Centre for Sustainable Energy

Pewsey and Manningford Community Energy Workshop Report

Date: February 2026

Contents

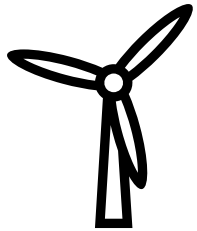
Introduction

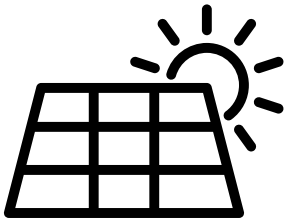
This page shares more information about when and why we did the workshop.

Zero North Wiltshire Community Energy, Wiltshire Council, Pewsey Green and the Centre for Sustainable Energy hosted a community energy workshop in November 2025 for local people in the areas of Pewsey and Manningford.

The workshop was led by the Centre for Sustainable Energy, an independent national charity. This project is funded by the Energy Industry Voluntary Redress Scheme.

The workshop aimed to understand the type, size and rough location of renewable technologies supported by local people - these are technologies that would be owned by and for the benefit of local people (known as community energy). It was the start of a conversation about community energy in the area, to explore what might be supported.





This report shares what renewable technology, like wind turbines and solar panels, could be possible in the area. It tells you how much energy they would generate and what local people think about them.

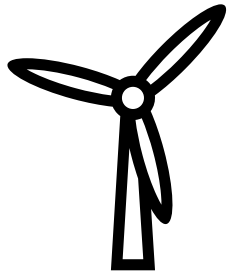
A survey and follow-up community conversations will happen after the workshop. This is to find out what the wider public think.

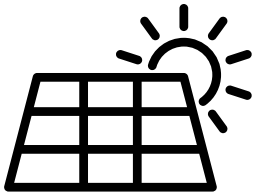
Report summary

During the workshop participants were given a map of Pewsey and Manningford parishes. These included some possible areas for solar farms based on initial evidence of what could be technically suitable. Due to technical barriers, no areas for wind turbines were presented to the group. This page shows a summary of which different technologies were supported. **This is not a commitment to developing any of these into projects,** but a snapshot of what could be possible and some areas of interest.

5 possible areas for wind turbines

There are significant technical barriers to wind turbines being built in this area. However, 5 possible areas were proposed by participants. 1 area in the south received more support than others, however there was no consensus on any one area. 1 person also voted for there to be no wind turbines in Pewsey and Manningford at all.



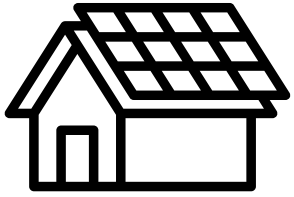


8 possible areas for solar

There are fewer tehnical barriers to building a ground-mounted solar farm in this area, however there was still concern that doing so would adversely impact the landscape. 8 possible areas were supported in some way for a solar project, however there was no consensus on any area. 1 area received the most support in Pewsey village where a ***rooftop*** solar scheme was proposed as an alternative to ground mounted. 2 people voted for there to be no ground-mounted solar in Pewsey and Manningford at all.

Smaller technology as a first step

There was a strong feeling from participants that smaller-scale local technologies would be positive first step in this community, looking at rooftop solar schemes and micro grids to keep the benefits local and build trust in renewable technology. Community members are exploring ideas for rooftop solar and low-carbon heating to provide tangible benefits to local people, businesses and community spaces.



Report summary

This page shows some of the thoughts local people shared in the workshop.

> Get power to Pewsey and get it straight back into the community.

> Views from the Downs are unspoiled by wind or solar on the fields. Tourists come for this...
>
> ...We don't want any more ground solar.

> National Landscape comes with significant planning issues. Need to focus on urban fabric.

> Let's do as much as we possibly can to produce our own energy in a clean, safe way. The odd unnatural thing in the landscape is nothing compared to keeping our energy needs supplied in a sustainable way.

Why did we do the workshop?

Energy security

The way we produce and use energy needs to change. We need a lot **more energy from diverse, renewable sources** like wind and solar to ensure the UK's energy security and to meet the needs of households in the coming years. Nationally, we need to quadruple the amount of renewables that have already been built.

More affordable energy

Many people in the UK can't keep their homes warm in winter, even though it's essential for their health and wellbeing. Being able to afford to **keep warm in winter is a basic right** for everyone. Investing in local, renewable energy will improve security for households in the future.

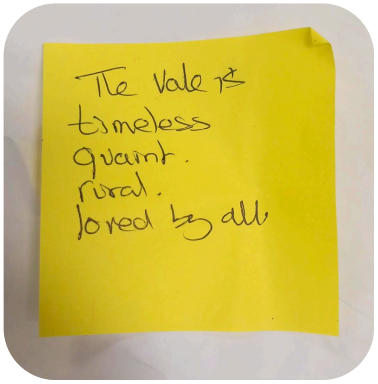
Community energy

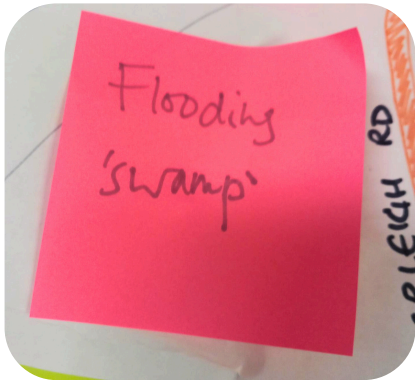
Community-led energy projects **keep benefits local** – from cheaper energy bills to investment in local facilities. When communities lead energy projects, they create solutions that work for everyone – **tackling both climate change and rising energy costs.** In 2024, community energy projects contributed £24.5million to local economies and saved £1.86m in energy bills. They also reduced carbon emissions by 120,000 tonnes, the same as 1,033,578 trees planted.

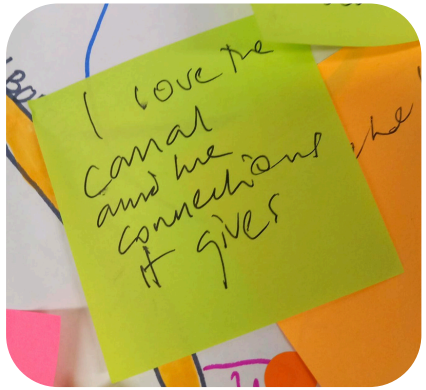
We want to increase awareness about community energy so that communities have the support to lead their own local projects and play a role in the energy transition.

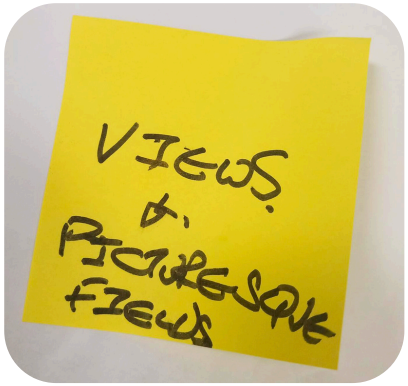
What is the local area like?

The workshop started with people sharing their thoughts about the local area. Individually they added post it notes to a large hand drawn map of Pewsey and Manningford, indicating areas they liked, areas they disliked, and feelings or emotions.









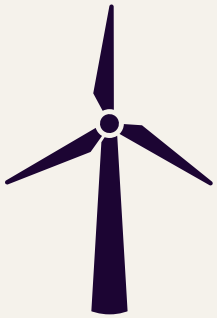
What is the local area like?

The main thoughts added to the map are shared in the table on this page.

Areas that are special	Areas that are disliked	Other descriptions and thoughts
Pewsey downs, Pewsey vale, surrounding hills, panoramic views.	Flooding 'swamp' between Everleigh Road and A345 and flooding in the village.	The vale is timeless, quaint, rural, loved by all.
Community orchard.	Industrial estate.	Friendly, eccentric.
National Landscape - comes with significant planning issues. Need to focus on urban fabric.	Lack of solar on roofs e.g. conservation area means lots of building owners don't want rooftop solar.	Downs, views and picturesque fields.
Archaeological richness under the soil.	The railway track.	The Scotchel.
Nature reserves and designations e.g. Jones Mill, Pewsey Downs NNR, The Scotchel.	Pewsey White Horse is too small and almost invisible.	The whole area is AONB so rooftop solar scheme and micro grid.
Pewsey White Horse walking routes. Views from the downs. Unspoiled by wind or solar on the fields. Tourists come for this.	Old playground area is scruffy and unloved and could be used for solar rather than more homes.	School (renewables) scheme is still in planning.
Hants Avon river and chalk streams.	Wasted unpleasant arch close to the village (near the railway station).	Top of Martinsell Hill - peaceful, expansive views.
Railway and canal and the connections they give.	Canal around Pewsey doesn't seem as clean as other areas in the Vale (relating to water and litter).	Public footpath and dog walking.

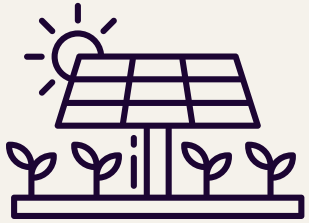
Choosing renewables

The main part of the workshop brought everyone to 'Sunshine Cafe' where a menu of renewable energy options was shared. This page shows the technology on the menu. In small groups everyone had time to discuss the menu options, before feeding back to the whole room.



Wind Turbine

Powers 177 homes,
100 metres tall, 1 megawatt.



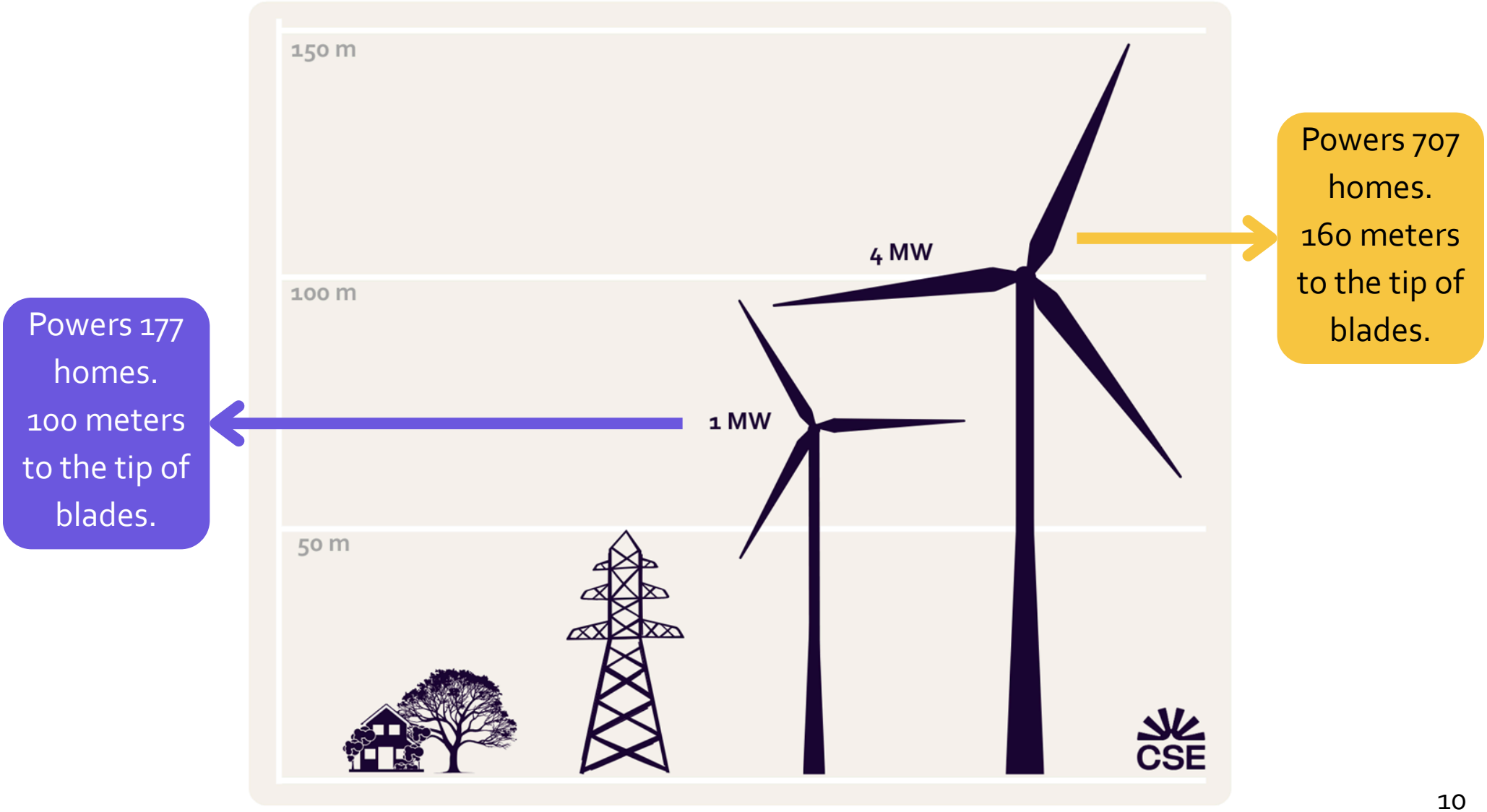
Solar Farm

2.5 megawatt solar farm
powers 171 homes (6 acres,
or about 3.5 football fields)

This menu is based on technical evidence showing what could work in Pewsey and Manningford. The evidence looks at things like flooding, green belt land and wind speed - so these are already thought about before the workshop. There is no maximum number to aim for, but there is a guide of what could technically be delivered. People in the workshop chose the technology based on what they thought is acceptable for the area. This does not mean any of these would be built any time soon. Any areas the community wants to look at further would be subject to a lot more thought and community conversations.

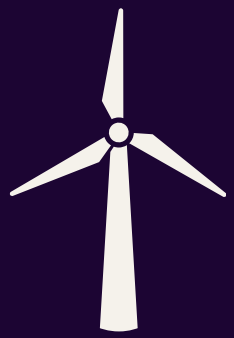
Wind turbines

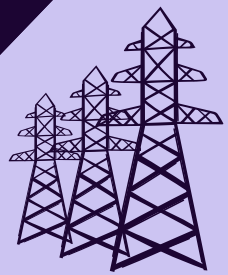
During the workshop participants were invited to discuss wind turbines. This graphic demonstrates the size of different wind turbines and how many homes they can supply with electricity on average. **For this workshop participants were invited to discuss wind turbines at 100m tall and 160m tall.**



Wind turbine results

Per year, 1 wind turbine at 100m tall (1mw) could...





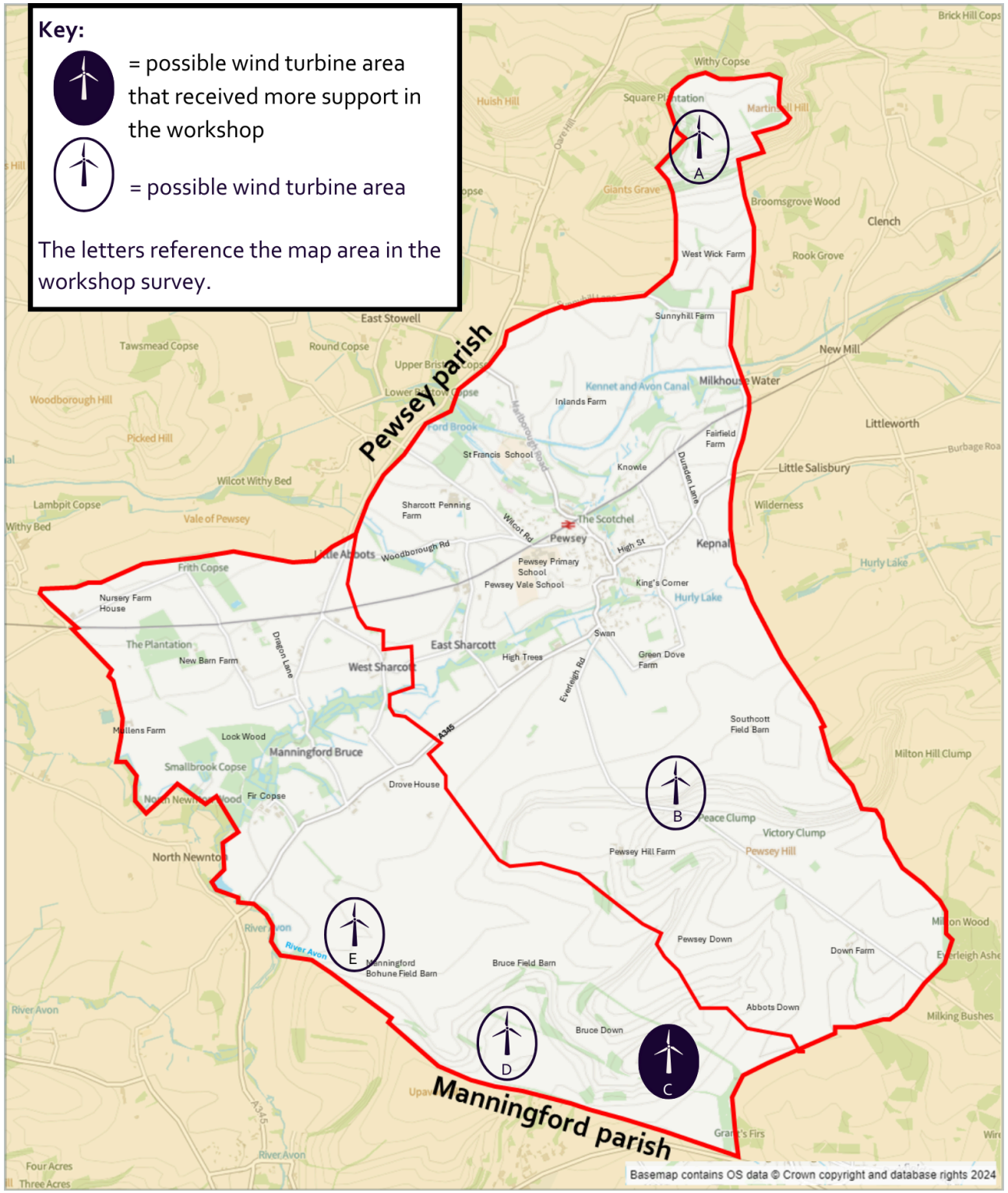
Generate 2,148 MWh electricity

Power 177 homes

Main workshop thoughts shared about wind turbines
"I'd like to have wind turbines everywhere if we could".
The visual impact of wind turbines on the hills is major issue. Most of the area is not flat which increases this challenge.
Designation of the area as a National Landscape, the Ministry of Defence helicopter and parachute activity, and local policy against wind are seen as significant barriers.
Southern areas on the map are considered more feasible due to lower visibility.
The potential to group wind turbines could minimise landscape disruption.
Acknowledgement that wind and solar could be complementary across different seasons and wind would be particularly helpful during winter when there is less sunlight.

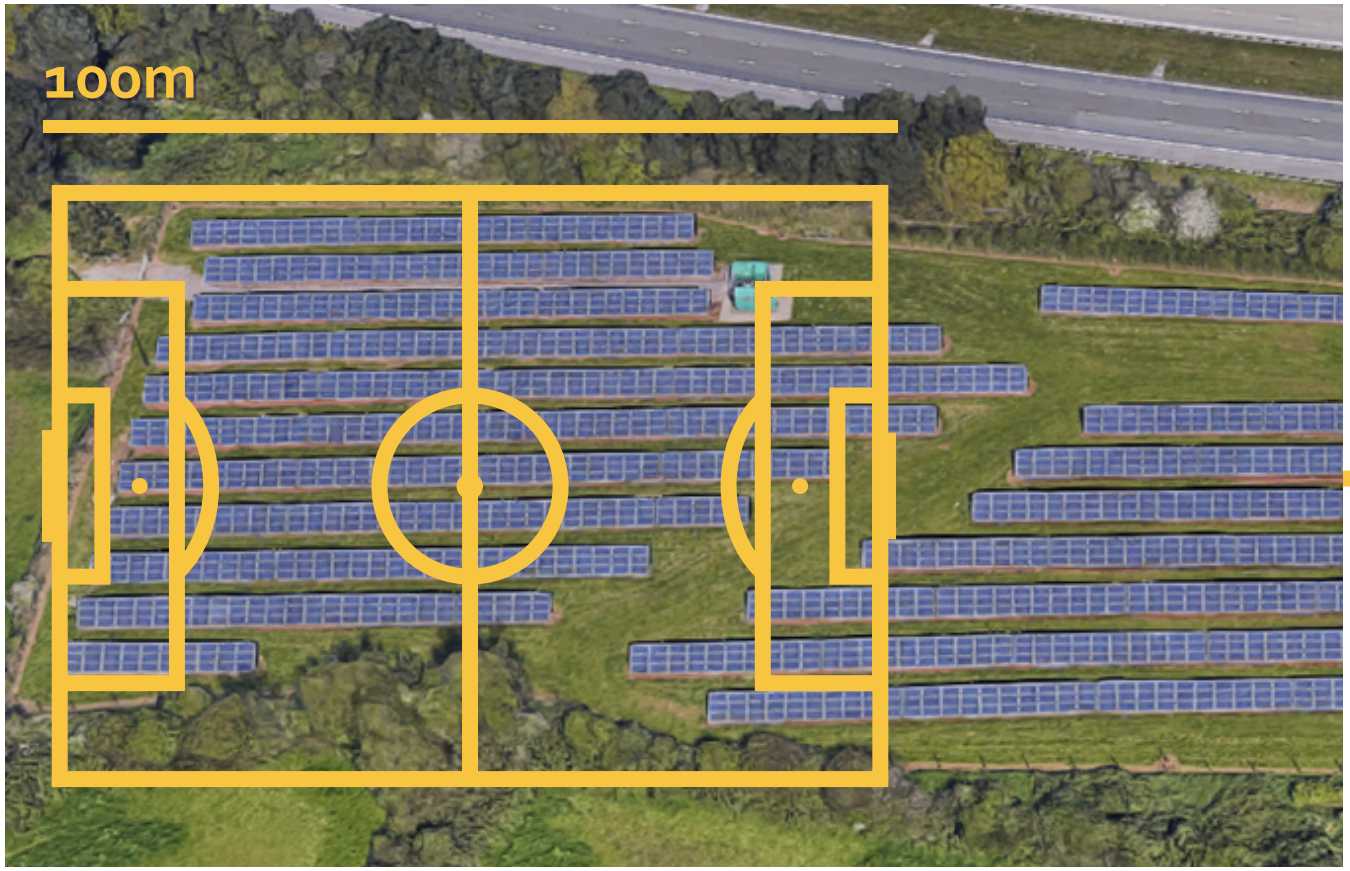
Possible areas - wind turbines

These areas received some support in the workshop, however not all areas would be pursued as part of a potential future project. Any area that is taken forward would have more consultation.



Solar farms

During the workshop participants were invited to discuss solar farms. This graphic demonstrates the size of solar farms in acres and football pitches, and how many homes they can supply with electricity on average. **For this workshop, participants were invited to discuss solar farms at the size of 2.5 megawatts (mw).**

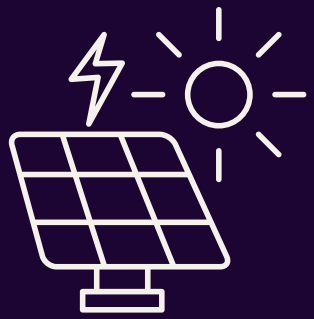


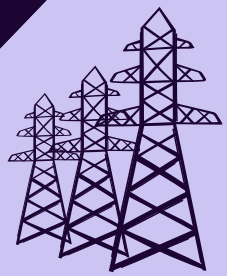
A solar farm at **2.5mw** would be approximately the size of **3.5 football pitches (or 6.2 acres).** It would power the equivalent of **171 homes.**

The scale above demonstrates a solar farm the size of 1 football pitch.
This is 1.78 acres and powers the equivalent of 51 homes.

Solar farm results

Per year, 1 solar farm at 2.5mw could...





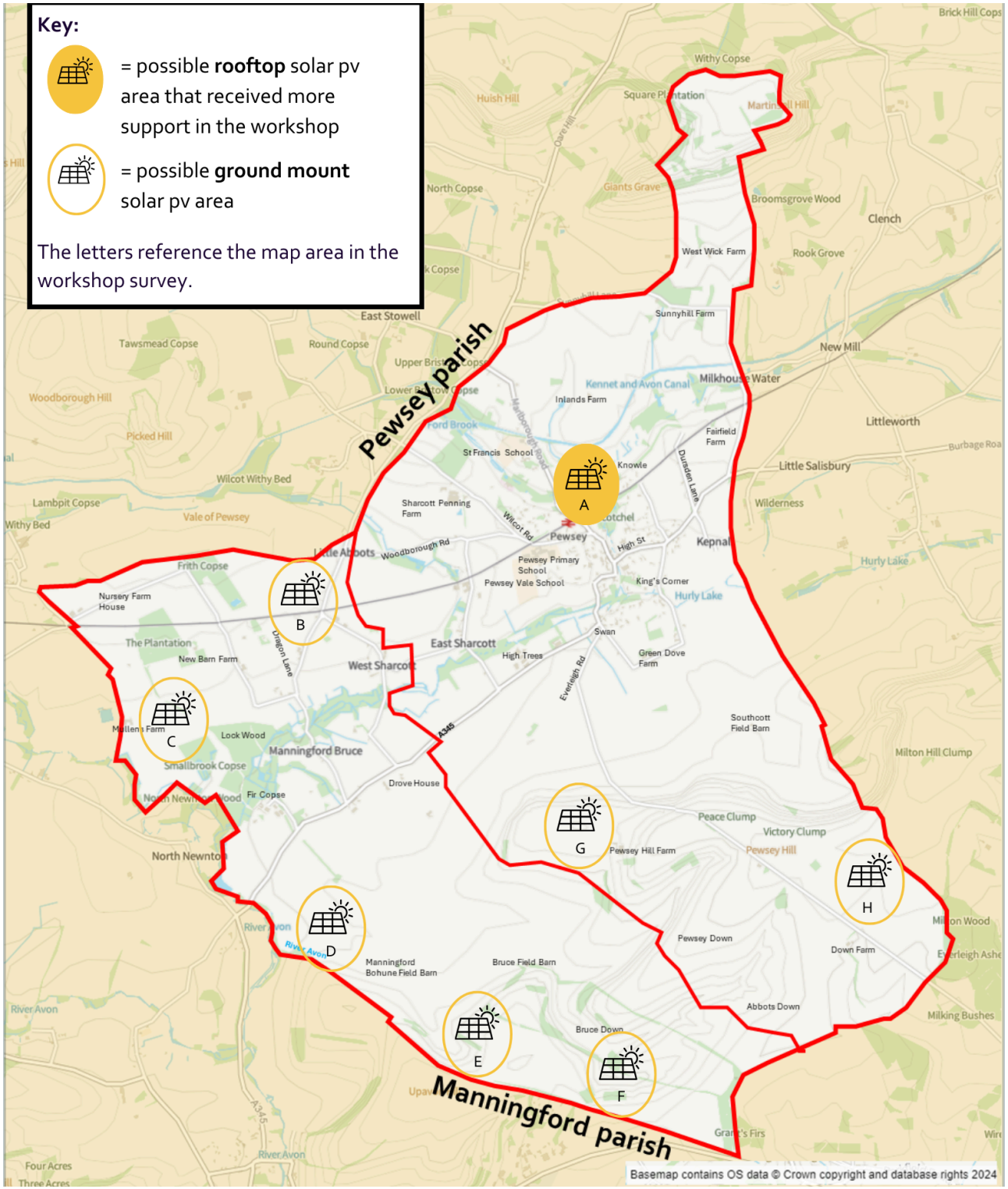
Generate 2,082 MWh electricity

Power 171 homes

Main workshop thoughts shared about solar farms
There is strong landscape sensitivity within the Pewsey Vale, especially across the scarp slopes and other high-visibility areas.
Some areas have high risk of flooding, poor ground conditions and spring lines which could limit suitability.
Some landowners would be reluctant to allow solar, however there was an acknowledgement that solar might be easier to negotiate with landowners than wind.
Many participants were clear that they didn't want more large ground mount solar schemes, especially on agricultural land because of food security concerns.
Recognition that solar farms can increase biodiversity such as Wiltshire Wildlife Community Energy schemes.
Presence of a National Nature Reserve in the area "would stop development".
Could explore tucked-away, out-of-sight areas that are away from the most sensitive landscapes.

Possible areas - solar pv

These areas received some support in the workshop, however not all areas would be pursued as part of a potential future project. Any area that is taken forward would have more consultation.

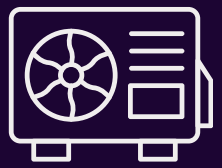


Building related technologies

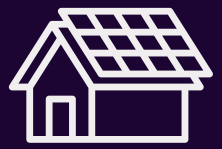
There was a strong interest in discussing building-related technologies. Members of the community are exploring ideas for rooftop solar and low-carbon heating to provide tangible benefits to local people, businesses and spaces.

Home technology

We estimated that in the future…

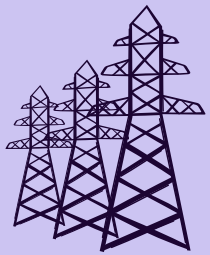


52% homes would have a heat pump
25% homes would have solar panels



Which would mean…

14,100 MWh generated

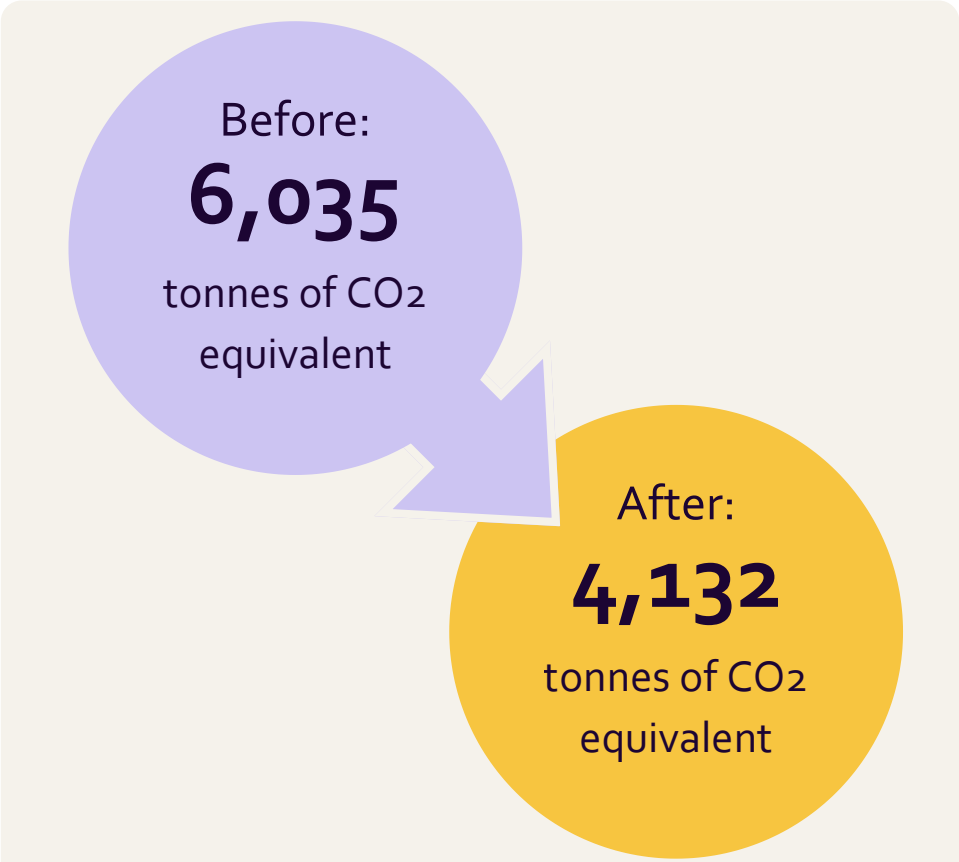


640 homes heated
2,030 homes powered

Main workshop thoughts shared about home technologies
Strong support for starting with small, low-controversy urban projects to build trust and momentum in the community.
Many participants strongly preferred rooftop solar and some suggested the council should make roof installation mandatory.
Participants were keen to keep all technology options in the discussion, including rooftop solar pv, solar canopies, heat pumps, anaerobic digestion, microgrids and local energy trading and potentially a small-scale hydro scheme on the river.
Starting with smaller projects may make grid access easier.
Using local generation could improve resilience and self-sufficiency.
Recognition that rooftop solar alone won't meet full energy needs, but is a good place to start.

Carbon impact

If **one wind turbine** and **one solar farm** were built and installed, alongside **rooftop solar and heat pumps** the carbon emissions of Pewsey and Manningford would **reduce by 32%**. Building renewable technologies creates carbon, however after approximately 2-3 years the technology will save more carbon than it's used.



Community benefit

Community energy schemes can bring tangible **benefits to local people and communities**. These benefits can be explored further, but examples include:

Community benefit fund for investment in local services e.g. public transport, play grounds, community centres.

Warmer, safer homes, and cheaper bills from building-related technology and support with energy advice.

More secure, localised energy supply for the future.

Increased biodiversity through wildflower planting and sheep grazing.

Centre for Sustainable Energy

Thank you.

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