

**DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY
REGIONWIDE COMMUNITY FUND
ANNUAL REPORT
2021/22 'Year 2'**

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1. Introduction

Windfarm Community Benefit monies now form an important aspect of community resilience and empowerment.

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 Region Wide 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 Fund has now distributed its second year's funding. As evidenced in this second Annual Report, the existence of the Fund 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 was invited from public sector bodies and members were appointed in 2019 for a three-year term from Dumfries and Galloway Council, Dumfries and Galloway College, NHS Dumfries and Galloway, and NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage).

2.2 Independent members of the Management Committee were recruited with the assistance of Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway, to maintain a level of separation between the Council and the selection of Independent Members. 5 members have been appointed for a three-year term.

2.3 Current Members:

- Cllr. Andy Ferguson - Dumfries and Galloway Council
- Dr Stuart Graham – Nature Scotland
- Nicole Hamlets – NHS D&G
- Scott Proctor – D&G College
- Jeanette Byers – Independent
- Michael Greaves-Mackintosh – Independent
- Carol Hogarth – Independent
- Brian Jones – Independent
- Sue Reedman – Independent

Meetings during 2021/22

2.4 The Fund's Management Committee met in June 2021 to agree the allocation of funding for this year, and is scheduled to meet in November 2021 to scrutinise the performance monitoring reports of the 2020/21 awards.

2.5 Constitution and Terms of Reference

Full name

Dumfries and Galloway Windfarm Voluntary Region Wide Fund
Abbreviated to 'Region Wide Community fund' or 'RWCF'

Aims

The Region Wide 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 Fund'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 will be 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 maximum 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 meeting will be a minimum of five, with a majority of independent members required.

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

In the absence of the Chair at a 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 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 Chair.

Decision Making Process

Decisions will be made by the 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's Management Committee 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 2021/22 ahead of the second round of applications was £98,000 contributed from the Airies Windfarm Community Benefit Fund. An additional £4,185.99 funding that had been allocated but not used by the applicants was carried over from the previous year.

3.2 Expenditure

The outgoings of the Fund in 2021/22 were: £92,386.25 committed to projects in the region. Full list of successful applicants in table 1 below.

As previously agreed, 10% of the fund will go towards running and admin costs which will equate to around £9,000 per year. It's agreed by the Management Committee than any excess funding not allocated will be carried forward for the next round of applications.

4. Performance monitoring of 2019/20 awards

The first year of the Region Wide Community Fund's operation, 2020/21 supported a variety of community benefit projects covering a range of the Fund's target aims.

A full list of the 29 projects supported is available in the year 1 annual report - [Regionwide Community Fund - Annual Report 1.pdf \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](#)

Detailed project monitoring returns have been collected from the successful applicants in line with the Grant Agreement 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 and testimonies of some of the completed projects the 2020/21 Fund supported across the region.

Annandale Community Transport Services (ACTS) - £7,500 – Community Transport in Langholm & Canonbie

ACTS used their funding from the RWCF, alongside other local funders, to purchase a wheelchair accessible vehicle for community transport use.

The vehicle is currently being used in the Langholm/Canonbie area, driven by local volunteers (trained & disclosure checked) to provide an affordable and stress-free transport option for residents who need it to attend hospital appointments. The work was covered in the local newspaper, crediting this fund for its support.



Members of ACTS with the new vehicle

Dalbeattie Star Youth Football - £1,411.66 – Training Equipment

The club spent their money on a variety of training equipment which has allowed them to train all of their youth football players on the Colliston Park community pitch during the summer months. The additional equipment has helped to train for free all summer, enabling enough money to be saved to pay for winter training pitch hire, taking place on the high school's 3G pitch. This has kept the training fees as low as possible, helping make the club accessible to all the children in the community.

From the club:

“The money has massively improved the club’s ability to provide fun structured training for all our players all year round. The club is going from strength to strength, with a large part of that due to the funding we received. The fact that we can get up to 90 children training and playing football on a regular basis outside, will greatly improve their physical and mental health. The club now has a committed forward thinking committee who are striving to keep progressing the club and to make the children’s experience an enjoyable and fulfilling one. Thank you”

The Crawick Multiverse Trust - £7,012.50 – Understanding the Crawick Multiverse

The funding provided by the Regionwide Community Fund has enabled the Crawick Multiverse Trust (CMT) to add value and invest in further improving the visitor experience at Crawick Multiverse. The new facilities, to be known as The Coalface in recognition of the site's heritage and history as an open cast coal mine, provides a new custom designed sustainable, eco-friendly building with a small retail area, accessible toilets, changing areas and a sheltered space; as well as on-site office space for staff. We have also been able to improve our car park, picnic area and site signage. The main benefits achieved from the funding include:

- Investment in a nationally and regionally significant tourism destination and visitor attraction, as well as a public amenity for the local community in Upper Nithsdale, contributing to the economic and social development of the area.
- Supporting the Trust's plans for growth in visitor numbers and visitor spend, with early indications suggesting that our increased promotion and new facilities are directly contributing to attracting new and return visitors to the site.
- Keeping spend within the local economy, as all works were carried out by local businesses.
- Leverage of other funding, which has contributed to the further on-site improvements to visitor facilities and enhancing of the overall visitor experience at Crawick Multiverse.
- The improvements are also in line with supporting the tourism aspirations of Upper Nithsdale.



The Coalface, new facility

Kirkcudbright Community Tennis Club - £7,500 – Renovate Tennis Courts



The Kirkcudbright tennis courts were previously in a poor state of repair, and the club have used their RWCF grant to provide new courts that will last for years into the future. The new courts have already proved popular with players, seeing a growth in the club's membership numbers since the improvements. The club are also working towards taking on full management of the site through the Community Asset Transfer program.

Pictured left: the new playing surface

Ae Community Council - £5,843.10 – Village Recreation Area

Ae's funding was spent clearing a recreation area in the village and to provide a hard path, drainage, handrail, and benches through the area. This allowed all residents to be able to use the space safely and those with poorer mobility are now able to access the site, especially in the winter months.

The village school benefited too; using this trail after lockdown as well as a socially distanced elf hunt for both school children and pre-schoolers being arranged which was enjoyed not only by the children but also the parents. There has been positive feedback from local residents, and once current restrictions lift there are further plans to use the spaces for school lessons with different themed trails, and planting of fruit trees.

5.2021/22 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 – 29th January 2021
- Closing of applications – 5pm Friday 23rd April 2021

5.2 54 compliant applications were received and after consideration and scoring by the Management Committee, 25 were successful as set out in Table 1. Unsuccessful applicants have been advised they can re-apply to future rounds of the Fund.

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 '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 funds have been spent on the agreed purpose, and for the information of the Management Committee.

Table 1

2021/22 Grant Awards

Applicant	Award
All Roads Lead to Whithorn	£5,000.00
Auchencairn Initiative	£3,750.00
Birchvale Players, The	£3,434.81
Dalbeattie Star Youth Football	£3,750.00
Dumfries & District Music Festival Association	£2,570.00
Dumfries Table Tennis Club	£3,750.00
Dumfries Y Gymnastics Club	£3,048.95
Galloway Community Transport	£5,000.00
Hub, D&G	£5,000.00
Keir Penpont Tynron Development Trust	£3,750.00
Kirkconnel & Kelloholm Development Fund	£3,750.00
Kirkdale Hall Trustees	£3,750.00
Lift DG	£3,750.00
Moniaive Initiative	£3,750.00
New Abbey Play Park Project	£3,750.00
Newton Stewart (Galloway) Walking Festival	£750.00
Newton Stewart Football Club	£5,000.00
Nith Valley Leaf Trust	£3,750.00
Quilters of Shambellie House	£3,750.00
Sleeping Giants Community Development CIC	£3,712.50
Solway Firth Partnership	£3,750.00
South Machars Community Centre	£3,750.00
South West Scotland RnR	£3,800.00
Stranraer Stingrays ASC	£2,570.00
Tweed Forum	£3,750.00
Total	£92,386.25

6. Communications and information

6.1 A webpage for the Fund was created on the dumgal website:

<https://dumgal.gov.uk/article/20249/Dumfries-and-Galloway-Regionwide-Community-Fund> has received 2152 visitors over the past 12 months – this was a 36% increase on the previous year.

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