

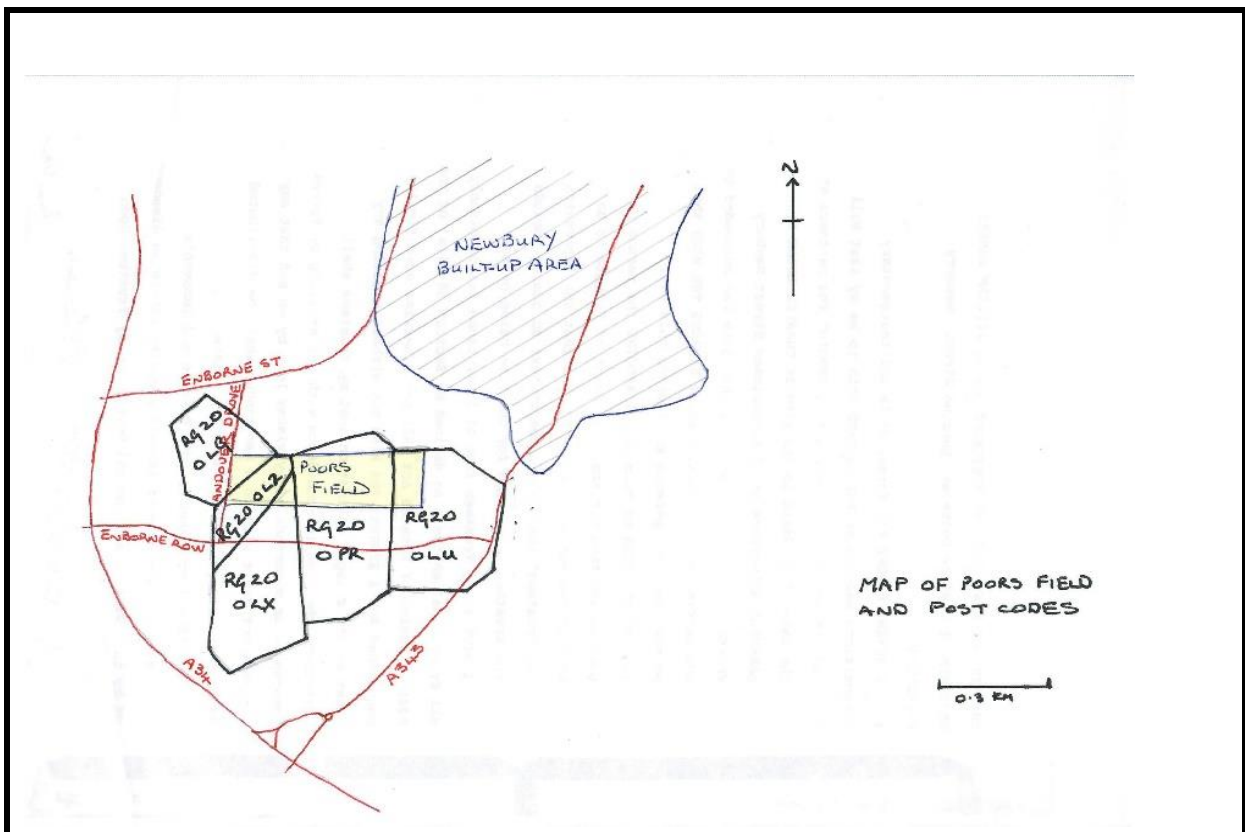
How to use The Poors Allotment for the benefit of the Residents of Enborne Parish?

From the Trustees of the Enborne Poors Allotment Charity, January 2020

The Poors Allotment is a 20-acre field owned by the Poors Allotment Charity. The Trustees of the Charity are also the Councillors of Enborne Parish Council. The Parish Council, in line with many other institutions in West Berkshire, have undertaken to encourage the reduction of the Parish’s carbon footprint. **As part of this initiative the Councillors/Trustees are considering siting solar panels on the Poors Allotment with the objective of generating electricity and reducing the carbon footprint of the Parish.**

Poors Allotment

Historically, the field was for the benefit of the poor of the parish and a place where they could collect firewood. Today the field is predominantly unwooded and the Trustees currently rent the field out for grazing. This generates a small annual income which is slowly accumulating.



The Poors Allotment Charity's objectives are "To promote any charitable purpose (charitable in English law) for the benefit of the residents of the parish of Enborne in West Berkshire; in particular but not exclusively by the provision of grants to local charities which provide advice and services calculated to relieve the charitable needs of those residents".

Solar Farm

The Poors Allotment is well suited to solar panels as it is on a south facing slope and is largely unshaded by trees. A rough calculation suggests that in order to generate enough electricity to offset the consumption of Enborne Parish we would need to install a minimum of 1MW of panels. We believe that the site could house these panels with ease. However, we need to undertake a study to determine whether this we could install an economically viable and sustainable solar farm on all or part of the Poors Allotment.

In order to finance and implement such a project the Councillors/Trustees are considering:

- Undertaking a planning and feasibility study to assess the technical and financial viability of the project. It is likely we can get a Government grant to fund a feasibility and planning study.
- Working with a local, non-profit community benefit society with experience in this area (Calleva Community Energy Limited) to help raise capital through a community share offer and ensure the solar farm remains community owned.
- Work with Calleva Community Energy to implement, manage and maintain the project.
- The project will be put into a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to ensure the charity has an option to buy it out at any point in its life

Community Ownership

A community benefit society is a special kind of limited company which exists to benefit the community rather than private shareholders. The Society :

- does not distribute profits to shareholders. It does, however, pay share interest on any investments made into the society. The amount of interest paid is capped, and depends on a member vote each year
- priority will be given to local investors in the community share offer, to make sure that the opportunity is there for the immediate community to benefit from profits generated, and to become members of the society
- surpluses each year are returned for investment into the local community. It is our intention that the Enborne Charity Trustees would continue to direct how these community funds are spent locally
- The Councillors/Trustees envisage that the Charity will retain ownership of the Poors Allotment and rent land to the Community Benefit Society and that the Parish Council

would, if appropriate, and following all the necessary approvals invest in the Community Benefit Society.

- We are expecting that grazing could continue around the panels.
- The field will be returned to its original state after the life of the solar farm and continue to be the property of the Poores Allotment Charity.

Benefits of the Solar Farm Initiative

Reducing carbon emissions

Potentially stimulating the local economy, including through the development and dissemination of new skills and training opportunities

Hopefully it will increase public awareness of energy issues and help change attitudes and behaviours related to energy use

Stimulating community engagement and enhance community cohesion in Enborne

If commercially feasible, reducing energy costs within the community (NB the law will not allow us to sell energy direct from the farm to the local community as yet)

Potentially help to finance the Parish council

Provide finances to the Poores Allotment Charity to be used to the benefit of the Enborne Residents

What we are Asking?

Before we embark on what we envisage to be a formidable commitment for the Trustees/Parish Councillors we are seeking your support for this initiative as a resident of Enborne Parish. All Councillors/Trustees work on a voluntary basis receiving no income from the position.

It is intended that if the project does look feasible, then an open community meeting will be held to share the proposed plans and take more detailed comments at that stage. However, there will be a meeting of the Poores Trustees at the Barn, adjacent to Enborne Church, at 7:30pm on the 20th January 2020 which will be open to the public should you wish to ask questions or comment.

Please tick the appropriate boxes below.

Are you and your household:

In favour, in principle, of the initiative to install solar panels in part of the Enborne Poores Allotment.

Opposed to the idea of installing solar panels in the Poores Allotment and your reasons for this are given below.

Would you or your household consider investing (£250 or more) into the Community Benefit Society to help raise the capital to build the farm (subject to the detailed proposals that would be provided)?

Does anyone in your household have any relevant expertise with renewable energy projects or Community Investment Schemes and be willing to volunteer some time and expertise?

If so, please provide contact details below.

Please return this questionnaire to one of the following:

Chris Garrett, October House, Enborne Row RG20 0LX

John Leeson, 2 Spring Gardens, RG20 0PR

Or by e-mail to enbornepc@newbury.net

by the 18th January 2019 to be considered at the 20th January 2019 Trustee Meeting.