



CLASP

Climate Change
Local Area
Support
Programme

Community Engagement Toolkit

'How to Use' Guide

An overview of how to use the
Community Engagement Toolkit.

www.clasp-nw.info

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Foreword

In 2009, the North West of England produced around 6% of electricity from renewable and waste sources. The Government target for energy produced from renewable sources is 15% by 2020, so we still have some way to go if we are going to contribute our fair share¹.

Communities are increasingly aware of the pressures of climate change, with many communities motivated to take action. However, many renewable energy applications still face strong opposition. There is therefore a need to ensure that communities understand the different types of technologies available and their impacts to avoid common misconceptions and improve understanding.

The UK Government Coalition Agreement explicitly encourages community-owned renewable energy schemes² and the introduction of a Feed-in-Tariff and Renewable Heat Incentive makes the financing of renewable energy schemes a lot more attractive to investors, opening up new funding opportunities for communities.

There are many benefits for those communities installing renewable energy technologies. However, there are still a number of barriers preventing action. After conducting research with community groups the Energy Saving Trust knows a number of key barriers they face in generating their own renewable energy, including:

- A lack of financial drivers to initiate community energy projects.
- High set-up costs (planning and legal fees and co-ordination).
- Time and skills required to coordinate the diverse interests within the community as well as the range of other stakeholders (Local Authorities, utilities, finance providers etc).
- A lack of replicable well tested models to encourage community energy projects.
- A lack of finance for smaller community energy projects.

To address these barriers, CLASP commissioned the Energy Saving Trust and Neighbourhoods Northwest to deliver a programme of support to build skills around community engagement and planner training. The aims of the programme are to ultimately encourage more community groups to bring forward renewable energy schemes by developing resources to improve knowledge and encourage people to take action.

As part of this programme, the Energy Saving Trust in consultation with Neighbourhoods Northwest has produced a package of resources (or toolkit) to enable communities to undertake the steps necessary to deliver a community renewable energy project. The toolkit will:

- Provide you with factual information about all renewable energy technologies at community scale, helping you decide which is the most suitable.
- Identify further sources of information and support.
- Showcase local examples of how other communities have done it before.
- Help you understand each step along the way.

This toolkit provides materials to enable you to engage the wider community and demonstrate the benefits of renewable energy projects, find support and collectively decide on the best project for your community group. The toolkit has been tested with great success with several communities and local planners in the North West. We hope that you find it useful and welcome any further feedback.

Good luck with your project!

The Energy Saving Trust is the UK's leading impartial organisation helping people save energy and reduce carbon emissions. We do this by providing expert insight and knowledge about energy saving, supporting people to take action, helping local authorities and communities to save energy and providing quality assurance for goods, services and installers.

The North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NWIEP) is a partnership dedicated to helping local authorities and their partners achieve efficiency and improvement objectives, as set out in the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership Strategy. The Climate Change Local Area Support Programme (CLASP) aims to assist North West Local Authorities and LSPs in tackling climate change, mitigation and adaptation.

¹ DECC Energy statistics <http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/statistics.aspx>

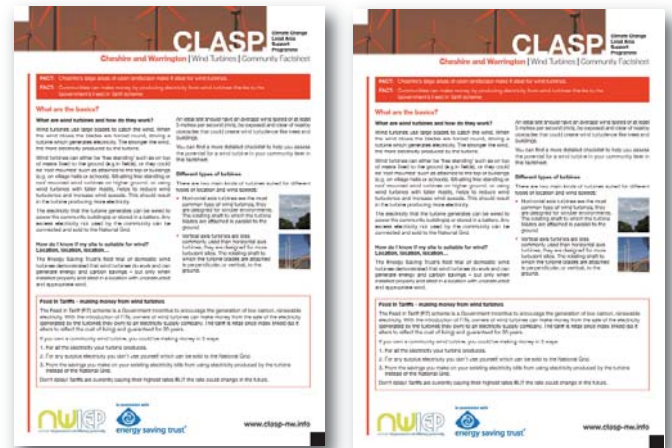
² DECC http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/news/pn10_89/pn10_89.aspx

Resources contained in the Toolkit

2.1 Factsheets:

There are 8 different factsheets covering different renewable energy technologies at community scale. They are:

- Factsheet 1: Wind Turbines
- Factsheet 2: Solar Photovoltaics
- Factsheet 3: Hydro Power
- Factsheet 4: Solar Thermal Hot Water
- Factsheet 5: Heat Pumps
- Factsheet 6: Biomass Heating Systems
- Factsheet 7: Combined Heat and Power Systems
- Factsheet 8: District Heating



The factsheets contain information covering:

- Different technologies with details about how they work and different systems available.
- Government incentives such as Feed in Tariffs and Renewable Heat Incentive.
- Myth busting and addressing common misconceptions about the technologies.
- Technology checklist to help you understand which technology will best meet your needs.
- Potential community benefits from renewable energy projects.
- Local examples and contacts.

In order to make the factsheets more relevant to your community group they have been produced at a sub regional level so there are five versions per technology: Cheshire and Warrington, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside.

A further Factsheet, Factsheet 9, has been produced on Community Ownership, it contains information on:

- How renewable energy projects can strengthen your community
- Securing community benefit from renewable energy: Ownership
- Energy Services Company – ESCo

2.2 Case Studies:

There are 5 different case studies, one per North West subregion:

- **Cheshire and Warrington:** Sustainable Blacon – energy monitoring equipment and affordable renewable technologies in an Eco House.
- **Cumbria:** Thirlmere Recreation Hall – biomass heating system for a community hall off the gas network.
- **Greater Manchester:** New Charter Housing Trust – district heating for a social housing block of flats.
- **Lancashire:** Barley Village Hall – combination of heat pumps and solar PV in a village hall.
- **Merseyside:** Larkins Farm – wind turbines to provide electricity for community buildings.

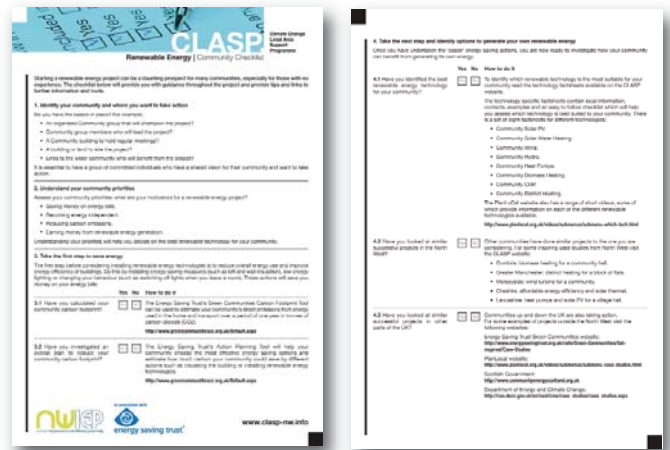


The case studies showcase different types of community undergoing different renewable energy projects. The case studies have been selected based on the technologies installed and the approach taken by each group to complete the projects. It is highly recommended that all the case studies are considered by your community group and contact made where necessary.

2.3 Checklist:

The checklist sets out the steps needed for a community group to progress their renewable energy project. It provides key information for your community from getting organised and setting priorities through to choosing the right technology and advice on commissioning the project. This includes: what to do, who to talk to, identifying a potential project, conducting a feasibility study, securing partners, planning the project, grid connection, ownership, planning permission, etc....

Links to further advice are provided at each step and your community will be able to identify what stage you are in and what's required to move forwards.

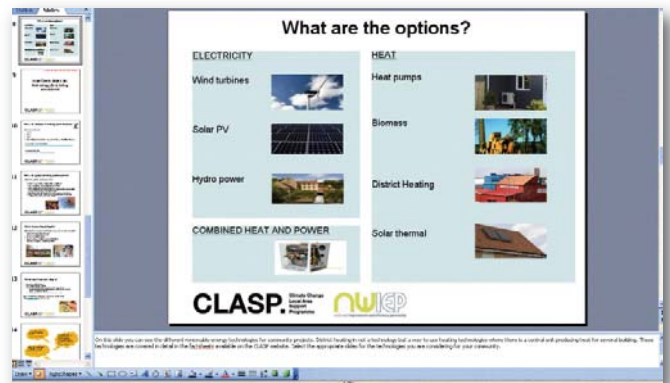


2.4 Powerpoint presentation:

The powerpoint presentation has been designed for community groups to deliver a presentation on how to use the technical information contained in the factsheets, case studies and check list which will help you to put together an evidence based business case for developing a renewable energy scheme.

The presentation includes slides for approximately 1 hours' content and provides information about:

- Overview of traditional and renewable energy sources.
- Benefits of renewable energy projects.
- The different technology options: individual presentation slides have been produced for each of the technologies and can be inserted in this section as appropriate. For example, if your community is only interested in PV and biomass, you can insert those slides only.
- How to access funding and finance.
- How to achieve planning permission.
- Who owns the project?
- What are the next steps?



The slides are supported by the information contained in the notes section at the bottom. They provide guidance on how to use the presentation, including the information to support each slide so you don't have to memorise any content. Detailed step by step information on how to use the presentation is provided in each slide.

2.5 Literature library

In order to produce the resources contained in this toolkit, an extensive review of existing literature and tools has been undertaken in order to avoid duplication and use best practice whenever available. As a result of this review, the literature library contains in-depth information about renewable energy projects.

In line with the rest of the material in this toolkit, it has been organised by technology type and covers areas such as technical information, sources of case studies, finance, grid connection to name a few.

Energy Efficiency	Heat pumps	Biomass	Wind turbines	Solar PV	Hydro power	Heat pumps	Biomass	Wind turbines	Solar PV	Hydro power
1. Overview of renewable energy sources	2. Benefits of renewable energy projects	3. The different technology options	4. How to access funding and finance	5. How to achieve planning permission	6. Who owns the project?	7. What are the next steps?	8. Case study 1	9. Case study 2	10. Case study 3	11. Case study 4

3. How to use the Toolkit

Different communities and local authorities will have different requirements and are therefore likely to find the toolkit useful in different ways. Below is a recommended pathway to use this toolkit, which is meant to serve as a guide:

1. Have a look at the **Checklist** in order to determine at what stage your renewable energy project is. This will guide you throughout the factsheets and case studies as appropriate.
2. Use the technology **Factsheets** to learn about the different aspects of those technologies you are interested in and determine which technologies have got potential within your community.
3. Refer to the **Case Studies** for examples of how other communities have done it before or for inspiration about what can be done.
4. Ready to engage with a wider audience? Use the **Presentation** to deliver an event for your community on the benefits of renewable energy projects, different options and how to move forwards. Remember to customise your presentation by including the slides for those technologies that have got potential within your community.
5. Need more in-depth information? Use the links provided in the Checklist and refer to the **Literature Library** for more information.

This toolkit has been developed and designed with communities and local authority officers in mind and we hope that you will make the most out of it. It will help you disseminate the importance of taking action to combat climate change by undertaking a renewable energy project.

Great benefits have been achieved by those communities across the UK that have taken action. Don't delay and find out what opportunities renewable energy projects could bring to your community.