



Co-design brief

For our co-operative membership research project

Who are we?

We are a small team of **community organisers** and **researchers**. We work for **energy co-operatives** in North Kensington and Newham through [Repowering London](#), and on topics relating to social entrepreneurship and renewable energy.

Energy co-operatives are created by people coming together to invest time and money to develop renewable energy projects (e.g. installing solar panels on a school). The people involved are members of the co-operative, making decisions on how the business is run and its profits distributed. It's a way of taking back control of our energy system, currently in the hands of energy companies. It's about building a new system based on community and co-operation.

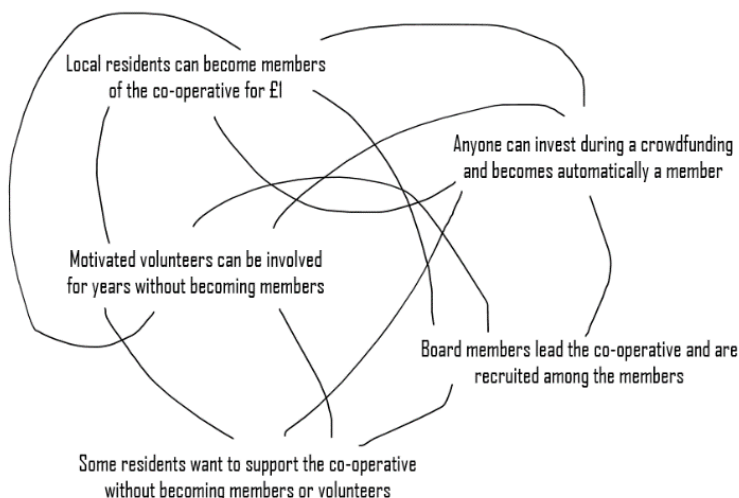
What is the research about?

We started this project because we noticed that some of London's diverse communities aren't currently well represented in energy cooperatives. A co-operative is owned and driven by its members, and so we want **more people to join energy co-operatives as members**.

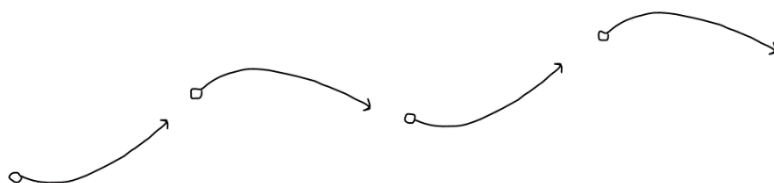
With this research, we're exploring new ways to make joining energy cooperatives more appealing and accessible to a wider range of Londoners. To this purpose, we need to better define **how people can get involved** in our energy co-operatives, and **what our membership offer is**.

What are we designing?

A **membership journey**. Currently the way people get involved in our energy co-operatives is a bit messy:



We want to change this and create a clear, compelling, attractive journey – with different roles and benefits. Something that would look a bit more like this:



This journey and the offer could be communicated in the form of a poster, a map, a drawing and more. We can take inspiration from other cultural or commercial memberships around us, such as [Nike](#) or the [Tate](#) museum.

There are some constraints for our design. Co-operatives are operating within a legal framework and have some duties as organisations. We must also consider the resources that co-ops such as North Kensington Community Energy and Community Energy Newham have available for community and member engagement.

What is co-design?

In co-design, people with the relevant skills and experience **come together to create** a product, like training materials, information booklets, a new service, organisational policies, or service specifications.

Co-design brings together lived experience, lived expertise and professional experience to learn from each other and make things better – by design. Co-design involves centering care, working with the people closest to the solutions, sharing power, prioritising relationships, being honest, being welcoming, using creative tools, balancing idealism and realism, building and sharing skills.

Timeline

We will be running **four co-design workshops** in person, two in North Kensington and two in Newham, in the first half of May 2024. We expect around 5-10 participants in each area, who will be attending both workshops as they will be complimentary. Participants will be compensated for their time and be invited to get involved in their local energy co-operative. The designs we produce will be used by the local energy co-operatives from summer 2024. We will also be sharing our designs and our research process with the wider co-operative sector.

How are we going to work together?

We'll be agreeing values to guide our collective work. We can borrow from such as collaboration, care, ingenuity, inclusion and integrity. We want to create a safe atmosphere where people feel free to speak their minds and be heard without fear of judgment. We value all contributions– of energy, enthusiasm, knowledge, time, vision, humour, skill and care.

We will be discussing as a group on how to do this best when we start the workshops.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to get in touch with Eva at eva.goudouneix@repowering.org.uk or on 07 549 874 906.