

Community benefit package

Our approach

Should the project be consented, a community benefit package will be established to support the communities who host, and are closest to, the project.

We take a tailored approach and consult with the local community, both pre-planning and post-consent (should the project be granted planning permission), to gain an understanding of the local priorities and to seek suggestions for projects that will help to secure long-term economic, social and environmental benefits for the area.

This approach ensures the community benefits package that is delivered is aligned with the priorities of the local community. For instance, the package could include RES' Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS) or provide funding for projects that sit outside the parameters of a traditional application-based fund.

Should the project receive consent, the area of benefit for Hill of Fare Wind Farm will be determined in consultation with locally elected representatives from the closest communities.

Value of the package

RES is proposing a tailored package of benefits for the community from the Hill of Fare Wind Farm that would be worth £5,000 per megawatt (or equivalent) of installed capacity per annum. Based on the current design of the site and installed capacity of 105.6MW this could equate to a tailored community benefit package for the local area worth £528,000 (or equivalent) each year.

This package could include RES' unique Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS), something that has received significant interest from the community. LEDS seeks to deliver direct and tangible benefits to people living and working closest to RES' operational wind farms.

Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS)

Our unique Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS) was developed in response to research and feedback from local communities around RES' operational wind farms.

LEDS offers an annual discount to the electricity bills of those properties closest to a participating wind farm and there is no need to change energy provider. If this is something that you are interested in as a potential part of a tailored community benefits package at Hill of Fare, please note this in your formal written feedback to RES and let our project team know if you would like more information.



Who administers the fund?

Where traditional application-based funds are established for our projects, these are always administered by an independent organisation. For example, a Trust established for the specific purpose of managing community funds or an established grant-making organisation such as Foundation Scotland.

Should an application-based fund form part of the tailored community benefits package for Hill of Fare Wind Farm then we would consult with the community with regard to an administrator for the fund.

Your feedback on local priorities

We are seeking your feedback on ideas for local benefits and priority projects that you would like to see supported or delivered in your community from the Hill of Fare Wind Farm project, should it receive consent. Some of the most popular suggestions we've received from the community so far include:

- Improved cycle and walking paths on the hill and local area
- Discounted electricity
- Home eco measures (insulation, solar panels)
- Funding for schools, education initiatives, renewables education
- Improved parking for hill access
- Funding for village halls
- Electric vehicle charging facilities within community
- Funding towards installation of electric vehicle charge points
- Biodiversity initiatives (peatland, trees, flowers)
- Social welfare support, senior citizen support, hardship funds
- Upgraded or new sports facilities
- Skills and employment initiatives
- Shared ownership
- Improved broadband
- Improved transport

Voluntary community benefits are not a material planning consideration.

Penmanshiel Wind Farm – case study

The Penmanshiel Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund contributed £35,000 to the Community Council's refurbishment of Reston play park which had been severely delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, with match funding used for the balance.

The initiative involved entering a contract with Scottish Borders Council to transfer ownership of the play park to the community council. The park was officially opened by the oldest gentleman in Reston, a fitting tribute from the elderly to the young.



Shared ownership

Is this of interest to the community?

RES is also interested to understand whether there is any appetite from the community in exploring the potential opportunity of shared ownership in the wind farm. If shared ownership is something that interests you, please put this on your comments form and speak to our project team. Local Energy Scotland is the independent body that manages the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES). To find out more about the scheme visit: <https://localenergy.scot/hub/shared-ownership/>.