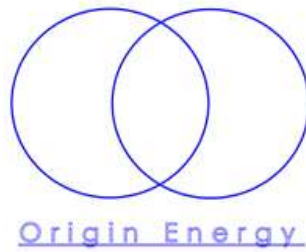


Towards Community Structures



Community

Sustainable living is more than just buying green products and recycling waste. Sustainable living is having regard to the whole continuum of society, past, present and future and its place in the natural environment. To search for a more sustainable life-style means that we believe that living prosperously is possible within the resources available to us. It encompasses all our activities, hopes and dreams for the future. To believe that a sustainable life-style exists means that we believe it is for everyone: sustainability means prosperity for everyone. In this respect, community is our connectedness through our actions for a shared prosperity. Community implies that what we can do together is of more benefit than what we can do individually.

Studies have shown that democratic structures and procedure in all areas of society, not only in the political system, are preconditions for effective environmental policy.

the fundamental driver of sustainable development must be democratic debate - decisions reached through open discussion, consensus based on shared goals and trust. Sustainable development needs representative democracy that is trusted and vibrant, and new forms of participatory democracy to compliment it that can inspire greater engagement by citizens in creating a better world.

Alongside the concept of capacity building is the idea of social capital. This factor tries to describe the importance of collective community intelligence and the links between different sectors of a community. And perhaps of over-riding importance is the observation that in order to be successful, communities need access to resources.

Origin Energy

Origin Energy was established as a Community Interest Company whose aim is to help communities and local governments in Yorkshire and Humberside to live a more prosperous and sustainable life-style.

Its strategy is to raise funds on behalf of communities through the sale of renewable energy and to establish ways in which this revenue can be spent to promote longer term prosperity for the community. In relation to the initiatives outlined above, it aims to promote participatory democracy in environmental matters and make available to communities the resources that they may need to achieve their aims.

We want assist communities to:

- get access to finance
- get access to markets
- get access to information
- get access to knowledge

In this way and through participatory structures we hope to:

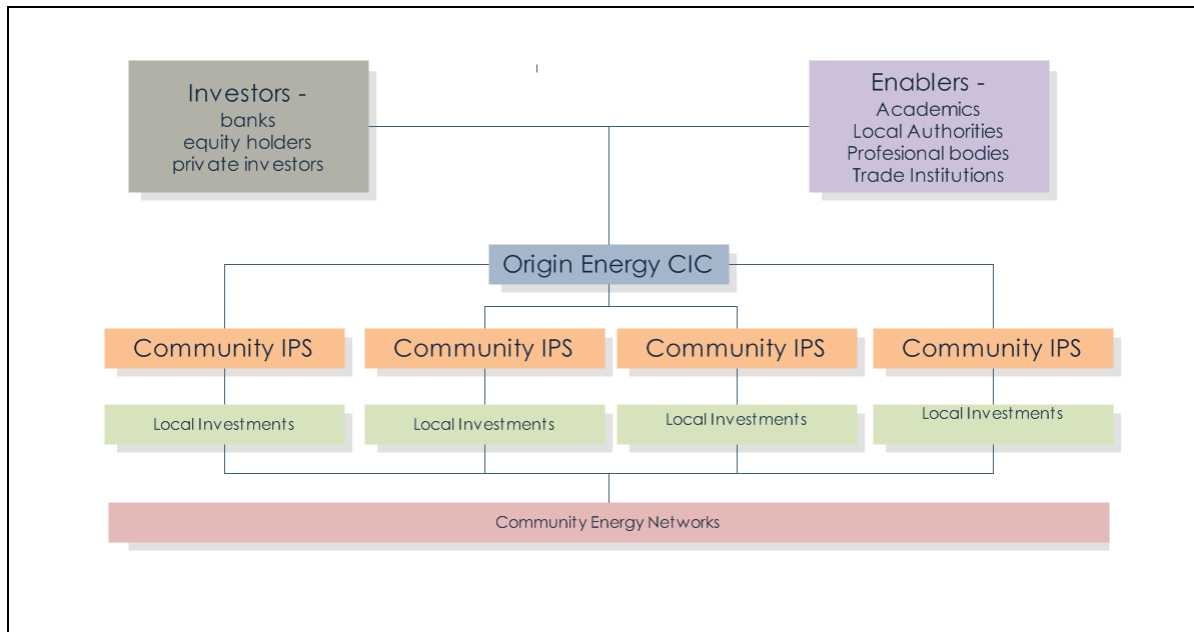
- encourage communities to be responsible for their own energy creation and management
- to foster the requirements of communities to live sustainably within their own environment
- to support the up-take of sustainable construction and refurbishment
- to enjoy community living

The tools for achieving these goals include

- assessment of local land for siting wind turbines, sized for the needs of the particular community
- providing and establishing an autonomous community structure to oversee investments in local sustainability needs from the energy revenues
- acting as a connection between national and local government strategies and communities
- offering expert advice with regard to:
 - ~ energy creation, usage and savings to homes and businesses
 - ~land-use and planning issues
 - ~ecological footprinting and strategies
 - ~minimizing environmental impacts of business activities

A family of Communities

The Company Structure is envisaged as follows:



The operation of the turbines, their maintenance and administration plus overall long-term support will be provided by Origin Energy. However, a separate Industrial and Provident Society owned by the community would be established to administer the investment process. The aim is to promote democracy and social capital building for the benefit of the local environment.

It is expected that several approaches could be viable:

- longer term community sustainable issues relevant to that community
- sustainability issues relevant to all the communities in the network
- knowledge and skill sharing through the community network
- introduction of outside consultancies and contractors who could help the communities with specific tasks
- the establishment of a sustainable economy through community allowances.

Investment in longer term projects would require allocating funds and perhaps trying to attract further funding for the community. Investment would also be required in knowledge structures and the participatory organisation.