



Local MP drops in on Devon's new community solar farm

9 March 2020 South West Devon MP Sir Gary Streeter paid a visit on Friday to newly built Creacombe Solar Farm near Yealmpton, South Devon.

The project is the UK's first subsidy-free community solar farm, and has been developed with support from local group Yealm Community Energy (YCE), some of whose members were on hand to show Sir Gary around.

The visit was organised by Plymouth Energy Community to facilitate the MP's understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented by the government's commitment to achieve a Net Zero future.

The 7.3MW solar farm will save approximately 2,000 tonnes of carbon per year and generate enough green electricity to supply the equivalent of around 2,440 homes.

YCE plans to launch an investment offer this summer to enable the community to invest directly in Creacombe along with another nearby operational solar farm, Newton Downs. The combined output from both solar farms will be enough to power the equivalent of all the households in the five local parishes of Newton & Noss, Holbeton, Yealmpton, Wembury and Brixton.

Sir Gary Streeter MP said: *"We are lucky to be in one of the sunniest parts of the UK here in the South Hams – so I'm very pleased that Creacombe community solar farm is now connected to the grid, helping provide enough solar power for the equivalent of all the homes in the five parishes served by Yealm Community Energy. Community-owned renewable energy projects like these can give every person a genuine stake in the UK's net zero future, and I hope that when the investment offer is launched later this year it is a huge success. Creacombe Solar Farm is a bold and pioneering project that can lead the way for a real step-change in the UK."*

Peter Brown, Yealm Community Energy Chair, said: *"We are very pleased that Gary Streeter is taking an interest in Creacombe, and recognises it as a great example of a community energy business demonstrating the scale of activity already happening in his constituency. Our two local solar farms underline how all communities can play a part in tackling the Climate Emergency, while also generating a surplus that can be spent in the area on more carbon-reducing initiatives."*

Construction of Creacombe solar farm was completed at the end of January. The solar farm is split into two parts: 60 percent of the site is expected to receive a small subsidy in the form of one of the last Community Feed-in Tariffs for which it was pre-accredited, while the remaining

40 percent is subsidy-free, making it the first subsidy-free community ground-mount solar to be built in the UK.

Last week the government launched a consultation on allowing ground-mount solar and onshore wind farms back into the Contracts for Difference scheme, which supports renewable energy projects by allowing them to compete in auctions for a guaranteed minimum price.

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