

North Kensington Community Energy

A community energy first for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea



Working to create a low-carbon borough

North Kensington Community Energy (NKCE) is the first community-owned renewable energy project in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and is bringing social, financial, and environmental benefits to the surrounding community.

The project also supports the Borough Council's Air Quality and Climate Change Action Plan. The shared goal: to create a low-carbon borough in the centre of London. NKCE's solar panels play a part in building decarbonisation in the Borough, saving 114 tonnes of CO₂ so far.

Empowering climate action

NKCE is helping drive behaviour change and empowering local people to take positive climate action. Its community of more than 200 members, volunteers, investors, and supporters are spreading the message that everyone can play a part in the fight to maintain a liveable climate and make a just transition to a low-carbon society.

NKCE in brief



Now includes 4 solar installations with 225 kWp of solar capacity – enough to power 44 London homes



Is reducing CO₂ emissions in the Borough – by 191 tonnes so far



Will raise £70k for local causes over its lifetime via a Community Fund



Has trained some 50 young people to start them off in the green economy



Is generating ethical returns for local investors



Recognised with the Community Renewable Energy Project Award 2019 and Climate Coalition's Inspirational Community Project Award in 2020.



Creating Local Energy

Find out more about NKCE at repowering.org.uk

Proven formula for progress

NKCE was created using a proven model pioneered by Repowering London. The entire project has been co-produced in collaboration with the community and is led by it.

We reached deep into the local community to bring people on board and explain how community energy can help their neighbourhood. In total, we distributed around 3,500 flyers and put up 150 posters in local shops, cafes, libraries, markets, and community spaces. We invited the community to public meetings across the Borough, to tell people more about the project and how they could be involved. Mentoring sessions



were organised to let people share their views, information and make decisions by consensus. And we held informational events at local schools, universities, and community centres – including solar-panel making workshops and energy-advice sessions.

A co-operative structure (Community Benefit Society) was established to administer the project, and local volunteers recruited to take key leadership roles. Shares in the project were offered to local investors, with the prospect of receiving a 3% annual return

over its lifetime. A Community Fund was also created, which is already using the money raised through energy sales to support local causes in the Borough.

In phase 1 of the project, 144 co-op members raised the £83,000 needed to install 306 solar PV panels in three locations. Since then, NKCE has worked with Westway Sports Centre to install 138kWp of solar panels on its roof. NKCE raised a total of £107k through a second community share offer for the project, which involved more than 100 investors. So far, the NKCE panels have kept some 114 tonnes of CO2 from being emitted.

The four sites of NKCE

Westway Sports Centre

500 panels > 138 kWp

Dalgarno Trust Community Centre

158 panels > 43 kWp

Avondale Park Primary School

60 panels > 14 kWp

Thomas Jones Primary School

88 panels > 30 kWp

"I'm over the moon that community renewable energy is now up and running in the Borough and is fully funded. By becoming a shareholder, I have been able to do and participate in something that moves things forward environmentally and at local level and give material form to values I have always believed to matter ..."

– Geraldine Cawthorne, RBKC resident and NKCE member



Training for a green future

NKCE is also giving people in the Borough the tools they need to take part in the fast-growing green economy. A group of 16 young people participated in a paid Youth Training Programme, getting practical job skills and qualifications. Meanwhile, NKCE's volunteers are learning transferable skills in marketing, project management and more. Finally, a paid local Community Lead is creating a bridge across the Borough while building the skills they need to participate in the environmental and co-operative economy.

Addressing inequality

Though NKCE operates right across Kensington and Chelsea, its focus is on the North Kensington area. North Kensington is surrounded by some of the wealthiest streets in the UK yet is home to some of the country's poorest people. This income imbalance was brought into sharp relief by the Grenfell fire, which revealed the stark differences in the way people live in the Borough and the services they receive.



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