

Frequently Asked Questions about Energy Local

1. What are the benefits?

a. What's in it for me?

Joining your Energy Local Club has many benefits:

- Keeping money in the local community - stimulating the local economy
- Saving you money on your bills
- Supporting local renewable energy – creating a greener country and supporting the community.
- Ensuring that a bigger proportion of your electricity supply is generated from local renewable energy

b. How does the local community benefit?

Through Energy Local, participants in other clubs generally pay ~11-18p/kWh when they match their electricity use to the local generation, compared to ~7-10p/kWh normally received by a generator. The price benefits the generator, by increasing its income and keeping it within the community. It is also cheaper for participants than a normal electricity price. Our current estimations are that Southwell Energy Local Club members would get their electricity at about 40% less than 100 Green's variable time of use tariff when matching consumption with generation.

c. How much will I save?

This will be different from household to household and will depend on how you match your energy use to the local generation and the amount of peak and off-peak electricity you use. We estimate you could save around 10% - 30% on your electricity bills.

To achieve the biggest savings, remember these three key points:

- Do the things you can, to be more energy efficient
- Match your electricity use to times when your share of the local generation is likely to be bigger.
- Reduce the amount of electricity you use at peak times.

Note for households with solar panels and a battery system

- If you already have solar panels and a battery, and/or are consuming very little electricity from the grid (or only consuming it overnight at the cheapest prices), you may find that you won't save anything by being in the club. However you will be able to ensure that more of the electricity that you do import is generated locally, especially on windy nights or cloudy

windy days, when the wind turbine is spinning but your solar panels are not generating!

2. Tariffs explained

a. What is a Match Tariff?

This is when it is possible to match all of the electricity you use to locally-generated electricity- the Match Tariff is set by the club.

b. What is a Time of Use Tariff?

A "Time of Use Tariff" applies when club members are using more electricity than the amount generated locally. This extra electricity will be priced differently depending on the time of day – it will be cheaper overnight and more expensive at tea time.

3. Using Local Renewable Electricity

a. Why is my electricity cheaper when I match it up to a local renewable generation?

Along with local households, a local renewable energy generator is also a member of the Club. The Club agrees upon a price that households will pay for the electricity they use when the local renewable energy is being generated. This price will be higher than what the local renewable generator would normally receive, but lower than what the households would normally pay. So, everyone wins!

b. How will I save money by using local renewable electricity?

You will have a smart meter which will measure how much electricity you use every half an hour. The electricity you use when your local renewables are generating will be the cheapest electricity on offer to you as a member of your Energy Local Club.

c. What is my share of the locally-generated renewable electricity?

The renewable electricity generated locally will be shared equally between the Energy Club households using electricity at the time. Sometimes your share will be enough to cover all the electricity you are using at that time. At other times you will be buying a mix of electricity from the locally-generated renewable energy at the Match Price, and electricity on the Time of Use Tariff. By shifting your electricity usage to off-peak times it's more likely that your share of the locally-generated

renewable energy available will cover the amount of electricity you are using. The balance between the amount of electricity you buy at the Match Price vs the Time of Use Tariff depends on the total amount of power being generated and how big your share of that power is.

e. How will I know when my electricity use is matching the renewable generation?

You will have a smart meter fitted which measures how much electricity you are using every half an hour. So you will be able to show when you have been using power when the local renewable energy was being generated. You will also be able to view your **Energy Dashboard** on a smartphone or laptop. It will give you a forecast of how much power will come from the local renewable energy each day, so you will have an idea in advance of how much of your use could be matched to it.

f. I have solar panels on my house, can I become a generator for the Energy Local Club?

Not within current regulations, unless you are generating more than 15kw and not using this yourself. However you can of course export any spare electricity directly to an Energy company, see g.

g. Can I continue to export the spare electricity from my solar panels even if I am in the Energy Local club?

Yes. You can either export this to 100 Green, or you can sell it to another energy company. You are not obliged to export electricity to the same company that you import it from. However, you may get a better rate if you are importing and exporting with the same company.

h. I have a battery system with solar panels. Can I charge them with locally generated electricity?

Yes, it is up to you when you charge your batteries, and whether this is from your own generated electricity or from electricity you buy in. However, if you are currently charging them overnight using cheaper electricity, you may find that this is more cost effective than using locally generated electricity through the club to charge them.

4. Shifting Electricity Usage

a. Why is it important to try to reduce peak-time electricity use?

To make the most of being part of your Energy Local Club, it will be important to make an effort to reduce the amount of electricity you use at peak times (breakfast and evening) as these are the most expensive. If the generator is operating there will be some local power but these times are typically when electricity use is greatest, so your share of the local renewable energy is less likely to cover all your electricity use at this time.

By shifting your electricity use to other times of day, you will avoid high Time of Use Tariff prices and your share of local renewable generation is likely to cover more of your usage.

b. What kinds of things can I do to shift my electricity use away from peak times?

Many of the actions you can take are simple – such as running your dishwasher, washing machine, charging an electric car at off-peak times of the day.

5. Who can take part?

a. I'm a small business, can I be part of the Energy Local Club?

Yes. Please enter your details into the portal and indicate that you are a small business.

b. Can I take part if I don't live in the Southwell substation area (Brinkley, Fiskerton cum Morton, Maythorne, Normanton, Upton, Hockerton and Southwell)?

There are currently no clubs developing in neighbouring substation areas but you can still register with Energy Local or provide us with your details and we can connect you up with anyone else from your area who might be considering working to set up a club up.

c. Must I own my home?

No, but you must be the person paying the electricity bill. If you pay rent with bills included or someone else pays your bill, then you can always suggest that they join Energy Local.

d. I am on Economy 7, can I join in?

Yes, but you will need to have a smart meter fitted and move to the Time of Use Tariff with everyone else. Electricity during the night will still be cheaper but there will be three tariffs instead of two.

e. I am on a pre-payment meter, can I join in?

Not yet. Energy Local is hoping to include prepayment in the next few months so you can still register your interest on the website and they will keep you informed.

d. Can I leave my Energy Local Club?

Yes. If for unforeseen circumstances you need to leave, you can move to 100 Green's standard tariff or switch supplier.

e. Are there any additional requirements to be a member of the Club? Do I have to help run the Energy Local Club or contribute in anyway

You do not have to help run the Club or contribute time, although you are welcome to be involved (e.g. attending the annual general meeting if you can, promoting the club to others, or even joining the steering committee). Energy Local CIC also ask all members to answer a survey about once a year.

6. Changing electricity suppliers

a. Do I have to change suppliers?

Yes, you will have to change to 100 Green, the supplier working with Southwell Area Energy Local Club.

b. Do I have to change my gas to the same supplier too?

No, you can stick with your existing gas supplier if you wish and if they offer a gas only tariff. However, 100 Green offers a dual fuel option and it is the only UK supplier of 100% green gas (produced from anaerobic biodigesters).

c. Will I still pay a standing charge for my electricity use?

Yes. The amount you pay will be published on the Club's page on the Energy Local Portal, once it has been confirmed. The standing charge will be slightly higher to cover the extra admin that comes from being in the club.

d. How will I be billed?

100 Green will send you your bill for everything. You'll pay via direct debit.

e. What's a smart meter and why do I need one?

A smart meter measures how much electricity and gas you are using every half an hour and sends the information to your supplier without you needing to read the meter. You will need to have a smart meter so that your supplier can ensure you are charged the correct prices.

Your smart meter will be fitted by the supplier and you will not be charged. The smart meter will remain where it is if you leave Energy Local or move house.

You will need to give permission for the electricity supplier and Energy Local CIC and partners to see your half-hourly data – you are in control.

f. What if I am on a fixed tariff with my supplier at the moment with a penalty for leaving them?

It is up to you to decide whether you want to switch to Energy Local straight away and pay the penalty.

g. What if I am coming to the end of a fixed tariff before my Club is ready to switch?

You could switch over to 100 Green in readiness for when our Energy Local club is ready to start switching over all members to the Energy Local tariffs. Alternatively if there is no penalty for leaving your existing supplier, you could stay with them until we are ready.

h. What if I move house?

Unless there is a Club where you are moving to or you are staying in your Club area, you will have to leave the Club when you move house (see below)

- Please inform the supplier that you are moving house.
- Please let the new residents know (or leave a message) that you are in the Club, give them the weblink. Please ask them to give the supplier their contact details and sign up on the portal so the Club can contact them.
- If you are moving into a house in the Club area or to another Club area: Please let your supplier know that you have moved as they will

need to fit a smart meter in your new house. As above, please tell the new residents of your old house about Energy Local.

7. The people behind the project

Energy Local Southwell Area has a team of volunteer directors. It was set up with support from Sustainable Hockerton and the Midlands Net Zero Community Energy Fund.

Energy Local CIC is an organisation based in Wales, supporting member clubs like ours to set up.