

Form 2 - Foreign travel and associated expenditure approval (occasional travel)

For use by teams not listed in Guide 1 who do not have prior agreement of the need for overseas travel. For more guidance, see the Foreign travel, gifts and hospitality policy.

Employees planning to travel:

Employee name(s):	Job title(s):
Kyle Buckle-Hodgson	Energy & Low Carbon Project Officer

Purpose/reason justifying the visit:

Details:

I would like to ask for approval to attend a conference in The Hague, Netherlands on the **29th and 30th of September 2022**. This relates to an EU-funded project called "LECSEA – Local Energy Communities Across the 2 Seas". This is the final annual conference of the 2 Seas region and funding programme which funds LECSEA, as the 2 Seas funding programme will cease after March 2023 owing to the British exit from the EU. **Travel costs are fully funded by the EU grant.**

Anticipated value / benefit to ECC / Essex:

Details:

The aim of the LECSEA project is to stimulate the growth of local energy communities across the UK and Europe, empowering residents to generate, manage and distribute local renewably produced energy and pioneer grassroots climate action. Participation in this project has:

- Led to the establishment of four community energy groups throughout Essex, leading to achievements such as:
 - Community Energy Colchester have delivered 2 twin EV charge points in Arlesford and Wivenhoe and started a collaboration with Colchester Hospital to install solar PV generation onsite. They have also implemented cycle hire and electric cargo bike hire schemes to stimulate interest in more eco-friendly local delivery services.
 - Received a £5000 grant from the Climate Action Challenge fund (Sustainable Danbury) to develop their communications and engagement plan in order to scale up the projects they can undertake.
 - Supported 85 individuals with energy advice, with a £3,451 total financial benefit. By April 2023, 100 individuals will receive in- depth energy support to reduce energy consumption and costs.
 - Tollesbury Climate Partnership have worked towards successful grant and funding applications of over £37,000 in total to deliver initiatives and projects over such

areas as home energy advice, thermal camera imaging of heat loss in homes, a solar PV feasibility study, community engagement, and share offer and supply chain development. Tollesbury Climate Partnership are also probing potential work around the decarbonisation of the local school and utilising share offers for the installation of renewables.

- Allowed ECC to better understand the opportunities provided by the changes in the energy market
- Led to ECC influencing national policy in urging BEIS to undertake the national rollout of the Pathways programme ECC commissions.

Specific benefits to ECC include:

- **External funding** to deliver ECC Corporate objectives – **approximately £407,182**, 60% of overall project costs.
- Revenue savings - reduction on operational costs (electricity costs) in ECC public buildings as part of the incoming pilot project, a ground mounted solar PV array in Danbury County Park.
- Innovation – the opportunity to implement an Energy Local club on the pilot project, matching renewably generated electricity with local purchasers at preferential rates to both.
- This particular conference will provide an opportunity for ECC to broadcast its community energy success and provide a case study to influence European policy to a pan-European audience: appetite for this has been confirmed by the LECSEA European partners who suffer from a relatively impoverished policy environment.

Contributes to ECC strategic aims and ECAC recommendation that “**by 2035 a network of community energy neighbourhoods is built across every district in Essex, to generate, store, share and use energy locally.**”

As noted above, **travel costs are fully funded by the EU grant.**

Details of visit – dates, itinerary, people/organisations to be visited:

Include also potential engagements –state not yet finalised where this is the case.

Details:

<https://www.interreg2seas.eu/en/event/reaching-new-heights-together>

The programme spans 29th and 30th September at Fokker Terminal, The Hague.

Estimated costs:

Refer to policy for key areas, eg travel, accommodation, hospitality, gifts if required, and so on. Add information needed to give a clear understanding of the visit and likely expenditure. Show actual costs where known. Where actual costs are not available in advance, please give estimates and then update the actual costs upon your return – see below.

Item:	Notes:	Cost - £ estimate:	Cost - £ actual:
Train	Harwich Town to St. Pancras	45	
Train	Eurostar – St. Pancras International to Rotterdam	75	
Train	Rotterdam to The Hague	7	
Accommodation	2 nights	200	
Train	The Hague to Rotterdam	7	
Train	Eurostar – St. Pancras International to Rotterdam	75	
Train	St. Pancras to Harwich Town	45	
Total (fully funded by the EU grant)		454	

Authorisation to travel:

The Executive Director will copy this form to each employee approved to travel. The Executive Director will also retain a copy and forward the original to the Executive Director for Corporate and Customer Services. If actual costs are not known before travel, please resubmit the updated form upon your return to the Executive Director, who will repeat the above process.

Executive Director:

Name	Signature	Date

Comments:

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Prior approval of travel plans and budget is also required by the relevant Committee – see policy.

Approval of actual costs by Executive Director (after travel):

Name	Signature	Date