



TURNED ON: Martin Taube from Central Power turns on the turbines.

Turbine connected to power network

BY EMMA SCHENK

HEPBURN Community Wind Farm flicked the switch towards a brighter future last week, when the farm's 110-metre wind turbine was energised for the first time.

At 12.30pm, the turbine was officially connected to the local electricity network and the commissioning team is now preparing the turbines for generation.

Located in Leonards Hill, the \$13 million project is the first in Australia to establish a community-owned renewable energy source, and is expected to start generating clean, safe energy for the Daylesford community within a month.

Hepburn Wind chairman Simon Holmes a Court was ecstatic that the day went off without a hitch saying it was a major step in what has been a challenging project.

"This seemingly unscaleable

mountain has almost been conquered and I'm thrilled the vision of so many parties is finally coming to fruition."

Once the wind farm is generating power, 12,200 tonnes of CO2 are expected to be displaced each year.

"It's a new concept that will benefit the whole community," Mr Holmes a Court said.

"We want to achieve local power rather than outside coal power. And, while many people are scared of low-carbon generation, we want to prove it is possible."

Hepburn Wind will establish a community sustainability fund which is anticipated to put more than \$1m into local projects.

"Our project is not about building wind turbines, it's about empowering local people to become engaged and active participants in responding to the challenge of climate change," Mr Holmes a Court said.