Royal Borough of Greenwich Community Energy Fund 2026/27

Guidance for applicants

November 2026

Contents

1 Community Energy Fund Guidance 3

1.1 Introduction and Background 3

1.2 What is community energy? 3

1.3 Programme details 3

1.4 Priorities 4

1.5 What the fund will cover 4

1.6 Eligibility 5

1.7 Application Process 6

1.8 Assessing Applications 6

1.9 Funding terms 8

1.10 Application requirement 8

1.11 Important information for applicants 8

1.12 Contact Details 9

1.13 Interpreting 9

1 Community Energy Fund Guidance

1.1 Introduction and Background

1.1.1 In February 2025 the Royal Borough of Greenwich launched the final report on the outcome of the Cooperative Commission called 'Together for Greenwich: Co-Operation for the Future.' The report set out a range of actions, one of which was to launch a Community Energy Fund.

1.1.2 The aim of the fund is to enable communities within the borough to apply for funding to support and/or deliver community energy projects that deliver carbon reductions. This supports the Council's response to the climate emergency and seeks to help local communities be more resilient to the impacts of a changing climate and create new local solutions on energy demand and supply.

1.2 What is community energy?

1.2.1 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.

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

1.2.3 There are many examples of community energy projects across the UK:

- 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 community group supporting energy saving measures such as the installation of cavity wall or solid wall insulation, which can be funded wholly or partly by the Green Deal.
- Collective purchasing of heating oil for off gas-grid communities
- Collective switching of electricity or gas suppliers.

1.2.4 Reducing carbon through the opportunities provided by the Community Energy Fund will support and enable decarbonization of buildings and provide new capacity for local community and voluntary groups to bring people together for a common purpose in relation to energy, carbon reduction and fuel poverty.

1.2.5 This guidance sets out the funding and how local groups can apply to the Fund. All projects must take place in the borough of Greenwich.

1.3 Programme details

1.3.1 The Fund aims to support the community in overcoming challenges associated with implementing energy related projects in the borough. The overarching objective of the Fund is reduce borough-wide carbon emissions of households, community facilities and businesses through energy generation and reduced energy use.

1.3.2 There are four funding strands available:

- Strand 1 > Innovation and pre-feasibility development

- Strand 2 > Feasibility and business case development
- Strand 3 > Training and capability building
- Strand 4 > Project implementation and delivery

1.4 Priorities

When considering applications, the following priorities are important factors of the Fund:

- Collective action to reduce, manage and generate energy.
- Community-led development and delivery of energy projects which provide direct benefit to the local community.
- Increasing community awareness and action on energy efficiency.
- Projects which focus on households affected by fuel poverty, for example: older people, low- income families, disabled people or those with long term health conditions.
- New approaches that will provide additionality in terms of outcomes for the borough.
- Activity that fits within and complements existing work in the borough through match funding.

1.5 What the fund will cover

1.5.1 Projects are expected to reduce carbon emissions. This can be through generating renewable energy, reducing consumption of energy through retrofitting activities, encourage energy saving activity by others and training/capacity building to create opportunities for energy consumption.

1.5.2 **Strand 1 - Innovation and Pre-Feasibility Development**

Grants up to £5,000 per project supported.

This funding can be used to investigate the suitability of technologies prior to business case development. This would include, for example, surveys to determine if a renewable heating system is viable for a community building; or assessments of solar PV capacity across multiple community-owned buildings. This will help community groups that are in the early stages of project development, or are new to community energy projects and help identify projects with the most potential for progressing to business case development.

1.5.3 Strand 2 – Feasibility and Business Case Development

Grants up to £10,000 per project supported.

This funding will support a range of works associated with developing a project to the point where it is ready for implementation. This could include:

- Technical feasibility assessment (for example structural surveys, assessing the feasibility of grid connection).
- Stakeholder consultation.
- Assessment of planning issues.
- Getting permissions from the site landowner.
- Support to complete applications for permits, licences and consent.
- Financial viability or business case assessments.
- Legal advice.

1.5.4 Strand 3 – Training and Capability Building

Grants of up to £5,000 per project supported.

This can be used by community energy groups to provide training and building capability within

community groups.

1.5.5 Strand 4 - Project Implementation and Delivery

Grants capped at £15,000 per project supported.

This funding will support a range of works associated with implementing projects, capped at a maximum of £15,000 or up to one-third of the total cost, whichever amount is the smaller. This could include:

- Capital costs (to support the cost of a renewable installation or deep retrofit).
- Core costs (e.g. staff, office costs).
- Project costs (e.g. venue hire, project worker).
- Project management costs.

1.6 Eligibility

1.6.1 The fund is targeted at small organisations with charitable aims operating in the borough. You do not have to be an energy or environmental group to apply. If you are a smaller organisation that may not have the capacity to deliver your project proposal, you can partner with any organisation independent of the council that does have the capacity to receive a grant.

1.6.2 Individuals are not eligible, however the following groups are eligible to apply:

- Community and Voluntary Groups
- Co-operatives
- Company Ltd by Guarantee
- Registered charities
- Faith and Equalities Groups
- Social Enterprises
- Schools
- Community interest companies
- Community benefit societies
- Tenants' and residents' associations, or tenant management organisations
- Other / constituted

1.6.3 All projects must benefit the local community in some form and have the Royal Borough of Greenwich as its primary focus. If equipment or retrofit measures are to be installed as part of the project, then the property / land where measures will be installed must be located within the borough. All applications should consider equal opportunities of access to the project.

1.6.4 Applications are welcomed which show your organisation is working collaboratively with, and involving, other local groups. However, you must nominate a single lead organisation to submit the grant application.

1.6.5 Individual personal bank accounts **will not** be accepted for receipt of money. For organisations that have been set up within the last 12 months and do not have a Constitution/ Terms of Reference or bank account the organisation can either:

- Make an arrangement with either a charity commission registered organisation that has been in existence for **12 months plus** to act as a bank to 'hold' and manage the funds or
- Use an online service like 'Accountable', which acts like a bank and holds money on behalf of your group. Accountable is run by the Social Change Agency CIC and is designed specifically to help community groups who don't have a bank account. Your group can simply and transparently

manage your money using their online platform.

https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/supplier/accountable-money-management/
Successful applicants will be required to complete a formal agreement as part of the grant conditions.

1.6.6 We are not able to fund:

- Individuals – if you are an individual with an idea you could link up with a local organisation (contact us if you would like help with this).
- Activities that promote political views or religious beliefs.
- Commercial or business-related activities.
- Spending that has already taken place.
- Projects already funded by other sources or services we provide.

1.7 Application Process

1.7.1 Applications will be made via the ActionFunder website.

1.7.2 Guidance on how to make an application can be found via the ActionFunder Help Centre. You can also reach out to ActionFunder at hello@actionfunder.org or 07446 475311.

1.7.3 To learn more about how ActionFunder works, sign up to their monthly online community drop in.

1.8 Assessing Applications

1.8.1 ActionFunder will provide an evaluation of the applications received. These will be reviewed by an evaluation panel, and applications will be approved based on the projects fit with the selection criteria and available funding.

1.8.2 The number of projects which receive support will depend on the number and quality of applications received. Projects will be assessed based on the information provided by applicants in the application form.

1.8.3 Funding should support as many projects as possible. Applications which outline additional funding sources (public or private) to complement the project will be looked upon favourably.

1.8.4 Please refer to the below resources that outline successful Community energy projects and case studies:

- The Greater London Authority past projects.
- Community Energy London case studies

1.8.5 Proposed projects should:

- A clear timetable for delivery and demonstrate that there is sufficient capacity to complete the work by the proposed timetable.
- Propose efficient use of funding, such as leveraging other funding sources, joint procurement opportunities, partnerships, and working with others to maximise impact through knowledge sharing.
- Demonstrate the additional benefits the proposed project will bring to the community.

1.8.6 Selection criteria

Applications will be based on the following selection criteria:

Category	Criteria	Questions	Score (1-5)
Planning a successful project	Research	What degree of work has already been undertaken to help establish the viability of the proposal and how it fits with existing work in the borough?	
	Project plan	To what extent is there a clear project plan in place supported by a timetable of milestones to develop the project? Have risks been identified and are they manageable?	
	Community Support	To what extend is existing community support demonstrated? (Is their matched funding, partnership organisations etc)	
	Project budget	Is the proposed budget and the associated costs reasonable? Have quotes been sought and provided? Are there any sources of external funding? Are there sufficient resources in place to deliver the project?	
Empowering people	Empowered and responsible	Is the community actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities?	
	Local support	Has the project obtained support amongst a variety of local community groups and other interest groups?	
Impact of Intervention	Impact on the community	What is the anticipated impact on the community?	
	Vulnerable community	To what extent will vulnerable communities be impacted by the intervention? Will this include fuel poor households? What are the estimated bill savings?	
	Carbon emissions	What is the anticipated energy and carbon emissions savings from the intervention?	
Applicant Experience	Relationship with the local community	What experience do the applicants have working with the local community of the proposed project?	
	Developing energy projects	What experience does the applicant have delivering community energy projects? Please provide details of any previous installations.	
	Working in partnership	To what extent has the applicant investigated opportunities for working jointly with key stakeholders, including local authorities and sector experts?	

*** Scores range from 1-5 (1 = Low, 5 = High), where:**

1 Does not meet the minimum aims of the programme, does not describe the details of the project

2 Meets the minimum aims of the programme, describes some details about the project but does not explain wider context

3 Meets the minimum aims of the programme, clearly explains the project and puts it in context

4 Goes beyond the minimum aims of the programme, clearly explains and evidences the project and puts it in context

5 Ambitious programme or project which exceeds the minimum aims of the programme, detailed explanation and evidence of the project, includes elements of innovation in approach

1.9 Funding terms

1.9.1 Any award(s) of funding will be made subject to the acceptance of standard funding terms, set out in Appendix A. The terms are non-negotiable and attempts to, and proposals for, changes will result in the application being rejected.

1.9.2 Funding is expected to be paid within 28 days of the signature of the funding agreement..

1.10 Application requirement

1.10.1 All applications need to demonstrate clear benefit to the local community and have a clear set of measurable objectives. Project descriptions are to be informative but concise with all supporting information included within the relevant section(s) of the application.

1.10.2 Applications must be received by the dates below. Applications are to be submitted to via the ActionFunder platform:

1. Greenwich Community Energy Fund - Strand 1: Innovation and Pre-Feasibility Development

2. Greenwich Community Energy Fund - Strand 2: Feasibility and Business Case Development

3. Greenwich Community Energy Fund - Strand 3: Training and Capability Building

4. Greenwich Community Energy Fund - Strand 4: Project Implementation and Delivery

1.10.3 Timetable for funding

All funding must be claimed by an agreed completion date to be discussed if projects are successful.

Community Energy Fund opens for applications	
Deadline for submissions	
Successful applicants informed & feedback to unsuccessful applicants	
Deadline for signed funding agreements	
Projects undertaken	
Review of the Fund	

1.11 Important information for applicants

Funded organisations must ensure that:

1. A bank account is in operation into which payment can be made please note we will not pay into individual bank accounts. See notes on Eligibility above if you are a group without a bank account.

2. All legal and insurance liabilities associated with the project are fulfilled.
3. Appropriate safeguarding measures are implemented such as DBS checks.
4. A completed monitoring form with appropriate information is provided at the end of the project. Failure to provide this will result in the organisation being ineligible for future funding.
5. All financial evidence, including receipts, is kept for at least two years after submission of monitoring information.

If you have any concerns or questions about the above requirements or anything else related to this application form, please contact:

1.12 Reporting requirements:

If your application is successful and you accept the funding offer, you will be required to:

1. **Provide project updates:** Submit at least two progress updates via the ActionFunder platform to inform us of your project delivery and achievements.
2. **Complete an impact survey:** Upon project completion, complete a short impact survey to help us understand the outcomes of your work. You can view the survey questions here
3. **Additional reporting question:** In addition to the standard impact survey questions, the following question will also be included –
    a. Please state the carbon savings achieved (directly or indirectly) using tonnes CO2e

1.12 Contact Details

Email:
Tel:

1.13 Interpreting

If you need this document in large print please call 020 8854 8888

Translation **Please contact Royal Greenwich Interpreting Service if you need this letter translated for you;** **Telephone: 020 8921 3928** **Email:** **interpreting@royalgreenwich.gov.uk**	**अनुवाद** **यदि तपाईं लाई यो पुस्तिका अनुबाधित भएको चाहिएमा कृपया रोयल ग्रीनविच इन्टरप्रेतिङ्ग सर्भिसमा सम्पर्क गर्नुहोस्;** **टेलीफोन: ०२० ८९२१ ३९२८** **इमेल: interpreting@royalgreenwich.gov.uk**
Traducere **Vă rugăm să contactați Serviciul de Interpretare al Consiliului Local Greenwich dacă aveți nevoie de traducerea acestei broșuri;** **Telefon: 020 8921 3928** **Adresa de e-mail:** **interpreting@royalgreenwich.gov.uk**	**Traducción** **Póngase en contacto con el Servicio de Interpretación de Royal Greenwich si necesita que le traduzcan este folleto;** **Teléfono: 020 8921 3928** **Correo electrónico:** **interpreting@royalgreenwich.gov.uk**