

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

**Monday 13 January 2020**

## **New local energy scheme for Bridport could be first in England**

A new scheme, enabling Bridport residents to reduce their fuel bills whilst supporting locally-produced green energy, is set to become the first of its kind operating in England. Energy Local Bridport, which launches this week, will enable local people to benefit from the green electricity generated by the wind turbine at Salway Ash at a reduced price.

### **Renewable power used locally**

Until now, electricity generated by the turbine is exported and sold for 6p/kWh, while people living in Bridport buy it back through their regular electricity tariff for upwards of 15p/kWh. The Energy Local scheme creates a local market for the wind energy for a mid-price, around 9p- 10p/kWh, benefitting both the consumer and the renewable energy generator.

The scheme, which is being set up by local non-profit Dorset Community Energy in partnership with Energy Local CIC, will create a co-operative for a local energy market, the Bridport Energy Local Club. Households that join the Club will have a smart meter fitted, which tracks when they are using electricity and how much. If they use electricity at the same time that the wind turbine is generating, they will pay the agreed 9p-10p/kWh 'match' price for the electricity. The energy supplier (in this case Octopus Energy) provides the extra power for when the wind turbine isn't generating enough, and is also responsible for metering and billing.

### **Award-winning scheme comes to Dorset**

The Bridport scheme is based on the Energy Local Club in Bethesda, Wales, where local people are benefitting from hydroelectric power and seeing savings of 10-20% on their electricity bills. Energy Local won the Ashden Award for the introduction of its solution for locally-generated renewable energy. The trailblazing Bridport scheme is now poised to become the first of its kind in England.

This is the latest project of Dorset Community Energy (DCE), who have previously used community share offers to provide solar panel installations on schools and community buildings around Dorset, including Salway Ash village hall, Bridport Primary School and Bridport Arts Centre. The Energy Local project has been made possible by development funding secured by DCE from the Power to Change Community Fund. If the scheme proves successful, DCE hope that Energy Local Clubs could support new renewable energy installations in Dorset.

DCE Secretary Pete West said:

*"We're really excited about this new project. Renewable energy is now cheaper than fossil fuels and local people should be able to benefit from cheaper clean energy."*

Peter Bailey, owner of the wind turbine that is powering the project said:

*"I am pleased to be involved in this great opportunity that will benefit our local community."*

Dorset Community Energy are looking for an initial 50-70 households in Bridport and the surrounding areas to join the Energy Local scheme. If you are interested in joining Energy Local Bridport, you can come and see us at Bucky Doo Square on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> January 10.30 – 12.30, or attend our public information meeting at Bridport Town Hall at 7.30pm, Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January. You can also find out more about the scheme and register online with no obligation at [energylocal.org.uk](http://energylocal.org.uk).

--ENDS--

#### **Notes to editors:**

For media requests, interviews and photos please contact Alison Jay at [alison@dorsetcommunityenergy.org.uk](mailto:alison@dorsetcommunityenergy.org.uk) or call her on 07769 592047.

#### **About Dorset Community Energy**

Dorset Community Energy is a not-for-profit Community Benefit Society established in 2013 with support from the BIG Lottery-funded 'Communities Living Sustainably in Dorset' project. Find out more at [www.dorsetcommunityenergy.org.uk](http://www.dorsetcommunityenergy.org.uk).

#### **About Energy Local**

Energy Local CIC is a small, non-profit, organisation set up to show how local communities and small-scale renewables can get better value from the electricity market by working together. Energy Local won the prestigious Ashden Award for Energy Market Disruptors in 2018 for their pilot Energy Local Club in Bethesda. More information about Energy Local can be found on their website [www.energylocal.co.uk](http://www.energylocal.co.uk)

#### **About Octopus Energy**

Octopus Energy launched to the public in April 2016. It supplies electricity (backed 100% by renewable generation certificates) and gas to almost 1.4 million UK homes. Octopus Energy is the only Which? Recommended energy supplier for a second year in a row, has been awarded the company who has done the most to advance renewables in Britain and was voted the UK's best company to work for. Founded by e-commerce entrepreneurs, Octopus Energy has a different starting point to other suppliers, aiming to redefine what is possible for consumers and the system by using technology and data to deliver the best products and experiences.

Octopus Energy is backed by Octopus Group, a financial services and energy firm, which manages more than £8.6bn of funds. Octopus has invested more than £2.7bn in renewable assets across Europe, while its ventures arm has backed UK success stories like Zoopla, Depop, Secret Escapes and SwiftKey.

For more information, check out <https://octopus.energy/>