

Mark backs Smart Grid bid

A CITY MP has put his weight behind a scheme set to make Milton Keynes the low carbon capital of Europe.

Mark Lancaster is supporting a bid by electricity distributor Central Networks to make the city a showcase for reducing emissions from transportation, homes and businesses.

As a guinea pig in the 'MKSmart2020' project, the city would have its electricity usage scrutinised. New infrastructure would make wind and solar power, plus electric cars and heat pumps, more prevalent.

With 20,000 smart meters, residents would be able to keep tabs on their own consumption, putting an end to estimated bills.

The Ofgem funding would allow the creation of a so-called Smart Grid, aiming to show how an entire city can become low carbon.

The MP for Milton Keynes North, who met with the people behind the bid, said: "We may be known for our grid roads but I'm wholly supportive of us becoming renowned throughout Europe for having our own 'Smart Grid'. Milton Keynes is the ideal place to pioneer such ideas.

"It is particularly good to see efforts being made to drive down energy costs while moving towards environmentally friendly sources of power. What could be better than saving the planet while saving money?"

Central Networks, one of the UK's seven electricity distributors, wants to add to the city's existing low carbon credentials.

Milton Keynes Council is driving its Low Carbon Living Programme, namely through 1,200 new 'demonstrator homes' in Tattenhoe.

As well as this, the city is set to gain hundreds of charging points for electric cars after being awarded the Plugged in Places grant.

Backed by big business, Accenture, GE and Cisco, Central Networks is also working in partnership with local academic institutions, such as the Open University and Cranfield University.

If successful, it is hoped the achievements of Milton Keynes will be rolled out throughout the UK.