

APSE Energy Awards 2025

Sponsored by DESNZ

We would like to say a huge thank you to all of the councils who submitted an entry for this year's awards. It is amazing to see the dedication and creativity shown by local authorities in the pursuit of net zero.

We appreciate all of your hard work and we look forward to recognising these important achievements!

Category finalists

Supporting Innovation

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council) has partnered with Advetec to become the UK's first local authority to process 100% of non-recyclable waste into Solid Recovered Fuel (SRF). Using Advetec's innovative XO22 bio-thermic digester, the council is eliminating landfill dependency, reducing transport emissions, and creating renewable fuel with 95% less CO₂e than coal. This £1.2m initiative supports Scotland's 2026 landfill ban, advances energy security, and sets a benchmark for sustainable waste management in remote areas.

Gateshead Council

A ground-breaking solution using heat from disused mines to provide low cost, low carbon heat and hot water to the people of Gateshead. Our project has not only decarbonised our heat network, but then developed further, bringing in renewable power sources and dynamic energy trading to get even closer towards both our own net zero goals, but also proving this technology for other potential users across the UK.

London Borough of Hackney

Hackney Light and Power's Residential Solar PV Pilot will deliver 1 MW of solar power across council housing estates using innovative microgrid technology, offering residents affordable clean energy while advancing Hackney's net-zero goals. This pioneering UK-first model emphasises cost savings, fuel poverty alleviation, and carbon reduction through renewable energy, creating a scalable solution for other local authorities to follow.

Northumberland County Council

We have innovated in the delivery of Government funded grant schemes and created 'Warmer Homes' delivery methods including: Bespoke IT system for CMS/contract management and 'batching' tool; fully trained internal retrofit team, using social value in contracts to train other internal teams on retrofit and PAS2030 processes. The IT products are being prepared to be suitable for commercialisation to assist other local authorities deliver energy efficiency schemes with the aim of combatting fuel poverty and towards net zero goals.

Walsall Council

Walsall Council is working with Achieve Your Goals CIC and Hillary Primary School, to act as a 'catalyst' in process of reaching out to parents/carers (householders). Via engagement with local school children, we reach hard-to-reach households and find hard-to-treat homes. We have delivered bespoke energy and renewable energy education package to 200 children leading to £1.5m of grant-funded retrofits, with £78,500 energy savings. We are working with teachers and Nash Dom CIC to promote and provide translation services.

Westmorland and Furness Council

Voreda House is the UK's first council office building to achieve Passivhaus EnerPHit accreditation following the retrofit of an ageing office building. The newly-formed Westmorland and Furness Council took the scheme through to completion in May 2024 and its positive certification in June 2024. Voreda House is now a modern, fit-for-purpose and sustainable hub for staff and the public and an embodiment of Westmorland and Furness Council's commitment to providing leadership in the drive to becoming carbon net zero.

Accessing and Managing Finance

Bedford Borough Council

Bedford Green Energy Park delivers low carbon, clean energy generation technologies on a closed restored landfill site, as a model to provide an education resource, training and encourage others to reduce carbon emissions, adopt innovative technologies, and improve air quality. The project represents the significant amount of work by the project team in developing and securing SEMELP funding for sustainable investment opportunity for the Council, whilst also satisfying the aspirational pledge by the Council to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Lancashire County Council

Local authorities across England have identified tree and woodland planting as a key part of their response to the climate change and biodiversity crises. A lack of capacity to develop and design planting proposals, to consult widely, apply for capital grants and organise planting has been identified as a key barrier to progress. LCC's Treescapes team have successfully accessed significant amounts of finance to accelerate the amount of tree planting in Lancashire.

Salford City Council

Salford City Council has secured funding from public sector funders to deliver projects across Turnpike Depot, a strategic operational council site. Turnpike has benefitted from installations of air source heat pumps, roof mounted solar panels, battery storage and solar car ports to decarbonise and generate electricity at the site. This is in preparation for the renewal of the council's fleet and move towards electrification. Without accessing these funding mechanisms these works would not have been possible within current council budgets.

Southwark Council

Southwark Green Investment is an ambitious local green bond, aiming to raise £6m by 2030 and connect with residents, businesses and charitable foundations. The first two raises smashed targets for locally-raised investment: of a total £1.5M raised, £468,000 came from 149 local investors. Targeted communications, strong political championing and partnership working have created excitement in Southwark about climate action and connected locals with transformative projects. This has helped to highlight the challenges of financing climate solutions and build an investor base that can be leveraged for future initiatives.

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council has put accessing and managing finances at the centre of its priorities to deliver excellent public services and its 2030 carbon neutral aspiration. In tackling its largest source of carbon emissions, Larkfield Leisure Centre, the council has landed funding from the Swimming Pool Support Fund capital scheme, and the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, with renewable, efficiency and decarbonisation measures co-funded through prudent reserves and returning savings from renewable investments to fund future initiatives.

Working in Collaboration

Blackpool Council

With its genesis in a project aiming simply to decarbonise a library building, the Blackpool Eco Hub has quickly evolved into a multi-faceted partnership service and delivery model helping people to be wealthier, healthier and greener. By taking a flexible approach, and seizing the opportunities arising from building new relationships with partners, the service now has the potential to re-shape public services in Blackpool around our common need to tackle the Climate Emergency.

Bolsover District Council

Bolsover District Council, East Lindsey District Council, and Birmingham City Council partnered with leading independent construction and property consultant, Rider Levett Bucknall (RLB) to deliver a step change in green skills delivery through Regional Retrofit Skills Roadmap and Pilot project, funded and supported by the Midlands Net Zero Hub and DESNZ. Dozens of organisations collaborated to successfully deliver nearly 30 funded pilot activities in less than four months, with outcomes that will upskill over 765 people per year across the Midlands.

Cambridge City Council

CERP is a considerable success story. This Cambridgeshire Council partnership has collaborated for over a decade delivering retrofit support to communities. Currently HUG2 is being delivered in significant numbers across Cambridgeshire and is supporting our wider strategic partnerships and aspirations towards net zero.

Our success is a direct result of our strong collaborative approach and Officer commitment. We are passionate about the work we do and proud of the difference we are making for both residents

and environment.

North Yorkshire Council

North Yorkshire Council and the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (now the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority) worked collaboratively with community representatives to both develop and deliver the £2.2million Shared Prosperity Fund Decarbonisation Theme, delivered between January 2023 and March 2025.

Pembrokeshire County Council

Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) is working closely with Egni, a local community energy cooperative, to install 1.5MW of rooftop PV across 20 schools and leisure centres. 530kW of which has already been delivered. This builds on previous work which installed 265kW on six schools in the county.

Alongside this work, PCC and Egni co-op are delivering an educational engagement program to support the schools with a variety of curriculum enrichment activities related to energy efficiency and sustainability. This includes access to Energy Sparks, which has reduced energy demand by up to 20% in some schools.

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Seven West Midlands local authorities have shattered traditional boundaries, uniting in partnership with West Midlands Combined Authority to deliver a groundbreaking cohort of Net Zero Neighbourhood projects.

By choosing collaboration over competition, this innovative cohort has secured critical funding to launch seven unique demonstrator projects that reimagine how communities can achieve a Just Transition.

Their approach has transcended local ambitions, sparking national interest. Regions like Greater Manchester, Greater London, and Scotland are now looking to the West Midlands as a blueprint for transformative climate action.

