



EDF Renewables Dorenell Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund

Review of the Dorenell Community Development Plan and Fund Strategy



**This report has been produced by Dr
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Scotland**



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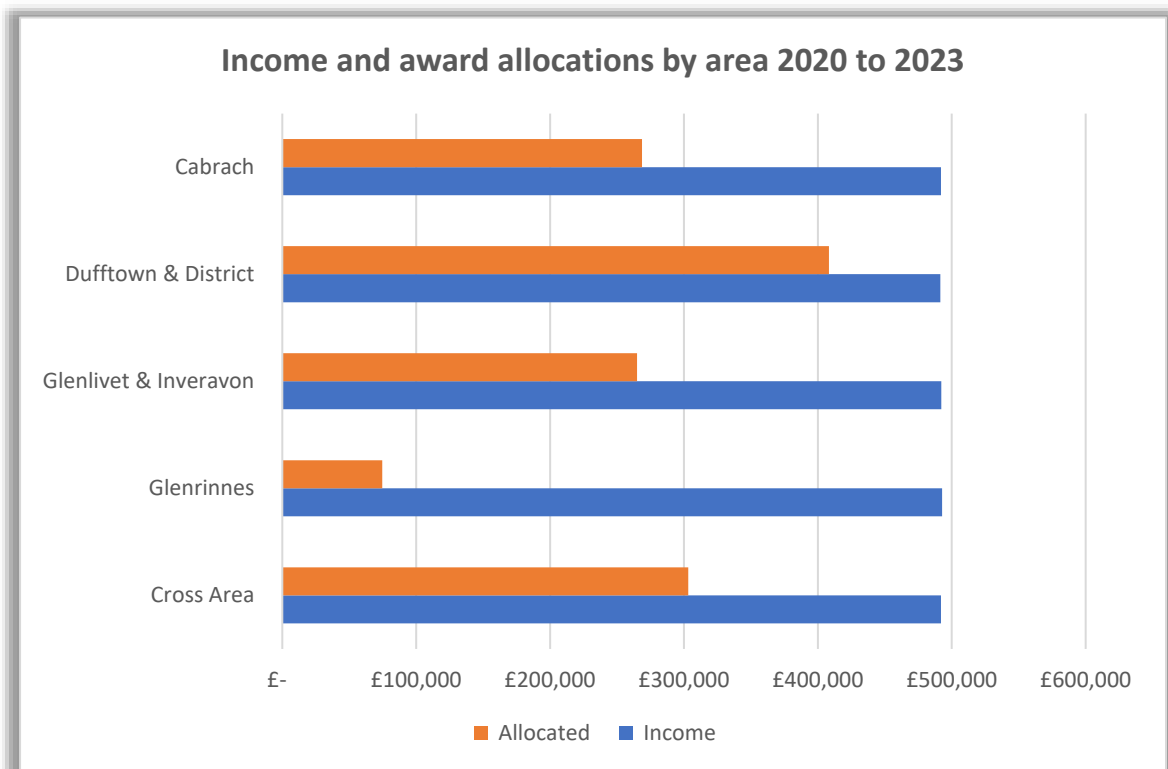
Executive Summary

The EDF Dorenell Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund supports community-led charitable activities in Cabrach, Dufftown and District, Glenlivet and Inveravon and Glenrinnnes.

The priorities for the fund are set out in the 2018 to 2023 Dorenell Community Development Plan (DCDP) and an associated Fund Strategy, which includes cross-cutting themes and outlines the approach to be used in fund distribution.

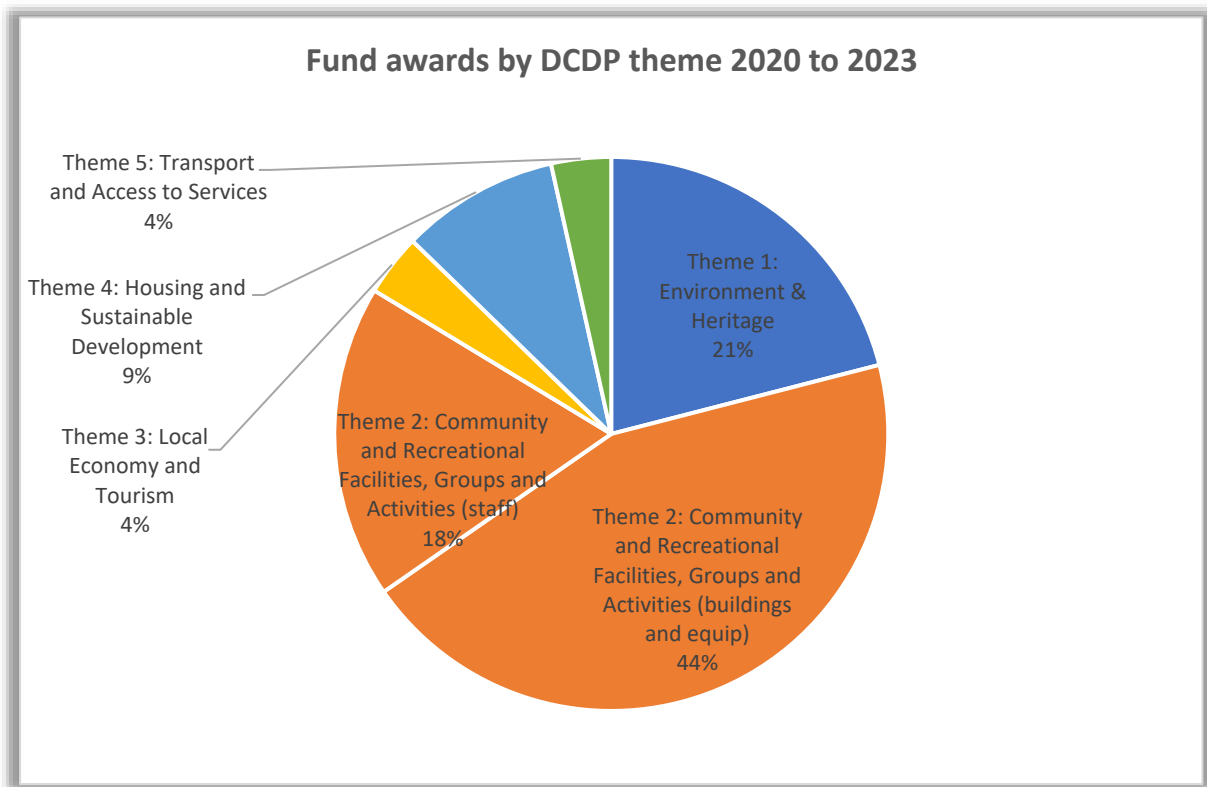
Between the launch of the fund in 2020 and the summer of 2023, the fund received £2,460,243 in income from donations from Dorenell Windfarm Limited and interest. Awards had been made totaling £1,273,764 to 61 projects from the main grant programme and £57,963.98 had been paid to the local Community Associations to fund microgrants.

The fund is allocated equally between the four fund areas and a cross-area fund. Award decisions are made by a single panel of volunteers drawn from across the fund areas. The percentage of each area's fund awarded varies with Dufftown and District seeing most successful applications and Glenrinnnes seeing least.



Of the funded projects, 85% of awards (by value) were identified as indicative projects in the 2018 to 2023 DCDP, indicating that expenditure by the fund is in line with identified community priorities.

Theme 2 of the DCDP, Community and Recreational Facilities, Groups and Activities, has received most support to date.



Consultations with local stakeholders, a review of changing contexts and lessons learned from project case studies were used to develop proposals for updated DCDP priorities and projects, revised cross-cutting themes and modifications to the fund distribution approach. The proposals were reviewed by the Dorenell Forum and fund panel and amended to reflect their feedback.

Updated DCDP priorities and priority projects:

The five themes in the 2018 to 2023 DCDP have been retained with minor rewording. The table below shows the revisions to priorities and priority projects.

KEY: Black – no change from 2018 to 2023 DCDP.

Blue – similar priority or priority project in 2018 to 2023 plan, but reworded.

Red – new priority or priority project.

A table including deleted priorities and priority projects and rationale for changes is provided in [section 8](#).

Theme 1: Environment & Heritage

Priority	Revised Priority Projects
Walking & Cycling Networks	Develop mountain bike tracks around Dufftown and Cabrach and expand biking facilities in Glenlivet Estate
	Take forward recommendations from the 2023 cross area path study
	Development of and improvements to local path and cycle networks in all areas
Museum, Visitor & Heritage Centres	Historic Distillery and Visitor Centre in the Cabrach
	Whisky and Heritage Centre in Dufftown
	Dark Skies Observatory in Glenlivet and Cabrach
Preservation & Enhancement of Landscape, Culture and Heritage	Creative and/or educational activities promoting engagement with the landscape, heritage and culture
	Creation of community assets from disused/underused rural buildings
Village & Town Enhancement	Breathe fresh life into prominent historic buildings
	Refurbishment of Dufftown Clock Tower to create a community hub and tourist accommodation
	Projects to enhance village and town appearance and streetscape

Theme 2: Community and Recreational Facilities, Groups and Activities

Priority	Revised Priority Projects
Community Halls	Development of the community facility at Old School Hall and House
	Continued improvements to halls in Dufftown
	Taking forward recommendations of feasibility study on Braes of Glenlivet Hall
	Improvements to Glenlivet Public Hall
	Improvements to Glenrinn Community Centre
	Improve/develop community group's dedicated facilities
	Improve coordination and sharing of community facilities e.g. booking systems, joint events diary, equipment sharing

Recreation Facilities	Tininver Park improvements
	Continued development of inclusive outdoor recreation facilities in Cabrach
	Develop sports and recreation facilities in Dufftown, potentially including MUGA
Opportunities & Facilities for Young People	Speyside Youth – continuation of youth facilities and provision in Dufftown
	Development of activities for young people across the fund area
Support for Community Development	Develop capacity of community anchor organisations, including funding of development officer posts
	Equipment for local groups
	Enhanced opportunities for local promotion of events, communication and sharing learning (e.g. newsletters, events, forums)
	Activities to recruit, support, coordinate and retain volunteers, such as a volunteer pool
	Developing and delivering events and activities which bring the community together
Emergencies, crises & resilience	Activities building the capacity and resilience of communities
	Emergency responses to crisis situations
	Recovery from crises and emergencies

Theme 3: Local Economy

Priority	Revised Priority Projects
Enterprise and Community Led Economic Development	Development and growth of social enterprise and community led economic activity creating good quality and sustainable employment
	Reviving Dufftown town centre to make it an attractive place to visit and do business, and where residents can access vital facilities such as financial services
	Supporting estates and farms to diversify and add value locally to benefit local economies
Access to ICT	Community initiatives to develop Superfast Broadband for homes and businesses
	Development of internet hotspots in Dufftown
	Support to groups and residents to embrace digital technologies
Tourist Facilities, Events & Promotion	Development of community owned accommodation for tourists and visitors
	Support Whisky festivals, Highland Games in Dufftown and Cabrach and other events that support the tourist industry

	Improving Keith & Dufftown Heritage Railway, including signage links with Dufftown town centre and links to main line
	Promotion of the unique scenic, cultural and historic character of the area
	Develop visitor information and information resources such as walk/cycling maps and apps
Training & Skills	Training and skills development linked to major local initiatives such as the Cabrach Distillery and Visitor Centre
	Bursaries for training and access to further education
	Working with businesses to create apprenticeships
	Development of training and education strategies which reflect opportunities within and outwith the fund area (such as initiatives supported by the Moray Growth Deal) linking people to high quality jobs
	Retaining and developing rural skills
	Increased provision of workspace for individuals and small businesses

Theme 4: Housing and Sustainable Development

Priority	Revised Priority Projects
Housing	Build new affordable and/or community owned housing in Dufftown to meet needs identified in housing needs analysis
	Explore options for improved appropriate housing provision in Glenlivet & Inveravon and Cabrach
	Connect houses to the grid in remote parts of Glenrinnnes
	Support households to access information and funds to increase energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty
Supporting the Transition to Net Zero	Support communities to access information and funds to improve the energy efficiency of community halls and fund improvement where costs cannot be met through existing schemes
	Explore potential for community renewables and storage (wind, hydro, solar) – feasibility studies
	Supporting a circular economy, including local food and drink production and minimisation/reuse of food and drink waste
	Development of projects supporting a Just Transition to net zero and/or developing links which harness benefits of Just Transition projects supported by other funders
	Encourage active travel e.g. expand bike and ebike hire at Tininver Park

Theme 5: Transport and Access to Services

Priority	Revised Priority Projects
Transport	Community Transport and integrated public transport schemes – commission feasibility study (which incorporates needs of school children, young people and visitors) and implement recommendations
	Develop and expand existing community owned transport solutions such as community car hire in Dufftown and Speyside Community Car Sharing Scheme
Childcare	Develop and support childcare services including childminders and afterschool care
Support for Vulnerable Children and Families	More services for vulnerable families
Older People	Very sheltered housing in Dufftown
	Initiatives addressing rural isolation among older people
	Initiatives catering for an ageing population in Dufftown

Changes to cross-cutting themes:

A table showing the original themes and rationale for changes is provided in [section 9](#).

Updated Cross-Cutting themes
Community Wealth Building: The project builds, retains and recirculates wealth in the local economy by investing in community owned assets, using local suppliers and/or creating high quality employment
Partnership and participation: The project is designed, developed, delivered and evaluated using an approach which engages with the community and encourages collaboration with other organisations
Sharing learning and building capacity: The project provides opportunities to share learning and build skills with other local people and groups
Environmental sustainability: The project has positive environmental benefits or has considered how best to mitigate harms
Leverage: The project will lever in funding from other sources; or the applicant can demonstrate what other funding has been or is likely to be secured; or what contribution is being made to deliver the project in terms of committing staff/volunteer time and assets
Legacy: The project will have a lasting impact, for example by kickstarting activities which will be financially sustainable in the long term; by bringing about long term systemic change; by preventative (upstream) actions which reduce harm to vulnerable individuals in the long term; or investing in capital assets which will benefit the community beyond the life of the fund

Proposed revisions to the Fund Strategy:

- 1. *Revise the current system of a £30,000 maximum award (with applications over this amount considered on a case-by-case basis) to a clearer system specifically allowing large awards for strategic projects and staff posts***

Applications over £30k would be considered for strategic awards and ongoing staff posts. Strategic awards are large, multi-year projects designed to bring about transformational change in the fund area, and in line with the priorities in the DCDP. The current maximum of £30k would be retained for other (non-strategic/staff) applications.

- 2. *Microgrants (max £1,000)***

The current approach to micro grants will be retained. However, reports on the usage of micro grants should be shared with the panel annually.

- 3. *Repayable grants***

The ability of the panel to make interest free loans should be added to the Fund Strategy. This could be considered in situations where cashflow limitations are impeding the delivery of a project.

- 4. *Commissioning***

The ability of the fund panel to commission projects should be retained in the Fund Strategy. Commissioned projects would be likely to remain a fairly small part of the fund expenditure. However, there is scope to extend commissioned work, particularly in support to the community in Glenrinn.

- 5. *Emergency awards***

It should be added to the Fund Strategy that the panel can agree to make awards outside normal grant cycles in the event of an emergency or unexpected occurrences severely impacting on the communities in the fund area.

The above proposals maintain the same underlying approach across the whole fund area whilst also taking account of the different needs and opportunities of each community. Allowing for strategic grants should make it possible for sub fund areas to develop a distinctive approach tailored to specific local circumstances.

1. Introduction

The EDF Dorenell Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund has been set up to benefit people who live in the areas of Moray served by:

- Cabrach Community Association
- Dufftown and District Community Association
- Glenlivet and Inveravon Community Association
- Glenrinn Community Centre

The above organisations (referred to in this report as ‘the Community Associations’) are represented on the Dorenell Forum which negotiated with Dorenell Wind Farm Ltd (DWL) to secure the fund and worked with Foundation Scotland, an independent grant-making charity, to set up the fund. Foundation Scotland is currently under contract to deliver the fund and report on its delivery to DWL and the Forum.

DWL, which is majority owned by EDF Renewables, makes an annual donation of around £450,000 to the fund, which is made available equally between the four communities. The annual amount is linked to RPI and will be donated annually for the life of the wind farm. The Forum also negotiated with DWL an additional Special Project Fund which has been used to set up an endowment, which the Community Associations asked Foundation Scotland to administer. The fund inception dates from 1st April 2019, with grant-making launched on 1st July 2020. A panel of up to twelve local volunteers makes decisions on awards. More information about the fund is available on the fund [webpage](#).

The fund also provides for a microgrant scheme, run by each of the four Community Associations. Through this, the Community Associations can make grants of up to £1,000 directly to groups or individuals for charitable activities.

Aims of the Review

The Fund Strategy, adopted in June 2020, outlines the priorities for the fund, drawing on the 2018 to 2023 Dorenell Community Development Plan (DCDP) as well as detailing the approach to fund distribution to be applied.

The DCDP was developed by the Dorenell Forum, with support from STAR Development Group Consultants.

The plan was informed by extensive consultation during 2017 and 2018 and sets out a vision for the area with themes, priorities and indicative projects for the period 2018 to 2023. The plan is now due to be updated.

The Fund Strategy stated that a review would be conducted of the strategy after three years of operation (i.e. 2023). This process would include public consultation within the four communities and involve the Community Associations. It would consider the fund's impact and priorities, distribution arrangements, and fund administration including the performance of the panel and Foundation Scotland. A report on the consultation findings would be prepared for the panel's consideration, and they would input to any recommendations on the way forward. The final report (agreed by the Panel) would then be sent to EDF Renewables.

This review was commissioned by Foundation Scotland and undertaken by Dr Bea Jefferson in the Autumn/Winter of 2023.

The overall purpose of the review, as set out in the brief, is to:

- Review the allocations from the fund and its impact to date against the priorities of the 2018 to 2023 DCDP
- Check that the fund's priorities (and cross cutting themes) are still in line with priorities of the communities and stakeholders in the area of benefit, taking on board where this is not the case
- Update the DCDP to reflect changing priorities
- Assess the effectiveness of fund distribution arrangements, as set out in the Fund Strategy, on an area by area basis (the four sub-fund communities with consideration also given to the cross area fund delivery) and if and how it should be adapted to suit each community's needs
- Make recommendations about how the fund's impact/legacy can be enhanced.

The scope does not include operational delivery of the fund, particularly satisfaction with Foundation Scotland as fund administrators, as this was covered in an evaluation in 2022. Neither does it include consideration of the Special Projects Fund.

It is also assumed in this review that core requirements contained in the fund agreement with DWL will be retained. This includes decision making by a community panel, and a requirement that the fund supports activities charitable in nature.

The current equal five-way split of the fund between the four communities and a cross-area fund was not part of the review. It was felt to be too early to make any judgement on whether this was the most appropriate division going forward. However, this is clearly an important issue, particularly given the differing levels of commitment of the fund in each area during the first three years (see below), and the split may need to be reviewed in future years. Foundation Scotland's contract to administer the fund runs until March 2024. This review does not assume continuation beyond this point. It is hoped that the findings will be relevant to any future fund administrator.

The report starts by considering the awards made by the fund between 2020 and 2023. In particular the differences in types and total value of awards between fund areas and the alignment of awards with the 2018 to 2023 DCDP. The report then considers the somewhat limited evidence to date on the impact of the fund.

The report then sets out the evidence gathered in developing proposals for changes to the DCDP and Fund Strategy which were agreed by the Dorenell Forum and fund panel in February 2024. This includes findings from consultations and reviews of the context in which the fund operates. The revisions are then outlined, alongside the rationale for changes, for the updated DCDP, cross-cutting themes and Fund Strategy.

2. The EDF Renewables Dorenell Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund 2020 to 2023

The fund supports community-led, charitable activities providing benefit to people living in the fund area. The themes and priorities for funding are taken from the 2018 to 2023 DCDP. These are:

1: Environment and Heritage

- Walking and cycling networks
- Museum, visitor and heritage centres
- Preservation and enhancement (of the natural environment)
- Village and town enhancement

2: Community and recreational facilities, groups and activities

- Community halls
- Recreation facilities
- Opportunities and facilities for young people
- Support for community development

3: Local economy and tourism

- Access to ICT
- Tourist accommodation and hospitality
- Tourist attractions, events and promotion
- Training and enterprise
- Partnership work between communities and estates

4: Housing and sustainable development

- Housing initiatives
- ICT
- Low carbon and green initiatives

5: Transport and access to services

- Transport
- Health and care
- Access to education
- Childcare
- Support for vulnerable children and families

Applications for projects that fall outside the listed priorities but still meet with strategic themes may be funded where there is clear evidence of need and community support.

Awards can support both revenue and capital costs and a wide range of activities, including equipment costs, staff or sessional worker costs, consultations and feasibility studies, maintenance and refurbishment of community facilities.

Applicants to the fund are also expected to consider the following cross-cutting themes in a way that is relevant to the proposed project or activities.

- Local procurement: Local suppliers of goods and services will be used, where appropriate and feasible.
- Partnership working: The applicant has considered whether delivering their project in collaboration with other groups or organisations can bring about greater impact.
- Building capacity locally: The applicant has considered whether the project provides opportunities to build the skills and knowledge of group members or other local people or groups connected with the project.
- Sustainability: Where the project or activity is recurring in nature, for example, an annual event, that the applicant can demonstrate their intention for the activity to become sustainable at some point in the future without the need to rely on grant funding in the longer term. Where the main purpose of the project is to develop an enterprise (whether a not-for-profit or private enterprise), its commercial viability will be a key consideration and should be demonstrated through a robust and realistic business plan.
- Leverage or match funding: That the applicant has secured or is seeking to secure match funding for the project (e.g. from local fundraising activity, other grants, or crowdfunding) and/or that the applicant can demonstrate what other funding may be secured as a result of implementing the project.
- Creating a lasting legacy: projects that are likely to benefit beyond the life of the Dorenell Wind Farm (expected to be 25 years) are particularly encouraged.

Fund Awards 2020 to 2023

Between the launch of the fund in 2020 and the summer of 2023, the fund received £2,460,243 in income from DWL donations and interest. Awards had been made totaling £1,273,764 to 61 projects¹ from the main grant programme and £57,963.98 had been paid to Community Associations to fund microgrants. The awards made to each of the fund communities are shown in full in [appendix 1](#). The tables in appendix 1 have been colour coded into broad categories to convey the different make up of funded projects in each of the fund's four areas. In summary:

- More awards have been made from the Dufftown and District allocation than the other area allocations and the cross area fund. 83% of the Dufftown and District allocation had been awarded (this figure is based on the full donation from DWL for 2023, but only part of the year's grantmaking). See figure 1.
- In contrast, 15% of the Glenrinnnes area fund has been allocated.
- Funded projects in the Cabrach area have an emphasis on the outdoor environment, arts and heritage, reflecting the character of the area and engagement by key local organisations in arts and culture.
- In contrast, Dufftown and District and Glenrinnnes projects have a high proportion of expenditure on community buildings and facilities.
- Projects delivering services to vulnerable people have been allocated to the cross area fund, reflecting that these services reach people throughout the fund area.
- The fund has supported development officer posts in Dufftown and District and Glenlivet and Inveravon.
- The fund supported other staff posts, including a heritage ranger and freelance arts professionals. This funding was initially only for 12 months, with further applications being made to continue with the projects being delivered.
- In Cabrach and Glenrinnnes a small number of individual organisations have been funded, reflecting the lower number of established organisations in these areas.
- In total, 27 individual organisations have been supported, with many receiving multiple awards.

¹ Repeat awards to continue with an activity are treated as separate projects. Two significant award uplifts have also been treated as separate projects as these required a panel decision and are shown on Foundation Scotland systems as a separate project.

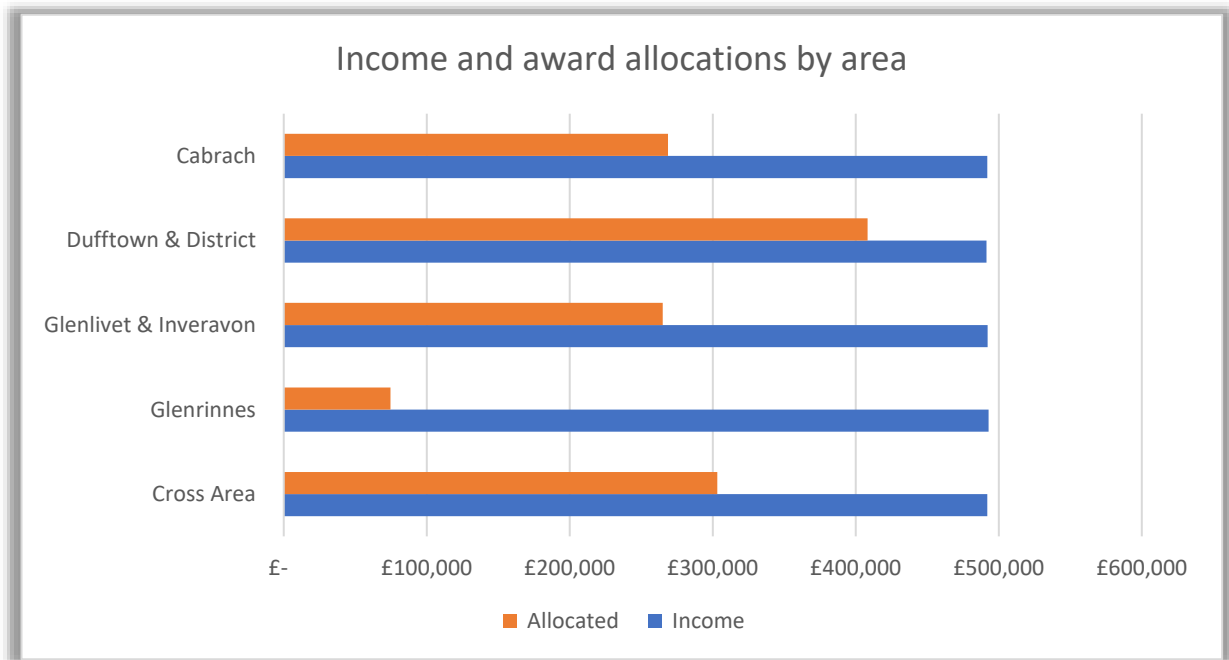


Figure 1: Income and award allocations by area, 2020 to 2023

The differing award allocations between areas is discussed further in the consultation in [section 7](#) and recommendations in [section 10](#).

Size of Awards

Applications are normally expected to be between £1,000 and £30,000. However, larger applications can be considered on a case by case basis. During the period under review, 11 awards of over £30,000 were made out of 61 awards (this includes a loan of £60,000). The maximum grant amount is discussed further in the consultation in [section 7](#) and recommendations in [section 10](#).

Distribution approach

In line with the Fund Strategy, all apart from one of the awards was made through an open grant making process. The exception was a commissioned piece of work on enhancing the footpath network across the Dorenell area (see [case study](#)). The balance between open grantmaking and commissioned work is discussed further in the consultation in [section 7](#) and recommendations in [section 10](#). 60 awards were grant awards made under Foundation Scotland's standard grant terms and conditions².

² These terms and conditions are consistently used across all Foundation Scotland managed community benefit funds. They reflect sector good practice and Foundation Scotland's long experience in managing funds. They are relatively short and written in plain English. In line with Foundation Scotland's commitment to open and trusting grantmaking (see section 6) they are designed to not be overly onerous to grantees.

One award was for an interest free loan to enable the delivery of an affordable housing project (see [case study](#)).

Microgrants

Only two areas, Dufftown and District and Cabrach, have awarded their first tranche of microgrant funding and drawn down a further allocation. Reports on expenditure are provided alongside the claim for further funds.

At November 2022, Dufftown and District Community Association had made 11 awards totaling £10,156. A broad range of items and activities were funded including equipment for the under 12s football club; events including the Farmers' Market and the Queen's jubilee; kitchen equipment at community halls; and bike racks for Keith and Dufftown Railway Association.

At May 2023, Cabrach Community Association had made 18 awards totaling £11,321. Of these awards, 11 were for activities of the Community Association (which is permitted to make awards to itself in the Fund Strategy), unlike in Dufftown and District where awards were to external organisations. As with Dufftown and District, awards included events and kitchen equipment. Awards also included help to organisations with design and planning activities, cleaning, repairs and maintenance.

Two awards supported the Community Association with 'core' activities, covering a new computer and accounting fees. In the stakeholder interviews conducted for this review, representatives of the Community Association commented how important the microgrant fund was for the Association to carry out its work.

Glenlivet and Inveravon Community Association have a grant fund provided by another windfarm which they can draw on as well as the Dorenell microgrants, resulting in a lower level of allocations.

Glenrinnies, having a lack of community groups other than the Community Centre, has seen a low demand for microgrants to date.

No changes to microgrants are recommended in [section 10](#).

3. Alignment with 2018 to 2023 DCDP priorities

The 2018 to 2023 DCDP highlighted 73 indicative projects relating to the themes and priorities identified through the community engagement process. The table in [appendix 2](#) shows the extent to which these indicative projects have been supported by the fund in the period to 2023.

Of the 61 awards in this initial period, 53 in number, 85% in value, relate specifically to indicative projects in the 2018 to 2023 DCDP. Of the eight awards which are not indicative projects, six are directly relevant to the themes and priorities in the plan.

One is to reinstate a childcare service which was stopped during the pandemic; one is for cycle events and training (two awards) which relates to the priorities of low carbon and green initiatives and opportunities for young people; one is for an oral history project in the Cabrach (two awards) which, though not specifically mentioned in the plan, links to indicative projects around training and development of heritage facilities in the Cabrach; and one for an arts project again in the Cabrach also contributes to wider arts-led community engagement.

A project to install speed cameras in Dufftown is of limited relevance to DCDP themes and priorities although improving road safety does benefit residents of the area, and potentially encourages active travel, which as a low carbon initiative is also a fund theme.

One award, contributing to the improvement of Glass Community Outdoor Space, sits outside the priorities of the DCDP as the facility is located outside the fund area. However, this was a small contribution to a much larger project, which reflects that the facility serves a wider area which includes some residents of the fund area.

Total support from the fund to each DCDP theme is shown in figure 2 below.

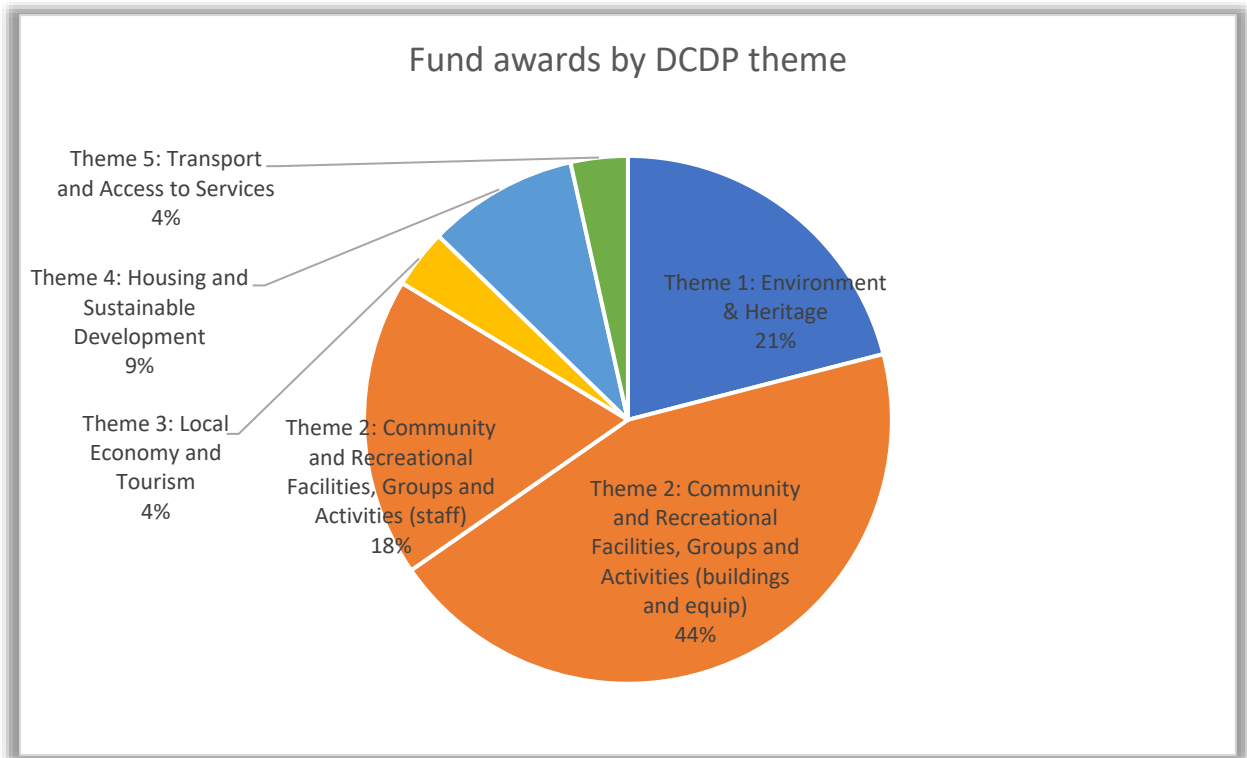


Figure 2: Awards (by value) to each DCDP Theme 2020 to 2023 (includes awards made to indicative projects only)

As can be seen, theme 2, which includes refurbishment of community buildings, equipment and community development support has received most funding with 62% of awards which can be allocated directly to a theme falling into this category.

The funding allocated to theme 2 has been further split on figure 2 between buildings and equipment (which includes feasibility studies for building improvements) and funding for staff posts related to community development activities. This shows that investment in capital improvements to community facilities still makes up the largest category accounting for 44% of awards.

Themes relating to transport and access to services and local economy and tourism have received very limited support from the fund to date with only 4% of allocations each.

4. Fund Impact to Date

This review has relied on Foundation Scotland project monitoring reports submitted by grantees, supplemented by stakeholder interviews.

In three years, £1,273,764 has been allocated to projects.

The impact of this funding includes:

- Feasibility studies being completed relating to improvements to three community buildings (Cabrach Old School and House, Mortlach Memorial Hall, Chapletown Hall). These will inform the future development and improvement of three significant community facilities.
- Other feasibility studies being completed relating to housing in Dufftown and a cross area footpath network which will inform future major developments in housing and walking infrastructure (see [case study](#)).
- Improvements to six established community buildings: Dufftown Bowling Club, Dufftown Community Centre, Dufftown Royal British Legion, Glenlivet Public Hall, Glenrinnes Community Centre, Tomintoul and Glenlivet Bowling Club. These upgrades have improved the experience of users (see [case study](#)).
- Improved outdoor spaces including Tininver Park in Dufftown, Cabrach all abilities path, Cabrach cairn memorial garden and improvements to the Dufftown paths network.
- Employment of development staff in Dufftown and Glenlivet and Inveravon which have enhanced the capacity of the community to develop projects (see [case study](#)).
- Delivery of projects engaging the community in collecting and retaining oral and visual history (see [case study](#)) and employment of a heritage ranger improving access to important historic sites (see [case study](#)).
- Using a repayable grant to facilitate the delivery of a major affordable housing project in Tomintoul (see [case study](#)).
- Delivery of projects supporting young people with their mental health and wellbeing and other activities for young people including a youth café.
- Initiating a pilot project providing public Wifi in Dufftown.
- Improvements to car parking and vehicle speed signs in Dufftown.
- Promotion of active travel through cycle training and bike maintenance.

As set out in the previous section, there has been a very strong alignment between the projects supported and the community priorities identified in the 2018 to 2023 DCDP. Monitoring reports provided by grantees point to a number of lessons learned by the organisations delivering the projects. These include:

- The importance of working in partnership with other community groups, the public sector and private sector.
- Dealing with the unexpected, whether this was increased costs, weather or unanticipated complexities.
- That professional support in developing major building refurbishments was very much valued, particularly when considering options and technical issues such as airflow and ventilation.

In 2022, Foundation Scotland adopted a new impact monitoring framework, developed in conjunction with the UK Community Foundations. This identifies a broad range of potential outcomes of awards. The indicators and outcomes most relevant to a specific fund's objectives can be selected for grantees to report against. The new impact framework should allow for more detailed quantitative information on outcomes to be collected consistently for projects in future years. However, this data is only one aspect of understanding impact as:

- The information is collected at completion of the funded project. Impacts often take longer to emerge.
- Projects often have multiple funding sources, and allocating outcomes to funding sources is often inconsistent among grantees.
- It is usually very difficult to determine a 'counterfactual', that is, what would have happened without the award.

In addition, a review of some of the early data being reported using this new framework suggests a degree of inconsistency and misunderstanding from grantees in interpreting outcomes and indicators. Foundation Scotland are aware of the issues and these are being addressed in ongoing work on developing ways to improve the impact evidence in line with Dorenell Fund priorities/outcomes. The new impact framework is a welcome improvement and will enhance current impact data. However, as with any monitoring system, its limitations need to be understood.

5. The First Three Years: Summary and Implications for the Future Fund Strategy

The fund launched in the midst of the Covid pandemic, which disrupted and delayed the plans of many groups and local organisations. However, £1.27 million has been allocated to the Dorenell communities.

Dufftown and District has seen greatest demand for funding, and the majority of the fund relating to the area has been allocated. In contrast, the fund allocated to Glenrinnnes has been undersubscribed. Issues relating to these differing levels of allocation and how to deal with them in the revised Fund Strategy were discussed with stakeholders (see [section 7](#)).

85% of the funding has been allocated to projects identified as a priority in the 2018 to 2023 DCDP, which was based on extensive community consultation. This indicates that distribution of the fund is in line with community priorities. However, a large proportion of the funding is to a single theme in the DCDP (Community and Recreational Facilities, Groups and Activities), with limited funding going to the remaining themes.

To an extent, this may be a timing issue. Projects such as improvements to kitchens and toilets of community buildings and appointment of development officers do not take a great deal of time to plan. In contrast, strategic developments such as community housing and major refurbishments to disused buildings can take a number of years to test feasibility, plan and raise funding. As a result, the pattern of allocations may become more evenly spread in future years.

Delivery of major future planned projects such as the Dufftown Clocktower and housing provision is heavily reliant on staff posts supported by the fund. The ability to bring forward projects related to themes such as Local Economy and Tourism is likely to be constrained by the capacity of the current paid staff to develop additional new projects.

However, the fund panel can continue to actively fill some gaps with initiatives such as the footpath study (see [case study](#)).

The high level of awards on improvements to community buildings has undoubtedly led to having facilities which provide a better experience for users. However, there is a lack of data as to whether these improved facilities have resulted in impacts such as increased use, more community activity or improved financial sustainability for the buildings.

Nevertheless, consultations undertaken for this review show that the buildings are valued by the community (see [section 7](#)).

The case studies in [Appendix 3](#) identified some potential approaches to enhancing impact including:

- Taking a longer term approach, particularly in funding commitments to staff posts
- Allowing larger, strategic grants
- Using commissioning to fill gaps in the DCDP
- Being flexible – such as provision of repayable grants
- Encouraging sharing and coordination of facilities

These are addressed further in [section 10](#).

6. Dorenell Community Development Plan and Fund Strategy Update: Changing Context

The Dorenell Community Development Plan (DCDP) 2018 to 2023 sets out the long term vision and priorities for the development of the fund area. It was informed by extensive community engagement carried out from September 2017 to January 2018.

In 2023, many of the priorities for the communities remain the same. However, new challenges and opportunities have emerged which need to be reflected going forward.

The updated plan maintains the 2018 to 2023 DCDP structure relating to themes, priorities and indicative projects (renamed 'priority projects'), identifying a number of additional priorities and projects and removing some projects which are no longer relevant.

The community profile from 2018 incorporated into the DCDP has not been updated due to a lack of data, particularly from the 2022 census, being available as yet at a local area scale³.

The Fund Strategy outlines the operations of the fund, including cross-cutting themes and distribution methods.

The proposals for revisions to the DCDP and Fund Strategy were based on:

- A review of how the environment and policy environment have changed, particularly since 2020, at a global, national, regional and local level
- A review of good practice research and recommendations relating to grant distribution
- Consultations carried out by local organisations in the period since the 2018-2023 DCDP
- An online survey, stakeholder interviews and public consultations carried out to inform this review
- Stakeholder workshops to review the proposed changes to the DCDP and Fund Strategy

³ Local area population data is due to be issued in spring 2024

The proposed revisions were considered by members of the fund panel and Dorenell Forum in February 2024 and amended to reflect the feedback received.

The Changing Environment

Uncertainty, Crises and Emergencies

2020 to 2023 has seen challenges which could not have been anticipated when developing the 2018 to 2023 plan. A pandemic, cost of living crisis and extreme weather events have caused profound difficulties for individuals and communities, with some sections of society, who were already vulnerable, being particularly hard hit⁴.

One lesson emerging from the Covid pandemic is the need for funders to recognise uncertainty when developing funding strategies⁵ and being prepared to make changes, sometimes very rapidly⁶, when faced by a crisis.

It was therefore proposed that a priority be added to the updated DCDP related to **responding to crisis situations and emergencies**. These responses could involve building resilience in advance of an emergency (such as equipping community halls to be places where the community can access warm space, food and power) or rapidly reacting to an emergency.

The fund panel and Forum recognise that community resilience is important. However, their feedback was that the revised DCDP should make clear that the fund is not supporting the community to take on responsibilities which should be the role of statutory undertakings such as local authorities.

The updated Fund Strategy explicitly states that the panel can make awards outside planned grant making rounds to deal with an emergency request for funding, and can proactively make awards to organisations involved in an emergency response. This proposal was accepted by the fund panel and Forum.

⁴ Foundation Scotland Briefing Note – Impacts of the Cost of Living Crisis on Organisations Funded through Foundation Scotland, January 2023. <https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/Briefing%20Note%20Final.pdf>

⁵ NPC – Shifting your funding practices during Covid-19. <https://www.thinknpc.org/resource-hub/covid-funding/>

⁶ Foundation Scotland, Evaluation of the Response, Recovery & Resilience Fund, July 2021. <https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-02/RRR%20Fund%20Report%20July%202021.pdf>

Energy Costs

Energy costs have more than doubled⁷ since 2018. This has impacted both on households, with poorest households worst affected⁸, and community groups, particularly those responsible for community buildings⁹. Fuel poverty is disproportionately high in rural Scotland¹⁰.

The Scottish Government is investing heavily in energy efficiency for households, community organisations and businesses¹¹, with major programmes of support available via Home Energy Scotland, Moray Council, Business Energy Scotland and Local Energy Scotland. The fund panel may not wish to support projects which could be funded through these far larger schemes. However, it is acknowledged that negotiating the complexity of grant schemes can be a problem for individuals and organisations and that support services are vital to improving uptake¹².

The 2018 to 2023 DCDP includes indicative projects on addressing fuel poverty and energy efficiency of community halls. The priorities on energy efficiency have been reworded to include **advice and support services** and the Fund Strategy should clarify that applicants are expected to make use of available grant schemes.

Pressures on the Voluntary and Community Sector

As well as financial pressures driven by increased costs, voluntary and community sector organisations across Scotland consistently report volunteer shortages as their biggest concern¹³. Anecdotal evidence from stakeholder interviews (see consultation findings in [section 7](#)) suggest that the fund area is no exception.

⁷ Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, Quarterly Energy Prices, UK April to June 2023. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/651d7540e4e658000d59d961/Quarterly_Energy_Prices_September_2023.pdf

⁸ Office for National Statistics, Energy Prices and their effect on households, February 2022. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/articles/energypricesandtheireffectonhouseholds/2022-02-01>

⁹ Pro Bono Economics, Lights Out: The charity sector's energy bills, December 2022. <https://www.probonoeconomics.com/lights-out>

¹⁰ Changeworks, A perfect storm – fuel poverty in rural Scotland, 2023. <https://www.changeworks.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/A-Perfect-Storm-Fuel-Poverty-in-Rural-Scotland.pdf>

¹¹ The Scottish Government, Energy Efficiency. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/energy-efficiency/>

¹² Changeworks, Fuel Poverty in Rural Scotland, The Solutions, 2023. <https://www.changeworks.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Fuel-Poverty-in-Rural-Scotland-The-Solutions.pdf>

¹³ SCVO, The Scottish Third Sector Tracker, 2023. <https://scvo.scot/policy/research/evidence-library/2023-the-scottish-third-sector-tracker-wave-6-summary-report-spring-2023>

Informal volunteering increased during the Covid pandemic, with many people helping their neighbours. However, since the pandemic volunteering has been in decline. This is thought to be a symptom of the cost of living crisis¹⁴.

Volunteers play an essential role in supporting the communities in the fund area and delivering the activity in the DCDP. This is acknowledged with a new priority project relating to **recruitment, support and retention of volunteers**.

Demographic Change

Data from the 2022 census is not yet available at a local level. However, it is clear that Scotland's population is ageing and that Moray, as a whole, has a relatively high proportion of older people in comparison to the rest of Scotland¹⁵.

Anecdotal evidence from consultations carried out as part of the DCDP update (see consultation findings in [section 7](#)) suggests that the ageing population is an issue, primarily in the more remote communities of the fund area.

Older people can face challenges with isolation, lack of transport, unsuitable housing, poor access to services and poor employment opportunities¹⁶.

A lack of available housing can make it difficult for older people to downsize to more suited housing whilst staying in the same area, which leads to under occupation of houses and exacerbates a lack of housing for families.

The 2018 to 2023 DCDP makes reference to very sheltered housing, but not wider issues being faced by older people. Therefore, a priority has been added to the updated plan reflecting the needs of **older people** and the range of priority projects has been amended to reflect a wider range of needs among the older population in the area.

¹⁴ Volunteer Scotland, Testing our Resilience, September 2022. <https://www.volunteerscotland.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Testing-our-Resilience-The-impact-of-the-cost-of-living-crisis-on-volunteering-and-volunteers.pdf>

¹⁵ Scotland's Census 2022, Rounded Population Estimates. <https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/2022-results/scotland-s-census-2022-rounded-population-estimates/#section4>

¹⁶ Age Scotland. Age Scotland calls for more action to prepare for ageing population, July 2022. <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/latest-news/2022/july/age-scotland-calls-for-more-action-to-prepare-for-ageing-population/>

Policy Environment

The 2018 to 2023 DCDP includes a number of priorities where the policy environment has changed significantly during the last five years, creating new opportunities for the fund area.

Community Wealth Building (CWB)

CWB is a place based approach that looks to alter local economic thinking by focusing on retaining and recirculating wealth within local communities¹⁷. CWB has been adopted by the Scottish Government¹⁸ and Moray Council¹⁹, and legislation is in development to embed the approach in Scotland. Initiatives informed by CWB emphasise the importance of local procurement, community ownership and high quality employment opportunities.

Many of the priorities in the 2018 to 2023 DCDP and projects already supported by the fund are fully in line with CWB as they support the development of community assets and local enterprise. Local procurement is included in the existing Fund Strategy as a cross-cutting theme.

The **cross-cutting theme** referring to local procurement has been expanded to embrace the concept of **CWB** more fully.

Reaching 100% programme (R100)

The Scottish Government was committed to enabling access to superfast broadband (speeds of at least 30Mbps) to every home and business in Scotland by 2021. The 2021 policy commitment was to be met via the three strands of R100 activity: R100 contracts with providers to install fibre connections; the Scottish Broadband Voucher Scheme (SBVS) which provides households and businesses with vouchers to purchase connections from providers, and encouraging an increase in ongoing commercial coverage expansion.

By October 2023, 42,000 connections had been installed under the programme and 3,500 premises had used the voucher scheme²⁰. However, 100% coverage has not been achieved.

¹⁷ Moray Community Wealth Building Strategy 2023. <http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file149242.pdf>

¹⁸ Scottish Government, Policy, Cities and Regions, Community Wealth Building. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/cities-regions/community-wealth-building/>

¹⁹ Moray Council, Community Wealth Building Strategy.

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_149231.html

²⁰ Digital Scotland, R100 facts, October 2023. <https://scotlandsuperfast.com/r100-programme/r100-facts/>

In Moray as a whole, 4,852 premises are still awaiting connection, with R100 targets not expected to be met before 2027²¹. Data is not publicly available on how many properties are awaiting connection in the fund area, but connectivity remains a major concern among residents in the more remote communities (see consultation findings in [section 7](#)).

As 'R100' appears to be some way from being reached, it is reasonable to continue to include **superfast broadband connectivity** as a priority for the fund in the updated plan. Since the 2018 to 2023 DCDP was developed, connectivity has become all the more important, being essential for accessing public services, flexible employment opportunities and running businesses.

A Just Transition to Net Zero

The Scottish Government is committed to a 'just' transition to net zero²², which leaves nobody behind. This aspiration is backed by a £500m, 10 year fund for the North East and Moray²³.

In the first year of the fund, 24 projects were supported²⁴ as part of the main grant programme, and many more smaller awards were made through a participatory budgeting programme. One of the projects supported was the Cabrach Historic Distillery, which is in the fund area. Other cross-Moray projects were supported which could bring some benefits the fund area such as Moray Council's Just Transition Masterplan and UHI Moray's work on future skills requirements in Moray as it transitions to net zero.

The Just Transition Fund programme is still at an early stage. Hence it is difficult to know exactly what opportunities the fund or other just transition initiatives could bring to the fund area. Therefore, a priority project is included in the updated plan which refers to **harnessing the benefits of Just Transition** activities.

²¹ <https://www.northern-scot.co.uk/news/mp-slams-painfully-slow-progress-on-moray-superfast-broadb-337197/>

²² Scottish Government, Policy, Climate Change, Just Transition. <https://scotlandsuperfast.com/r100-programme/r100-facts/>

²³ However, it is noted that the 2024-5 Scottish Government budget shows a considerable reduction in short term funds committed to the fund, with the £50m in 2023-4 reducing to £12.2m in 2024-5. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-budget-2024-25/pages/8/>

²⁴ Scottish Government, Just Transition Fund, year one projects. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/just-transition-fund/pages/year-one-projects/>

The priority 'Low Carbon & Green Initiatives' has been renamed to become '**Supporting the Transition to Net Zero**' as this reflects the language used in local and national policy.

Moray Growth Deal

Moray Council successfully secured £100m to deliver a Growth Deal²⁵ to support the economic development of Moray. Eight large projects are being funded. The majority of these are based in Elgin, Moray's largest settlement. However, the benefits of the investments are intended to boost the economy of the whole area.

Two Growth Deal projects may directly benefit the area:

1. The expansion of on-demand bus services, so that they operate 4am to midnight on Monday to Saturday and 7am to 10pm on Sunday throughout Moray
2. Funding for the early stages of development of rural housing sites providing affordable housing

Housing and transport remain as priorities in the updated DCDP, and these Growth Deal projects could support local aspirations in these areas. A new priority project has been included in the updated plan which refers to **harnessing the benefits of Growth Deal** projects.

Good Practice in Grantmaking

Foundation Scotland

Foundation Scotland, the fund administrator, is an independent charity managing over 110 community benefit funds. As previously stated, the contract to manage the Dorenell Community Benefit Fund expires in March 2024. Nonetheless, Foundation Scotland experience and learning are relevant to any future administrators; and Foundation Scotland's formal commitments on Open and Trusting Grantmaking and on Climate Change are likely to be aspirations of any future administrators, and so have been considered in the Fund Strategy update.

²⁵ My Moray, Growth Deal FAQs, <https://mymoray.co.uk/growth-deal/growth-deal-faqs/>

Foundation Scotland is formally committed to ‘Open and Trusting Grantmaking,’ as set out by IVAR²⁶. This encompasses eight aspects of good grantmaking:

1. Don't waste time
2. Ask relevant questions
3. Accept risk
4. Act with urgency
5. Be open
6. Enable flexibility
7. Communicate with purpose
8. Be proportionate

Many of these eight areas are being addressed internally by Foundation Scotland in reviews and improvements to systems which are applied across all Foundation Scotland funds, and are excluded from this review. However, some aspects of Open and Trusting Grantmaking could be more strongly embedded in the updated DCDP and Fund Strategy. In particular, the recognition of **accepting risk** when making funding decisions, the ability to **act with urgency** when appropriate, and enabling **flexibility**.

Another of Foundation Scotland's formal commitments is the Funder Commitment on Climate Change²⁷. This includes a commitment to working with stakeholders to introduce climate smart objectives and being cognisant of climate impacts when assessing project applications.

In guidance provided for applicants, Foundation Scotland emphasises the point that what's good for people is also good for the planet²⁸. Environmentally sustainable solutions can cost less in the long term. To reflect this commitment, **environmental sustainability** has been added as a **cross-cutting theme** in addition to the current stand-alone priority on Low Carbon and Green Initiatives, as environmental sustainability is relevant to all themes in the DCDP.

²⁶ IVAR, Flexible Funders. <https://www.ivar.org.uk/flexible-funders/>

²⁷ Funder Commitment on Climate Change. <https://fundercommitmentclimatechange.org/>

²⁸ Foundation Scotland, for people and planet. <https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/apply-for-funding/help-for-applicants/projects-for-people-and-planet>

Foundation Scotland has been working jointly with the Wellbeing Economy Alliance on a project looking at how to channel more funding towards activity that goes beyond short term fixes and supports enduring, transformative change²⁹. This has led to a commitment to an ‘**upstream**’ approach which emphasises the need for preventative activities and changing systems, rather than short term actions aimed at reducing immediate social and environmental harms. Foundation Scotland is not the only stakeholder embedding the concept of the Wellbeing Economy into its work: tsimORAY, the third sector interface for Moray, have also been working on this with the Wellbeing Economy Alliance to inform their approach.

The updated Fund Strategy reflects this thinking through an increased willingness to make **longer term** awards with greater **flexibility** and wording of the fund’s **cross-cutting themes** has been amended to incorporate key concepts behind the wellbeing economy relating to **participation, prevention and systems change**. Support for this approach also came out of stakeholder consultation – see consultation findings in [section 7](#).

Restricted v Unrestricted Grants

Restricted grants have to be used for a specific purpose as defined by the organisation awarding the funding. Unrestricted grants can be used by an organisation’s trustees for any purpose as long as it is in line with their objectives.

Traditionally funders have awarded restricted grants, which have to be used to deliver a project as outlined in a funding application. This is perceived as offering more accountability and ensuring the fund gets used in a way consistent with the fund objectives and compliant with the rules the funder has to follow (such as charitable registration)³⁰.

However, there are increasing calls from organisations such as IVAR for funders to be more open to awarding unrestricted grants.

²⁹ Foundation Scotland, Raising our Gaze, September 2022. <https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-02/Raising%20our%20Gaze%20September%202022.pdf>

³⁰ IVAR, Evidence Review: why restrict grants? 2023. <https://www.ivar.org.uk/publication/evidence-review-why-restrict-grants/>

This is because the funded organisations (rather than the funder) have greater expertise and knowledge of the issues they are tackling ‘on the ground’, and so can make better strategic choices in how money is spent. It is also perceived as being more likely to promote creativity, innovation and build capacity in funded organisations. The funder still needs to offer some guidance on how awards can be used, but if beneficiary organisations have objectives which are consistent with the fund objectives, only light restrictions are needed to give an ‘envelope’ to how funds can be spent³¹.

The updated Fund Strategy reflects this thinking by allowing **longer term, flexible, strategic awards**.

Commissioning

The Fund Strategy currently allows distribution through commissioning. This is where the fund panel develop a specification for a project. The specification can then be openly advertised to select an organisation to deliver the project (open commissioning) or the panel could invite a single local organisation to submit a bid (closed commissioning) where it is clear that organisation would be best placed to deliver.

To date only one project has been commissioned (see [case study](#)), which has demonstrated the utility of this approach, particularly for taking forward cross area projects.

Good practice guidance on commissioning tends to reflect the use of the approach by local authorities and government agencies when working with the third sector³². However, most points noted as good practice are consistent with IVAR’s ‘Open and Trusting’ principles.

The updated Fund Strategy continues to allow **commissioning**. Some areas where a commissioning approach could be used were noted in the consultation.

³¹ IVAR, The holy grail of funding, 2021. <https://www.ivar.org.uk/publication/the-holy-grail-of-funding/>

³² DSC, Grants for Good, 2023. <https://www.dsc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Grants-for-Good-Local-Authority-Grantmaking-072023.pdf>

Alternative Distribution Approaches

Since the development of the 2018 to 2023 DCDP and the 2020 Fund Strategy, participatory approaches to grantmaking have been tested locally, particularly by tsiMORAY.

Participatory approaches cover a variety of practices where the local community is involved in decision making. This can involve ensuring a wider range of people, including those with 'lived experience' are on decision making bodies and/or putting award decisions to a public vote. The approach has been piloted in Moray using funding from Scottish Government and the National Lottery Community Fund.

Evaluations carried out of participatory budgeting³³ (where the public vote on awards) highlight that it can increase public accountability, but it comes with risks such as difficulties ensuring it is inclusive. TsiMORAY have found that using a participatory budgeting approach for small grants has helped them to better understand the needs of local communities and increased engagement with smaller community organisations³⁴.

The panel approach adopted by the Dorenell fund and other Foundation Scotland community benefit funds, already has community members leading on decision-making. However, an explicitly 'participative' approach could broaden representation on the panel and/or invite the public to vote on awards.

However, it was not proposed that participatory grantmaking/budgeting is employed in distributing this fund as there is still limited evidence that it is an effective method of grantmaking and consultations did not indicate any support for such a move.

However, **encouraging participation** has been incorporated into a revision to cross-cutting themes. This will be particularly important if the fund panel decides to go down the route of longer term unrestricted funds, where ongoing engagement with the community would be vital to informing the direction of activity.

³³ Scottish Government, Evaluation of Participatory Budgeting activity in Scotland 2016 -2018.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/evaluation-participatory-budgeting-activity-scotland-2016-2018-2/pages/1/>

³⁴ Stakeholder interview findings

Community Consultations Since 2018

Dufftown and District Community Association developed a Community Action Plan (CAP) for Dufftown and District 2021 to 2026³⁵. This incorporated much of the 2018 to 2023 DCDP and an earlier planning for real exercise. The plan is intended to be a live document which was reviewed and updated in 2022³⁶. The updated DCDP incorporates many of the projects identified in the Dufftown and District Community Action Plan to ensure these plans are consistent (though some action plan projects have been merged into more generic descriptions for reasons of length).

In early 2021, the **Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust** conducted a postal survey of all households in Glenlivet and Inveravon³⁷. This was structured around the priorities in the 2018 to 2023 DCDP. The findings ranked priorities for potential projects in the area. These projects are reflected in the updated DCDP.

2021 also saw a survey of all households in Glenrinnnes undertaken by the **Glenrinnnes Hall Committee**. This asked about priorities for residents, with the top priorities reported by respondents being internet connectivity, social events, improvements to the Glen Hall and walking and cycle routes. These priorities are reflected in the updated DCDP.

The **Cabrach Trust** have been conducting an ongoing piece of work with IVAR as 'learning partners' evaluating their work. This includes community engagement activities which have identified priorities for local people. This has not resulted in an updated local plan, however, emerging priorities from IVAR's baseline report were discussed during stakeholder interviews, and are consistent with the updated DCDP.

The Cabrach Trust also commissioned a survey as part of a feasibility study for the Old School House development in 2021. Even though this was carried out in the context of a specific development it includes feedback from the community on challenges faced by the area, which are consistent with the updated DCDP.

³⁵ <https://dufftowncommunity.co.uk/app/uploads/2021/04/Dufftown-Community-Action-Plan-2021.pdf>

³⁶ <https://dufftowncommunity.co.uk/app/uploads/2021/04/Action-Plan-Review-2022.docx-1.pdf>

³⁷ <https://www.tgdt.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Glenlivet-and-Inveravon-Community-Priorities-Survey-Report-compressed.pdf>

A number of consultees for this review made the comment that there had been a great deal of consultation in the fund area, and that there was a sense of 'consultation fatigue'.

It was therefore important that material from existing consultations were incorporated into the revised plan rather than carrying out extensive further public consultation.

7. Dorenell Community Development Plan and Fund Strategy Update: Consultation Findings

Methodology

An online survey was open during October and early November 2023. This asked respondents to state whether they felt the priorities in the 2018 to 2023 DCDP were more or less relevant today and whether indicative projects from the 2018 to 2023 plan were still relevant. Respondents had the opportunity to provide further information about their answers on free text sections of the survey form and provide contact details if they were willing to discuss their views further.

Despite being circulated via Community Associations and on social media, completion was low, with only 17 completed surveys being received. Five of those local residents responding were contacted by telephone to learn more about their views on local priorities.

Three public events were attended where local residents were invited to give their views. These were existing scheduled events, including Dufftown's Farmers' Market.

Online or telephone interviews took place with representatives of the following stakeholder organisations:

- Cabrach Community Association
- Dufftown and District Community Association
- Glenlivet and Inveravon Community Association
- Glenrinnes Community Centre
- Highland and Islands Enterprise
- IVAR
- Moray Council
- The Cabrach Trust
- The Dufftown Trust (Formerly Dufftown and Mortlach Development Trust)
- Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust
- tsiMORAY

In addition, the fund panel discussed issues around different levels of spend in each fund area at a meeting on 14th November 2023. Their comments and ideas were incorporated into the consultation.

Proposed changes to the DCDP and Fund Strategy were considered by a meeting of stakeholders in each of the four fund areas. In Dufftown, one of the regular Dufftown Forum meetings was used for this purpose.

The finalised proposed changes were reviewed by a joint meeting of the Dorenell Forum and fund panel and further amended to reflect the issues raised.

Key points emerging from the consultation were:

Priorities

There was general agreement that all the 2018 to 2023 DCDP priorities remained valid. However, the online survey showed a lower level of support for priorities related to **tourism and training and enterprise**. Further discussions with respondents indicated that there was a feeling that private businesses, particularly distilleries, should take a lead on tourism, as they were the main beneficiaries.

As a result of this feedback, the tourism priority in the updated plan specifically emphasises community led approaches rather than more generic support for tourism.

The fund panel and Dorenell Forum felt that the updated plan should not place too much emphasis on tourism. Tourism is undoubtedly important to the local economy, but the jobs created by tourism can be insecure, low paid and seasonal. There is a need for more diversified economic development which creates high quality employment. Therefore, a new priority has been added to the updated plan relating to **enterprise and community led economic development**.

The 2018 to 2023 DCDP priorities did not reflect concerns which were expressed by community members at consultation events carried out for this review about **older people** facing isolation, primarily in rural areas.

Therefore, an additional priority has been added to the updated plan to reflect this gap.

The online survey asked if responding to the **cost of living** crisis should be included as a specific new priority. The survey respondents were generally positive about this suggestion. However, community members at consultation events were less supportive. It was felt that people were very reluctant to come forward and admit that they were struggling, making targeted support to those in poverty very difficult in practice. Hence, cost of living was not proposed as a new priority. However, aspects of dealing with the cost of living crisis fall within the new priority on dealing with crises and emergencies. In addition, a priority project has been added referring to food waste, which would include initiatives such as Dufftown's community larder which addresses both food poverty and food waste.

A few community members attending events felt that the fund should be used to give all households money towards **electricity bills**. This would be problematic under the current fund arrangements as all funded activity must be charitable in nature. A universal contribution to fuel bills to all households in the fund area would not meet OSCR's definition of a charitable purpose³⁸; support would only be possible to households in parts of the fund area which faced particular fuel poverty issues³⁹. However, household energy efficiency remains within the updated plan, which could also save residents money on bills.

Priority Projects

Theme 1: Environment & Heritage

Walking and cycling routes were recognised as important by many consultees, for both residents and visitors to the area. The 2018 to 2023 DCDP has some very specific improvement works noted, particularly in the reinstatement of bridges. Consultees mentioned numerous routes where they would like to see improvements. The updated plan takes a more generic approach than the 2018 to 2023 plan and does not identify specific actions at a local level.

³⁸ OSCR, Meeting the Charity Test <https://www.oscr.org.uk/guidance-and-forms/meeting-the-charity-test-guidance/>

³⁹ OSCR have approved Foundation Scotland universal schemes as charitable where a majority of homes are off-grid and a majority of homes have EPCs rated E-G.

This is partly due to the lack of consensus on which routes are priorities and partly so that any local path improvements are informed by the work being done on cross area paths (see [case study](#)) which was not available at the time of the consultation.

Arts and creative activities were felt to be a major omission from the 2018 to 2023 plan by some consultees. Cabrach has a particularly active programme of arts-based and creative projects which were felt to be very successful in driving community engagement and skills development (see [case study](#)). The updated plan now makes explicit reference to creative activities.

A number of specific **derelict or underused sites** were mentioned by consultees, including Inveravon school; and the potential for an increased number of unused churches due to the Church of Scotland reducing its estate was also raised. A generic project has been added to the updated plan to recognise that these buildings can represent opportunities for communities. However, each site comes with challenges, and it is too soon to say which projects should be prioritised.

In contrast, the development of the **Clocktower** in Dufftown is a clear priority for many consultees, and this iconic building is now included as a priority project in its own right.

Theme 2: Community and Recreational Facilities, Groups and Activities

Community Halls were cited by many consultees as being of crucial importance to communities. This was particularly the case in Glenrinnies, where the Glen Hall is the only community facility.

Consultees reported that, even though there were a number of halls in Dufftown, they were all well used. The perception was that there was no excess capacity, so it was reasonable for the fund to support improvements in all the halls. There was a lack of appetite for a strategic review of halls as put forward in the 2018 to 2023 DCDP. However, some consultees felt that the halls could do more to work together.

A few consultees thought that halls in more remote areas should receive ongoing funding to meet running costs, to recognise their importance to the area.

This has not been included as an indicative project in the updated plan as there was not a consensus on this with others feeling that community facilities should be able to self-fund from rental income.

The proposed development of a **Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)** was raised as a potential priority for Dufftown, even though it does not appear explicitly in the town's Community Action Plan. The MUGA is, however, referenced in the updated plan.

Improving activities for **children and young people** was mentioned by a number of community members. However, the point was also made that there were other demographics where provision was poor, such as young adults and young families. The 2018 to 2023 DCDP only made mention of activities for young people in Dufftown. The revised plan includes development of activities the other fund areas.

Consultees from Highlands and Islands Enterprise, tsiMORAY and Moray Council were very supportive of the funding of **Development Officer** posts. Their experience was that areas with paid Development Officers had far greater capacity to develop and deliver projects of benefit to the community than those without. These consultees felt it was important to commit funding to these posts for a significant time period so that experienced staff could be retained. In the past, a number of Development Officer posts in Moray and the Highlands have been funded or part funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise through their Strengthening Communities programme. Budgetary constraints mean that this support may be harder to come by in future, making support from funds such as Dorenell more important.

There was a minority view among consultees that funding staff posts was of limited value as it may not create a lasting legacy. It was felt by some that organisations employing staff supported by the fund could do more to ensure they were generating income to support these posts in the mid to long term. Currently the fund supports Development Officers in Dufftown and Glenlivet and Inveravon. A lack of paid staff capacity in Glenrines was suggested as one reason why the proportion of funding allocated in the area has been low. A number of community members mentioned the importance of community newsletters and other ways of **sharing information** such as social media.

Dufftown Speirin's and Glenlivet's (currently dormant) Thistledown newsletter were seen as particularly useful for people who don't engage with digital news sources and social media. Several consultees also mentioned **community events** and activities which brought people together such as 'soup and sweet,' coffee mornings, Burns suppers, film nights, craft workshops and talks. Overall, these were seen in a positive way, particularly emerging from the isolation of the Covid pandemic.

They are also important in the sustainability of community halls. However, one consultee felt that they were a waste of time, and potentially money, attracting only a minority of the community, who were already well engaged. Nonetheless, priority projects have been added to the updated plan on sharing information and community events.

A lack of capacity among **volunteers** was cited by many consultees as holding back development and delivery of projects in the area. Therefore, a new priority project has been added to the updated plan reflecting the need to recruit and support more volunteers.

A number of consultees said that the community had rallied round during the pandemic to support more vulnerable people in the community, and this high level of support puts the area in a good position to respond to future **emergencies**.

However, the more rural parts of the fund area were acknowledged as being potentially vulnerable, particularly to adverse weather conditions and power outages. Therefore, a new priority has been added with priority projects on increased resilience, responses and recovery. It was noted that Moray Council is supporting the development of community resilience plans at a Community Council level. However, concerns were raised that this could encourage shifting of statutory responsibilities onto communities.

Theme 3: Local Economy (previously Local Economy and Tourism)

To reflect the fund panel and Dorenell Forum concerns that the theme should include diverse economic activity beyond tourism which can deliver high quality jobs, the 2018 to 2023 DCDP priority of 'Training and Enterprise' has been split into two priorities.

These priorities cover ‘Enterprise and Community Led Economic Development’ and ‘Training and Skills’.

The ‘enterprise’ priority incorporates two priority projects previously identified in the 2018 to 2023 DCDP, and adds a priority project relating to the development and growth of **social enterprise** and **community led economic activity** which creates high quality and sustainable employment. The title of the overall theme has been changed to ‘local economy’.

Consultees from the general public, particularly those attending the Dufftown Farmers’ Market, were keen to see improvements to shops and services in Dufftown. It was said that there had been a recent increase in vacant units coming back into use, but more could be done. As a result, the priority project in the updated plan has been reworded to expand possible actions from just ‘linking business support to empty units in Dufftown’ to a more all-encompassing town centre revival.

Access to superfast **broadband** remained a major concern outside Dufftown. Efforts by the community to address this through voucher schemes had so far failed. Glenlivet and Inveravon Community Association has funding from another windfarm fund to pursue further work on this. However, it was felt that it should remain a priority in the revised plan.

In Dufftown, Dufftown and District Community Association is delivering a pilot providing public Wi-Fi. Assuming evaluation of the scheme is positive, this has been added as a priority project to be consistent with the Dufftown CAP. A number of consultees commented that digital access depends on skills and confidence as well as infrastructure. A priority project has been added reflecting this.

The 2018 to 2023 DCDP included a number of very specific **tourist accommodation** projects. In the revised plan these have been merged and made more generic to reflect the feedback that the tourism sector has gone through a period of significant change and stakeholders have rethought what is required in terms of accommodation. In addition, the revised plan refers to community owned accommodation to make clearer that the fund is supporting community assets and not private sector providers.

Consultees voiced a high level of support for **events** and activities such as the Whisky Festival and Highland Games, which benefit both visitors and locals. Two consultees, who are both accommodation providers, commented on the need for better **tourist information**, including maps and signage. Both also raised the issue of transport for visitors if they don't bring their own private car. A new priority project has been added referring to tourist information, which is also a priority in the Dufftown CAP. Reference to visitors has been added to a reworded priority project on transport.

Training and skills initiatives were more frequently supported by interviewees from organisations than the general public.

The Cabrach Trust is actively developing an education strategy which is central to its vision for the area as one which is attractive to families and can offer access to good quality jobs. Education and skills were felt to be important topics to consider for all fund areas. The potential for development of a cross area education strategy was discussed with consultees as much of the education infrastructure, such as Speyside High School, serves the whole fund area and beyond. However, a cross area strategy was felt to be potentially too complex and time consuming in practice to include as a priority project. Some evidence (from Glenlivet and Inveravon household survey and a small number of consultees) suggests that provision of workspace is needed for individuals and small businesses. Hence, a priority project has been added relating to workspace.

Among the consultees from the general public there was some skepticism about the fund supporting the development of education and skills, particularly through bursaries, apprenticeships and putting on skills development courses.

There was a feeling that this would have limited additionality; that is, they would be taken up by those who would access these opportunities anyway, and not do anything to reduce barriers or motivate take up of opportunities. However, when bursaries and apprenticeships were discussed in the stakeholder workshops, views were mixed, with some consultees feeling strongly that they should remain as a priority in the updated plan.

Therefore, priority projects relating to bursaries and apprenticeships have been retained.

The 2018 to 2023 DCDP included a priority '**Partnership Work Between Communities & Estates**'. Consultees said that it is important that communities and estates work together, particularly on paths and housing projects. However, as this is more to do with the process of delivering successful projects rather than a priority in its own right. Therefore, this priority has been deleted from the updated plan. One of the projects within this priority on rural diversification remains relevant and has been moved to the 'enterprise' priority.

Theme 4: Housing and Sustainable Development

A shortage of affordable **housing** was raised by a number of consultees. This is being addressed in Dufftown, initially through a housing needs analysis. This could lead to community owned affordable housing in the town.

Housing was also reported as an issue in Glenlivet and Inveravon and Cabrach. However, there are major constraints to developing new build affordable homes due to land availability. A priority project has been added to the updated plan which reflects that solutions can be about more than new build developments. Repurposing existing buildings and making it easier for older people to downsize could also add to housing stock.

The 2018 to 2020 plan included an indicative project on insulation. This has been reworded to consider household energy efficiency more broadly and recognise barriers to accessing grant funds.

Consultees had mixed views on **low carbon** initiatives. Some were very supportive, seeing projects such as improved energy efficiency in community halls as being essential to their financial viability. Others saw them as not a priority in the midst of a cost of living crisis, and thought that the community would not be very supportive of funds being spent on this priority.

A few individuals were strongly committed to driving the transition to a low carbon economy and were keen that the fund support innovative projects which could position the area as an exemplar of change. This included ideas such as making better use of waste heat from distilleries to community owned power generation.

Despite the acknowledged skepticism from some consultees, priority projects relating to the transition to net zero have been retained and expanded in the updated plan. This reflects the majority view of stakeholders plus the policies and priorities of government and funders.

Theme 5: Transport and Access to Services

Poor public **transport** infrastructure remains an issue across the fund area. Consultees remarked on this particularly impacting on older people, young people and visitors. The 2018 to 2023 DCDP included an indicative project relating to a feasibility study on community transport. This has been retained and reworded to incorporate public transport, school transport and transport for visitors as these are all interrelated.

Projects are already being delivered to address transport provision including community car hire, ebikes and car sharing. Development and expansion of these services has been added as a priority project.

A shortage of **childcare** in the form of childminders and afterschool care was only mentioned by one consultee, who saw it as a major barrier to women being able to access good quality jobs. It was retained as a priority in the updated plan as it is also a priority in the Dufftown CAP.

The updated plan removes 'health and care' and 'access to education' priorities as the indicative projects identified by consultees as priorities fit just as well under other priority categories.

Fund Distribution

As part of the consultation, interviewees from stakeholder organisations were asked their views on the fund's distribution approach and what changes they would wish to see. The ideas which emerged from this were then further discussed in stakeholder workshops in each of the fund areas and with a joint meeting of the fund panel and Dorenell Forum.

Multi-year funding was mentioned by several organisations who had received support from the fund. The fund is currently able to support multiyear applications, but, in reality, this is perceived by applicants as constrained by having a normal maximum award of £30,000. The importance of multi-year funding was seen as particularly relevant when funding staff posts.

Attracting and retaining good quality staff is easier if it is possible to offer some certainty over the term of a post.

Those attending the stakeholder workshops agreed that multi year awards were appropriate for staff posts. There was some discussion over whether potential applicants currently realised they could apply for more than £30,000 if required. It is stated on the fund website that applications over this amount are possible on a case by case basis. It was generally agreed that a more explicit statement encouraging longer term applications for funded staff posts would be appropriate. This is reflected in recommendations for changes to the Fund Strategy.

‘Strategic’ grants were discussed by some stakeholders in interviews. In this context this refers to a significant award of funding over several years, awarded to support the delivery of strategic objectives rather than an individual project or part project. For example, a community hall could develop a five year ‘masterplan’ which includes capital work and development of activities rather than making several one off applications for elements of the work costing less than £30,000 as is sometimes the case at present. Alternatively, an area could apply for a strategic award to fund a programme of regeneration activity delivered by a consortium of organisations rather than ad hoc applications from individual organisations. The advantage of a strategic approach was seen as:

- Putting more control in the hands of organisations close to the community, who understand community needs and could adapt plans over time. A small number of consultees felt that the current system of fund distribution means that panel members from outside the applicant’s local community make decisions on individual projects they may not fully understand, particularly as representatives of the local area may have to withdraw from the meeting because of conflict of interest issues.
- Encouraging a coherent development approach. Improvements to community halls in Dufftown were cited as an example by one consultee of a system which encourages each hall to put in an application for renovations to kitchens and toilets with no consideration being given to the overarching needs for community buildings in the town and the role of each building within that.

- Allowing organisations to plan medium to long term initiatives rather than short term one off projects.

However, there are a number of risks:

- The organisations delivering have to be seen as representative of and accountable to the communities being served. A number of consultees shared instances of tensions between organisations, many historical, which could damage the trust which would have to underpin a long term strategic commitment.
- The fund panel would have to feel confident that the funding is being used in a way which is consistent with the fund objectives. This would require ongoing monitoring of strategic grants and an ability to renegotiate or withdraw funding if appropriate.
- Increased numbers of large, strategic grants would reduce the funds available for distribution to other projects. This could make the remaining fund very competitive, particularly in Dufftown, and the fund panel could have to reject strong applications which fall outside a strategic grants programme.

Feedback during the stakeholder workshops was that strategic grants would work better in some fund areas than others, with Cabrach in particular being cited as an example where this would work well, as it has fewer organisations, but with a strong track record and good working relationships. A strategic, flexible and long term approach by the fund was perceived by stakeholders in Cabrach as having the potential to add considerable value to the ongoing programme of regeneration in the area.

However, in Dufftown in particular, the approach was seen as potentially problematic due to demand for the fund being far greater and the need for the fund to be accessible to a broad range of organisations.

The view was expressed by a minority of stakeholders that the fund panel, in being meticulous and conscientious in carrying out their role, liked to delve into the detail of projects, and could find it difficult to take a more 'hands off' approach when making strategic awards.

Attitudes to **risk** were raised by a few stakeholders. There was a feeling that the fund could do more to encourage innovation and creative approaches.

The **maximum size** of awards (usually £30,000) was generally felt to be reasonable for projects. There were mixed views on whether '**match**' funding should be a requirement. This would allow the fund to go further, particularly in Dufftown where demand is greatest. However, some saw it as putting an unnecessary burden on applicants in an environment where funding from other sources is already tight.

Small grants, such as those funded through micro-grants, were seen as helpful, particularly to applicants with limited capacity to make large applications, and should be continued. However, more could be done to increase awareness of these and increase the number of applications. tsiMORAY's experience in distributing small awards suggests that these often provide useful intelligence on community needs which can help to inform future strategy. This suggests that providing more information on micro-grant awards to the fund panel may be helpful to understanding local context and emerging priorities and future demands on the fund.

All stakeholders recognised that the four areas covered by the fund are very different. However, there was a general feeling that having **different distribution arrangements** for each fund area (for example different maximum awards or match funding requirements) would create unnecessary complexity for applicants. Other options for dealing with the different levels of demand across the fund areas were suggested including:

- Recognising that projects in Dufftown benefit other areas, and allocating funding accordingly
- Limiting numbers of repeat applications from organisations in areas where demand is high
- Encouraging applicants to secure match funding in areas where demand is high
- Managing expectations in areas where demand is high
- Commissioning support or seconding a Development Officer to Glenrines to work with the community developing proposals, until the Community Centre is in a position to directly employ a development officer

There was widespread support for the fund panel **commissioning** projects where there was a clear need to initiate projects, particularly if these were cross area. However, there was a feeling that the fund should still be predominantly distributed through open grantmaking. As noted above, commissioning support to Glenrinnnes would be welcomed by many in the Glenrinnnes area.

It was felt that the commissioned project on development of the footpath network ([see case study](#)) had worked well. However, commissioning is a time consuming process for volunteers forming the steering group and the Foundation Scotland Fund Adviser who provided support. Hence the ongoing support which is required to develop and manage commissioned work needs to be considered if numbers of commissioned projects are increased.

A consultee, who is also a panel member, proposed making it easier for the panel to award funds in an **emergency** with a streamlined process. This was done by a number of Foundation Scotland administered funds during the pandemic. This idea was seen as positive by stakeholders and has been included in recommended changes to the Fund Strategy.

A few consultees expressed the view that the current equal split of funds between the four areas should be reviewed and amended. Considering the split between areas is outside the scope of this review.

8. DCDP Updated Priorities and Projects (Red=New; Blue=Reworded)

Theme 1: Environment & Heritage

Priority	Indicative Projects (2018-2023)	Revised Priority Projects	Rationale
Walking & Cycling Networks	Improvements to Dufftown Path Network		Rationalised into one line on plan
	Improvements to Glenlivet Paths Network including reinstating bridges on Glenlivet and Ballindalloch estate		Rationalised into one line on plan and made more generic to add flexibility to local plans
	Glenrinnas Paths developed eg connections to Ben Rinnas from Hall, car park at Ben Rinnas		Rationalised into one line on plan and made more generic to add flexibility to local plans
	Develop Cabrach Paths Network including reinstating bridges on Gelnifddich and Cabrach Estates		Rationalised into one line on plan and made more generic to add flexibility to local plans
	Develop mountain bike tracks around Dufftown and Cabrach	Develop mountain bike tracks around Dufftown and Cabrach and expand biking facilities in Glenlivet Estate	Merged
	Expand biking facilities in Glenlivet Estate		Merged
	Improve Speyside Way and its spurs		Superseded by 2023 path study
	Connect paths between communities eg using old drove roads	Take forward recommendations from the 2023 cross area path study	Reworded to reflect 2023 study
		Development of and improvements to local path and cycle networks in all areas	Rationalised and made more generic to reflect emerging community priorities

Museum, Visitor & Heritage Centres	Historic Distillery and Visitor Centre in the Cabrach	Historic Distillery and Visitor Centre in the Cabrach	Remains a priority
	Whisky Museum and Information Centre in Dufftown	Whisky and Heritage Centre in Dufftown	Remains a priority – Dufftown CAP. Amendment to wording to reflect title used by project.
	Dark Skies Observatory in Glenlivet and Cabrach	Dark Skies Observatory in Glenlivet and Cabrach	High priority in G&I household survey
Preservation & Enhancement of Landscape, Culture and Heritage	Ideas and projects stemming from the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Landscape Partnership		Incorporated into other projects going forward
		NEW: Creative and/or educational activities promoting engagement with the landscape, heritage and culture	Reflects successful arts engagement projects in Cabrach and Heritage Ranger in Glenlivet and Inveravon
		NEW: Creation of community assets from disused/underused rural buildings	Recognises opportunities arising when buildings become vacant and/or derelict, such as disused schools and churches
Village & Town Enhancement	Improvements to the built environment eg Dufftown Clock Tower	Breathe fresh life into prominent historic buildings	Reworded based on Dufftown CAP – greater emphasis on prominent buildings
		NEW: Refurbishment of Dufftown Clock Tower to create a community hub and tourist accommodation	Separated out to reflect the importance of this iconic building
	Projects to enhance village and town appearance and streetscape	Projects to enhance village and town appearance and streetscape	Remains a priority – Dufftown CAP

Theme 2: Community and Recreational Facilities, Groups and Activities

Priority	Indicative Project	Revised Priority Projects	Rationale
Community Halls	New Cabrach community facility in Old Cabrach Hall	Development of the community facility at Old School Hall and House	Reworded to reflect progress
	Multiple hall improvements in Dufftown	Continued improvements to halls in Dufftown	Reworded to reflect progress
	Strategic study into halls in Dufftown		The consultation showed a lack of appetite for this, with organisations feeling that there would be more point in increasing coordination and shared facilities (for example, booking systems)
	Improvements to Braes of Glenlivet Hall	Taking forward recommendations of feasibility study on Braes of Glenlivet Hall	Reworded to reflect progress
	Improvements to Glenlivet Public Hall	Improvements to Glenlivet Public Hall	High priority in G&I household survey
	Improvements to Glenrinnies Community Centre	Improvements to Glenrinnies Community Centre	High priority in consultations and Glenrinnies household survey
	Improve/develop community group's dedicated facilities	Improve/develop community group's dedicated facilities	Retained, however, consultations suggested an appetite for shared resources (below)
		NEW: Improve coordination and sharing of community facilities e.g. booking systems, joint events diary, equipment sharing	Reflects Dufftown CAP and views in consultations
Recreation Facilities	Develop the adventure playground in Glenlivet		Likely to be incorporated into Glenlivet Hall proposals – not taken forward as a separate item
	Improve playground at Mortlach primary		In Dufftown CAP, but not felt to be a priority at Dufftown Forum meeting
	Tininver Park improvements	Tininver Park improvements	Remains a priority - Phase 1 complete, but further work planned

	Improve existing playpark at Glenrinnies		Not identified as a priority in consultations – however, improvements to hall could include improvements to facilities in outside area
	Proposed development of a new play area in Cabrach	Continued development of inclusive outdoor recreation facilities in Cabrach	Focus has been on all abilities outdoor recreation rather than ‘traditional’ playground
	Develop sports facilities in Dufftown	Develop sports and recreation facilities in Dufftown, potentially including MUGA	Reworded to reflect MUGA proposals
Opportunities & Facilities for Young People	Speyside Youth – development of youth facilities and provision in Dufftown	Speyside Youth – continuation of youth facilities and provision in Dufftown	Reworded to reflect progress
		NEW: Development of activities for young people across the fund area	Identified as priority in G&I household survey and consultations (However, it is recognised that Speyside Youth cater for the wider area)
Support for Community Development	Community Transport Feasibility Study and implementation of recommendations		Moved to Theme 5 to reduce duplication
	Develop capacity of community trusts (Cabrach, T&G and establishment of a new umbrella trust in Dufftown)	Develop capacity of community anchor organisations, including funding of development officer posts	Reworded to reflect the development role of organisations who are not development trusts, such as DDCA and support from consultation of DO posts
	Equipment for local groups	Equipment for local groups	Retained – though consultations suggests appetite to share equipment when realistic
		NEW: Enhanced opportunities for local promotion of events, communication and sharing learning (e.g. newsletters, events, forums)	Consultees frequently stated how important they found local newsletters. 2022 update to Dufftown CAP emphasises communications

		NEW: Activities to recruit, support, coordinate and retain volunteers, such as a volunteer pool	Volunteer capacity mentioned in several interviews. Raised as issue in Dufftown CAP 2022 review
		NEW: Developing and delivering events and activities which bring the community together	Reflects feedback from consultations on the importance of community events
NEW: Emergencies, crises & resilience		NEW: Activities building the capacity and resilience of communities	Increased likelihood of severe weather events in coming years – however, it needs to be clear that this is not shifting the burden from statutory bodies to communities
		NEW: Emergency responses to crisis situations	Reflects experience of the Covid 19 pandemic
		NEW: Recovery from crises and emergencies	Reflects experience of recovery after the pandemic

Theme 3: Local Economy

Priority	Indicative Project	Revised Priority Projects	Rationale
NEW: Enterprise and Community Led Economic Development		NEW: Development and growth of social enterprise and community led economic activity creating good quality and sustainable employment	Reflects concern that previous plan was too focused on tourism and the need to diversify the local economy
		Reviving Dufftown town centre to make it an attractive place to visit and do business, and where residents can access vital facilities such as financial services	Moved from 'Training and enterprise' priority and reworded to convey wider importance of a vibrant town centre as reflected in Dufftown CAP
		Supporting estates and farms to diversify and add value locally to benefit local economies	Moved from 'partnership working' priority

Access to ICT	Community initiatives to develop Superfast Broadband for homes and businesses	Community initiatives to develop Superfast Broadband for homes and businesses	Remains a priority despite R100
	Develop digital enterprise hubs		Not identified in consultations as a priority – however, any workspaces supported would be expected to include digital connectivity
	Improved mobile phone signal		Not identified in consultations as a priority. Also, a very difficult area for community led responses
		NEW: Development of internet hotspots in Dufftown	In Dufftown CAP – builds public Wi-Fi pilot
		NEW: Support to groups and residents to embrace digital technologies	In Dufftown CAP and raised in consultations as important
Tourist Accommodation & Hospitality Tourist Facilities, Events & Promotion	Development of camping/caravan site at Glenlivet		Replaced with generic project to increase flexibility on responses to accommodation development
	Development of campsite at Dufftown		Replaced with generic project to increase flexibility on responses to accommodation development
	Development of bunkhouse accommodation in Cabrach		Replaced with generic project to increase flexibility on responses to accommodation development
		NEW: Development of community owned accommodation for tourists and visitors	Less specific to reflect changes in tourism market an emphasise that the fund is supporting development of community assets
Tourist Attractions, Events & Promotion-(merged with accommodation priority)	Historic Distillery and Visitor Centre in the Cabrach		Removes duplication – in Theme 1
	Whisky Museum and Information Centre in Dufftown		Removes duplication – in Theme 1
	Dark Skies Observatory in Glenlivet and/or Cabrach		Removes duplication – in Theme 1

	Support Whisky festivals, Highland Games in Dufftown and Glenlivet and other events that support the tourist industry	Support Whisky festivals, Highland Games in Dufftown and Cabrach and other events that support the tourist industry	Retained – in Dufftown CAP. Cabrach now has highland games, but none in Glenlivet
	Improving Keith & Dufftown railway links to Keith and main line service	Improving Keith & Dufftown Heritage Railway, including signage links with Dufftown town centre and links to main line	Reworded to include signage, as per Dufftown CAP
	Improvement to Biking and Adventure Playground in Glenlivet		Biking in Theme 1. Adventure playground not identified as a priority in consultations
	Promote branded roads through the area (Snow Roads, North East 250)	Promotion of the unique scenic, cultural and historic character of the area	Branded roads were not identified as a priority in the consultation. However, promotion of ‘scenic gateways’ and historic destinations was felt to be relevant
	Co-ordinated marketing of the area and its assets		Not identified as a priority in consultations (Visit Moray Speyside has set up a Speyside tourism network which may be more appropriate to take this role)
		NEW: Develop visitor information and information resources such as walk/cycling maps and apps	In Dufftown CAP and raised in consultation
Training	Training and skills development linked to Cabrach Trust proposals	Training and skills development linked to major local initiatives such as the Cabrach Distillery and Visitor Centre	Reworded to give greater flexibility in responding to other opportunities
	Bursaries for training and access to further education	Bursaries for training and access to further education	Retained, though views of consultees varied considerably
	Working with businesses to create apprenticeships	Working with businesses to create apprenticeships	Retained, though views of consultees varied considerably

	Linking business support to empty units in Dufftown		Moved to new 'enterprise' priority
		NEW: Development of training and education strategies which reflect opportunities within and outwith the fund area (such as initiatives supported by the Moray Growth Deal) linking people to high quality jobs	Reflects opportunities created by Just Transition, Moray Growth Deal.
		NEW: Retaining and developing rural skills	Reflects work being done in the Cabrach area
		NEW: Increased provision of workspace for individuals and small businesses	Reflects priority in G&I Household Survey and consultation
Partnership Work Between Communities & Estates	Joint agreed approach to visitor centre provision in the Cabrach		Consultation suggested that partnership working was an element of delivery on a number of themes, particularly housing and path development, and need not be a priority in its own right.
	Partnership working to deliver projects on estate land (eg paths, recreation, housing, business units, tourist attractions and accommodation		
	Supporting estates and farms to diversify and add value locally to benefit local economies		

Theme 4: Housing and Sustainable Development

Priority	Indicative Project	Revised Priority Projects	Rationale
Housing Initiatives	Renovate derelict housing for affordable local housing in Cabrach (Cabrach Trust)		The 2018-23 indicative project is thought to be related to housing renovations being done by the estate, not the trust – the renovation has been done, but consultees have said that the housing is not occupied
	Build new affordable housing (mainly mentioned by Glenlivet & Inveravon)	Build new affordable and/or community owned housing in Dufftown to meet needs identified in housing needs analysis	Reworded to reflect progress with housing needs analysis in Dufftown
		NEW: Explore options for improved appropriate housing provision in Glenlivet & Inveravon and Cabrach	Recognises that improving housing provision can include repurposing buildings and ensuring there is a mix of housing so that older people can downsize as well as new build.
	Develop very sheltered housing in Dufftown		Moved to theme 5 to reduce duplication
	Connect houses to the grid in remote parts of Glenrinnnes	Connect houses to the grid in remote parts of Glenrinnnes	Retained as still appears to be an issue for some properties. However, expenditure from the fund must be charitable in nature and not be primarily for the benefit of private individuals.
	Support housing insulation and other projects targeted at fuel poverty	Support households to access information and funds to increase energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty	Reworded to recognise that funding is available to support energy efficiency through Scottish Government schemes, but barriers exist to accessing these funds
ICT	Community driven superfast broadband and 4g initiative		Moved to theme 3 to reduce duplication

<p>Low Carbon & Green Initiatives Supporting the Transition to Net Zero</p>	<p>Schemes to support energy efficiency in community halls</p>	<p>Support communities to access information and funds to improve the energy efficiency of community halls and fund improvement where costs cannot be met through existing schemes</p>	<p>Reworded to recognise that funding is available through Scottish Government schemes</p>
	<p>Explore potential for community renewables (hydro, solar) – feasibility studies</p>	<p>Explore potential for community renewables and storage (wind, hydro, solar) – feasibility studies</p>	<p>Reworded to add storage and wind energy</p>
	<p>Community transport schemes, better public transport, electric car friendly area</p>		<p>Moved to Theme 5 to reduce duplication</p>
	<p>Local food production</p>	<p>Supporting a circular economy, including local food and drink production and minimisation/reuse of food and drink waste</p>	<p>Reworded expand and incorporate current initiatives such as the Dufftown community larder and potential future initiatives, particularly related to distilleries</p>
		<p>NEW: Development of projects supporting a Just Transition to net zero and/or developing links which harness benefits of Just Transition projects supported by other funders</p>	<p>Reflects Dufftown CAP and Scottish Government support for Just Transition through the Just Transition Fund and other future funds should the commitment to JTF reduce in future years</p>
		<p>NEW: Encourage active travel e.g. expand bike and ebike hire at Tininver Park</p>	<p>Priority in Dufftown CAP</p>

Theme 5: Transport and Access to Services

Priority	Indicative Project	Revised Priority Projects	Rationale
Transport	Community Transport – commission feasibility study and implement recommendations	Community Transport and integrated public transport schemes – commission feasibility study (which incorporates needs of school children, young people and visitors) and implement recommendations	Reworded to combine community transport and public transport – to reflect likely shift to on demand services, plus previous indicative project on school transport
		NEW: Develop and expand existing community owned transport solutions such as community car hire in Dufftown and Speyside Community Car Sharing Scheme	Reflects activities already underway to address transport needs
	Encourage and develop integrated public transport schemes		Merged with community transport indicative project
Health & Care	Very sheltered housing in Dufftown – and other care initiatives that cater for an ageing population in Dufftown		Moved to new priority relating to older people
	Bursaries for young people going into health and care related professions		Not identified in consultations as a priority – bursaries still included in ‘skills’ priority
Access to Education	Opportunities for after school activities in the area		Subsumed by new project in theme 2 on opportunities for young people
	Improve transport options to and from Speyside High School		Included in proposed community transport feasibility study
Childcare	Support more childminders	Develop and support childcare services including childminders and afterschool care	Remains a priority – in Dufftown CAP and consultations – merged into a single priority project
	Develop more afterschool care		Merged with above
Support for Vulnerable	Development of a Family Centre in Dufftown		Not identified in consultations as a priority

Children and Families	More services for vulnerable families	More services for vulnerable families	Remains a priority – particularly in the light of the cost-of-living crisis
Older People		Very sheltered housing in Dufftown	Moved from ‘health and care’
		NEW: Initiatives addressing rural isolation among older people	Consultation identified concerns about older isolated people
		Initiatives catering for an ageing population in Dufftown	Moved from ‘health and care’ and separated out from sheltered housing

9. Fund Strategy: Updated Cross-Cutting Themes

2020 Fund Strategy	Updated Cross-Cutting theme	Rationale
Local procurement: Local suppliers of goods and services will be used, where appropriate and feasible.	Community Wealth Building: The project builds, retains and recirculates wealth in the local economy by investing in community owned assets, using local suppliers and/or creating high quality employment	Expands the narrow focus on local procurement to other ways in which wealth is created and retained in a community
Partnership working: The applicant has considered whether delivering their project in collaboration with other groups or organisations can bring about greater impact.	Partnership and participation: The project is designed, developed, delivered and evaluated using an approach which engages with the community and encourages collaboration with other organisations	Expands the concept of partnership to include the local community and encouraging participative approaches
Building capacity locally: The applicant has considered whether the project provides opportunities to build the skills and knowledge of group members or other local people or groups connected with the project.	Sharing learning and building capacity: The project provides opportunities to share learning and build skills with other local people and groups	Minor rewording, as 'sharing learning' is a little more tangible than 'building capacity'
Sustainability: Where the project or activity is recurring in nature, for example, an annual event, that the applicant can demonstrate their intention for the activity to become sustainable at some point in the future without the need to rely on grant funding in the longer term. Where the main purpose of the project is to develop an enterprise (whether a not-for-profit or private enterprise), its commercial viability will be a key consideration and should be demonstrated through a robust and realistic business plan	Environmental sustainability: The project has positive environmental benefits or has considered how best to mitigate harms	Change to the type of 'sustainability' being considered reflects the importance of climate smart interventions. Financial sustainability now included under 'legacy'.

<p>Leverage or match funding: That the applicant has secured or is seeking to secure match funding for the project (e.g. from local fundraising activity, other grants, or crowdfunding) and/or that the applicant can demonstrate what other funding may be secured as a result of implementing the project.</p>	<p>Leverage: The project will lever in funding from other sources; or the applicant can demonstrate what other funding has been or is likely to be secured; or what contribution is being made to deliver the project in terms of committing staff/volunteer time and assets</p>	<p>Rewording avoids the term ‘match’ funding as this is often interpreted as requiring a certain % from other sources. Recognises non-monetary contributions</p>
<p>Creating a lasting legacy: projects that are likely to benefit beyond the life of the Dorenell Wind Farm (expected to be 25 years) are particularly encouraged.</p>	<p>Legacy: The project will have a lasting impact, for example by kickstarting activities which will be financially sustainable in the long term; by bringing about long term systemic change; by preventative (upstream) actions which reduce harm to vulnerable individuals in the long term; or investing in capital assets which will benefit the community beyond the life of the fund</p>	<p>Expands on the concept of ‘legacy’ to give a wider range of ways in which impacts can be sustained</p>

10. Fund Strategy: Proposed Changes to Distribution Approach

Award size

It is proposed that the Fund Strategy is amended to provide two levels of award (over and under £30k) to allow for strategic awards and longer support for staff posts. This would also remove the current uncertainty among some applicants over whether applications over £30k are permitted.

Awards over £30k (no maximum)

Applications of over £30k would be considered for:

1. Strategic awards

These are large, multi-year projects designed to bring about transformational change in the fund area. There is no maximum application amount, however, applicant organisations need to be cognisant of the annual fund allocation to each area.

2. Staff posts

Where a job role is of an ongoing nature, applicants are encouraged to apply for support for a sufficiently long period to attract and retain suitably qualified and experienced staff.

For awards over £30k, introducing a two stage application process was discussed with the fund panel and Dorenell Forum. This would involve:

- a. A brief Expression of Interest, outlining the project and likely impacts and estimated costs
- b. If the Expression of Interest is approved by the panel, a full project application on the standard application form would be invited

Creating a two stage process for large applications has the advantage of allowing the panel to reject large proposals at an early stage if they are not a good fit with fund priorities, and therefore save applicants wasting time on a full application. However, it has the disadvantage of lengthening the approval process, and may lead to an applicant having to spend more time over the two stages than a single stage process, going against the IVAR Open and Trusting principles (see [section 6](#)).

Foundation Scotland uses a two stage process in a few funds including the nearby Vattenfall Clashindarroch Windfarm Community Fund and the Crown Estate Scotland Community Capacity Grants Programme.

The fund panel and Dorenell Forum felt that the disadvantages of a two stage process outweighed the advantages, and that the fund should continue with the current system where applications over £30k need to be discussed with the Foundation Scotland Fund Advisor before submission.

For strategic awards, it is unlikely to be practical for quotations to be supplied to support costs, particularly for items to be purchased in future years. Therefore, instead of quotations, the applicant should supply the rationale they used in developing the costings and a copy of their procurement policy and procedures.

Applications for staff posts should be supported by a job description and person specification.

Those applying for multi-year awards would be required to provide an annual monitoring report detailing progress against objectives and expenditure in the year which would be reviewed by the panel.

Awards between £1,000 and £30,000

The current single stage process for applications up to £30,000 would be retained.

It is acknowledged that a lower maximum would allow the fund to support more applications in Dufftown and District where the fund is oversubscribed. However, an alternative to lowering the maximum application amount for one of the four areas is for the fund panel to make awards informed by 'minimum for impact' recommendations from assessors, and for the panel to accept that a greater degree of prioritisation will be required when making funding decisions and a higher proportion of applications rejected. The panel could decide to state a priority for funding organisations which have not received awards previously.

Nonetheless, repeat awards are inevitable in the fund areas with small numbers of potential applicants.

In areas where the fund is oversubscribed, it will be important to manage expectations of applicants, for example, by Foundation Scotland continuing to publish the available funding on the website.

Microgrants (max £1,000)

The current approach to micro grants will be retained. However, reports on the usage of micro grants should be shared with the panel annually.

Repayable grants

The ability of the panel to make interest free loans should be added to the Fund Strategy. This could be considered in situations where cashflow limitations are impeding the delivery of a project.

However, applications for repayable grants will be on a case by case basis. The fund does not formally operate as a lender and systems are not in place to manage a significant portfolio of loans.

Commissioning

The ability of the fund panel to commission projects should be retained in the Fund Strategy. Commissioned projects would be likely to remain a fairly small part of the fund expenditure. However, there is scope to extend commissioned work, particularly in support to the community in Glenrinn⁴⁰.

Emergency awards

It should be added to the Fund Strategy that the panel can agree to make awards outside normal grant cycles in the event of an emergency or unexpected occurrences severely impacting on the communities in the fund area.

The above proposals maintain the same underlying approach across all of the fund areas. It is clear that the four fund areas are very different.

⁴⁰ It was noted in discussions with the fund panel and Dorenell Forum that the committee for the Glenrinn Community Centre has recently been expanded and strengthened, which could reduce the need for additional support

However, having different distribution mechanisms in each area would add a degree of complexity which has the potential to be problematic for potential applicants and the decision making panel.

Allowing for strategic grants should make it possible for sub fund areas to develop a distinctive approach tailored to specific local circumstances.

Appendix 1: Awards by Area

Key

	Capital - Outdoor and environment
	Capital - Community buildings and facilities
	Public realm
	Feasibility studies and design work
	Revenue - Arts, heritage and events
	Revenue - Community development
	Revenue - Delivery of services
	Housing project loan

Awards: Cabrach

Cabrach Community Association	Creation of new 'all abilities' walking paths	£30,000
Cabrach Community Association	Construction of drystone wall plus planting and landscaping to enhance the Cairn Memorial Garden and providing drystone walling training	£26,900
Cabrach Trust	Woodland planting, new 'all abilities' paths, a wildflower meadow and a pond as part of a wider project of improvements to local access and the environment	£30,000
Cabrach Trust	Feasibility study and initial building improvement to restore the Cabrach School Hall and House	£18,918
Cabrach Trust	Cabrach Lives' project, collecting oral history to preserve local heritage and share this through the production of interpretation materials including an online archive and book.	£29,880
Cabrach Trust	Continue the Cabrach Lives project for a further two years, employing professionals to engage the community and create resources focussing on the present and future for local residents, building on the heritage focus of the initial project.	£30,000
Cabrach Trust	Equip the training/volunteer bothy with a stove, seating and storage; deliver a programme of rural skills and wellbeing events; and collaborate with local artists to create outdoor community artworks.	£27,610
Cabrach Trust	Clear, prepare and make safe the walled garden area at the Old Cabrach School to create an outdoor community space for further projects.	£18,268
Moray Arts Development Engagement	Cabrach Reconnections Phase 2 which will deliver creative community activities, permanent artworks, an art exhibition, and project film over 18 months to engage the community and promote the area.	£39,454

Total project awards	£251,029
Micro-grant funding paid to CA	£17,661
Number of project awards	9 (inc 1 continuation)
Number of organisations funded	3
Capital/mixed/revenue	49%/11%/40%
Income and interest	£491,917
% allocated	55%

Awards: Dufftown and District

Dufftown & District Community Association	Three vehicle activated speed signs and their maintenance over 10 years	£14,130
Dufftown & District Community Association	Community Development Leader (Economics) staff post	£47,444
Dufftown & District Community Association	Free public Wi-Fi for central Dufftown and operate for an initial 12-month period to provide outdoor broadband access	£11,351
Dufftown & District Community Association	Master Plan for an affordable housing project	£30,000
Dufftown & District Pipe Band	Storage facility and base for the Pipe Band	£23,804
Dufftown & District Pipe Band	Increase to storage facility award	£7,616
Dufftown & Mortlach Development Trust Ltd.	Upgrade a circuit of paths around Dufftown to create a local heritage trail	£29,404
Dufftown Bowling Club	Upgrade kitchen facilities in the Bowling Club pavilion, and to replace windows	£10,138
Dufftown Bowling Club	Upgrade the toilet facilities	£25,000*
Dufftown Community Centre	Loft insulation, gas central heating and LED lighting	£19,208
Dufftown Community Centre	Upgrade toilets and increase storage space	£27,507
Dufftown Community Centre	Upgrade flooring and kitchen units, install acoustic sound panels and create additional storage space	£29,500*
Dufftown Highland Games	Fencing panels to provide a secure perimeter for the Dufftown Highland Games.	£9,410
Dufftown Highland Games	Steel frame shed to increase storage capacity for equipment used during the annual Highland Games	£41,850
Dufftown Highland Games	Increase to storage facility award	£7,330*
Dufftown in Bloom	Planters and polytunnel irrigation system	£5,194
Dufftown in Bloom	Wooden barrel planters, compost and equipment	£4,702
Hanover (Scotland) Housing Association	Covered area in the grounds of Aigan Court	£1,500

Mortlach Memorial Hall Dufftown	Feasibility study into hall upgrades	£10,860
Mortlach Memorial Hall Dufftown	Car park resurfacing	£30,000
Royal British Legion	Kitchen refurbishment	£12,500
Royal British Legion	Upgrade doors and windows	£10,347

*Part allocated to cross area fund or other area

Total project awards	£390,564 (net of cross area and other area allocations)
Micro-grant funding paid to CA	£17,661
Number of project awards	22 (inc 2 uplifts)
Number of organisations funded	10
Capital/mixed/revenue	85%/3%/12%
Income and interest	£491,440
% allocated	83%

Awards: Glenlivet and Inveravon

Chapelton Hall Committee	Feasibility and outline design of a new hall to replace the existing Chapelton Hall in the Braes of Glenlivet.	£22,800
Glenlivet Public Hall	Replacement showers and shower block roof plus a new fire alarm system	£13,056
Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust	Community Development Officer staff post	£42,438
Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust	Community Development Officer staff post	£44,570
Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust	Repayable grant (interest free loan) towards the construction of 12 affordable and energy efficient houses	£60,000
Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust	Heritage Ranger staff post	£31,899
Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	Heritage Ranger staff post	£34,196
Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	Refurbish and repurpose two telephone kiosks	£1,340
Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	All abilities blue graded trail at the Bike Glenlivet Trail Centre.	£3,933
Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	Design work associated with creating a mini observatory at Braes Hall.	£3,480
Tomintoul and Glenlivet Outdoor Bowling Club	External clubhouse doors and windows	£7,965

Total project awards	£265,667 (inc 60k repayable)
Micro-grant funding paid to CA	£11,321
Number of project awards	11 (inc 2 continuation)
Number of organisations funded	4
Capital/mixed/revenue	42%/0%/58%
Income and interest	£492,128
% allocated	54%

Awards: Glenrinnnes

Glenrinnnes Community Centre	Replace gutters and install snow guards at Glen Hall	£6,938
Glenrinnnes Community Centre	Ride-on mower and storage shed for Glen Hall	£6,675
Glenrinnnes Community Centre	Core hall running costs for three years and to purchase curtains, chairs and tables	£39,381
Glenrinnnes Community Centre	Pool/table tennis table and seating	£8,000

Total project awards	£63,324 (inc allocation from D&D project)
Micro-grant funding paid to CA	£11,321
Number of project awards	4
Number of organisations funded	1
Capital/mixed/revenue	38%/62%/0%
Income and interest	£492,831
% allocated	15%

Awards: Cross Area

Dufftown & District Community Association	Play equipment, seating and a BBQ area at Tininver Park	£29,558
Dufftown Golf Club	Two golf buggies, a grass cutter and professional youth coaching	£29,062
Glass Community Association	To contribute to project costs to improve access to Glass Community Outdoor Space.	£10,000
Marie Curie	Specialist palliative nursing care to those who are terminally ill in the Fund area.	£4,800
Moray Baby Bank	Running costs for Moray Baby Bank to support families in need throughout Moray.	£2,000
Moray District Scout Council	New camping equipment	£9,729
Moray Wellbeing Hub CIC	Support vulnerable young people to improve their mental health and wellbeing through activity delivered to groups of young people at Speyside High School	£29,508
Outfit Moray	Cycle skills training, bike maintenance and cycle promotion events for children and adults	£17,130
Outfit Moray	Cycle skills training, bike maintenance and cycle promotion events for children and adults	£48,780
Speyside Community Car Share Scheme	Volunteer-based transport service	£10,000
Speyside Youth Ltd	Youth Cafe and other activities for young people in and around Dufftown	£60,000
The Cabin	Hall hire and resources to run a childcare service for two-year-olds	£5,468
Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust	To fund a mobile planetarium event in Glenlivet to celebrate the Cairngorms Dark Sky Park.	£2,435
Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust - Panel Commissioned	To fund a design and costing feasibility study for a footpath network connecting the Dorenell communities.	£25,000
Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	To deliver a shared learning event for community groups in the fund area to share good practice and develop ideas for collaborative projects.	£3,800

Total project awards	£303,169 (inc allocation from D&D projects)
Number of project awards	15 (inc 1 continuation)
Number of organisations funded	12
Capital/mixed/revenue	25%/10%/65%
Income and interest	£491,926
% allocated	62%

Appendix 2: Alignment with DCDP Themes, Priorities and Indicative Projects

Theme 1: Environment & Heritage

Priority	Indicative Project	Organisation	Project Summary	Amount
Walking & Cycling Networks	Improvements to Dufftown Path Network	Dufftown & Mortlach Development Trust Ltd.	To upgrade a circuit of paths around Dufftown to create a local heritage trail to benefit locals and visitors	£29,404
	Improvements to Glenlivet Paths Network including reinstating bridges on Glenlivet and Ballindalloch estate			
	Glenrinnes Paths developed eg connections to Ben Rinnes from Hall, car park at Ben Rinnes			
	Develop Cabrach Paths Network including reinstating bridges on Gelnifddich and Cabrach Estates	Cabrach Community Association	Towards the creation of new all abilities walking paths as part of a wider project of improvements to local access and the environment in partnership with The Cabrach Trust.	£30,000
		Cabrach Trust	Towards woodland planting, new all abilities paths, a wildflower meadow and a pond as part of a wider project of improvements to local access and the environment in partnership with Cabrach Community Association.	£30,000
	Develop mountain bike tracks around Dufftown and Cabrach			
	Expand biking facilities in Glenlivet Estate	Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	To contribute to the costs of a new all abilities blue graded trail at the Bike Glenlivet Trail Centre.	£3,933
	Improve Speyside Way and its spurs			

	Connect paths between communities eg using old drove roads	Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust - Panel Commissioned	To fund a design and costing feasibility study for a footpath network connecting the Dorenell communities.	£25,000
Museum, Visitor & Heritage Centres	Historic Distillery and Visitor Centre in the Cabrach (Cabrach Trust)			
	Whisky Museum and Information Centre in Dufftown (Dufftown 2k)			
	Dark Skies Observatory in Glenlivet and Cabrach	Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	To complete the design work associated with creating a mini observatory at Braes Hall.	£3,480
		Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	To fund a mobile planetarium event in Glenlivet to celebrate the Cairngorms Dark Sky Park.	£2,435
Preservation & Enhancement	Ideas and projects stemming from the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Landscape Partnership	Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	To employ a Heritage Ranger to undertake ranger duties relating to the heritage environment of Glenlivet and Inveravon, promoting local heritage, enhancing the visitor experience and bringing repeat and longer visits to the area. (2 awards)	£34,196 £31,899
Village & Town Enhancement	Improvements to the built environment eg Dufftown Clock Tower			
	Projects to enhance village and town appearance and streetscape	Dufftown in Bloom	To fund the purchase of new planters and a polytunnel irrigation system to help volunteers continue to create floral displays to enhance the village.	£5,194
		Dufftown in Bloom	To fund wooden barrel planters, compost and equipment to help volunteers improve Dufftown through floral displays.	£4,702
		Cabrach Community Association	To fund construction of 65m of drystone wall plus planting and landscaping to enhance the Cairn Memorial Garden and providing drystone walling training for 30 people.	£26,900

Theme 2: Community and Recreational Facilities, Groups and Activities

Priority	Indicative Project	Organisation	Project Summary	Amount
Community Halls	New Cabrach community facility in Old Cabrach Hall	Cabrach Trust	To commission a feasibility study and some initial building improvement to restore the Cabrach School Hall and House and create a community hub for training, events and activities.	£18,917
		Cabrach Trust	To clear, prepare and make safe the walled garden area at the Old Cabrach School to create an outdoor community space for further projects.	£18,268
	Multiple hall improvements in Dufftown	Dufftown & District Royal British Legion Club	To fund kitchen refurbishment to improve the safety and functionality of the facility.	£12,500
		Dufftown & District Royal British Legion Club	To upgrade doors and windows to improve energy efficiency and help maintain the fabric of the building for continued use as a key community facility.	£10,347
		Dufftown Community Centre	To install loft insulation, gas central heating and LED lighting so as to improve energy efficiency and reduce running costs.	£19,208
		Dufftown Community Centre	To upgrade toilets and increase storage space to improve the facility for users.	£27,507
		Dufftown Community Centre	To upgrade flooring and kitchen units, install acoustic sound panels and create additional storage space to improve the centre for groups and hirers.	£29,500
		Mortlach Memorial Hall Dufftown	To fund feasibility study on hall upgrade to make design and energy improvements; and CCTV purchase to improve safety and security around the hall.	£10,860

		Mortlach Memorial Hall Dufftown	To fund car park resurfacing to provide a safe and attractive parking area for users of the Hall and the wider community.	£30,000
	Strategic study into halls in Dufftown			
	Improvements to Braes of Glenlivet Hall	Chapelton Hall Committee	To fund consultancy services to establish the feasibility and outline design of a new hall to replace the existing Chapelton Hall in the Braes of Glenlivet.	£22,800
	Improvements to Glenlivet Public Hall	Glenlivet Public Hall	To fund replacement showers and shower block roof, which will increase revenue and improve users' experience at this community owned and managed asset.	£16,278
	Improvements to Glenrinn Community Centre	Glenrinn Community Centre	To replace gutters and install snow guards so as to keep the hall water-tight, reduce maintenance requirements and improve safety.	£6,938
		Glenrinn Community Centre	To cover the costs of purchasing a new ride-on mower and storage shed to help volunteers maintain the grounds around the centre.	£6,675
		Glenrinn Community Centre	To fund core hall running costs for three years and to purchase curtains, chairs and tables to create a better space to help facilitate community events and activity.	£39,381
		Glenrinn Community Centre	To fund a pool/table tennis table and seating to encourage social and recreational activities to improve health and wellbeing.	£8,000
	Improve/develop community group's dedicated facilities	Dufftown & District Pipe Band	To purchase and install a 40 ft unit as a storage facility and base for the Pipe Band. (additional award to reflect rising costs).	£23,804 £7,616
		Dufftown Highland Games	To fund the building of a steel frame shed to increase storage capacity for equipment used during the annual Highland Games (additional award to reflect rising costs).	£41,850 £7,330

		Dufftown Highland Games	To purchase 200 fencing panels to provide a secure perimeter for the Dufftown Highland Games.	£9,410
		Tomintoul and Glenlivet Outdoor Bowling Club	To replace five external clubhouse doors and 12 windows to improve energy efficiency and security and reduce maintenance requirements.	£7,965
		Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	To refurbish and repurpose two telephone kiosks to create community facilities	£1,340
Recreation Facilities	Develop the adventure playground in Glenlivet			
	Improve playground at Mortlach primary			
	Tiniver Park improvements	Dufftown & District Community Association	To fund play equipment, seating and a BBQ area at Tiniver Park so as to enhance recreational facilities for young people.	£29,558
	Improve existing playpark at Glenrinnies			
	Proposed development of a new play area in Cabrach			
	Develop sports facilities in Dufftown	Dufftown Golf Club	To part-fund a new grass cutter; fund a new golf buggy; fund a programme of professional youth coaching and purchase equipment for the use of local young people, to enhance club facilities and encourage more young people to get involved in golf.	£29,062
		Dufftown Bowling Club	To upgrade and improve kitchen facilities in the Bowling Club pavilion, and to replace windows, so as to bring the pavilion up to an acceptable modern standard in terms of access, hygiene and energy efficiency.	£10,138

		Dufftown Bowling Club	To upgrade the toilet facilities to improve the safety, hygiene and accessibility of the club pavilion for members and visitors.	£25,000
Opportunities & Facilities for Young People	Speyside Youth – development of youth facilities and provision in Dufftown	Speyside Youth Ltd	To contribute to core staff costs for youth workers for three years to support the Youth Cafe and other activities for young people in and around Dufftown, to improve opportunities, skills, confidence and mental wellbeing.	£60,000
Support for Community Development	Community Transport Feasibility Study and implementation of recommendations			
	Develop capacity of community trusts (Cabrach, T&G and establishment of a new umbrella trust in Dufftown)	Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	To employ a Community Development Officer to develop and deliver a range of community projects and events in Glenlivet & Inveravon (2 awards).	£42,438 £44,570
		Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	To deliver a shared learning event for community groups in the fund area to share good practice and develop ideas for collaborative projects.	£3,800
		Dufftown & District Community Association	To part fund a two-year full-time Community Development Leader (Economics) to develop and deliver a range of projects and events to improve the financial sustainability of Dufftown & District Community Association and increase the capacity of the group to support the community	£47,444
	Equipment for local groups	Moray District Scout Council	To cover the costs of new camping equipment to enable Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers to benefit from traditional outdoor scouting activities.	£9,729

Theme 3: Local Economy and Tourism

Priority	Indicative Project	Organisation	Project Summary	Amount
Access to ICT	Community initiatives to develop Superfast Broadband for homes and businesses	Dufftown and District Community Association	To install free public Wi-Fi for central Dufftown and operate for an initial 12-month period to provide outdoor broadband access to locals and visitors and investigate potential for further coverage.	£11,351
	Develop digital enterprise hubs			
	Improved mobile phone signal			
Tourist Accommodation & Hospitality	Development of camping/caravan site at Glenlivet			
	Development of campsite at Dufftown			
	Development of bunkhouse accommodation in Cabrach			
Tourist Attractions, Events & Promotion	Historic Distillery and Visitor Centre in the Cabrach			
	Whisky Museum and Information Centre in Dufftown			
	Dark Skies Observatory in Glenlivet and/or Cabrach			
	Support Whisky festivals, Highland Games in Dufftown and Glenlivet and other events that support the tourist industry			
	Improving Keith & Dufftown railway links to Keith and main line service			
	Improvement to Biking and Adventure Playground in Glenlivet			

	Promote branded roads through the area (Snow Roads, North East 250)			
	Co-ordinated marketing of the area and its assets			
Training & Enterprise	Training and skills development linked to Cabrach Trust proposals	Cabrach Trust	To equip the training/volunteer bothy with stove, seating and storage; deliver a programme of rural skills and wellbeing events; and collaborate with local artists to create outdoor community artworks.	£27,610
	Bursaries for training and access to further education			
	Working with businesses to create apprenticeships			
	Linking business support to empty units in Dufftown			
Partnership work between Communities & Estates	Joint agreed approach to visitor centre provision in the Cabrach			
	Partnership working to deliver projects on estate land (eg paths, recreation, housing, business units, tourist attractions and accommodation)			
	Supporting estates and farms to diversify and add value locally to benefit local economies			

Theme 4: Housing and Sustainable Development

Priority	Indicative Project	Organisation	Project Summary	Amount
Housing Initiatives	Renovate derelict housing for affordable local housing in Cabrach (Cabrach Trust)			
	Build new affordable housing (mainly mentioned by Glenlivet & Inveravon)	Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust	Towards the construction of 12 affordable and energy efficient houses, so as to address housing needs amongst the population of Tomintoul and Glenlivet. (Repayable grant)	£60,000
		Dufftown and District Community Association	To contribute to cost of a Master Plan for an affordable housing project to meet the long-term housing needs of residents of Dufftown and District.	£30,000
	Develop very sheltered housing in Dufftown			
	Connect houses to the grid in remote parts of Glenrinnnes			
	Support housing insulation and other projects targeted at fuel poverty			
ICT	Community driven superfast broadband and 4g initiative			
Low Carbon & Green Initiatives	Schemes to support energy efficiency in community halls			
	Explore potential for community renewables (hydro, solar) – feasibility studies			
	Community transport schemes, better public transport, electric car friendly area	Speyside Community Car Share Scheme	To continue the provision of a volunteer-based transport service to reduce isolation and improve access to local services and medical appointments.	£10,000
	Local food production			

Theme 5: Transport and Access to Services

Priority	Indicative Project	Organisation	Project Summary	Amount
Transport	Community Transport – commission feasibility study and implement recommendations			
	Encourage and develop integrated public transport schemes			
Health & Care	Very sheltered housing in Dufftown – and other care initiatives that cater for an ageing population in Dufftown	Hanover (Scotland) Housing Association Ltd	To construct a covered area in the grounds of Aigan Court, Dufftown so elderly tenants can have shelter from sun or wet weather and maximise time spent outdoors.	£1,500
		Marie Curie	To provide 240 hours of specialist palliative nursing care to those who are terminally ill in the Fund area.	£4,800
	Bursaries for young people going into health and care related professions			
Access to Education	Opportunities for after school activities in the area			
	Improve transport options to and from Speyside High School			
Childcare	Support more childminders			
	Develop more afterschool care			
	Development of a Family Centre in Dufftown			

Support for Vulnerable Children & Families	More services for vulnerable families	Moray School Bank (Moray Wellbeing Hub)	To support vulnerable young people to improve their mental health and wellbeing through evidence-based activity delivered to groups of young people at Speyside High School (above and beyond the standard curriculum), parents and family groups.	£29,508
		Moray Baby Bank	To contribute to 12 month running costs for Moray Baby Bank to support families in need throughout Moray.	£2,000

Appendix 3: Case studies

CASE STUDY: Supporting Development Capacity in Anchor Organisations

The fund has made awards to support Community Development Officer and Community Development Leader posts in Glenlivet and Inveravon and Dufftown and District. Two awards totaling £87,008 have been made to Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust to support the Glenlivet and Inveravon Community Development Officer, and one award of £47,444 was made to the Dufftown and District Community Association to support the Dufftown and District Community Development Leader (Economics) post.

Prior to these awards, the Dufftown and District Community Association had no paid staff and was totally reliant on volunteers. The Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust had paid staff but insufficient capacity to develop projects identified by the community as priorities in the Glenlivet and Inveravon area (which covers only part of the geographical area covered by the Trust).

Impacts



Dufftown and District Forum (source: Dufftown and District Community Association)

In Dufftown and District, a community forum has been established by the Community Development Leader which brings together community groups on a quarterly basis to share information and collaborate. This has actively engaged with young people through the Speyside Youth committee and helped youngsters develop their skills.

A crucial part of both development roles has been progressing planned major capital projects relating to community assets. These include the Dufftown Clocktower and Braes of Glenlivet Hall.

In Dufftown and District, the Community Development Leader is actively involved in a major project in partnership with the Communities Housing Trust and Moray Council developing community owned affordable housing. Both development staff have planned and delivered events and activities including a skills and wellbeing programme in Dufftown and District and ‘tea in the park’ pop up café in Glenlivet.

In Dufftown and District, the post holder is also developing the business model for financially sustainable ebike hire and community car hire.

Community development is a long-term process. Initiatives such as the refurbishment of community buildings or housing developments often take several years from initial feasibility studies to completion.

The time and expertise needed to keep these projects on track means that having paid staff in post makes these far more achievable for community organisations. During stakeholder interviews conducted for this review, Development Officers were described as **‘like gold’** by a Highlands and Islands Enterprise representative, as it is the communities which have Development Officers where major community owned capital projects are most likely to succeed.



Glenlivet Public Hall (source: Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust)

Successful delivery of these projects brings in significant leverage from other funders; improves community facilities; and, potentially aids financial sustainability of community organisations through the development of income generating assets.

The long-term nature of capital development makes the full impact of these posts difficult to evidence at this early stage. However, the staff in the funded posts have made significant progress in developing large community owned capital projects.

In the short term, feedback from events and activities has been positive, with attendees reporting benefits relating to social interactions and learning. In Dufftown and District, the post holder has had success in generating income for the Dufftown and District Community Association through increasing ebike hire by over 300%.

It was also noted in the consultations that the development staff are actively sharing learning across the area and supporting each other.

Lessons for the fund

The awards from the fund supporting development staff have been for two year periods. This does not reflect the time periods development staff need to be in post to develop and deliver major projects which have the potential to deliver significant impact.

Short term funding makes it more difficult for organisations to attract and retain suitably experienced staff (Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust had to re-recruit to the role of Community Development Officer, the first incumbent of the post having left).

Therefore, it is proposed in this review that the Fund Strategy recognises the importance of supporting staff posts for longer periods.

The changes to the DCDP make the plan more specific in referencing support to development officer posts, in recognition of the importance of these posts in furthering other priorities in the plan such as housing and improvements to community buildings.

CASE STUDY: Opening up the hidden history of Glenlivet and Inveravon

The fund has made two awards totaling £66,094 to support a Heritage Ranger for Glenlivet and Inveravon, employed by the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust.

The post was created in 2022 to develop and deliver a range of heritage events and ranger activity in the Glenlivet, Inveravon and Ballindalloch area. There are a number of important heritage sites in this area, such as Scalan Seminary and Mills, Inveraven Church and Blairfindy Castle.



Scalan Seminary trained Roman Catholic priests in the 1700s, a period when Catholics were facing persecution. The priests moved away in 1799 and corn mills were built on the site. A restoration of the mills took place in 2019, supported through the lottery funded Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership.

King Charles on a visit to Scalan Mills, September 2023 (source: Northern Scott)

The official opening of the site finally took place in 2023 with a visit from King Charles.

Inveraven Church dates from 1806. However, it is home to four much more ancient Pictish symbol stones dating from the 6th to 8th centuries.

Blairfindy Castle is a fortified sixteenth century tower house built for John Gordon of Huntly. It was partially destroyed by government troops following the Battle of Culloden and has remained a ruin ever since.

The ruin was stabilised with funding from the Glenlivet and Tomintoul Landscape Partnership.

Despite their historic importance, these sites are not well known and don't figure on the itinerary of many visitors. The Heritage Ranger puts on a programme of regular tours and walks to encourage visitors to these sites. In addition, the Heritage Ranger promotes the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Cairngorms Dark Sky Park, holding events, particularly in the winter months.

Impacts

The ranger was recruited in May 22 and delivered a total of 88 tours of sites and events between July and December 2022 with a total of 403 attendees.

Most of the tours took place on regular days throughout the summer. Additional tours were held at the request of groups.

The Heritage Ranger is an important follow-on to investment made by the Glenlivet and Tomintoul Landscape Partnership, encouraging visitors to sites supported by the partnership which are currently not well known. Both local visitors and tourists have benefited.

As well as increasing knowledge of the rich history of the area, the events encourage people to be physically active as Scalan and Blairfindy are accessed on foot.

The perceptions of local stakeholders interviewed for this review were, in general, that the activity of the ranger was valued by the local community. There was a dissenting voice who felt that the activities did not represent value for money, and that the activity was unsustainable as tours were offered at no charge to attendees.

The Heritage Ranger maintains lists of attendees at tours and events. However, at present no follow up takes place as to how people have benefited.



Inveraven Church (source: Scotland's Churches Trust)

Lessons for the fund

The importance of heritage has been strengthened in the update to the DCDP as this is clearly important to the community and a major asset to the area. However, there is a need for better impact evidence for these types of activity to better understand their value.

CASE STUDY: Commissioning a cross-area path study

The fund panel has taken a lead on commissioning a study to drive forward a priority identified in the 2018 to 2023 Dorenell Community Development Plan. £25,000 was allocated to fund a feasibility study for a footpath network connecting the Dorenell Communities.

During the third year of grant making, in recognition that projects had not come forward through the open grantmaking process addressing the priority of developing cross area walking and cycling networks, the panel embarked on its first commissioned project.

A steering group was set up to take this forward, with support from Foundation Scotland.



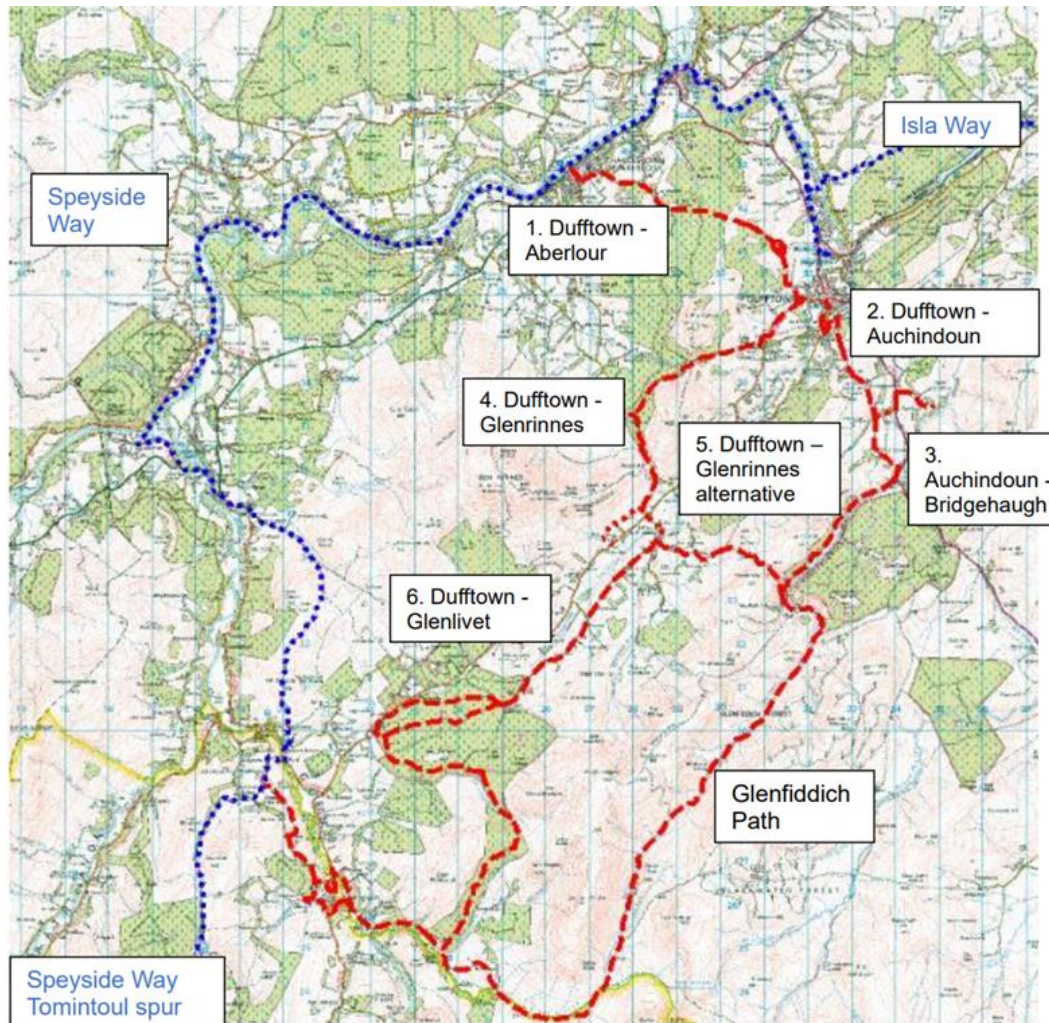
The project steering group (source: Foundation Scotland)

The steering group included key stakeholders such as the Moray Council Access Officer, an EDF Dorenell Ranger, a Crown Estate ranger, and the Glenlivet and Inveravon Development Officer, alongside two panel members.

The objective of the project is to create an integrated network of paths which link the communities and provide a valuable tourism resource that will benefit the local economy. Where possible, the routes are intended to accommodate regular 'active travel' though this may be limited due to the remote nature of the area and the fact that distances between the communities are considerable. The intention is that the network will mostly use and upgrade existing paths to ensure minimal impact on the environment. Occasionally, new sections of path will be required to provide missing links in the network.

Impacts

The steering group issued a tender for the initial feasibility work which would survey, design and cost likely routes, engage with communities, landowners and stakeholders, and create a prioritised action plan and cost estimates to deliver the path network.



The proposed routes (source: Foundation Scotland)

The contract was awarded to Vyv Wood-Gee Countryside Management Consultant at an actual cost of £23,950, a little less than the budget available. The feasibility study and costed, prioritised action plan has been completed. Six routes have been proposed linking the communities in the fund area (see map). Time critical works, such as path creation which could take place alongside planned forestry work, have been identified.

The steering group is developing proposals for phase two of the project which would fund a project officer for two years and provide a budget for initial capital works to create the path network.

Further phases will be required to develop interpretation and marketing and ensure plans for long-term maintenance are in place.

Through using the option of commissioning, the panel has given the impetus to set a project in progress which would probably not have come forward through the standard open grantmaking process. The project is cross-area and has required a number of partners to come together to plan and deliver the feasibility study.

The project's impacts will only be realised in years to come when the network is usable and being promoted to potential users.

Lessons for the fund

The project intends to develop a tourism resource and improved options for active travel. To achieve these goals, the project will need to link in with wider initiatives on tourism and transport. Hence, the update to the DCDP makes reference to the path network and active travel under the tourism and transport themes as well as under the walking and cycling theme.

The project has provided an example of effective use of commissioning to meet gaps in delivery of community priorities. Hence the proposed updated Fund Strategy maintains commissioning as an option for fund distribution.

CASE STUDY: Supporting affordable housing through a repayable grant

The fund made a repayable grant (interest free loan) of £60,000 to the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust to facilitate the delivery of a housing project providing 12 affordable and energy efficient homes.

A shortage of affordable housing in the Glenlivet and Inveravon area was recognised in the 2018 to 2023 DCDP. This was further evidenced by a housing needs and demands assessment commissioned by the Trust in 2019 which provided more detailed information on likely demands and appropriate site, size and type of development.

Even though the chosen housing site is in the village of Tomintoul, which sits outside the fund area, half the identified demand came from the Glenlivet and Inveravon part of the Trust's area of operation.

Impacts



The completed housing development, Tomintoul (source: Northern Scot)

12 affordable and energy efficient houses were built on the site of a former school. These are a mix of two and three bedroom houses. Some being for let at affordable rents, others being for sale. The properties have been allocated to people with a strong connection to the Tomintoul and Glenlivet area and are protected from being used as holiday lets or second homes.

Three of the properties include workspace for small business use, and all have energy efficient features including solar panels, air source heat pumps and battery energy storage systems.


The Trust worked in partnership with the Communities Housing Trust on the development.

The total budget was over £2m funded from a range of sources including the Scottish Government, Scottish Land Fund, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Social Investment Scotland, Community Renewable Energy Scotland and loan funding from the Ecology Building Society.

The contribution from the Dorenell Community Benefit Fund was a relatively small one. However, it was needed to help the Trust to manage cashflow. The project will generate income from house sales and rental income which will enable the grant to be repaid over the course of 10 years.

The housing has capacity for 54 people and so helps address a shortage of affordable housing in the area. This is seen as essential for retaining families and maintaining a vibrant community.

In addition, the workspaces have the potential of encouraging business start-ups and the energy efficient features of the houses reduce carbon emissions. The development has made use of a brownfield site, bringing back into use a previously derelict site in a central location in the village.



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Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust

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Sales poster for the development (source: Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust)

Lessons for the fund

New build, community owned and affordable housing is a clear priority in many rural communities. These are complex projects to deliver, usually involving multiple funding streams and a mixture of grant and loan finance. The ability of the fund to be flexible and allow the award of repayable grants has been one of the jigsaw pieces in the successful delivery of an ambitious project.

As a result of this experience, the proposed changes to the Fund Strategy make clearer that repayable grants are an option where this can help facilitate the delivery of a project.

CASE STUDY: Improving community buildings in Dufftown

The fund has made multiple awards to improve, or plan the improvements to, community buildings in Dufftown. These include:

Dufftown Bowling Club	Upgrades to kitchen, toilets and windows	£35,138
Dufftown Community Centre	Upgrades to toilets, kitchen storage, acoustics and energy efficiency	£76,215
Royal British Legion	Kitchen refurbishment and upgrades to doors and windows	£22,847
Mortlach Memorial Hall	Feasibility study into hall upgrades	£10,860

The four buildings above are all under community ownership. They host a wide variety of activities from the Farmers' Market at the British Legion, to Ceilidhs, Speyside Youth activities and parent and toddler groups.

The volunteer committee of each building had had to deal with the challenge of ongoing maintenance and increasing bills. The fund has helped through funding refurbishments, particularly to kitchens and toilets, to bring the buildings up to a good standard, and energy efficiency measures including upgrades to windows, and insulation and a new boiler for the Community Centre.

Impacts

Mortlach Memorial Hall received funding to pay for professional support to plan future upgrades.

The Community Centre benefited from free advice from Zero Waste Scotland (this service is now provided by Business Energy Scotland) which informed the work undertaken.



Mortlach Memorial Hall (source: Moray Federation of Community Halls)

Improvements have been made to three buildings offering important community facilities, and a programme of work has been developed for the Memorial Hall.



The community facilities are undoubtedly of a better quality and able to offer increased comfort to users. However, ascertaining how many people have benefited from these refurbishments and/or whether the refurbishments have resulted in any additional community activity or improved financial sustainability for the halls, is difficult.

This is partly due to the fact that the improvements have taken place during a time when social activities have been severely restrained by the Covid pandemic, and partly a limitation of monitoring systems currently in use for the fund.

Royal British Legion kitchen (source: Foundation Scotland)

The venues are essential to other activity supported by the fund taking place, such as Speyside Youth meetings.

Lessons for the fund

The DCDP 2018 to 2023 included an indicative project suggesting a strategic study into halls in Dufftown. This has not taken place.

However, feedback from stakeholders conducted for this review suggests that each venue serves different purposes, and Dufftown doesn't have significant overprovision of community space.



Dufftown Bowling Club (source: Foundation Scotland)

In fact, the organiser of one group for young people said that their activities were constrained by current capacity. Hence, the investment by the fund in several community spaces appears to be justified. However, stakeholders also thought that more could be done in sharing and coordination of facilities.

Feedback from the fund's decision making panel members provided for this review emphasised the importance of applicants showing that the works applied for were part of a planned refurbishment strategy, rather than the fund receiving repeated unrelated requests for improvements. Mortlach Memorial Hall has found that professional advice has been a big help in developing a strategic approach, particularly in understanding issues around airflow and ventilation.

Suggested changes to the Fund Strategy include allowing for larger strategic grants, which may encourage a strategic and phased approach to refurbishments.

Foundation Scotland guidance now asks applicants proposing major refurbishments to obtain advice from Business Energy Scotland and the Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES) as part of their planning process. This advice opens up access to a number of funds which can support all or part of the costs of energy efficiency measures and installation of renewables. Due to this availability of funding, a change in wording has been made to the updated DCDP which emphasises the role of the fund in only supporting improvements not covered by other funding.

CASE STUDY: Creating a living archive of place and people

The fund has made two awards totaling £59,880 supporting the Cabrach Trust's 'Cabrach Lives' community engagement and oral history project.

The twentieth century has seen a dramatic decline in the population of the Cabrach. A major part of the Cabrach Trust's vision to rebuild a thriving and sustainable community is capturing, sharing and celebrating the area's heritage and history.

Community consultations carried out by the Cabrach Trust show loss of the area's heritage to be a major concern for residents.

The first phase of the project engaged and trained community members in collecting oral history and shared this through a website <https://cabrachlives.org/>.

The second phase of the project places more emphasis on the present and future of the Cabrach. The project is delivered with the support of an experienced freelance community engagement researcher.

The project has strong intergenerational aspects, engaging with schools and older people in the community. Events such as memory teas and the recently revived annual picnic and games have helped the community to come together and facilitated the capturing of reminiscences.

Members of the community have shared photos which have been digitized and saved on eHive (an online archive management system).

Impacts



Photograph from Cabrach Lives website

The project has provided a focus to bring people together and members of the community, including school pupils, have been given opportunities to develop skills. The Cabrach Lives website has been developed, and interviews and photos of Cabrach digitally archived and retained for the future.

The impacts of the Cabrach Lives project can't be seen in isolation to the rest of the Cabrach Trust's work. The Trust has been working with the Institute of Voluntary Action Research on a longitudinal evaluation.

This has developed a 'theory of change' showing how collection and collation of visual and oral heritage sits alongside the Trust's major historic distillery development and community wellbeing and engagement activities. It is one strand in developing a sense of place in a revived and thriving community and visitor destination.

Lessons for the Fund



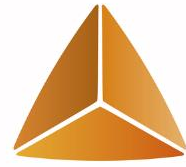
Places from the Cabrach Lives website

Cabrach Lives was not a project identified in the 2018 to 2023 DCDP and was not a strong fit with the priority areas in the plan, though it contributes to a number of themes. However, when the project launched, the Trust's consultations showed that retaining the area's history and heritage was a key priority for local people.

The update to the DCDP adds a priority project referring to creative and educational projects promoting engagement with heritage and culture. This recognises that this is a priority for the local community, and this type of project has multiple benefits from building skills and a sense of place to safeguarding important cultural assets for future generations.



Places from the Cabrach Lives website



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