

West Raynham Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund

Agreement Overview

1. Background

West Raynham Solar Farm has promised to provide a fund of about £25,000 per year for the benefit of the 4 communities adjacent to the site and its work, West Raynham, Helhoughton, Weasenham St. Peters & Weasenham All Saints. The fund will be available over the life of the solar farm for 25 years, or as long as the farm operates, starting in 2015.

The funding can be administered by :

- a) a dedicated purpose community group, or
- b) divided equally and administered annually by the 4 parish councils, allocating it to organisations or individuals who submit successful applications.

The fund is intended to be spent each year; in exceptional circumstances, it may be saved for 2 years where a successful applicant needs a larger sum. Applications may be submitted at any time. It is recommended the reviewing committee will meet at least twice a year to consider recently submitted applications.

2. Conditions of funding

Eligibility of applicants

- a. Applicants must demonstrate a clear need for financial support.
- b. Organisations must be either non-profit making or charitable.
- c. Organisations or individuals may only make one application for a grant in any financial year.
- d. Applications from education, health or social service establishments will be considered only where the organisation can demonstrate that it is working in partnership with other groups or where there are benefits to the wider community.
- e. Applications will **not** be considered from:
 - i. Political parties
 - ii. Organisations intending to support or oppose any particular political party or to discriminate on the grounds of race, religion or gender.
 - iii. Private organisations operating as a business to make a profit or surplus
 - iv. "Upward funders" i.e. local groups where fundraising is sent to a central HQ for redistribution.
 - v. Organisations with significant unrestricted reserves.
 - vi. Applications will not normally be considered from national organisations or local groups with access to funds from national 'umbrella' or 'parent' organisations unless funds are not available from their national bodies or the funds available are inadequate for a specified project.

Use or purpose of grant

The Solar Fund will only award grants where the use or purpose of the grant benefits the 4 parishes and their community. The benefit could include but is not limited to:

- a. Providing a service
- b. Providing activities
- c. Enhancing the quality of life
- d. Improving the environment
- e. Promoting the 4 parishes in a positive way
- f. Applications will **not** be considered:
 - i. For projects that benefit single individuals
 - ii. No grants will be made retrospectively
 - iii. For prize money
 - iv. For campaigns to influence public opinion

3. How to apply

Applications must be made using the application form attached to this policy. All questions on the application form should be fully answered and additional appropriate information, which supports an application, must be provided in order for the request to be considered. It is important that the application form is filled in as completely as possible, as applications will be evaluated using only the information on the form.

The form should be submitted to the Solar Fund group secretary.

4. Evaluation procedure

A grant request will be considered at the next meeting of the the Solar Fund group provided it is received in writing at least three weeks before the date of the meeting. Each application will be assessed on its own merits against the conditions of funding and the evaluation criteria listed below. To ensure as fair a distribution as possible of available funds, the group will take into account the balance of the types of other supported project. Account may also be taken of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or fund raising activities. No commitment to award grants in future years will be made.

The Solar Fund group may make the award of any grant subject to such additional conditions and requirements as it considers appropriate. Applicants will receive notice of the outcome of their application within three weeks of the group meeting.

Evaluation criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

Priority will be given to projects that make use of existing amenities e.g. supporting a youth club that uses the village hall

- a. Priority will be given to projects where the objective is to improve the health, fitness and wellbeing of the community.
- b. Priority will be given to projects that improve existing amenities rather than building new.

- c. Priority will be given to projects that bring the community together e.g. annual gatherings or regular interest groups
- d. Priority will be given to projects that are environmentally sustainable e.g. conserving energy within community buildings, providing education about environmental issues or improving local biodiversity.

5. Successful applications

After applicants have received notice in writing of their successful application and any additional conditions and requirements, the grant will be paid by cheque.

Projects receiving grants are required to advise their users/members that a grant has been received from West Raynham Solar Farm.

Applicants must provide feedback and/or receipts to demonstrate how the money has been spent. They must demonstrate that the grant has only be used for the purpose for which it was awarded, and any unspent portion of the grant must be returned to the fund by the end of the financial year following the year in which it was awarded. Detail of the feedback required will be included in the notification letter.