



# Solar Fund Community Benefit Fund

## Funding Criteria – November 2025

### Fund Overview:

The West Raynham Solar Farm owned by Bluefield Income Solar Fund is committed to providing a Community Benefit Fund (the Fund).

The Fund will provide an annual payment to the Parish Council each year for the lifetime of the Solar Farm. The annual donation is linked to inflation so should increase each year. (In 2025 this figure was £12,812).

Grass root community groups and volunteers are encouraged to apply to the Parish Council for grants that can improve the natural and social environment for the benefit of Weasenham Parish.

The Parish Council will also put ideas forward for community projects.

All applications received and Parish Council ideas will be discussed openly at Parish Council Meetings before commitments are made.

### Project Location:

Projects must be for the benefit of the community of Weasenham Parish in Norfolk.

For a physical (capital) project, this needs to be delivered at a location within the Parish boundary.

Grants can also be awarded for activities and services which may take place inside or outside the Parish. An example of the latter might be an excursion for a local elderly community group.

However, if the excursion also includes individuals that reside outside of Weasenham, a grant from this Fund will only be awarded to support the costs of the residents attending from within the Parish. Applications to the Fund must therefore provide a full project cost breakdown in their submission to demonstrate this.

Organisations located outside the benefit area can apply if they are delivering a service or activity for individuals residing within it. An example of this may be a youth worker employed by a local charity and the Fund could pay for costs associated with supporting young people that reside in the Parish. Applications to the Fund must therefore provide a full project cost breakdown in their submission, particularly if the overall project covers a wider area than just Weasenham Parish.

### Project Purpose:

Some examples of the type of projects the Fund could support are given below:

- **Community buildings and facilities.** For example: capital improvement works or measures to increase energy efficiency such as public EV charging points, or improvements at village halls including solar panels, churches, schools, community centres, museums, heritage centres and community cafes.

- **Community activities and services.** For example: activities or events to engage the local community which may address health and wellbeing, social isolation, community cohesion, access to amenities, young and old people's projects, and projects providing support for local clubs and groups.
- **Environmental and public open space projects.** For example: projects involving parks, nature reserves, community growing schemes, public benches and habitat/species conservation, woodland creation, pathways, interpretation boards and those which encourage nature conservation.
- **Sports, recreation and play.** For example: playgrounds, skate parks, indoor climbing walls, sports equipment and sports field drainage projects.

*The above list is not exhaustive and is provided to give ideas only.*

## Eligible Organisations:

Eligible Organisations, who can apply for funding include:

- Voluntary and community groups
- Local charities
- The Parish Council (whilst being the administrators, are eligible to deliver projects through the Solar Fund)
- Social enterprises and Community Interest Companies operating on a non-profit-distributing basis. These are defined by Social Enterprise UK as 'businesses that trade to tackle social problems, improve communities, people's life chances, or the environment. They make their money from selling goods and services in the open market, but they reinvest their profits back into the business or the local community'. **These organisations must have a minimum of three unrelated Directors, that also do not reside at the same address.**

Organisations need to have a written constitution, a set of rules, or a governing document and a bank or building society account held in the name of the organisation in place before applying for a grant. If groups do not have these requirements, please contact the Parish Council who may be able to deliver the project on their behalf.

## Exclusions

The Fund will **not** be available for:

- Commercial organisations.
- Individuals applying directly to the Fund
- Projects that are narrowly religious in focus or that support a party-political campaign.
- Retrospective funding (i.e. funding can only be requested for works that will begin / expenditure that will be incurred AFTER our funding decision has been made and a formal grant Contract issued).
- Works considered a statutory duty, including costs and activities which the Parish Council precept should cover or works to public highways, for example.

## **Judging Criteria:**

The main considerations the Parish Council will consider when assessing applications will be:

- The social, economic and environmental benefits which will result from the project.
- The level of community support for and involvement in the project.

Other factors will also be considered:

- The ability of the applicant to deliver the project.
- How the work will be continued after the project has been completed i.e. its sustainability and legacy.
- Value for money.
- The project meets the requirements of the Solar Farm Fund Agreement.