



## Renewable energy powered communities

Where a community takes the lead on harnessing its natural resources to generate green energy and meet local needs, Communities for Renewables can help: making communities more sustainable, bringing people together to make a real difference and turning energy costs from a drain, into a benefit to the local economy.

## What is Communities for Renewables?

Communities for Renewables (CfR) is a south west based community interest company (CIC) that works at two levels:

Firstly, **CfR's Community Support Programme** will help create a positive environment for community energy. Key elements of the support programme include:

- Networking and training events and help bringing together community energy groups with appropriate partners and suppliers;
- One to one support to develop community energy business plans and undertake project management for a limited number of initiatives;
- A website at [www.communities4renewables.co.uk](http://www.communities4renewables.co.uk) that provides guidance on how to set up a community energy initiative, technology and funding options, and basic project feasibility tools, with a specific site finding tool for south west of England communities. It will also host a central resource of community energy documentation including template business plans, best practice exemplars, briefing papers, template legal documentation and economic benchmarks;
- Government liaison support, including local planning policy development, project planning liaison and a leading voice for local communities on national policy lobbying.

Secondly, **CfR's Project Delivery Partnership** provides the technical expertise, project management, and funding required to deliver larger-scale community renewable energy projects. The initial focus will be wind projects between 500kW and 20MW. We will develop capacity for other technologies (such as heat, solar PV, hydro and anaerobic digestion) in the future.

For more information please contact the **Communities for Renewables team** on **01392 494399**, email [help@communities4renewables.co.uk](mailto:help@communities4renewables.co.uk) or visit [www.communities4renewables.co.uk](http://www.communities4renewables.co.uk).



## Tiree – a community energy powered island

A good example of a renewable energy powered community is the Scottish island of Tiree. Tiree's community wind turbine was developed by and with the support of local people, and will provide a sustainable source of community owned and managed income of around £120,000 per year. The income will be used to support key community infrastructure and services that would otherwise struggle for funding, such as: an island swimming pool, improved harbour facilities, better facilities for local businesses, affordable housing and support for youth groups. It will make a meaningful positive difference to the future of life on the island.



## Local benefits from each project

A CfR community wind project will deliver substantial benefits for the local community:

- **Local control** – CfR will only progress projects to planning where they form part of a proactive local community energy initiative and have broad local support. We will work with a local community energy group and other local organisations to facilitate proactive community involvement at all stages;
- **Long-term community income** - 2 large (2.5MW) wind turbines could generate contributions to a local community fund of over £100,000 per year over 20 years. The funds will be democratically owned and controlled by the community, typically through a co-operative, to re-invest in further local community initiatives (e.g. tackling fuel poverty and supporting local community facilities and services);
- **Local ownership** - the opportunity for local people to invest in the projects through a community share offer that provides a good rate of return. CfR will fund the cost of the share offer, and raise bridge equity finance where required.

## Benefits for landowners

For landowners with suitable sites for hosting a community renewable energy project, CfR will offer an income that is competitive with commercial developers, and fair option and lease terms. CfR will involve the landowner in key decisions over the design, construction and operation of the project.

## What next?

**If you are a community energy group considering a large-scale community wind project, or a landowner interested in hosting such a project, we would be interested to talk to you. CfR will be meeting with interested parties and carrying out feasibility work on potential sites during autumn 2011. Please call Jake on 07815 014540 or Cheryl or Hazel on 01392 474326 to arrange a meeting. Alternatively, to see if your site is suitable for wind energy and register your community group to receive further information, please log-on to [www.communities4renewables.co.uk](http://www.communities4renewables.co.uk) or call Josie on 01392 494399.**

## How CfR is funded

CfR has secured substantial seed investment and is now looking to establish a portfolio of community wind projects to progress over 2012. Once planning permissions and grid connection offers have been secured, project specific investment will be raised for each project from a bank loan, a community share offer and commercial equity investment where required. CfR will generate a development profit from each successful project that will be used to pay CfR's investors and re-invest in further community energy projects.

## Who is Communities for Renewables?

CfR is a joint venture between the South West renewable energy experts, Regen SW [www.regensw.co.uk](http://www.regensw.co.uk), and Green Trust CIC [www.greentrustwind.co.uk](http://www.greentrustwind.co.uk), a specialist community energy development company. The CfR team has substantial professional experience of supporting community energy initiatives and developing and delivering medium and large-scale renewable energy projects. Our combination of extensive commercial expertise with social enterprise values, objectives and business model sets us apart.

