Community Benefit Fund

Small GRANTS. Local ACTION. Visible community BENEFIT.

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COMMUNITY ENERGY

Why a Community Benefit Fund?

As part of the co-operative values, most Community Benefit Societies are committed to investing in their local communities. They often use profits generated from their community-owned renewable energy projects to establish Community Benefit Funds, which support practical initiatives and projects that deliver lasting benefits to local people and environment.

From the start of 2027, North Lincolnshire Community Energy (NLCE) are delighted to be in the position to roll out our own Community Benefit Fund (CBF) to eligible projects; increasing our ability to support local projects, activities and initiatives that benefit the community.

- **Give local groups a simple way to turn ideas into action.**
- **Support projects that strengthen communities and improve local sustainability.**
- **Make the benefits of community owned energy visible beyond the solar installations.**
- **Encourage participation, collaboration and environmental awareness.**

The Principle

LOCAL VALUE

Even a small amount of funding can unlock practical support for projects, volunteer effort, local biodiversity and community participation/education.

NLCE Community Benefit Fund: At a Glance

A total of £1,000 is available through seven unrestricted awards, providing flexible funding to support a range of community initiatives.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis from January 2027 and will be considered, until the awards have all been fully allocated for the year.

Two Larger Awards

2 × £250

For projects with a little more scope, reach or upfront cost.

Five Smaller Awards

5 × £100

For simple, practical ideas that can make a quick difference locally.

Total Available

£1,000

Seven successful projects. A clear, accessible first step into community funding.

What Projects Can The Fund Support?

NLCE has chosen to keep the funding criteria as broad as possible to encourage creativity and innovation within our community. Projects and activities may be considered as long as they align with our co-operative values of creating a sustainable future, improving access to environmental education, and helping to reduce energy poverty.

Greener Spaces

Community planting, biodiversity improvements, recycling initiatives, or energy-saving projects.

Learning & Engagement

Workshops, displays, talks or activities that build climate, nature and/or energy awareness.

Community Wellbeing

Projects that bring people together, improve shared spaces, or reduce isolation.

Youth Led-Projects

Activities led by or designed with children and young people around climate and energy justice.

Practical Local Action

Small purchases of equipment, or materials that would help a community project happen.

Energy Saving / Retrofitting

Support for community hubs to purchase energy efficiency improvements, such as LED bulb upgrades.

Eligibility criteria:

NLCE have kept the process simple and accessible, aiming to make it easier for individuals, schools and smaller community organisations to apply.

Who can apply?

- Individuals, community groups, and/or voluntary organisations.
- Schools, youth groups and educational/community projects.
- Neighbourhood, or residents' groups.
- Clubs, charities and other not-for-profit organisations.

Projects must show that they will be of benefit to the people, or communities in North Lincolnshire. More details on the eligibility criteria can be found on the guidance notes and application HERE.

Exclusions: *While most applications may be considered, applications from political parties, or those with a conflict of interest to NLCE, or Energy4All will not be considered.*

How to apply:

ONE PAGE

Application Process

Applicants are asked to explain what they will do, who benefits, how much it costs and what difference the award will make. Our application will be online, but can also be sent out in a paper format to remove digital barriers.

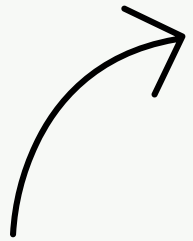
Conditions of Application and Grant Award:

These conditions help ensure that funding is distributed fairly, used responsibly, and delivers the greatest possible benefit to the community, full guidance is available on NLCE's website **HERE**.

- One application per organisation per grant round, which is on an annual timescale.
- Successful applicants agree to use the CBF grant soley for the agreed purpose outlined within the application submitted.
- Awards are not available for retrospective activities, which have already been or are partially completed.
- Funding should be used within an agreed period of time with NLCE, e.g. 6 months, or 12 months.
- Applicants should declare any other funding for the same activity.
- Successful projects agree to provide a short impact update for NLCE to share and, where possible, photographs for publicity purposes.
- NLCE reserves the right to withhold or recover funding where agreed conditions are not met, or false information has been provided in the application.

How Applications Are Evaluated

Our applications are evaluated through a transparent and proportionate process by our **voluntary CBF committee**. By bringing together a range of perspectives and experience, the panel ensures that all applications are considered fairly, consistently, and against clearly defined criteria.



What NLCE are looking for in a successful application

1. **Local benefit**
   Who benefits and how meaningful is the benefit?

2. **Community participation**
   Does it bring people together, offer education or encourage volunteering?

3. **Environmental connection**
   Does it support sustainability, energy awareness or greener living?

4. **Value for money**
   Can the project deliver a clear outcome with £100 or £250?

5. **Feasibility**
   Can the project be completed within a reasonable timescale?

Easy Application and Grant Award Process

NLCE has designed its first Community Benefit Fund to make the application and grant award process as simple and accessible as possible. The fund aims to minimise administration for applicants, offer broad eligibility criteria, ensure fair and transparent assessments free from conflicts of interest, and maximise positive impact for the local area.

1

PROMOTE

Share the fund through NLCE, community networks and local partners.

2

APPLY

Short Form:

- Project
- Beneficiaries
- Budget
- Timing
- Impact

3

ASSESS

Small panel reviews and approves applications against published criteria.

4

AWARD

Select awards
2 x £250
5 x £100

Notify all applicants.

5

DELIVER

Awarded projects complete their activities and provide a short update and evidence.

More Information

For more information about **North Lincolnshire Community Energy Limited;** how you can get involved, become a host site, or member, or to apply for our Community Benefit Fund, please visit our website: www.nlce.coop or email grants@nlce.coop

Our Community Energy Group is administered by **Energy4All Limited,** for more details on how that works please visit their website: www.energy4all.co.uk

North Lincolnshire Community Energy are also members of regulatory organisations:

- Community Energy England: www.communityenergyengland.org
- Co-operatives UK: www.uk.coop