



## Acceptance, acceptability and environmental justice: the role of community benefits in wind energy development

PreviewView full textDownload full text  
Access options

**DOI:**  
10.1080/09640568.2010.521047

Richard Cowell<sup>a\*</sup>, Gill Bristow<sup>a</sup> & Max Munday<sup>b</sup>

pages 539-557

### Publishing models and article dates explained

- Received: 18 Aug 2009
- Accepted: 7 Aug 2010
- Published online: 08 Apr 2011

### Article Views: 1942

Article usage statistics combine cumulative total PDF downloads and full-text HTML views from publication date (but no earlier than 25 Jun 2011, launch date of this website) to 02 Mar 2015. Article views are only counted from this site. Although these data are updated every 24 hours, there may be a 48-hour delay before the most recent numbers are available.

Alert me

- TOC email alert
- TOC RSS feed
- Citation email alert
- Citation RSS feed

### Abstract

Conflict around wind farm development has stimulated interest in 'community benefits' – the provision of financial or material benefits by the developers to the area affected by these facilities. By and large, both policy makers and researchers have couched the rationale for community benefits in instrumental terms, i.e. that an increased flow of community benefits will improve the social acceptability of these facilities and thereby expedite planning consent. This paper questions this conventional rationale. Proponents of this rationale neglect the institutionally structured terrain of the planning process; the provision of community benefits can shift in significance depending on whether or not the 'affected community' has any significant influence over wind farm projects. Similarly, our discourse analysis conducted in Wales shows that community benefits are seen predominantly as compensation for impacts, without any clear implication that they should change social attitudes. Our conclusion is that the dominant, instrumental rationale for community benefits obscures other, equally important justifications: the role of community benefits in promoting environmental justice; and how flows of community benefits might better serve the long-term sustainability of wind farm development areas.

- View full text
- Download full text
-

researchers have couched the rationale for community benefits in instrumental terms, i.e. that an increased flow of community benefits will improve the social acceptability of these facilities and thereby expedite planning consent. This paper questions this conventional rationale. Proponents of this rationale neglect the institutionally structured terrain of the planning process; the provision of community benefits can shift in significance depending on whether or not the 'affected community' has any significant influence over wind farm projects. Similarly, our discourse analysis conducted in Wales shows that community benefits are seen predominantly as compensation for impacts, without any clear implication that they should change social attitudes. Our conclusion is that the dominant, instrumental rationale for community benefits obscures other, equally important justifications: the role of community benefits in promoting environmental justice; and how flows of community benefits might better serve the long-term sustainability of wind farm development areas.

- [View full text](#)
- [Download full text](#)
- 

### Keywords

- renewable energy,
- community,
- compensation,
- justice,
- planning

### Related articles

[View all related articles](#)