



RWE

RWE in your community



Putting our communities first

Investing in local communities can lead to remarkable transformations. RWE is dedicated to investing in, and empowering the communities that neighbour our UK renewable energy sites.

We are committed to providing community funding to enable communities to foster growth, resilience, and sustainability. From enhancing community buildings and services to supporting environmental conservation efforts, our approach is designed to be flexible and to enable communities to make their own decisions about how best to use this funding opportunity.

RWE has been fostering community development for over 25 years through our community fund programme. This investment isn't just about financial support; it's about empowering communities, supporting the UK's transition to net zero, and building a lasting legacy for future generations.

We care about creating bright futures for everyone.





How our funding works

Our approach to community funding explained



It's all about you

Meeting the needs of the local area is what we're here for.



Every community is different

We tailor our funds to meet the unique and changing needs of communities and we take a bespoke approach for every allocation.



Local knowledge is best

We want communities to be at the heart of decision-making: we recruit local panels with the knowledge to call the shots on what we fund and how, and our funds are usually managed locally by professional grant making organisations.



We adapt

Our funds can respond rapidly to emergencies and unforeseen challenges – so we're there to help communities through unexpected events such as floods, the pandemic, or the cost-of-living crisis.



We flex

Our adaptable approach means we can support projects through grants, loans or even by investing.



We listen

We take a flexible approach and listen to consultation responses to find out how the area surrounding the site is used for living, working and recreation.



Ensuring legal compliance

Funds are secured through legal agreements for the future and to mandate good governance.



We keep it simple

So, the application process is easy, straight forward and with as little bureaucracy as possible!



We're here for the long-haul

We encourage communities to plan for the future, to support sustainable development and build legacy for future generations.



Global goals

We measure our funds against the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere. Adopted by all UN Member States in 2015.



And this is just the beginning

We aim to future-proof benefits by securing and sign-posting match funding and curating partnerships with other funders.

How RWE Solar Farm Community Funds Work

Good Governance

We know these funds have the biggest impact when local people decide how they are spent. We therefore recruit a panel of local volunteers that decide on the allocation of funds. We also understand that these volunteer panels work best when they are supported by an independent, professional, administrator that takes responsibility for supporting applicants, managing all of the fund processes and that supports communities to maximise the potential of the funds.

Introducing GrantScape

RWE's preferred administrator for our solar community funds is a registered charity called GrantScape. As well as being highly experienced in supporting panels of local decision makers, GrantScape specialise in making the application process really simple, straightforward and efficient for communities. For more information about GrantScape visit their website: <https://grantscape.org.uk/>





Local community decision making

As fund administrators, GrantScape take responsibility for promoting the fund, supporting applicants, receiving applications, carrying out due diligence, assessing applications, responding to applicants, handling payment administration and monitoring awards. They are also responsible for recruiting and supporting the panel of local people that make all decisions on the allocation of funding.

Once funds are available we advertise the opportunity for local people to nominate themselves to join the grants panel. Grants panel members must live, work or volunteer within the communities that will benefit from the fund. From these nominees, RWE and GrantScape will select panel members that reflect the communities they represent. Panel members are volunteers and they usually meet up to 4 times a year, depending on the volume of applications, to vote on which projects receive awards.

Funding availability

Some funds are provided annually and others are transferred to the fund administrator in one lump sum. The funds usually first open for applications shortly after the solar farm begins construction. There are no time limits for funding to be spent, for example within a set number of years, to ensure the best projects are supported not just the first to apply.

How can funds be used

RWE is keen that the funds are accessible, can be used flexibly, and most importantly are tailored to suit the needs of the local communities closest to each solar farm. Once the panel has been recruited, GrantScape will work with them to decide which of the following themes the fund will support.

Project themes & ideas

RWE would like all applicant projects to consider how their projects meets the cross-cutting theme of: Sustainability

For example: village hall improvements could include improved insulation and / or green technology such as: solar panels or air source heat pumps, playground improvements could use sustainable/recycled materials.

The following list intends to provide our grants panels with a broad range of themes that can be applied to their RWE community fund.

Reflecting on the specific needs in their community, the local panel can choose to focus their fund around one or more of the following themes, or can use the full list.

The aim is that the panel can tailor their fund priorities to suit their community needs and to ensure reasonable levels of competition considering the funds available. Fund themes can also change over time, if required.

Funds can support projects that meet at least one of the following themes:



Improvement works to community buildings & facilities

Example: improvement works to village halls, community centres, museums, heritage centres and community cafes. Grants could include decoration, heating improvements, structural repairs, extensions, or new builds.



Support for community activities & services

Example: projects addressing health and wellbeing, social isolation, community cohesion, access to amenities, fuel poverty, young and old people's projects as well as projects providing support for local clubs and groups.



Sports, recreation & play

Example: playground equipment upgrades and new builds, skate parks, indoor climbing walls, sports equipment, sports field drainage projects, cricket nets, posts, goals etc.



Environmental, green initiatives & public open space projects

Example: projects involving habitat and species conservation, community growing schemes, public park improvements such as landscaping works, planting, benches, sensory gardens and improving local biodiversity.



Educational projects

Example: after school STEM club, cost for external trainers delivering bespoke courses, outdoor classrooms. Note all grants at schools must be additional to the statutory educational core costs.



Grants to benefit individuals

In some circumstances, where sufficient funds relative to potential demand allows, fund panels may choose to make grants available to individuals. Example: grants that encourage and nurture talent within the arts or amateur sport, support individuals to access education, training courses and personal development, or enable access to apprenticeships or vocational courses.

Who can apply for funds?

Organisations that can apply for funding include:

- Voluntary and community groups
- Parish Councils
- Schools and educational establishments (for projects above LEA responsibility)
- Social enterprises and Community Interest Companies operating on a non-profit-distributing basis.

Applicants are required to have a written constitution, a set of rules, or a governing document and a bank or building society account, held in the name of the organisation, in place before applying for a grant.

In certain cases, individuals may be eligible to apply for funding.

Which communities will benefit?

As a general rule, the funds support the communities closest to the solar farm.

As the solar farm is developed, RWE welcome the views of local people on which communities they think should benefit from the community fund.

When drawing up the final area of benefit for each fund some of the key things RWE and GrantScape would consider include:

- Local feedback
- Proximity to the solar farm
- Size of population relative to the size of the fund
- How people live, work and use community facilities in the area



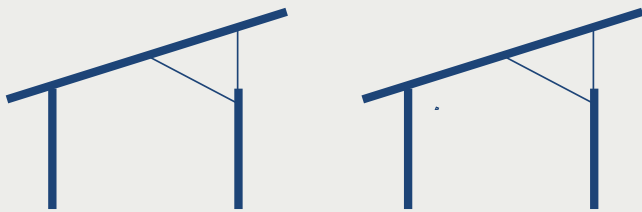
Rooftop Solar for Schools & the Wider Community

Newent & Highleadon

Funding from the RWE Layne's Wood Solar Farm Community Fund will enable an array of exciting local projects to take place.

Roof top solar panels and energy efficiency measures for local primary schools and community buildings will both reduce running costs and carbon emissions. Improvements will also be made to community buildings to increase their accessibility for those with mobility issues.

The fund will also support the improvement of the 'Bluebell Walk' footpath.



Wellbeing garden project

Snaith School

Funding from an RWE Community Fund allowed Snaith School to run a gardening project and create an outdoor wellbeing space in the school grounds.

The quiet and relaxing outdoor space means lots of young people in the school benefit from the calming effects of being in nature, potentially reducing stress levels, improving mood and enhancing self-esteem.

The project also directly engaged some of the more vulnerable students who had the opportunity to get involved with the planting and maintenance of the garden, building skills which will help them to thrive in the classroom.

Growing and caring for plants requires exercising patience, resilience, persistence and commitment. Taking responsibility for helping plants to grow means being trusted to care for them, and helping them to thrive brings feelings of pride and empowerment.





Creative Heart

Solar Panels

Creative Heart is a welcoming community hub and arts café in the heart of Littlehampton. They are passionate about bringing the community together and tackling social isolation and loneliness.

They know that creativity of all kinds can improve mental, emotional and physical health, so they provide as many different opportunities as possible for people to join in no matter what their ability, age or background.

By part funding the costs of solar panel installation on the building roof, an RWE Community Fund has helped to unlock additional match funding to make the project happen while also reducing the energy usage of the building. This will cut the costs of running the building and reduce carbon emissions, all the while making it warmer for those using the facilities.

Community Transport Scheme

Dolen Teifi

Dolen Teifi is a community transport organisation created by volunteers to provide sustainable transport to the people who live in and around Llandysul. An RWE Community Fund enabled the group to develop a rural electric car club.

The funding paid for the purchase of a fully accessible electric vehicle, for multiple charging points to be installed on local community buildings, and for a part time co-ordinator to manage the vehicle. The car is used for medical appointments and social purposes and have even been used to take family members to funerals where accessible transport was unavailable. The car can be self-driven but a pool of 45 volunteer drivers have been MiDAS trained through the funding to enable them to drive those who need support.

The scheme has been so successful that Dolen Teifi have drawn down National Lottery funding to extend it into neighbouring communities based on this pilot project.



Get Involved

RWE knows that our funds work best when local people help to design them to suit their area.

Throughout the development of our projects our specialist community investment team are available to answer your questions or to listen to your ideas and feedback on how funds might best benefit your community

When funds are set up, we will be looking for people who live, work or volunteer within the communities that will benefit from the fund to join the local panel that will decide on how funds are allocated. This opportunity will be promoted locally but individuals can also express an interest in this at any point.

Contact Us

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