

## Next Generation end of project case study: Nadder Community Energy - Electric Vehicle Car Club in a rural area



### **About Nadder Community Energy:**

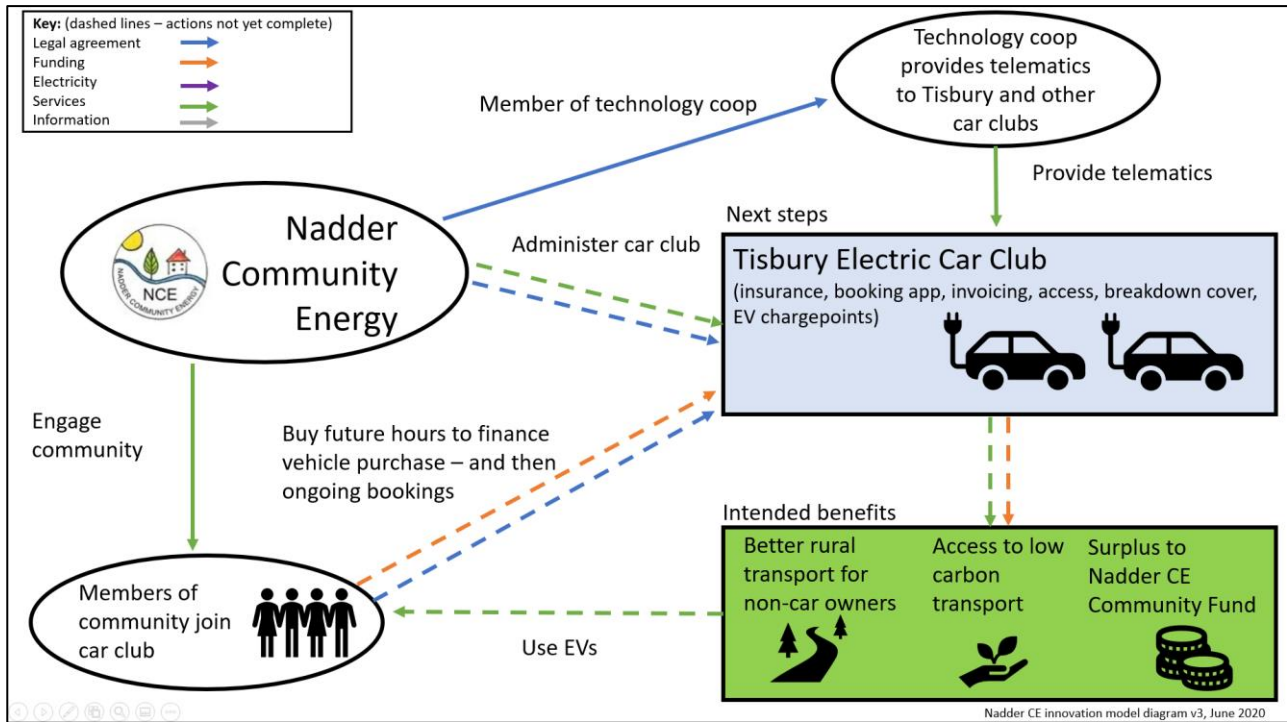
Nadder Community Energy (NCE) is based in the town of Tisbury in Wiltshire. It operates a 200kW solar installation and aims to expand the definition of 'community energy' to include the energy required to heat our homes and power our vehicles.

### **About this innovation project and its impact:**

NCE developed a car club using electric vehicles (EVs), which is now operating two cars, has provided two chargepoints and has 69 members. They found that at the rural level, car clubs are unlikely to make a profit, and in fact there are challenges to secure enough income to cover staffing or vehicle replacement. However, they contribute to the transition to electric and shared mobility and increase community resilience by providing additional flexible transport where public transport is generally sparse.

NCE also explored options for improving viability of car clubs by scaling up to a co-operative network of clubs that could share skills and resources. Although they were not successful in developing a network in the duration of the Next Generation project, they believe that there is an opportunity to do so in the future.

The diagram below shows how Tisbury Electric Car Club (TECC) is operating and the benefits being delivered.



**Advice for other groups considering setting up a club:**

There are significant technical, practical and business challenges to establishing an EV car club, and particularly one in a rural area like Tisbury. Key challenges to breaking even with a telematic-enabled model are: the time it takes to build the market for the service; time to develop a user base (this includes affordable pricing to encourage use); and the high costs of infrastructure and non-variable costs.

In Tisbury, NCE provided a community anchor. Any rural club would need to be started by something similar, an organisation that has social capital and connections. The Tisbury club started with a transport needs survey, but rather than such a general approach, it would be better to find an initial group of core users, and build from there. It is also important to understand that as things stand there is unlikely to be enough income to cover salaries, without grant funding.

**Key messages for policy makers:**

Rural car clubs deliver a number of community benefits despite the financial challenges they face. NCE believes that the community energy sector has a number of advantages to draw on in developing car clubs, in particular the trust and engagement it has with existing members and community connections.

Economic viability for individual clubs would be supported by an umbrella co-op for the sector. This could be developed in the community energy sector, though it would require grant funding for the development work.

Feedback from TECC users is that another challenge when making longer journeys is uncertainty and difficulty in accessing chargepoints. This is an issue that will need to be addressed if rural electric car clubs are to develop.

### **If you want to know more:**

- See the project final report which includes lots of detail on the insights gathered and challenges faced on this project. For the final reports for this and other Next Generation projects see: <https://www.next-generation.org.uk/resources>
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