

Energy Learning Network

Supporting local councils as enablers of community energy

Join an exciting opportunity to find out more about community energy and how local people could benefit from clean energy and lower bills.

What is the Energy Learning Network?

Thanks to National Lottery players, Ashden Climate Solutions has received £1.5m from The National Lottery Community Fund, the largest community funder in the UK. To accelerate the growth of community energy across the UK, the Energy Learning Network has been established, delivered by a partnership of Ashden Climate Solutions (Ashden), Community Energy England (CEE), Community Energy Scotland (CES), Community Energy Wales (CEW), Action Renewables (AR) and Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE). The Network is funded by the National Lottery Fund.

Local councils are uniquely placed to stimulate community energy, through grassroots engagement with local people and working with community groups to turn ideas into reality. Recognising this, the network is seeking to work closely with local councils across the UK who want to enable and deliver community energy in their area.

What is Community Energy?

Community energy is about community-led renewable energy, energy demand reduction and energy supply projects, whether wholly owned and/or controlled by communities or through a partnership with commercial or public sector partners. It can look like anything from a community-owned solar farm, local retrofit advice service to delivering energy saving education workshops in local schools or running a community-owned and run electric car club.

It is about people taking democratic control over their energy future as well as working together. It's a growing sector: in 2023 over there were 583 community energy organisations, £4.4million saved on energy bills, 165,980 tonnes CO2 saved in one year of work by communities (Source: [Community Energy State of the Sector 2024](#)).

The opportunity

The network is looking to recruit 5-10 local councils across the UK to work with over the next two years to support the growth of skills and knowledge to enable and deliver community energy activities locally. This is also a fantastic opportunity to meet, learn from and collaborate with other local councils from across the UK and share challenges and solutions.

This is being coordinated by one of the Energy Learning Network's delivery partners, the [Centre for Sustainable Energy](#), an independent national charity supporting people and organisations across the UK to tackle the climate emergency and end the suffering caused by cold homes.

What is the time commitment?

There will be six 1.5 hour workshops (delivered online). The first of these will be in November 2024. The following five workshops will take place between January 2025 and March 2026.

Attendance at the workshops is a core part of the network so your participation at these is a mandatory part of being involved. Outside the workshops, there will be time commitments for you in terms of taking forward the actions identified in the workshops and reflecting on the learnings. As part of this opportunity, you will also be able to receive ongoing advice and support from CSE.

Who is eligible?

You must be a local council in the UK and have an interest in supporting the growth of community energy in your local area. You can be based in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

- England – parish or town council
- Wales – town or community councils
- Scotland – community councils
- Northern Ireland – district councils, Community Associations and Village Committees

We're looking for a mix of experience of community energy so whether you have some experience, or no experience but you are interested, please apply.

How can I apply?

To apply, please complete [this short Expression of Interest form](#) by Tuesday 17th September at 17:00

If you have any questions about this opportunity, please contact elncommunity@cse.org.uk