



# 4th Interregional Event FINERPOL project 11-12 May 2022, Plymouth, UK



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## Introduction

While the COVID-19 pandemic led to a wide range of technological innovations for connecting, there remains no real replacement for meeting in person to discuss ideas and share best practice. It was therefore exciting and productive for the FINERPOL partners to gather—for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic—in Plymouth, England in May of 2022.

With previous partner meetings in Brussels, Gdansk, Porto and Tartu, the FINERPOL project was first established in 2016 to increase the rate of refurbishment of building to improve their energy efficiency, by improving access to investment finance. When the COVID-19 pandemic began, an additional phase was added to examine its impact on the mandate.

## Summary: 4<sup>th</sup> Interregional Event in Plymouth, England

10 & 11 May 2022 saw the meeting of FINERPOL partners from Spain, Greece, Britain, and Czech Republic, to share significant insights and provide updates regarding their various projects.

20 visitors were welcomed on 10 May by Plymouth City Council (PCC) at the Market Hall in Devonport, a 19<sup>th</sup> century derelict Grade II listed building recently transformed by the Real Ideas Organisation in partnership with PCC and the University of Plymouth's Institute of Digital Art and Technology into a collaborative workspace and venue for digital innovation and learning. Particular overlaps were identified in community energy and the experience of PCC in facilitating a retrofit program with their partners Plymouth Energy Community (PEC). A Plymouth walking tour was hosted for partners to see for themselves the range of energy efficiency measures currently being undertaken to further decarbonise heat and energy in the city – including electric vehicle (EV) charging, the retrofitting of PCC's own Ballard House and Elliot Terrace for energy efficiency, and a trip on the Mountbatten Ferry's electric ferry.

On the second day, presentations were made from local organisations, TRESOC and the Dartmoor Wood-fuel Co-operative as well as national organisation Regen. The presentations provided insight into the desire and availability to produce and consume renewable energy within Devon, through solar and hydro power as well as through the use of biomass. The community-based element provides empowerment and autonomy to local people, helping to protect against fuel insecurity whilst keeping economic benefits within the area.

These talks focused on policy choices that had helped and hindered their success as well as the different financial channels that were used. This information informed further discussions between delegates and stakeholders.

## Agenda

10th

9.00	Meet at City Centre location for coach	
9:30 - 10.00	Tea and Coffee at <a href="#">Market Hall</a> (START)	
10:00 - 10.20	Welcome from Head of Environmental Planning Kat Deeney	
10.20 - 11.20	Project Partner Meeting	
11.20 - 11.30	Comfort break	
11:30 - 12.00	Presentation on Plymouth Programmes re. Building Retrofit.	20mins plus Q&A
12:00 - 12.30	Coach travel to start of walking tour	
12:45 - 13.45	Lunch @ <a href="#">The Waterfront</a>	
13.45 - 14.30	Walking Tour along Plymouth Hoe	
14.30 - 15.00	Electric Ferry to Mount Batten	
15.00 - 15.45	<a href="#">Mount Batten Centre</a> (Retrofit Potential)	
15.45 -16.30	Transport back to City Centre ( FINISH)	
19.00	Dinner at <a href="#">Rockfish Seafood Restaurant</a>	

11th

9:30	Leave Plymouth City Centre location for Dartington (START)	
10:30	Tea and coffee at <a href="#">Dartington</a>	
11:00	Welcome from Dartington Hall	
11:05	Presentation on community energy sector in Devon by Ky Hoare, Regen	20mins plus Q&A
11:30	Presentation on Totnes Renewable Energy Society - community energy case study by Ian Bright, Tresoc	20mins plus Q&A
12:00	Tour of the grounds or case study presentation on Dartmoor Woodfuel Cooperative	
12:30	Lunch	
14:00	FINERPOL presentations/AgroRES workshop	

16:00	Finish	
	Potential transport back to Plymouth or Exeter.	

## Plymouth Visit

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Of particular interest to partners was the structure Plymouth used to implement its building retrofits using local SME's. Plymouth Council is unique within the UK, and within the FINERPOL project, in that it delivers domestic retrofits via a household grant based scheme. This negates the need for public procurement and subsequently encourages the local supply chain to engage with the programmes of work. As well as increasing local SME turnover, this approach also drives the demand for capacity raising within the local supply chain. In order to achieve this, educational providers are also engaged and a full 'system' is developed to allow for building retrofits to be installed.

### 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022

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autonomy to local people, helping to protect against fuel insecurity whilst keeping economic benefits within the area.

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## Dartington Hall Presentations

Ky Hoare, project manager of Regen – an independent centre of energy expertise and market insights within the UK – provided insight into key policies, programmes and initiatives that have shaped the sector.

Regen’s mission is to transform the energy sector, accelerating the move to a zero-carbon energy system through advocating for policies and funding that provide long-term support for energy projects.

The sector is resilient and adaptable.

### Important lessons include:

- Policies must focus on urban and rural energy funds that focus on building capacity
- Local communities and public bodies must be involved in community-based energy, with local and shared ownership and commitments to buying community-owned energy
- Local authorities can support community energy through:
  - Grants
  - Training
  - Supporting meetings and networking



Ky Hoare: Regen providing an overview of key policies programmes and initiatives that shaped the sector

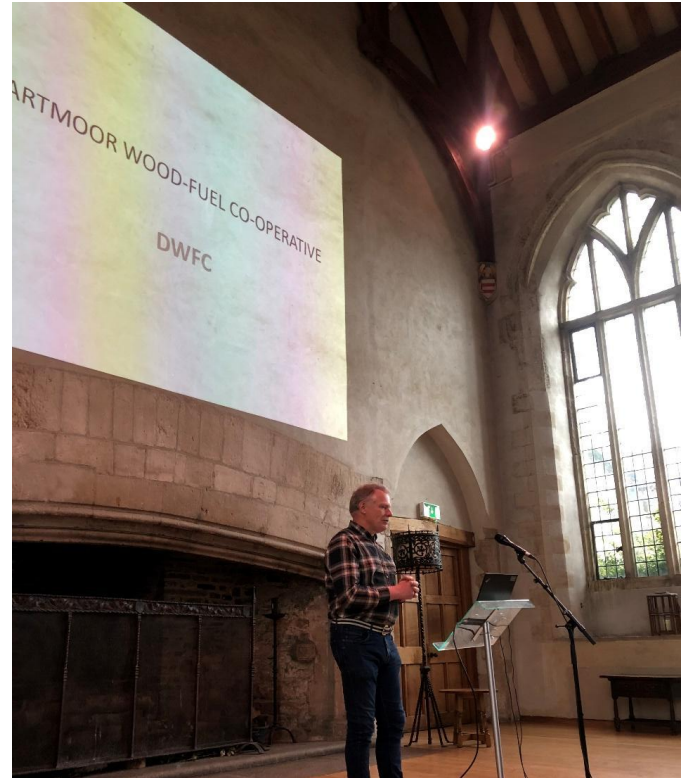
**Totnes Renewable Energy Society (TRESOC)** managing director Ian Bright provided a specific example of a local renewable society, tracing actions that have helped and hindered the movement to successfully incorporate community energy within society. Most recently, TRESOC was recently awarded a £25,000 grant from Team Devon's Covid 19 Economic Recovery & Business Prospectus Fund to develop a Totnes Energy Local Club which would allow the consumer to pay less whilst the generator receives more. These projects support local communities in building resilience within the transition to net-zero and creating a just transition.



Ian Bright: TRESOC financial and policy implications of renewable energy explored



Andy Bradford, farmer of a 700 acre farm that has heavily diversified, discussed how one of these strategies is founding the Dartmoor Wood-fuel Co-operative, formed in 2009 through a grant awarded by the Bio Energy Infrastructure Scheme. In 2014, Rural Development Programme England funding secured storage of biomass chips, with funding in 2019 increasing capacity to 3000m<sup>3</sup>. Funding was key to the success of the co-operative which now supplies their membership's 35 wood chip boilers. Members facilitate the growth of locally sustainable fuel sources and benefit from well-priced quality goods. The production of this biomass form also encourages environmental improvement through better forest management.



Andy Bradford: Dartmoor wood-fuel co-operative - the benefits of using biomass in certain places for energy production, increasing biodiversity and forest management

## Study Visit 2 – FINERPOL Workshop



Within the second half of the first day the presentations' information was used alongside FINERPOL-AgroRES knowledge to conduct a workshop where a SWOT analysis was performed by groups to evaluate action plans. Ideas were also shared that constructively critiqued plans and projects helping to transfer best practices and improve future action plans.

