

Introducing Repowering Communities

FAQs about Repowering London's fast-track financing tool



Having access to a fossil-free energy pipeline has never been more urgent – our London communities face crippling fuel costs and the effects of climate change have become ever clearer. That's why Repowering London has developed a fast-track financing pathway for installing urban solar energy.

Q1 What is Repowering Communities?

Repowering Communities is a new asset-locked Community Benefit Society created to increase the speed and scale at which community-owned solar power can be installed across London. It capitalises on Repowering London's 10 years of experience in developing, installing and managing community-owned low-carbon assets across the capital and has been created to support London's community energy sector.

Q2 How will it help build community energy?

Repowering Communities will help existing community energy groups to grow and give new ones a route to becoming financially viable organisations, encouraging people across London to join the low-carbon energy revolution. It will also help Repowering London to achieve its ambitious goal to deliver 5MW of community energy over the next five years using our proven model for community-led energy projects. This work has already begun, with 3MW in our solar pipeline.

Q3 Why is it needed?

The end of the government's Feed-in Tariff and the long fundraising rounds required to launch solar projects have slowed progress on installing community-owned solar. This new financing solution decouples the fundraising and installation processes, opening up new opportunities for delivering solar projects at speed and scale.

Q4 What is the role of Repowering London in Repowering Communities?

We get the ball rolling by helping to find and develop potential sites where solar panels could be installed, arranging funding to do the installation and overseeing the placing of panels on roofs. We also get the word out to the community that a project is underway, what benefits it can bring to local residents and let them know how they can get involved as co-operative investors, volunteers and directors. Once a co-op is up and running, we help the volunteers and directors to keep it healthy and growing, often providing a dedicated Community Lead to keep engagement with the community going, put together events and get as many people involved as possible.

Q5 How does Repowering Communities work?

Repowering Communities has agreed a £1.5m loan facility with social impact lenders the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Trust for London. This finance facility allows Repowering Communities to install solar assets across London on behalf of local community groups. These assets will then be held in trust for the local group until it is able to raise the capital required to purchase the assets.

The Repowering Communities site development cycle:



Q6 What are the wider benefits of Repowering Communities?

For local energy co-ops:

- The development and fundraising stages are separated, which allows for more streamlined processes
- Installing assets as part of a larger procurement exercise allows for lower installation costs
- The ability to group sites into larger share offers creates economies of scale in fundraising.

For landlords:

- Assets are installed faster, creating instant decarbonisation and positive community impact.

For London:

- A greater number of installed solar assets will create larger Community Funds, generating long-tail, locally managed finance streams for community benefit.



Q7 How do Londoners benefit from Repowering Communities?

In addition to supporting the growth of community-owned solar across London, as part of the Repowering London family Repowering Communities will also enable:

- 300 of London's young people to be trained for entry to the Green Energy sector
- Community Funds worth some £750,000 (in total) to be developed and distributed in the London boroughs where new solar assets are installed
- 1,000 households living in social housing to reduce their energy bills through the purchase of locally generated, clean electricity
- All Londoners to be empowered and inspired to play an active role in a transition to a low-carbon society, by taking control of how they create and use energy – and encourage at least 4,000 of them to invest directly in the new community solar assets created.

With thanks to our funders

