

# Shropshire and Telford Community Energy

## Newsletter Feb 2025



### Our Bishop's Castle Wind Turbine Planning application is live..

After nearly four years work our planning application for the Bishop's Castle wind turbine is now live on Shropshire Council's portal at <https://pa.shropshire.gov/online-applications>, ref no 25/00177/FUL. The turbine is an essential part of the Bishop's Castle Heat & Wind project, with the electricity to be used to power large air source heat pumps providing low carbon heat for the centre of the town, the SpArC leisure centre and the Community College, replacing polluting oil boilers.

See <https://lightfootenterprises.org/heat-network/> for more details.

All messages of support are welcome, particularly if you live in SW Shropshire.

### STCE has won an Award!

We are honoured be Highly Commended by Community Energy England for 'Progress in Expansion'! The Community Energy Awards is a prestigious event hosted by Community Energy England, designed to shine a light on community energy and highlight achievements in the wider community energy sector. Our Treasurer Dave Green was also shortlisted for the Community Energy Champion award. see



<https://communityenergyengland.org/news> Dave Green, Fran Hunt & Howard Betts of STCE with the award

### Twemlows Litter Pick & Hedgerow Maintenance, Next Visit Sat March 15<sup>th</sup> 10am-1pm



*Angela, Jenny, Tony, Howard, Dave and David at the November litter pick*

At the end of last year the STCE directors and a group of volunteers spent a morning on-site litter picking, putting up bird boxes and replanting a small section of hedgerow. All part of our plans to be good neighbours, keeping the site tidy, and enhancing local biodiversity the best we can.

The 2km hedgerow at Twemlows Solar Farm will be 10 years old this year and has developed well from when it was planted during the Solar Farms construction. Only a small section needed our attention and whilst a group litter picked and another put up some bird boxes, some of us set about infilling the gap with new hedge saplings.

It's important that we use native species of local provenance when hedge planting and the saplings we used were from only one mile away from Heathwood Tree Nursery. Over 20 bird boxes were installed which will provide homes for birds including robin, blackbird and dunnock, a big thanks to Telford's Men's Shed and Howard Betts for making the boxes and to all those who attended. See our website for details of the March 15<sup>th</sup> event where we will be checking on the new planting, removing some tree guards from the most established hedging and putting up some more bird boxes.

## At our Twemlows Solar Farm

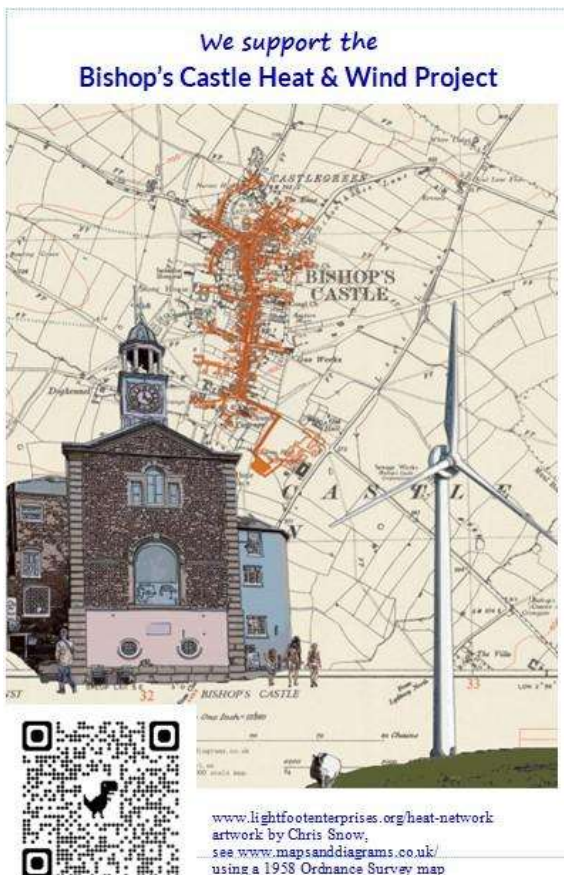
Generation (and therefore income) was down last year due to the poor weather and some technical issues but we got an unexpected refund from EDF so we still met our financial targets for repaying loans, providing community benefits and paying interest to our investors. Importantly we still expect to pay 6% interest to our shareholder investors in the Spring. Our professional management team in London are doing a good job monitoring the solar farm's performance and managing the planned maintenance and unplanned repairs.

## New Share Offer to be Launched in May

We will be launching a new share offer in May; if you missed out in 2023 or would like to invest some more, this will be your chance. We aim to raise at least £300k. This money will help to support our work and pay off some of our expensive short-term loans, leading to more money being available for Community Benefit grants in the future. Full details will be in our next newsletter.

## More Opportunities Await

We are pleased to welcome two new members and a co-opted director, Neil Pulker. We're going to be busy this year with the share offer, biodiversity work at Twemlows, another Community Benefit Fund round and further work on the Bishop's Castle project. We'll be attending many events around the area, including Ludlow Green Festival, Blackberry Fair etc. There is always more we could be doing if we had more hands, please get in touch if you'd like to know more about the opportunities available.



## Big Solar Co-op Delivers in Shropshire

Our partners the Big Solar Co-op have recently fitted rooftop solar panels to two Co-op stores in Shrewsbury (Radbrook & Cophorne) as part of a contract with the Midlands Co-op that will deliver to 39 sites in total. Well done to the Big Solar team.. see [www.bigsolar.coop](http://www.bigsolar.coop)

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

Most of our members have come from investing in our Twemlows solar farm share offer. However, if you're not an investor member you can join STCE for just £10. For a membership form please email [info@stcenergy.org.uk](mailto:info@stcenergy.org.uk).

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