

Innogy Renewables UK Ltd
Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm
Community Investment Funding Consultation
Results - Summary

Introduction

Innogy Renewables UK Ltd (innogy) is constructing the Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm, within the working forest managed by Natural Resources Wales near Denbigh, North Wales. The project brings with it community investment funding which could be worth £19 million over the project's operational lifetime which is expected to be up to 25 years. Up to £768,000 will be available each year which will be index linked to inflation. Administration costs will be paid from the fund. innogy has consulted widely on how this funding should be set up and delivered, this update is designed to provide some of the key findings from this process.

As part of the consultation innogy prepared and shared a questionnaire with residents, held two drop in sessions and a strategic stakeholder event to ascertain opinions on:

- The geographical area to benefit from the funding
- What people think is the best thing about their local area, what they would improve about their local area and what they think is important for the future of their local area
- Who they would like to see involved in making decisions about funding allocation
- How much they know about the Hiraethog Development Strategy and Steering Group and if they feel it still represents the needs of their local area
- Ideas they have for how the funding could be invested
- Any other issues they think are important

The response rate to the consultation was very positive and innogy would like to thank everyone who took part. All of the comments were considered in detail and will continue to be considered by innogy, the fund administrator and grants panel as the fund application processes are developed and reviewed.

Summary of results

The questionnaire was open between 31/10/2018 and 17/12/2018. It was published online using Survey Monkey and was mailed to all homes within 6km of the wind farm site boundary. The questionnaire was also advertised via the Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm project e-mail list, in the local press and on social media.

innogy held two very well attended drop in sessions, at Denbigh Town Hall on 12/11/2018 and at Cerrigydrudion Community Centre on 13/11/2018. Local residents had the opportunity to meet the innogy community investment team, to ask questions and share their ideas about the fund.

On 11/12/2018 innogy hosted a strategic stakeholder event to help maximise the effectiveness of this significant investment and to ensure the funding structure is being developed to complement the wider funding and policy context.

Questionnaire results were received from 481 respondents (351 online and 130 hard copies). 45% of responses were submitted in Welsh. Denbighshire County Council, Conwy County Borough Council and the Hiraethog Steering Group all submitted standalone responses to the consultation.

General views in relation to renewable energy have been noted but not included in the results as this was not the focus of the consultation.

Geographical area of benefit

Opinions about the area of benefit options proposed by innogy were divided, this was supported by conversations at the drop in sessions. Option 2, which was based on a 12.5km radius from the site boundary, received marginally the most support from respondents (34%). 21% of respondents preferred option 1 which was based on all community council areas which touch within 10km of the wind farm site boundary. 24% of respondents preferred option 3 which was a wider regional area.

19% of respondents selected the “Other” option and provided alternative suggestions for identifying the areas that should benefit and for areas that should be included. 42 respondents (9%) made suggestions that fell into the category of residents living closest to the wind farm should be prioritised. 17 respondents (4%) made suggestions that supported a wide rural area of benefit including the whole of the Hiraethog area or even all the rural wards in Conwy and Denbighshire. 16 respondents (3%) expressed concerns about more populated towns being included.

“The funds should only benefit communities directly affected - restrict the areas to 5 miles. But applications can come from outside that area if there is a tangible benefit (e.g. employment, skills etc.) for the affected communities”

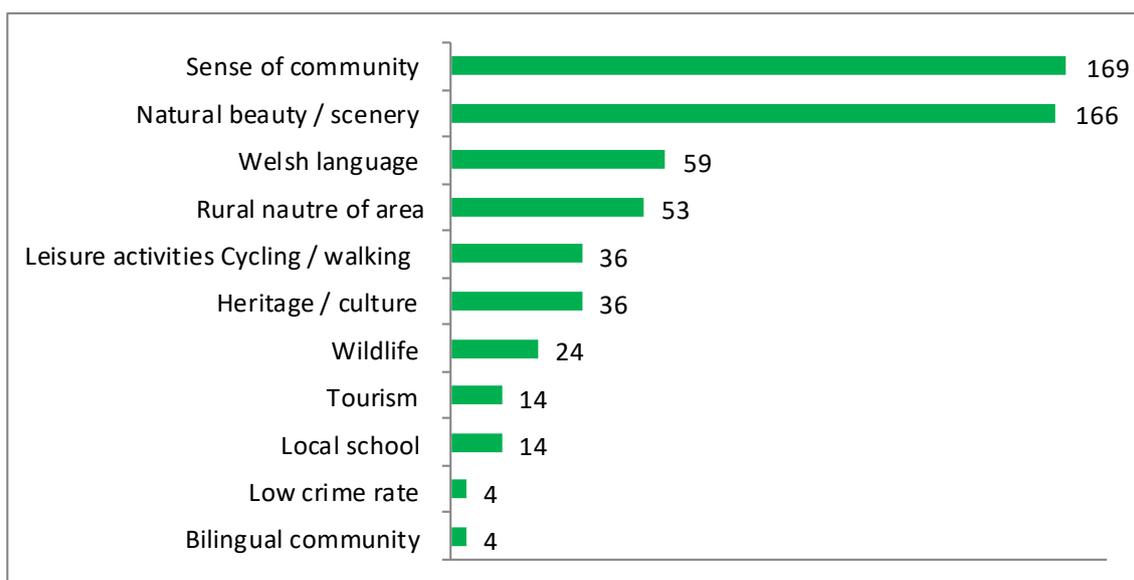
“The communities closest to the windmills should be prioritised. There should be two layers to the area. The first being the communities that are closest, and then the more populated areas to ensure that the communities that are closest are prioritised. There is a real danger that the populated areas (the villages) will soak up the money.”

“The larger area should benefit from the Windfarms. the A5 corridor in particular takes the massive traffic incurred in construction.”

The best things about your local area

Over a third of respondents (35%) made comments falling into both the categories of natural beauty and scenery and sense of community. 12% of respondents made comments highlighting the Welsh language and 11% the rural nature of the area.

Graph 1 – What do you think is the best thing about your local area? Data is categorised by themes and presented by number of respondents.



“Geographical location. Rural unspoiled country area. Attracts tourists. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Environment, black grouse, birds, nature, and wildlife. Good walking area.”

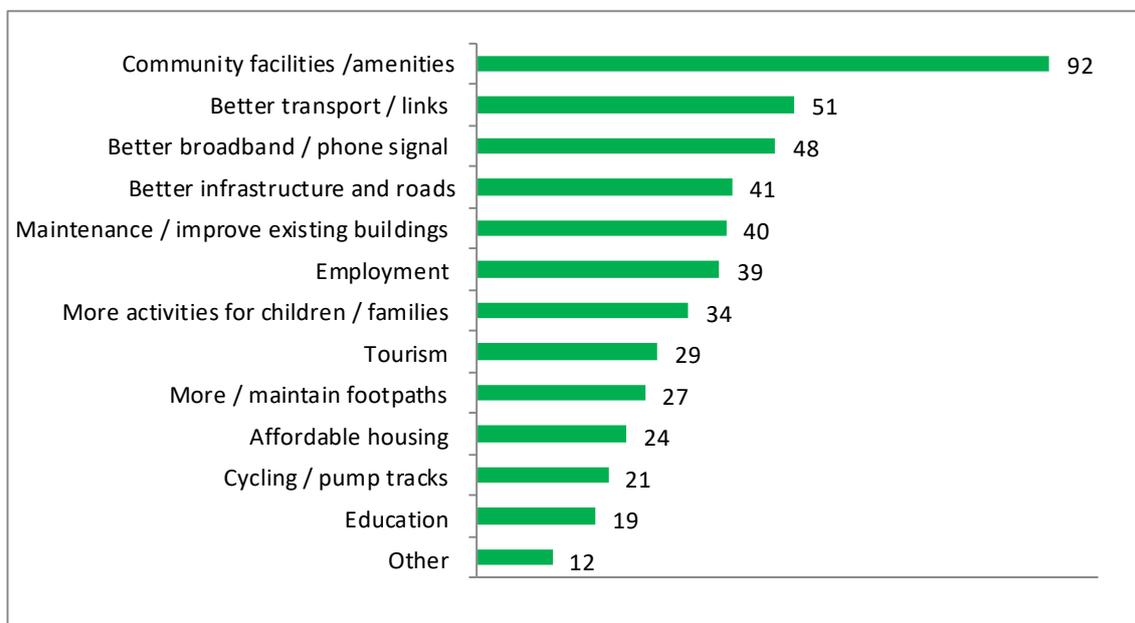
“The community is very important to everyone, the people look out for each other and the environment.”

“Heritage, history, culture, Welsh language communities, the countryside, central to North Wales and is not too remote.”

What would improve your local area

Approximately one out of five respondents (19%) made comments indicating that community facilities and amenities would improve their local area. Approximately one out of seven respondents (14%) highlighted the local economy, making suggestions that fell into the two combined categories of employment and tourism. Other themes which featured highly included better transport links (11%), better infrastructure and roads (9%), and better broadband and phone signal (10%).

Graph 2 – What would improve your local area? Data is categorised by themes and presented by number of respondents.



“More activities for children, young people and families in the community. Better roads and transport, affordable housing for local people, education and jobs in our communities.”

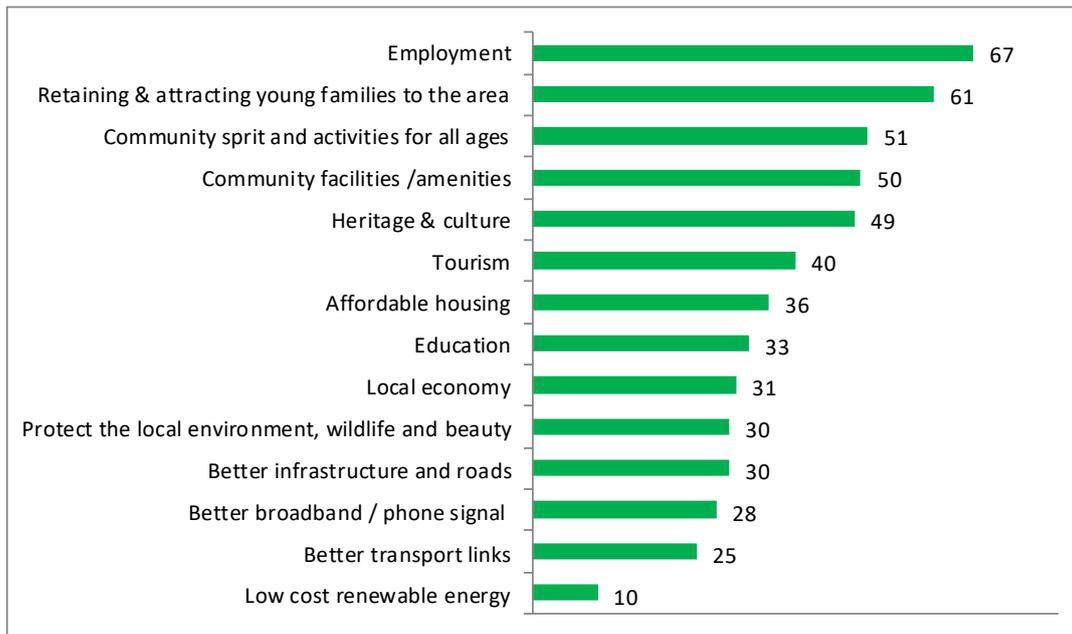
“Increased opportunities for employment and local based training post school. support for new businesses and entrepreneurs. improved access to employment.”

“Better community facilities e.g. buildings Better mobile signal and faster internet speed, it’s not possible for me to work from home currently because of poor internet speed.”

What is important for the future of your local area

Graph 3 – What is important for the future of your local area? Data is categorised by themes and presented by number of respondents.

Nearly one third of respondents (29%) highlighted the local economy, making suggestions that fell into the three categories of employment, local economy and tourism. 13% of respondents made suggestions that involved retaining and attracting young families to the area. Other themes which featured highly were community spirit and activities for all ages (11%), heritage and culture (10%) as well as community facilities / amenities (10%) in which popular suggestions included cycle / pump tracks, playgrounds, footpaths and maintaining and improving existing buildings.



“Homes for young people, intergenerational projects, income from tourism, to celebrate the welsh language, to protect farmer livelihoods, employment for young people.”

“Keeping the Welsh language alive. Keeping local businesses going. Keeping people healthy. Also, being able to socialise in these communities is very important to keep mental health problems at bay.”

“Promote tourism to improve jobs and opportunities in the area. Develop the things that are important to the community to keep people in the area and ensure improvements that are needed in the local community.”

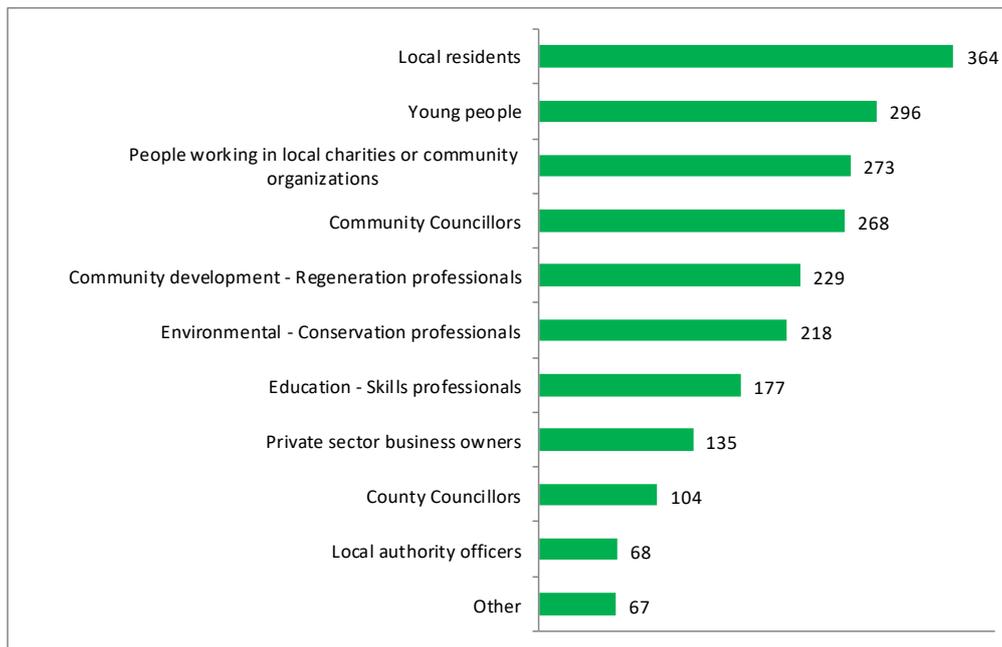
“Keeping our younger generation in the area is important for the future of the area as we know it and developing well paid employment or making it easier for business start-up would help towards this.”

Decision making

More than 3 out of 4 respondents (76%) wanted to see local residents involved in decision making. Other suggestions for decision making panel members that received strong support were:

- Young people (62%)
- Environmental – Conservation professionals (45%)
- Education – Skills professionals (37%)
- Community development – Regeneration professionals (48%)
- People working in local charities or community organisations (57%)
- Community Councillors (56%)

Graph 4 – Who do you think should be on the panel of people deciding how the money is spent? Data is presented by number of respondents.



“If should be an equal representation of local professionals who work in the area, and those with a community hat on. More opportunity for those not involved currently in local council to work together as a hybrid group.”

“A cross section of the community is required including age, skills and experience. The panel members should live or work within the area of benefit.”

The Hiraethog Strategy

The Hiraethog Development Strategy work was undertaken in 2014. The work was commissioned by Cadwyn Clwyd, Denbighshire County Council and Conwy County Borough Council. It is a development strategy for the economic and community regeneration of Hiraethog, the rural, upland area straddling the borders of Conwy and Denbighshire.

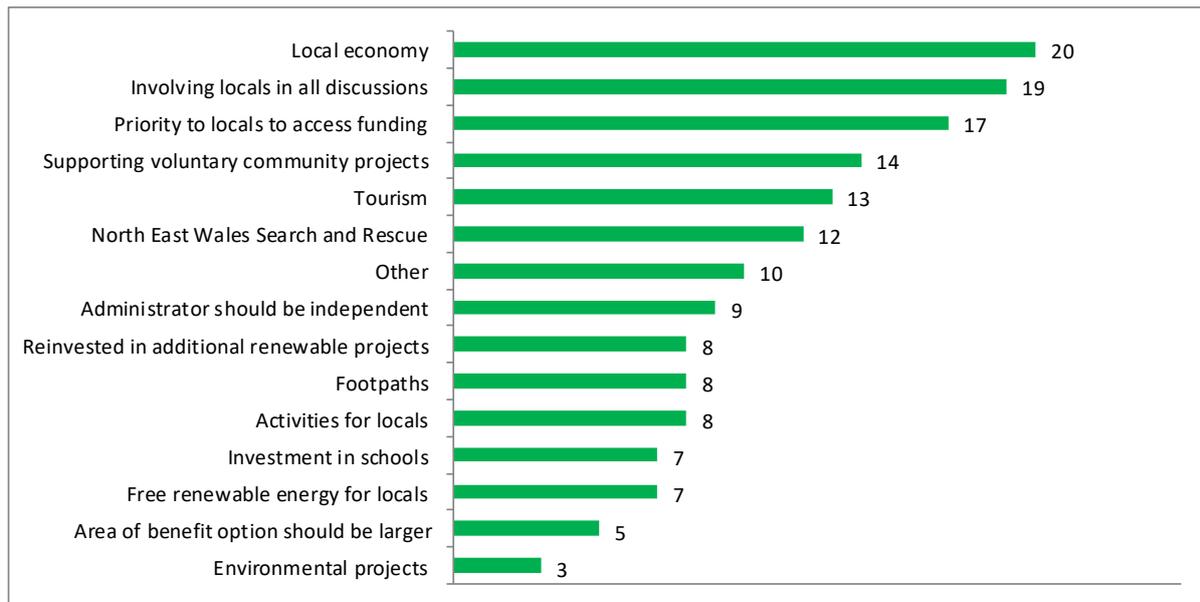
Awareness of the Hiraethog Strategy amongst respondents was mixed with 38% of respondents indicating they were already aware of the strategy and 46% of respondents indicating that they were not. There was broad agreement amongst respondents that the Hiraethog action areas continue to be relevant. All of the action areas identified by the strategy were well supported by respondents with those receiving strongest support being:

- Access to better broadband (59%)
- Maintain and improve the area’s natural environment (59%)
- Affordable local housing for local young people (57%)
- Enable people to use and enjoy the area’s natural environment (53%)
- Helping the next generation of local businesses (52%)
- Community transport and access to key services (51%)

Other ideas

A wide range of suggestions were submitted. The local economy featured highest with 6% of respondents making suggestions that fell into the two combined categories of local economy and tourism. Other themes which were most frequently mentioned included involving local people in all discussions (4%), priority to locals to access funds (4%) and supporting voluntary community projects (3%).

Graph 5 – Other ideas, suggestions or comments about the Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm Community Investment Fund and how it could be administered and / or invested. Data is categorised by themes and presented by number of respondents.



“I live in an area of rural poverty. Young people's opportunities are limited as are their aspirations due to our lack of connectivity. This money could be used to help grow access and opportunities for the future generation.”

“Very important to involve ALL ages in any development in such a sparsely populated area. Transport / broadband are both extremely important as is the keeping open of as many local shops, pubs, halls, businesses as possible. This area has a strong community spirit – let's build on it!”

“Tourism is a source of income in the area. We have wonderful public footpaths in the Hiraethog / Dyffryn Clwyd area, but unfortunately our public transport system for tourists, and more importantly, for our residents is awful. There are no buses to the villages any more. How are the young people who do not drive that live in rural areas meant to get to work?”

“Important to involve local residents in all discussions.”

“Central to success will be the creation of the right Panel with suitably broad range of expertise. This should not be based around the community councils or any one group of interests. The right depth of expertise to deliver on the scale for the fund opportunity.”

“A straight forward and simple application process to enable small or large groups to draw down funding for the benefit of the community.”

“The administrator should have an understanding of the rural area, and a commitment to invest in a way that will benefit the local community.”

Profile of respondents

Respondents were mainly aged 40 – 65 years of age (43%) followed by those aged 20 – 39 (21%) and those aged over 65 (19%). Only 1% of respondents were aged under 20.

Nearly three quarters of respondents (73%) live within the proposed geographical area of benefit. The highest turn out of respondents was from Denbighshire (49%), Conwy was also well represented (29%).

Most people responded with their own personal views (64%). 42 people (9%) responded representing a local community or voluntary organisation and 24 people (5%) responded representing a community council. Only 11 people (2%) responded representing a local business.

240 respondents provided their e-mail details which have been added to the Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm project and community investment fund update list.

Conclusions and next steps

Area of benefit

innogy has carefully considered all of the feedback from the consultation and listened to views on our initial proposals for an area of benefit. As a result we have decided to adopt an area of benefit with three zones, see map in appendix 1 and available on our website at www.innogy.com/clocaenogforest.

Zone 1 will be the “Priority Local Zone” which includes the community council areas closest to Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm.

Zone 2 will be the “Wider Rural Zone” which includes the wider rural areas included within the Hiraethog strategy area but excluding the area already covered by the Gwynt y Môr Offshore Wind Farm Community Fund.

There will also be, adjacent to Zone 2, a Gwynt y Môr Community Fund / Hiraethog strategy Area overlap region. Any applications for standalone projects in this area should be submitted to the Gwynt y Môr Community Fund and subject to the relevant criteria. This area can however be included in any Hiraethog wide applications and in this instance the whole application would be submitted to the Clocaenog Community Fund and subject to the relevant criteria.

Zone 3 will be the “Service Town Zone” including Denbigh, Ruthin and Llanrwst

There will be flexibility in terms of how the funds are split across the zones but with the intention that no sound application to the Priority Local Zone 1 would lose out at the expense of the wider zones 2 and 3. Essentially the communities closest to the site will be the first priority. It is expected that the split of funds across the zones may vary from year to year.

innogy is committed to delivering a flexible fund with broad criteria so that it can address what is important to the area now and into the future. It is however anticipated that the fund criteria may vary for each of the zones with the broadest criteria in Priority Local Zone 1.

Engaging young people

Only 1% of the questionnaire respondents were young people, yet young people featured consistently throughout the consultation. 62% of respondents to the questionnaire even indicated that young people should be represented on the decision making panel.

During the summer term 2019 innogy will carry out an additional consultation activity focused on schools and young people in the area of benefit. This will aim to encourage young people to have their say about what's important in their local area and how the community fund could make a difference for young people now and in the future.

The results will be shared with both the fund administrator and decision making panel to ensure they have an insight and understanding of young people's views when setting up and delivering the fund. innogy will ask the fund administrator to ensure that young people are included in the decision making panel or as an alternative to set up a Youth Advisory Panel to support the decision making panel.

Appointing an administrator

innogy will now commence the process of appointing a fund administrator through an open procurement process. Full details of this process and how organisations can get involved will be made available in the local press and can be found at www.innogy.com/clocaenogforest.

Following their appointment the administrator will be required to finalise the parameters for how the fund will operate, based on the consultation results and in agreement with innogy. This will include:

- Developing funding criteria for each zone
- Creating funding applications processes
- Recruiting and managing the decision making panel
- Promoting availability of the fund
- Supporting applicants through the application process