

## East Lammermuir approach to Green Energy Community Benefits

This brief paper (May 2025) sets out how the community council has arrived at its views about the use of EGL1 (and other) forthcoming community benefits.

East Lammermuir Community Council has been involved in administering community benefits locally since the Crystal Rig 1 Turbines were commissioned over 15 years ago.

It would be fair to say we began with a narrow view, and small ambitions. These have grown over the years.

We have worked with Fred. Olsen Renewables and CWP Energy to agree the administration and deployment of significant funds over this period.

During COVID, we ran a hardship style Community Support Fund. That experience led us to broaden our gaze and intentionally invest in schemes that ran across a wide geographic area - a GP-led Exercise On Referral scheme benefitting East Lammermuir residents by dint of being within the Dunbar and East Linton area, for example.

We have been aware that an exponential increase in community benefits might arise from the plethora of large electricity infrastructure projects now proposed or being built in East Lammermuir. We established two new entities to ensure that we were able to play our part in any such new benefits - a charitable incorporated organisation, and a company limited by guarantee.

In line with East Lothian Council's timetable for its Local Development Plan, we took advantage of the Scottish legislation about Local Place Plans and worked with a paid consultant to consult across East Lammermuir on priorities for this place. Over 150 people contributed their views through face to face workshops and an online (and hard copy) survey. The final plan was the first one to be registered with and validated by East Lothian Council, in June 2024. This goes well beyond planning policy to cover many local priorities clustered around themes of place, getting around, and the land.

We are included as a member of the Scottish Government's Advisory Group on Onshore Wind, and contributed to two online sessions (national and local) to contribute to the discussions on community benefits from net zero technologies.

The announcement at the EGL1 Groundbreaking Ceremony in February 2025, of a £4M community benefits fund prompted us to do more detailed local work on how the community council should approach developers and transmission owners who may offer new community benefits now or in future.

On 3 March 2025 the community council discussed how best to run a community voice session on Community Benefits at Innerwick on 10th March 7-9 pm.

On 10 March 2025 we met with 20 members of the local and near-regional community in Innerwick Hall, and used a workshop methodology (shamelessly copied from foundation Scotland's) to work in small discussion groups to gauge the feeling about important principles to pursue, the geographical area that should benefit, and the types of improvement that would be welcomed. Not surprisingly, the Local Place Plan was seen as a critical guide to decisions about investment. A new notion arose very strongly - those households directly affected by construction work should be the primary focus of community benefits during the construction, and for a time thereafter. Once a "just transition" for those households could be seen, the application of subsequent benefits to a wider geographic area should follow on.

On 17 March 2025 we met with all known developers and transmission owners working or proposing to work in East Lammermuir. One of the subjects for discussion at the small group tables was "How will you support implementation of the Local Place Plan, and leave East Lammermuir better than you found it?"

On Monday 28 April, the Community Council had a long debate about the findings of the local meetings, the results of our work to date, the implementation of the Local Place Plan, the content of the national consultation (including what we think is missing) and some of the various responses to that which we have seen. We agreed a statement about what we want to see happen here, which you will see under separate cover. We sent it to all developers and transmission owners who are invited to an annual public meeting on 19 May 2025 to consider how they will "leave East Lammermuir better than they found it". Last year's public meeting saw over 145 people in attendance (there are 600 houses in the whole community council area). We will use that opportunity to check out our consolidated aspirations with the local community members who attend this year.