

SOLAR & WIND STORIES REPORT



University of Brighton

SOLAR AND WIND STORIES WORKSHOP CPRE AND UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON COLLABORATION BACKGROUND

Solar and Wind Stories is a partnership with CPRE Countryside Charity and University of Brighton to imagine acceptable clean energy infrastructures with rural communities in East Sussex, through collaborative making, to limit impacts of climate change. As a result of global warming future climate forecasts indicate that the UK will experience sea-level rises, coastal erosion and increased chances of extreme heat and flooding. Figures suggest, 60% of the country's Grade 1 best and most versatile land is already at high risk of flooding, with climate change expected to increase the intensity of rainfall. The move to 100% renewable energy seeks to limit these extreme weather impacts. The government have set targets for the UK to achieve net zero by 2050 and to get most of its electricity from 'clean' sources by 2030. Progress is already being made, as over fifty percent of our electricity currently comes from zero

carbon sources (Energy Trends report 2024 the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero). There is concern however on the impact that renewable energy infrastructure will have on the environment and on landscapes and nature. CPRE highlight that in the move to net zero there are choices that we can make on the use of finite land, for sustainable agriculture and nature-positive work. Bringing the public into the conversation on the challenges faced in the transition is a key issue, both in terms of concerns over the expense and location of the infrastructure needed such as solar panels and wind turbines. This report will present two case studies at Park Mead Primary School and CPRE Countryside Day, funded by the AHRC Impact Accelerator and the Centre for Arts and Wellbeing at the University of Brighton and supported in kind by CPRE. Through collaborative making, the workshop participants considered how clean

energy structures could be integrated in the environment for sustainable place making. Much of the early industrial revolution was built on clean energy however according to Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, our history in renewable energy "...shows a past rich in neglected technological paths and unrealized potentialities." (Bonneuil and Fressoz, 2017, *The Shock of the Anthropocene*, London, NY: 110). Our heritage and connection to solar power is evident in the Sussex landscape in the Longman of Wilmington, while its providence is questioned. One of the suggested origins is that it was used as a sun map for rural communities. In addition, the history of wind power is visible in the many windmills that populate the Sussex landscape, and they have been captured and celebrated as idyllic scenes by artists such as JMW Turner through "Drawings of the Windmill by the River Ouse: Lewes Castle in the Distance" c.1806-10.

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Park Mead Primary School

The Solar and Wind Stories research project is funded by the AHRC Impact Accelerator Account (IAA) and the Centre for Arts and Wellbeing at University of Brighton. The aim was to develop dialogical workshops to engage with the local community to imagine acceptable clean energy landscapes for the future through collaborative making using traditional and digital tools.

Case Study

In July 2025 we set up a pilot project with Park Mead School to engage in discussion through collaborative making on climate change and the changes needed to ensure that we have a sustainable energy infrastructure in the local community for clean energy. Working with a class of 25 pupils, in small groups the participants were provided with a 2D template to create a 3D house, and through discussion, the children developed designs using collage, organic form, rubbings images and Turmeric Anthotype (a photogram or light sensitive imprint) to collectively create their village powered by clean solar energy. Pupils were also asked to document an imagined future village with ideas on how animals and humans might live and flourish together in the local environment. These ideas were to be developed as Augmented Reality (AR) animations following the workshop. A video example of AR was shown to pupils during the session. These examples built on previous AR research by the team.

The pupils were each given a net of a house, with collage materials. The collaborative nature of the making activity encouraged the sharing of ideas on the best placement of renewables in the local environment.

The day started with a presentation where the research team introduced renewable energy and asked questions to explore the pupils' existing knowledge. The group were engaged and happy to answer questions about the concepts of renewable energy and sustainability. They had good knowledge and vocabulary in this area. The pupils spoke about solar (big and small thinking, for example, about their garden lights), wind, carbon dioxide, fossil fuels and global warming. There was a consensus in the classroom that renewable energy was needed, though some commented on the prohibitive expense and the space requirement for the infrastructure needed to make the transition. Others suggested that reliance on solar power may be hindered by seasonal changes and the reduction of sunlight in winter. The session built on the pupils existing knowledge of renewables by talking about nature using animal and bug facts, developing each pupil's vocabulary of 'care for nature' and

highlighting the importance of humans acting responsibly to protect the natural world and its resources for the benefit of all living things. Some of the pupils began to talk about quite complex ideas around a regulated approach and the idea of a government top-down approach.

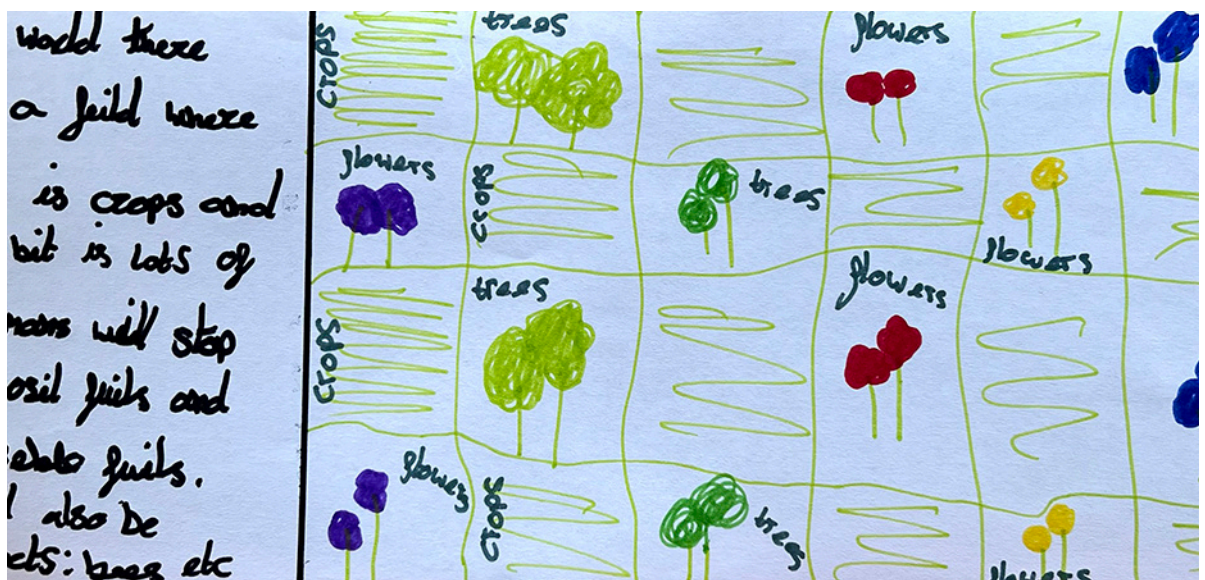
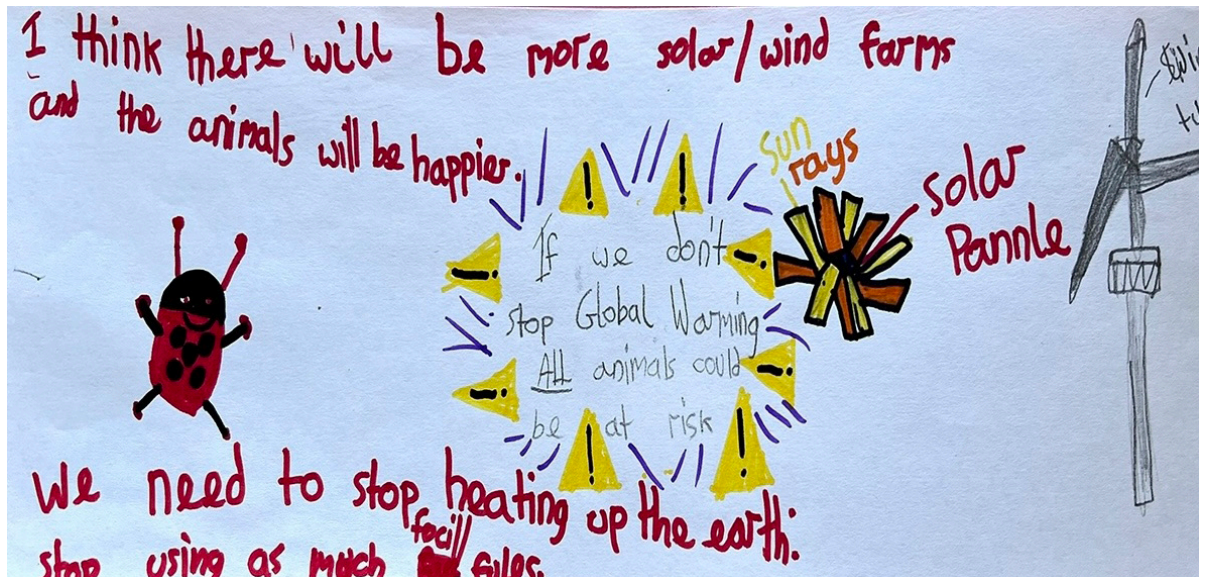
The next activity involved the children creating their own Turmeric Anthotype, harnessing the power of the sun to create a light sensitive print with natural objects. Children were provided with Turmeric Anthotype paper and packs of pressed and dried leaves, flowers and feathers to create an arrangement of their own choosing. Children were very excited about doing this and engaged in focused ways to create their unique pieces. These were then exposed to strong sunlight in the school playground for most of the school day, and after a few hours they were washed in a solution of bicarbonate of soda to enhance the final print.

After the morning break pupils were introduced to the activity of decorating the net of a house. They were asked to decorate it in a way that was important to them and to consider whether to include solar panels in their design. The pupils were given prints of flowers and solar panels and were encouraged to use objects to make rubbings to then cut out and decorate their houses with the collage materials. The collaborative nature of the making activity helped to promote reciprocal discussion and sharing of ideas. Groups worked and chatted about different aspects of their houses and shared their knowledge of climate and renewables. One pupil speaking about her Grandad's car explained it as being 'a car that has [...] coming out of it' – not electric. The group then started to talk about making a house for the pupil's grandad by decorating to help combat the environmental impact of the car. Another table, worked out the process together, following each other's lead. Some tables heavily used flowers and stencils only for the walls. Other tables created a mix of solar and nature, together as they decorated. All the students added solar panels to their roofs. The pupils were engaged with the activity, and it created and prompted conversation. All pupils were considering the aesthetics of the houses – they all commented on how important the solar panels and the environment was, but they said that the houses had to 'look good' and often reflected their interests and identity.



The pupils were asked to draw images of their ideal future village; all 25 imagined aspects of a sustainable world, 13 wanted clean energy, and 13 wanted a sustainable ecosystem, 6 envisaged stopping the use of fossil fuels. 3 wanted no more pollution and 2 wanted to stop litter and rubbish. 3 responses related to the sea, "I think that trawlers should be banned because I want a world without a polluted sea and ocean so no more coral bleaching is affecting the wildlife in the sea". One mentioned crop rotation, 11 care for nature including, "I want my future world to have more trees and for people to stop destroying nature so there's less endangered species". Another pupil wanted free access to clean energy, "Let it stay summer and everyone will get a solar panel for free and lovely

habitats for animals so they can live happy life [with] power games [with] technology". Another participant wrote "Stop eating up the world all clean energy, [I would like] more greenery and plants more happy people taking care of [the] earth and energy sources, more fruit and vegetable and farms and animal life." 4 pupils wanted more electric cars, "Environment friendly world becomes a better place, plant trees and flowers and many different plants for animals also solar panels and electric powered cars", and 4 raised issues over use of plastics and another 4 over pollution, "Less pollution, less plastic and dumping rubbish, more winter turbines more electric cars use more biodegradable plastics, or won't be any sea animals". 4 pupils mentioned recycling and "animal friendly clothes".



The Pupils visualised their ideal future village and the inhabitants who would flourish there. These speculative narratives informed Augmented Reality stories linked to the model village, visible on a mobile phone.

Pupils were engaged in making and talking about solar and wind energy infrastructures and where to place them, where would work in their community and where would not work. They all collaged solar panels on the roofs of their model houses.



In the afternoon session the students finished the decorating of their houses and, with instruction, then began to construct their houses. Everyone was working at different rates. The children who had finished were given maps of their village and asked to map out where they thought renewable energy sources should be located and why. On the tables, most joined in even if they were still working on their houses. There were different approaches to where different sources of renewable energy should be located. Some felt that it should be equally spread out, with wind farms located equally around the map (although not so many in wooded areas) seemingly aware of the tensions of wind farms with local residents, whilst also grappling with knowing that there are benefits too. Others considered carefully the existing use of the land or the vicinity to their homes, with some wanting solar farms closer so that they could use the energy, just not on the fields where their horses lived! At the end of the day all the houses were gathered and placed at the front to form a village of houses with the school, town hall and church also included in the model. A small group of girls stayed in the room admiring and reflecting on the creations – some talked about their favourite houses, explaining how they liked them because of the decorations, colour or mix of solar and floral pieces.

Through a range of activities pupils had been introduced to different ideas around the natural world and renewable energy. This had enabled them to discuss the role that nature plays in the world around them and they demonstrated awareness of the importance of renewable energy and the challenges around renewable energy in the landscape and the tensions with nature. As the day had progressed, we built a

good relationship with the pupils and had begun to touch upon some of the many areas and challenges to renewable energy and the natural world. However, what was important is that the pupils were able to share what was important to them through their creations, surveys and drawings of future worlds. Together these methods triangulate to show insights into pupils' views on renewable energy infrastructures and sustainability in the local environment.

QUESTIONNAIRES

We took a mixed method, qualitative and quantitative approach to the research, and the pupils completed a questionnaire at the end of the day. The results support and add to our observations through making. Pupils responded positively to the idea of using solar and wind to make energy, (24 out of 25), however the responses were split in relation to wind and solar in their local environment, with 12 positive responses, and 4 negative responses, the latter of which all related to concerns over the limited space available in and around the village. Nine pupils demonstrated some uncertainty; of those three were worried about space, two expressed concerns over the negative impacts on animals, two were concerned about possible negative public opinion, and one was worried about the expense of transitioning to clean energy.



In the classroom we set up a model of Upper Dicker village complete with civic buildings such as the church, shop and village hall. Pupils were asked to place their houses in the model village.

Pupils were asked what would not work. Eleven thought that there was not enough space, three were concerned about the noise levels of wind turbines, one was concerned that wildlife would be disturbed, three said that watermills were unworkable and one that electric cars will not work. One participant commented that clean energy structures are incongruous in a rural landscape, saying “I don’t think that high-tech things would be very nice in this old village”.

Pupils were asked if the process of making or viewing the artwork helped them discuss how turbines and solar panels might be positioned locally and the response was overwhelming positive with 23 affirming responses, one “don’t know”, and one negative, where the pupil commented, “not really but I did enjoy making the houses”. Positive comments included eleven who said that it helped their understanding, “Yes, it made me understand so it should help others”, another responded that “It made me look deeper into the situation”.

Pupils were asked whether art is a good medium to help talk through the challenges and benefits and problems of moving towards

solar and wind energy use. Again, a significant majority responded positively, 13 commented that it helped their understanding including, “Yes, because it sort of gives a visual of what is happening”, and “Yes, it helps the brain understand”. Another wrote that it had prompted discussion before the session, “It did because I put it on the houses and was talking to my father about it” and another on the benefits of talking and making, “Yes, because we were discussing it”. One negative comment focused on the restriction of adding solar panels only to one house, one did not know and a third said, “No it’s just fun.”

When asked about barriers to clean energy, 13 pupils commented on concerns over the available space, three had financial concerns and two that it would take too much time to transition to clean energy. There were concerns about the rural environment. One said that farms should be avoided, and another respondent was concerned about the negative impact on animals. Other comments included concerns over the cost, logistics and public opinion. One participant wrote, “It’s expensive and some people don’t like it”, another was concerned over impacts of the





Pupils were given maps of Upper Dicker village and they were asked to consider where else the solar panels and wind turbines could be placed, where would work and where would not.

timeline of the transition, “It takes a long time and [they] might shut the road which can make people angry”. Others were concerned over space in the village “There might not be enough room to put them in certain places”, and another wanted the infrastructure to avoid farmland and the village “Keep them away from the farms and the place itself”. Another raised issues of cost “You will have to pay a lot of money to get it built” and another raised concerns of animal welfare, and after “Animals could get scared, hurt and lose their homes” another noted that there is a solar farm nearby, “We’ve already got a solar farm”.

When asked if there is there an ideal position for wind turbines or solar panels in the area that they live, there were thirteen positive comments amongst the suggestions, seven thought high ground was ideal, three mentioned roofs, one the ocean, and one a lorry as a portable solution. Seven respondents were weakly negative either stating that they did not know or were unsure

and there were three negative comments. Affirmative statements included the sea as an ideal location, “Ocean because there is space and it has to be windy”, and more nuanced responses indicating that only less fertile farmland would be acceptable, “Yes, in the unused field, not prime farmland”. Roof tops for solar panels were suggested, “On the roofs of houses and in empty fields”. There were some specific ideas for locations in the local environment included, “By Arlington reservoir”, “Behind the Downs” and the portable solution, “Yes, you should make a solar panel lorry next to the Wilmington Longman East Sussex”. The weakly negative comments included “No, not really as there’s not open grass and in my other house it’s on the main road” and “No, not in particularly”. One negative comment included “No, because I live next to tons of buses busy roads like the A22”, and another demonstrated reluctance to have the structures in their local environment, writing, “Not near me”.

Participants responded positively to the process of making in facilitating group discussion and as an aide to thinking more deeply and understanding. The responses were positive overall to renewable energy, but there were concerns over placement of the structures in the rural community in terms of available and appropriate space, cost, public opinion and negative impacts on animals. The responses demonstrate a range of insights and nuanced ideas and perspectives.

Pupils were able to respond in a variety of ways through making, discussion, and drawing providing an inclusive and accessible activity for all to actively engage. The research demonstrates that young people can contribute to nuanced discussions on the clean energy transition. The variety of methods used for participation enabled opportunities for pupils to explore ideas in different ways so that a diverse range of pupils could enact agency to contribute their ideas.

This mixed method approach provided data extracted from the discussions, artwork, and questionnaires which was triangulated to form our conclusions. We were keen to build on this collaborative framework method to work with mixed age groups and families, to bring communities into clean energy transition discussions, so we were delighted to have the opportunity to deliver the workshop to family groups at CPRE Countryside Day, Knepp Estate.

CPRE Countryside Day, Knepp Estate

Following the success of the Park Mead Primary School Workshop, CPRE invited us to deliver dialogical workshops at the Countryside Day at Knepp Estate rewilding project to test the concept of working with mixed age groups to ask communities where renewable energy structures might be positioned in the Sussex landscape.

Case Study

The Solar and Wind Stories Workshop was delivered as part of CPRE Countryside Day at Knepp Estate on 6th September 2025 and aimed to bring children and the local community into this discussion through collaborative making, to determine the priorities of the group, possible locations for solar and wind energy infrastructures and to determine acceptable compromises. The solar stories workshops took place as part of the day between 2pm– 4pm, designed to run as two sessions with participants moving between 4 tables of activities in the space. Each table had a focus, house making, Anthotypes, storytelling, and situating in a model of the landscape which contained a set of houses and civic buildings. Participants were each provided with a template to create a 3D house.



Participants worked in groups while making to discuss the positioning of renewable energy infrastructures in the Sussex landscape.

Children and their families were eager to share their knowledge of care for nature through collaborative discussion.

Using the house template, collage, organic form, rubbings participants collectively created a future village powered by clean solar and wind energy. The workshop also offered opportunity to make photograms using Turmeric Anthotype (sun sensitive paper) and to engage in storytelling to consider care for nature. The participants outcomes were photographed as part of a physical 3D model village which was exhibited in the space and formed further opportunity for discussion about clean energy infrastructures in the local environment. The model buildings had augmented reality tags linking animations of wildlife and wind turbines in the landscape, which could be viewed on a mobile phone.

At the storytelling table, children supported by their families were eager to share their experiences and knowledge about care for nature through collaborative discussion. This was initially inspired by their interaction with a selection of soft toy animals and birds set out on the table, and bug and animal facts on coloured slides. These resources together with open questioning encouraged a reciprocal sharing of knowledge between the participants about caring

for wildlife and ways to support their survival. This was exemplified by one child explaining how they had made a gap in their garden fence to support the movement of hedgehogs. The discussion highlighted the amazing qualities of animals which people might not be aware of. This was demonstrated by one young child's detailed knowledge of a bat's use of echolocation for catching its prey, and a parent speaking about the healing properties of spiders' webs for treating open wounds based on his tropical rainforest experiences.

Responses: The adult visitors to the Countryside Day all had a strong interest in, nature, environment and the countryside, for example speaking of the importance of creating gaps in fences for wildlife to move through. The adults came with an existing knowledge and desire for change. The demographic was quite specific and targeted at this event.

The adults joined in the making, commenting that they enjoyed the chance to pause and make, and a visitor commented that this "gave us time to discuss ideas". Talking through making created an opportunity for a very relaxed conversation





Talking through making created an opportunity for a very relaxed conversation around change and environment. One visitor said, “Art and play and free conversation are a good way to learn, share and get all the ideas flowing.”.

around change and environment. Two groups of visitors commented on the power of making to create discussion and how this combination is an important tool for learning. One adult visitor said, “Art and play and free conversation are a good way to learn, share and get all the ideas flowing.” The workshop participants were in favour of moving to clean energy. A participant commented that it is a “free energy source gifted by nature [that] can be used with simple technologies”. Many of the visitors agreed that roofs were a good place for solar panels, and one participant commented that all the houses in their local community (Horsham) could be retrofitted with solar panels and that all new builds should be fitted with solar panels. However, many participants raised the issue of the barriers of cost to install solar panels and one visitor commented that more community focused initiatives were needed to support this. One group commented on the negative impacts of using fertile farmland

for clean energy infrastructure on sustainable food production and one child visitor commented that solar and wind structures took up space where animals could otherwise graze. Other participants emphasised the opportunities that land with clean energy infrastructures offered for rewilding and a visitor commented that “wind turbines in the sea create a good habitat for kelp and sea creatures”. All groups were in favour of the use of civic buildings for solar panels as well as nature depleted land for solar panels and wind turbines. The sea for wind turbines was another popular suggestion. Horsham Hill and Chesworth Farm were also suggested as locations.

At the mapping table, part of the conversation revolved around priorities, with one participant having just moved house saying that the priorities were to get the work done on the important things and then solar panels were a secondary form of investment – they had the ambition, but it was not top priority or embedded in part of their initial changes. One younger child wanted to put solar panels on all the houses they could find on the map and equally spread around windfarms. They also said that ‘solar panels power the internet’ and that they are ‘pretty, blue and look like the nighttime’. Another participant commented on the ugliness of solar panels and said that they wanted to beautify the panels on their model house. One visitor recalled hearing that insects are at risk by mistaking solar panels on farmland for water but said that panels on roofs were less likely to have this effect.

The responses to the workshop provide data for insights on attitudes to acceptable clean energy infrastructures both from within the community and from visitors to the area. Most participants did not have a personal relationship with the immediate space around Knepp as they have travelled to attend the event from other areas in Sussex, so suggestions related to their local environment. Participants responded positively to the experience of talking and thinking through making as a family or friendship group, taking time to consider the issues, the benefits, aspirations and barriers to adopting clean energy. Four groups completed the questionnaire, two were written by children and two by adults demonstrating the inclusive collaborative approach taken. There was however a difference in the detail of responses between the child and adult lead writers.

Friendship and family groups discussed the barriers and benefits of the renewable energy transition.

People of all ages added solar panels to the roofs. Some were concerned about the aesthetic qualities and wanted to beautify the tiles.



Responses were positive on the question of using making to bring communities into the discussion on the clean energy transition in their local area. Barriers included concerns over space, cost, animal welfare and lack of government support initiatives.



All responded positively to the question, “What do you think about the idea of using wind turbines and solar panels to make energy?” with one of those expressing both negative and positive views, “Good and bad because it makes energy but bad it takes up space for animals” another stated, “Really good free energy source gifted by nature can be used with simple technology”.

When asked their thoughts on wind turbines and solar panels in their local environment comments were positive including “We should use them as much as possible” and “We would like to see more of them in our local environment we have solar panels on our roof”.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Four out of the five groups of visitors completed a questionnaire. One person in the group took the lead to scribe for the group. Two of the participants responded to “What would not work in your local environment and in rural communities?” with wind turbines, another was not sure and a third showed some concern that solar power in fields can be harmful, writing that “We have heard that some animals might mistake solar panels for water. Some moths may lay their eggs on solar panels thinking they are water. We heard this from ... at Rewilding Coombs head.” They added that solar panel on roofs would be

less likely to cause harm.

Three out of four groups responded positively to “do you think that art is a good medium to help talk through the challenges and benefits and problems of moving towards solar and wind energy use”. The one negative was a direct “no”, but positive comments included, “Yes because we were a captive audience” and “It’s showing how much we have an impact on them.” Another responded positively to the learning potential saying, “Yes awesome and play and free conversation are a good way to learn share and get idea ideas flowing.”

Responding to what are the barriers to installing solar wind power in your local environment the countryside and the surrounding area areas participants replied with concerns of space, animal welfare, cost and lack of initiatives to support transition. Answers included “It’s a small place”, “animals”, “personal cost”, and “Cost and lack of community energy initiatives like the one in Lewes we need more of these”.

Three out of four responses were positive to the question of whether there is an ideal position for wind turbines or solar panels in the area that they live. Replies included the sea, and on roofs as well as identifying more specific places in Sussex. Responses include, “Off the coast in the sea”, “Solar panels on houses” and specific locations included, “Horsham Hill could have wind turbines also Chesworth farm”, and “Retrofit solar panels on every roof in Horsham solar panels for all new builds”. The one negative comment was a direct “No”.

The responses to clean energy for net zero were largely positive in both workshop groups, with some concern expressed over cost, lack of government support initiatives, space, logistics and negative impacts on animals and reduction of fertile farmland for food production. Respondents were positive about the process of making to help consider the challenges as part of a group, to improve understanding, and to enhance communication. The majority of group responses demonstrated that the activity offered an opportunity to bring people together to pause and focus collective attention. Mixed age groups were able to contribute to discussion through active engagement in a making activity. Participants discussed a range of benefits and challenges with nuanced responses to clean energy transitions.

Conclusions:

The project met the objectives set out in the bid.

Objectives:

1. To work with CPRE to engage a local community school/group through collaborative creative practice and making using traditional and digital media tools to facilitate discussion on locally relevant sustainable place-making.
2. To create a template for the making process as a collaborative discursive tool to care for nature and sustainability.
3. To explore narratives of our heritage of clean energy in Sussex including solar and wind power to offer insights on how we might consider future sustainable approaches to land use.
4. To prompt discourse through collaborative creative practice with a rural community on the potential changes to landscape in the move to clean energy.
5. To use augmented reality artwork for speculative fictions to contribute to discussion on acceptable clean energy infrastructures.

Participants at both workshops had the opportunity to make Tumeric Anthotypes. Pupils at Park Mead Primary left their Anthotypes in the sun for a few hours and washed them at the end of the day.





1. The data can contribute to our understanding of how making using craft and digital tools, (drawing, collage and Augmented Reality) can be used as a vehicle for discourse around societal challenges and collaborative problem-solving in relation to the transition to clean energy. Through the University of Brighton and CPRE partnership we were able to engage with the local community, initially at Park Mead school and then at the Countryside Day at Knepp Estate to consider challenges and benefits of transitioning to renewable energy in their rural community through making and discussion.

2. A mixed method approach offers a tool kit for community engagement over challenging issues of clean energy transition. This method can augment and enhance the existing community energy visioning project used by CPRE to offer further agency to a mixed age group and diverse community facilitating discussion and feedback. The talking through making approach offers an equitable way to include a range of voices and stakeholders in the consultation on clean energy infrastructures, in the local environment using visual, written and oral modes of engagement.

3. Through storytelling we explored narratives of the local heritage of clean energy in Sussex. This was effective in eliciting further ideas and considerations from participants on care for nature and sustainable approaches to clean energy emphasising justice for all. Through discussions on the unique qualities of animals living in the local environment participants considered a more than human approach for flourishing in the community. At Park Mead School we explored the heritage of wind, water and the sun in the local landscape. We discussed the history of wind power through the lens of artists representations of windmills demonstrating the value placed on these as icons of idyllic rural landscapes despite their industrial purpose. We also looked at two local sites for historical narrative, the Longman of Wilmington, where time is mapped using the sun in the landscape and Michelham Priory Waterwheel as a historic example of clean power. Participants were asked to respond by visualising their ideal future village where all could flourish. In this way we used speculative imagining to look to the past to consider the present to imagine a future.

The making process offers an inclusive way to engage in public discussion, and can complement and enhance the energy envisaging project currently used by CPRE.



Through collective making participants were able to take time to discuss and listen, to consider the challenges and benefits of the the transition to renewable energy.





4. Through discussion we garnered participants' views on clean energy, on the benefits and challenges of transitioning to clean energy. We asked participants for ideas on possible locations for solar panels and wind turbines in their local environment to consider what was acceptable and what would not work. We observed that the making activity created a relaxed atmosphere, and respondents said that making process helped them to take time out to pause and discuss. The respondents fed back that they enjoyed the making process and that it helped them to consider the issues more deeply. Where one respondent did not think that making helped them to think through the issues, they commented that it was anyway fun. The

collaborative making activity created a relaxed atmosphere of flow and open exchange between participants, enhancing opportunities for open communication and the sharing of ideas.

5. The houses in the model village were linked to an Augmented Reality (AR) tag so that animations are triggered when viewed through a mobile phone. Examples were made for the workshops of animals that could flourish in the future village. The inclusion of technology, with animations augmented onto the physical model appeared to ignite the imagination of some of the participants, prompting energetic questions and discussion. Faces lit up when the wildlife were revealed as an overlay on the model village. One of the participants at Knepp asked if their house



could be given a goat tag to take away, but we had not built this into the workshop. This is something that could be designed into the experience for the future. The use of technology with traditional craft techniques enabled an inclusive approach as the visual media had widespread appeal to a diverse audience. This approach further offered different modes of communication for enhanced accessibility, using words, images and sound by mapping augmented animations onto the physical world. This approach can be used for further research into collaborative frameworks for equity and accessibility to promote agency through creative practice using digital tools.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Both workshops had low numbers with 25 at Park Mead School and at Knepp Estate there were 6 family groups of 17 people in total. The pupils at Park Mead were aware of the challenges and we discussed the contentious nature of the issue, and some had discussed this with their families before the workshop took place. The visitors at the Knepp Estate, rewilding project, were already invested in care for nature and issues around sustainability, so this group may be more inclined towards supporting renewable energy. However, the views expressed highlight that attitudes are nuanced and they may be influenced by factors, from economic situation to geographic location.

NEXT STEPS

We plan to submit a bid for a nation-wide project using making as a mechanism to engage communities in discussions on acceptable solar and wind renewable energy infrastructures in their local environment. This project gives communities agency through the development of a toolkit, offering an inclusive way to engage in the conversation on what is acceptable and what is not in the move to net zero. The pilot project shows that the making process enables a relaxed atmosphere conducive to sharing ideas, and to listening, and to considering the issues together. Making can help collaborative visioning, supporting discussion on relevant options and challenges faced, as well as the opportunities in moving towards renewable energy. An external bid would enable the project to be delivered on a larger scale, to roll out nationally to develop a tool kit that can be implemented by governments and used independently by communities.

Augmented Reality (AR) tags were linked to the houses, when the Augmented reality tag is downloaded on to a mobile phone, the AR animations can be viewed on screen.



Solar and Wind Stories presents an opportunity to work with cross generational groups to explore clean energy landscapes of the future through collaborative making. Grant Kester promotes active community engagement through “dialogical” artworks where conversation is used as an interventionist tool. (Kester, 2004, Conversation Pieces). Communities were able to engage in discussion on the future clean energy transition in their community through collaborative making, creating a speculative fiction with Augmented Reality (AR) animations, visible through a mobile phone. Through making we took a care for nature approach for sustainable placemaking.

This research is a collaboration between University of Brighton and CPRE:
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