

Community Energy England AGM 2026: Director Appointments

Background

Under Community Energy Association (England) Limited's governing documents, the Board may have up to 12 directors, comprised of:

- The strict majority of the total Board must be duly authorised representatives of Community Members.
- The holder of the office of the Chief Executive Officer is automatically appointed as a Director ex-officio.
- The Board may, at its sole discretion, appoint no more than three (3) Co-opted Directors. These individuals do not need to be representatives of Members and are appointed to provide additional specialist knowledge or expertise.
- To ensure balanced representation, the Elected Director seats must include exactly one (1) representative from a Corporate Member and exactly one (1) representative from a Public/Third Sector Member, with any remaining Elected seats open to any Member category.

Our current directors are:

- Pete Capener, Bath & West Community Energy (community) - *interim chair*
- Syed Ahmed, Community Energy London (community)
- Kate Gilmartin, Energy Heroes (community)
- Noel Lambert, Big Solar Co-op (community)
- Emma Lower, Lendology (public & third sector) – *co-opted director*
- Alistair MacPherson, Plymouth Energy Community, (community)
- Alastair Mumford, Devon Energy Collective (community) – *chair of CEE's finance & governance committee and interim Treasurer*
- Ollie Pendered, Community Energy Pathways (community)
- Matt Vickers (in his capacity as Chief Executive of Community Energy England)

The previous Treasurer, Helen Ryder, stepped down from the Board in March 2026, when her nominating organisation ceased its membership with CEE, which procedurally concluded her eligibility to serve as an Elected Director under Article 22(c) of our Articles of Association. We are grateful to Helen for all of her support over the years.

CEE's rules state that any director who has served more than thirty-three months since being elected shall retire by rotation. Three directors are re-standing (Syed Ahmed, Kate Gilmartin & Ollie Pendered).

Candidates

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

- Syed Ahmed, Community Energy London, (community)
- Bridget Burrows, Kent Community Energy, (community)
- John-Henry Charles, Alentis, (corporate)
- Laurie Duncan, Community Energy Birmingham, (community)
- Kate Gilmartin, Energy Heroes, (community)
- Als Parker, Devon Energy Collective, (community)
- Ollie Pendered, Community Energy Pathways, (community)
- Shajidur Rahman, Community Energy Birmingham, (community)
- Ania Vercellotti, Bright Renewables, (community)

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

Voting

Under the current CEE articles, there are four spaces available, and nine candidates. This will make voting a competitive ballot. Members are asked to vote for **four candidates only**. The four candidates with the most votes will be elected.

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 CEE, 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 21 September 2026** (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

Name: Syed Ahmed	I was a co-founder of Community Energy London (CEL) in 2017, and was its first Chair, before moving to become CEO in 2025.
Member affiliation: Community Energy London	I have actively campaigned for the benefits of community energy and the work undertaken by community energy groups in London to be better valued. CEL's work has directly led to the creation of the Mayor's London Community Energy Fund (LCEF), which recently launched its 9th round of funding, and further funding from a growing number of London boroughs.
Member category: Community	
	
	If elected as a Board Member of Community Energy England I hope to be able to help CEE: Develop further routes for groups to be able to collaborate with local authorities, especially in relation to new opportunities coming out of the Government's Local Power Plan. Raise the profile of community energy across all sectors to create further opportunities for community-led climate and energy projects Develop new routes to provide core funding to community energy groups Ensure that the role of community energy is fully recognised by the Government and included in key policy areas such as the Warm Homes Plan, the new distribution price control for electricity distribution network companies, the Energising Britain Strategy, and the move to a Smarter Local Energy System (SLES).

Name: Bridget Burrows	I want Community Energy England to be the organisation that helps every community energy group thrive, in every postcode.
Member affiliation: Kent Community Energy	As a voluntary Director at Kent Community Energy, I've felt what many of you feel: the risk of burnout from funding gaps, red tape, complexity, and decision-makers who don't yet understand local energy.
Member category: Community	Now is the moment to maximise Great British Energy's Local Power Plan funding, and CEE must be the go-to partner getting it to real community projects on the ground.
	As a CEE Board member, I'd focus on growing a thriving, financially sustainable association that serves members old and new, long term. I'm Communications and Knowledge Director at a Europe-wide membership body helping 8,400 hospitals go solar and cut emissions, where I've learnt about growing income through data insights, events and corporate partnerships, so members get more without paying more. I bring two decades of results growing influential networks, the last decade focused on the climate crisis. I founded the world's first global community energy network — 200 groups across 70 countries — building shared knowledge so no group reinvents the wheel. Throughout, I've shifted resources and power to communities and championed new, diverse leaders. In Kent, I'm proudest of sharpening our social impact strategy to bring lasting benefits for people and planet, from green jobs training for young people to tackling energy poverty. We're growing fast from a small base, so I know how to keep every member's needs at the table. I'll bring energy and make things happen. I'd be honoured to have your vote.

Name: John-Henry Charles	Renewables have shifted fully into the mainstream. Now the question is not just how we get more community assets developed, but also how we manage them effectively to get the best outcomes for the local area and community investors? I would like to contribute to the long-term asset stewardship discussion at CEE.
Member affiliation: Alentis	
Member category: Corporate	
	At the same time, AI is reshaping all fields of work, including the renewables sector. AI presents huge opportunities for the community sector - from faster prospecting and proposal development to better asset management and maintenance. I would like to contribute to how CEE considers and engages with our ever-changing technology landscape. I'm passionate about community energy. I've invested in share offerings since 2019, Alentis now invests in share offerings, and I have the energy and motivation to contribute my perspective on what the sector needs to do to continue to thrive. My background supports input on both topics. On asset stewardship, I was Commercial Director for Lightsource bp's 150-person Asset Services business, responsible for the performance of the asset management and operations businesses supporting over 4GW utility-scale assets globally. On the technology front, I have built and scaled two energy sector software businesses: FlareIntel and now, Alentis. Alentis supports asset management and maintenance teams managing more than 5GW assets worldwide. We are also committed to provide enterprise-grade software to the asset managers working in community energy. We currently support teams at Repowering London, Maidenergy, Big Solar Coop, Croydon Community Energy, Plymouth Energy Community and Energise South Downs.

Name: Laurie Duncan	I would be delighted to bring my experience and enthusiasm to the Board to help Community Energy England thrive. I am a Programme Manager at the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), responsible for energy and net zero research, policy and partnerships. My academic research background and professional experience are well aligned with CEE’s priorities. I am keen to apply my experience in local government to ensure CEE’s policy and advocacy work takes advantage of national opportunities (GBE’s Local Power Plan, Rewiring the State’s reference to greater control of local energy) while recognising how regional and local implementation may work in practice. I also bring hands-on experience from my previous role as Chair of Community Energy Birmingham (CEB). I understand that policy support for the sector is never enough in isolation; growing community energy requires hard work from dedicated staff and volunteers alongside tangible support to sustainably grow capacity. I have experience of leading CEB from a volunteer-only group through a process of fundraising and onboarding paid workers to more effectively deliver on the organisation’s priorities, while also building a consortium of community groups across the city to work together to pool resources and access longer-term funding. I also see this opportunity in my work across the West Midlands, identifying huge potential for community groups with no energy-specific projects to collaborate with organisations that have years of energy expertise, maximising the impact of existing community energy groups and also broadening the reach of the sector.
Member affiliation: Birmingham Community Energy	
Member category: Community	
	

Name: Kate Gilmartin	I am the Chief Executive of the British Hydropower Association and has been a Director of Community Energy England, I was also a founder member of CEE. With many years of experience and am recognised for bringing together government, industry, network operators, local authorities and communities to develop practical, whole-system solutions that accelerate the transition to a secure, affordable and decarbonised energy system.
Member affiliation: Energy Heroes	
Member category: Community	
	Before joining the British Hydropower Association, I led community energy investment across the North West Net Zero Hub, working with local authorities, combined authorities, the Green Finance Institute and NWF to unlock investment in low-carbon infrastructure. Throughout my career I have specialised in translating ambitious policy into deliverable projects through strong partnerships, innovative governance and community participation. I have been the strategic lead behind the award-winning Net Zero Terrace Streets initiative, a pioneering programme developing scalable neighbourhood decarbonisation models that integrate heat, power, retrofit, flexibility and local energy markets. Alongside my executive role, I have held a number of non-executive and advisory positions, including serving on the Start-up Board of Great British Energy, where I advised on the development of its Local mission. I am also Chair of the Energy Heroes charity and a Director of Rossendale Valley Energy. I will bring to the CEE Board a unique combination of strategic leadership, systems thinking and practical delivery experience. I'm passionate about strengthening the role of community energy within the UK's future energy system and believe that empowering communities will be central to delivering a fair, resilient and successful transition to net zero.

Name: Als Parker	
Member affiliation: Devon Energy Collective	I have worked across the community energy sector throughout my career and understand deeply the value of engaging and empowering local people to deliver projects that reduce bills, strengthen energy resilience and cut carbon emissions.
Membership category: Community	Whilst a Director at Octopus Energy Generation, I retained parallel involvement in grassroots renewables development, local authority energy planning and GB-wide strategy through the Devon
	Energy Collective CIC. That vantage point showed me the disconnect between bill payers, community energy organisations and commercial developers - a gap that is holding back the generation projects we urgently need. I would like to help steer Community Energy England in closing that gap and realising the sector's potential. Through innovation and partnership across a range of organisations, I believe community energy can prove its serious intent and build the momentum it needs. I would welcome the opportunity to lead, support, monitor, evaluate, represent and promote Community Energy England's work. My board experience - with Devon Energy Collective CIC, Westmill Solar and Southill Community Energy - has sharpened my judgement, diligence, conflict resolution and decision-making. I also bring hands-on experience as a renewable energy developer, including the learnings I am currently gaining through the wind projects I am developing in South Devon - and see real potential to link this on-the-ground experience to UK energy planning and wider partnership opportunities.

Name: Ollie Pendered	I am honoured to be putting my name forward to stand for a fourth term as Non Exec Director of Community Energy England. We must think carefully how we position Community Energy within our uncertain political landscape. As a Board member my focus will be to help CEE and our members become sustainable and navigate the uncertain and ever changing energy landscape. Based in Lewes, East Sussex I am the Founder and Executive Chair of Community Energy Pathways CiC (previously known as Community Energy South); we work closely with Community Energy England and many community energy groups, Local Authorities and sector partners. I work closely with UK Power Networks and am a member of the Independent Stakeholder Group (ISG) as one of the few Community Energy representatives in this position in the UK. In Lewes we have showcased Community Energy to the Chair of Ofgem and GBEnergy and made our high street facility become a beacon of hope for the local community. I was a Big Energy Saving Network Champion for 5 years combining community energy work with fuel poverty and energy awareness campaigns and did a stint in Government representing community energy and support partnerships for the energy sector. In 2025 Community Energy Pathways was awarded the Kings Award for Sustainable Development and I was honoured to meet King Charles and discuss community energy with him.
Member affiliation: Community Energy Pathways CIC	
Membership category: Community	
	

Name: Shajidur Rahman	I am standing for the Board of Community Energy England because I know I can add value to the Energy Co-operative. I am currently a Director of CommunityEnergy Birmingham and have previously held leadership positions in the form of Chair and Secretary. During my near ten years at Community Energy Birmingham, I have played an important role in three Community Share Offers, including marketing and stakeholder engagement. I also play a key role in the current Retrofit work that Community Energy Birmingham does, including securing funding for our DIY sessions and leading on the forthcoming able to pay home energy advice offer.	Member affiliation: Community Energy Birmingham
Membership category: Community		

Outside of Community Energy Birmingham, I have extensive experience in leading Co-ops on Boards. I am a Director of Co-op Press and I am on Governance Committees for the large retail Co-ops, Co-op Group and Our Co-op. I was previously a Director of the Environmental Campaigning Co-op Birmingham Friend of the Earth.

I believe that Community Energy England has a great opportunity to support the community energy space as it goes mainstream. GB energy amongst other opportunities will thrust community energy into the spotlight as a viable form of energy production for communities up and down the country. Community Energy England can play a vital role of supporting new Co-ops into this space.

My experience that I have mentioned earlier would help me play an important role in this happening.

Name: Ania Vercellotti	Hi, I'm Ania Vercellotti, and I'm putting myself forward for the Community Energy England board because I can offer a combination of commercial and business development experience, technical insight, strategic drive, and first-hand understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing the sector.
Member affiliation: Bright Renewables	
Membership category: Community	
	I've dedicated more than twenty years to renewable energy, working across design engineering, R&D, field applications, operations, and asset management. Since 2019, I've been Managing Director of Bright Renewables, the trading name of Community Owned Asset Management, where I oversee a portfolio of ten community benefit societies, around seventy renewable energy assets totalling 80MW, and more than fifty associated companies. My experience spans technical, commercial, governance, and financial responsibilities, with strengths in contract negotiation and commercial structuring. Working closely with boards and stakeholders on risk management, compliance, business growth, and long-term strategy has given me an understanding of what community energy organisations need to thrive, from project development, contract management and finance to long-term asset management, operational performance, and member value. What motivates me is helping community energy become an influential, commercially resilient and financially sustainable part of the UK's move to clean energy, with a vital role to play in a just transition. I enjoy bringing people together, developing partnerships, finding practical solutions to complex challenges, and turning ideas into delivery. I would welcome the opportunity to contribute my experience, energy, and practical perspective to support Community Energy England in delivering its ambitions, supporting its members, and strengthening the sector's voice nationally through the CEE board