

Engaging communities:

**New tools to support public engagement,
community benefits, and local ownership**

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Background



- Building on 3 recommendations of *Community Benefits from Wind Power* study by CSE and Garrad Hassan for Renewables Advisory Board funded by DTI (2005)
- Main findings:
 - “The routine provision of meaningful benefits to communities hosting wind power projects is likely to be a significant factor in sustaining public support and delivering significant rates of wind power development”
 - BUT we can’t simply import approaches from overseas
 - UK focus needs to be on engagement, direct financial contributions, and simplifying local ownership



COMMUNITY BENEFITS FROM
WIND POWER

Policy Maker's Summary



<http://www.cse.org.uk/pdf/pub1051.pdf>

3 recommendations followed up



- Guidance on public engagement with wind energy development process
 - CSE with BDOR Ltd, Bond Pearce & Peter Capener
- A good practice 'toolkit' on community benefits
 - CSE with Garrad Hassan, BDOR Ltd and Peter Capener
- 'Bankable' models for enabling community ownership in commercially-led developments
 - TLT Solicitors LLP

Protocol for Public Engagement



- Based on process of stakeholder engagement with developers, local authority planners and councillors, statutory consultees, NGOs and community organisations
- Starting place the public engagement protocol developed for Regen SW for South West England
- England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland all 'unique'
- Expected to be published on DTI website and www.planningrenewables.org.uk by end October
- Target audiences: wind developers, local authorities, statutory consultees, community organisations
- Protocol for individual or collective signature plus guidance

Protocol for Public Engagement



- Lays out series of undertakings for each party to participate in good public engagement practices:
 - Wind developers – clear engagement plan, regular updates and feedback on process and progress, explain & consult on local benefits
 - Local authorities – clear policy, early consultation, commitment to maintaining good level of understanding and reliable evidence base
 - Statutory consultees – do what you say you’re going to do by when you say you’ll do it
 - Community organisations – be clear about who you represent and what issues matter most to you, and be transparent about your sources
- All to *‘participate willingly and openly in a process of establishing and verifying information about the proposed development’*
- Intention is to improve the timely flow of information, build trust, establish evidence-based approach, and get ‘better’ decisions

Community Benefits Toolkit



Designed to help wind energy developers, local authorities and local communities understand better:

- the range of ways in which 'host communities' can benefit from wind energy developments
- the possible justifications for ensuring greater local benefits
- the factors which may influence the nature and scale of benefits available to host communities
- the options for managing the delivery of benefits locally
- the role each of them can potentially play in securing local benefits

Not aimed at community-led development and not a 'case for wind power' or a requirement for financial benefits to be paid

Community Benefits Toolkit



Answers questions like:

- Why should community benefits be considered? (Section 2)
- What are the costs, risks and rewards of wind energy and how do community benefits fit into this picture? (Section 3)
- What is the relationship between community benefits and the planning process? (Section 4)
- What are the different ways community benefits can be offered? (particularly Sections 5 and 6)
- Who should benefit and how should this be controlled and managed? (Section 7)
- What agreements can and should be put in place to secure these benefits? (Section 7)

Justifications for community benefits



The continuum of stereotypical perspectives?

“Being a good neighbour”

“Sharing the rewards of farming the commons”

“Compensation for impacts”



Developer

Community



‘Bankable’ models for local ownership

- Intention is to outline ways to enable local ownership which fit with typical financing structures for commercial wind farm developments ***without great complexity***
- Consultation by TLT Solicitors with bankers, wind developers and community organisations involved in commercial-scale developments
- Shows why many approaches would not work (too complex)
- Focuses on two approaches
 - Individual investment in community-owned vehicle which owns share capital in joint venture project company (eg Energy4All)
 - Securing a revenue-linked payment into a community-managed trust fund

‘Bankable’ models for local ownership

- Individual investment in community-owned vehicle which owns share capital in joint venture project company
 - Genuine ownership but community partner’s influence on project operations will need to be limited
 - Raising investment needs ‘public offering’, so costly
 - May divide community between ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’
- Secured revenue-linked payment into a community-managed trust fund
 - Less sense of formal ‘ownership’ but genuine relationship with project performance, far less complex and no need to raise local investment

New tools for engagement



- Guidance on public engagement with wind energy development process
- A good practice 'toolkit' on community benefits
- 'Bankable' models for enabling community ownership in commercially-led developments
- DTI website & www.planningrenewables.org.uk by end October

Contact



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