



**CLEVE HILL**  
SOLAR PARK

# Cleve Hill Solar Park

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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SPRING 2026

## Construction and delivery traffic update.

The solar park remains a live construction site while final testing works continue. We expect the completion of this final phase in May/ June 2026.

Installation works at the BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) are underway, with associated traffic movements anticipated from March.

We expect a maximum of 20 deliveries per week with no requirement for abnormal load arrangements and most movements taking place between 9.15am and 3.00pm.

All site traffic will be managed as before, and all HGVs must report at the holding area. They will be issued with trackers and escorted in convoys of six vehicles maximum, with no movements during the start and finish times of Graveney Primary School (8.15am - 9.15am and 3.00pm - 4.00pm).

Substantial completion of the installation of the BESS is anticipated in late summer 2026 with energisation following in the winter months. These forecasts may change as the programme progresses.

Monthly meetings of the Construction Traffic Management Group continue to address any concerns arising from construction-related traffic movements. If you have any queries about solar park traffic movements, please email [info@clevehillsolar.com](mailto:info@clevehillsolar.com)

When all construction-related traffic has ceased the CHSP team will carry out a survey of the condition of the road surfaces and verges along the route. We will agree on any remediations required due to solar park traffic movements with KCC and arrange for the works to be carried out.



Electrical compound and BESS taken in January 2026.

## Landscaping programme.

Landscaping works are progressing well and in line with the obligations set out in the Landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan (LBMP), despite the adverse weather.

The planting programme for the solar park includes woodland, scrubland, screening, native hedgerows and meadows.

In January and February works to clear mud and plant shelterbelt, as well as mulching the ground, were underway right across the site including the bunded electrical compound.

Zones in the southern area (including zones K, L, M, U, V, W and X) have seen mulching works alongside planting of native hedgerow and woodland species.



## First grants allocated from Cleve Hill Solar Park Community Benefit Fund.

The first successful applicants to the Cleve Hill Solar Park Community Benefit Fund were announced in December 2025.

Decisions on applications are made by the Advisory Panel which is made up of local residents. Specialist charity GrantScape works with the Panel to administer and deliver the funding.

There are two rounds this year, with the first closing on 12 May and the second on 30 September. £50,000 of funding is available in each round for 2026.

Congratulations to the varied range of projects and initiatives awarded funding in late 2025:

- All Saints Church, PA System for Graveney Parish Church – **£18,000**
- Dawes Community Association, Future Fit 3v3 Goals – **£1,000**
- Graveney and Goodnestone Parish Council, Community and Environmental Projects in Graveney with Goodnestone Parish – **£5,160**
- Graveney and Goodnestone Village Hall, Kitchen Renewal – **£18,900**
- Graveney and Goodnestone WI, Providing Better Care for Disabled People Within Our Community – **£4,726**
- Graveney and Goodnestone WI, Educational Opportunities for Women – **£1,500**
- Graveney and Goodnestone WI, Continuing to Enhance the Environment with the Parish – **£9,003**
- Hernhill C of E Primary School, Sustainable Digital Learning Suite – **£23,375**
- Hernhill Parish Council, New Noticeboard in Monkshill – **£800**
- Hernhill Village Hall & Playing Fields, Replacement Main Hall Flooring & Substructure and Other Flooring Surfaces – **£17,536**

Read more about the details of the fund and how to apply here: <https://grantscape.org.uk/fund/cleve-hill-community-benefit-fund/>

## Sea wall update .

The Environment Agency continue to cut the grass on the embankments, and they also maintain the sluice and outfall.

Recently, we have made further assessments of the wall condition using Ground Penetrating Radar. This will assess whether any repair or more intrusive maintenance works are needed.



Sea wall north of the solar park

## New permissive footpath from the sea wall to the bottom of Cleve Hill.

It is anticipated that the new, permissive footpath will be open before the end of June 2026. This new footpath will create a circular route from Seasalter Road via the ZR488 existing Public Right of Way.

The route of the permissive path is marked in orange:



## Ecology and wildlife update.

Our ECoWs (Ecological Clerks of Works) are continuing to monitor the wildlife seen in and around the solar park and habitat management areas, as well as weekly checks on the progress of the landscaping and planting works.

Recent bird sightings noted in the monthly bird monitoring surveys include:

- A Green Sandpiper feeding under the panels in Zone I which has been spotted there a few times since it was first identified. This was interesting to see as while not a rare species it's not common and a first for the site.
- Mistle Thrushes have been seen singing while sitting on the panels, and they are an early-nesting breed, so the ECoWs are optimistic for another season of them breeding underneath the panels. Last year 12 pairs nested in the panel structure and 11 of those pairs successfully fledged chicks, after a 10-metre exclusion zone was installed around each nest.



*A mistle thrush adult feeling chicks in their nest beneath the solar panels*

Raptors spotted across the site this winter:

- Marsh Harrier are regularly seen quartering the ditches through the site but mainly along the Fleet, as they did pre-construction.
- There have been a few sightings of Merlin but not since Christmas.
- Peregrine have been seen hunting over the intertidal areas or roosting in a pylon and freshly picked kills have been found on the site.
- The occasional Red Kite passes over and the more common Sparrow Hawk, Kestrel, and Buzzard are often recorded.

The pools and rills dug in the Wetland Grazing Marsh are now full of water and the ECoWs report quite a high count of ducks there (Mallard, Wigeon, Teal, and Shelduck). Flocks of Curlew have been seen roosting there at high tide over the winter.

As we move into spring, the ECoWs will be looking out for the amphibians and reptiles we have on site as they emerge from hibernation. The Bumblebee Conservation Trust has set up a BeeWalk survey route along the sea wall at the mouth of Faversham Creek and along the public footpath that crosses the solar park. This part of their national monitoring scheme and will help to identify the potential habitat improvements for bees arising from the LBMP.

On their initial visit to the area in 2025, the Trust found all five of the UK's rarest bumblebee species that occur in Kent. The solar park team are very happy to support this ongoing research, and we will share their 2026 findings later in the year.

## Solar Safari public visits planned for summer 2026.

Thank you to everyone who expressed interest in visiting the solar park, following our shout-out in the October 2025 issue of the Community Newsletter.

The idea of an 'open day' received considerable interest from members of the local community. Whilst site visits are not possible during the construction phase, once the project enters normal operations, Cleve Hill Solar Park Limited is keen to consult with local groups around possible dates when local people can visit the plant, meet the team and learn more about the project.

If you would like to register your interest in a closer look at the UK's first solar Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, please email [info@clevehillsolar.com](mailto:info@clevehillsolar.com)



## Keep updated

Our Freephone telephone line remains in operation Monday to Friday 9am-5pm on **0800 328 2850** (this line will be closed when construction activities cease). You can also email [info@clevehillsolar.com](mailto:info@clevehillsolar.com) or write to us at **FREEPOST Cleve Hill Solar** (no stamp required). Jackie Hall, the Community Liaison Officer for CHSP is available Monday to Wednesday on **07766 408840**.

Once the construction phase on the solar park is complete, specialist renewable asset management company WPO will take over the day-to-day running of the solar park. They will then be the point of contact for public enquiries, and we will share the details nearer the time.

## Contact Us:

If you would like to be kept updated via email, please get in touch with the project team via the communication channels below:



**Write to us at:**

Freepost: Cleve Hill Solar



**Email us at:**

[info@clevehillsolar.com](mailto:info@clevehillsolar.com)



**Call our Freephone information line:**

**0800 328 2850**

Available Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm

Saturday, 9am - 1pm

Voicemails can be left outside of these hours



**Visit our website at:**

[www.clevehillsolar.com](http://www.clevehillsolar.com)