



Community Energy Town & Parish Councils

What is Community Energy?

Community energy covers aspects of **collective action** to reduce, purchase, manage and generate energy.

Community energy projects have an emphasis on local engagement, local leadership and control and the local community benefiting collectively from the outcomes.

Community-led action can often tackle challenging issues around energy, with local councils and community groups well placed to understand their local areas and to bring people together with common purpose.

There are many examples of community energy projects including:

Community-owned renewable electricity installations such as solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, wind turbines or hydroelectric generation.

Members of the community jointly switching to a renewable heat source such as a heat pump or biomass boiler.

A climate change/sustainability organisation or community group supporting energy saving measures such as [Cold to Cosy Homes Cumbria](#)

Collective purchasing of heating oil for off gas-grid communities.

Collective switching of electricity or gas suppliers.

What can Town & Parish Councils do?

Declare a Climate Emergency.

In a formal meeting, town or parish councils can put forward a climate emergency motion and do the following:

Use the phrasing 'declare a climate emergency.'

Set target dates for reducing their own emissions.

State their climate actions to support them.

Set up a Climate Action Group to act on their declaration, and provide regular updates to the parish/town council.

Work out what the council and the community are most interested in working on. Think about what might have the most impact, but also what the local community will want to support.

Look at the existing powers of councils regarding climate change.

[Existing Powers of Councils regarding Climate Change](#)

Consider adopting the General Power of Competence and using innovatively.

The GPC gives councils the power to do anything an individual can do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation.

An eligible council is one which has resolved to adopt the GPC, with at least two thirds of its members being declared elected.

The Clerk must hold an appropriate qualification.

[\(Parish Councils \(General Power of Competence\) \(Prescribed Conditions\) Order 2012\).](#)

Encourage & Support Community Energy Projects.

[CAFS Solar Made Easy Project](#)

[Community Energy Cumbria](#)

Action with Communities Cumbria-[Community Oil Buying Groups Toolkit](#)

Reduce your own Energy Use in Local Council Buildings.

Ensure any local council buildings are as energy efficient as possible, and that energy is not wasted through unnecessary heating and lighting.

	<p>Ensure any street lighting uses well-directed LED lighting.</p> <p><u>Get an energy audit as a first step.</u></p>
<p>Buy/Generate Green Energy.</p>	<p>Install renewable energy generation, like heat pumps and solar PV. This could be on council land as well as council buildings, (eg a hydro or solar field).</p>
<p>Engage in Zero Carbon Neighbourhood Planning.</p>	<p><u>How to shape where you live: a guide to neighbourhood planning</u></p> <p>Promote renewable energy projects, such as solar energy & wind turbines in your Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>Engage with your Communities to raise awareness and knowledge of Climate Change.</p> <p>Find out what matters to them.</p>	<p>Take advantage of the grassroots reach of parish and town councils.</p> <p>Use your website, social media, posters, leaflets and word of mouth via your Councillors.</p> <p>Host a Community Engagement event about Climate Change and Community Energy.</p>
<p>Share Information with your communities.</p>	<p>Share information from local agencies & organisations which support your communities to save energy.</p>
<p>Do the <u>CAFS Carbon Literacy Training course</u></p>	<p>This informative and interactive Climate and Carbon Literacy training will give you an understanding of what's causing climate change, including here in Cumbria. You'll learn about climate science, where emissions come from and their impact on everyday life. You will also find out about the actions being taken to reduce them and the part you can play.</p> <p>It is suitable for a wide range of people regardless of current knowledge about climate change.</p>
<p>Become a Volunteer Climate Champion! (Copeland area only)</p> <p><u>Community Climate Champion (Volunteer) - CAFS</u></p>	<p>CAFs are currently looking to involve Local Councillors as Volunteer Climate Champions in the Copeland area.</p> <p>If successful in applying for the role, volunteers will be provided with support to increase their knowledge of climate science, solutions and practical actions. This includes participation on a FREE accredited Climate & Carbon Literacy course. Volunteers will be further supported by CAFS to organise activities to share their new found knowledge and enthusiasm with their council and communities.</p>

Community Energy Case Studies/Activities

Name	Details	Link
Burnside Community Energy	Burnside Community Energy (BCE) Ltd is a 'community benefit society' that was set up in November 2015 to support the development of community owned renewable energy and low carbon projects in Burnside and the surrounding area.	About Burnside Community Energy
NALC Climate Change Case Studies	Energy & Heating case studies page 23.	NALC Climate Change Case Studies
Sustainable Keswick	One of their activities has been to set up an Energy Group who are interested in both energy efficiency and energy generation – to reduce carbon emissions, make homes warmer and cheaper to heat, and to improve energy security. The group has been set up to look for opportunities to join or set up projects such as the community purchase of PV panels. They also publicise existing projects that might be of interest to people in the Keswick area, such as the Cold to Cosy Homes Cumbria service which provides free energy advice to eligible householders.	Sustainable Keswick The future is in our hands.
Greening Levens	The campaign is based on a blueprint initiative for local communities to take action against climate change; helping the environment, reducing our carbon footprint and saving money - and helping other villagers do the same.	Greening Levens – Levens Village

Support/Resources Available

Cumbria Action for Sustainability	Home - CAfS
ACTion With Communities in Cumbria	Action With Communities in Cumbria
NALC	NALC Climate Change
CALC (Training, support & resources)	kate.mcgibbon@cumbria.gov.uk - Resilience Support Cumbria Association of Local Councils: About Parish Councils : Climate Action
Zero Carbon Cumbria	ZCC
Centre for Sustainable Energy	Neighbourhood Planning in a Climate Emergency
Local Energy North West Hub	<p>The Local Energy North West Hub provides public sector institutions with support to help them develop sound propositions that can reduce both energy bills and carbon emissions.</p> <p>The team works flexibly to help organisations better understand the business case for their project proposals and any funding and finance that may be available.</p>

Funding Opportunities

Electricity Northwest – Powering our Communities Fund: Powering Our Communities fund enwl.co.uk	<p>Grants are available to provide seed funding to support the</p> <p>development of community and local energy projects in areas of Northwest England where Electricity Northwest operate.</p>
--	---

Parish Councils are eligible to apply.

Application deadline: 28/07/2023

**The National Lottery Community Fund-
Climate Action Fund - Energy and Climate**

[Climate Action Fund - Energy and Climate | The National Lottery Community Fund](#)
nlcommunityfund.org.uk

This funding aims to inspire and support communities across

the UK to address the energy and climate crisis. We're looking for projects

that show how communities can address climate change while tackling the energy

challenges through community-led climate action.

Town and Parish Councils are eligible to apply.

Application deadline: 28/07/2023

Winscales Moor Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund

[Cumbria Community Foundation - Connecting People Who Care With Causes That Matter](#)
cumbriafoundation.org

Who can apply?

volunteer-led, community groups, or local partnerships which benefit the parishes of Winscales, Great Clifton and Little Clifton. Not individuals.

What type of projects can be funded?

Charitable, community activities that are:
community-related
environmental
educational

Examples of Community Energy activities the Fund would like to support:

projects that promote and/or implement the sustainable use of energy and resources
capital items with a tangible, lasting benefit, including improvements to community buildings
projects to improve energy conservation and increased use of renewables
free information events about domestic or solar power

How much can you apply for?

There is no minimum or maximum award amount

The aim of the funding is to get as many people as possible to 'do their bit' to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Zero Carbon Cumbria – Community Climate Grants

[Zero Carbon Cumbria - Community Climate Grants - CAFS](#)

Organisations who apply must be based in Cumbria and must be locally controlled. Only not-for-profit groups can apply, including Parish Councils.

Delivery projects should be focused on:

Reducing carbon emissions including those relating to energy use.

Engaging with more people and building knowledge and understanding of climate change within your community.

Linking with other projects or activities which will help achieve the target of a Zero Carbon Cumbria by 2037.

Small grants (£200 – £750) and medium grants (£750 – £2,000) will be awarded to local groups until 2025.

Walney Extension Community Fund

[Walney Extension Community Fund Grantscape](#)

The funding is aimed at a wide range of not-for-profit groups and organisations (including town and parish councils) that are working for the benefit of the local community and environment in the areas of Copeland, South Lakeland & Barrow-in-Furness.

Grants from **£500 up to £50,000** are available

Closing date: 21 June 2023 **Decision by:** Mid September 2023

Closing date: 10 January 2024 **Decision by:** End March 2024

Sellafield Ltd Social Impact Fund

[Applying for Sellafield Ltd grants/reusable equipment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Funding is available for community projects addressing social and economic issues in West Cumbria (Allerdale & Copeland). In particular, projects should be able to demonstrate a strategic alignment to the social impact objectives of Sellafield Ltd. Including:

Sustainable growth - reflecting the increasing importance of the climate agenda and trying to achieve economic, social and competitive advantage for communities by integrating the climate agenda into day-to-day activities and socio-economic interventions.

Large projects - grants of over £200,000

Medium projects - grants between £10,000 and £200,000

Small or good neighbour projects - grants of up to £10,000

Bay Wind Energy Community Trust

[Grants \(bwect.org.uk\)](https://www.bwect.org.uk)

Grants can be awarded to individuals and organisations which are not-for-profit, charities or SME (Small or Medium Sized Enterprise), including Local Councils, and based within the prioritised geographical area of South Cumbria (potentially other areas also).

Applications must meet one of the two objects below:

1. To promote the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in particular by providing grants for the installation and raising awareness of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency, technology and solutions.
2. The prevention or relief of poverty or financial hardship by providing assistance to the people who are in fuel poverty.

CAfS Community Energy Support

[Support for Community Renewable Energy Projects - CAfS](#)

Light-touch Support

Specialist consultancy support for initial project development

Grant funding for further project development:

- Application details to follow
- Evaluation criteria to follow
- Delivery period: May 2024 – September 2025

Kate.mcGibbon@cumbria.gov.uk

CALC

June 2023