

Shropshire and Telford Community Energy

Newsletter September 2024



A Huge Boost for Community Energy – Are we Ready?

The new Government has promised 'the biggest expansion in Community Energy in British history'. GB Energy is poised to offer finance to Local Authorities and low interest loans to community-based energy schemes. This is very exciting, but the question is - are we ready for this? STCE is in a strong position with the ownership of Twemlows and the income it generates, at our last AGM we had a good turnout with 16 people and we had 12 attend our litter pick in July. However, the five existing Directors are fully engaged keeping the society going, including managing Twemlows, the Community Benefit Fund and the Bishop's Castle project plus helping to run Community Energy Together. We could really do with help to take advantage of new opportunities.

Can You Help?

There are lots of actions people could take on to support the work of STCE including:

- Join the Twemlows biodiversity team
- Help with social media, press releases, newsletters, and/or website
- Help with the Community Benefit Fund
- Help with Society book-keeping (paying bills, maintaining the cash book)
- Helping on stalls
- Maintain our mailing list
- Working on new proposals, etc.

Many hands make light work, none of these jobs is onerous, you wouldn't have to become a director to help. We have a survey on our website, if you're interested in helping, please use the QR code below, go to www.stcenergy.org.uk/about-us or email info@stcenergy.org.uk.



Twemlows Litter Pick in July

The litter pick went very well, there was actually very little to pick up, but it was still a very worthwhile event, thanks to all those who took part. We'll do another one in the autumn including removing some tree guards from the thickest stems. We will also be at the always excellent Blackberry Fair, Whitchurch, on Oct 5th. Do search us out and come and have a chat.

Bishop's Castle Heat & Wind Project - public meeting to report progress

Work on the Bishop's Castle project is proceeding well. Sharenergy have studied 14 properties in the town and shown that half of them can connect to the network easily with solutions of varying complexity available for the others. A Customer Offer document has been prepared and is being distributed alongside an Expression of Interest form. Ecology and other studies for the wind turbine are coming together and we expect a planning application to be submitted in October or November. There will be a public meeting to discuss progress on Wed Sept 25th, 7.30pm at the 3 Tuns. We encourage you to attend this important event if you are in South Shropshire.

Biodiversity at Twemlows

The soil sampling has been done and we're awaiting the results. The hedge looks generally in very good condition, a short section will need to be replaced in the autumn. If you want to take part contact info@stcenergy.org.uk. We've had various bird boxes made for us by Telford's Men's Shed.



Twemlows Performance

In the first seven months of 2024 there has been a lot of rain and not much sun so the output from our Twemlows solar farm is nearly 6% down on the forecast. This is an improvement on the figures from the first quarter and there's still time to catch up.

STCE AGM July 2024

We had a good turnout for the AGM in July. Our existing five directors (Robert, Howard, Fran, Mark & Dave) were all re-elected. Robert is staying on as Chair and Dave as Treasurer, Howard is taking over the Secretary's role from Fran. The annual accounts were unfortunately not ready for the AGM but a financial summary was presented and agreed. The accounts have since been finalised and submitted to the Financial Conduct Authority, copies are available on our website.

You Can Still Join STCE If You're Not Already a Member

Most of our members have become members through investing in our Twemlows solar farm share offer. However, if you're not an investor member you can join STCE for just £10. This is to enable people who couldn't invest, or who missed the share offer, to be more involved in STCE. For a membership form please email info@stcenergy.org.uk.

Community Benefit Fund

We've recently paid out for solar panels at Rushbury Village Hall and an induction cooker for Little Wenlock VH. Little Wenlock VH has now completely finished using fossil fuels. We'll open another round of wider applications next year, but groups within 15 miles of Twemlows can always apply for the local grants (up to £1,000). Contact Community Resource,

<https://community-resource.org.uk/grants-for-community-groups>

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