

# Flicking the switch for wind power

History was created on Tuesday 17 May at 12.30pm in Leonards Hill when the Hepburn Community Wind Farm was connected to the local electricity network.

After thorough inspections by two independent inspectors, local distributor Powercor and contractors REpower and Consolidated Power received the all-clear for the connection.

Martin Taube from local contractor Central Power had the honour of closing the switch that separated the wind farm from the grid. Operating at 22,000 volts, Martin and the team were very careful to ensure that the connection was made safely and without interruption to Daylesford's supply.

"I've flicked many a switch, but never one to a wind farm — everything went according to plan," Mr Taube said.

Taryn Lane Hepburn Wind Community Officer, said for the past six weeks the blades have been feathered to avoid catching wind, however with the hubs 'free wheeling', the blades have



*Hepburn Wind Chairman, Simon Holmes à Court with two of the wind turbines in place at Leonard's Hill.*

occasionally been seen slowly turning.

"The electrical team has spent the last month preparing for connection to the grid. With power now on, the commissioning team is ready to start preparing the turbines for generation," she said.

Over the next month, each

part of the wind farm will be tested, with the final stage being energisation of the individual turbines. Hepburn Wind, the community group behind the project, expects to be generating clean, safe energy before the middle of the year.

"Once the wind farm is generating, Hepburn Wind

will establish a community sustainability fund which is anticipated to put over \$1m into local projects over the life of the project," Ms Lane said.

Hepburn Wind will provide additional community support to their Leonards Hill neighbours as part of this initiative.