

Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils

CLERKS SEMINAR Thurs 18th Sept 2014

Solar farm community benefit

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Dorset County Council



Government support for community benefit payments



House of Commons
Energy and Climate Change
Committee

Local Energy

Sixth Report of Session 2013–14

Volume I

July 2013

79. Community benefit payments (which typically involve a developer making an annual payment to the local community) have been at the heart of industry and Government efforts to improve levels of acceptance among local residents. Most recently this had led to a five-fold increase in community benefit from wind farms, increasing from £1,000/MW/year to £5,000/MW/year under new DECC proposals.



- **Community benefits are currently being offered for approximately 60% of solar farms**
- **Total lifetime solar farm community benefit offered to Town and Parish Councils to date approx £2m**
- **Annual payments per megawatt range from £1,000 to £1,500 (average £1,100).**

- **Community benefits are being offered for the vast majority of both wind and solar farms**
- **Total lifetime solar farm community benefit offered to Town and Parish Councils to date over £5.5m**
- **Annual payments per megawatt range from £360 to £5,000 (average £2,880).**

Support for Dorset communities to get a better deal

Dorset County Council Renewable Energy Development Officer

- Assistance during initial community benefit discussions with solar farm developers
- Promoting community benefit to both developers and Dorset Town and Parish Councils

[Summary DCC solar farm community benefit paper](#)

Community benefit from solar farms in Dorset

Assistance for Parish Councils and community groups to successfully negotiate, set up and manage community benefit funds



Prepared by Pete West

*Renewable Energy Development Officer
Dorset County Council
1st Sept 2014*

Dorset County Council 

Support for Dorset communities to get a better deal

Dorset County Council Legal and Democratic Services

Guidance on the form of Unilateral Undertaking to ensure agreed solar farm community benefit payments are binding if ownership of a solar farm changes hands

DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL SOLAR FARM COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROJECT – PLANNING OBLIGATIONS FOR COMMUNITY BENEFITS- A briefing paper

Background

1. A planning obligation is a legal document in which a developer/landowner commits to provide mitigation for a development.
2. The commitments given in a planning obligation are enforced by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). That is usually the District Council but can also be the County Council. A Parish Council is not a Local Planning Authority.
3. Planning obligations take two forms. The first is an agreement between the developer/landowner and the LPA.



Support for Dorset communities to get a better deal

Dorset Community Action

-Support, if needed, in setting up the structures to manage community benefit funds



DAPTC

Promotion of community benefit funds and
Sharing information between communities



**Dorset Association of Parish
and Town Councils**

**Enabling Local Councils
to Achieve Excellence**



And finally, on the horizon

Government financial support for new solar farms over 5MW will be substantially reduced from 1st April 2015

In future there will be significant new community benefit opportunities including local investment and, in the longer term, direct local electricity supply to households



Thank you for your attention

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