



Funding Criteria

(Updated June 2025)

GAWCOTT FIELDS
COMMUNITY
SOLAR

Purpose of the Fund

The Bee Green Fund exists to benefit Gawcott and its immediate local community. Priority will be given to projects that have a positive, tangible and lasting impact on the environment. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Developing low-carbon infrastructure, encouraging projects that contribute to energy-efficiency and renewable energy generation within the community.
- Promoting environmental awareness, including educational and community activities about climate change, energy conservation, environmental issues and sustainability.
- Fostering positive community-led responses to environmental challenges.



About Gawcott Solar CIC

Gawcott Solar CIC is a Community Interest Company which owns a community solar farm at Gawcott Fields Farm, between the village of Gawcott and Buckingham.

Our 4.17 megawatt solar array is made up of over 16,000 solar panels and is generating over 4 million kWh of renewable electricity each year, equivalent to the annual electricity consumption of around 1,100 homes.

Surplus income generated by the solar farm (after operating and finance costs, including payments to bondholders) is used to support community organisations and fund energy and environmental projects in the local area.

Examples of projects we are interested in supporting

- ✓ Renewable energy and energy efficiency measures for local community buildings
- ✓ Solar PV rooftop installations for local community buildings and schools
- ✓ Installation of EV chargers or initiatives encouraging their use
- ✓ Community-led nature conservation projects
- ✓ Community-led efforts to promote sustainable food practices
- ✓ Community and youth-led activity to help develop a vision and plans for a net zero future. e.g. youth climate assemblies and eco-councils
- ✓ Nature-based and environmental education activities
- ✓ EV mechanics training, energy efficiency and renewable energy apprentice training



Eligibility criteria:

Applicants must:

- i. **Be based within a five km radius of the solar farm in Gawcott** (please see the funding radius map on the final page of this document), and projects must be of benefit to the community within the same area.
- ii. Only submit projects which have a true community focus and have a sustainable impact or longevity past the funding window.
- iii. Be able to demonstrate value for money, which may include obtaining three quotes for capital expenditure, where applicable.
- iv. Be a constituted body, with its own bank account which requires two authorised signatures.
- v. Demonstrate a clear need for financial support.

Exclusions:

Funding will not normally be considered for applications or organisations which:

- i. Have started prior to application.
- ii. Solely benefit individuals or private enterprises.
- iii. Could be considered to be part of statutory, council or government funding obligations.
- iv. Are for-profit enterprises.
- v. Redirect fundraising to a parent organisation.
- vi. Possess significant unrestricted reserves.

Funding cannot be retrospectively awarded. It should not displace funding that would otherwise be available; however, applications that secure additional funding or government grants for renewable energy and energy efficiency measures are encouraged.

How Funding Works



1. Grants for all projects

Large grants of up to £10,000

Small grants of up to £500

(Large grants may require matched funding, agreed in advance)

These grants are available for all types of eligible projects, including environmental education, community-led initiatives and infrastructure.

All grants must be spent within 12 months of receipt unless otherwise agreed. Promotion of the grant is a requirement – successful applicants must publicly acknowledge the funding.

2. 'Solar Soft loans' for energy-related measures

To ensure sustainability and support more projects long-term, Gawcott Solar has introduced a 'pay as you save' model for funding certain energy efficiency measures.

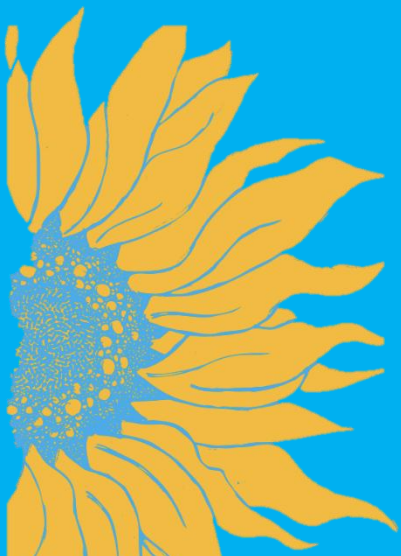
For projects over £10,000. GFCS aims to recover capital over the project's lifespan via our solar soft loan model.

- **For solar PV projects**, repayment will be structured as a 'Solar Soft Loan' or through export income allocation. *Solar Soft Loans help schools, community organisations and local councils to install rooftop solar panels or energy-saving measures with no upfront cost, no roof lease and no long-term commitment to a power purchase price. The organisation owns the system from day one, benefits from lower energy bills and can earn from any surplus electricity exported to the grid. The repayment of the soft loan is based on a share of the actual cost savings each year. If the savings are less than expected at the outset, the loan gets paid back slower, or may not get repaid in full. All repaid funds are reinvested into a local low-carbon soft loan fund to help more local schools and community buildings go green. See an illustrative example on the next page for a step-by-step run through of the scheme.*
- **For LED lighting and low-carbon heating**, repayment will be based on actual usage and demonstrated savings.

This approach ensures that larger-scale energy-saving investments are reinvested to support future community projects.

Solar Soft Loan illustrative example

1. Gawcott Solar provides a 'Solar Soft Loan' to the community organisation or school to pay for a solar PV system. Gawcott Solar can offer support with feasibility assessments and can assist in procuring and managing installers if needed.
2. The community organisation or school **owns the solar system** and is responsible for its maintenance. Solar electricity generated is free for the applicant to use. The community organisation or school will **save money** as kWhs of solar electricity generated and used on-site will **reduce kWhs bought from suppliers**. The applicant will also **earn an income from selling surplus solar electricity to the grid** (export income).
3. Repayments will be based on **50% of the actual net savings each year, after an allowance for operating and annual maintenance costs**. e.g. if the applicant saves £500, the loan repayment will be £250.
4. If the savings are less than expected (e.g. the applicant uses less electricity, power prices drop or there is less sunlight), the Solar Soft Loan repayments will reduce and the loan will be repaid slower. **If the loan is not repaid after 25 years, the outstanding balance will be written off**. The outstanding loan amount will be increased by inflation each year to maintain the value of GFCS's community fund, but no other interest is charged.
5. Gawcott Solar recoups the loan over time to re-invest into a local low carbon revolving loan fund and help other schools and community buildings do the same. We can only do this as our source of funds is surplus income from our solar farm at Gawcott Fields Farm!



How to apply

If you're within 5km of our solar farm and have great green idea, then please complete the application form **available at www.gawcottsolar.co.uk**

Applications will be assessed on a monthly basis. We expect to contact you within 14 days of your application being made.

Please email the application form to **hello@gawcottsolar.co.uk**. If you do not have access to email then applications can be delivered by post to: Communities for Renewables CIC, Cornwall Business Park West, Redruth House, Scorrier, Redruth, TR16 5EZ.



Successful applications

All grant decisions are made at the discretion of the directors, notwithstanding this guidance.

Promoting the grant is a specific requirement of funding. Recipients must promote this funding to their members and locally. For more information on the grant funding process, please see our 'Application Process and Funding Conditions Guide'.

Facebook: [@gawcottsolar](https://www.facebook.com/gawcottsolar)

Mail: hello@gawcottsolar.co.uk

Website: www.gawcottsolar.co.uk



SCAN ME!





GIVING
£2.8 MILLION
TO LOCAL
COMMUNITY
PROJECTS!