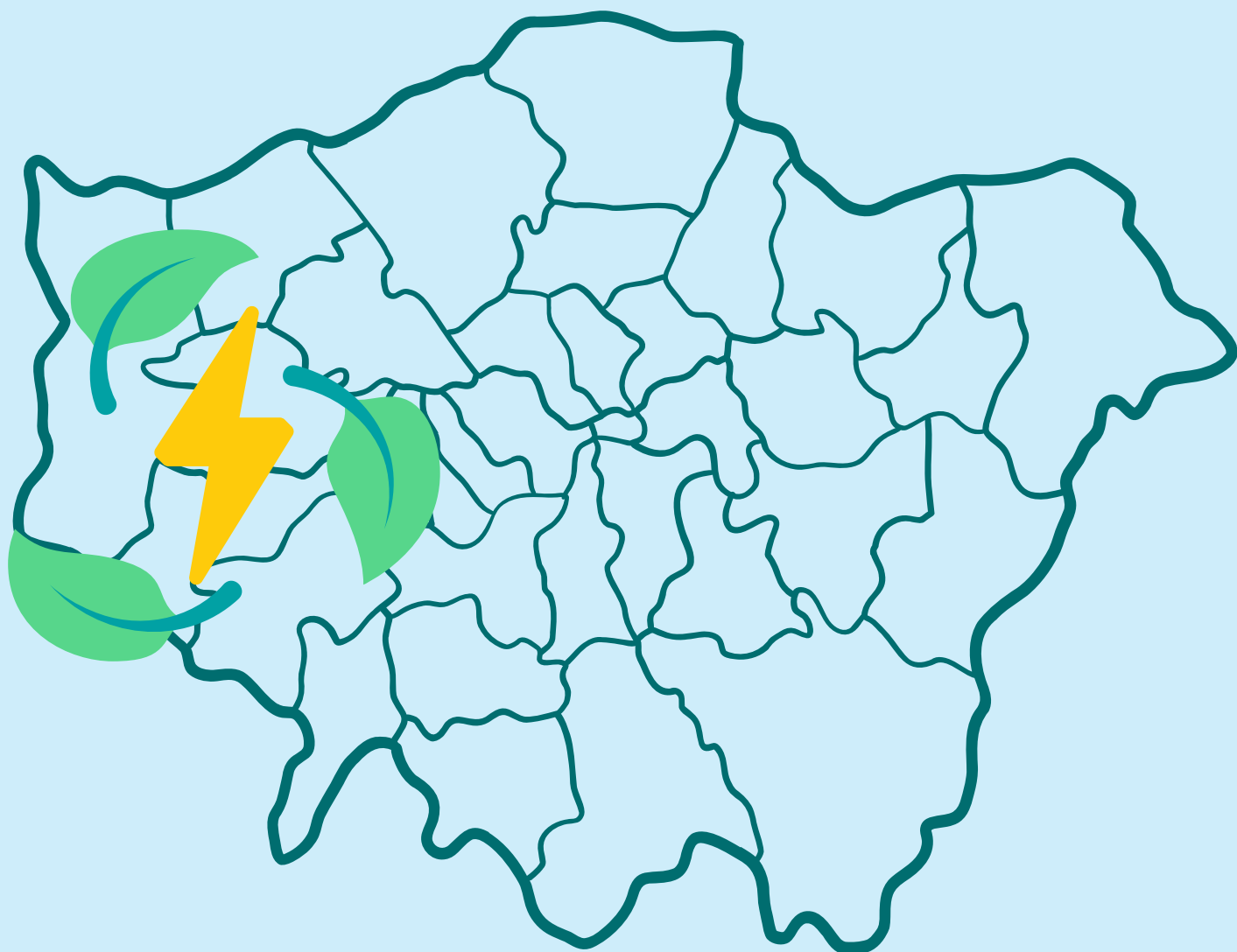


# Community Energy Now!

*Powering Up **West** London*



**REPORT**

JULY 2025

## Acknowledgements

This report was produced by by Syed Ahmed and Katherine Linsley of Community Energy London (CEL) with the support and contributions of Ealing Transition, North Kensington Community Energy (NKCE), Schools' Energy Coop, Hammersmith & Fulham Community Energy (HFCE) and Brent Pure Energy (BPE).



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## Introduction

As part of [London Climate Action Week 2025](#) (21 - 29 June) Community Energy London (CEL) partnered with its members to host four events across the city to present the significant work undertaken by groups to date. The events showcased the variety of projects delivered by groups to date, alongside their work with local authorities to develop new opportunities for the sector. Also highlighted was the huge potential for community-led action to decarbonise London's buildings, and the wider social and economic benefits community energy can bring.

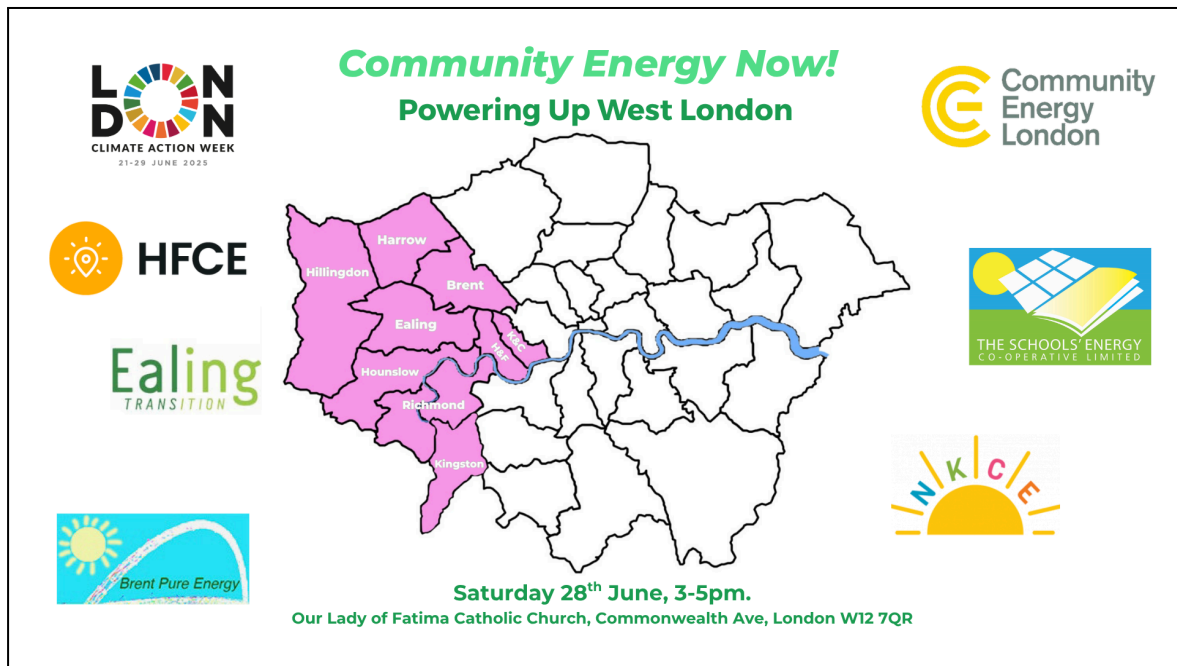
Following these events, ***Community Energy Now! Powering up North/East/South and West London***, four reports have been prepared which set out for each region:

- Case studies of community energy action undertaken
- Analysis on the potential for future community energy projects
- Proposals to policy makers on how to boost growth in the deployment and scale of community energy

This report focuses on the West London boroughs of:

- Brent
- Ealing
- Hammersmith and Fulham
- Harrow
- Hillingdon
- Hounslow
- Kensington and Chelsea
- Kingston Upon Thames
- Richmond Upon Thames

## LCAW EVENT: Community Energy Now! Powering up West London



### Speakers:

- Syed Ahmed – CEO, Community Energy London
- Afsheen Rashid – CEO, Repowering
- Andy Rolfe – Director, Ealing Transition
- Wilf Macdonald-Brown – Director, Hammersmith and Fulham Community Energy



## Background

The past few years have seen community energy activity grow at pace in London, with renewable energy and energy efficiency projects delivered by an increasing number of groups supporting the delivery of cleaner, more affordable energy in their neighbourhoods.

For example, across the city, community energy groups are helping schools, cultural venues, places of worship and other community and public buildings to generate their own green energy and reduce both their carbon footprint and running costs.

In 2023, CEL created a [Community Energy Potential Map for London](#). Working with the Greater London Authority (GLA), who provided access to their extensive datasets and mapping tools in relation to building energy consumption and rooftop solar power potential, CEL combined data from the GLA's [London Solar Opportunity Map](#), [London Heat Map](#) and the [London Building Stock Model](#) to:

- Match up this energy data to existing community buildings across the city
- Allow for this data to be explored by administrative areas (borough, Parliamentary constituency, and council ward) or for London as a whole
- Estimate the potential of solar PV capacity that could be deployed across these community buildings

Using this data CEL developed an innovative map that can support community energy groups to identify potential projects in their areas, as well as providing policy makers a tool to visually explore the potential of community energy in their area.

In summary:

- We identified 20,849 community buildings in London of the type which may be of interest to community energy groups
- Up to 85% of these buildings have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating less than C. Hence, all of these buildings will need to be retrofitted if London is to achieve its Net Zero goal

- 11,508 of these community buildings could host solar PV projects, which amounts to a total capacity of 1,126MW. This level of electricity generation is equivalent to powering about 350,000 homes (around one-tenth of London homes) and would save over 200,000 tonnes of carbon annually
- As of mid-2025, there are over 200 community energy projects in London, the majority of which are recorded on a separate [projects map](#) on CEL's website.

**On the basis of our findings Community Energy London has set an [ambition](#) to have 1,000 community energy projects in place across the city by 2030 - an approximate fivefold increase over the current level of projects.**

**This can also be viewed as 30 projects in each of London's 33 boroughs by 2030.**

*"I am determined to unleash the power of community energy across the country. Through Great British Energy's Local Power Plan, this Government is supporting local authorities and community energy groups to help build local clean energy projects – from community-led onshore wind, to solar on rooftops and hydropower in rivers. The profits generated from these projects could then be reinvested into community projects or take money off people's bills."*

Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP, Secretary of State, Department of Energy Security and Net Zero

[Power in Our Communities](#), Labour Climate and Environment Forum (LCEF) x Co-operative Party, June 2025

## Community Energy In London

CEL was founded with the aim of facilitating collaboration among London-based groups to exchange experiences, resources, and knowledge, while also encouraging the formation of new groups and advocating for greater public sector support for community energy initiatives.

The past few years have seen community energy activity grow at pace in London with an increasing number of projects delivered by a growing number of groups and practitioners. The sector has been supported by the Mayor through the London Community Energy Fund (LCEF) alongside a number of boroughs who have established their own Community Energy Funds (CEFs).

Considerable work is now underway to help accelerate the deployment of projects including:

- Phase 2 of the Mayor's **Community Energy Task Force** which will bring together representatives from community energy groups, London boroughs, the finance and business sectors and other key institutions to unlock structural barriers to the sector's growth and identify routes to securing additional funding.
- Two projects by **London Councils' Community Energy Working Group**:
  - The development of a **Community Energy Toolkit (LCCET)** to help support the case for community energy to officers within local authorities and provide officers with a practical set of tools, resources and evidence that support their work on community energy.
  - A **community energy mapping study**, being undertaken by the Mayor's Zero Carbon Accelerator (ZCA) programme, will produce an individual report for every London council on the potential for community solar generation projects in their borough.
- Most importantly, the development of the Government's **Local Power Plan**, which "*will work with local communities to empower people to generate their own energy, save money on their energy bills, and reinvest the savings where they are most needed*" and is a key output of the Government's publicly owned company, GB Energy.



## The Potential For Community Energy In West London

For West London boroughs, CEL's Potential Map sets out the following opportunity in terms of the PV solar capacity identified across community buildings. These include sites such as community centres, educational institutions, leisure centres, museums, art galleries and libraries, theatres, concert halls & cinemas and places of worship.

<b>West London Boroughs</b>	<b>Number of Community Buildings</b>	<b>Total Solar Capacity/kWp</b>
Brent	422	48,723
Ealing	318	33,459
Hammersmith and Fulham	292	29,937
Harrow	201	18,653
Hillingdon	264	24,954
Hounslow	227	24,395
Kensington and Chelsea	255	23,084
Kingston upon Thames	247	21,706
Richmond upon Thames	312	28,540
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2,538</b>	<b>253,451</b>

Table 1

However, community energy extends far beyond just solar, with groups taking a holistic approach to decarbonising buildings. Community energy organisations are delivering cleaner and cheaper energy for South London in a wide variety of ways. CEL's members are working in partnership with local authorities, businesses and the third sector, whilst securing funding from grant-giving organisations and programmes such as the Energy Redress Scheme, and raising millions of pounds of investment through community share offers.

A few example case studies follow below.

## **CEL Member Case Studies**

### **Case Study 1: Brent Pure Energy (BPE)**

BPE was set up in 2015 as a Community Benefit Society. Their first Solar PV installation was 50kW at Queens Park Community School, NW6 7BQ in 2016, next came 27 and 24kW at nearby Malorees Infant and Junior Schools NW6 7PB in 2020. The contractor was Soventix, a multi-national German company.

BPE began negotiations with Capital City (now Harris Lowe) Academy, NW10 3ST in 2021. These progressed smoothly, thanks to financial director, Greg George. They raised £195k by Community Share Offer (as previously) in 4 months for a 300kW (660 panels) array on this impressive Norman Foster designed building. As with other projects the main delay was in completing the roof lease. They are grateful for a GLA grant under LCEF5 to cover this. Generation started in June 2022 producing an average 210MWh p.a. In 2023 BPE secured a PPA contract with Octopus for the approximate 15% of exported electricity from this site. The contractor for this project was UK company GenFit. It is now BPE's intention to enlarge the installation to 495kW, covering the entire roof.

<https://www.brentpureenergy.org.uk/>

### **Case Study 2: Ealing Transition**

Ealing Transition works with the School's Energy Coop to install solar PV systems on the Borough's schools. Since starting the project in 2015, with the active support of the Council, they now have 19 sites, supporting 637kWp of solar PV panels. The sites are expected to generate 561,000 kWh/ year enough to power more than 320 average UK homes. Altogether this avoids nearly 200 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions each year. As a result of early publicity of the scheme, the School's Energy Coop also worked with the energy manager of Harrow Council, resulting in solar PV on a further 8 schools, with a capacity of 330kWp, representing an additional 110T of CO2 saved each year.

The systems are installed at no capital cost to the schools, which purchase the solar electricity at a discount to normal grid prices. Together we estimate that their Ealing sites are saving around £40,000 each year on electricity costs. They have also distributed nearly £14,000 in profit share to

the Ealing schools. Funds were raised by public share offers, and supported by grants from the GLA's LCEF fund and Ealing's Carbon Offset fund.

A good example is West Acton Primary School. The head teacher approached Ealing Transition for help in understanding the existing small PV installation. Then in 2022, Ealing Transition installed an additional 49kWp of solar PV on the school, with the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, Rupa Huq MP and the leader of Ealing Council attending the opening.



<https://ealingtransition.org.uk/>

### **Case Study 3: Hammersmith & Fulham Community Energy (HFCE)**

Founded by a group of Hammersmith & Fulham climate activists in 2023, HFCE is a Community Benefit Society (CBS) whose mission is to develop community-owned sustainable energy projects in the borough. In August 2024, solar panels were installed on Jack Tizard School in White City, and HFCE is now raising the funds to bring the assets into community ownership.

The 119kWp solar installation will save up to 445.7 tonnes of carbon emissions and contribute £10,500 to a community fund over the project's lifetime. Additionally, the project will bring up to £2,000 of yearly savings on the school's energy bills, which will be used to improve the school's facilities and bring great benefits to the local community.



The solar installation was financed by Repowering Finance (RF) on behalf of HFCE, and the assets are held in trust by RF until HFCE raises the capital

required to purchase the assets, through community shares. Repowering Finance is an asset locked Community Benefit Society created to increase the speed and scale at which community-owned solar power can be installed across London.

Repowering London, a CBS that works closely with and supports HFCE, has secured funding from the Just Transition Fund of Ofgem's Energy Redress scheme to explore the solar potential of further sites in the borough, with the view to continuing the expansion of installed capacity whilst also continuing engaging the community. The group will continue to actively work with H&F Council, who has remained supportive and proactive in facilitating the growth of HFCE, to find new sites that are suitable for solar.

<https://www.repowering.org.uk/hammersmithandfulham/>

#### **Case Study 4: North Kensington Community Energy (NKCE)**

In March 2019, NKCE installed 306 solar panels across the three council-facilitated sites over the course of two months. These projects had a total of 86kWp electrical capacity, generating 69,800kWh of clean power annually. Over the 20-year lifetime of the project, 643 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will be saved from the



atmosphere. The energy generated is sold to the site buildings at a discounted rate, with any surplus exported to the grid. A portion of the sales of electricity from the projects will go into a community fund, raising £28,000 to support local projects.

In October 2020, NKCE completed the next stage of the project with a fourth solar PV array installing 485 solar panels equating to 138kWp on the Westway Sports Centre. The project saves 28 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> every year and generates an estimated 3% annual return for its investors, and adds £42,000 over the project lifetime to the NKCE community fund, bringing it to a total of £70,000. In 2022, 28 local young people were recruited for and

supported with paid training, as part of Repowering London's Youth Training Programme in the borough.



NKCE's ambition is to install 1MW of community-owned rooftop solar in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and become a thriving, self-sustained and inclusive group where volunteers, champions and directors gain a wide range of skills and take on leadership roles.

<https://www.repowering.org.uk/north-kensington-community-energy/>

## **Council Support for Community Energy**

In addition to the London Mayor's London Community Energy Fund (LCEF), which has had seven rounds of funding to date and supported around 200 projects across the city<sup>1</sup>, a number of boroughs in London have introduced specific funding programmes to support the growth of community energy activity in their area. These funds are typically financed by carbon offset payments collected from developers through Section 106 (s106) legal agreements which are required to be paid under Council planning policy where applications fail to meet required carbon reduction targets set by councils' Local Plan. The relevant s106 agreements require that the contributions must be used to reduce carbon emissions. A short profile of each of these is set out below.

### **Hounslow Community Energy Fund**

The Hounslow Community Energy Fund was launched in 2022 and allowed community groups of all sizes and levels of experience to apply for a share of £100,000 to take action on climate change and become more energy efficient. For the 2025/26 HCEF funding round, £150,000 is available to support community-based carbon reduction and energy efficiency projects. Community groups based and working in the London Borough of Hounslow can apply for grants up to £40,000. The council welcomes and actively encourages applications from existing energy and environmental groups, as well as community groups who have not undertaken a carbon or energy related project before.

Examples of projects that could be eligible for funding under the HCEF include:

- Retrofitting community buildings with energy-saving insulation, installing double glazing and energy-saving light bulbs
- Installing solar panels on community buildings and using them as venues for energy-saving workshops
- Installing carbon-friendly heat pumps in already energy-efficient community buildings to cut carbon emissions further

Further information is available at:

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<sup>1</sup> See -

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/environment-and-climate-change/net-zero-energy/london-community-energy-fund>



<https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/environment/hounslow-councils-community-energy-fund>

### **Ealing Community Climate Fund**

Ealing's Community Climate Grants programme is intended to help community organisations contribute to the borough's net zero target of 2030. By making energy efficiency improvements, community organisations will see a reduction in their carbon emissions. The council will be prioritising Community Climate Grants for community organisations that are offering cooling and warm spaces.

Community organisations can apply for a grant of up to £10,000.

Successful community organisations must be engaging the wider community with climate action. Groups should be promoting the benefits of the improvements made using the grant and encouraging residents to make climate positive behavioural changes.

Further information can be found at:

[https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201304/climate\\_action/3146/community\\_climate\\_grants](https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201304/climate_action/3146/community_climate_grants)

### **Kensington & Chelsea**

One of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's (RBKC) stated main priorities in reducing carbon emissions is to develop community-owned energy projects and increase the solar uptake in the borough.

The RBKC Climate Change Team worked in partnership with Repowering London to develop the North Kensington Community Energy (NKCE) project, which is the first community-owned energy enterprise/power station in Kensington and Chelsea. This project is helping empower local people to come together and generate clean local electricity, reduce energy bills and carbon emissions whilst putting the profits back into their community.

Key community benefits:

- Reduced energy bills for the schools and community buildings in the project
- Creation of the NKCE community fund (£28,000 over 20 years)
- Reducing CO2 generation and tackling climate change at a local level
- Encouraging interest in science and energy issues and inspiring wider environmental activities in the borough
- Free workshops and training opportunities for local people
- Paid internship programme for young people
- The project offers a local ethical investment opportunity for the local community and residents who can benefit from a 3% return on investment
- Allowing the wider community to take positive action against climate change while promoting renewable energy

Further information is available via:

<https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/environment/climate-change/north-kensington-community-energy-project>



## **Why Support Community Energy?**

Many community energy groups' first projects involved the installation of solar PV on rooftops, responding at the time to the Government's Feed in Tariff (FiT) incentive. The FiT scheme closed to new applicants in 2019, and over time, as groups delivered more projects and increased their knowledge around different energy solutions, they have diversified their skills in areas such as energy efficiency advice, building retrofit, LED installations, heat pumps and fuel poverty alleviation projects.

Groups continue to innovate and deliver projects which:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Re-connect people with how energy is generated and consumed - supporting wider behaviour change
- Lowering energy bills and helping support programmes to help tackle fuel poverty
- Return benefits to the local economy

Community energy groups can support local organisations - including councils - by:

- Providing project development support to helping identify carbon reduction solutions
- Host energy and climate change advice and training workshops for residents
- Secure funding through routes not always open to local authorities (e.g National Lottery Climate Action Fund, Ofgem Redress Funding etc)
- Raise finance through issuing community share offers
- Supporting local businesses involved in the building and retrofit sector
- Develop and install renewable and energy efficiency projects
- Inspiring communities and maintaining enthusiasm around climate and energy issues

## Routes To Support The Growth Of Community Energy

Councils can support the growth of community energy activity in their area - and help accelerate the deployment of projects via a number of routes. These could include:

1. Setting out clear commitments within council climate change action plans to develop local community energy activities exploring options such as providing start up support to community energy groups, shared staffing, access to councils skills
2. Collaborate with groups to identify site opportunities for potential projects, including on council assets; connecting community energy groups with potential site owners/ leaseholders/ occupiers; leveraging the Council's contacts, standing and endorsement
3. Examining the potential for utilising carbon offset funds, or Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) (as LB Wandsworth did [earlier](#) this year) to accelerate the deployment of local community energy projects (also see CEL's '[Setting up a Local Authority Community Energy Fund](#)' guidance document for further details)
4. Developing partnerships with community energy groups in any funding applications the council may be applying around retrofit, such as Government Warm Homes Plan programmes
5. Promoting and supporting community energy group projects - including share offers - to the wider community and introductions to local businesses
6. Develop documentation and processes to support community energy project developments - such as leases, licences and grant claims across departments including Procurement, Housing, Property and Legal
7. Providing spaces for community energy groups to support local capacity-raising opportunities and workshops for residents on energy issues

## **Conclusion**

Community energy is at a pivotal moment with increasing levels of interest from communities to businesses to policy makers wanting to support the deployment of projects. However, groups remain constrained by a lack of resources, access to development sites, and the absence of a policy framework for the sector. Forthcoming outputs by the Mayor, and London Councils, should help, but the Government needs to set out their ambition for community energy in their Local Power Plan as soon as possible.