

**DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY
REGIONWIDE COMMUNITY FUND
ANNUAL REPORT
2022/23**

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1. Introduction

Dumfries and Galloway Council first considered the establishment of a region-wide fund in January 2015 and the arrangements were subsequently agreed by the Council's Communities Committee in October 2018.

The Regionwide Community Fund (RWCF) acts mainly as a 'last resort', to ensure as much funding as possible is drawn into the region from windfarm developers and to give community groups a choice - for example, if there is no local community group in existence to manage the funds; or available groups are unable or unwilling to process the amount of funding available then the RWCF would accept and distribute it.

The Council continues to promote the position that the most local appropriate group receives any available windfarm funding and there will be absolutely no obligation on either communities or developers to contribute to the RWCF - it is entirely at their discretion.

The RWCF has now distributed its third year's funding. As evidenced in this third Annual Report, the existence of the RWCF and the contribution from Airies Windfarm has provided local groups with funding that is being used for a range of projects that will benefit our region.

2. Management Committee and arrangements

Membership

2.1 Representation on the Management Committee (the 'Management Committee' or the "MC") was invited from public sector bodies and a second set of members were appointed in 2022 for a three-year term from Dumfries and Galloway Council, Dumfries and Galloway College, NHS Dumfries and Galloway, and NatureScot.

2.2 A new set of independent members of the Management Committee were recruited ahead of this round with the assistance of Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway, to maintain a level of separation between the Council and the selection of Independent Members. Five independent members have been appointed for a three-year term.

Cllr. Kim Lowe was DGC representative from 16th June 2022, replaced by Cllr. Ian Carruthers on 4 April 2023. Both appointed by Communities Committee.

2.3 Members of the MC for 2023/24:

- Cllr. Ian Carruthers - Dumfries and Galloway Council
- Dr Stuart Graham – Nature Scotland
- Sharon Walker – NHS D&G
- Jill Galloway – D&G College
- Claire Black – Independent
- Jane Stanistreet – Independent
- Fiona Limbrey – Independent
- Michelle Nichol – Independent
- Rose Murdoch – Independent

Meetings during 2023/24

2.4 This year's allocation was confirmed by the Management Committee at their meeting 30 May 2023. Meeting was quorate with unanimous decision to approve the allocation.

2.5 Constitution and Terms of Reference

Full name

Dumfries and Galloway Windfarm Voluntary Regionwide Fund
Abbreviated to 'Regionwide Community Fund' or 'RWCF' or the 'Fund'.

Aims

The Regionwide Community Fund will be a source of funding to support applications aimed at improving:

- Local business and skills
- Community and environment
- Culture and tourism
- Affordable housing
- Community transport
- Broadband connectivity
- Fuel poverty
- Energy conservation and production
- Support local recovery from Covid-19 pandemic (added for Year 2 by the Management Committee)

Remit

The Management Committee's remit is to:

- Allocate the funds from the RWCF using the information provided in the RWCF's Application Form and based on the above Fund Criteria and associated Scoring Framework.
- Agree grants given have met the aims of the Fund.
- Agree effective and efficient management arrangements of the Fund.

The Management Committee has the power to grant or reject applications for the Fund's money with no right of appeal.

Membership

The Management Committee is made up of 9 members, with a majority of independent members; i.e., 5 drawn from non-public sector organisations and 4 from public sector organisations.

The Chair will be an independent member elected by the Management Committee. Membership of the Management Committee will be for a term of three years. Members will be expected to undertake any relevant training and briefing during their term of appointment.

All Members will be required to adhere to the Standards of Public Life and the Council's Code of Conduct.

Meeting Arrangements

The quorum for making valid decisions at each MC meeting will be a minimum of five, with a majority of independent members required.

If a Member cannot attend an MC meeting and they have a suitable substitute available, the substitute can attend in their place.

In the absence of the Chair at an MC meeting, the Committee will elect a Chair for the meeting.

Meetings are private and the agenda, reports and minutes will be circulated to Committee Members only.

Executive and Administrative Support

An Officer of Dumfries and Galloway Council will provide this support.

Schedule of Meetings

There will be at least an annual meeting of the Management Committee and normally two meetings in each calendar year.

Any changes to the schedule (i.e., more or fewer meetings) can be determined by the Lead Officer in consultation with the committee.

Decision Making Process

Decisions will be made through scoring of applications by the Management Committee against the Fund Criteria and Scoring Framework provided. Committee Members will be provided with applications in advance of meetings, so if unable to attend can submit their scores in advance.

Monitoring and Reporting

Successful applicants will submit a monitoring report on at least an annual basis for the duration of their project, and a report will be scrutinised by the Management Committee to ensure that the funding has fulfilled its purpose.

Finances

The monies will be held and administered on behalf of the Fund by Dumfries and Galloway Council's finance system.

Payments will be made to and come from a designated account held by the Council and are only accessed by those authorised to administer the Fund – the funds cannot be spent on anything else.

At least an annual Budget Monitoring Report will be submitted to the Management Committee.

Running costs will come from the Fund itself, initially at 10% in line with other funds of this type. The percentage will be reviewed in the event of extra funds being contributed to the RWCF, to ensure costs are met without over-charging the Fund.

3. Budget

3.1 Income

The total contributed to the Fund for 2023/24 ahead of the fourth round of applications was £109,375 contributed from the Airies Windfarm Community Benefit Fund. An additional £2,508.75 funding that had been allocated but not used by the applicants was carried over from the 2022/23 year to add to the total available.

3.2 Expenditure

The outgoings of the Fund in 2023/24 were: £100,946.25 committed to projects in the region. There is a full list of successful applicants in table 1 below.

As previously agreed, 10% of the Fund will go towards running and administration costs. It is agreed by the Management Committee that any excess funding not allocated will be carried forward for the next round of applications.

4. Performance monitoring of 2022/23 awards

The 3rd year of the Fund's operation, 2022/23 supported a variety of community benefit projects covering a range of the Fund's target aims.

A full list of the 27 projects supported is available in the year 3 annual report - [Regionwide Community Fund - Annual Report Year 3.pdf \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](#)

Detailed project monitoring returns have been collected from the successful applicants in line with the Grant Agreements entered into by the applicants and conditions of accepting their award; and the performance monitoring report will be scrutinised by the Management Committee.

Below is a selection of short case studies of some of the completed projects the 2022/23 Fund supported across the region.

RCF016 Tweed Forum - South of Scotland Tree Planting Grant Scheme - £5,000

Although SW Scotland is particularly well endowed with woodland and forestry much of this is commercial timber monoculture whilst much of the older mature native woodland is in decline as trees succumb to age and disease and are often not replaced. The South of Scotland Tree Planting Grant (SoSTPG) scheme is designed to encourage the creation of small areas of new native woodland and tree planting by funding the cost of trees, protective tubes/stakes and minor fencing works costing up to £1000. Many successful grant applicants have added their own funds and resources to the grant to create even bigger planting schemes to create new woodland, replace field boundary trees or new tree planting in existing mature woodland.

The overall purpose of the scheme is to encourage and support the planting of native woodland trees as a way of enhancing local landscapes and adding to local biodiversity whilst promoting woodland stewardship in local communities.

The scheme is open to any organisations or individuals in Dumfries and Galloway who can bring forward a planting project of up to 0.25 hectare to enhance the landscape and biodiversity of the region.

The RWCF funding was a key contribution to the South of Scotland Tree Planting Grant partnership scheme for the 22/23 planting season. The SoSTPG scheme gave out 45 grants in 22/23 planting season across the whole of the Dumfries and Galloway Council area. This equates to approximately 6,900 new trees planted from the proceeds of grants worth £39,525 which also generated additional levered funding contributions of £19,696. In total the SoSTPG scheme contributed to new woodland planting totalling over 20 acres across Dumfries and Galloway in 2022/23.

RCF030 The Furniture Project Ltd - Community Reuse Shop - £5,000

The funding was used to purchase a portable cabin which is being used as a learning environment for those aged 16 to 64 through the programme 'The Pink Frog'. The programme supports people not in education, employment or training to move closer to, or further into work or education and the extra space has provided a high-quality space to provide work-based training and life skills.

The additional space has allowed a greater capacity to engage with the community and increase opportunities for formal and non-formal training amongst people who are marginalized within the community, increasing their skill base and employment opportunities.

The Furniture Project Ltd have been able to offer a wide range of recognized qualifications through City & Guild and are continuing to develop partnerships with local businesses to provide quality learning and work placement opportunities cultivating a positive, supportive learning environment to help maximise retention of participants, whilst creating opportunities for forward employment.

RCF032 Annan The History Town Group – Improving Annan’s Visitor Experience - £3,750

The money was spent on developing two information boards, one on Edward Irving, probably Annan’s most famous individual in history, with his role in setting up the Apostolic Church in the early 19th century, and secondly telling the story of Annan Castle, Home of the Robert the Bruce family, and its motte and bailey which is a registered national monument.

This development included the cost of advertising consent for both these boards and another 4 interpretation sites which will provide a History Hub trail for visitors which will extend from Annan Harbour at one end of the town, up to the Everholm (Annan Castle) and then eastward to the far end of the town to the Annan Old Parish Church with its Edward Irving connections.

The benefits of the project will be significant in Annan’s development as a destination for visitors, as it strives to achieve its tourism potential, presently underachieving compared to other similar market towns. When all six sites are developed it will create a History Hub Trail which the group will promote to bring more people to the town.

RCF044 Young Enterprise Scotland - D&G Company Programme - £1,544.13

In 2022-23 the project supported 82 young people from 9 local secondary schools across Dumfries and Galloway to take part and to learn essential business and personal transferable skills which will help them achieve a positive future.

The programme supported young people to set up and run their own business over the course of an academic year. They were supported by local volunteers to design their business product or service; to select a company name and job roles; to prepare accounts; to create branding; to sell online and via local trade fairs and to deal with any problems or issues that arose.

Tackling real-life issues, they learned key entrepreneurial skills including creativity, resilience, teamwork, and problem solving and developed a valuable knowledge of business which will have a positive impact on their future aspirations and employment potential. Local training events ran throughout the year and at the end of the year participants competed in local and national competitions.

The winning team from Dumfries and Galloway were “Oor Wee Gift Company” from Annan Academy who beat all the competition at the local finals held at the Cairndale Hotel in Dumfries in March. They went on to attend the national Company Programme finals at Hampden Park in May, performing very well in both their trade stand display and final presentation.

In addition, 22 students worked towards achieving the accredited SCQF Level 6 qualification through taking part. 4 achieved the full award and 18 received at least 1 accredited unit.

Most recent evaluation of the programme showed that:

- 76% of young participants felt they had improved four or more employability competencies, with work readiness and self-esteem showing the greatest improvement.
- 91% of young people have a better understanding of the world of work.
- 100% of teachers agreed that the Company Programme had increased participants' self-awareness of their own capabilities, potential, strengths and weaknesses.

RCF061 The Fullarton Theatre – New Digital Projector System - £3,750

The grant was spent as part of the amount required to replace the projector. Since the new projector has been installed The Fullarton has been able to show films, live streams of ballet, opera and live events plus the projector has been used in the annual pantomime and summer show. From Sept 2022 to March 2023 5000 people have been able to see a film at The Fullarton in Castle Douglas without the need to travel to Newton Stewart, Annan, Carlisle or Ayr. Many other people have been to the live streams and live performances. The future of The Fullarton depends on this continuing and the new projector provides a stable reliable dependable way of doing this.

5.2023/24 Grants

5.1 The application form, criteria, eligibility, and Scoring Framework were agreed by the Management Committee and also the timetable as follows:

- Applications opened – 30th January 2023
- Closing of applications – 5pm 21st April 2023

5.2 83 compliant applications were received and, after consideration and scoring by the Management Committee, 33 were successful as set out in Table 1. Unsuccessful applicants have been advised they can re-apply to future rounds of the Fund and feedback was given to any applicant who requested it.

5.3 The grant application process, the Scoring Framework, compliance checks on the governance arrangements and financial sustainability of applicants, and the grant conditions are based on established arrangements that are already in place for other grants and are therefore consistent with Audit Scotland's 'Following The Public Pound' and other best practice guidance.

5.4 Each successful project is required to submit a Monitoring Report to evidence the achievement of the project outcomes. These Monitoring Reports are to be returned within 12 months of accepting the award, with the information used to check that funds have been spent on the agreed purpose, and for the information of the Management Committee.

Table 1: 2023/24 Grant Awards

Applicant	Awarded
Ae Bike Association	£375.00
All roads lead to Whithorn	£3,750.00
Auchencairn Initiative	£900.00
Balmaclellan Village Hall Trust	£2,849.25
Building Futures Galloway	£3,750.00
Creation Mill	£3,750.00
Cree Valley Development Trust Limited	£3,598.20
Dumfries & Galloway Hard of Hearing Group	£3,000.00
Dumfries Partnership Action Group (DPAG)	£3,750.00
Food Train Limited	£3,750.00
Glenkens Community and Arts Trust	£1,500.00
Glenkens Community and Arts Trust	£2,025.00
Happy Hooves Sanquhar CIC	£3,750.00
Inter Galloway AFC & community youth hubs	£3,750.00
Kirkconnell and Kelloholm Development Trust	£3,750.00
Kirkcudbright Development Trust	£1,500.00
Kirkcudbright Summer Festivities	£3,225.00
Kirkmaiden Community Harbour Trust	£3,375.00
Knockengoroch Festival	£3,750.00
KPT Development Trust	£3,750.00
Moffat Water Hall	£1,328.05
Moniaive Initiative	£3,750.00
New Abbey Playpark Project	£3,750.00
Nith Valley LEAF Trust	£4,000.00
Portpatrick Community Development Trust	£4,000.00
Sanquhar Enterprise Company	£3,750.00
Southern Uplands Partnership	£992.25
The Pamela Young Trust (PYT)	£3,750.00
The Royal Burgh of Lochmaben & District Community Council	£3,750.00
The Stove Network	£3,300.00
Upland Arts Development CIC	£3,703.50
Whithorn Playpark Project	£3,750.00
Young Enterprise Scotland	£1,275.00

Total: £100,946.25

6.Communications and information

6.1 A webpage for the Fund sits within the Dumgal website:

<https://dumgal.gov.uk/article/20249/Dumfries-and-Galloway-Regionwide-Community-Fund>

6.2 The promotion of the Fund was through the Council's website, social media platforms, information distributed to Elected Members, Community Councils, as well as being included on various third sector funding information websites, newsletters etc. for the region.