

Declaration for community benefits by onshore wind farm developers and operators in Wales

Introduction

This Declaration, signed by onshore wind energy developers and wind farm operators in Wales, is supported by RenewableUK Cymru and the Welsh Government.

Planning guidance for onshore wind farm developments in Wales identifies strategic areas suitable for large scale developments. Wind farm developers recognise the opportunities that this presents and stand by the principle that considers community benefits an appropriate way to directly enhance the economic, social, and environmental benefits of the communities that host wind energy projects. This Declaration is a promise to ensure that these “communities are fully engaged and that they receive long-term positive benefits”¹.

We the undersigned declare that our companies will abide by this Declaration and refer to it as good guidance when engaging with communities in the vicinity of proposed wind energy projects.

The Opportunity

Community benefits provided by wind farm operators can be delivered in a wide range of forms, including (but not limited to):

- Direct financial support (such as Community Benefit Funds)
- Opportunities such as community ownership, profit share, and shares ownership
- Measures or initiatives to support the reduction of energy costs
- The provision of new or improved local infrastructure
- Sponsorship of organisations, sporting and cultural events
- In-kind offers such as habitat management programmes
- Enabling education or training opportunities

They are a way to bring tangible benefits to those communities which host wind projects, over and above economic, energy security and environmental benefits that arise from those developments.

Energy Wales: A Low Carbon Transition sets a commitment for delivering and maximising economic and community benefits from onshore wind, and the Welsh Government has outlined clear expectations about how this should be achieved, including:

- A strong focus on both economic and community benefits.
- Transparency about the benefits being delivered by each development.
- Consistency in approach to engaging with communities and stakeholders.
- Cooperation between developers to enable better strategic outcomes.
- Probity in the way Community Benefit Funds are distributed and managed.
- Engagement with communities and other stakeholders at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Constructive relationships with any advice and support package provided to Welsh businesses and communities.

Our Commitment

The signatories are committed to:

- A consistent approach to engagement with communities and stakeholders to ensure that economic and community benefits are maximised.
- Transparency and probity in both funding and operation of community benefit schemes. The signatories agree to assist in the creation of and on-going active participation in an economic and community benefit register for Wales, working with the Welsh Government, communities and other stakeholders.
- Maximising the impact of our investments by:
 - Working with a wide range of stakeholders at the earliest practicable opportunity, including, where appropriate, competitor companies, to ensure that any new schemes take account of existing and emerging initiatives
 - Working collaboratively to identify opportunities – with communities, government, and other appropriate stakeholders – to deliver regional as well as community priorities, leveraging funding from other sources wherever possible.
- Enabling communities to access the best possible advice and services in negotiating, mobilising, planning and administering community benefit schemes. The wind industry is therefore committed to working constructively with any support mechanisms the community may wish to use.

¹ Energy Wales: A Low Carbon Transition, Welsh Government, 2013. P.17

Signatories



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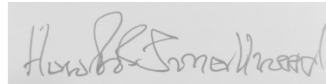
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