



Ynni
Cymunedol Cymru
Community Energy
Wales



Community Energy England Press Release

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Community Energy Awards Winners

On Wednesday 1st November 2017, Community Energy England and Community Energy Wales convened to celebrate the achievements of the community energy sector after a challenging year of adjusting to a new policy landscape which has seen less new projects, but more innovation and new ways of thinking taking place.

The nominations demonstrate how resilient, innovative and sustainable the community energy sector is despite the turbulent times the sector has seen this past year. The judges were impressed with the wide range of nominations, the commitment demonstrated by individuals and organisations and the ability of the sector to respond to change. Judges included Patrick Allcorn, Graham Ayling, Chris Blake, Leonie Cooper, Alistair Macpherson, Jennifer Pride, Afsheen Rashid and Nina Skorupska. The judges found it hard to pass judgement on so many impressive projects, as such some awards saw nominations being highly commended for their exceptional levels of innovation and community benefit.

Detailed case studies on the winners will be available on our [website](#) shortly.

Community Renewable Energy Project Award

The most commendable sustainable electricity generation project undertaken by a community group.

Sponsored by: The Renewable Energy Association

Shortlisted entries:

- **Gower Power - Winner**
- **Energy Local – Highly Commended**
- High Winds Community Energy Society
- Sandford Hydro
- The Small Wind Co-operative
- Ynni Ogwen and Ynni Padarn Peris

Winner profile:

Gower Regeneration is Wales' first community owned solar farm. It will provide clean energy for the demands of 300 hundred houses whilst telling the story of our energy transition for this generation and generations to come. They faced an incredibly tight timescale to develop this project which consists of 3568 solar panels that will save over 11,500 tonnes of carbon emissions over its life time with an estimated £500k+ community benefit being generated over the next 30 years.

Highly Commended project profile:

Energy Local is an innovative local energy project that gets communities working together to reduce their bills and increase the income for local renewable energy generators - providing them with much needed stability in an unpredictable policy environment. At its heart is the desire, shared by so many in the community energy world, to use renewable energy to directly benefit the lives of communities. Stated by one judge as potentially a “game changer” and by another as a project that “could be the holy grail of what community energy could be”.

Community Energy Saving Award

The community group which has undertaken the most inspiring energy conservation and/or management project.

Shortlisted entries:

- **South East London Community Energy - Winner**
- **Carbon Co-op – Highly commended**
- re:work

Winner profile:

SELCE has developed multiple services to enable the whole community to benefit from their expert advice, including energy cafes, workshops, training, the 'Watt's About You?' energy information roadshow, Parent Power (a parent focused project), and champion programmes. They have innovated new ways of working, but also worked in a strategic, reflective way by undertaking research.

Highly Commended project profile:

Carbon Co-op and URBED developed My Home Energy Planner which is a simple, replicable service that enables householders to plan and make retrofit decisions about their home. Driven by a modular, open source tool it is being replicated by other community energy groups. This tool is financially sustainable, replicable and proven to be effective.

Local Authority Award

The Local Authority which has done most to help local, community energy organisations through partnering, investing or other support.

Shortlisted entries:

- **Oldham Council - Winner**
- **Barnsley Council – Highly commended**
- Reading Borough Council
- West Oxfordshire District Council
- West Suffolk Councils

Winner profile:

Oldham Council both supports its local borough community energy groups and leads at a regional, national and international level to build capacity and innovation in the sector, working with a strong partnership of key organisations across the UK and Europe aiming to deliver long-term resilience and sustainability for community energy.

Highly Commended project profile:

Energise Barnsley is a nationally significant project which has been pioneered by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council. It was highly commended for the high level of complexity, innovation and integration into

the lives of the community. It has overcome major financial obstacles to install solar PV on council tenant houses and develop a 7MW battery storage standalone facility.

Community Energy Finance Award

The community group and its funders and advisers, which have achieved the most inspiring results in bringing investment into the sector.

Shortlisted entries:

- **Leapfrog Finance - Winner**
- Grimsby Community Energy
- Mean Moor Community Wind Farm
- Mongoose Energy
- Robert Owen Community Banking Fund

Winner profile:

As impact investors, Leapfrog Finance seek to maximise the social and environmental benefit achieved by the projects they fund. This is part of how they have created the sector's most successful financial platform which has helped to prepare the ground for other financing organisations. On top of this, they have produced many valuable resources which have undoubtedly helped the sector to grow.

Collaboration Award

The most commendable collaboration between community and commercial / public / third sector partners.

Sponsored by: Northern Powergrid

Shortlisted entries:

- **Marks & Spencer Energy Society - Winner**
- CAPE
- Co-op Energy
- Edinburgh Community Solar Cooperative
- Lawrence Western Solar Farm

Winner profile:

M&S Energy Society, a collaboration between Energy4All, Joju Solar and M&S Energy, is a commercial relationship with a difference. It has a community feel to it. It is built on a shared ethos, trust and mutual respect and support which has culminated in the aspiration to revive community funded social housing and deliver more community funded projects with commercial occupiers.

Community Energy Champion

The individual who has done most to advance the community energy sector over recent years.

Sponsored by: Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks

The 2017 Community Energy Champion: Sonya Bedford

Winner profile:

Sonya's commitment, drive and passion for community energy is second to none. Genuinely believing that community energy can take the UK to energy independence. She will do whatever she can to make sure projects continue to come forward and progress, even if it means never having any spare time!

Sonya works professionally in the sector but is involved in various projects outside of her work commitments. She has supported over 25 community energy groups and is responsible for establishing the UK's first grid consortium.

Although currently studying for an MSc in Renewable Energy and sitting on the board of five community energy groups, she still finds time to attend festivals, schools and local groups advising on renewable energy and sustainable living. And on top, of this she is trained to perform high altitude rescue of maintenance personnel from wind turbines!

Community Energy Photo Award

This is first year we have had a photo award. Images were submitted that captured the essence of community energy. The shortlist was put to a public online vote which took place in the lead up to the ceremony. Photo likes on Facebook and Twitter were combined with a survey. We were astounded at the response it received. Over 850 votes were cast!

[Shortlisted entries.](#)

Winning image: Westmill Turbine Hug.



Winner profile:

The winning picture, Westmill Turbine Hug, which received 26% of the public vote, demonstrates a community coming together to help create a low carbon future for generations to come.

Photo credit - Westmill Wind Farm Co-operative.

ENDS

Other notes to editors

Interviews

For further details, contact Jon Hall. e: j.hall@communityenergyengland.org t: 0114 312 2248

About Community Energy England

Community Energy England was established in 2014 as a not for profit organisation, set up to provide a voice for the community energy sector and help create the conditions within which community energy can flourish. www.communityenergyengland.org [@comm1nrg](https://twitter.com/comm1nrg)