

Community group benefiting from a wind farm
community fund in North Wales.



DBS Offshore Wind Farms

Community Fund Consultation Report

August 2026

551

survey responses

70 days

consultation period

£1.06m

potential fund value

94%

support charity and
community decision
making panel model

At a glance

The Dogger Bank South (DBS) offshore wind farms are being developed by RWE and Masdar in the Dogger Bank area of the North Sea, over 100km off the northeast coast of England. The DBS Community Fund will be made available in association with up to two new onshore converter stations proposed southwest of Beverley in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

The potential total fund value is £1,060,000, based on UK Government guidance of £530,000 per converter station. The guidance recommends that this is delivered within 15 years from the start of construction, with delivery and administration costs funded separately. The fund is subject to the projects proceeding to construction.

The proposed fund is part of the wider DBS community benefit package and is separate from the planning process. Its purpose is to create positive local benefits, shaped by the people and communities hosting the onshore transmission infrastructure. The wider package is also expected to support skills, employment and supply chain opportunities.

Consultation has been carried out in line with the UK Government Guidance on Community Funds for Transmission Infrastructure.

Contents

1. Consultation summary	3
2. How the consultation was carried out	4
3. What people told us	5
4. Bentley priority insight	11
5. Proposed fund structure and guidance alignment	13
6. Suggested next steps	15

1. Consultation summary

To help us shape the proposed fund and to identify what matters most to local communities, we invited residents to take part in a consultation to tell us about the kind of projects a fund might support and which communities the fund could benefit. The consultation ran between 27 January and 27 March 2026. It included a survey and in-person events held in Little Weighton and Walkington.

This report presents what people told us in regard to priorities, the proposed fund structure and guidance alignment. Page 15 sets out our suggested next steps, considering the feedback received to our consultation. This feedback is briefly summarised below and explored in more detail throughout this report.

The strongest messages were clear:

- People value the landscape, the 'East Riding way of life' and strong local communities.
- The most popular priorities were environment and nature projects, activities for young people, sports and leisure, community buildings and community transport.
- There was strong support for an experienced local grant-making charity to administer the fund, with funding decisions made by a community panel.
- People want openness, transparency, local knowledge and independence built in from the start.
- The fund needs to balance support for communities closest to the converter stations with a clear, fair area large enough to support meaningful projects.

The evidence points to prioritising Bentley, the closest community to the proposed converter stations. All Bentley respondents selected landscape as something they value and eight out of 10 supported prioritising the green zone within the wider 3km area (see page 8, figure 5). A letter received from Rowley Parish Council identified specific Bentley priorities, including safer footpath access, playing field equipment, a possible ring-fenced residents' fund, home energy improvements and better street lighting.



2. How the consultation was carried out

The consultation was designed to understand which communities should benefit, what local priorities matter most, how the fund should be governed, and who should help decide which applications receive funding. The structure of the consultation was agreed with the DBS Local Liaison Committee.

Method	What happened
Online survey.	A survey was open between 30 January and 27 March 2026. It could be completed online and respondents could remain anonymous.
Direct local promotion.	Postcards were sent to residents within a 3km radius of the proposed onshore converter station(s), with a QR code linking to the survey.
Paper access.	Residents could request a paper survey and return it via the Freepost address.
In-person engagement.	Two community events where people could meet the DBS team were held at Little Weighton Village Hall and Walkington Village Hall.
Website and newsletter.	The survey was promoted through the DBS website and community newsletter.
Stakeholder communication.	Details were shared with parish councils, MPs, local media and voluntary sector organisations.
Additional channels.	Press release, local adverts and social media posts were used to increase awareness.

Before the consultation was launched, introductory meetings were held with local and voluntary sector stakeholders to help shape the engagement approach and understand possible fund administration capacity, including East Riding of Yorkshire Council, HEY Smile Foundation, Community Vision and Two Ridings Community Foundation.

3. What people told us

3.1 Who responded

Responses by community

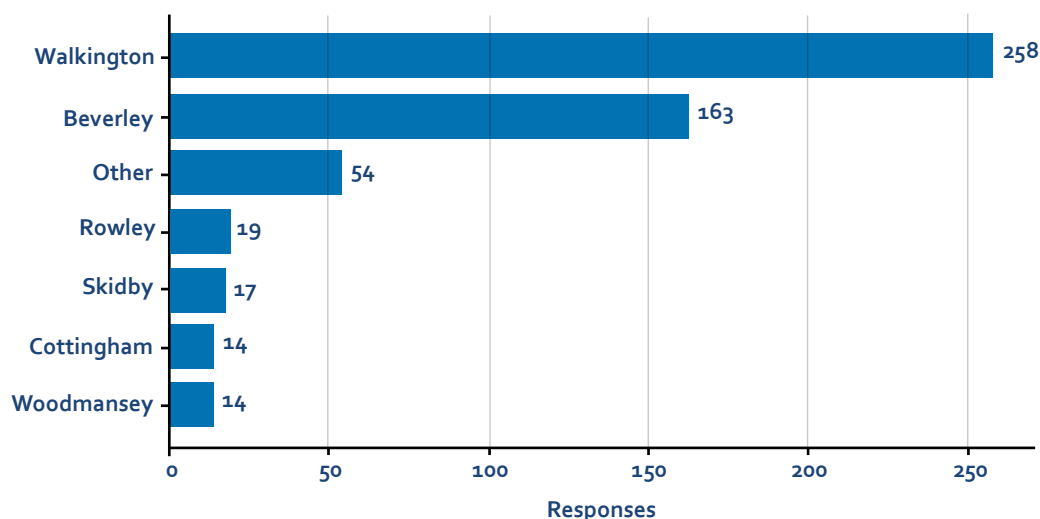


Figure 1. Survey responses by community. Walkington and Beverley accounted for the largest number of responses, with Rowley, Skidby, Cottingham and Woodmansey also represented.

Of the 551 responses received to the consultation, 539 people answered the question asking which East Riding community they live in. Walkington accounted for the largest share of responses, with 258 respondents, equivalent to 48% of those who answered the question. Beverley was the next largest respondent group, with 163 responses, or 30%.

The age question was answered by 531 people. The survey had a strong response from older residents: 61% of those who answered were aged 55 or over. However, only 37 responses, equivalent to 7%, were from residents in the younger categories of under 34. This is important context for the interpretation of the findings and for future engagement with younger residents.

For Bentley, the number of responses is small due to the size of the community. The report therefore uses postcode data and considers the direct communication from Rowley Parish Council to give proportionate weight to the community closest to the proposed onshore converter stations.

3.2 What people value most

People could select up to three options in response to this question. The most selected answers were landscape (391), way of life (386) and people (290). This suggests that the fund should protect and strengthen what local people already value, rather than focus too heavily on funding new initiatives.

What people like most about living in East Riding of Yorkshire

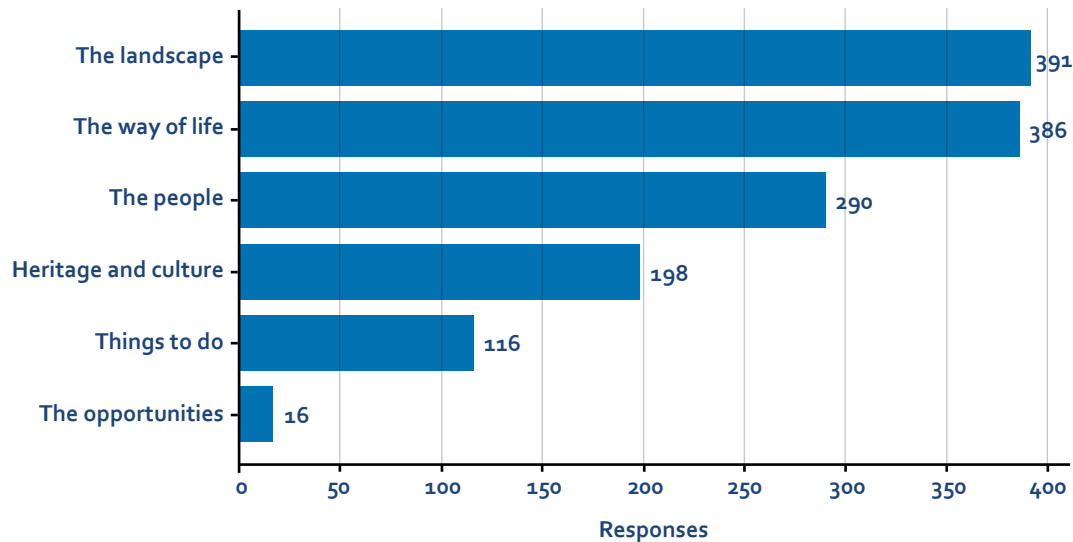


Figure 2. What people like most about living in East Riding of Yorkshire.

3.3 What people would like to see more of

People could select up to three options in response to this question. Environment and nature projects were selected most often, followed by activities for young people, sports and leisure activities, improvements to community buildings and community transport projects.

What respondents would like to see more of

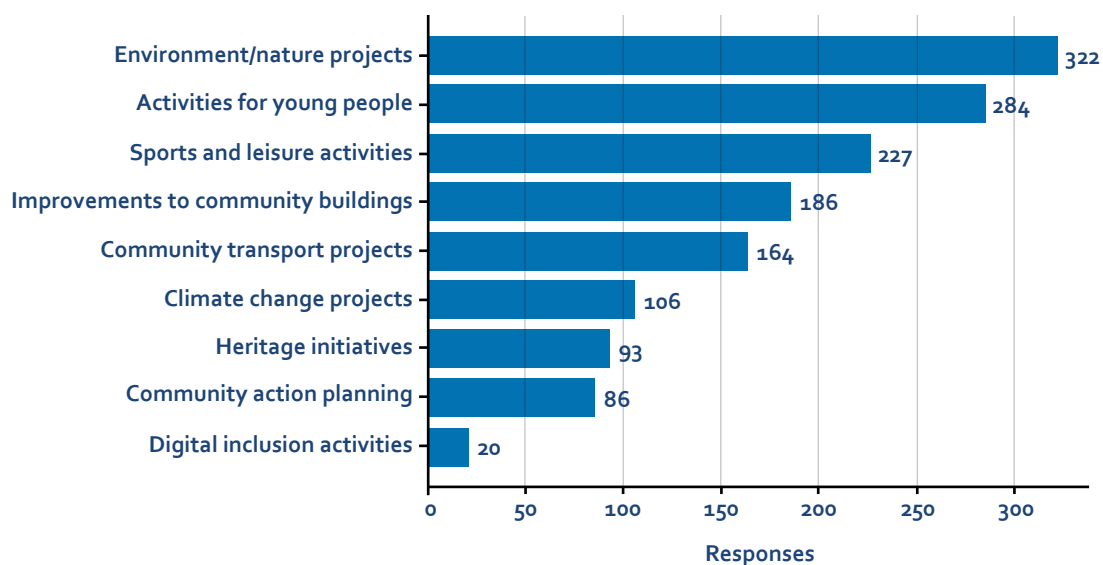
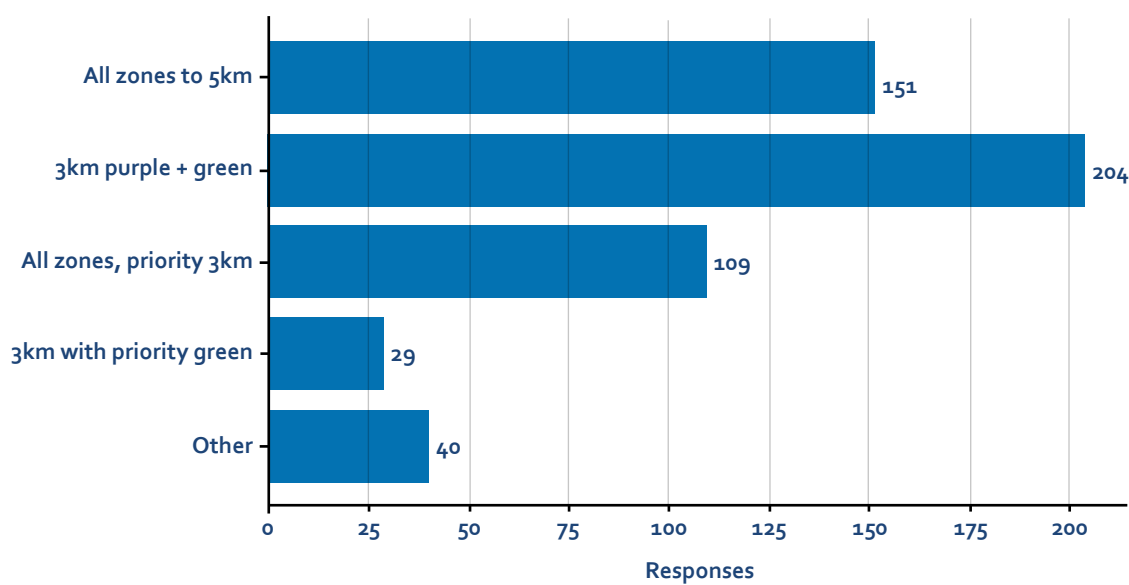


Figure 3. Main local priorities selected by respondents.

3.4 Who should benefit

Respondents were asked to choose an area of benefit using zones around the proposed onshore converter station(s). The most selected option was the purple and green zones, equivalent to the 3km area. However, when the options supporting a wider area are considered together, there was also strong support for including the wider 5km area, either fully or with priority for the 3km area.

Preferred area of benefit



Option	Description	Responses
Option B: Purple and green zones.	Core 3km area surrounding the proposed onshore converter station(s).	204
Option A: Orange, purple and green zones.	Wider 5km fund area.	151
Option C: All zones with priority for purple and green zones.	Wider 5km area with priority for core 3km.	109
Option D: Purple and green zones with priority for green zone.	Core 3km area with priority for properties closest to the proposed onshore converter station(s).	29
Other:	Alternative suggestions, including boundary and priority comments.	40

Figure 4. Preferred area of benefit selected by respondents.

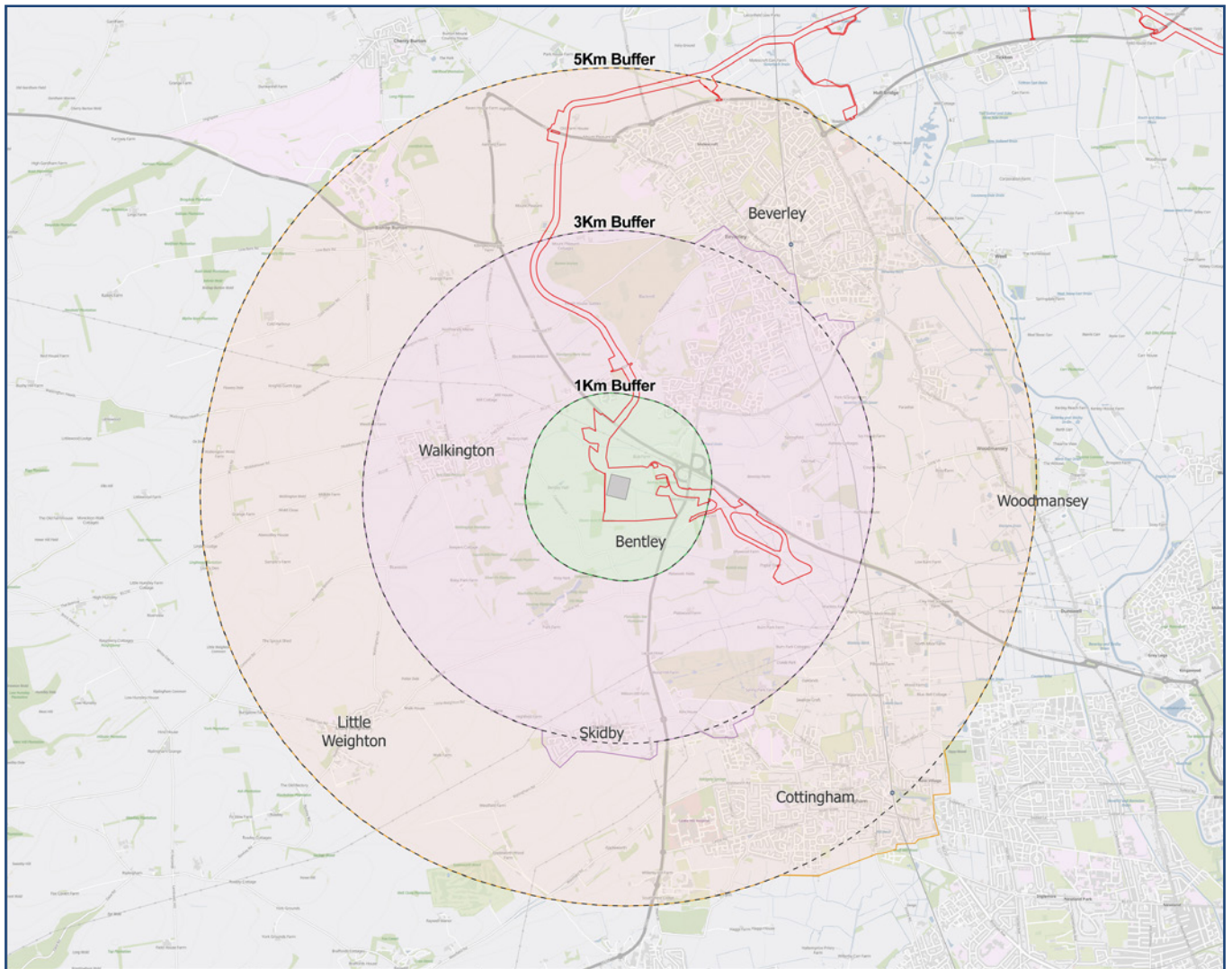


Figure 5. Map showing proposed community fund zones.

Key

- DCO Onshore Development Area
- Proposed Onshore Converter Station(s) Footprint
- Proposed Onshore Converter Station(s) Footprint Distance Buffer
- Community Benefit Fund Consultation Zones**
- Orange Zone
- Purple Zone
- Green Zone

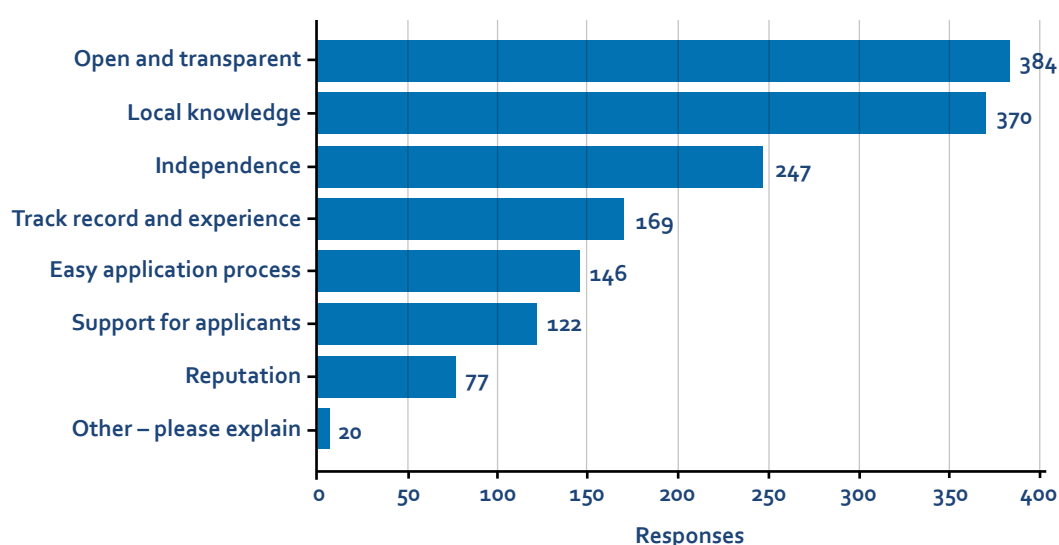
3.5 Fund administration and decision making

A very strong majority supported the proposal that the fund should be administered by an experienced local grant-making charity, supporting a community panel to make decisions. 526 people agreed with this proposal and 31 disagreed with this proposal. This is a very strong mandate for the proposed model.

The qualities respondents valued most in a fund administrator were openness and transparency, local knowledge and independence.

The decision-making results indicate that people strongly support decisions being made by a mixed local panel. Written comments also emphasised local people, residents, parish knowledge and independent expertise.

Most important qualities for the fund administrator



First-ranked preference for decision making



Figures 6 and 7. Administrator qualities and first-ranked decision-making preferences.

3.6 What people said in their own words

"It would be great to see this linked with nature, climate and sustainability initiatives."

"Umbrella organisations that have good links to the community and work with smaller organisations."

"The survey itself was quick, easy and visually appealing."

"Keep the fund local and ensure communities closest to the infrastructure see a clear benefit."

"Support nature, wildlife, biodiversity, green spaces and climate-related projects."

"Support young people through activities, sports facilities, schools, clubs and safe places to meet."

"Make it easier to fund community buildings and small capital improvements, not only activities."

"Consider community transport, traffic, access and connections between local villages and services."

"Keep the application process simple, fair and transparent, with help available for community groups that may not have grant-writing experience."

"Use an administrator that understands the area, but make sure the decision-making process is independent and robust."

Note: quotes are illustrative excerpts from survey responses and consultation summaries.

4. Bentley priority insight

The Bentley area (postcode area HU17 8PP) has been treated as a priority because it is the immediate neighbour of the proposed onshore converter station(s). In the survey data, 10 responses provided a Bentley postcode. This is a small sample, but it is highly relevant because of their proximity to the proposed onshore converter station(s).

Eight out of 10 Bentley respondents selected the option that prioritises the green zone within the purple and green zones. One selected the purple and green zones, and one selected 'other' (see page 8, figure 5).

Priorities – local Bentley residents



Figure 7. Priorities indicated by Bentley residents.

Bentley insight	What it suggests for the fund
10 out of 10 selected the landscape as something they value.	Projects should protect rural character, biodiversity and landscape setting.
Seven out of 10 selected environment/nature projects.	A Bentley priority could include pond, drainage, wildlife, tree planting and habitat work.
Eight out of 10 selected the option prioritising the closest green zone.	Bentley and other immediate neighbours should have a clear priority route to access funding.
Several responses referred to disruption, safety and proximity.	Eligibility criteria should recognise proximity not only population size.

4.1 Bentley comments from survey responses

"I feel very strongly that a community fund prioritises those who are most affected by your project in the long term. Bentley Hamlet is less than 300 metres from your proposed converter stations."

"Bentley should be prioritised for funding."

"I do hope that Bentley is made a priority for this funding, we will have the most disruption."

4.2 Rowley Parish Council submission

The Rowley Parish Council letter gives helpful qualitative evidence on both parish-wide priorities and Bentley-specific priorities. It describes Rowley Parish as rural, with limited precept (local tax income) and limited funds for community improvements. It also describes Bentley as the place most affected by the proposed infrastructure.

Priority raised	Potential fund response
Play equipment and safe surfaces at Little Weighton playing field.	Likely eligible under community facilities, young people and sport/leisure.
Village and hamlet entrance signs.	Likely eligible under heritage, identity and public realm.
Specialist help to improve and manage village and hamlet ponds.	Likely eligible under nature recovery, biodiversity and climate resilience.
Footpaths and cycleways, including wheelchair-accessible improvements.	Likely eligible under active travel, accessibility and community safety.
Community transport assessment and support.	Likely eligible under community transport and rural isolation.
Bentley footpath access westwards to Little Weighton, Walkington and wider parish.	High-priority Bentley project because it addresses safety and direct local impact.
Bentley surface water management, pond overflow, potholes and ice risk.	High-priority resilience and safety project that would be subject to engagement and/or partnership with the Local Authority and Environment Agency.
Ring-fenced Bentley 'Near Neighbour' Fund for home energy, efficient power, glazing, curtains and screening.	Could be considered as a separate Bentley 'Near Neighbour' Fund, subject to clear eligibility criteria.
Modernised street lighting within Bentley.	Could be eligible under safety, energy efficiency and local infrastructure, subject to engagement and/or partnership with the Local Authority.

Taken together, the Bentley survey responses and Rowley Parish Council letter support a specific Bentley priority within the wider fund. This should not replace wider community benefit, but it should ensure that those nearest the proposed onshore converter station(s) have the opportunity to benefit from the fund.

5. Proposed fund structure and guidance alignment

Responses to the consultation point to a simple tiered fund that could be accessed in a variety of ways. This keeps the fund open to the wider local area, while giving clear priority to Bentley and the closest communities to the proposed onshore converter station(s). It also reflects UK Government guidance by being community-led, transparent, locally targeted and capable of creating a lasting legacy.

The proposed structure would be taken forward for further discussion and development by the community decision-making panel.

At this stage we are proposing to ringfence funds for Bentley only, as we are keen to retain as much flexibility as possible for the wider fund. Going forwards the community decision-making panel may choose to consider how funds are allocated across the different areas.

Proposed fund element	Purpose
Bentley 'Near Neighbour' Fund – £100,000 ringfenced.	Priority route for Bentley and the closest households/community projects, including safety, home energy/efficiency, drainage, footpath access and small-scale environmental improvements.
Core within 3km local community fund.	Main fund for projects in the green and purple zones, which also includes Bentley.
Wider within 5km strategic fund.	Support for larger collaborative projects that benefit the wider local area, especially where projects also serve the core area which may also include the orange zone.

5.1 What you said, what we propose

The table below summarises the consultation feedback received and our proposed responses, as well as how each response aligns with UK Government guidance.

This approach uses consultation evidence to design a practical community benefit fund: locally led, easy to understand, independently administered and focused on visible improvements for the places closest to the infrastructure as well as the wider affected area.

What you said	What we propose	How this aligns with the guidance
Bentley and the closest households should be prioritised.	Creating a Bentley 'Near Neighbour' Fund, ringfenced from the main fund. Include a Bentley voice in the community panel.	Targets benefit directly to communities closest to the proposed onshore converter station(s) and uses local evidence to define priorities.
People value the landscape, way of life and local identity.	Encouraging the community decision-making panel to use these as core assessment themes.	Supports locally-shaped outcomes and a lasting community legacy.
People want more environment/ nature projects, youth activities, sports/leisure, improvements to community buildings and community transport projects.	Encouraging the community decision-making panel to use these as early priority themes for the first funding rounds.	Responds directly to community-led priorities gathered through engagement.
People support working with an experienced local grant-making charity.	Running a tender process to appoint an independent local fund administrator to run the scheme and support applicants.	Provides transparent governance, capacity building and fair access.
People want open, transparent decision-making with local knowledge.	Supporting the fund administrator to recruit a community decision-making panel made up of local people. Publish criteria, decisions, annual spend by area/theme and monitoring reports.	Meets expectations for transparency, monitoring and evaluation.
Some benefits may need to support individuals as well as groups.	Exploring a carefully designed near-neighbour home energy/ efficiency or screening route for Bentley, subject to fairness, deliverability and legal checks.	Reflects guidance that funds can support local projects, investment and direct benefits where appropriate.
Voluntary sector stakeholders highlighted that some groups may have challenges with capacity to develop and deliver projects or funding for new innovative ideas.	Ensuring applications for capacity building support, feasibility studies, pilot projects and community action planning can be supported from the fund.	Supports the capacity and capability of communities.

6. Suggested next steps

1. DBS is seeking feedback on its proposals outlined in section 5.1, as informed by feedback received to its consultation earlier this year.
2. DBS will procure an independent local grant-making charity to support fund administration, with strong local knowledge, transparent processes and applicant support. The tender process will be advertised locally and open to interested organisations with appropriate skills and experience.
3. The appointed fund administrator will recruit a community decision-making panel, including a Bentley perspective and a mix of residents, voluntary sector and local community representatives.
4. Guided by the community decision-making panel, the appointed fund administrator will draft the final details and criteria for the fund.
5. Guided by the community decision-making panel, the appointed fund administrator will draft a delivery plan focused on environment/nature, young people, community buildings, sport/leisure, community transport and Bentley priority projects.
6. Criteria and delivery plan will be checked with the DBS Local Liaison Committee, which includes representatives of neighbouring community and parish councils.
7. Launch the DBS Community Fund and open for applications.
8. Publish annual monitoring: spend by theme, geography, beneficiaries, project outcomes, and lessons learnt.

7. Community fund case studies

To find out more scan the QR code or click on the case study title.



**Dolen Teifi –
Community Transport**



**Watten Shop –
Community Shop**



**Green Shoots –
Community Garden**



Angle for the community



Bicker Village Hall



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