

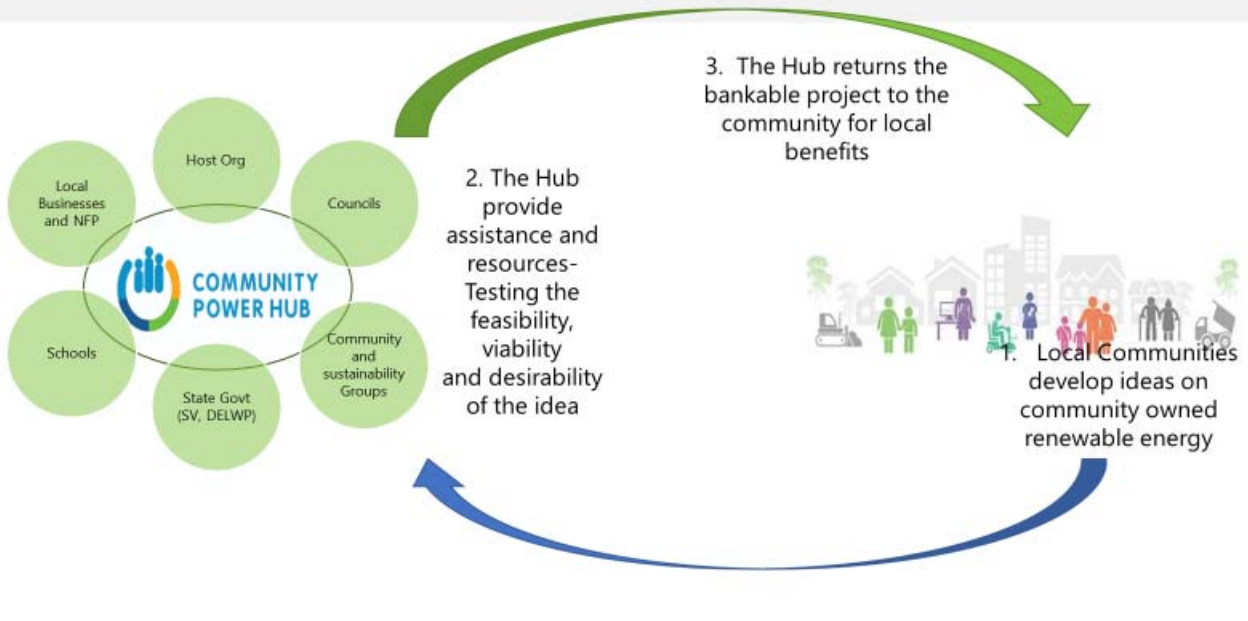


Recommendation

The Government continues to support community-based power hubs in developing community energy solutions for local communities.



What is a Community Power Hub?



Pilot Community Power Hub achievements

15

Community energy projects built

1.35MW

Renewable energy installed

1,705MWH

Renewable energy generated per year

\$364k

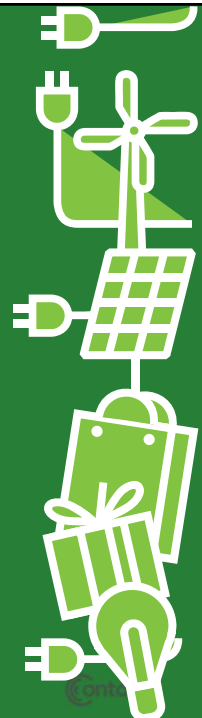
In bill savings per annum

\$9.1m

In bill savings over 25 year lifecycle

1,839tCO₂

Carbon emissions abated per year



Pilot Community Power Hub achievements

\$14.5m

Of value generated within the 2-year pilot period

13-1

leverage on government investment

\$25.6m

Lifecycle value of projects completed during pilot

20k+

Connections made in community

114

Meetings and public events held

200

Businesses and organisations engaged



- The opportunities for community power are literally unlimited.

Examples include:

- Hepburn Wind.
- Licola – a complete off grid town.
- Yinnar Art Resources Collective.
- 150kW on an aged care centre in Geelong.
- Bendigo Library.



Community Power Hub

The Community Power Hub has proven to be an important methodology to encourage, design, develop and assist in the development of numerous community projects.

But there is one consistent issue...

The Problem

- Many groups do not have the skills to design, scope, model, finance, procure and project manage a community energy project.
- The Community Power Hubs have had to develop methodologies and processes to deliver these.
 - Finance remains a problem – many projects are small (<\$4M) which does not attract large scale investors such as Superannuation funds.
 - Using a Special Purpose Vehicle will allow funding of up to \$200k with a maximum of 20 investors. This is still difficult and incurs significant legal fees.
 - Larger scale investments needing a prospectus and shareholders is unlikely to be an option for most groups.



But there is one consistent issue...

The Solution

- We have proposed the development of a Community Energy Fund that would aggregate projects to attract larger investors.
- Such a fund would need one-off seed funding of \$250k. This would be waived if more than \$4M in projects are in the pipeline.
 - The fund manager would take on the financial modelling, sourcing funding and legal compliance for all aspects the projects.
 - The Community Power Hubs would take on the role of the Asset Manager providing the design, scope, procurement, project management and ongoing monitoring. This provides an income to the hubs and potential for reinvestment.
- We have approached the government seeking this funding and would welcome the panel's support.



Recommendations

Programs are developed to assist the community in retrofitting existing housing stock with subsidies made available – especially to lo income families

Development and encouragement of a single reputable, scoring mechanism for energy efficiency to encourage increased property value based on energy footprints and ongoing energy costs



Scorecard Assessments

56 homes assessed using 3 local assessors. 35 made significant retrofits to their homes.

Background

Sustainability Victoria's report,
Comprehensive Energy Efficiency
Retrofits to Existing Victorian Houses:

- \$12-13,000 upgrades
- Avg annual energy bill savings \$663
- Avg g'house gas reduction 2.045 tonnes
- Wider societal benefits through better health, reduced peak demand, greenhouse savings would be at least three times more than the energy bill savings.

Got Bill Shock?? 

Take back control!
Our expert assessors will show you how.

We're trusted, local, accredited assessors serving Gippsland.

We use Scorecard, a home energy star rating system developed by the Victorian government.

Count on us for a personalised, prioritised plan that will cut your energy bills AND make your home more comfy year round.

Call now on 1800 839 007 to book an assessment.
Satisfaction guaranteed - see our website for details.

www.energisegippsland.org Find us on:   

 **GCCN**
GIPPSLAND CLIMATE CHANGE NETWORK

The Current System

- A 6 star NatHERS is the worst home you are legally allowed to build.
- Vic Govt has developed Scorecard- another star rating tool that is more closely aligned to comfort and cost issues that people understand.
- Scorecard needs to be promoted and used more. There is a huge latent need.
- Trajectory for low energy existing homes is proceeding from Federal level but is very slow.
- Solar Victoria is established and flying

The Solution

- Gradually introduce a mandatory Scorecard assessment with every Solar Victoria rebate awarded. Consider adding more retrofit options for rebate money based on Scorecard advice.
 - Perhaps by postcode initially
 - Promotes Scorecard
 - More jobs for retrofit industry
 - Known household and society wide benefits.

Recommendations

Investment in programs that change attitudes and not just infrastructure. As a community's ability to realise a low carbon future requires a communication plan to educate, debate, and lead through transitions.



- Unplanned transitions can overwhelm
- Cultural shift has not been addressed
- Resistance to new developments hinder progress, reduce benefits and lose opportunities
- Meaningful conversation can diffuse resistance, break down barriers, limit propagation of misinformation, build public involvement and support
- No 'one size fits all' local context and local leadership is essential
- Best outcomes: effective engagement, build trust, feelings of ownership, sense of empowerment, community building



Communities Leading Change

Recommendation

The Government needs to support not-for-profit environmental groups located within their communities to lead this cultural change.



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Thank you



INFORMING
CONNECTING
ACTING