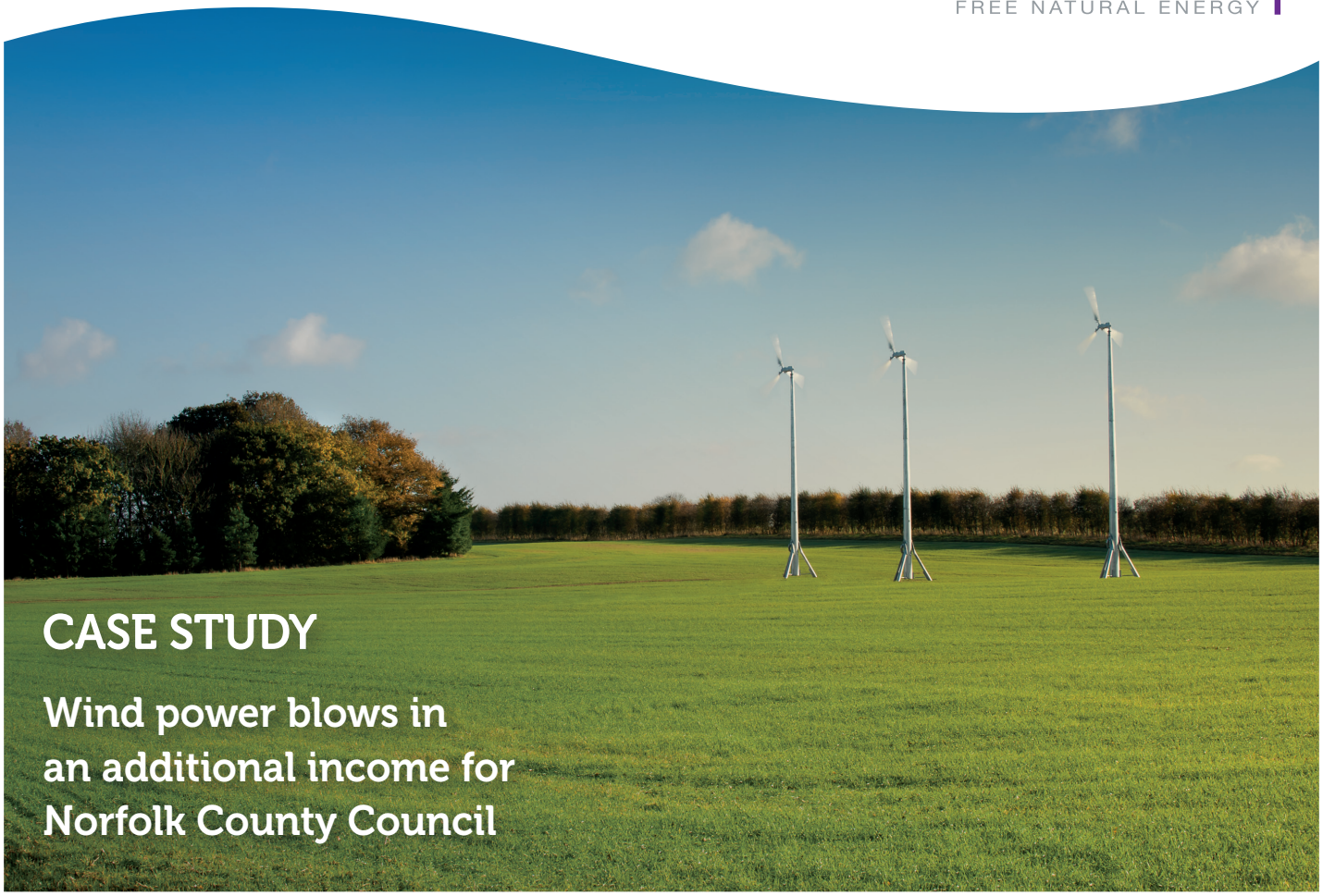
windcrop
FREE NATURAL ENERGY



CASE STUDY

Wind power blows in an additional income for Norfolk County Council

By investing in renewable energy, Norfolk County Council has reduced farm tenants' energy bills, enhanced its eco-credentials and secured a long-term income to support the delivery of good quality, better value services for all residents.

In the first phase of a partnership project with Norfolk Energy Futures (NEF), a subsidiary company set up by the County Council, Windcrop has installed 19 small-scale wind turbines across 11 of the County Council's County Farm Estates.

The farm estate is the third largest in England. It extends to over 16,200 acres and is let to over 145 tenants at the heart of the county's rural economy, generating local produce and employment.

Investing in the installation of the 15m high turbines, which will also be maintained by Windcrop, has helped NEF to meet its objectives of increasing the uptake of renewable energy and supporting a low carbon economy.

Each turbine generates an average 10,000 kWh energy a year and with Britain being the windiest country in Europe, they are proven to generate energy 85 per cent of the time.

This supplies the tenants with free, environmentally-friendly electricity to power the farms providing substantial savings on energy bills, protecting against the impact of rising electricity prices and creating a more sustainable future for the rural businesses.

The County Council will also receive an 11 per cent return on its investment, providing an additional income to support the delivery of its frontline services.

A set rate is paid for each unit of electricity generated by the turbines through the Government's Feed in Tariff (FiT) and through the export tariff for every additional unit exported back to the National Grid.

Cllr. Cliff Jordan, Norfolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Efficiency, said: "In these tough times, Norfolk County Council needs to be more entrepreneurial and find fresh ways of tapping into new sources of income which will make us less dependent on central Government funding."

Phil Bennett-Lloyd, Operations Director at Norfolk Energy Futures Ltd, added: "As the UK's largest installer of small-scale wind turbines, Windcrop were an obvious choice for Norfolk Energy Futures to partner with for the delivery of this project.

"The initial work they did in assessing our County Farms estate was impressive and gave us the data we required. Windcrop managed the planning application process on our behalf, with only a small input from ourselves, and worked hard to ensure all the turbines were installed by the required deadline.

"The project has enabled Norfolk Energy Futures a healthy return on its investment ensuring success in its first year. We are looking forward to working with Windcrop again to look at further opportunities that may arise on the estate in the future."

Adding renewable energy to its land has enabled the County Council to reduce its reliance on electricity generated by fossil fuels and to play a key part in helping to meet the Government target of generating 15 per cent of all the UK's energy from renewables by 2020.

As an ethically run business, Windcrop is committed to ensuring the installation of turbines does not have any negative effect on the environment. Unlike large, utility scale turbines, the turbines are the size of a mature tree and have been specifically designed to be in scale with their surroundings.

John Moore, managing director at Windcrop, said: "The County Farm Estates make up a large proportion of Norfolk's diverse countryside. The compact design of our turbines means they easily blend into this beautiful landscape, providing the maximum benefits of generating free electricity and a visible commitment to a sustainable future with minimum visual impact."

The turbines are ideal for farm sites as they are the most efficient, productive renewable energy generation technology to install and are proven to be livestock friendly. At a time when the industry is struggling due to retailers squeezing profit margins, the cost of fuel increasing and adverse weather conditions affecting crops, cutting costs is just as important as cutting carbon footprint.

