

Shropshire and Telford Community Energy Community Benefit Fund

Report detailing STCE management of the Twemlows CBF 19th September 2023

Introduction

The Community Benefits flowing from the Twemlows solar farm are a key part of the case for investment in the STCE share offer. This report is to put on public record details of the activities of the Twemlows CBF during the period it has been under the management of Shropshire and Telford Community Energy. The next and future STCE Annual Accounts will include a report on the CBF for that financial year.

Short history

The Twemlows Community Benefit Fund was initially run on by Gower Power as it was an existing community owned organisation with a solar farm, there was no such organisation in Shropshire. Gower Power enlisted the support of the Shropshire Rural Community Council (RCC), a charity based in Shrewsbury, to manage the fund in Shropshire. A steering group was established by Shropshire RCC to manage the distribution of the funds.

In early 2020 STCE came into existence as a “working group” with the intention of bringing Twemlows into community ownership. On 3rd November 2020 a handover meeting was held between STCE and Shropshire RCC. It was agreed, and minuted, at that meeting that:

1. STCE would become responsible for the CBF, taking over the role of the steering group.
2. STCE would in future ask RCC to manage funds for distribution to community projects within 15 miles of Twemlows. RCC was subsequently renamed Community Resource (CR).
3. The rest of the funds would be managed directly by STCE who would target the funds at carbon saving projects throughout Shropshire and T&W.

Flow of Funds

The Twemlows 10MW solar farm was set up as two 5MW solar farms under two operating Community Interest Companies (CICs)– Twemlows 1 CIC and Twemlows 2 CIC. Each company sells the power generated to the grid. After deductions of costs and loan repayments, etc. the resulting Community Benefit Funds arrive at STCE for distribution.

Community Resource report their distribution of their half of the CBF through their own reporting system as part of their year end accounts. CR and STCE each have a documented process by which applicants can apply for grants. These include the criteria used for awarding grants. CR have a standing “Grants” committee for consideration of and decisions on grant applications. They administer a number of grants for different organisations. STCE has been doing this as part of its regular board meetings.

Below is a list of the beneficiaries of the Twemlows Community Benefit Fund since STCE took responsibility up to the date of this report.

STCE Community Benefit Fund Beneficiaries			
T1 - Twemlows 1 fund administered by Community Resource for any community project within 15 miles of Twemlows			
T2 - Twemlows 2 fund administered by STCE for energy related projects anywhere in geographic Shropshire			
Year	T1 or T2	Organisation	Used for..
2020	T1	Little Wenlock Village Hall	Contribution to heat pumps
2021	T1	Lee Brockhurst Village Hall	New double glazed doors and windows
2022	T2	Park Lane Centre, Woodside Telford	LED lights and rainwater harvesting
2022	T2	Lightfoot Enterprises	Home energy survey training
2022	T1	Whitchurch Blackberry Fair	Whitchurch Blackberry Fair
2022	T1	Brownlow Community Centre	LED lighting
2022	T1	Ellesmere Bowling Club	LED lighting
2022	T1	Hodnett Footpath Group	New leaflets
2022	T1	Renshaws Field Association	Purchase of a willow dome
2022	T1	Whitchurch Whippets	First aid training and equipment
2022	T1	Wem Christmas Festival	LED lighting
2022	T1	Great Ness to Little Ness Community Project	Litter picking equipment
2022	T1	Tilstock Tennis and Bowling Club	Replacement scarifier & mower
2022	T1	Tilstock Bradbury Village Hall	Lithium batteries for solar power storage
2022	T1	Whitchurch Allotment and Community Orchard	Trees and beehive equipment
2023	T1	Harmer Hill village hall	Solar PV project
2023	T2	Festival Drayton Centre	Solar PV project
2023	T2	Longnor Village Hall	Loft and floor insulation
2023	T2	Shrewsbury United Reform Church	Secondary glazing
2023	T2	Rushbury Village Hall	New windows and doors