

Northumberland Community Energy Limited (NCEL)

The Solar-Powered Building Project is working to enable community buildings reduce their energy bills, reduce their carbon footprint and boost their long-term resilience to the impacts of climate change and fluctuating energy markets.

NCEL project manages the installation, maintenance and all risks of the system over the 20-year partnership.



The main steps along the way:

Following a hall/centre/church's interest to join the project, an initial **feasibility study** is carried out by a recognised contractor on behalf of NCEL.

Once funds are in place to proceed the next stage is securing **planning permission** for the siting of panels and batteries. This is carried out by a planning consultant engaged by NCEL. This can take up to 4 months.

A Lease is to be agreed between NCEL and the community building with respect to siting of NCEL panels and batteries and a power purchase agreement where the community building purchases the solar electricity at £0.15 per kWh. The lease will be drawn up by solicitors, independently acting for both parties, engaged and funded by NCEL. This process can take up to 2-3 months

A solar PV contractor will be procured and once the lease is in place we can agree an **installation** date. This process can take up to 2 months.

All capital and revenue costs associated with installing panels and batteries are covered by NCEL.

There is an accompanying **How it Works** summary sheet and information on the Community Action Northumberland website [Solar-Powered Community Buildings](#)

Update on progress with Solar-Powered Buildings project

By the end of Jan 2025 NCEL plans to support the installation of solar PV and battery storage in **11 buildings**. **The actual buildings may change over time as the individual building's circumstances change.**

As well as the 11 buildings there are another **70** buildings that are either:

- Going forward for planning approval
- Have a feasibility study in place
- In the process of going through a feasibility study this summer **OR**
- Have expressed an interest to join the project.

Installed community buildings

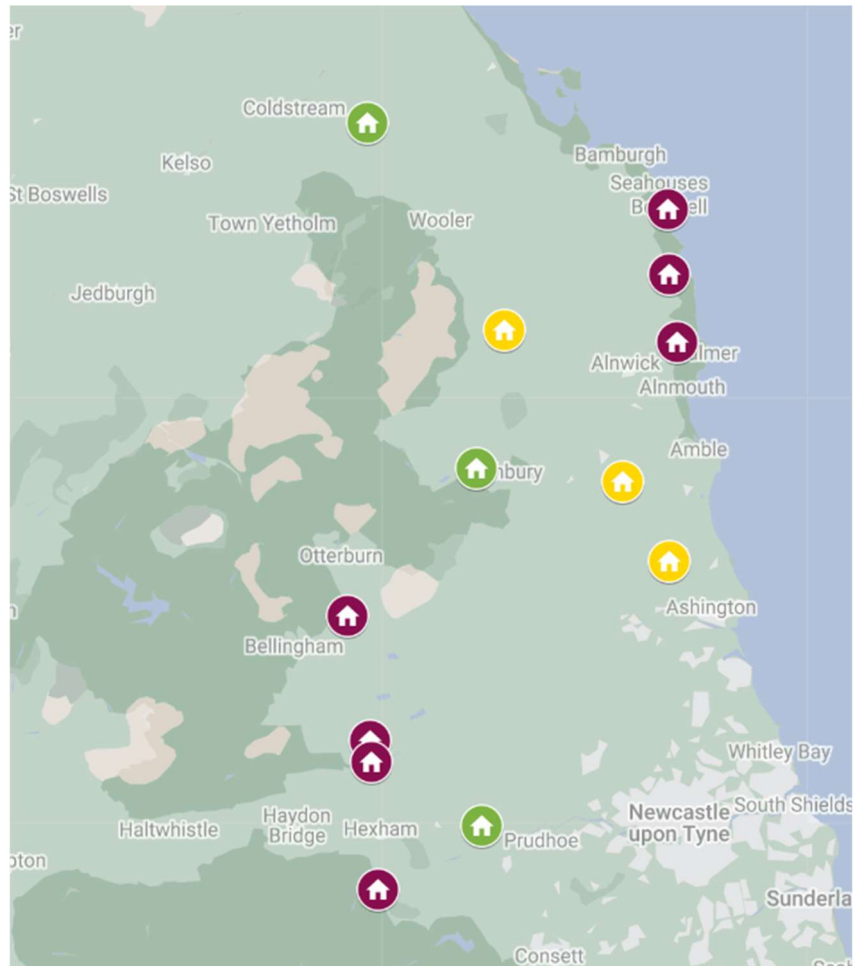
- 🏠 Corsenside Parish Hall
- 🏠 Longhoughton Community & Sports Centre
- 🏠 Barrasford Village Hall
- 🏠 Whitley Chapel Parish Hall
- 🏠 Humshaugh Village Hall
- 🏠 Creighton Memorial Hall
- 🏠 Beadnell Women's Institute

Proposed Solar PV installed by Jan 2025

- 🏠 Newton & Bywell Community Hall
- 🏠 Thropton
- 🏠 Crookham Village Hall

Proposed installation in spring 2025

- 🏠 Breamish Hall Powburn
- 🏠 Ulgham
- 🏠 Felton Village Hall



NCEL held the first **Sharing Event** at **Longhoughton Community & Sports Centre** on Monday 18th November. Forty people registered for the event. People saw the solar panels, invertors and batteries installed at the Centre and HE Servicing who installed the system talked them through the kit, installation process and the monitoring that can be accessed remotely. We heard from the trustees at the Hall and Paul Cowie of NCEL. There were lots of great questions and people left better informed and hopefully feeling connected and part of the Solar-Powered Building family.



NCEL held its last NCEL Board meeting for 2024 in early December. The directors are members of NCEL and represent several halls: Humshaugh, Beadnell, Whitley Chapel, Barrasford, Newton & Bywell, Tasset, Longhoughton, and Creighton. The first NCEL AGM will be in early 2025, information to follow.

NCEL was formed in 2023 as a not-for-profit Community Benefit Society. It is supported by representatives from community buildings and the founding partnerships of Community Action Northumberland (CAN), Rural Design Centre (RDC) and National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise (NICRE). NCEL is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and works for the best interest of the community.