

Low Carbon Lake District Grants Scheme: Case Study

Rookhow Quaker Meeting House

The Challenge:

Rookhow Quaker Meeting House in the Rusland Valley is a Grade II* listed building, dating back to the 1700s. It not only provides a place of worship but also an important group activity space for a wide range of families and community organisations - from yoga groups to wellbeing retreats and training sessions.

Rookhow is currently undergoing a refurbishment to make the building more accessible and comfortable for the community. However, as an historic building, it faces a number of constraints to meet its ambition of achieving a more sustainable future. Preserving original features - such as the stone flag floors - are an integral part of respecting the building's 300 year old heritage.



Photography credit: James Kirby

The Solution:

Rookhow secured around £15,550 from the Lake District Low Carbon Grants Scheme (equating to 60% of the total project cost) to install an air source heat pump (ASHP), rather than installing less efficient and less environmentally-friendly standard electric heaters. As well as heating the water, the ASHP will be used to power the building's underfloor heating and radiators.

As the system works best in a well-insulated building, the low carbon grant will also support improved loft insulation to ensure maximum energy efficiency.

The organisation carried out extensive research before taking the project forward, as well as consulting with both a conservation architect and a specialist conservation builder to develop the most energy effective solutions. It has also worked closely with The Lake District Foundation and planners from the Lake District National Park throughout the process.

The Results:

According to the CAFS (Cumbria Action for Sustainability) energy saving calculator, the measures Rookhow is introducing will save 10.1 tonnes CO₂ equivalent per year.

Development Manager at Rookhow, Sue Nicholls, says, *“The support we have received is helping to create a ‘living space’ for future generations and has come at just the right time for us. These changes will help preserve this historic building and make it much more usable and comfortable for a range of community groups, including vital mental health services, forest therapy and forest schools training.*

“There is a real – and vital - focus on sustainability right now and lots of expertise out there for organisations like ours in Cumbria. I would strongly urge others to investigate the funding currently available through the Low Carbon Lake District Grants Scheme. In our case, it has enabled us to take practical steps to reduce our carbon footprint and this momentum has helped us to leverage additional funding from alternative sources as well.”

Round 3 will open for registrations in March 2022. [Find out more about the Low Carbon Lake District Grants Scheme here](#)

Thanks to support from the European Regional Development Fund, the Lake District Foundation is able to offer grants to community groups and small to medium sized businesses based in Cumbria wishing to reduce their Carbon Footprint.

Qualifying groups and businesses will be awarded up to 60% of project costs, and all projects will need to be completed by March 2023. State Aid Rules will apply.

The total size of the grant pot is £600,000 and applications will be reviewed by an independent expert panel. Funding is available to organisations from a range of sectors.

The [Low Carbon Lake District](#) initiative is a comprehensive programme to help tackle climate change in the National Park, working in partnership with local businesses and communities to reduce greenhouse gases and prepare for the impacts of climate change. Led by the **Lake District National Park Authority**, other key partners include the **Lake District Foundation**, the **National Trust**, **South Lakeland District Council** and **Cumbria Tourism**.

Low Carbon Lake District has received funding from the England European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Work and Pensions (and in London the intermediate body Greater London Authority) are the Managing Authorities for European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund funding through the Growth Programme, funds established by the European Union to help local areas stimulate their economic development. By investing in projects the funds will help to support innovation, businesses, skills and employment to improve local growth and create jobs. For more information visit: <https://www.gov.uk/europeangrowth-funding>.

The Northern Powerhouse is a key aspect of this Government’s approach to addressing the productivity gap in the North and ensuring a stronger, more sustainable economy for all parts of the UK. Alongside over €1.5 billion of European Regional Development Fund support for businesses and communities across the North, the government has awarded £3.4 billion in three rounds of Growth Deals across the Northern Powerhouse.