



7<sup>th</sup> May 2021

## **Clayworks Community Wind Farm – Update from Feasibility Study.**

Devon Energy Collective CIC, [www.devonenergycic.co.uk](http://www.devonenergycic.co.uk) is a Devon-wide community energy enterprise founded and owned by the network of local-level energy enterprises across Devon known as the Devon Community Energy Network. Its aim is to be a catalyst for Devon communities developing their own local energy economies and achieving energy resilience. It aims to do this by identifying, supporting, developing, financing, operating and owning large-scale community renewable energy generation projects across Devon. Devon Energy Collective CIC is a not for profit community interest company which operates for the benefit of Devon's communities.

In December 2020, we ran a 3-month feasibility study with funding from the Rural Community Energy Fund to look at the potential for a community owned wind farm on the china clay works area of south Devon in the parishes of Sparkwell, Shaugh Prior and Cornwood. This site was chosen because of its potential for a grid connection and its industrial past.

The project was named Clayworks Community Wind Farm and looked at the potential for a wind farm around the clay pits. The conclusion was that a wind farm here could be technically and financially viable and if built, would make a significant impact to Devon's transition to net zero as well as benefitting local communities and the local economy.

Our next stage is to work with local people to see whether there is support for a community owned wind farm in their parishes. A community wind farm here would be set up for the benefit of local people which means that 50% of the profits would be invested back into the local area with the rest invested Devon-wide on further renewable energy and energy reduction projects. Local people would have the opportunity to invest in the wind farm for a fair return and would also take part in its design and operation through a community steering group.

Devon Energy Collective's role is to aid the community's decision, by presenting what a community owned wind farm of scale could mean for local people, for the parishes and for Devon's carbon commitments. As an example, a wind farm owned by the community here would bring at least £100,000 of community payments each year. One focus for these payments could be to fund a deep green retrofit of all the households in the local parishes over the lifetime of the project; this would mean warmer, energy efficient homes which are cheaper to run and more comfortable to live in.

Through the local community energy group, South Dartmoor Community Energy, our next step is to hold an open forum Question & Answer session for everyone in the community. This will allow people to ask questions and find out more and it will give us more information about what people are interested in, concerned about and what their priorities are. We will be following this with the formation of a community steering committee who will help design an appropriate wind farm. These events are scheduled for early summer 2021 and we will be in touch with invitations shortly.