



East Renfrewshire Renewable Energy Fund Guidance Notes

What is the East Renfrewshire Renewable Energy Fund?

The East Renfrewshire Renewable Energy Fund (ERREF) is money received from renewable energy projects in East Renfrewshire and is administered by East Renfrewshire Council Environment department. The fund combines contributions from ScottishPower Renewables Whitelee and Middleton windfarms.

The purpose of the fund is to assist projects that will provide community benefit to the people of East Renfrewshire and is available to all eligible projects within East Renfrewshire.

Purpose of the fund

Financial support will be available for projects that meet one or more of the following priorities:

- Community facilities and services e.g. hall refurbishment, purchase of equipment and vehicles
- Community or local events e.g. summer fairs, special events
- Environmental projects e.g. tree planting, path building
- Heritage projects e.g. history trails, statue conservation
- Skills and employment e.g. training equipment
- Sport and recreation e.g. upgrading play areas, buying sports equipment
- Youth and education e.g. cubs and brownies clubs, nursery and school projects

Support is **not** available for revenue projects or projects that restrict access from an equal opportunities perspective. Applications that meet more than one of the above priorities and have more community involvement will have a greater chance of approval. Please note that due to legislation introduced by the Department of Energy and Climate Change the Council is unable to award a grant for capital equipment for projects also anticipating income from feed-in tariffs.

What is available?

ERREF is primarily targeted at projects that have the potential to achieve substantial long term benefits for communities in East Renfrewshire and that have a minimum cost of £20,000. Projects costing less than £20,000 will be considered where they are seen to offer exceptional community benefits. Typically, there is £150K available annually to invest in projects, the panel will endeavour to support as many eligible projects as possible.

ERREF can provide up to a maximum of 87.5% (7/8^{ths}) of total eligible costs. Funding is only available for capital projects.

Capital costs: generally one-off costs including building and major refurbishment furniture and transport buying of land events equipment.

Revenue costs: day-to-day running costs including utilities bills routine maintenance salaries.

What match funding is required by the applicant?

A minimum of 12.5% match funding must be provided by the applicant. This match funding can be provided from the organisation's own funds, other funding sources or 'in-kind' contributions of volunteers' time or donated materials. The council has guidelines for quantifying 'in-kind' contributions and further information on this is available upon request.

Funding will only be available for capital projects that can demonstrate that resources are in place for any on-going revenue costs and routine maintenance.

You must state if you are registered for VAT. If you are, ERREF grant will be calculated on net project costs. If you are not VAT registered, grant will be awarded based on eligible costs including VAT.

Who can apply?

The fund is designed to be as accessible as possible to encourage a wide range of projects. It is for community benefit and projects must be able to clearly demonstrate the extent of the community/ communities from within East Renfrewshire that will benefit. Applications that demonstrate strong community involvement will be more favourably considered. Applications from individuals for individual benefit will not be supported.

To be eligible to apply for funding, groups must have a written constitution and a bank account. Bank accounts set up solely for the purpose of the project for which grant is sought will be acceptable. The applicant must also be able to demonstrate that the project for which grant is being sought promotes equal opportunities.

Applications will be considered from:

- Community groups, associations and organisations
- Partnerships, charities, trusts, co-operatives and other non-government organisations
- Public organisations and agencies, including East Renfrewshire Council
- Any business, co-operative or other trading enterprise located, or offering a service benefiting communities within East Renfrewshire, where the profits made by the project are reinvested in the project.

Income generating projects – applications must be accompanied by a business plan covering a medium to long term projection (typically up to five years) and detail how any income received will be used to benefit the community

In some instances, projects will involve East Renfrewshire Council assets or services. Applicants should approach the relevant service before applying and work in partnership with the council to develop ideas. Council services can work with communities to develop partnership projects that are in addition to existing service provision. Applications made solely by council services will require to demonstrate that they are not to finance or replace a service that the Council has a statutory obligation to provide or in substitution of existing statutory funding.

General Conditions

1. Only applications submitted on the ERREF application form will be accepted
2. All awards will be conditional on the applicant securing all relevant statutory consents
3. Written evidence of legal ownership of land or property or owner's permission to undertake any works or activities on land or in buildings must be produced as necessary
4. All match funding must be confirmed before any work commences
5. Work must not commence before confirmation by written acceptance of the award offer by the applicant
6. Awards are not available for work already started or completed
7. With the exception of any approved up-front developmental grant, payment of grant is retrospective following confirmation by the Environment Department that the works have been completed in accordance with the grant approval.

We would encourage anyone with a project idea to contact the Environment Department to discuss the scope of the project and eligibility criteria. Please complete and submit the ERREF Initial Enquiry Form. Any necessary further discussions should take place prior to lodging any application to ensure that when it is received it contains all the required information to allow processing and determination.

Depending on the type of project, you may be required to provide detailed drawings, specifications, event details, project timescales, detailed costings*, all relevant permissions (unless application for these forms part of the grant application in which case evidence of initial discussions with the relevant authority should be provided), details of match funding (confirmed or otherwise), community benefit details, and any other relevant supporting information.

(*In all instances, three quotations should be provided for all works or services for which grant is being sought. Unless there are good reasons otherwise, an offer of ERREF grant will be based on the lowest tender received).

Where the project is being delivered by the Council and it proposes to charge for its services it will be necessary to obtain a minimum of two other competitive quotations for the project. Where the services are being delivered by the Council's Trading Operations it will not be necessary to seek other quotations however written confirmation will be required that the services are being provided in compliance with its duty to secure best value. In both instances written evidence is required that all materials have been procured through Scottish Excel or have been procured in accordance with the council's standing orders relating to contracts.

The application will initially be registered by the council's 'one stop shop' grant service and to ensure the applicant has an acceptable constitution and bank account.

The application will then be passed to the Environment Department for technical assessment.. Complete applications will then be considered by the ERREF Panel. The Panel comprises four local councillors and the chief executive of Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire. The Panel will make a recommendation to the Director of Environment who will make the decision. If approved, an offer of grant will then be made to the applicant who will require to confirm in writing that the offer is accepted. Any grant offer will be subject to securing any necessary statutory consents and match funding; other conditions may be attached. It is expected that the project will be completed and grant claimed in full within 12 months of the award. Where an application is refused, reasons for refusal will be sent to the applicant in writing.

The Panel will meet once a year to consider applications. The timetable for the submission and determination of applications is shown on the Councils' website.

Details of successful applications will be posted on the council's website and may be used by the council and ScottishPower Renewables for publicity purposes. It will be a condition of any grant that the applicant will acknowledge East Renfrewshire Council and the ERREF in any project publicity or signage.

Prior to any grant money being released, the Environment Department will require to ensure that the project is progressing as approved. This is likely to involve site inspections and/ or meetings with the applicant. There is an expectation that the applicant will provide written quarterly progress reports.

How can we apply?

All applications must be submitted using an ERREF application form. This can be completed electronically or by hand however a signed copy must be submitted along with other supporting materials.

The application form, guidance notes and conditions of grant are available from the Council's website.

Anyone wishing to apply for funding should discuss their idea with the Environment Department before making an application. Where appropriate you may be directed to another council service or organisation to assist you with the development of your project and with completion of the application form.

When is the closing date for applications and when will I hear the outcome of our application?

Applications are currently considered annually and the closing date for applications will be stated on the Council webpage, typically around the end of August. The Council endeavours to notify applicants on the outcome of their application within three months of the closing date. Applications are considered and awarded by the ERREF panel.

If my application is successful, how do I draw down my grant award?

A claim form will be provided as part of any grant award. It is expected that successful applicants will report on the progress of their project on a quarterly basis until the project is completed.

Payment will be made

either on production of receipted invoices (i.e. to reimburse the applicant who has paid the e.g. contractor/ supplier directly) and provides proof of defrayment of the invoice through their bank account; or, once an invoice has been received by the applicant, they notify us and we will verify that the spend has taken place in accordance with the grant approval following which, the council will issue a payment to the applicant's bank account to enable the e.g. contractor/ supplier to be paid by the applicant. The applicant must provide proof of defrayment of the invoice through their bank account within 28 days of receipt of grant funds.

The council will endeavour to make payment within 10 working days.

Please note: The council will not pay a contractor/ supplier directly.

In certain circumstances, up to 20% of the approved ERREF grant may be paid upfront to allow developmental work to proceed. This will only be released where a similar percentage of the applicant's match funding is also committed and only if previously agreed with the Council.

What are the publicity requirements attached to the grant?

Applicants will be required to give appropriate recognition to the fund by all or some of the following methods:

Prominent signage on premises (during construction phase)
Permanent plaque on premises

Acknowledgement in all press and media releases

Acknowledgement in all project documentation

Acknowledgement on applicant's website.

Enquiries should be made to:

Environment Department
East Renfrewshire Council
2 Spiersbridge Way
Spiersbridge Business Park
Thornliebank
East Renfrewshire G46 8NG

Phone: 0141 577 3791

Email: david.kermack@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Applications must be submitted to:

Democratic Services
East Renfrewshire Council
Council Headquarters
Rouken Glen Road
Giffnock
East Renfrewshire G46 6UG

Information may be made available to third parties subject to the redaction of appropriate personal information