

Corsham Community Energy Workshop

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Introduction

When and why we did the workshop.

Bath and West Community Energy, Corsham Climate Action, Wiltshire Council and the Centre For Sustainable Energy hosted a community energy workshop in July 2025 for local people in Corsham.

Wiltshire Council

Corsham
Climate Action
for a greener future

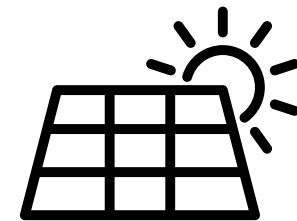
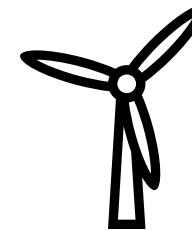


**Bath & West
Community Energy**
Generating local energy



This project is a partnership lead by the Centre for Sustainable Energy and is fully 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. It was the start of a conversation about community energy in Corsham, to explore what renewables could be supported.



This report shares what renewable technology, like wind turbines and solar panels, was suggested in the workshop. It tells you how much energy they would generate and why local people chose them.

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



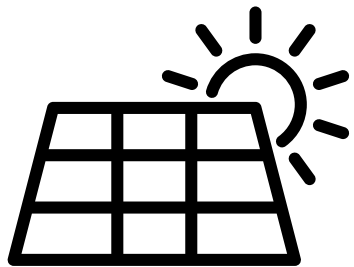
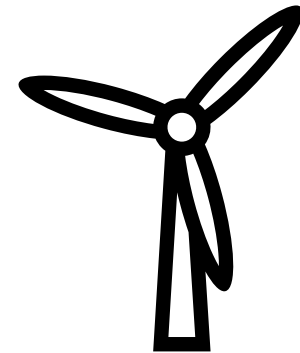
Report summary



This page shows the main suggestions made in the workshop by local people.

Three wind turbines

People selected all available options for wind within the area and agreed to size up the turbines to 160m for greater efficiency. All three are located along the parish boundary, mostly away from densely populated areas. An option was posed to have three turbines in total but all grouped in one location, if technically possible.



195 acres of solar farms

This is the equivalent of 105 football fields. It would be split into several areas of smaller solar farms across the area. Similarly to wind turbines, many are located on the parish boundary in less built-up places. A few locations were chosen near the railway line and A road.

7,532 homes powered

This is more energy than Corsham *currently* needs within the parish. There was an understanding within the group that this is an ambitious amount of renewable energy that is unlikely to be delivered, but it's better to have more site options at the beginning for further exploration. There was also agreement that people who live near proposed sites should be spoken to as a priority.



Report summary



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

“

Residents want to embrace renewables but feel left out of the decision making.

”

“

I don't mind wind turbines, don't think they are ugly, and don't think they spoil the view. I like the ones in Scotland.

”

“

I feel joyous about more renewable energy in Corsham.

”

“

We want to keep solar as less visible as possible for those who live nearby and avoid good agricultural land.

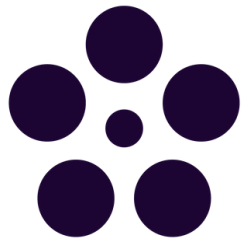
”

Why did we do the workshop?



Increasing renewables

The way we produce and use energy needs to change. It's the main cause of climate change. We need a lot **more energy from renewable sources** like wind and solar to meet the UK's climate targets. Nationally, we need to quadruple the amount of renewables that have already been built.



More affordable energy

At the same time, it's difficult for many people in the UK who 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.

Community energy

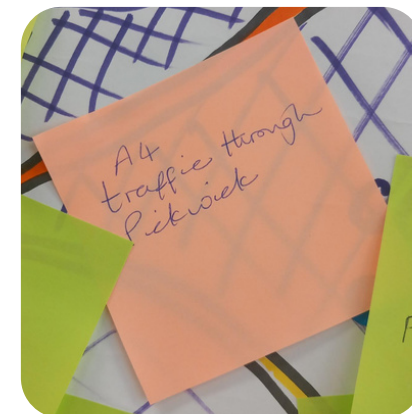
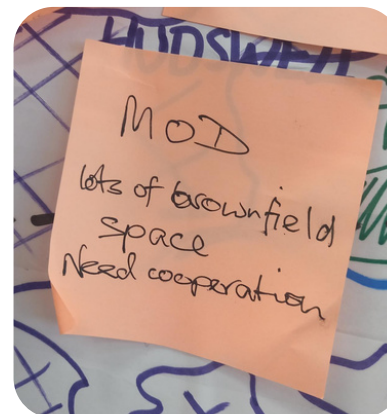
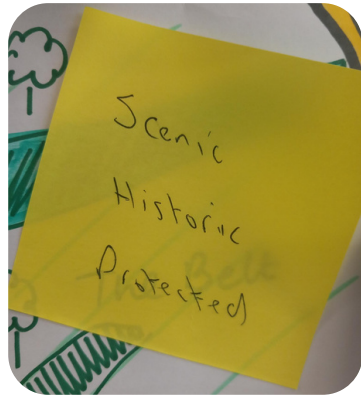
Community-led energy projects **keep benefits local** – from cleaner air to investment in local facilities. When communities lead energy projects, they create solutions that work for everyone – **tackling both climate change and rising energy costs.** In 2023, community energy projects contributed £12.9m to local economies and saved £4.4m in energy bills. They also reduced carbon emissions by 166 mega tonnes, the same as 200,000 passenger round trips from London to New York.





What is the local area like?

The workshop started with people sharing their thoughts about the local area. They added post it notes to a large hand drawn map of Corsham.





What is the local area like?

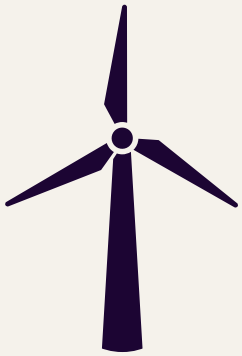
The main thoughts added to the map are shared in the table on this page.

Areas that are special	Areas that are disliked	Other descriptions and thoughts
Corsham Court - untouchable, conservation, access for walks	Leafield Industrial Estate	Joyful for more renewable energy in Corsham
Beechfield Nature Reserve created by community, located in Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Ministry of Defence - lots of brownfield sites	Sad that new build houses are not adding solar
Springfield Park - lovely green area and great for all sorts of activities	Ark Data Centre uses a lot of energy	Scenic
Town - High Street has lovely old buildings, and Pound Arts	Traffic along the A4 through Pickwick	Historic
Disused quarries provide space for wildlife	Litter along the lanes and bins are always visible	Protected
Good networks of footpaths south of the town	Donkey field, Neston	Excellent Town Council organising community events that are great for all
Shaw and Whitley villages - historic villages surrounded by farmland and public spaces	Area between Rudlow and Park Lane	All Corsham is very special
Pickwick conservation area		



Choosing renewables

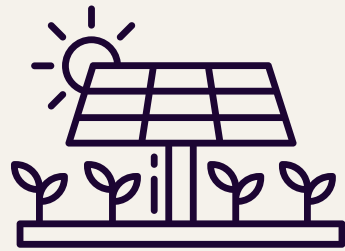
The main part of the workshop brought everyone to 'Sunshine Cafe' where a menu of renewable energy options was shared. This page shows the technology on the menu.



Wind Turbine

Powers 177 homes,
100 metres tall, 1 megawatt.

Maximum 3



Solar Farm

5 megawatt solar farm
powers 343 homes (13 acres,
or about 7 football fields)

Maximum 19



This menu is based on technical evidence showing what can be built in Corsham. The evidence looks at things like flooding, green belt land and wind speed - so these are already thought about before the maximum number possible is decided. 'Maximum' isn't a number to aim for though, it's a guide of what could technically be delivered, but people in the workshop chose the technology based on what they thought is acceptable for the area.

Choosing renewables

In small groups everyone had time to discuss the menu options, arrive at a consensus as a group, before feeding back to the whole room.

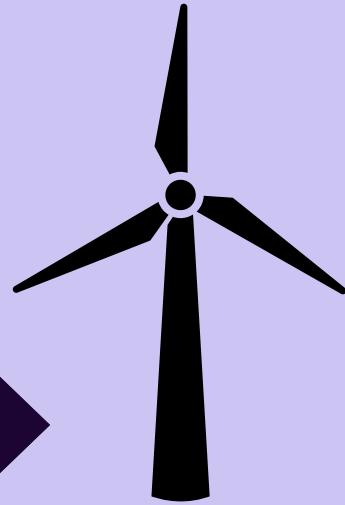




Wind turbine suggestions

People in the workshop suggested a total of...

3 turbines



Which would mean...

25,980 MWh generated



2,121 homes powered

**£19 million
total cost**



Main workshop thoughts shared about wind turbines

Start pursuing bigger turbines (160m) as they have greater capacity and reduce down (to 100m) if not suitable.

The wind site to the far right (A) is seen as a less visible option. There are 2 new solar developments upcoming nearby.

The wind site in the middle (B) may have an impact on the villages to the south, Whitley and Purlpit. A conversation would need to happen with people who live there.

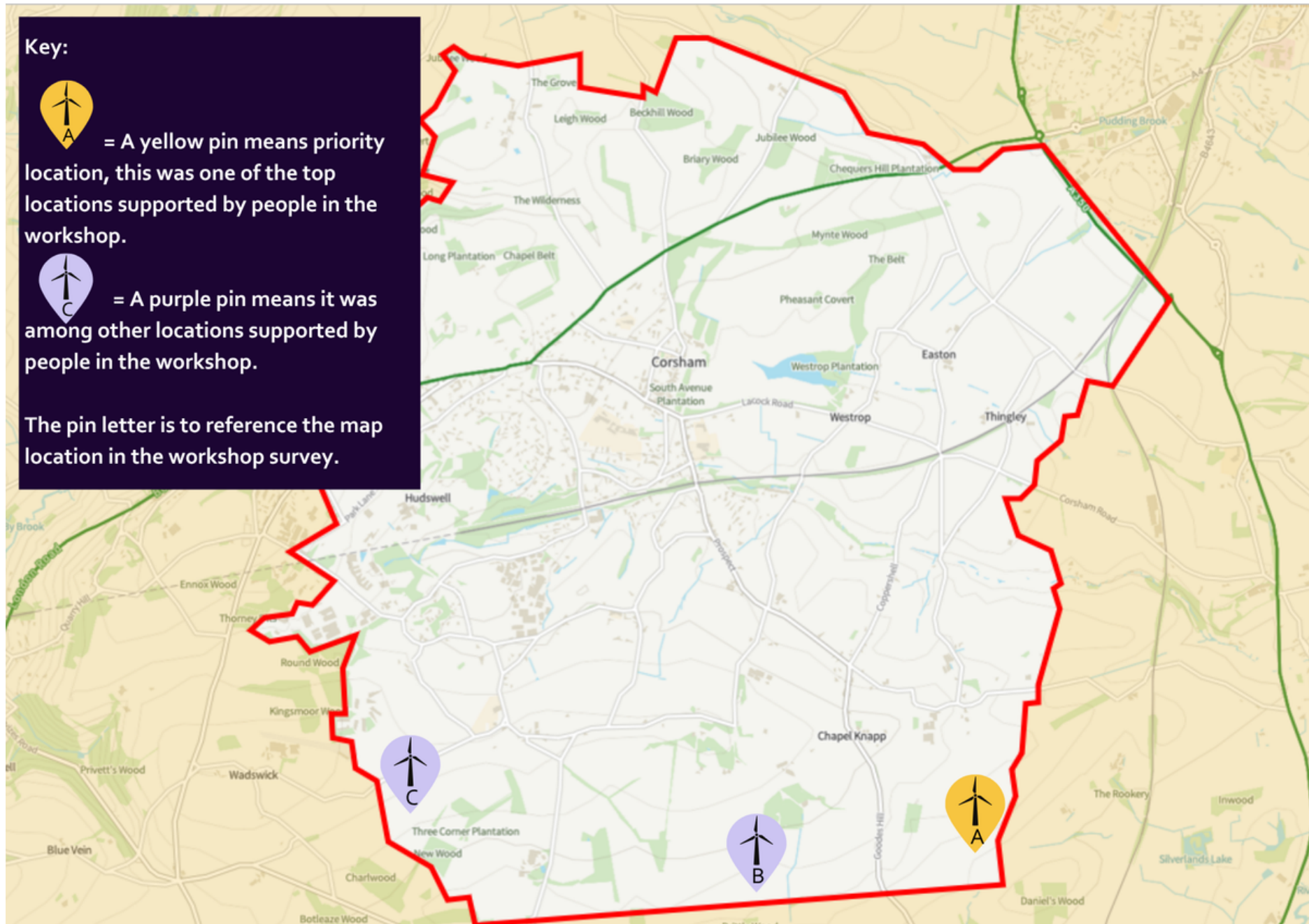
Preference to group wind and solar together for increased capacity, and to include biodiversity features, or grouping all 3 turbines together to combine infrastructure.

Very positive about wind turbines and the look of them, some concern about noise.

Preference for locations to be more hidden and on the outskirts of the town.

There are lots of pylons in the area that have become part of the landscape. In time the same could be said for wind turbines.

Suggested locations - wind turbines

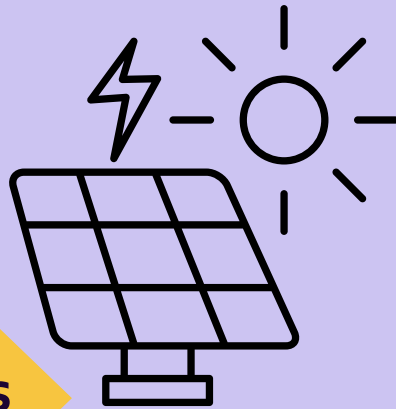




Solar farm suggestions

People in the workshop suggested a total of...

15 solar farms



Which would mean...

62,666 MWh generated



5,139 homes powered

**£33 million
total cost**



Main workshop thoughts shared about solar farms

Could combine solar with sheep farming, small-scale agriculture, or allotments. Grade 1 agricultural land should be avoided.

Avoid Corsham Court as this area is untouchable despite having land!

Having solar farms near railways is seen as positive due to being less visible but would need to find out how much space is needed alongside tracks for safety.

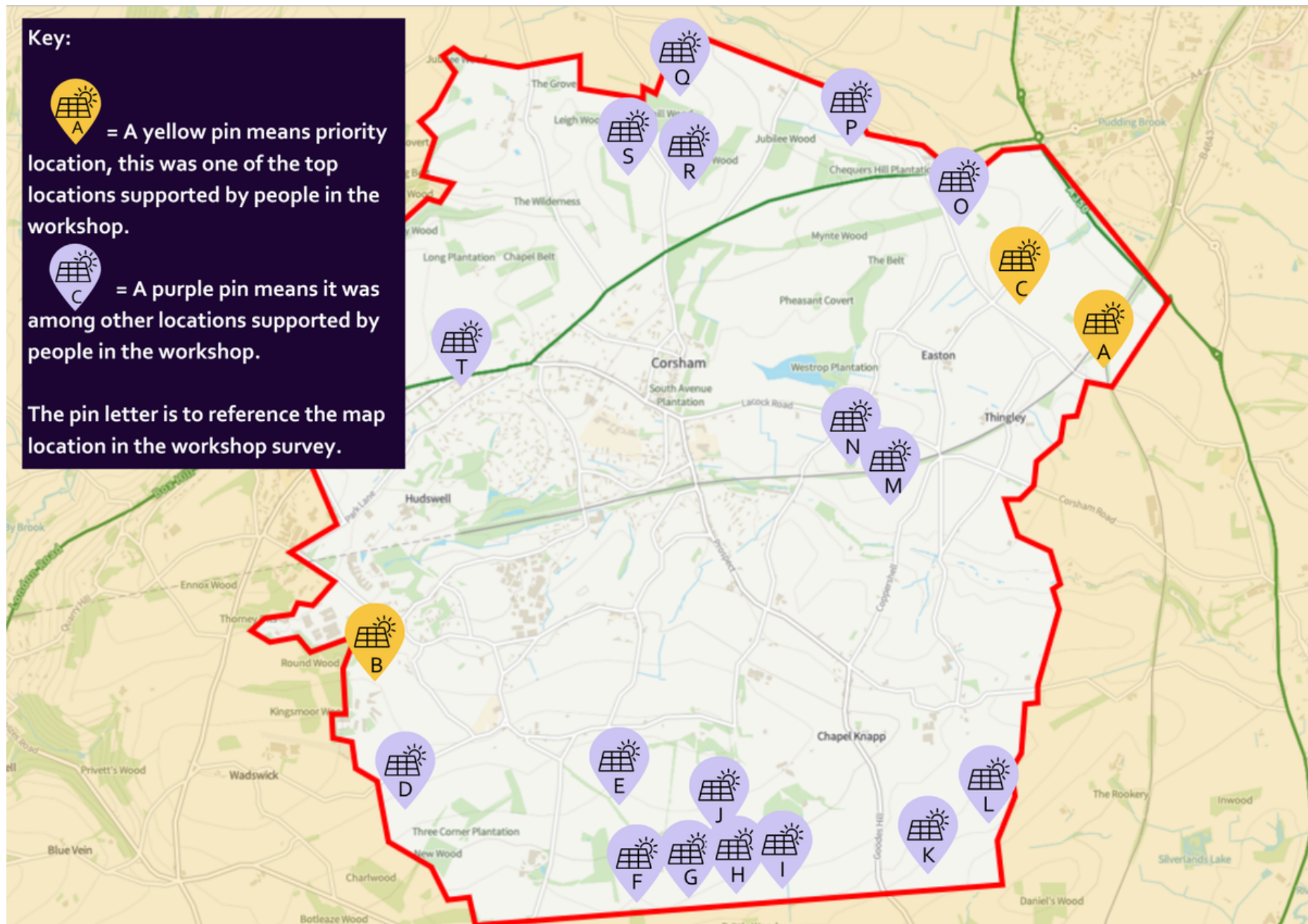
Solar farms are preferable to new housing developments.

Solar farms should be spread out to minimise the visual impact in one area for those who live nearby.

There is a planned expansion at Ark Data Centre near site B (one of the priority sites) - this is deemed unpopular and solar could be a preferable alternative. The same applies for brownfield industrial sites.

Land ownership is a big factor. Further engagement is needed with land owners and neighbouring parishes and villages.

Suggested locations - solar farms

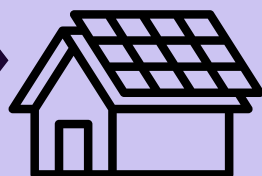
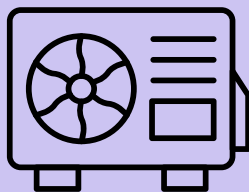


Building technology projections



We estimated* the impact of future renewable technologies on both domestic and non-domestic buildings...

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



Which would mean...

56,895 MWh generated



272 homes powered

£21 million
total cost



Main workshop thoughts shared about building technologies

Corsham has a few large industrial buildings e.g. Hudswell and Leaffield. If these had solar then other big scale options might not be needed. They have high energy use so should consider generating more. Same for MoD and Ark Data Centre.

All commercial buildings should be generating their own energy.

All new housing developments should include rooftop solar but currently they do not. Look out for upcoming changes in the Future Homes Standard autumn 2025.

There are listed buildings and a conservation area in Corsham which could impact rooftop solar and heat pumps.

Batteries are not included in the calculations but could make building technologies more effective.

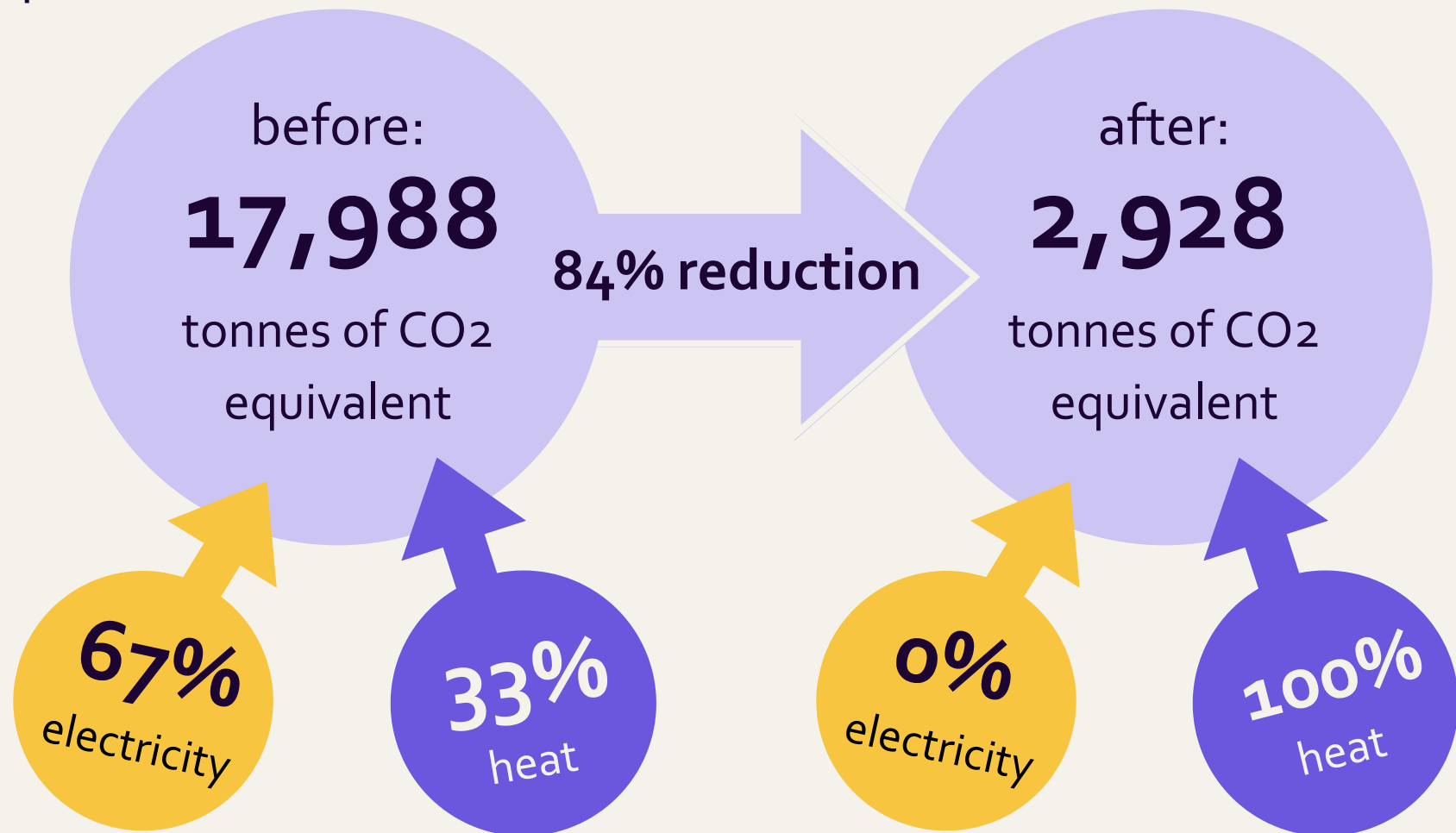
**These percentages were pre-populated based on NGED's 2024 Future Energy Scenarios for viable building related technologies. They were not chosen by workshop participants.*



Impact of choices

This page shows the current carbon emissions in Corsham from electricity and heating use. It then shows how much those emissions would be reduced if the technology suggested in the workshop was built and installed.

The annual carbon emissions of Corsham before and after the suggested technologies from the workshop





Suggestions for community benefit

This page shows some suggestions made by participants on how the community of Corsham might benefit from a renewable energy project that is owned by the community. Most options use revenue from the site to reinvest in community projects.

Community share
offer or benefit
fund

Subsidies for
people who live in
close vicinity of a
renewables site

Home
improvements e.g.
insulation, solar
panels, heat
pumps

Community
improvements e.g.
flood prevention,
new facilities

Green
prescriptions -
community
allotments and
gardens

Consider if savings
from renewable
generation could
offset Precept
payment

Funding for travel
e.g. bike hire
scheme, bus
improvements,
electric bus

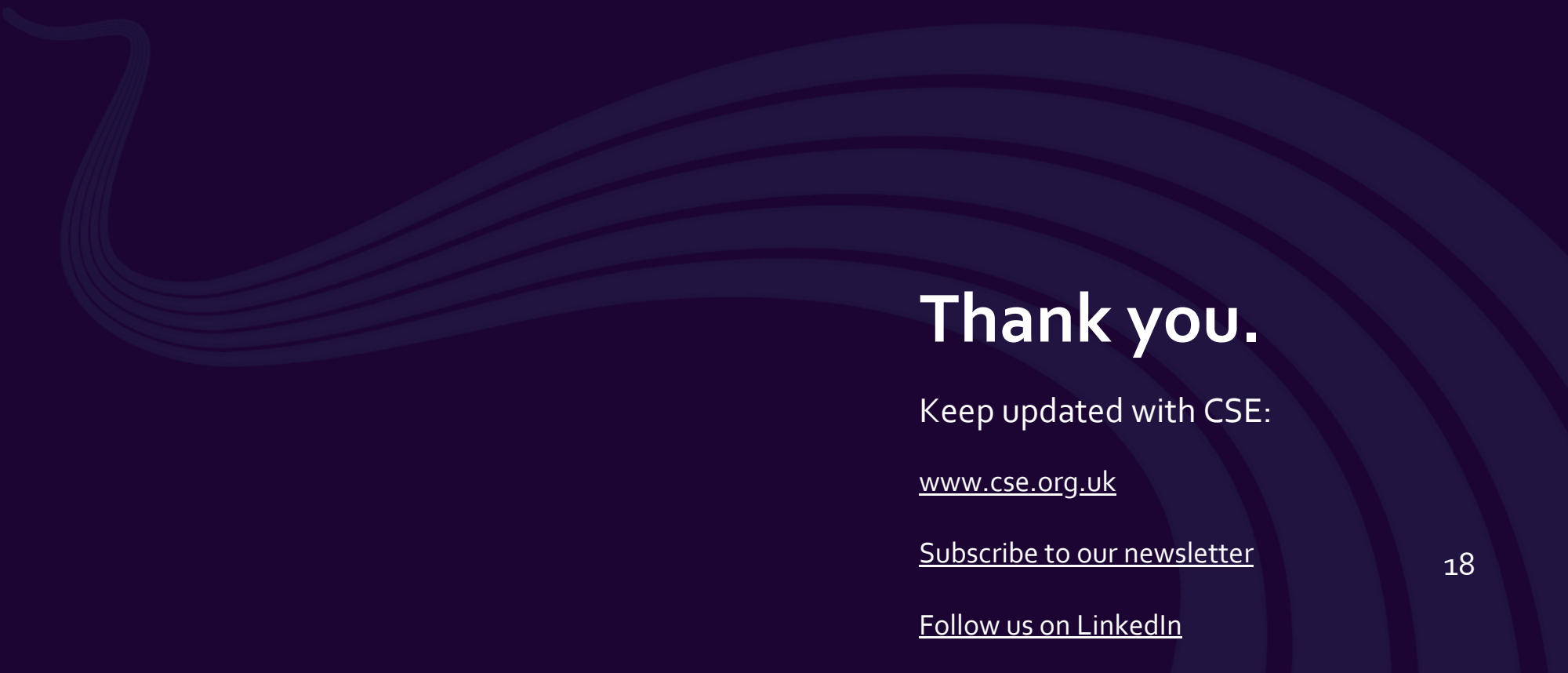
Funding for
'outside of school'
education
programmes

Fund new
community energy
projects

Energy awareness
programmes to
help people use
less energy at
home

Improve social
housing for people
living in fuel
poverty

Develop a
community hub
for support with
health and
wellbeing



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