

BEN Directors re-election pitch

Caroline Bird

I have been a BEN director since its formation as a CIC in 2014 so I have lots of experience and knowledge of the organisation's evolution over the years and I think we're at a very exciting point where the public are starting to realise the extent of the challenge and welcome alternative ways of taking ownership of our energy. I've been chair since about 2017 so I think I've played a part in our rise to prominence and influence not just in Bristol but nationally. We've been involved in several projects which have helped to raise awareness of energy issues across the city and brought new member organisations to BEN – extending our membership beyond those focusing just on community energy to include a variety of communities for whom energy is just one of a number of issues.

I am also an interdisciplinary / collaborative researcher interested in grassroots responses to sustainability challenges, particularly at the city level and I can bring connections to the university where it might help BEN and its members.

Jenny Howard-Coles

I joined the BEN board in December 2017, after returning to Bristol (my home town) for a job at Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE). As Senior Development Manager at CSE, at any one time I lead several large and small fundraising, service design and partnership development initiatives, and I represent CSE on the BEN Board. I bring development and fundraising skills, and have written funding applications for BEN as well as brokering the inclusion of BEN in CSE projects including Futureproof and WHAM.

Prior to joining CSE, I worked for Plymouth City Council as Low Carbon Officer, in the small team that launched Plymouth Energy Community (PEC), a successful community energy initiative. At PEC I worked as a project manager and business developer, negotiated key contracts and partnerships and provided strategic advice to its Board on key projects, helping shape the direction of the organisation. I delivered projects including an innovative switching scheme, a local tariff initiative and a schools LED lighting offer.

I am motivated by the challenge of tackling climate change whilst addressing the injustices we see in our communities. I would be delighted to continue supporting Bristol's community energy sector through my role with BEN.

Sam Willitts

I have been a BEN director since 2016 and taken on a financial management role administering payments and providing regular reporting on the financial position at Board meetings.

I am a director of Keynsham Community Energy extending the reach beyond Bristol - I bring a member's perspective to the board and can represent the needs of community energy groups. I am keen to ensure that BEN continues to develop to support its membership.

I have 10 years' experience Energy and Sustainability Manager at Bristol Royal Infirmary so bring my knowledge of energy and health sectors.

My involvement with organisations across the city in sustainability gives me a strategic view that I can offer to support the Board