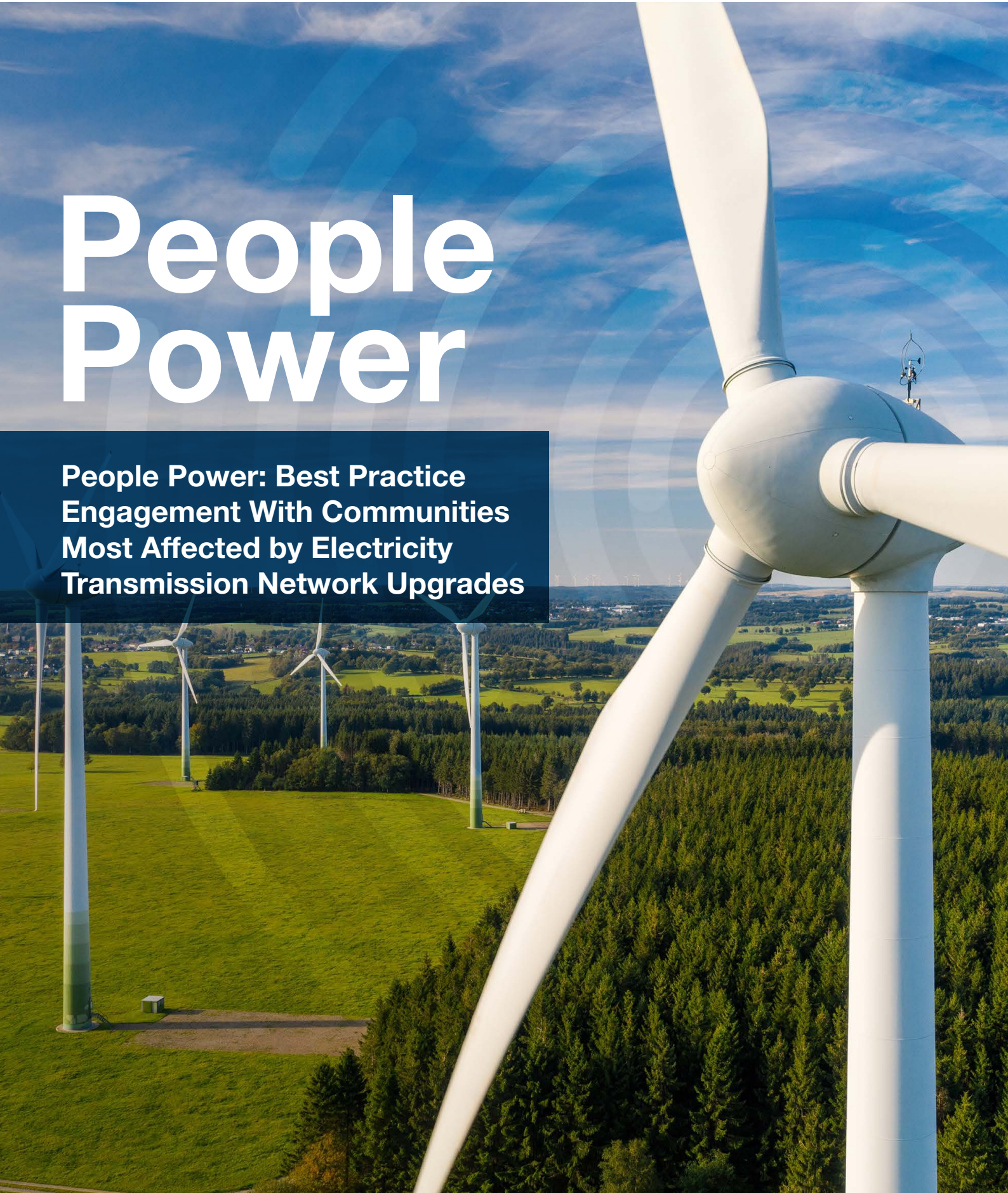




**Sustainability
First**

People Power

**People Power: Best Practice
Engagement With Communities
Most Affected by Electricity
Transmission Network Upgrades**



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Executive Summary

‘How can we make sure that communities are properly and fairly included in future upgrades to the national electricity grid?’

Great Britain (GB) is undertaking a major expansion of its electricity transmission network (the grid) as part of the transition to a cleaner, more secure energy system. But upgrading and replacing ageing infrastructure also brings significant impacts for the communities that live closest to these major infrastructure sites. Local backlash against major energy infrastructure can risk slowing progress, increasing costs to billpayers and undermining public trust.

To understand what fair and meaningful engagement looks like from the public’s perspective, forty-five residents from communities in the East of England and Scotland took part in a six-month deliberative Sounding Board between April and October 2025. Supported by an expert panel, participants explored how grid development affects local people, considered trade-offs, and used structured discussion and ranking exercises to surface their expectations, values, and concerns.

Residents consistently reported a lack of trust in developers and that engagement around development often feels unclear, rushed, or tokenistic. They strongly rejected the government’s £250 annual bill discount scheme for households living near developments. Participants unanimously felt it undervalued the scale of long-term impact on their communities and did little to build trust. They preferred investments that provide tangible, lasting improvements,



including energy-efficiency programmes, local transport upgrades, community-led initiatives, and environmental restoration. Participants also disagreed that the cheapest infrastructure route should always be chosen or that undergrounding should be confined only to protected landscapes, emphasising that everyday places and landscapes hold social, cultural, and emotional value.

From this work, five Community Principles were developed to describe what good engagement should involve from a public perspective: Transparency, Listening, Local Involvement, Impacts and Benefit, and Accountability and Learning. These principles complement existing guidance by grounding expectations in lived experience and clarifying what communities need for engagement

to feel fair, respectful, and trustworthy.

Sustainability First has since worked with Transmission Owners (TOs) to refine these principles for practical application, particularly in designing and delivering community benefit funds - an early opportunity for developers to build trust and deliver visible improvements. Participants emphasised that these funds must be safeguarded so that they supplement, rather than replace, statutory local services.

While participants shared many concerns and aspirations, they also held differing views on issues such as individual versus community-wide compensation, property impacts, and whether greater public ownership would build trust.

Recognising this diversity is important for tailoring engagement to local values.

Examples from “pioneer places,” such as East Lammernmuir and Saxmundham, show how proactive, community-led planning can shape long-term improvements through clear local leadership and collaboration with developers.

By amplifying public perspectives and offering a practical, community-derived framework, this report highlights how it is possible to place fairness at the centre of how grid development is taken forward, meeting our changing societal needs and being more responsive to the people and places most affected by these changes.



The Project Team

Funded by the European Climate Foundation, the project team consisted of:

Sustainability First - a politically neutral think tank and independent charity that conducts research to inform policies and practices promoting sustainability and social equity.

The Local Storytelling Exchange - a network of local journalists who share stories of people, communities, and businesses working toward a fairer and more sustainable future.

Rachel Coxcoon, Director of Climate Guide

- Rachel has extensive experience running public meetings and discussions on planning, climate, and renewable energy issues.

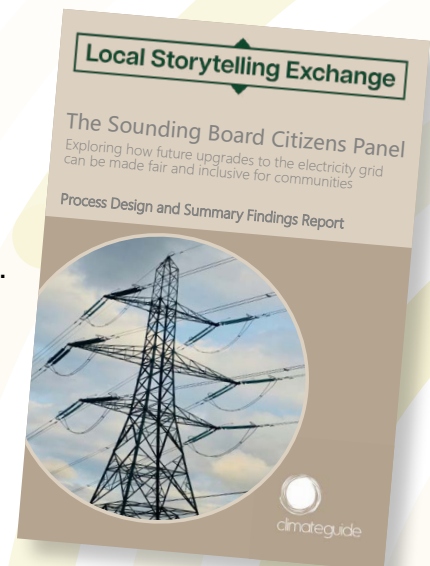
The Sortition Foundation - a not-for-profit organisation specialising in recruiting participants for research.

More In Common - a public opinion research and insights organisation that is seeking to enable social cohesion in pursuit of a more united, inclusive, and resilient society.

Report Scope and Background


Sustainability First's role was to work with members of the public and an expert panel to develop a set of practical community-derived engagement principles which could be applied by organisations involved in rolling out or communicating major infrastructure projects. The principles were informed by feedback from the public research and subsequently refined through collaboration with TOs to establish a set of guidelines for the TOs.

This report also provides broader perspectives on how participants believe developers of grid upgrades can ensure fair and meaningful community engagement, along with suggestions on how community benefits could be distributed. It further offers recommendations for policymakers based on these insights. This report forms part of a wider, ongoing public engagement project, which aims to understand what the public want and expect from engagement around forthcoming grid upgrades, and to work with TOs to build this understanding into everyday business practice. It should be read alongside Climate Guide's report which outlines in more detail the methodology behind the research and the findings of the public Sounding Board.



[Read the Sounding Board Report](#)

Major electricity grid upgrades are happening across Great Britain



Over the next decade, major changes will be happening across many communities in GB as the transition to cleaner energy sources progresses and the required transmission infrastructure is built. Renewing and expanding the grid is critical to boost the country's energy security, refresh ageing infrastructure, and deliver on the government's commitment to clean power by 2030. The building of pylons, substations, underground cables, and

related construction sites bring significant impacts for communities living closest to the upgrades. Multiple stakeholders are engaged in the planning and implementation of grid upgrades, including central government and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), local councils, supply chains, and delivery partners such as local authorities. Typically, TOs play the most visible role, and their activities can cause disruption to communities because they are tasked with building essential infrastructure.

Communities closest to development will be most impacted - a challenge for a fair energy transition

While the [majority of the public](#) are concerned about meeting rising energy demand and climate change, there is backlash against net zero and infrastructure projects, particularly in communities directly impacted by them for example, the [Norwich to Tilbury pylon upgrade project](#). Local opposition

and resistance to renewable energy projects are among the most significant challenges energy networks and developers face. It can result in delays that impact the speed of delivery of our net zero energy system, as well as additional costs to TOs, which are ultimately passed on to consumers' bills.

Effective engagement with communities is critical for the success of the energy transition

Guidance from government, the planning system and the energy regulator (Ofgem), sets out expectations and requirements on developers to engage with local communities as a recognised part of developing the electricity network. While this guidance is valuable and significantly contributes to establishing sound practice, the ongoing opposition to grid development by affected communities indicates engagement isn't currently effective and community acceptance in some areas is still low. This project aimed to adopt an innovative, bottom-up methodology for identifying best practices in collaboration with communities already affected, or likely



to be affected in the near future. Gaining input from local communities offers valuable understanding of what effective engagement looks like for them, which is crucial for increasing acceptance of grid upgrades.

Community benefits exist to offset local impacts of grid development

Community benefits are monetary and non-monetary benefits provided to enhance the economy, society, and/or environment in a local area.

They are intended to mitigate local impacts, improve acceptability, and support social licence to operate by providing lasting social, economic or environmental benefits that reflect local priorities. There are a wide variety of community benefits that can be delivered, but broadly they cover funding for local projects and programmes, investments in the local

area, or direct benefits to individuals in the area. These are in addition to any natural benefits that accrue through development and construction for example, local employment opportunities. When developed through early and meaningful engagement, community benefits can strengthen trust between developers and communities, contribute to fairer outcomes, and support the timely delivery of infrastructure necessary to meet wider public policy objectives.

What community benefits are available to offset local impacts of grid development?

Developers are expected to deliver [community benefits funding](#) of £200,000 per km of overhead line and £530,000 per substation. This is currently a recommendation only and requires voluntary commitment by TOs, but the government is considering mandating the provision of community benefit funds for low carbon energy infrastructure to ensure a consistent approach.

An additional mandated Bill Discount Scheme (part of the UK government's Planning and Infrastructure Bill) offers up to £250 discount per year for a decade, to households within 500m of new or upgraded infrastructure.



What We Did – a Public-Centred Deliberative Approach

The project used a structured deliberative methodology centred on a Sounding Board of forty-five residents from communities affected by planned or ongoing electricity grid upgrades in the East of England and Scotland, who took part in six facilitated sessions over six months (April – October 2025).

The Sounding Board sessions were designed to help the participants consider the following question: “How can we make sure that communities are properly and fairly included in future upgrades to the national electricity grid?”

The process combined expert input, in-depth small group discussion and mixed qualitative–quantitative analysis to support informed and reflective public judgement. The expert panel comprised community leaders: government representatives, policy specialists, and GB’s three TOs: National Grid, Scottish and Southern Energy Networks (SSEN), and Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN). The panel was convened three times during the Sounding Board process and served as a confidential, facilitated space for honest dialogue, ensuring expert insight and lived experience continually informed one another.

Early sessions focused on building shared understanding through expert briefings on how the grid works, its regulation, and the drivers for upgrades, before participants collectively identified priority topics for deeper exploration. Rich qualitative evidence was generated using a “World Café” circulating discussion format, enabling participants to iteratively build, challenge and refine perspectives across multiple rounds of discussion. After extensive deliberation, a new exercise was introduced in which participants were asked to rank a curated set of statements to reveal distinct viewpoints

and areas of consensus and disagreement.

Together, these methods were designed to surface considered public values, trade-offs and expectations, rather than to force consensus or produce formal policy recommendations, providing nuanced insights and a deeper understanding for what fairness and inclusion mean to communities experiencing grid development.

Sustainability First’s use of the findings from the Sounding Board was to:

1. Develop a set of principles for effective engagement: Community-derived expectations designed to guide how those involved in developing the grid should communicate, work with, and be accountable to the people most affected.
2. Highlight broader insights relevant for steering recommendations on engagement practices with communities and supporting policy development, including on the design of community benefits.

Climate Guide was contracted to lead the Sounding Board process. Their report, [The Sounding Board Citizens Panel](#), provides details on how participants were recruited as a representative sample of the demographics of communities impacted by grid upgrades, the design of the deliberative process, the specific questions asked of participants, data collection and analysis methods, and further insights and reflections.

Community Principles for Effective Engagement in Grid Development

Based on input from Sounding Board participants who represent communities impacted by grid development, they expect grid developers to embed the following principles in their community engagement practices:



1. Transparency

- Be open from the start about what we know, what we don't know, and why decisions are made.
- Show all available information in one place, in plain language, without jargon or spin.
- Explain why here, why now, and what alternatives were considered.
- Be clear about what is in our power and what is not, and we will expect the same from government and regulators.



2. Listening

- Engage early and keep listening throughout.
- Reach out to as many different people as possible using a variety of different ways of communicating.
- Show clearly where people's input and knowledge have shaped decisions.



3. Local involvement

- Treat communities as partners, not obstacles, with a unique and expert view of what matters to them, their communities and the places they live.
- Where possible, provide genuine opportunities for shared decision-making with local councils, voluntary groups and residents.
- Support local champions who can speak for their area and help others take part.
- Actively seek out those less likely to be heard, and remove barriers that prevent them from taking part, using a number of different approaches to reach people.
- Invest in helping communities engage on equal terms and strengthen local citizen leadership.
- Help communities plan how community benefit funds are used.



4. Impacts and benefit

- Work with councils, government and communities to minimise harm and share benefits fairly.
- Leave people with tangible improvements that wouldn't have happened otherwise, not token gestures.
- Minimise disruption and restore and enhance local nature.



5. Accountability and learning

- Evaluate and publish evidence of how these principles are being met.
- Share lessons across the energy sector and with government, so practice improves over time.
- Invite independent scrutiny and be open about where TOs fall short and how TOs will put it right.

Reflections on the Sounding Board process by participants:

“

...it has been reassuring that companies do want communities to have a say, and...how people want to have input on how they're impacted...”

“

I think that people feeling heard has been a really great result of this”

“

..it's been very informative...people have a right to be informed, and people want to be informed, and this information should be shared amongst everyone...”



Why these principles matter

Rapid, large-scale grid development is needed to meet government clean energy goals, but public consent is essential. These principles, shaped directly by the public Sounding Board, provide a clear and practical framework for building public trust and ensuring upgrades are fair, transparent, and socially legitimate.

They echo established good practice in engagement but are uniquely rooted in the specific values and expectations of those most affected. By addressing community concerns, integrating local priorities, and promoting open decision-making, the principles foster transparent processes and meaningful participation-helping communities feel developments are 'done with', not 'done to'.



Working with TOs - how these principles will be used

Since the creation of the Community Principles, Sustainability First has engaged in collaborative efforts with TOs to further refine them, ensuring they are suitable for TOs to commit to upholding, and specifically tailoring them to community engagement for the purposes of community benefit funded initiatives. TOs have prioritised community benefit funds as the focus because these are an immediate mechanism through which they can engage and deliver value locally.

All TOs have recently committed to following [DESNZ's guidance on Community Funds for Transmission Infrastructure](#). However, this guidance is focused on public engagement from the position of a requirement to implement the fund effectively, rather than being focused on what communities see as meaningful or fair. Whilst the DESNZ guidance is welcome and the TOs' commitments to follow it are encouraging, pledging to uphold the Community Principles complements the DESNZ guidance by providing a local-up perspective, increasing the likelihood of community acceptance.

Transmission Owners' Principles for Effective Engagement in Community Benefit Funding

Overarching Principle:

As Transmission Owners, we will make community benefit funding associated with Great Britain's grid development feel as fair, inclusive and beneficial as possible for the people that it affects the most. We will do this while serving the public through delivering a modern, clean and secure energy system.

In line with the UK Government's guidance on community benefit funds, we want the communities hosting these developments to feel that the processes to award community benefit funds have been 'done with' and not 'done to' them.

1. Transparency: open, clear and accountable

We will share all available information relating to community benefit funding in one accessible place, using plain language without jargon or spin. We will be clear about what we do and don't know, and how and why decisions are made, including what we can and can't control. We expect independent scrutiny and will be open about where we fall short and how we will put it right.

2. Listen and involve

We will engage early and keep listening throughout. We will provide genuine opportunities for communities to share what matters most and to help shape decisions collaboratively. We will encourage participation from everyone, not just a few voices, and work towards decisions that best reflect the views of the whole community.

3. Local empowerment

We will help people take part in community benefit funds by removing barriers and encouraging involvement. We will ensure every voice can be heard and avoid single issues from dominating.

4. Impacts and benefit

We will work with communities to leave tangible improvements that would not have happened otherwise. Our focus is on meaningful outcomes, and we will provide examples to show what this looks like in practice.

5. Share benefits fairly

We will work to ensure benefits are fair and proportionate. We will share lessons across the energy sector, with government, and between communities, so that we are continuously improving our approach to our community benefit work.

Findings and Recommendations

Although the Sounding Board process was not designed to reach consensus, participants did find some common ground during their discussions. Drawing only from the opinions and values shared by those involved, the findings and recommendations below highlight what community members believe could make engagement and community benefits feel more fair, impactful, and trustworthy during future upgrades to transmission networks.

1. Ensure engagement feels genuine, transparent, and accountable

There was a pervasive lack of trust in developers and authorities amongst participants; even after having the opportunity to hear from experts and enter into discussion, participants continued to distrust motives, including during community consultations. They also felt that current efforts of engagement and compensation were ‘tokenistic’. Participants consistently described current engagement as unclear, rushed, or “tick-box.” They emphasised the need for early dialogue, plain-language information, honesty about constraints, and visible evidence of how community input shaped decisions.

Recommendation:

TOs should ensure that these community-defined expectations of transparency, honesty, and follow-through are at the centre of their engagement processes, helping to align engagement with communities’ lived experience and values.

2. Avoid lowest-cost decision-making that creates uneven burdens on communities

Participants strongly rejected the idea that the cheapest route for siting infrastructure should automatically be chosen, or that undergrounding should be reserved only for protected landscapes. They argued that many ‘everyday’ undesignated landscapes (like farmland, coastal edges, villages, and rural areas not classified as “protected”) still carry local heritage value, emotional attachment, aesthetic importance, social and cultural meaning. There was widespread agreement that cost alone should not dictate where and how transmission infrastructure is built.

Recommendation:

Where decisions have significant local impacts, Central Government and TOs should consider fairness and local context alongside cost, in order to better recognise the social and emotional value communities attach to the landscapes they live in.

3. Replace the £250 Bill Discount Scheme with other forms of support

There was widespread agreement that The Bill Discount Scheme (£250 discount on energy bills each year for 10 years) was tokenistic, trust-eroding and not reflective of the impact of development on their lives. The Sounding Board provided preferred alternatives that meaningfully improve households' long-term resilience or quality of life.

(See below [“What Did Participants View as Preferable Alternatives to £250 bill discount”](#))

Recommendation:

DESNZ should reconsider the Bill Discount Scheme and develop alternative approaches informed by community insights — for example, energy-efficiency support, local transport improvements, or place-enhancing investments.

4. Prioritise community benefit options that create long-term, tangible improvements

Participants consistently preferred benefits that leave their communities better off in the longer term, environmentally, socially, or economically, rather than one-off or symbolic gestures. The need for flexible, context-sensitive, and generous compensation schemes was a recurring theme.

Recommendation:

TOs and policymakers should consider prioritising the design of community benefits that deliver lasting improvements for the long-term, in addition to aligning with what communities say and what matters to them. Examples include nature restoration, energy efficiency support, local amenities, and community-led projects.



5. Safeguard community benefit funds so they supplement rather than replace public services

Participants repeatedly expressed concern that community benefit funding could displace local authority funding for services that should already be provided.

Recommendation:

DESNZ should ensure that community benefit funds sit clearly in addition to statutory service provision and are transparently ring-fenced for new or enhanced local improvements.

Sounding Board members held opposing views across several key themes discussed during the sessions, reflecting fundamentally different values between participants rather than simple disagreement. Some of the themes explored where views differed considerably include preferences for household compensation versus community-wide benefits, the importance of impacts to property values or personal enjoyment at home, and whether greater public ownership of grid infrastructure could improve acceptance. There is value in recognising the relevance of these distinctly different views and values, to help inform the different ways that people may be incentivised to increase public acceptance for grid upgrades, and to help with tailoring messaging with communities most affected by grid upgrades. Climate Guide's report provides this insight into these differing public views and values.



What did participants view as preferable alternatives to a £250 bill discount?

1. Investment in local infrastructure and services



- Public transport improvements
- Creation or enhancement of community hubs
- Development of green spaces and recreational areas
- Support for local amenities and wellbeing initiatives

2. Energy efficiency



- Funding for home insulation programmes
- Installation of heat pumps and renewable energy technologies
- Grants for energy efficiency upgrades in homes and community buildings

3. Community-led projects



- Establishment of independent, community-led boards to decide on fund allocation
- Support for projects with broad and lasting impact, chosen by local residents rather than developers or political bodies

4. Environmental enhancements



- Nature restoration projects
- Biodiversity initiatives
- Improvements to local landscapes affected by infrastructure

5. Direct Support for vulnerable groups



- Targeted assistance for those most impacted by grid developments
- Programmes to address fuel poverty and support low-income households

6. Skills and capacity building



- Training and education programmes for local people
- Support for community leadership and participation

Guidance for communities most affected by grid development

Further work is needed to identify the best ways to encourage meaningful community involvement in grid development for example, on how to facilitate consensus-building on how community benefit funds are spent. While our report offers guidance for fostering collaborative partnerships, translating this advice into real-world action remains a challenge. This is where communities and TOs coming together locally for constructive conversations about the challenges and opportunities that grid developments pose will help to further inform engagement best practice. With communities in mind, here are five suggestions for this constructive conversation with TOs and other key stakeholders:

1. Use the Community Principles for public accountability and for good quality engagement

The principles offer communities a reference point for “what good looks like,” helping them to consider whether engagement is fair and meaningful.

2. Participate in constructive, inclusive, and ongoing dialogue

Communities are encouraged to advocate for early engagement, clear information, and opportunities for shared decision-making.

3. Identify local support and build capacity.

Our report highlights how strong local leadership (like community councils) can meaningfully shape outcomes in support of community interests. This may involve partnering with local voluntary organisations, using existing neighbourhood forums, or accessing capacity-building grants with support from the TOs.

4. Engage proactively in shaping community benefits.

Communities are encouraged to influence the design and allocation of community benefit funds, especially through local leadership.

5. Advocate for fair, place-sensitive benefits that leave lasting improvements.

Examples like nature restoration, new or improved public amenities, insulation grants, and community-led rural transport schemes are offered as examples of the types of funded initiatives that communities could push for.



Pioneer places - practical examples

Communities and community leaders in regions where infrastructure projects are underway are already making a positive and lasting difference by collaborating with TOs and other stakeholders to advance the interests of their communities.



Image: Nigel Jarvis | Shutterstock.com

East Lammermuir Community Council: A pioneering approach to community benefits

The chair of East Lammermuir Community Council (ELCC), Chris Bruce, was invited to join our expert panel for this project, to provide a community perspective from Scotland. He represented the experiences and priorities of communities impacted by major energy infrastructure projects in their area, near Dunbar, and talked about their pioneering approach to community benefits and how they've gone about it.

ELCC has been actively involved in convening developers behind 14 separate electricity generation projects planned in the area, and building local support behind an area-wide plan including biodiversity restoration and energy efficiency in homes, which community benefits would help to support.

ELCC's approach emphasises democratic renewal, capacity building, and ensuring that development leaves the community better off and delivers on its wider ambitions within its [local plan](#).

Benefits are targeted first at those most affected and then broadened to the wider area. For example, ELCC already receives £183,600 per year (inflation-linked) for three years in [community benefits](#) from the Neart na Gaoithe wind farm. This has enabled the community council to fund energy efficiency and home upgrades, bringing all properties within 1 km of construction works, haul roads or access routes, up to an Energy Performance Certificate level B or C, including through the installation of micro renewables (e.g., heat pumps, solar).



Image: Ben Molyneux | Shutterstock.com

Saxmundham: Community-led planning

Saxmundham (in Suffolk) Town Council and local community members have put together a proposal for nature restoration in the area. While opposed to the Sea Link electricity converter station and associated developments locally, their twin-track approach is nonetheless being proactive and ambitious about what they would like to see community benefit spent on if development does go ahead.

The [‘Empowering Nature’ plan](#) includes creation of a ‘green corridor’ to the sea, construction of a new bridge and a river boardwalk, establishment of a Community Nature Fund, installation of bat boxes, provision of boats for local residents, public arts initiatives, and other amenities.



What else could these principles be applied to, and what's next?

Existing guidance for grid developers defines what good engagement looks like procedurally; our Community Principles define how to make that happen on the ground in a way that ensures communities are meaningfully represented in decision-making. Addressing these perspectives in policy and practice will require a combination of national leadership, local empowerment, and robust mechanisms for compensation, community benefit projects, and accountability.

By amplifying public voices, monitoring best practice, and championing deliberative engagement methods, future infrastructure projects could have greater ‘social legitimacy’ (public buy-in). There remain real opportunities to make the transition to a decarbonised energy system not just technically and economically fair, but also more human-centred and trusted by communities. These principles are transferable to other infrastructure projects.

Aligning community expectations and delivery realities

While TOs have expressed support for adopting new engagement best practice principles based on the Community Principles set out in this report, our research highlights some natural tensions between what communities say “good engagement” should feel like and what TOs are practically able to deliver. Communities emphasised partnership, shared decision-making, and deeper involvement throughout the process, whereas TOs must operate within regulatory, technical, and time-critical constraints that can limit how far they can go beyond structured consultation. Participants also placed strong value on fairness, transparency, and responsiveness – including visible evidence of how their input shaped decisions – which may require shifts in established engagement practices. These differences do not represent opposition, but rather

illustrate the areas where continued dialogue, careful expectation-setting, and collaborative refinement will be important to ensure that both community needs and operational realities can be meaningfully aligned. Community Benefit gives TOs and local communities a fresh opportunity to build relationships based on openness, respect, and shared priorities. Focusing on benefits that genuinely matter to people, it creates space for more meaningful dialogue and stronger local trust.



Glossary of Terms

Community council: A local, voluntary body of residents acting as the most basic tier of democratic representation, representing local views to larger authorities, influencing decisions, and undertaking projects to improve their area, focusing on local needs like planning, environment, and community events, and serving as a crucial link between residents and formal government (other definitions exist but are not relevant to this paper).

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ): A government department leading on the mission to make the UK a clean energy superpower.

Electricity transmission network (also ‘the grid’): the high-voltage “motorway” system that moves large amounts of power over long distances from generation sites (like power plants and wind farms) to major substations, using pylons, overhead and underground lines, and cables, before the voltage is ‘stepped down’ by local distribution networks for homes and businesses. It is a complex, interconnected grid managed by system operators to balance supply and demand, and it is currently being upgraded for more usage, and more renewable energy.

Infrastructure: The large metal towers (pylons), overhead lines, underground cables, and major substations making up the electricity transmission network.

Major infrastructure projects: Large-scale, high-investment developments in essential systems like transport (roads, railways), energy (power stations, grid upgrades), water, waste, and digital communication, crucial for economic growth and public service delivery, often requiring special consent due to their national

significance, size, and impact, supporting national goals like net-zero and connectivity.

Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem): The independent energy regulator for Great Britain, protecting consumers, promoting competition, and ensuring a secure, sustainable energy supply by setting rules, monitoring companies, and enforcing standards for gas and electricity markets, from generation to retail.

Planning and Infrastructure Bill: Landmark legislation covering England and Wales designed to accelerate building homes and major infrastructure (like energy, transport, and utilities) by streamlining planning approvals, reforming compulsory purchase processes, and introducing new environmental contribution schemes, aiming for faster economic growth and development.

Sounding Board: A group of everyday people (e.g., patients, customers, or community members) who provide honest, objective feedback on ideas, plans, or materials (like health information or service designs) to help organisations test, refine, and improve them before public release, ensuring they’re understandable, relevant, and meet user needs. They act as a “reality check,” offering valuable real-world perspectives, challenging assumptions, and helping to shape strategies from a user’s point of view.

Transmission Owner (TO): A company responsible for owning, operating, and developing the high-voltage power lines that move electricity over long distances from power stations to local distribution networks, ensuring the system’s security, reliability, and balancing supply with demand nationwide.



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Sustainability First, January 2026

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