

# LOW CARBON HUB ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

low  
carbon  
hub

**2023/24**

We are a social enterprise that's out to prove we can meet our energy needs in a way that's good for people and good for the planet

## SUMMARY REPORT



# OUR PURPOSE

**Low Carbon Hub is a social enterprise that's out to prove we can meet our energy needs in a way that's good for people and good for the planet.**

We develop community-owned renewable energy projects across Oxfordshire which produce clean energy and accelerate the transition to the zero-carbon electricity system we need for the future. Power, heat and transport – all powered by renewable electricity.

Our installations produce an ongoing, long-term income that we use to fund our part in the transition to a fair, community-centred, zero-carbon electricity system at the Grid Edge, where we all live and work. We want to be at the heart of a growing partnership of communities, local authorities, businesses, universities and energy system operators working together for a zero-carbon energy system that benefits everyone.

## **The IPS business model**

The Low Carbon Hub IPS Limited is a registered society run for the benefit of the community (previously known as an Industrial and Provident Society, hence IPS). The IPS is a for-profit business that applies all of its profits to the benefit of the community. Low Carbon Hub Sandford Hydro Limited and Ray Valley Solar Limited are both wholly-owned subsidiaries of the Low Carbon Hub IPS Limited.

The IPS develops renewable energy projects for partner organisations, including schools and businesses, providing them with cheaper electricity, enabling them to meet carbon reduction commitments, and delivering a positive corporate social responsibility return.

We raise the capital needed to pay for these projects through community energy share raises, loans and grants, so there is no investment cost to the partner organisation. Investors in the Low Carbon Hub IPS Limited become members on a one member = one vote principle. The IPS owns the installations, receives income from the sale and export of the electricity, and retains the Feed-in Tariff.

Surpluses from our trading are used for community benefit purposes, normally a combination of direct grants to communities for carbon reduction projects in their area, and match-funding for innovation projects that will lead to new systems and business models at the Grid Edge.

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## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

This document is the accounts summary.  
For a full copy with the financial statement included,  
please see the [Accounts](#) page on our website.

# STRATEGIC REPORT



Steve Drummond  
Chair of The Low Carbon Hub IPS Limited

## Message from the Chairman

I am writing to you on the Hub's twelfth anniversary; delighted to present to you another excellent set of results and to tell you about an unprecedented year of change at The Low Carbon Hub. Change is why the Hub was founded: the idea that community is the key to a truly sustainable energy future and that as many of us as possible need to help find the way. Helping to catalyse this change is what Low Carbon Hub is all about.

As Chairman, I am afforded the luxury of being able to pick out my own highlights from the last year of operations. Ray Valley Solar has been contractually put to bed and its innovative use of bi-facial solar panels is already reaping rewards in higher-than-expected energy output. The remodelling of Sandford Hydro is also nearing completion, to enable it to make better use of the river flows and be truly capable of remote operation. The successful consolidation of both of these generation assets creates a strong financial platform for the future, and thanks are very much due to our new Renewables Portfolio Director, Tim Jones.

I am also delighted that the total amount of community benefit invested from our renewable energy income has now exceeded one million pounds. This is a lot of money, from the smallest of beginnings, and has been the catalyst for very much more in grants and other income. Community benefit is not all about money however, and in addition to our work with businesses and schools I am particularly excited by the Community Action Plan for Eynsham. This points the way forward: a truly innovative, fully integrated sustainable energy plan for Eynsham's Primary Substation Area (PSA) involving all the parties necessary to ensure its success.

There are 63 PSAs in Oxfordshire and we have 46 community energy groups, so there is a gap. Each PSA needs a Community Action Plan and many of the unrepresented communities are in lower income areas – which needs fixing. Planning energy production and use locally is at the core of enabling a truly sustainable future. There is a huge prize: put simply, if we do this right, it will halve the amount of extra copper wiring needed in our streets for all-electric energy, heat and transport. Communities are at the heart of this transformation.

Which brings me neatly onto strategy. At the last AGM the Members appointed an expert Board, and the benefits are already being felt in every aspect of the Hub's mission and operations. Thank you – it makes the Chairman's job a lot easier! The main job of the Board so far has been to support Barbara Hammond's development of the next phase of the Hub's strategy. The Hub was formed to help communities in Oxfordshire develop energy efficiency and renewable energy

projects. Along the way the Hub has developed and acquired its own portfolio of renewable energy installations, and we have now grown our income enough to support initiatives for change directly, without having to rely on (and be diverted by) grant money. So we can truly focus our attention on where it will be most effective.

It is the Low Carbon Hub's job to ensure that we demonstrate how the 'high-welfare, low energy society' can be achieved, in Oxfordshire and beyond. We will continue to grow our portfolio of renewable energy assets, so that we can grow our community benefit profit and our profits will be used to help achieve the following benefits for Oxfordshire by 2050:

- No households in Oxfordshire remain in fuel poverty because all fuel-poor households (currently c. 23,000) have had a Whole House Plan and all the measures identified have been funded
- There are no households in Oxfordshire reliant on oil for heating because they are not connected to the gas grid (currently c. 57,000). All have had Whole House Plan and all have electric heating installed
- All SME premises in Oxfordshire (currently c. 18,400) have had an energy assessment and all the measures identified have been funded
- Smart retrofit: all households and SMEs have maximised their energy efficiency and installed highly controllable low-carbon technologies, so that:
  - demand from the Grid can be reduced to a minimum
  - all can benefit from supplier tariffs that help to manage electricity system loads
- Smart buildings can be members of Smart Community Energy Schemes that together provide reliable peak management behind the secondary substation and can trade surplus generation directly between themselves and local renewable energy assets
- Our programmes and business models will provide channels for stakeholder investment, coordinating with capital providers to achieve smart retrofit targets.

Our role is to partner with our Distribution Network Operators, Local Authorities, universities and major businesses to make sure the resources of skills, supply chain, knowledge, and funding are available to all communities, individual householders and SMEs to achieve a high-welfare, high energy, zero-carbon society in Oxfordshire.

We also have a duty to share our learning and help foment similar change elsewhere in the UK.

That's a lot to do! I look forward to sharing the progress with you next year.





Barbara Hammond, MBE  
Chief Executive Officer of  
The Low Carbon Hub IPS Limited

## CEO's report

Last year was one of finishing big projects: Project LEO, OxFutures, Ray Valley Solar, and consolidation of all business into the IPS. I am very happy to report that these all went very well, with full grant paid to us, performance acceptance achieved for Ray Valley Solar, and consolidated budgets set for the IPS for the first time at the March Board.

During this period, we continued working with our growing network of communities as we show in the 'Our Impact' and 'Supporting Community Action' sections of this report.

I am particularly pleased to highlight here that we have now invested over £1m of our own income from our renewable energy projects back into the community. We have leveraged this up to £13m in grants and contracts, making a huge £14m of community benefit spend in total.

The next ten years will be the most important for the zero carbon transition. We can achieve a 'high energy, high welfare'\* zero-carbon society; all the tools and technologies are there. We have the will, the knowledge and the resources now in the Low Carbon Hub that can make a significant contribution to a successful transition that could benefit everyone.

We will now be seeing policies and programmes put in place nationally through GB Energy and its Local Power Plan that can super-charge our ability to put actionable plans in place at the high-voltage and low-voltage levels to move forward rapidly with the transition in Oxfordshire.

We were not successful in the bid, led by our main Distribution Network Operator, Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN), for the successor innovation programme to Project LEO, Project LEO-N. The extra 'N' means 'at the neighbourhood scale, showing how vital our work has been in exposing the problem of the Grid Edge to SSEN and the wider system. But our Business Plan includes a programme of LEO-N activity funded from our community benefit profit, as the need for the work has not gone away.

We have developed our new strategy and business plan with all of this in mind. The strategy and the business planning framework is therefore set for the next 10 years until 2035. We have described the benefits we intend to achieve by 2035, we then manage the business planning underlying the strategy using an Objectives, Key Results approach. We will use the Annual Report to set out our progress using the three-level metric we have set in the strategy for each objective: baseline, grow, and stretch. We expect this business planning framework to be in place for the full 10 years, with a light-touch review by the Board every three years. This approach should allow us to keep a laser focus on making the change happen, whilst managing the Hub staff and resources efficiently.

We will not achieve our 'grow' or 'stretch' goals without working in partnership, both to leverage resources and capacities, but also to share knowledge within and beyond Oxfordshire. With your help, we have built a business that can build lasting partnerships, and that has the capacity to have a lasting effect on the welfare of the people of Oxfordshire and beyond.

\*Centre for Research into Energy Demand  
Solutions [www.creds.ac.uk](http://www.creds.ac.uk)

# OUR HEADLINES

At Low Carbon Hub, we are committed to leading the transition to a sustainable energy future for Oxfordshire. This section illustrates our journey and vision.

## Past successes

Our groundbreaking Local Energy Oxfordshire (LEO) project has demonstrated the power of localised energy systems in fostering sustainability and community resilience. Through LEO, we have set a benchmark for integrating energy solutions at the community level.

## Current projects

Presently, we are focused on several key initiatives. The FutureFit Area Based Insetting (FABI) project is driving forward with innovative energy efficiency measures across various communities. Our Community Action Plan for Zero-Carbon Energy (CAPZero) is empowering local residents and organisations to actively participate in the transition to a zero-carbon future. Additionally, the Action on Carbon and Energy in Schools (ACES) programme provides an energy efficiency support service specifically for schools in Oxfordshire.

## Planning the next steps

Looking to the future, we are excited to launch Local Energy Oxfordshire – Neighbourhoods (LEO-N). This upcoming initiative aims to build on the success of LEO by fostering greater community involvement and expanding sustainable practices at a neighbourhood level.



From left: Fiona Brown, Vice Chair, Hook Norton Community Land Trust; Dianne Regisford, Oxford City Councillor; and Cathy Ryan, Chair, Hook Norton Community Land Trust.

## From the success of LEO...

**Project LEO** (Local Energy Oxfordshire) reached a successful close in March 2023, marking a significant milestone in Low Carbon Hub's journey towards a sustainable and economically resilient future.

With a total budget of £40 million, LEO exemplified what can be achieved through collaboration and strategic investment. Key stakeholders, including Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks, the two universities, and local authorities, played a pivotal role in its success.

LEO focused on innovative energy trials, to build a broad range of evidence of the technological, market, and social conditions needed for a greener, more flexible, and fair electricity system. It looked at how communities could become more involved in, and crucially benefit from, the sustainable energy system of the future.

The lessons learned from LEO will have an enduring impact on the way we approach the energy transition.

## ...to the vision of LEO-N

**Project LEO-N** (Local Energy Oxfordshire - Neighbourhood) is an extension of Project LEO, and focuses on community-driven decarbonisation. It emphasises coordinating efforts between communities, network operators, and local authorities to optimise energy use and reduce costs.

LEO-N aims to establish a Grid Edge Coordinator service. This service will support communities in creating and implementing Zero Carbon Energy Action Plans, facilitating smart retrofit schemes and data analysis.

The project seeks to develop a detailed plan, funded by our own community benefit surplus, aiming to avoid chaos in energy planning, create an affordable business model, and share insights nationwide. If successful, LEO-N could pave the way for coordinated, scalable decarbonisation efforts across the UK.

**"It's great to see residents moving into this community-led development, proving we can build affordable, energy-efficient homes powered by locally generated renewable energy."**

Cathy Ryan, Chair, Hook Norton Community Land Trust





## Targeting non-residential emissions

**FutureFit Area Based Insetting (FABI)**, an InnovateUK-funded project in Oxford City running to June 2025, targets carbon emissions from non-residential buildings.

Many businesses face financial and support challenges in decarbonisation. FABI offers a funding solution by allowing large local organisations to offset their carbon emissions through local low-carbon projects, which have had an Energy Solutions Oxfordshire (ESOx) energy efficiency assessment. Oxford City Council ensures transparency for the project.

FABI focuses on retrofitting and 'FutureFit' projects, enhancing energy systems' resilience. It will reduce energy demand, support local communities, and provide evidence of the impact of funding in supporting action.

## Community action plan

The **Community Action Plan for Zero-Carbon Energy (CAPZero)**, the first of its kind in the UK and pioneered by Project LEO, focuses on Eynsham's Primary Substation Area (PSA) to accelerate the shift to zero-carbon energy. With the UK targeting a 78% carbon cut by 2035 and net-zero by 2050, urgent action is needed. By 2030, goals include reducing energy use, adopting renewables, building energy-efficient homes, and fostering smart, connected communities. Opportunities like shared heat networks and local energy trading are explored. The plan sets targets for the first three years, with Low Carbon Hub working with the community and local authorities, supported by a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with West Oxfordshire District Council. The aim: To build a healthier, stronger world, starting now.







## OxFutures: Advancing energy efficiency

The OxFutures programme (2017-2023) created a lasting legacy of innovation and energy efficiency across Oxfordshire. It accelerated the growth of Oxfordshire's low-carbon economy, driving transformation at business, academic, and innovation levels.

Through the combined efforts of six partner organisations, including local authorities and universities, the programme made significant strides toward the county's net-zero goals. It funded 8 start-ups, 9 new low-carbon products and services, and supported 45 businesses in installing low-carbon technologies. Additionally, 182 businesses received building assessment reports, leading to major improvements in energy efficiency and reduced carbon emissions.



## Helping schools reduce energy use

The **Action on Carbon and Energy in Schools (ACES)** programme helps local schools reduce energy use, cut carbon emissions, and save money on energy bills. By March 2024, ACES had engaged over 100 schools, including 60% of county-maintained ones, providing free energy assessments, thermal imaging, and support in accessing funding. Notably, ACES has facilitated carbon savings of 19.76 tonnes annually. In 2023/24 the programme supported Oxfordshire County Council's interest-free loan scheme offering funding for LED lighting and solar panels. With its extension into a third year, ACES continues to offer invaluable support, working closely with Oxford Brookes University's Environmental Information Exchange, enhancing school energy efficiency and comfort for students and staff.

"It's that combination of experience, knowledge, and idealism that makes Low Carbon Hub so special."

Eleanor, Rose Hill and Iffley Low Carbon

# OUR IMPACT

We measure the impact we achieve against four key metrics:  
**Planet, Prosperity, People, and Perception.**

## Planet

We reduce Oxfordshire's carbon emissions by increasing renewable energy generation, reducing energy demand and supporting more efficient use of our local electricity network.

Our programmes support thousands of residents, organisations and communities across Oxfordshire to get started on their journey to net zero.

### Our portfolio



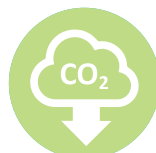
**55**  
renewable energy  
installations



**23.9**  
MW installed  
capacity



**18.16**  
GWh generated  
in 2023-24



**4,087**  
tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> saved  
in 2023-24



**122**  
kW of battery  
storage

### Plans to net-zero



**106**  
Whole House Plans  
carried out



**79**  
Energy efficiency  
assessments  
carried out



**1**  
CAPZero report  
delivered

## Prosperity

Our portfolio of community-owned renewables provides the organisations that host them with discounted electricity and a cost-effective way to reduce their carbon footprint. Together they form the Low Carbon Hub's engine – producing green electricity to power Oxfordshire, and a sustainable income stream to help transform the way we generate, use and store energy in our communities to the benefit of people, and the planet.



**£9,836,006**  
Total investment by  
our members



**£473,262**  
Surpluses spent on  
community benefit  
in 2023-24



**£456,820**  
Interest to investors  
in 2023-24



**£153,837**  
Savings on bills for our  
hosts in 2023-24

## People

Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do – from our community groups, host organisations, programme partners, and funders, to everyone who subscribes to our newsletters and helps spread the word on social media. Together they form an incredible ecosystem that supports the transformation towards a zero-carbon energy system.



**1,773**  
**Investor Members**  
who help finance the upfront costs of our projects and whose investments bring energy into community ownership



**14,000+**  
**Network of supporters**



**46**  
**Low carbon community groups**  
in our network who share our aims



**190**  
people from 61 organisations working in partnership with Low Carbon Hub



**45**  
Hosts for rooftop solar

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## Perception

We are committed to developing sustainable energy for community benefit. We aim to be a transparent and trusted partner, sharing knowledge and expertise openly.

To ensure we meet this commitment, we survey our stakeholders – host partners, community members, investor members, project partners, and others – annually to see how we're doing and how we can improve.

This summary is based on 132 responses to the "How are we doing?" Low Carbon Hub stakeholder survey, Spring 2024.

**93%**

perceive Low Carbon Hub to be quite or highly committed to the creation of a zero-carbon energy system that's good for people and good for the planet.

**92%**

report quite high or high trust in Low Carbon Hub to deliver community centred solutions that support the creation of a zero-carbon energy system.

**79%**

report we had a moderate or substantial difference to their knowledge of the changes we can make about the way we use, store or generate energy in our homes, organisations and community to support the transition to a low carbon energy system.

**74%**

report we made them more positive about the potential of community-centred solutions to energy issues.

**77%**

report we have contributed to them taking some or substantial action on energy or environmental issues.

# Delivering community benefit

The electricity we generate provides us with a sustainable income stream to support further carbon-cutting activity and leverage additional funding from grants and contracts.

## Community benefit income

	2023/24		2022/23	
Income	CIC	IPS	CIC	IPS
Own surpluses	-	£473,262	£1,391	£35,117
Unrestricted grants and donations	£237	£50	£840	-
Restricted grants and donations	£66,557	£14,095	£3,558,353	-
Service contracts	£92,431	-	£99,695	-
Total community benefit income by organisation	£159,225	£487,407	£3,660,279	£35,117
<b>Total community benefit income</b>		<b>£646,632</b>		<b>£3,695,397</b>

## Community benefit expenditure

	2023/24		2022/23	
Summary	CIC	IPS	CIC	IPS
Community grants programme	-	£18,450	£5,162	£35,117
Local energy programme	£96,592	£573,665	£4,175,001	-
Total community benefit spend by organisation	£96,592	£592,115	£4,180,163	£35,117
<b>Total</b>		<b>£688,707</b>		<b>£4,215,280</b>

## Income

We use our surpluses to leverage significant additional donations, grants and contracts to further our mission. We are most grateful to all our funders for their support of our work. In particular, our members who have donated shares and interest, and Westmill Solar Co-operative for their ongoing support of our community buildings energy assessment work.

### Did you know?

We've now reinvested over £1 million of our own income from our renewable energy projects back into the community and for every £1 of our own funds created, we've attracted an additional £13 in grants and contracts to support our communities, drive innovation and deliver carbon reduction programmes.

## Expenditure

We use our community benefit income to deliver community benefit activities, either in the form of grants or by directly carrying out activities ourselves to support community action on climate change. This includes:

- Grants and support to community energy enterprises
- Funding, help, and advice to support community action
- Innovation initiatives to accelerate the transition to net-zero

You can read more about our community benefit programmes on page 14. In this year of transition, some of our community benefit activity has been delivered by Low Carbon Hub CIC.

With restricted grants and donations, where monies were spent on capital investments, these monies have been treated as deferred income in the Balance Sheet and will be released as income into the Profit and Loss Account over the useful life of the investments.







# Supporting community action

Our network of 46 low carbon community groups sit at the heart of Low Carbon Hub. We offer training, advice and support to help them transform their neighbourhoods into vibrant and sustainable communities.



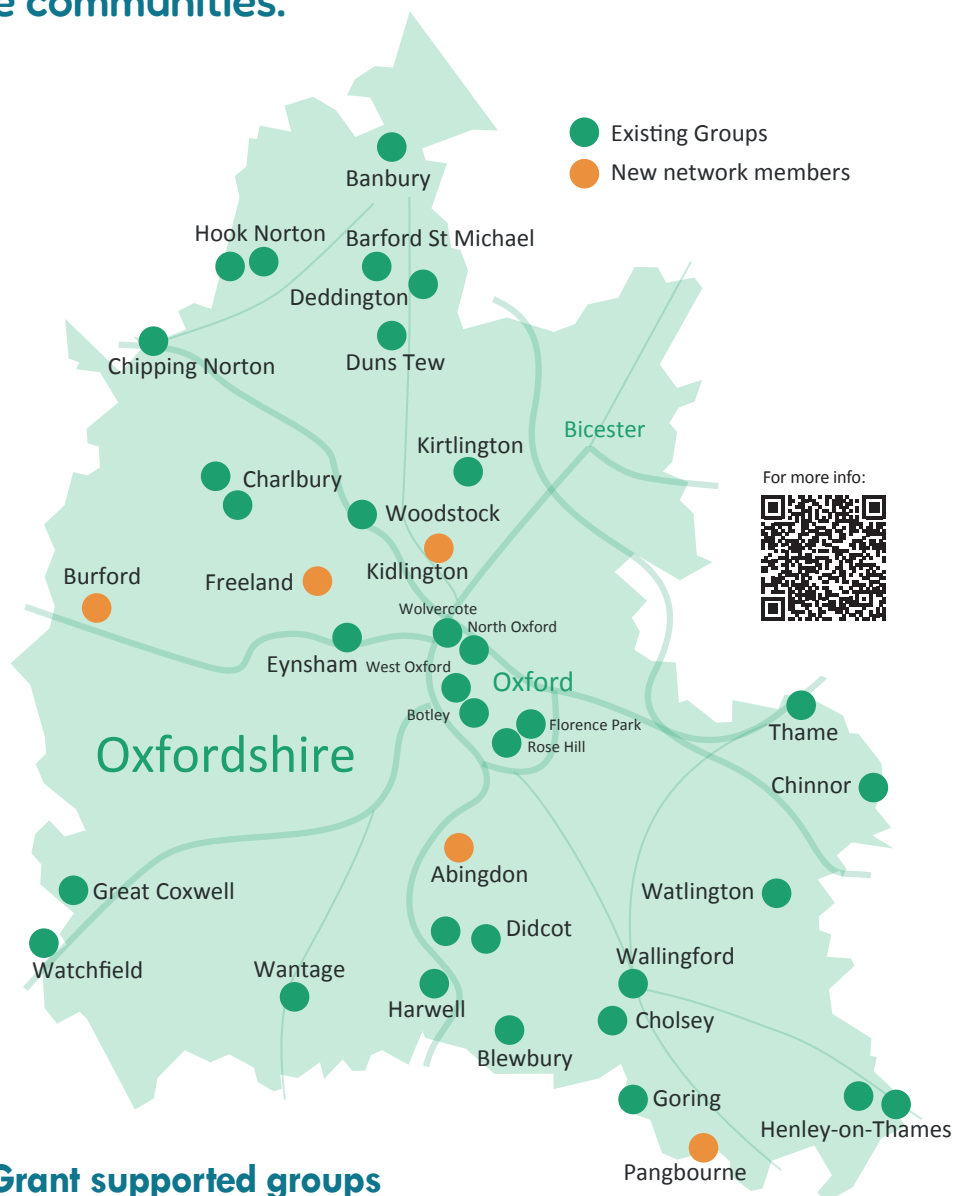
Above: **Sustainable Harwell** 'speed dating' in the Village Hall to bring the group together

Below: **Kidlington Eco Group** set up Draughtbusters (being demonstrated below)



## Our new network members:

Burford BEAGles  
Freeland Energy Group  
Hardwick Community Energy  
Kidlington Eco Group  
One Planet Abingdon



## Grant supported groups

**Oxford Friends of the Earth** set up an information service to help households move away from dependency on gas.

**Hook Norton Community Land Trust** designed resources to promote their community share offer to fund affordable, sustainable homes and a microgrid.

**Sustainable Wantage** held an energy event to encourage take-up of solar PV and batteries.

**WeSET** (in conjunction with Westmill Wind & Solar Co-op) created new educational materials for events in schools.

**Low Carbon Oxford North** set up a website called Oxport.org to help people find alternative ways to travel actively across Oxfordshire.



## Thermal imaging training

Our thermal imaging training and camera loan scheme helps groups show householders where their homes are losing heat and promote energy efficiency. Thirty-five volunteers were trained.



## Energy advice stall

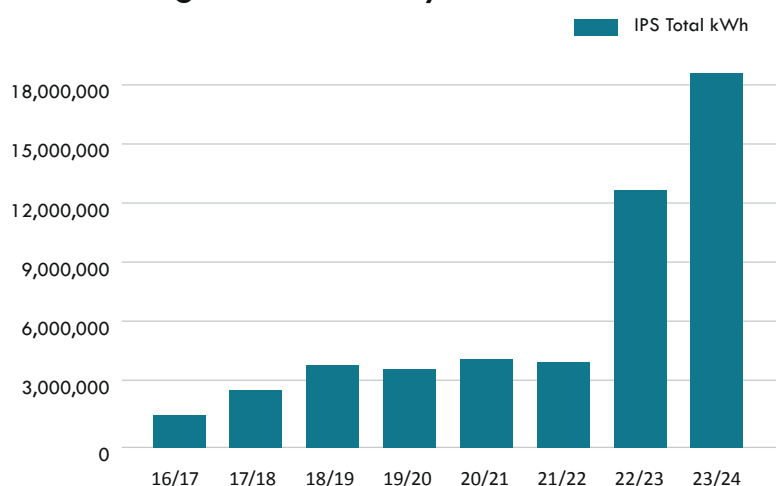
Our Community Energy Champions have delivered over 300 hours of energy advice.



# ANNUAL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

## Our generation portfolio

### Annual generation by IPS installations



Our generation portfolio forms the engine that powers Low Carbon Hub.

2023/24 saw the completion of all outstanding construction and generation works at Ray Valley Solar, the UK's largest community-owned solar park.

The decision to install bifacial panels is proving an initial success, resulting in 8% higher annual predicted generation than our original expectations.

See a full list of our installations, backed by over £10 million investment from 1,773 investor Members, on our website.

	Total installed capacity	2023/24 generation (kWh)	% of predicted	CO <sub>2</sub> tonnes saved	
IPS rooftop solar	4.3 MW	3,406,421	95.40%	766	
Ray Valley Solar	19.2 MW	14,095,317	76%*	3,171	
Sandford Hydro	440 kW	661,708	49.80%	149	

\*Reduced generation due to planned transformer works. Performance when site fully operational showing better than modelled performance.

## Investment performance

The investment by portfolio and return to investors summarised:

Portfolio	Number of investors	Total investment at year end	Change in equity	Interest rate	Total interest to be paid out
Solar 2014	354	£1,513,600	(£89,249)	5.6%	£84,762
Solar 2016	237	£673,365	(£34,478)	5.49%	£36,968
Community Energy Fund	1,227	£6,000,729	(£67,492)	4%	£254,597
			[4 year+]	5%	
Sandford Hydro	460	£1,443,844	(£12,333)	5%	£72,192
ONCORE A 25 year pledge	64	£102,891	(£5,061)	4.2%	£4,322
ONCORE A returnable	13	£24,010	0	3%	£720
ONCORE B 20 year pledge	37	£77,601	(£3,353)	4.2%	£3,259





## Rooftop solar portfolio

Capacity MW	Generation kWh	CO <sub>2</sub> tonnes saved
4.3	3,406,421	766

There was strong performance across our solar rooftop sites, reaching 95% of the predicted generation. Our focus on maximizing on-site energy use continues to drive efficient energy management and long-term sustainability.

Looking ahead will see the completion of our first 1 MW rooftop solar array with long-time partner Norbar Torque Tools Ltd.



## Ray Valley Solar

Capacity MW	Generation kWh	CO <sub>2</sub> tonnes saved
19.2	14,095,317	3,171

Our community-owned ground mount solar park, Ray Valley Solar, continues to exceed expectations as we gained an extra 8% of energy production across the year from using bi-facial panels. These generate electricity from the front and rear sides of the panels.

The site has also become a thriving [wildlife haven](#), with Great Crested Newts on site and beehives in place to enhance pollination.



## Sandford Hydro

Capacity kW	Generation kWh	CO <sub>2</sub> tonnes saved
440	661,708	149

Sandford Hydro had another poor year for generation. Various safety concerns meant considerable downtime was needed at the site while we made a lot of improvements. Unfortunately the renovation works were greatly delayed by the terrible winter weather preventing site access for our contractors. The weather also created flooding conditions further hampering generation. These vital improvement works will stand us in good stead for our major generation period in Autumn/Winter.

# GOVERNANCE REPORT

## Governance

The Board is the principal decision-making body in the IPS. It is collectively responsible for ensuring that the business is run according to the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and the Financial Conduct Authority guidance on its implementation. This includes the long-term success of the business for the benefit of the community according to the Objects as set out in the Rules of the Society, which include delivering a reasonable investment return to IPS members.

The Chief Executive proposes strategy to the Board and is then held accountable by it for delivery of the agreed strategy. The Board ensures effective corporate governance, succession planning, and stakeholder engagement. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that effective internal controls and risk management systems are in place.

The Board comprises Executive Directors – Low Carbon Hub’s senior management – and Non-Executive Directors who bring additional skills and experience and an independent perspective that is separate from its day-to-day operations. The Directors set the tone and lead by example. This is particularly true of Executive Directors, and each of the Non-Executive Directors has a specific responsibility to provide support to the IPS team beyond simple attendance at Board meetings.

As part of this, the Board has formally delegated certain governance responsibilities to its Board Committees as briefly outlined below and set out in more detail on the website. Prior to appointment, each prospective Non-Executive Director confirms that they will have sufficient time available to be able to discharge their responsibilities effectively and that they will have no conflicts of interest. This is discussed by the Board before any appointment is made.

The Board meets formally about eight times a year and individual Non-Executive Directors carry out other duties in addition, including the activities of the Board Committees. Board meetings are not exclusively for Directors; other members of staff are included to add their expertise on particular topics and to ensure broader links between the Board and the Low Carbon Hub’s team.

The Board is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Practice and applicable law) including FRS 102. The financial statements must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the IPS and its excess of income over expenditure for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Board is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the society will continue in business.

The Board is also responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Society’s transactions and the financial position of the Society, and to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. The Board is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Society and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Board is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Society’s website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

## Board Members

### Re-election of Directors previously appointed by the Members

Under the Low Carbon Hub IPS Rule number 18.1, one third of the Directors elected by the members must stand down at each AGM. This third must comprise the Directors who were longest-standing from their last election or re-election (Rule 18.2). Saskya Huggins stands down as a Director. Al Kitchen is standing for re-election (see below). Barbara Hammond is standing down as longest-serving Director and is seeking re-election. Steve Drummond is standing down having been drawn by lot under Rule 18.2 and will be seeking re-election.

### Communities Director

Al Kitchen kindly agreed to extend his term of office as Communities Director to bridge over the year of consolidation of the Low Carbon Hub CIC into the Low Carbon Hub IPS. Elections were duly held amongst our community shareholders, and they decided unanimously to ask Al Kitchen to stand again for re-election.



## Key to Committee Members

<b>A</b>	Audit Committee
<b>G</b>	Grants Committee
<b>GR&amp;N</b>	Governance, Risk and Nominations Committee
<b>I</b>	Investment Committee
<b>R</b>	Remuneration Committee
<b>S</b>	Strategy Committee
<b>*</b>	denotes Chair of Committee

## Board of Directors and Executive Team



### Steve Drummond

Chairman, Non-Executive Director **GR&N**

Board member since 2013, brings 40 years of energy sector experience. CEO of Electrogenic Ltd.



### Barbara Hammond, MBE

CEO, Executive Director **A, GR&N, R, S**

Founder and CEO since 2012, drives sustainability initiatives, pioneering community energy and leading Low Carbon Hub.



### Mairi Brookes

Smart Energy Systems Director, Executive Director **S**

Board member since 2023, drives community energy, focuses on carbon emissions reduction and innovation.



### Maxine Frerk

Non-Executive Director **R\*, S**

Board member since September 2023, leverages grid edge expertise, enhancing customer communication and innovation at Low Carbon Hub.



### Saskya Huggins

Social Impact Director, Executive Director **G, S**

Board member since 2023, 30+ years' charity experience, leading stakeholder engagement / community programmes.



### Tim Jones

Renewables Portfolio Director, Executive Director **I**

Board member since 2023, brings 35 years' energy sector experience, managing renewables investments.



### Al Kitchen

Non-Executive Director **G\*, R**

Board member since September 2023, champions community engagement, representing affiliated organisations and advancing Low Carbon Hub's mission.



### Lenah Oduor

Non-Executive Director **A\***

Board member since September 2023, brings financial expertise, chairing the Audit Committee at Low Carbon Hub.



### Mish Tullar

Non-Executive Director **G, S\***

Board member since June 2023, leads strategy development, leveraging corporate communication expertise and collaboration with Oxford City Council.



### Chris Woolhouse

Non-Executive Director **GR&N\***

Board member since June 2023, leads governance, leveraging legal expertise and commitment to the low-carbon transition at Low Carbon Hub.



### Rob Kesterton

Non-Executive Director **A, I\***

Board member since June 2023, merges finance acumen with renewable energy experience, chairing the Investment Committee for Low Carbon Hub.



### Chukwuemeka Godwin Nwangele

Non-Executive Director **I, S**

Board member since July 2023, serves on the Investment Committee.

## Our committees

### Board Committees

The Board Committees support the Board in specific areas of its responsibilities, as outlined below and set out in more detail on the website. The Committee Chairs provide regular updates to the Board on committee meetings and activities.

### Audit Committee

- Reviews and monitors the integrity of financial information prior to publication, ensuring that the Annual Report as a whole is fair, balanced, and understandable
- Oversees systems of internal control and risk management
- Approves internal and external audit processes
- Maintains relationship with auditors
- Carries out in-depth reviews of specific risks, ensuring that risks are appropriately identified, managed, and mitigated.

The Committee consists of two Non-Executive Directors, one of whom is the Board member responsible for finance, one of whom is the Chair of the Investment Committee, and both of whom are independent. It is chaired by the Non-Executive Director for Finance. The members of the committee at the date of this report are:

Lenah Oduor, Non-Executive Director Responsible for Finance and Committee Chair

Barbara Hammond, Executive Director

Rob Kesterton, Non-Executive Director and Chair of Investment Committee

In attendance:

Sam Clutton, Finance Manager

### External Audit

Critchleys Audit LLP were the external auditor for 2023-24. They provided the committee with relevant reports, reviews, information and advice, as set out in their engagement letter.

### Grants Committee

- Reviews and recommends the Community Grants Policy, ensuring that it promotes the delivery of the Low Carbon Hub's strategy and the long-term sustainable success of the business
- Reviews, assesses and makes the final decisions on awarding Community Grants
- Oversees and provide Governance for the whole Community Granting process

- Provides proportionate and appropriate transparency and accountability to all stakeholders

The Committee consists of two Non-Executive Directors and one Executive Director. It is chaired by a Non-Executive Director. The members of the Committee at the date of this report are:

Al Kitchen, Non-Executive Communities Director and Committee Chair

Saskya Huggins, Executive Director

Mish Tuller, Non-Executive Director

### Governance, Risk and Nominations Committee

- Reviews the Board's size, structure, and composition, including the recommendation of new appointments to the Board
- Monitors the balance of skills, knowledge, experience, independence, and diversity of the Board and its committees to ensure that they remain appropriate
- Oversight of succession planning and development plans of the Board and senior management
- Reviews the governance framework, including the IPS's compliance with applicable laws and regulations, particularly the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and accompanying guidance
- Evaluates the effectiveness of the Board and its committees
- Monitors compliance against the UK Corporate Governance Code
- Carries out in-depth reviews of specific risks, ensuring that risks are appropriately identified, managed, and mitigated.

The Committee consists of two Non-Executive Directors and the Chief Executive. The members of the committee at the date of this report are:

Chris Woolhouse, Non-Executive Director and Committee Chair

Steve Drummond, Non-Executive Director and Board Chair

Barbara Hammond, Executive Director

### Investment Committee

The Investment Committee oversees investment in and operation of the renewables portfolio.

#### Investment

- Approve 'standard' rooftop solar schemes under existing delegated powers from the Board



- Assess and update the detailed terms of those investments including lease terms, etc.
- Assess and guide the detailed terms of non-standard investments, which will be approved (or otherwise) by the full Board – ensuring that the important questions have been asked and the project detail is fully understood so there can be a meaningful discussion at the Board
- Guide the principles of the financial modelling and price determination for investments.

### Operations

- Oversee the operations monitoring processes to ensure they are appropriate
- Develop a reporting process so the Board has meaningful but concise information
- Oversee health and safety
- Provide guidance to management regarding specific issues that arise and refer to the full Board as appropriate.

The Committee consists of the Renewables Portfolio Director, and two Non-Executive Directors, both of whom are independent. It is chaired by a Non-Executive Director. The members of the Committee at the date of this report are:

Rob Kesterton, Non-Executive Director and Committee Chair  
Chukwuemeka Godwin Nwangele, Non-Executive Director  
Tim Jones, Executive Director and Renewables Portfolio Director

In attendance:

Barbara Hammond, Executive Director

Sam Clutton, Finance Manager

Kim McLaren provides the secretariat for the Committee.

### Remuneration Committee

- Recommends and reviews the Remuneration Policy, ensuring that it promotes the delivery of our strategy and the long-term sustainable success of the business
- Approves remuneration and benefits for the Executive Directors and Non-Executive Directors
- Approves remuneration principles throughout the business.

The Committee consists of the CEO and two Non-Executive Directors, both of whom are independent. It is chaired by a Non-Executive Director. The members of the Committee at the date of this report are:

Maxine Frerk, Non-Executive Director and Committee Chair  
Barbara Hammond, Executive Director and CEO

Al Kitchen, Non-Executive Communities Director

In attendance:

Sam Clutton, Finance Manager

### Strategy Committee

The Strategy Committee works with Chief Executive on the long-term development of strategies and plans for the Low Carbon Hub. The Committee supports the Chief Executive to:

- Undertake a comprehensive strategy review to refresh the mission and business objectives of the Company
- Produce, review and update a vision statement for the Company for consideration by the Board
- Develop both long-term (10-year) and short-term (3-year) business plans for consideration by the Board
- Refresh and updates these strategies and plans as required
- Propose the appointment of any external consultants as required to advise the Company on its strategic direction for consideration by the Board
- Horizon scan, research and make recommendations to the Board on the major financing plans of the Company and other major strategic issues influencing the development of the Company
- Provide governance as an “innovation gateway” for non-capital projects that aren’t naturally considered by the Investment Committee
- Support the development of strategic partnerships as appropriate to further the work of the Company and its relationship with Government.

The Committee consists of three Non-Executive Directors and three Executive Directors. It is chaired by a Non-Executive Director. The members of the Committee at the date of this report are:

Mish Tuller, Non-Executive Director and Committee Chair

Mairi Brookes, Executive Director

Maxine Frerk, Non-Executive Director

Barbara Hammond, Executive Director

Saskya Huggins, Executive Director

Chukwuemeka Godwin Nwangele, Non-Executive Director

## Directors' Report

### Principal activity

The IPS's principal activity is the development, ownership, and operation of renewable energy power generation installations. Surpluses from these activities are applied to the benefit of the community, as defined by the Objects of the organisation. The aim is to prove we can meet our energy needs in a way that's good for people and good for the planet.

Income is reinvested in further carbon-cutting projects. We help local organisations become more energy efficient, fund green innovation, and back further community energy projects. We make every pound of investment work hard to bring our vision of a smart and fair energy system to life.

### Capital structure

As of 31 March 2024, the Society had in issue 9,836,005 withdrawable £1 shares and 35 transferable £1 shares. The total issued share capital of the company at year end was 9,836,040 £1 shares.

### Interest payments to shareholders

The consolidated accounts for the Low Carbon Hub IPS Limited show a net trading surplus of £176,523. As set out on the FCA guidance, the IPS must demonstrate that the surplus is adequate to cover the interest payments to shareholders; this amount is adequate for the amount agreed.

The Board has therefore approved interest payments to Members for the financial year 2023/24 that are fully in line with the expectations set out in the individual share offers on the basis of which Members invested.

### Conflicts of interest

Directors are required to disclose their interests to the Board, highlighting any actual or potential conflicts of interest with their duties and responsibilities as a Director. A register of interests is maintained by the Company Secretary and reconfirmed every six months.

The Board has looked closely at the other appointments held by Directors, details of which are contained in their biographies, and considers that the Chair and each of the Directors are able to devote sufficient time to fulfil the duties required of them under the terms of their contracts or letters of appointment.

During the year no Director declared a material interest in any contract of significance with Low Carbon Hub or any of its subsidiary undertakings, other than any third-party indemnity between each Director and the Company.

### Going concern

The Directors, after reviewing Low Carbon Hub's operating budgets, investment plans, and financing arrangements, consider that the IPS has sufficient financing available at the date of approval of this report. Accordingly, the Directors are satisfied that it is appropriate to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the Annual Report and Accounts.

A full description of Low Carbon Hub's business activities, financial position, cash flows, liquidity position, committed facilities, and borrowing position, together with the factors likely to affect its future development and performance, is set out in the Strategic Report and the Financial Report.

### Viability statement

The Directors have assessed the prospects of Low Carbon Hub over a three-year period to October 2026. This has taken into account the business model, strategic aims, risk appetite, and principal risks and uncertainties, along with the Society's current financial position. Based on this assessment, the Directors have a reasonable expectation that the Society will be able to continue in operation and meet its liabilities as they fall due over the three-year period under review.

### Events after the balance sheet

On review by the Directors there are no subsequent events that have material implications on the financial statement to 31 March 2024.

### Auditor

Critchleys Audit LLP were the external auditor for 2023-24. They provided the committee with relevant reports, reviews, information and advice, as set out in their engagement letter.

### Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The Low Carbon Hub IPS Limited's AGM will take place online at 18:30 on Monday 14 October 2024. Members and the Directors are entitled to attend the AGM. Voting is conducted electronically.

Signed on behalf of the Board on 11 September 2024.





'It was a lovely day when the Board and Team visited Sandford Hydro. This visit exemplifies what Low Carbon Hub is all about!'

Leanne Byatt, Stakeholder Finance Coordinator





### Cover photo

On the roof at Norbar Torque Tools Ltd during the installation of their third solar PV array with Low Carbon Hub.

Photo credits in report: Low Carbon Hub

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The Low Carbon Hub IPS Limited is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.  
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