

Community Energy England AGM 2024: Director Appointments



Background

Under the current Community Energy England (CEE) bye laws CEE can have up to 11 directors (10 elected directors), of which:

- No less than five shall be duly authorised representatives of community members.
- No less than one director shall be a duly authorised representative of corporate members and one representative of public/third sector members, if those categories constitute at least 10% of the membership. This is not currently the case.
- The holder of the office of the Chief Executive Officer is appointed as Director ex-officio (they are the 11th director).
- The remainder may be from any class of member.
- The Board may, at its sole discretion and in accordance with the Articles, appoint no more than two Co-opted Directors, who need not be representatives of Members, to provide additional knowledge or expertise which the Board considers to be of assistance to the Association.

Directors standing down this year are:

- Mary Gille, Local Energy CIC - (community member)

We are very grateful for Mary's contribution to CEE and the sector throughout her time on the board.

The directors who remain on the Board are:

- Helen Seagrave, Electricity North West (corporate) – *interim chair*
- Peter Capener, Bath & West Community Energy (community) - *deputy chair*
- Syed Ahmed, Community Energy London (community)
- Kate Gilmartin, Rossendale Valley Energy (community)
- Emma Lower, Lendology (public & third sector)
- Alastair Mumford, Devon Energy Collective (community)
- Ollie Pendered, Community Energy South (community)
- Helen Ryder, HartlePower (community) - *treasurer*

CEE's rules state that any director who has served more than thirty-three months since being elected shall retire by rotation. There are no directors due to re-stand this year.

Director Criteria

Potential nominees were asked to consider the following criteria set out by the board to indicate the skills and expertise the existing directors feel would be of most benefit to CEE and its governance:

- Working with or for local authorities
- Providing support to the sector e.g. as an intermediary, building skills and capacity, project development/pipeline, governance
- Fuel poverty
- Income generation / finance and funding strategy (for the sector or an organisation)
- Communications strategy
- Networking / public affairs.

Candidates

This year's candidates are (in alphabetical order):

- Will Cottrell, Brighton Energy Coop (community)
- Noël Lambert, Big Solar Coop (community)
- Alistair Macpherson, Plymouth Energy Community (community)
- Agamemnon Otero, Energy Garden (community)

Candidates were asked to outline their aspirations for CEE, the board, and the contribution they will be able to make to the organisation (with consideration given to the criteria set out by the board) – these statements are set out below.

Voting


Under the current CEE articles, there are two spaces on the board at the 2024 election and four candidates putting themselves forward. This will make voting a competitive ballot. Members are asked to vote for **two candidates only**.


The CEE Board has significant input into the strategic direction of the organisation. As the ballot is competitive this year, we are asking members to carefully consider what your organisation requires from our board, and this year's skills/expertise criteria set out by the board, when making your voting decision.


Voting will take place during the AGM using a Zoom poll in which members can cast their votes.

Members unable to attend the AGM in person may appoint another member as their proxy, who will attend the meeting to vote on their behalf. Alternatively, members may vote using this [form](#) up to 7pm on 23 September 2024 (this deadline allows us to collate responses prior to the AGM). There is only one vote permitted per member organisation, so please coordinate with any colleagues.

Candidate profiles

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| <p>Name: Will Cottrell</p> | <p>The new Labour government is obviously a step change for community energy. As such I'd like to see Community Energy England and the sector it supports take advantage of this opportunity, to develop and grow rapidly. With the government's emphasis on community asset ownership, I am eager to bring my experience leading a large asset-owning community energy organisation to the CEE board to capitalise on this pivotal moment.</p> |
| <p>Member affiliation: Brighton Energy Coop</p> | |
| <p>Member category: Community</p> | |
|  | <p>I have particular contributions to offer in the Communications and Public Affairs areas.</p> <p>Communications: To meet the government's target of 8GW of Community Energy, the sector needs to grow to around 700,000 members, requiring a strong focus on communications. My background in movement building, particularly as head of communications for the anti-fracking group Frack Off (2013-2016), and my role in organising the Balcombe anti-fracking protest camp, highlight my ability to drive sustained and impactful communications efforts. At Brighton Energy, I brought a similar approach, raising £5m via our mailing list of 5,000 subscribers with an investing membership of 800 people.</p> <p>Political Affairs My approach to public affairs is shaped by my campaigning experience: identifying objectives, aligning them with stakeholder benefits, and finding the best channels to advocate for them. I have engaged closely with the new government's Community Energy initiatives and supported CEE CEO Emma in developing a public affairs strategy for CEE, positioning us to effectively advance our agenda.</p> |

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| <p>Name: Noël Lambert</p> | <p>Aspirations for CEE;</p> |
| <p>Member affiliation: Big Solar Coop</p> | <p>I have been a long standing supporter and follower of CEE and found it extremely useful in orientating myself as a newbie in the community energy sector when I joined the Big Solar Co-op five years ago.</p> |
| <p>Member category: Community</p> | <p>Some key highlights have been:</p> |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Receiving detailed and insightful support from Duncan Law over what to raise in an audience with Philip Dunne (at the time my MP and chair of the Environmental Audit Committee). ● Attending the annual CEE conference and in particular bringing 3 new staff members under my management to one as their ‘intro to the sector’. ● Lurking on the CEE Loomio board, absorbing all sorts of community energy knowledge that I would not otherwise have been party to – especially as a remote worker. <p>My hope would be that CEE continues to provide this rich, broad and easily accessible support to the community energy sector and that the offering can now evolve and be refined, as the political context has shifted to be more positive under the current Labour administration. I see the role of the Board as overseeing and guiding the process of upholding and evidencing the work of impactful community energy organisations and ultimately helping to inspire more action on climate change.</p> <p>Proposed contribution;</p> <p>I would like to be part of the next stage in CEE’s development and feel that I can bring useful expertise in the areas of communication strategy, networking, skills and capacity building and a strategic connection with the Big Solar Co-op and its members</p> |

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| <p>Name: Alistair Macpherson</p> | <p>As Chief Executive of Plymouth Energy Community (PEC), I have successfully led the development of a family of community-owned enterprises delivering local generation, retrofit and fuel poverty advice, as well as net-zero housing projects and services. As a founding member, I have had the pleasure of supporting PEC’s growth from a small start-up into an organisation with over 30 staff, 500 community investors, 6MW of local solar power, and a turnover exceeding £3 million.</p> |
| <p>Member affiliation: Plymouth Energy Community</p> | |
| <p>Member category: Community</p> | |
|  | <p>Central to our success has been my extensive experience working in partnership with local authorities. From collaborating with councils on renewable energy initiatives to integrating community energy into regional strategies on energy advice, I have built strong, impactful relationships that deliver long-term benefits to local communities.</p> <p>I am particularly keen to offer this experience to Community Energy England (CEE) as it seeks to inform and shape the new government’s aspirations for GB Energy, the Local Power Plan, and the Warm Homes Plan. Having worked on complex projects that align local government priorities with community needs, I am confident that my partnership-building skills and policy advocacy experience will support CEE’s efforts to influence these critical national strategies.</p> <p>In addition, I have a strong track record of sound financial management and governance, having overseen PEC’s sustainable financial models, ensuring efficient operations and reinvestment in community projects. I am eager to bring this expertise to CEE, ensuring the organisation remains robust and forward-looking as it navigates future challenges.</p> <p>I look forward to the opportunity to contribute to CEE’s important mission and help elevate the voice of community energy across the UK.</p> |

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| <p>Name: Agamemnon Otero</p> | <p>I am the Founder and CEO of Energy Garden. My aspiration for Community Energy England is to make community energy an understandable, exciting movement that breaks a billion pounds worth of investment. To do this, I want to strengthen Community Energy England’s voice, speaking with the support of all the members and presenting one clear, accountable methodology for why community energy is the way forward.</p> |
| <p>Member affiliation: Energy Garden</p> | |
| <p>Membership category: Community</p> | |



I co-founded Community Energy England, Brixton Energy, Vauxhall Energy, Banister House Solar, Repowering London, and Energy Garden. Some of my proudest achievements in the industry are helping to build the first community energy on social housing and the first community-owned solar project on the UK’s railways. Energy Garden of which I am CEO, currently oversees 640 KWs of Solar of which 40% is sold through the mirrored sleeved Environmental and Social Power Purchase Agreements.

I am now keen to return to Community Energy England to help steer the organisation through this tumultuous time. I can offer my insight and experience building community-corporate partnerships, Social Impact Power Purchase Agreements, and ESG Data collection and reporting. As a person of colour from an indigenous and ethnic minority backgrounds my 15 years’ experience of urban community energy I can amplify the voice to a wider diverse audience.