Heating Nassington: cleaner, cheaper and more sustainable energy for our community. Many of us are concerned about rising, unpredictable energy costs, the unsustainability of oil, pollution and growing fuel poverty. But taking action as individual household can be difficult. For example, I’ve spoken to lots of residents in the village, who have explored a heat pump, but found the up-front costs of retrofitting or changing radiators made it impossible. It’s hard to know where to start to get good independent advice on insultation and to find the time to make changes.

**‘Whatever the problem, community is the answer’ *- Margaret Wheatley***

This is where the idea of a community response comes in. Specifically, a community heating network.  What’s that you ask?

So far, for Nassington, it’s just an idea. But we could join lots of villages across the UK to create a locally-owned, shared and renewably-powered heating solution. The benefits could be many… warmer homes, better health, more predictable and secure energy, lower costs, less pollution and environmental damage, and a long-term source of community income – bringing us together, including everyone and removing the barriers that get in our way as individuals. It could even be quite fun?!

We discussed the idea at December’s Parish Council meeting to a delightfully warm (!), curious and enthusiastic response. We now have a small group of volunteers and **we would love more**!

**What will we need?**

To be successful, we will need a team effort. We’ll need diverse skills – from community engagement, communications, website, managing consultants, engineering, finance, project management, engaging with the local council and many more.

Above all, we will need curiosity, passion and persistence, and the support and involvement of the whole village. So, whether you are an expert or novice, excited or sceptical, whether you have lots of time or very little, we would love to hear from you.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me, Pamela McGill at 34 Church Street, 07747 690 607, [pamela.mcgill@re-leadership.com](mailto:pamela.mcgill@re-leadership.com) with any questions, feedback or to learn more and explore.

**Next steps?**

The next steps will be forming our team, engaging the community, and applying for funding from the **UK’s Community Energy Fund** to do a financial and technical feasibility study in 2024.

**Further Learning, Inspiration and Support?**

There are lots of sources of support we can draw from – other villages who are on this journey, to Community Energy England, Community Energy South, Energy4all and the UK’s Community Energy Fund. We are already in touch with the teams from the following villages who have been incredibly generous and supportive: Swaffam Prior, Bildeston and Upper Heyford. If you’d like to get a better idea of what is involved and where this work could take us, you can find helpful stories and information on their websites.

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