Energy fund**. Open to working with LA's to attract this funding for Sussex

Historical

- Set up Community Energy South. Financed and manage MBCE 5MW solar farm in West Sussex. Secured planning for 17MW solar Farm. 15 roof top solar PV sites in East Sussex. Managed local authority micro generation and energy advice scheme over 4 yrs. Delivery of NIA funded CommuniHeat with UKPN.

Expertise



Chris Rowland - CEO chris@ovesco.co.uk

Relevant experience: 17 years in the community energy sector founding Ovesco in 2007.

Technologies / Skills: Skilled in solar roof top and farm development, launched numerous community share offers, enabling relationships throughout the District. Success in grant applications including National Lottery, Redress, CEF, Ashden Award Winner



Patrick Crawford - Director patrick@ovesco.co.uk

Relevant experience: Solar rooftop project development, taking 17MW solar farm through successful planning to construction stage.

Technologies / Skills: Business skills via commercial work and work with the CDP, project development skills, project management skills, expertise in solar projects



Nicki Myers - Director/Project Manager nicki.myers@ovesco.co.uk

Relevant experience: Commercial renewable heating experience, project management, community engagement, events

Technologies / Skills: Domestic home retrofit, heat pumps, solar generation, battery.



Frank Donghi - Technical Manager frank@ovesco.co.uk

Relevant experience: Consulting domestic, Listed building and businesses to decarbonise via solar PV, insulation and electric heating.

Technologies / Skills: Energy and financial modelling, heat loss calculations to MCS standard, GIS rooftop assessment. Knowledge of installation of rooftop solar. Managing Operations and Maintenance.

A little about us

We are a social enterprise that is enabling communities across the UK to play a central role in delivering a fair, inclusive, and locally driven transition to a resilient, clean energy economy.

We work with community energy groups, renewable energy developers, local authorities and industry partners to deliver renewable energy and energy efficiency projects that have local leadership and tangible local benefits.

Our vision is for a resilient UK energy system in which every community shapes, owns, and benefits from clean, local energy generation and energy efficiency.



Community Energy across Sussex

July 2025

~ 60
employees



~ 76
volunteers

~ 119
renewable
energy & heat
projects created



~ 1,810
investors

Renewable
capacity
~ 24.6
MW



Total value of
projects
~ £21.9
Million



~ £8.63
Million
community
investment raised



reaching
~ 9,581
people with energy
advice in
2024 - 2025



Our participating groups across
Sussex – Bhesco, Ovesco, Energise
Sussex Coast, Brighton Energy Coop
& Community Energy Pathways



Our Reach

50 +

Community
Energy
Groups

15

Local
authorities

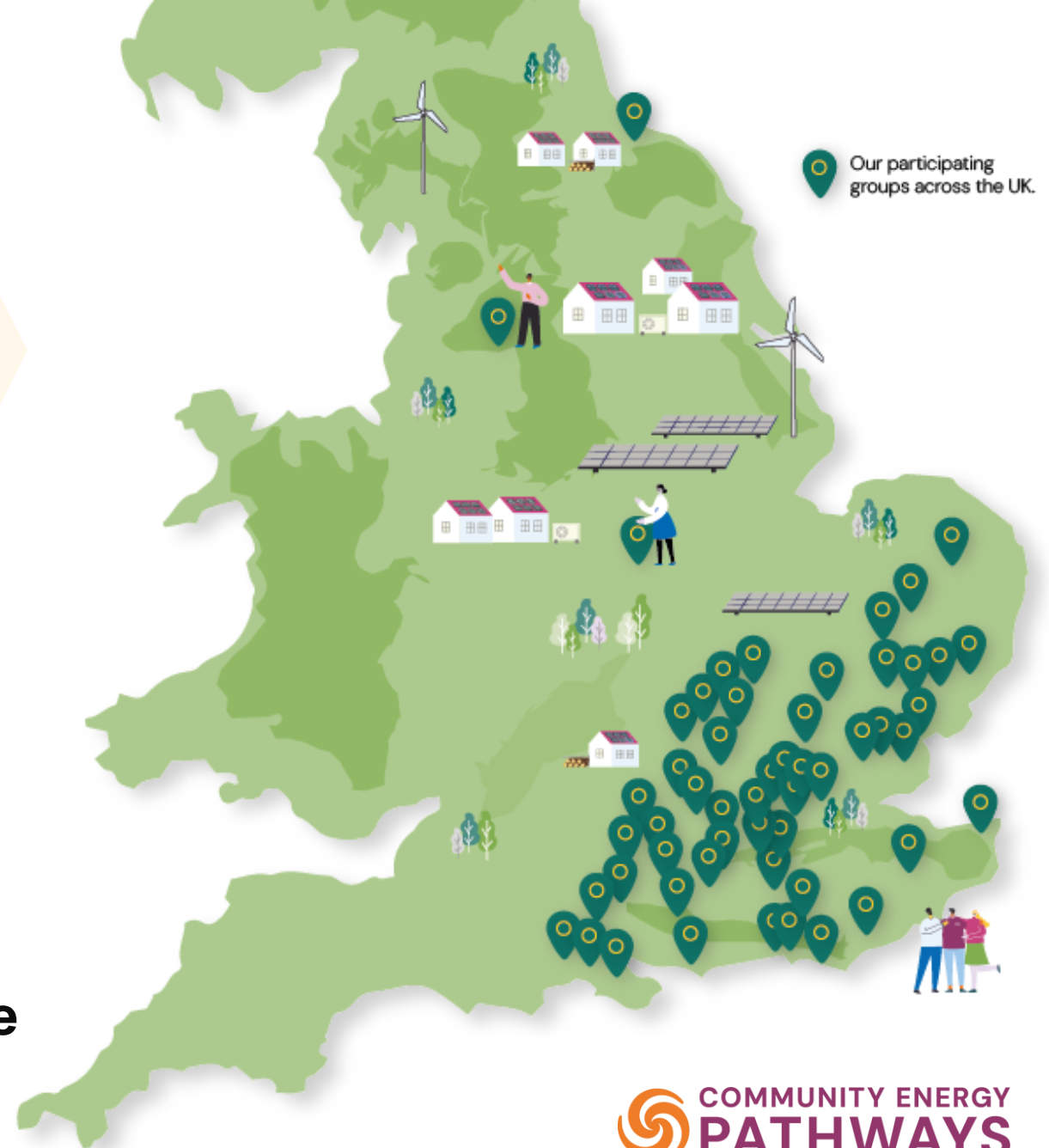
100+

Champions
trained

25,000 advice sessions in past 18 months
in community events, **1,200** home visits

100 local energy champions trained in 12
months

£2.5m funding secured for groups in the
last two years



Community energy is a strategic priority for Government, Ofgem and GB Energy

- Ofgem Chair Mark McAllister, alongside members of the Ofgem team, visited [Community Energy Pathways](#) in Newhaven, Sussex.

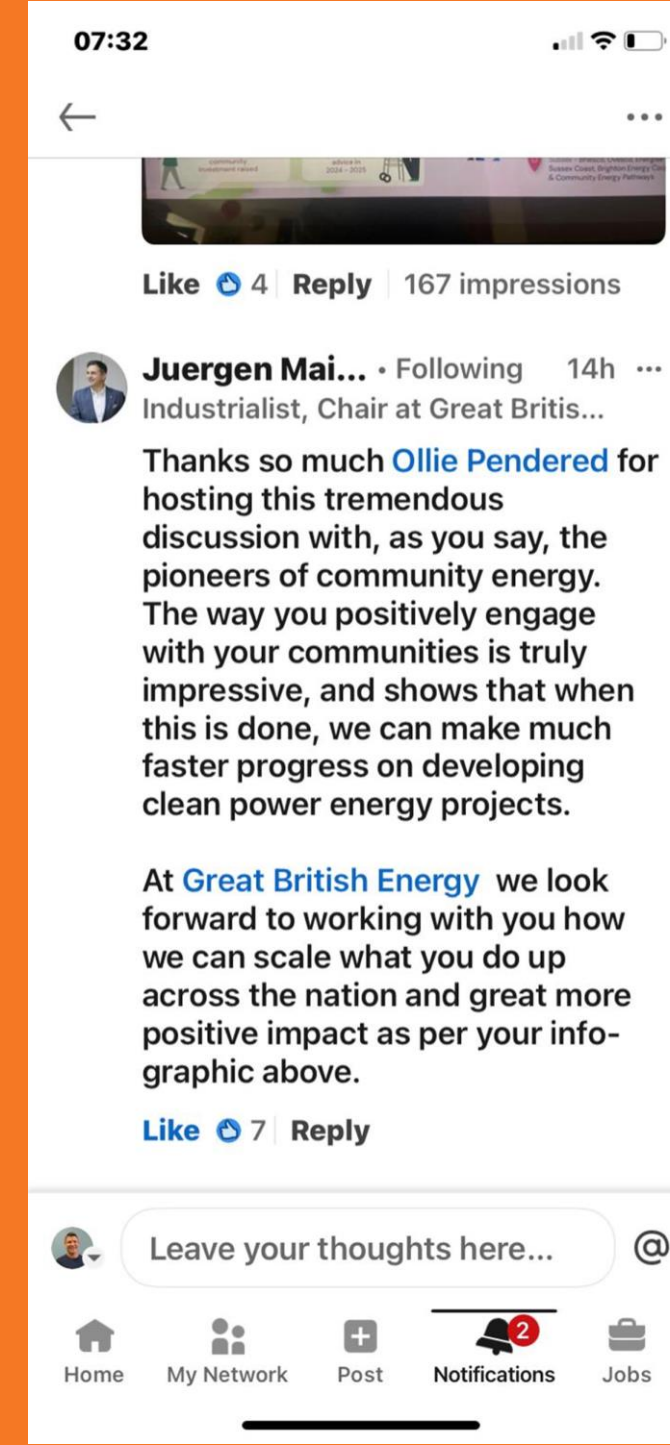


"We were impressed by the work being done at the grassroots level to drive the energy transition and support local communities.

Community energy plays a vital role in:

- Supporting those most in need
- Championing the energy transition in local areas
- Boosting local economies through home-grown renewables

We congratulate Community Energy Pathways for their trailblazing efforts and commitment to a fairer, greener energy future“ Mark McAllister



Case study: East Sussex

East Sussex Pilot – a planned approach to community decarbonisation



500 oil to heat pumps

17 renewable sites

Retrofits

75% saving in network reinforcement costs

Community Readiness

Community readiness in the context of community energy refers to a community's ability to organise themselves in response to an energy challenge.

It depends on the alignment and mobilisation of all relevant stakeholders within a local community.

Community readiness indicates the **community's capacity, motivation, and system preparedness** to make a local community energy project a success.



Community readiness: 3 key metrics

Community capacity

- Local volunteer capacity
 - Leadership to drive activity
- Skills (organisational, technical, legal, fundraising)
- Funding avenues
 - Local venues

Community motivation

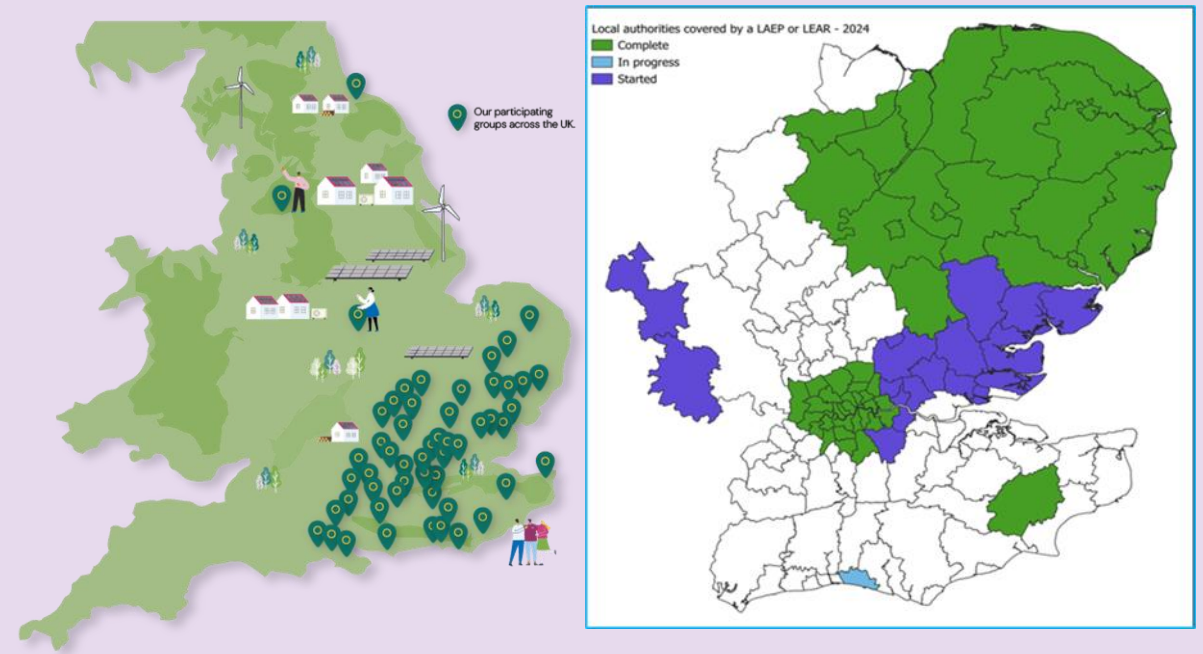
- Awareness of energy transition challenges
- Demand for action
- Desire for collective response
- Trust in local solutions and local champions
- Buy in and support from local councils and politicians

System preparedness

- NESO SSEP and LAEP in place supported by DNO/DSO
 - Data availability
- Local assets available for community energy
- Supply chain readiness
 - Local green skills market
 - Local authority involvement
- Local policies (e.g. local procurement, community wealth)

Opportunities

- **Community Energy In A Box - £33m revolving fund to deliver 88MWs + by 2030**
- **Be ambitious and imagine whole communities decarbonising at scale – parishes and towns**
- **Stimulate the green market – create jobs and reduce energy bills**
- **Believe in innovation – solar, batteries, local supply, flexibility**
- **Deliver a LAEP at speed and work with the CE sector for a bottom-up approach**
- **Access to buildings and business – drive a Sussex wide communications campaign**
- **Create an energy advice shop on every high street manned by energy and climate champions**



Why Sussex Community Energy Companies?

- We have a proven delivery under constraint
- A costed pipeline
- National political support
- A workforce that can scale
- Additional co-benefits

Solar Across Sussex: Site Identification & Prioritisation

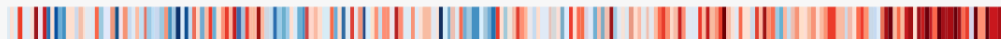
14 July 2026

Abigail Dombey – Net Zero Associates

Graeme MacLean – Carbon Transition Associates

Dr Doug Gregg

Net Zero Associates



CARBON TRANSITION ASSOCIATES

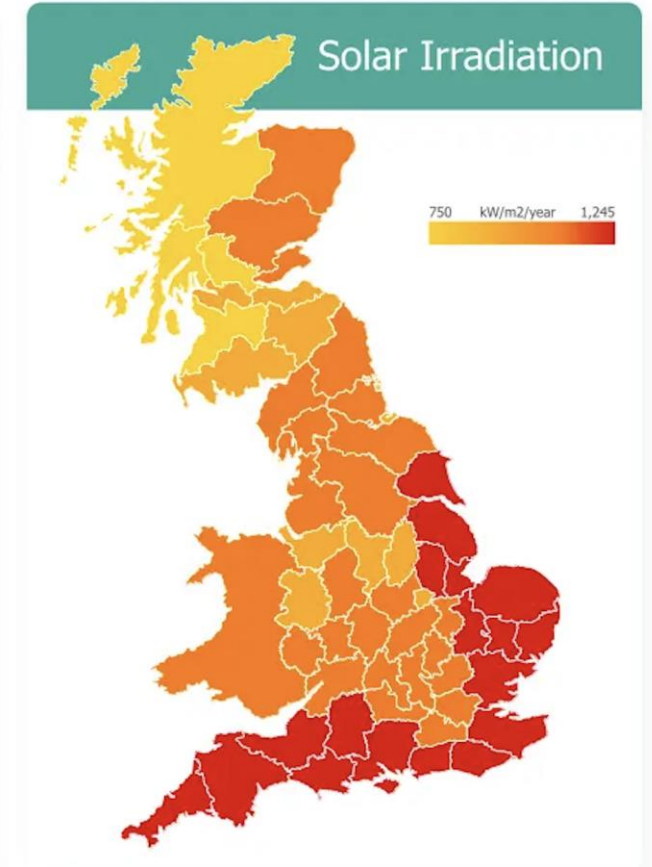
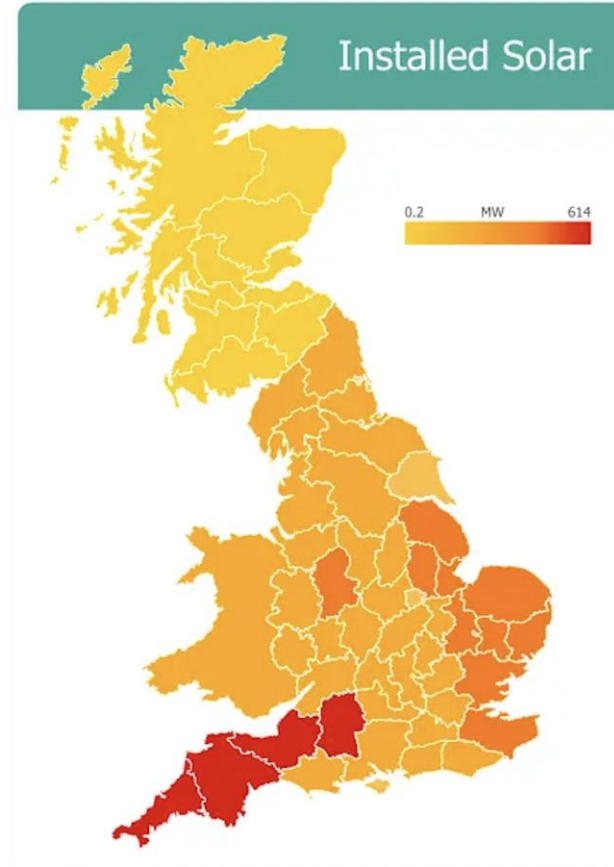
Agenda

- Solar across Sussex aims
- Stakeholder engagement
- GIS spatial mapping
- Potential ground-mount solar
- Potential rooftop solar
- Future energy scenarios - solar
- Outputs – current work
- Phase 2: Solar across Sussex plans



Solar Across Sussex Aims

- Solar is a proven renewable technology and the region benefits from some of the highest solar irradiance levels in the UK.
- Purpose of Sussex Solar project: to accelerate the delivery of large-scale solar generation in Sussex



Stakeholder Engagement

Public Sector Organisations

- Greater South East Net Zero Hub
- Brighton & Hove City Council
- East Sussex County Council
- West Sussex County Council
- Crawley Borough Council
- Horsham District Council
- South Downs National Park Authority
- NHS - Care Without Carbon
- Chichester College Group
- Kew / Wakehurst
- Sussex Police

Stakeholders

- CPRE Sussex

Community Energy

- Brighton Energy Cooperative
- Community Energy Pathways
- OVESCO
- Forest Row Energy
- Meadow Blue

Business Parks

- Lancing BID
- Manor Royal

Utilities & Private Companies

- UKPN
- Southern Water
- Brighton City Airport

Solar Developers

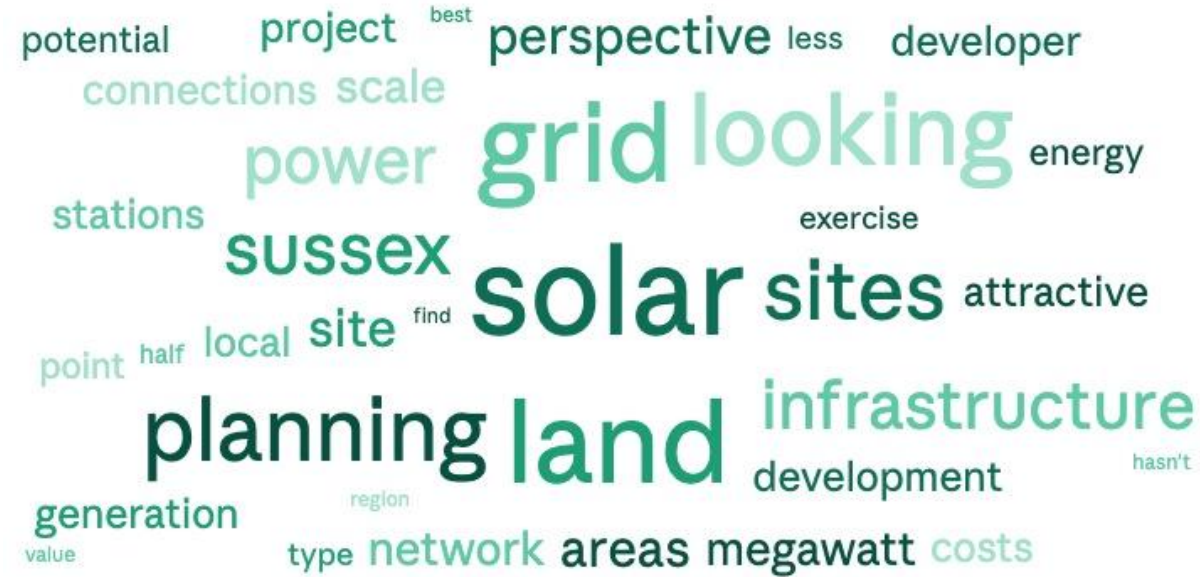
Net Zero Associates



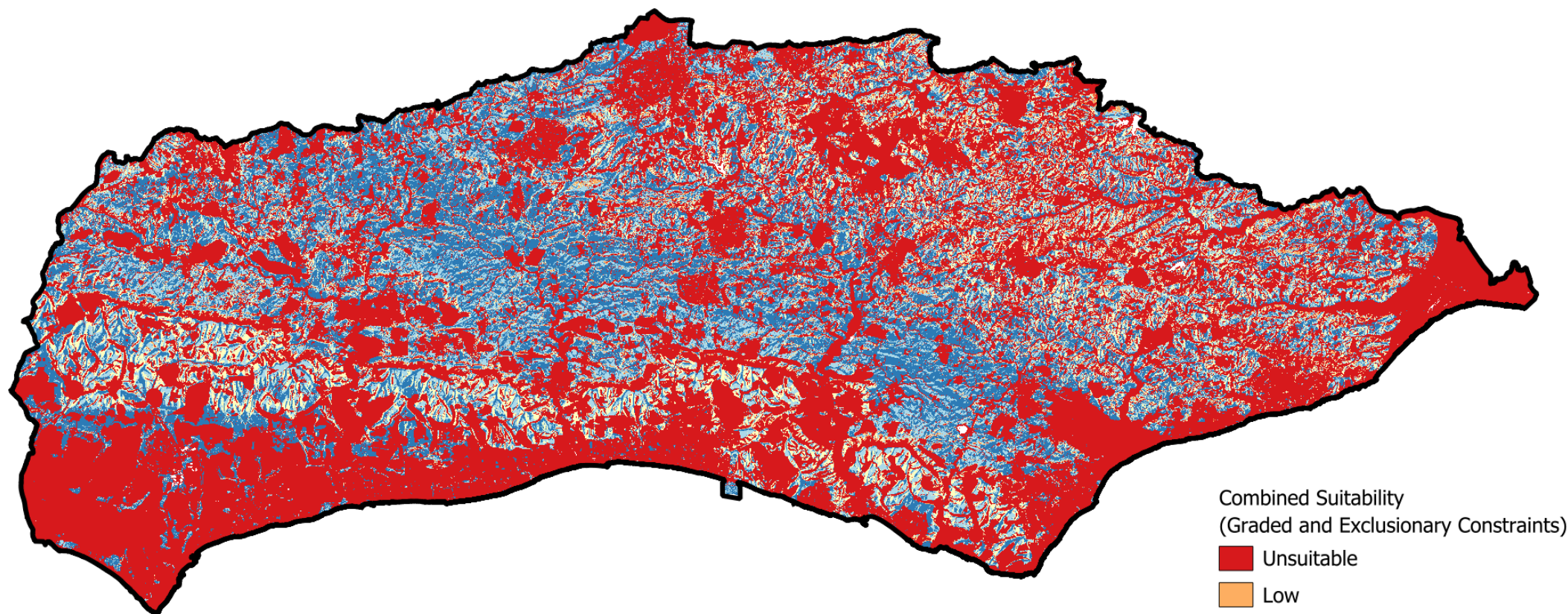
CARBON TRANSITION ASSOCIATES

Stakeholder Engagement

- Common Issues:
 - Lack of internal funding
 - Lack of internal capacity to:
 - develop business cases
 - project manage solar installations in house
 - cut through outdated negative anecdotes
 - Planning uncertainty
 - Perceived risks of affecting business rates
 - PPA / working with Community Energy organisations – internal blockers (uncertainty if first of a kind project)
 - Landlord / tenant disconnect (how to fix split incentives?)
 - Lack of inclusion of solar land requirements in Local Plans (or at least no external awareness of solar land planning)



GIS Spatial Mapping: Combined constraints + aspect



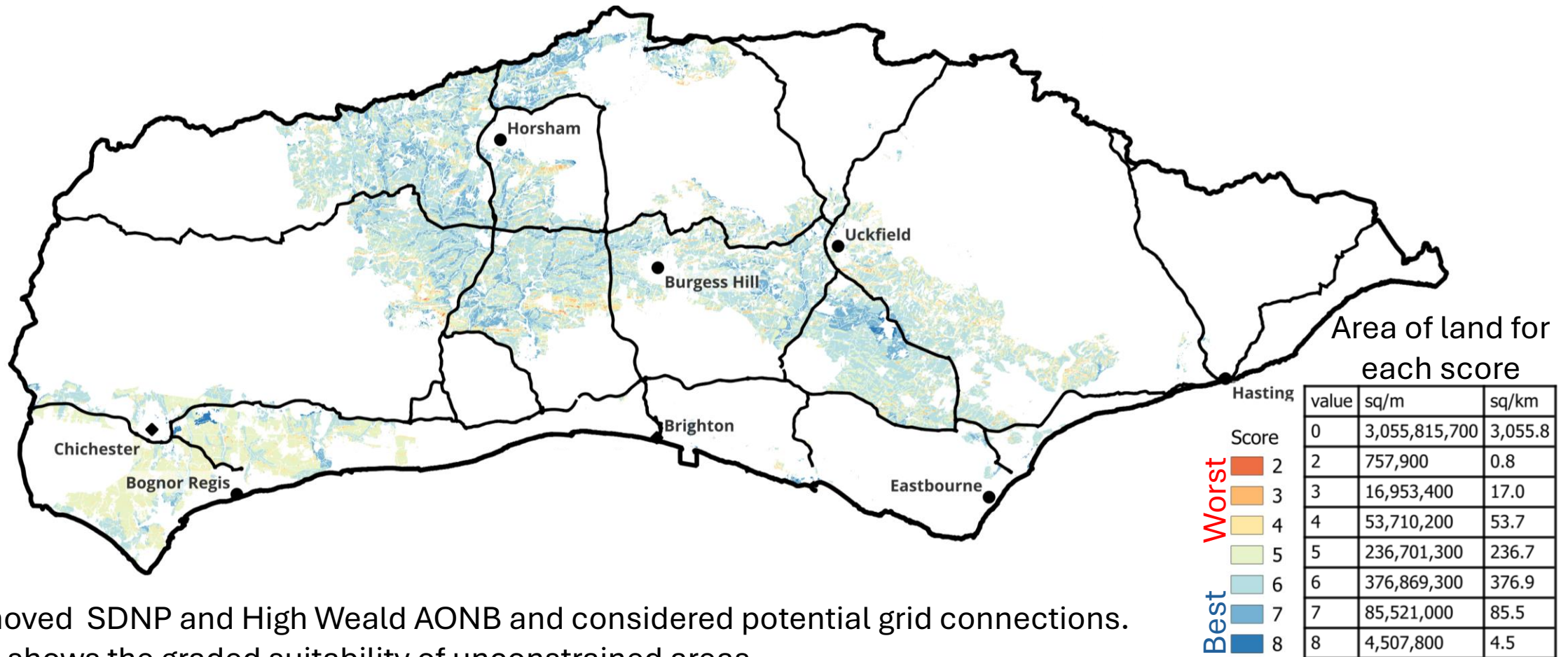
Considered aspect, farmland, and habitat constraints.

Net Zero Associates



CARBON TRANSITION ASSOCIATES

Combined constraints + aspect + grid



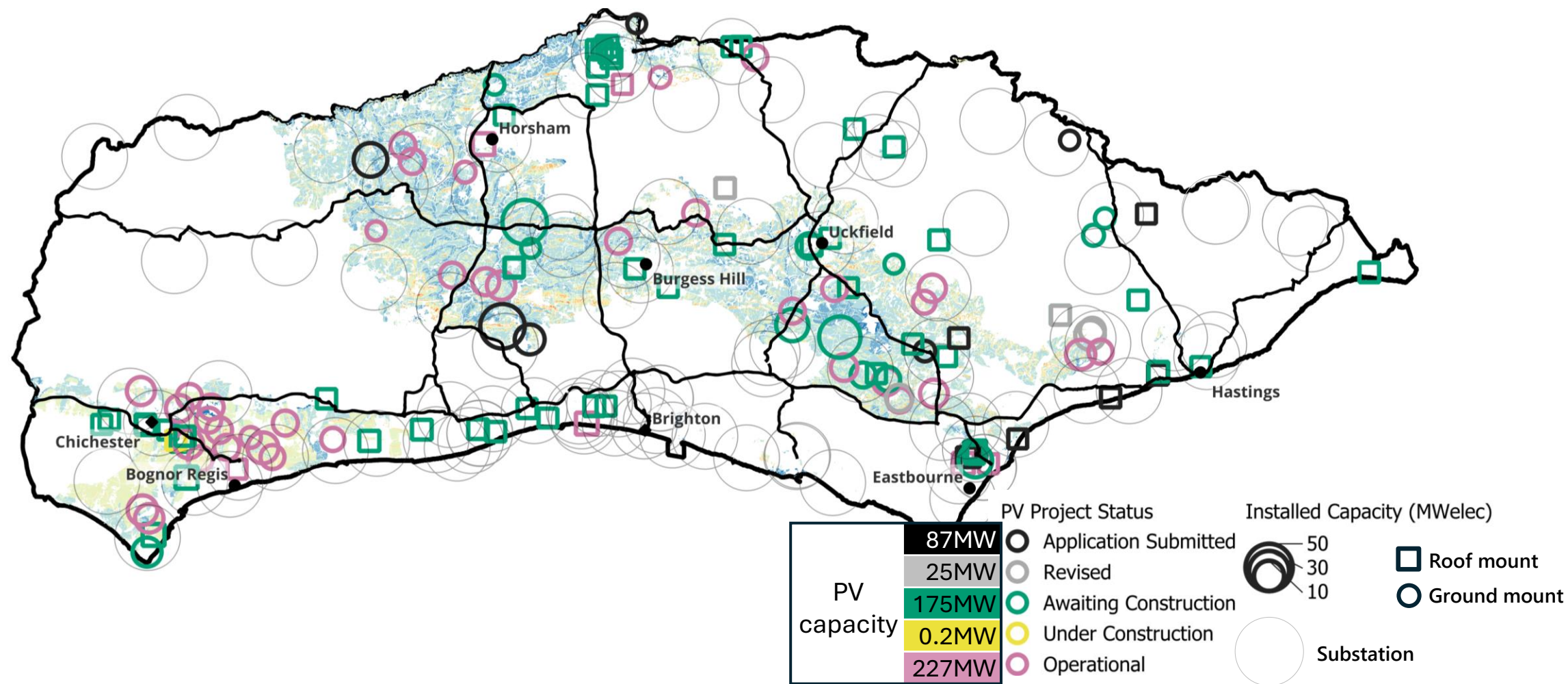
Removed SDNP and High Weald AONB and considered potential grid connections.
Map shows the graded suitability of unconstrained areas.

Net Zero Associates



CARBON TRANSITION ASSOCIATES

REPD solar projects vs combined constraints

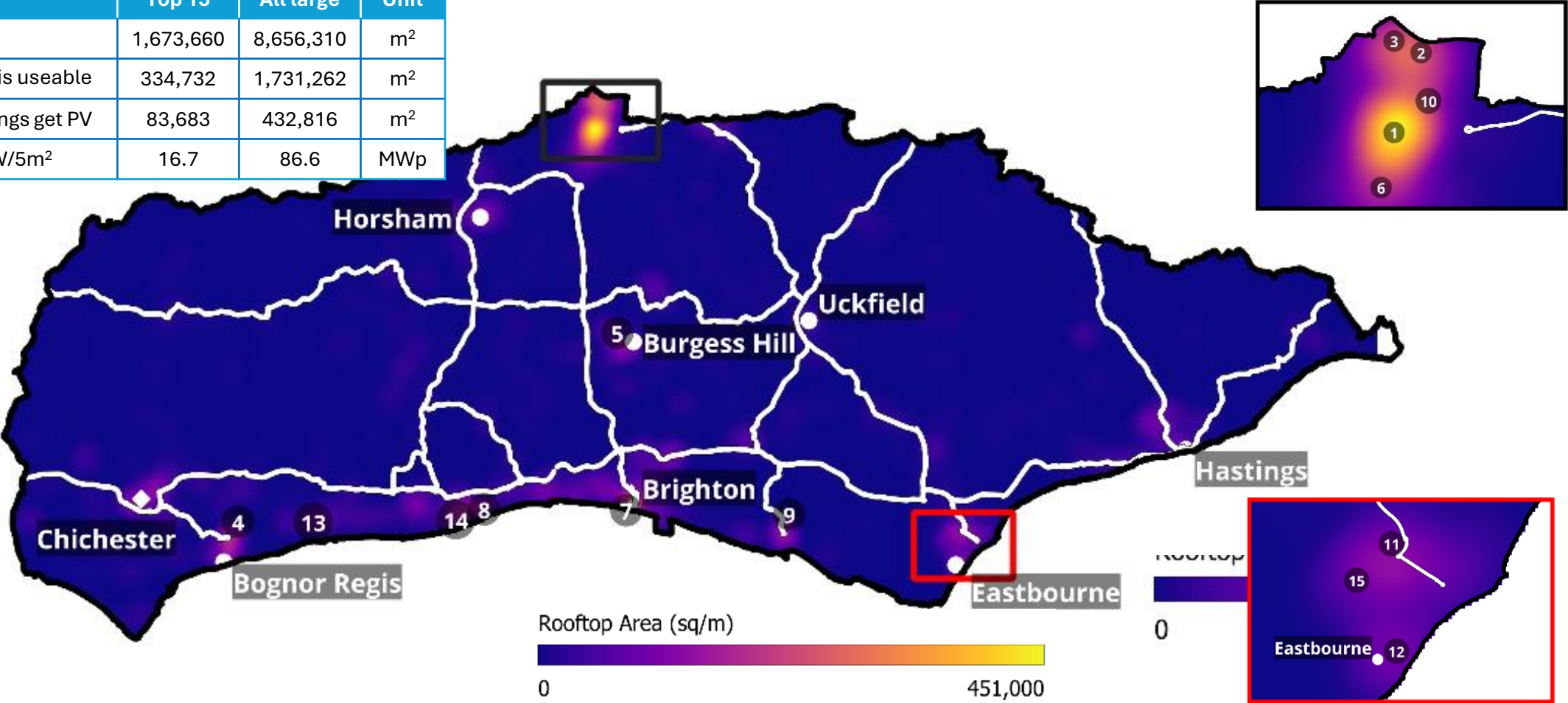


Net Zero Associates

CARBON TRANSITION ASSOCIATES

Rooftops heat map

	Top 15	All large	Unit
Total large roof area	1,673,660	8,656,310	m ²
Assume 20% of roof is useable	334,732	1,731,262	m ²
Assume 1 in 4 buildings get PV	83,683	432,816	m ²
Total installed @1kW/5m ²	16.7	86.6	MWp



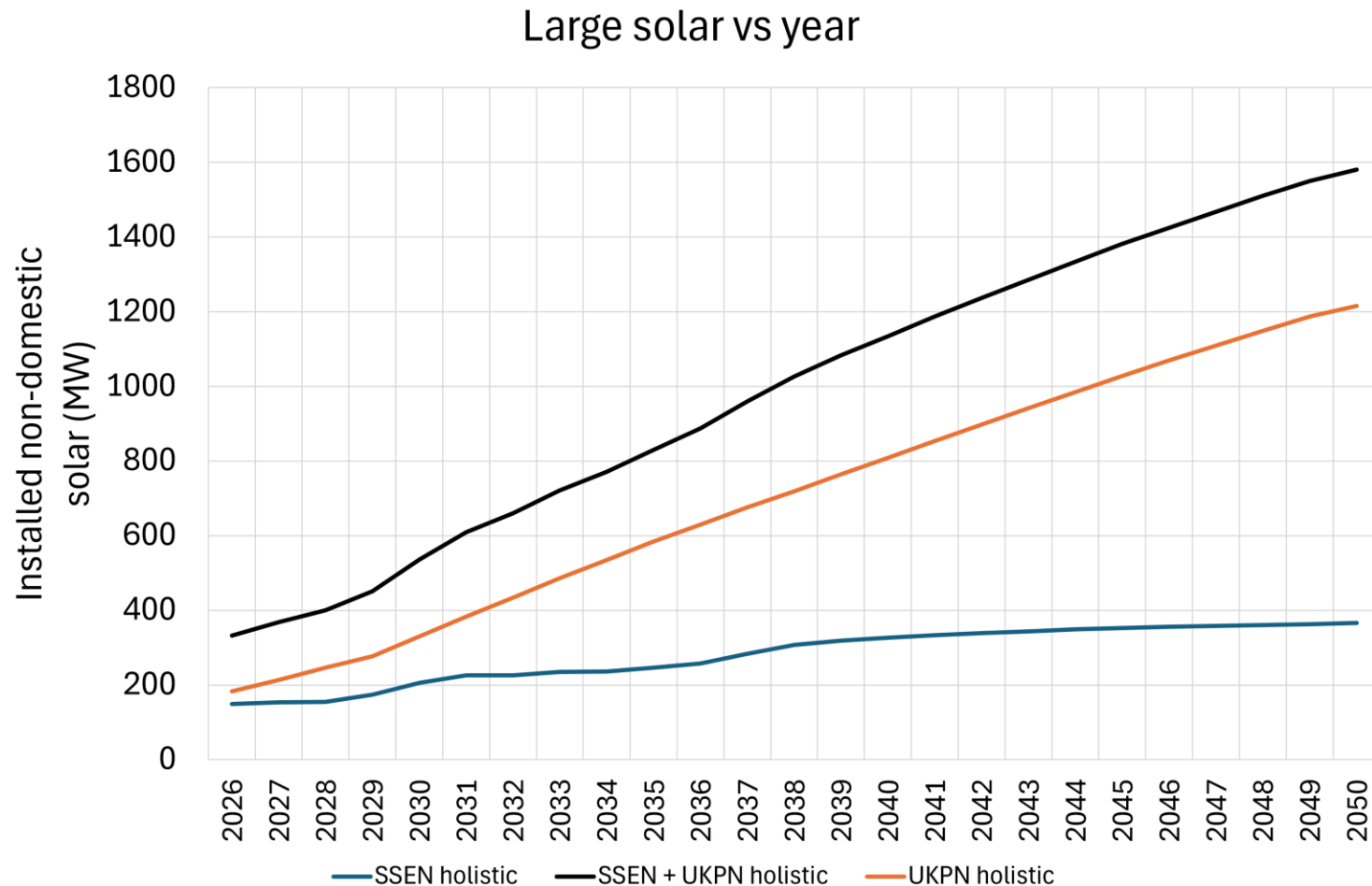
Net Zero Associates



CARBON TRANSITION ASSOCIATES



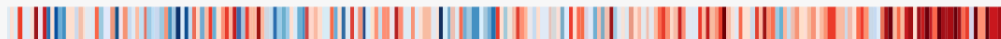
Future energy scenarios across Sussex local authorities show large increases in PV with economic opportunities



- NESO: need 1130MW large-scale solar in Sussex by 2040
 - Only 87MW potential from all large roofs
 - Will need ~20km² for total groundmount
 - 0.6% of Sussex land area (about half of land used by golf courses)
 - Around 700 mainly construction jobs- £28M salary/year
 - £50M cumulative land rental
 - >£800M cumulative electricity income
- Is solar PV at any large scale in Local Plans?

Outputs – Current Work

- List of potential solar sites and search areas for both ground-mount and rooftop
 - Prioritisation will include:
 - Ground-mount or roof mount; Commercial, community or public sector; Maximise total size (MW); RoI; Energy export or self-consumption
 - Can be used by LAs for future Local Plans
- Stakeholder feedback – common obstacles and requests
- Realistic solar potential for Sussex
- Recommendations



Phase 2: Solar across Sussex plans

- Unblocking solar development
- Recommendations for what needs to be in local authorities' solar planning guide
 - What is/ isn't acceptable
 - What's included under permitted development
- Potential policy drivers to overcome landlord / tenant gap (Public and private sector)
 - What levers are available to pull? (Energy / property / planning / policy)
 - We provide evidence base and run the meeting
 - Review potential policy areas that LAs have control over.

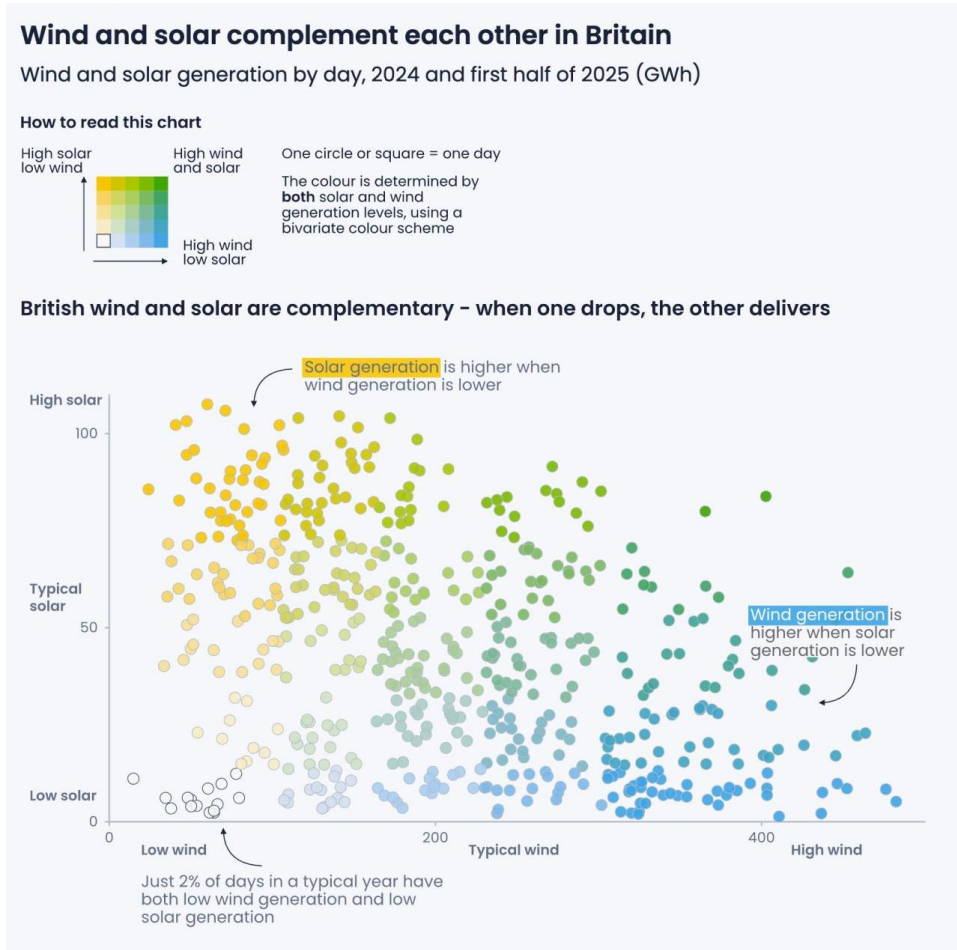


Phase 2: Solar across Sussex plans

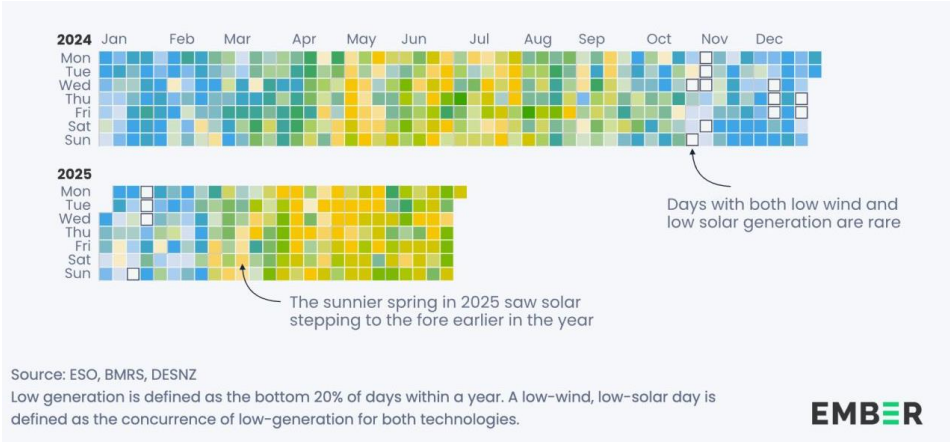
- Removing obstacles
 - Eg First of a kind installation
 - Legal issues: eg tripartite agreements with operators
- Develop real exemplars to share - actually deliver stuck solar projects
 - Business case, financials, legal (?), grid, optioneering, planning application development
 - Local authority
 - Business park / retail
 - Produce worked example(s) of successful projects



Wind & Solar complement each other



There are very few days a year where Britain has both low wind and low solar



Breakouts: Topics

2

Tables



Solar Across Sussex

Table 1: What can we do to improve public acceptance of ground mount solar? How do we make sure that communities benefit from GM solar?

*Table 2: Moving forward – what knowledge gaps do you have / what resources do you need to move forward with solar projects?
What questions do you get?*

1 Table



Unlocking Funding & Investment

Imagine Sussex could establish one new regional capability to accelerate investment into energy decarbonisation. What should it be, why is it needed, and what impact would it have?

*What problem would it solve? Who would benefit?
Who could lead it? What impact would it have?*

Breakout Discussion: 20 mins



2

Tables



Sussex Community Energy in a Box

Table 1: How do we achieve place-based decarbonisation in Sussex?

Table 2: What are the barriers & opportunities for scaling up community energy?

1 Table



Energy Innovation & Engagement Centre

If the University was to develop a space and suite of facilitated activities that could help you, your business, or a group you represent, in moving towards the goals of Sussex Energy (energy neutrality by 2040) what would that space need to have in it and what activities would you like it to deliver?



Join the Sussex Energy Forum LinkedIn Group to continue discussions:

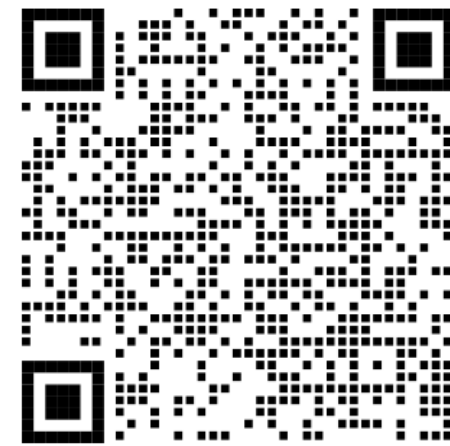


What conversation from today would you like to keep going?

What insight from today has become clearer for you?

What one thing will you explore further after today?

Follow the Sussex Energy LinkedIn page for updates and local case studies:



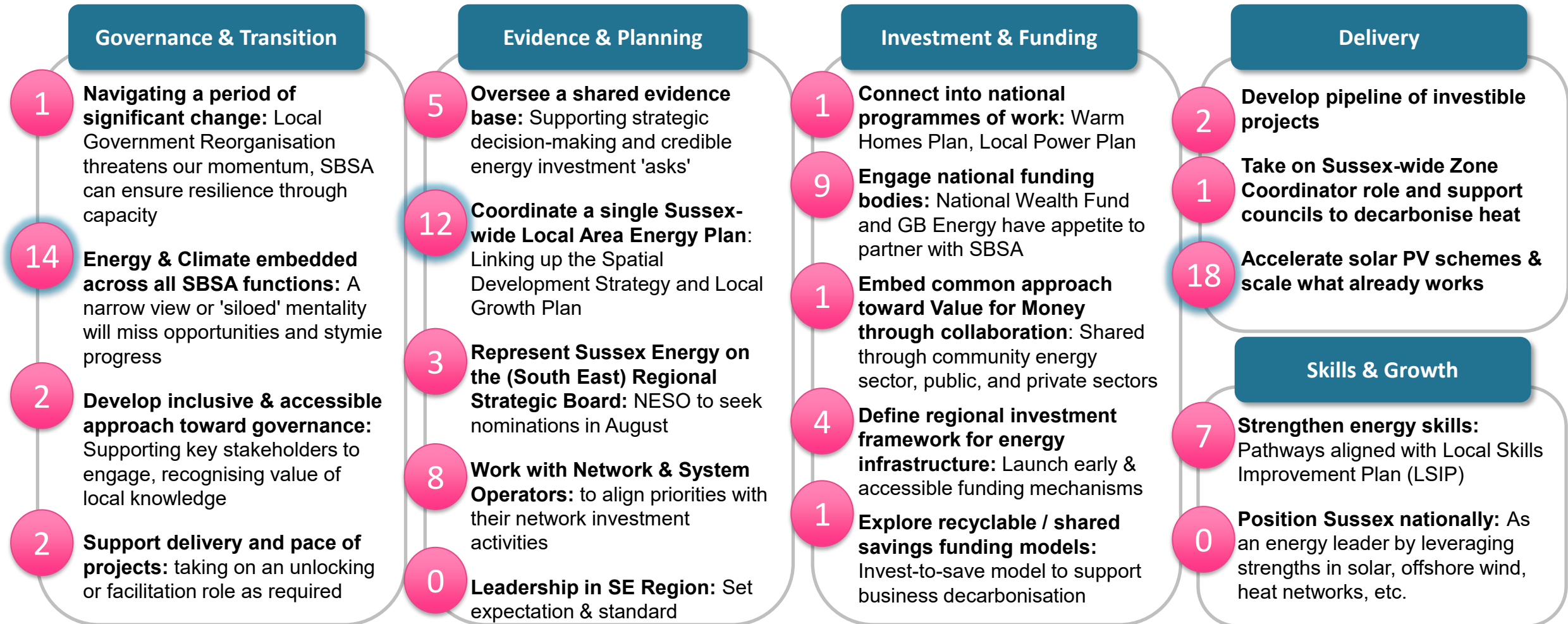


NOTES



Early Priorities (1 – 2 years)

Pink circles show the number of votes received when participants asked which priorities they thought the SBSA should progress first, in the very-near future (participants given 2 votes each).



Breakouts: Discussion Notes



Solar Across Sussex: *What can we do to improve public acceptance of ground mount solar? How do we make sure that communities benefit from GM solar?*

Overall: Participants agreed that improving public acceptance of ground-mounted solar requires a strategic, Sussex-wide approach that combines meaningful community benefits, transparent engagement, careful site selection and clear communication of why additional solar is needed.

Community benefit: Increase transparency over who benefits financially (local authority, residents, public benefit if publicly owned land) and ensure local communities receive meaningful, direct benefits (e.g. lower bills, community ownership, local investment).

Public acceptance: Better understand the causes of opposition and shift the conversation from individual projects to a strategic discussion about where solar should be located. Use community engagement such as Future Energy Landscapes workshops. Build on local climate action groups.

Strategic siting: Develop a Sussex-wide approach to identifying suitable locations, balancing landscape, agriculture, biodiversity and grid availability. Need to balance with other facilities competing for grid connections (e.g. data centres, transport). Consider what happens to solar farms once they are decommissioned. Discuss challenges associated with developing smaller (<5 MW) direct-wire projects (noted by Southern Water). Recognise that Sussex's protected landscapes (e.g. High Weald) limit opportunities for solar but planning policies have evolved.

Grid constraints: Limited grid capacity is a significant barrier, even for 5 MW projects (via CFDs or PPA contracts). Greater coordination between project location and connection opportunities is needed.

Project viability: Explore new incentives and financing models, including support for agrivoltaics and smaller-scale schemes where the economics are difficult due to the scale/complexity.

Communications: Improve messaging on why ground-mounted solar is needed, communicate wider environmental, nature and community benefits, and promote positive local engagement (YIMBY - "Yes In My Backyard"). Explain if there is limited space to install solar and the local need for it. Use Climate Outreach to understand audiences to help frame communications: [Britain Talks Climate & Nature - Climate Outreach](#).

Environmental outcomes: Highlight opportunities for biodiversity, habitat restoration, land management and long-term stewardship alongside renewable energy generation.

Breakouts: Discussion Notes



Solar Across Sussex: *Moving forward – what knowledge gaps do you have / what resources do you need to move forward with solar projects? What questions do you get?*

Overall: Participants highlighted that accelerating commercial solar deployment requires more than funding alone, with a clear need for accessible technical expertise, legal support, organisational capacity and greater certainty around funding, planning and project risks.

Scope: The discussion focused on **commercial-scale rooftop solar** (from small business premises through to large buildings) and **small-scale ground-mounted solar** (couple of fields). Large utility-scale solar farms were considered out of scope.

Knowledge and capability gaps

- Organisations often **don't know what information or expertise they need** until they begin a project.
- There is a **variation** between organisations:
 - Some have the **technical and legal expertise** but lack **funding**.
 - Others have access to funding but lack the knowledge or capacity to deliver projects.
- Questions were raised over whether specialist legal and technical expertise should be developed in-house or procured externally.
- **Limited capacity, competing priorities and specialist skills within local government** were identified as an additional constraint.
- Particular challenges include **landlord-tenant arrangements**, tripartite agreements and determining who is responsible for resolving complex legal issues.
- **Listed buildings** present additional uncertainty, with projects often abandoned because planning and heritage requirements are perceived as too complex.

Funding lead times: Funding opportunities are often announced with very short lead times, making it difficult for organisations to prepare competitive bids. Reoccurring issue.

Risk management

There is a need for a **better understanding of project risks**, prompted by a recent solar project shutdown in Devon, which could put future investors off solar. Key questions included:

- How project risks are allocated between different parties.
- Whether stronger legal input during contract negotiations could reduce future risks.
- How network operators (such as UK Power Networks) fit into managing these risks.

Breakouts: Discussion Notes



Sussex Community Energy in a Box: *How do we achieve place-based decarbonisation in Sussex?*

Overall: Participants highlighted the importance of coordinated local energy planning, innovative finance, community-led delivery and strategic network investment to accelerate place-based decarbonisation across Sussex.

Local approaches and community delivery

- Prioritise decarbonisation in deprived areas to maximise social and economic benefits.
- Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) give a better idea of the market and enable funding to be sought.
- Explore hyper-local planning through Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) across Sussex and parish-level energy plans ("Mini LAEPs").
- Strengthen links between schools, social housing and community energy initiatives.

Finance and investment

- Learn from what has worked in other areas.
- Explore innovative funding models, including revolving funds and loan facilities (e.g. Suffolk County Deal, GB Energy in a Box).
- Ring-fence funding to support community energy projects.
- Make greater use of aggregation to improve investment opportunities.

Energy system and network planning

- Better understand electricity markets and future demand through LAEPs.
- Work with DNOs and UK Power Networks to align investment with primary and secondary substations.
- Explore innovative approaches such as flexibility services and local energy "sandbox" areas that have Distribution Use of System charges removed (work with Innovate UK/Ofgem).
- Avoid piecemeal network upgrades by taking a long-term, strategic approach to infrastructure planning.

Technology and consumer opportunities

- Improve access to affordable technologies, including lower-cost battery storage.
- Consider appropriate battery sizing for place-based energy systems.
- Increase uptake of time-of-use tariffs to help reduce energy costs and support flexibility.

Breakouts: Discussion Notes



Sussex Community Energy in a Box: *What are the barriers & opportunities for scaling up community energy?*

Overall: Participants emphasised that scaling up community energy requires trusted local leadership, stronger collaboration, targeted funding, streamlined planning and a coordinated regional approach that supports communities while recognising local circumstances.

Building community engagement and delivery

- Build **public trust** and enthusiasm through **independent**, impartial advice and trusted local organisations. E.g. Future Energy Landscapes workshop for approach to decarbonising a village.
- Develop local community champions and community leadership to increase uptake and **build social proof**.
- Engage a broad range of local groups and representatives, not just community energy organisations.
- Professional partner needed alongside community, and they need to understand the community and funding mechanisms to help navigate options.
- Strengthen collaboration and provide a more unified voice across the community energy sector.
- Key thing to have in place is enthusiasm.

Investment and funding

- Secure early-stage investment to enable projects before wider social benefits can be realised.
- Develop funding and finance mechanisms tailored to domestic, commercial and community-scale projects.
- Improve project identification and aggregation to maximise opportunities from Great British Energy funding.
- Learn from successful funding models and pilot projects that have secured exemptions, such as the Low Carbon Hub.

Planning and delivery

- Simplify planning and approval processes while recognising that some planning constraints can hinder community-led projects (e.g. air heat pump installation restrictions).
- Use Local Plans to identify viable and non-viable sites
- Create a fast-track development approval process on suitable local assets.
- Aggregation of delivery will have benefits.
- Consider a strategic regional role (e.g. through the Mayoral Strategic Authority) to coordinate expertise and accelerate delivery.

Technology and inclusion

- Recognise that technologies such as heat pumps and rooftop solar are not suitable for every property.
- Ensure retrofit programmes take account of wider housing constraints, including insulation and roof suitability.
- Explore opportunities for battery storage, EV integration and future local energy systems.

Breakouts: Discussion Notes



Energy Innovation & Engagement Centre: *If the University was to develop a space and suite of facilitated activities that could help you, your business, or a group you represent, in moving towards the goals of Sussex Energy (energy neutrality by 2040) what would that space need to have in it and what activities would you like it to deliver?*

Overall: Participants envisaged a trusted regional hub that combines innovation, demonstration, research and public engagement to accelerate the adoption of low-carbon technologies and support Sussex's energy transition.

Purpose and focus

- Create a collaborative hub bringing together universities, local authorities, businesses, charities and community organisations.
- Focus on education, innovation, technology, policy and overcoming barriers to the energy transition.
- Develop an initial physical space, similar in size to Terrace Room with digital capability (Phase 1 – screens, projector, software, etc.), with scope to expand over time.

Demonstration and engagement

- Provide a trusted space for residents and organisations to see technologies in action (e.g. heat pumps, renewable energy systems).
- Host installers, industry and innovators to showcase solutions and answer questions. Opportunity for them to speak to customers.
- Support myth-busting and independent, expert advice to build public confidence.
- Develop complementary online and virtual experiences to widen access.
- Needs to have USP to encourage those from outside Brighton & Hove to use the space.
- Focus on Sussex with a replication of Sussex projects.

Innovation and research

- Create a 'living lab' and innovation sandbox for testing and demonstrating new technologies.
- Showcase emerging innovations and support collaboration between researchers, students and industry.
- Engage students in research, innovation projects and public engagement activities.
- Consider Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) to support technologies from research through to deployment.

Collaboration and regional impact

- Act as a centre of excellence, bringing together expertise in finance, legal, technical and policy disciplines.
- Provide space for conventions, conferences, forums and events to collaborate and share learning.
- Develop interactive dashboards and visualisations to communicate progress and regional energy data.

Breakouts: Discussion Notes

Unlocking Funding & Investment: *Imagine Sussex could establish one new regional capability to accelerate investment into energy decarbonisation. What should it be, why is it needed, and what impact would it have?*

Overall: Participants highlighted the need for a strategic regional capability that coordinates investment, planning and delivery across the whole energy system, helping Sussex to overcome grid constraints, accelerate decarbonisation and maximise social, economic and environmental benefits.

Expand the Brighton & Hove Strategic Energy Partnership (BHCC SEP)? Learn from existing models (e.g. Ameresco 1st right of refusal, consider alternatives to give community energy orgs the opportunity to contribute to SEP delivery).

Grid constraints: Renewable energy deployment has been scaled by access to institutional capital (e.g. pension funds). Grid capacity is the primary constraint, rather than availability of funding. Consider solutions that reduce reliance on new grid connections. **Rooftop solar is more self consumption, reducing grid reliance:** Explore incentives for industrial landlords and residents to install rooftop solar. **Plug in solar:** Allows those without roofs to access renewable energy. Rooftops and plug in solar alone are unlikely to be sufficient to meet future electricity demand.

Need to make a **strategic transition**, review **what would reduce grid demand** (compared to solar installations). Needs to be a **just transition** – reduce fuel poverty and community support. Review **what other funding is out there**. E.g. warm homes plan might do a lot for residential so commercial could be the focus of an intervention.

Regional decarbonisation is also about **decarbonisation of transport and heat**. A bigger difference than solar would be to switch gas boilers to low carbon solution (e.g. Heat Pump). Could have grants to accelerate this or mandated solution for social housing? Support businesses finding innovative solutions for flats and Victorian houses where heat pumps are not a direct replacement for the boilers.

Uni of Brighton and Lewes did work looking at **social housing retrofitting** based on social housing archetypes in Sussex and using the aggregated annual maintenance spend. Look to **roll out this work across the local authorities** that have own their own housing.

2025 Green Book Review introduced Place-Based Business Cases (PBBCs), a reform recognising that individual assessment of business cases for projects can miss the fact that projects often work better together than separately. Use this reform to **bundle together business cases to show the impact at the larger, place-based level**.

Plan for sufficiency – i.e. reduce the need for energy by changing how services are provided or how we choose to use them. E.g. reduce need for cars, reduce the amount of heating needed, reduce electricity use through smarter use and demand management.