



# RWE

# Future Bright

## Annual Report

### 2023



# Putting our communities first

**Investing in local communities can lead to remarkable transformations. RWE is leading by example, dedicated to empowering communities across the UK.**

We are deeply committed to reinvesting earnings from our renewable energy projects to foster growth, resilience, and sustainability within local communities. From enhancing community services and tourism to creating job opportunities and supporting environmental conservation efforts, our approach is holistic and inclusive.

RWE has been fostering community development for over 20 years through our community fund program. Over their lifetime, to December 2023, renewable energy projects we operate have contributed over £38 million to communities across the UK.

Over their operational lifetime, we are committed to investing more than £100 million into UK community funded projects.

This investment isn't just about financial support; it's about empowering communities, supporting the UK's transition to net zero, and building a lasting legacy for future generations.

We care about creating bright futures for everyone. Dive into our full story to understand the scope of RWE's impact and how it might inspire positive change in your own community.



## £5m

Invested in 2023. Helping communities create

## £3.8m

Match funding

## 2,685

Volunteering opportunities

## 2,788

Education & training opportunities

## 63

Jobs

And helping to safeguard

## 190

Jobs





## Tom Glover

RWE UK Country Chair

**Every time I visit our UK wind farm sites, I'm amazed to see and hear about the scale of the impact our funds are delivering for local communities.**



Communities are realising their ambitions, bringing ideas to life and putting the support where it's needed most, like biodiversity projects, forest schools and allotment projects, helping fund salaries for development officers and even initiatives to help local people improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

Supporting and working alongside the communities where we operate sits at the core of our business. This year, we're thrilled to announce our community contributions have reached £38 million, a testament not just to our commitment but more so to the local volunteers whose dedication, creativity, and effort breathe life into projects within their neighbourhoods.

A standout moment for me this past year was the celebration of the Gwynt y Môr Offshore Wind Farm community fund in North Wales hitting its £5 million milestone. Hearing firsthand about the positive changes spurred by this fund, from the people it directly affects, has been incredibly rewarding (for further insights, watch the [Gwynt y Môr film](#)).

It's been a significant year for RWE's renewable energy ventures in the UK, particularly the expansion of our solar energy business with the acquisition of JBM Solar. This experience enriches our journey, as we apply lessons from wind farm community funds to ensure impactful delivery across all of our projects.

Looking to next year, we're excited to introduce the RWE Future Bright Campaign 2024. This initiative will be all about celebrating community spirit, acknowledging outstanding projects, and sharing the successful strategies of the remarkable initiatives made possible by our community funds.

*Tom*

# How our funding works

## Our approach to community funding explained



### It's all about you

Meeting the needs of the local area is what we're here for.



### Every community is different

We tailor our funds to meet the unique and changing needs of communities and we take a bespoke approach for every allocation.



### Local knowledge is best

We want communities to be at the heart of decision-making: we recruit local panels with the knowledge to call the shots on what we fund and how, and our funds are usually managed locally by professional grant making organisations.



### We adapt

Our funds can respond rapidly to emergencies and unforeseen challenges – so we're there to help communities through unexpected events such as floods, the pandemic, or the cost-of-living crisis.



### We flex

Our adaptable approach means we can support projects through grants, loans or even by investing.



### We listen

We take a flexible approach and listen to consultation responses to find out how the area surrounding the site is used for living, working and recreation.



### Ensuring legal compliance

Funds are secured through legal agreements for the future and to mandate good governance.



### We keep it simple

So, the application process is easy, straight forward and with as little bureaucracy as possible!



### We're here for the long-haul

Our funds are long-term, and we encourage communities to plan for the future to support sustainable development and build a legacy for future generations.



### Global goals

We measure our funds against the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere. Adopted by all UN Member States in 2015.



### And this is just the beginning

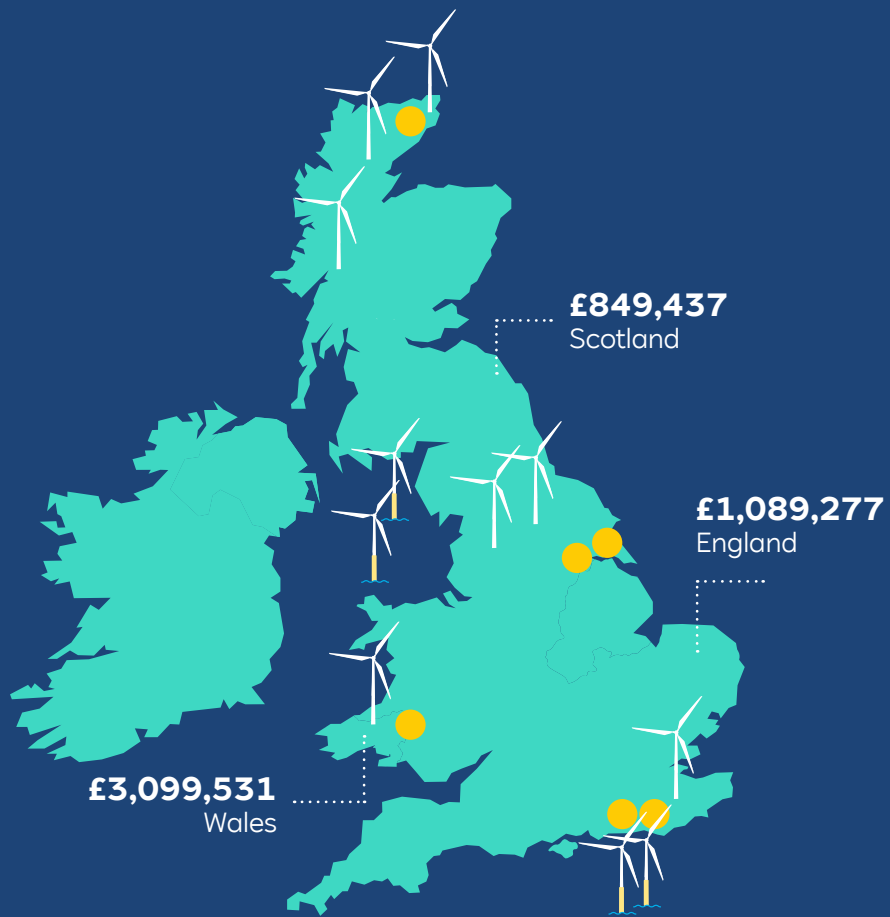
We aim to future-proof benefits by securing and sign-posting match funding and curating partnerships with other funders.



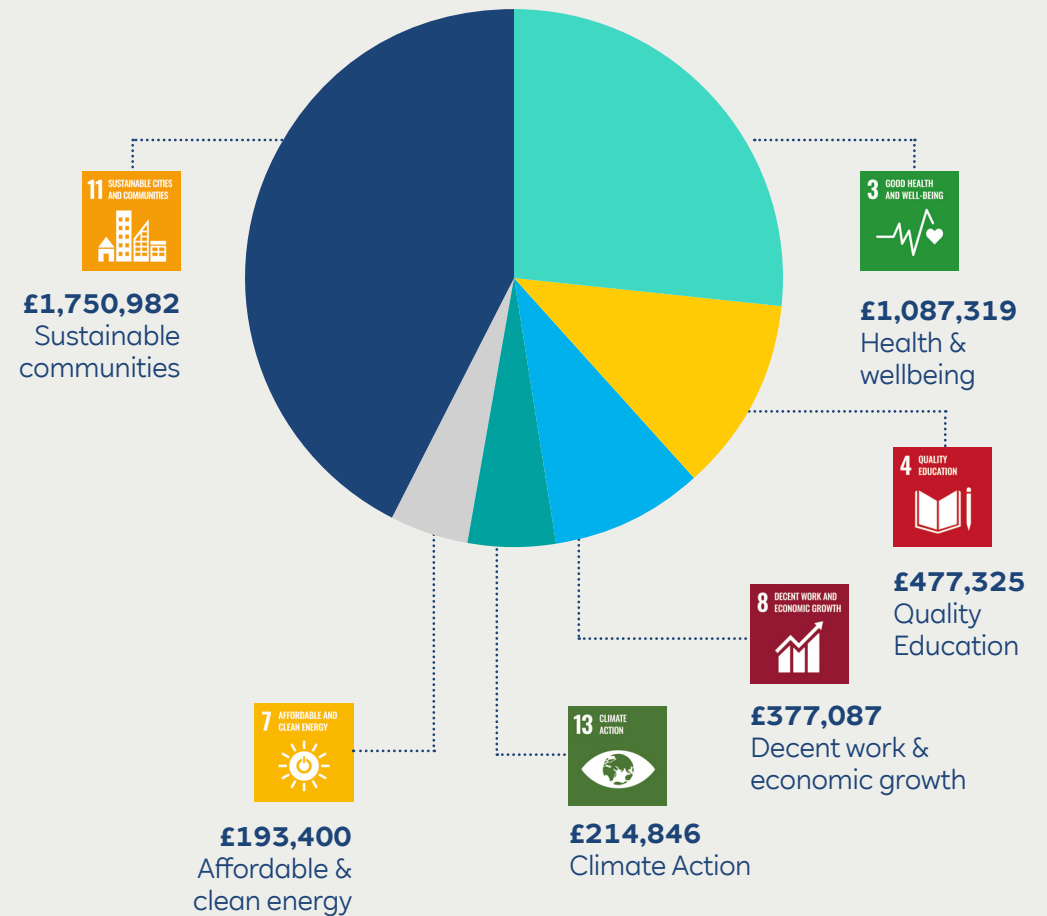
# Our year in a snapshot

## 2023 – more than £5 million invested in community funds

Click on yellow location dots to see the case study



## 2023 grants made to support UN Sustainable Development Goals



 Rampion Offshore Wind Farm


## Brighton Bike Hub

**Brighton Bike Hub is a community-driven initiative nestled in the heart of Brighton, powered by volunteers. Its mission? To transform Brighton's streets into safer, greener, and healthier avenues for travel and living.**

By minimising waste and reducing carbon emissions, the project not only contributes to environmental health but also offers local residents an economical mode of transportation. This initiative helps people save money while accessing essential services through a more affordable travel option.

At the hub, anyone can come to fix their bikes, seek guidance, and use tools and workshop space without any cost. With a selection of budget-friendly new and second-hand parts, along with refurbished bicycles for sale, Brighton Bike Hub caters to various needs.

Financial support amounting to £10,000 from the Rampion Offshore Wind Farm Fund has been instrumental in covering staff expenses, including a project coordinator. This funding also facilitated the acquisition of a shipping container, which now serves as a storage space for bikes and a venue for classes and do-it-yourself repair workshops.



After taking voluntary redundancy from work the bike hub has given me a way to be involved with people with a shared interest. Being able to help customers with their bikes puts my knowledge to good use, customers appreciate the work we do.

Volunteer



 **Goole Fields Onshore Wind Farm**

## The Green Team

### Community café & gardens

**The Goole Wind Farms Community Fund has backed the creation of a community café and garden centre, marking a significant step in consolidating all Green Team activities.**

This move includes their charity and commercial gardening services into one location. A generous grant of £34,000 is set to bolster the organisation's expansion and address the logistical hurdles previously faced due to operating across multiple sites.

The Green Team's work impacts a broad spectrum of individuals, including volunteers and clients, many of whom encounter financial, personal, or social challenges.

For most volunteers, the value of their experience extends beyond learning gardening techniques. It's the personal growth and overcoming of significant life obstacles or adverse experiences from their past that stand out. The nurturing and stable environment provided by the Green Team lays the groundwork for remarkable personal transformations, enabling them to thrive.

At the garden centre, volunteers engage in planting seeds and nurturing plants and flowers, which are then sold to the public to support the charity. The revenue generated from these sales, alongside profits from the café, plays a crucial role in securing the charity's future sustainability.







[Our impacts](#)

[Case studies](#)



 **Rampion Offshore Wind Farm**

## Creative Heart

### Solar Panels

**Creative Heart, nestled in the heart of Littlehampton, operates as both a vibrant community hub and arts café, dedicated to fostering connections within the community and combating social isolation and loneliness.**

They firmly believe in the power of creativity to enhance mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing, offering a wide array of participatory opportunities for individuals of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

The installation of solar panels on the building's roof, with 50% of the costs covered by the Rampion Wind Farm Community Fund, has not only facilitated the acquisition of additional matching funds but has also played a pivotal role in reducing the building's energy consumption. This initiative significantly lowers operational expenses and carbon emissions, simultaneously enhancing the warmth and comfort of the space for all its users.



Goole Fields Onshore Wind Farm

## Yorkshire Waterways Heritage Society

**The Yorkshire Waterways Heritage Society is dedicated to shedding light on the lives of the industrious watermen who navigated Yorkshire's waterways during the 19th and 20th centuries.**

Their mission is to celebrate and safeguard the rich histories of these individuals for posterity.

Brian Masterman, a respected historian from Old Goole, left behind a vast collection of local heritage items. Thanks to funding from the Goole Wind Farms Community Fund, efforts have been made to archive Masterman's significant contributions, including the acquisition of appropriate storage solutions.

This collection, rich in documents, photographs, and artefacts from old Goole, focuses especially on the shipbuilding industry and the community's residents. Volunteers are diligently organising, cataloguing, and digitising the archive, ensuring its preservation for the educational benefit of generations to come.

When the extensive Masterman collection of documents and photographs was donated to Moorlands Community Centre it came in a huge variety of grocer's sweet boxes, baskets and cardboard boxes of all shapes and sizes, none of which were suitable for long term storage of such a treasure trove of material.

Volunteer







Bad á Cheò Onshore Wind Farm

## Education & Training Fund

**A portion of the community fund from the Bad á Cheò Wind Farm in Caithness is dedicated to helping local residents pursue education and training.**

These awards are designed to provide access to learning opportunities that arm individuals with a diverse set of skills, crucial for securing or maintaining jobs in the region's key industries.

The opportunity to apply for the Bad á Cheò Education and Training Fund is exclusively available to those living in proximity to the wind farm. However, in a recent development, the Camster Wind Farm, another RWE project nearby, has contributed £30,000 from its community fund to establish a Caithness-wide Education & Training Fund. This new initiative extends support to individuals residing outside the immediate areas served by existing wind farm funds, offering them up to £750 for training courses that enhance their employment prospects.

All of RWE's wind farm community funds in Caithness, including this latest education and training fund, are managed by Foundation Scotland, an independent grant administrator. The decision-making process regarding fund allocation is entrusted to panels comprised of local residents, ensuring that the benefits are distributed fairly and effectively within the community.

**The funding provided a means for me to carry out this training which without the funding I probably would not have done. The training has allowed me to carry out the sheep dipping process for myself and I will now be able to do this for the surrounding neighbours. This has helped reduce my own costs, something that my neighbours will also benefit from**

Local crofter



 Brechfa Onshore Wind Farm

## Cynefin Schools project

**Six rural primary schools have collaborated together on a custom-designed program filled with unique activities for their students. Funding to support additional staffing costs has freed up teachers' time to work together on this exciting project.**

The 'Cynefin' project, which received a £74,000 grant from the Brechfa Forest Wind Farm Community Fund over three years, seeks to ignite a passion in students for their local surroundings by introducing them to the rich history, culture, and environment of their area.

Cynefin, a term that encapsulates a deep sense of belonging and familiarity with one's surroundings, guided the project's ethos. The funding facilitated the planning of vibrant and engaging lessons, including inviting guest speakers to schools and organising educational outings, all designed to make learning come alive through the exploration of local heritage.

Even the smallest school involved, with just 30 pupils, benefitted immensely from this collaborative approach, offering students learning experiences they wouldn't have had otherwise. Highlights of the programme include visits from notable Welsh figures like folk singer Dafydd Iwan and former Children's Poet Laureate Aneirin Karadog, as well as regular outdoor classes in Brechfa Forest.

This initiative is a prime example of the proactive efforts by the community panel responsible for allocating the Brechfa Forest Wind Farm Community Fund. By commissioning a local specialist to bring together schools and local authority representatives the panel were able to understand how the fund could best support their local schools. From the options presented they selected the Cynefin project because of its potential to have a significant and positive impact on so many children's educational journey (for further insights, watch the [Cynefin film](#)).

[Our impacts](#)[Case studies](#)





# Katy Woodington

Senior Community Investment Manager  
(UK & Ireland)



**Reflecting on the year 2023, the standout theme for me is the transformative impact of community-driven initiatives.**

Our funding programmes offer local residents the power to shape and directly influence the development of their communities. A prime example of this is the “Cynefin” project, supported by the Brechfa Forest Wind Farm fund. Here, a local panel, deeply knowledgeable about their community’s needs, tackled a specific challenge and crafted a tailor-made solution. As RWE’s renewable energy projects expand across the UK, ensuring that local voices remain at the helm of decision-making is a paramount priority for me.

Looking ahead to 2024, we are excited about launching new projects, which means the introduction of additional community funds. Specifically, in Scotland, RWE is currently building three new onshore wind farms. These projects are set to channel £25 million into Scottish communities, nearly doubling our annual contribution in Scotland and empowering these communities to envision and forge a sustainable future, realising their most ambitious goals.

Community benefits are also gaining prominence on the UK government’s agenda for the upcoming year. We anticipate the release of two new guidance documents focused on community benefits from electricity transmission network infrastructure and fostering local partnerships. Moreover, RWE is collaborating with solar industry partners to establish a new solar community benefit protocol, aiming to standardise the benefits communities can expect from new solar projects in their vicinity.

The ethos of community decision-making, the exchange of innovative ideas, best practices, and the encouragement of community fund panels to consider long-term legacies are at the heart of our approach. This focus not only enhances the immediate impact of our projects but also ensures their enduring contribution to community wellbeing and development.

*Katy*



Find out more about our projects:  
<https://uk.rwe.com/empowering-communities>



**£38 million**

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