

## Community Grant: Path Hill Outdoors



READING  
COMMUNITY ENERGY

### **Solar Kitchen – an off-grid system providing electricity and education**

Path Hill Outdoors is a not for profit company specialising in using the outdoor environment to provide positive experiences and personal growth for young people and adults.

#### **Grant Value:**

**£3,361.83**

In 2019, Path Hill was awarded a grant to build a timber framed outdoor kitchen for use with their students and visiting groups. The building has been roofed with cedar shingles and a wood fired oven built at the back of the kitchen, with much of the work being completed by the students.

Path Hill applied to Reading Community Energy Society for a grant to install PV panels on the south facing roof to produce an off-grid system, providing lighting and power to the kitchen and wildlife pod. Students would be involved in installing the system, and visitors would benefit from the visible installation and interpretative material provided to learn more about solar energy production, a predominant energy source of the future.

The ten 250w PV panels were donated by OVESCO in East Sussex from a school which was being demolished. The Reading Community Energy grant allowed the batteries, an inverter, and a solar charger to be purchased.



Although the panels were originally going to be installed on the roof of the kitchen, shading issues were identified early in the morning and late afternoon. Instead, a small solar farm of 9 PV panels was built using solar buckets. These have been connected to the adjacent pod where the batteries, inverter, and interpretation are located and is now producing electricity. It is currently powering the lights, heating and wildlife cameras in the pod and will also power the new kitchen once the electrics have been installed. The 10<sup>th</sup> panel will be used by students to create stand-alone projects such as water features in the sensory garden.

The project is part of Path Hill's Sustainability Strategy 2020-2025. They are aiming to develop as a local sustainability training hub, working with students and neighbouring communities to skill them up in sustainable construction, food growing and other future proofing life skills.



Reading Community Energy Society is a not-for-profit organisation, raising funds through community share offers to install solar PV systems on community, education and commercial buildings. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).