

RWE Rosehall Wind Farm Community Fund



Year 9, 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021



Year 9 Overview

- The Fund received £74,751.81 from RWE.
- Nine applications for support were received and seven awards made, totalling £195,240.
- A high level of spend with just 5% of the annual donation remaining to carry forward into Year 10.
- Five awards this year were to contribute towards staffing costs and core costs for community groups.
- Five awards this year were for multi-year awards.
- Four Panel members stood down, while four new Panel members joined.

Fund Background

The Rosehall Wind Farm Community Fund is provided by RWE Renewables, owner of the 24.7 MW Rosehall Wind Farm, 2.5 km north-east of Rosehall in Sutherland in the north of Scotland.

The Fund was launched in August 2012. Annual donations to the Fund are £2,500 per MW of installed capacity. Payments are index linked to the date the wind farm started exporting electricity, and will be made over the 25 years the wind farm is likely to be operational. In Year 9, the annual donation to the Fund was £74,751.81.

The Fund supports community activity and development primarily by supporting the charitable activities of constituted, not-for-profit groups working to benefit residents of three Community Council areas: Ardgay & District, Creich and Lairg (the Fund Area).

Requests to support a wide range of costs and activities can be considered, for example: equipment costs; running costs, events; staff or sessional workers costs; consultations; feasibility studies; refurbishments and other costs.

The SSE & RWE Community Funds Panel makes recommendations on awards from

both RWE Rosehall Wind Farm Community Fund and the two SSE Funds that operate in the same area - the Achany Community Fund and the Kyle of Sutherland Apprenticeship Scheme. The Panel has 12 volunteer representatives serving on it, made up of two Community Councillors and two further community representatives from each of the three Community Council areas.

Financial Overview

In Year 9, RWE donated £74,751.81 to the Fund and £7,475.18 towards Foundation Scotland for administration activity (10% of the value of the annual Fund donation), totalling £82,226.99. The donation for award making is split equally between the three communities, so each community was allocated £24,917.27. A summary of the Rosehall Wind Farm Community Fund finances for Year 9 is provided below.

Table 1: Financial statement 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021

| | General Account | Ardgay & District | Creich | Lairg | TOTAL |
|---|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| OPENING BALANCE (1 Aug 2020) | £237.62 | £6,856.33 | £7,140.89 | -£2,535.01 | £11,699.83 |
| INCOME: | | | | | |
| Year 9: donation RWE | £7,475.18 | £24,917.27 | £24,917.26 | £24,917.27 | £82,226.98 |
| TOTAL INCOME | £7,475.18 | £24,917.27 | £24,917.26 | £24,917.27 | £82,226.98 |
| EXPENDITURE: | | | | | |
| FS costs | £7,475.18 | | | | £7,396.00 |
| Year 9 grants allocated (including only the first year's allocation for multi-year awards)* | | £26,713.33 | £26,713.35 | £29,313.32 | £82,740.00 |
| Marketing: Kyle Chronicle | £100.00 | | | | £100.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | £7,575.18 | £26,713.33 | £26,713.35 | £29,313.32 | £90,236.00 |
| CLOSING BALANCE (31 Jul 2021) | £137.62 | £5,060.27 | £5,344.80 | -£6,931.06 | £3,690.81 |

* a further sum of £112,500 has been awarded via strategic, multi-year grants as explained in the next section of this report, but does not feature in the above statement as will be paid from donations to the Fund in future years.

The total amount awarded in grants represents 111% of the donation to the Fund in Year 9, which was made possible by utilising some of the underspend from Year 8. The available balance carried forward into Year 10 (£3,690.81) represents 5% of the Year 9 donation.

Investing in Communities

During Year 9, the Panel held a number of additional meetings as part of an internal review of the distribution of wind farm community benefit funds within the communities of Creich, Ardgay and Lairg

The Panel was aware that since 2006 the communities had been receiving varying community benefit arrangements from six windfarms in the area and with a further six in the pipeline. Over 14 years the annual community benefit sums have made a substantial contribution to the area with additional funds and inward investment levered in alongside. This is a real testament not only to the many groups and organisations, volunteers and staff who plan and deliver activity but also to the shared vision of the three community councils during the mid-2000's and who were determined the area capitalised on the strategic potential of community benefit. The Panel wished to take stock of the changed landscape of community organisations now delivering a range of social, economic and environmental benefits in the area. In particular, the Panel identified five 'primary organisations' in this fragile area, working on behalf of the communities, supporting jobs and economic and community development.

The five primary organisations identified were:

- **The Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust (KoSDT)**, established in 2011 to support economic and social development across the Community Council areas of Ardgay & District and Creich. KoSDT has delivered a number of large-scale projects such as: affordable housing, a Business Centre, re-development of Falls of Shin visitor centre, purchasing Bonar Bridge Post Office to prevent its closure, superfast broadband roll out, as well as a number of social care and research initiatives. KoSDT has a staff of 12.
- **Lairg and District Community Initiatives (LDCI)** was established in 2002 to support economic and social development across the Community Council area of Lairg & District. Projects include: the acquisition of the Sutherland Arms Hotel site to develop a Care and Well Being Centre, the Lairg Asteroid Exhibition, Lairg Through Time bus stop makeover, and community events such as the annual Winterfest. LDCI has one Development Officer.
- **The Kyle of Sutherland Hub** was formed in 2004, initially as a Youth Development Group operating from a former double-decker bus. It now offers a newly built soft play zone, fitness suite, cafe, rooms for hire and a diverse range of clubs and classes. The Hub has a staff of 10.
- **Creich Croick and Kincardine District Day Care Association** is a purpose-built centre for the over 60's and those with special needs. In 1993 it was operating from a church hall but, through community fundraising, a purpose-built centre was possible which has been further expanded in recent years. The Centre has six staff.
- **Lairg and District Learning Centre** was set up in 2002 by a group of local people seeing a need for increased learning opportunities locally. The Centre offers training opportunities and supports over 4,000 learners annually. It has seven staff.

These organisations have a long history of applications to the Rosehall and SSE funds for support towards projects and essential core costs and put forward the idea that finding a more streamlined way to would reduce the valuable time spent by staff and volunteers on applications. The Panel felt that if these organisations were supported in a sensible, consistent and longer

lasting way, it would offer an opportunity to secure key community-led services beyond the vagaries of funding rounds and widening possibilities to lever in further funds.

Following on for this discussion, these strategic grants were made, with the largest strategic award of £80,000 being to the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust for the purpose of allowing KoSDT to carry out activities as designed by the staff, boards and volunteers over the next four years in line with the organisation's overall purposes. Similar, albeit smaller, awards were made to other 'primary' organisations. One of the five was still in receipt of a multi-year award offered previously and so, although a new strategic award was not offered in Year 9, discussions with that group were held to ensure this system would work for them going forward.

Normally, Foundation Scotland would allocate all awards from the available balance in the Fund at the time they are awarded. However, the sums involved would have meant the Panel having to work with a large deficit 'available balance' which would have been unwieldy in terms on considering other applicants and against Foundation Scotland's finance policies. Therefore there is still a sum of £112,500 which has been awarded but not yet allocated from the Fund balance. Foundation Scotland will manage this annually over the next four years.

Year 9 Grant-making

Nine applications were received over the year. Seven of these were awarded, four to the primary groups mentioned in the previous section. Two applications were withdrawn by the applicants in advance of the Panel meeting. The awards were as follows:

Table 2: Rosehall Fund Awards made 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021

| Organisation | Project | Total Awarded | Amount allocated for Year 9 activity |
|---|---|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust | To make a strategic investment in the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust allowing the group to carry out activities as designed by the staff, boards and volunteers over the next four years. | £80,000 | £20,000 |
| Lairg and District Community Initiatives | To make a strategic investment in Lairg District Community Initiatives allowing the group to carry out activities as designed by the staff, boards and volunteers over the next four years. | £40,000 | £10,000 |
| Kyle of Sutherland Hub | To contribute to the Hub Manager post over a period of two years. | £20,000 | £10,000 |
| Creich Croick and Kincardine District Day Care Association | To contribute to two Activity Coordinator posts at 25 hours per week who will work at the centre organising stimulating activities for older people in the community. | £25,000 | £12,500 |

| | | | |
|--|--|---------|---------|
| Bonar Bridge and Ardgay Golf Club | To replace doors, windows and a carpet in the Clubhouse dining room and meeting room as part of a programme of Clubhouse improvements. | £2,640 | £2,640 |
| Bonar Bridge Football Club | To refurbish the clubhouse to bring back to an acceptable standard following a period of abeyance where the clubhouse fell into disrepair. | £25,000 | £25,000 |
| Lairg Community Association | To contribute to salary costs for the Association's part-time Administrator for one year from June 2021. | £2,600 | £2,600 |

The costs of the awards to the primary organisations were allocated equally from the sub-funds for each of the three areas as these organisations are all considered to bring benefit across the Fund area. The costs of other awards are supported by one or more of the sub-funds depending on the nature of the project and its beneficiaries.

To ensure the Fund is meeting the needs of the three communities, and to allow the Panels to reflect on the extent to which award are doing so, all awards are matched to a local Fund Outcome. Further information on these Outcomes, and how awards have contributed them, is provided in the following section of this report.

Meeting Fund Local Outcomes

The Fund invests in activities and initiatives that help to build a vibrant local economy, support thriving communities and make the areas attractive places to live, work and visit for people of all ages. The Fund outcomes are listed in Table 3 below, along with the number of awards in Year 9 matched to each outcome and their total value:

Table 3: Year 9 Rosehall Fund Awards by Fund Outcome

| Fund Theme | Amount Awarded | No. of Awards |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Strengthen, sustain and diversify the local economy through the development of established or emerging sectors. | £120,000.00 | 2 |
| 2. Encourage entrepreneurship and innovation in the local community with a view to stimulating economic and social growth. | £0.00 | 0 |
| 3. Increase community benefit through the acquisition, development and use of new community assets and maintain and enhance existing ones. | £30,240.00 | 3 |
| 4. Support measures designed to improve life chances and/or quality of life. | £25,000.00 | 1 |

| | | |
|---|--------------------|----------|
| 5. Optimise local resources and assets through support for coordinated community activity. | £20,000.00 | 1 |
| 6. Support environmental improvements which give physical social or educational benefit. | £0.00 | 0 |
| 7. Support energy conservation and increased use of renewables through the promotion of energy efficiency and sustainability within the area. | £0.00 | 0 |
| 8. Respond to unforeseen circumstances or opportunities that are in keeping with the broad fund outcomes identified above. | £0.00 | 0 |
| TOTAL | £195,240.00 | 7 |

Since the Fund launched in 2012, a total of 76 awards have been made. These have been aligned to local Fund Outcomes as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Rosehall Fund Awards by Fund Outcome Years 1-9

| Fund Theme | Amount Awarded | No. of Awards |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Strengthen, sustain and diversify the local economy through the development of established or emerging sectors. | £170,874.00 | 8 |
| 2. Encourage entrepreneurship and innovation in the local community with a view to stimulating economic and social growth. | £19,921.00 | 3 |
| 3. Increase community benefit through the acquisition, development and use of new community assets and maintain and enhance existing ones. | £115,093.98 | 24 |
| 4. Support measures designed to improve life chances and/or quality of life. | £153,247.33 | 18 |
| 5. Optimise local resources and assets through support for coordinated community activity. | £133,565.00 | 13 |
| 6. Support environmental improvements which give physical social or educational benefit. | £20,383.80 | 4 |
| 7. Support energy conservation and increased use of renewables through the promotion of energy efficiency and sustainability within the area. | £2,875.00 | 1 |
| 8. Respond to unforeseen circumstances or opportunities that are in keeping with the broad fund outcomes identified above. | £59,990.00 | 5 |
| TOTAL | £715,949.11 | 76 |

The above figures demonstrate that activities delivering against some of the Fund Outcomes (1, 3, 4, and 5) have been supported significantly more than the others. These Outcomes are of considerable interest to the Panel as they are the most likely to positively affect the greatest number of local residents. They include improvements to community spaces and village halls, staff posts such as Development Officers and Youth Workers, as well as recurrent activities such as community newsletters, Gala's and local shows.

To date, there has only been one award which was specifically to improve energy efficiency measures and uptake (Outcome 7), however, the Panel feels that some other awards would also contribute towards this as a secondary Outcome, for example improvements to village halls and some of the activities undertaken by the Development Officers.

Sustainable Development Goals

Foundation Scotland is now committed to recording activity against the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); this includes all awards made as well as our wider work. Rosehall awards have been aligned as follows in Table 5.

Table 5: Number and value of Rosehall Wind Farm Community Fund awards (Year 9) aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

| UN Sustainable Development Goal | No. of awards | Spend |
|--|---------------|--------------------|
| 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth:  | 5 | £167,600.00 |
| 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities  | 2 | £27,640.00 |
| TOTAL | 7 | £195,240.00 |

Given the focus in Year 9 on supporting the key organisations that create and maintain a number of jobs in the area, it is unsurprising that SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth features strongly with four awards and a high level of spend. The remaining two awards fit with 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities as they are making improvements to community owned assets.

Case Studies of Funded Projects

Car Park wall repairs for Ardgay Village Hall

Ardgay Public Hall was built in 1968 by the community on land gifted by Balnagowan Estate. A Committee of five volunteers ensure the Hall is well kept for the local community.

The car park perimeter wall has been in place over 100 years and hall users had noted that it was in need of some repair. Water had damaged the coping and the wall had lost its

structure and strength, making it a health and safety risk to users of the car park and to users of the foot-paths on adjacent Church Street and Carron Place. The Committee spoke with hall users about potential solutions including replacing the wall with a fence or a hedge. However, it was felt that, given how long the existing wall had been in place compared with the likely lifespan of a fence or a hedge, rebuilding the damaged sections of the wall was the preferred option.

The Committee continually fundraises so as to maintain the hall to a high standard. Even so, this project was quoted at over £7,000 so the need for grant funding was inevitable. The Committee applied to the RWE Rosehall Wind Farm Community Fund in June 2019 and was awarded £4,686 towards the project. Another local wind farm fund contributed £500, and the Committee used £1,831 of its reserves. The copestones had to be manufactured for the bespoke width of the wall and by the time they were almost ready to install the covid-19 lockdown meant that the project had to be put on hold. Once lockdown restrictions began to ease the local contractor found himself so busy trying to work through a backlog of work that the project took some considerable time to complete. However, the Committee's patience was rewarded in June 2021 when a good weather window enabled the contractor to get the job done. The bespoke cope stones and wet dash harling are offering good quality, durable weather protection, ensuring

the stability of the wall long into the future. This project has benefitted both members of the public using the adjacent foot-path and everyone accessing the hall car park, as they are no longer at risk of harm from the old, increasingly dilapidated wall.

Mrs Rhonwen Copley, the Hall's Secretary said: *"Without this grant the work could not have been commissioned and the health & safety risk to anyone within the environs of the hall's car park wall would have continued until sufficient funding could be secured, as it was out-with the hall's ability to fully fund the project from its own resources."*

The perimeter wall is highly visible, being in the centre of the village. Its upkeep reflects well on the hall and the rest of the community and having it well presented will hopefully encourage ongoing use of the building.



Bonar Bridge Improvement Group

Bonar Bridge Improvement Group was set up in August of 2018 by a group of 10 local people who had noted some neglect in public areas in the village of Bonar Bridge. The group wanted to improve the look of the village and make it a nicer place to spend some time, for locals and for people who might just be passing through.

Initially the group spoke to the Community Council and to residents to find out what ideas people had and what improvements would make the biggest difference. They also set up a fundraising webpage and organised collection boxes for local shops. This quickly raised £200, enabling some early clearing works and the purchase of summer bedding plants for the newly cleared areas.

The group was particularly keen to turn their attention to the space around the bridge area, which had been neglected and had old plant tubs disintegrating, the seating was in a poor state of repair and weeds were taking over. The area looked uninviting and visitors on their way to the Falls of Shin would simply pass through the village without stopping. It was proposed to establish a beautiful picnic area with seating to create an inviting area for people to stop and enjoy, hopefully visiting other local services too. As importantly, the project was intended to instil some local pride and provide an attractive seating area for friends and family to gather and spend quality time together in the centre of the village.

The existing seating was beyond repair so the group researched options and selected new seats made from recycled plastic which would



be bright and colourful whilst being durable

too. The main feature of the area was to be a repurposed fishing boat which was filled with colourful plants. Various other plant pots and plants were arranged around the area to give the whole area a bright summery feel. Fabric membranes and stone chipping finished the space off and will keep it looking tidy.

The group's Secretary, Lorraine Askew said *"The project has given the village a focal point for visitors and the community, we have had lots of lovely comments on how the centre of the village has been transformed from a weed covered eyesore to a lovely communal area for locals and visitors to enjoy. One visitor who was taking pictures of the flowers told a committee member that in the five years they had been visiting the village this was the nicest they had seen it. It is now an area where people stop to sit enjoying the view. This area will be used for pop up events such as the Christmas fare. When the pandemic is over we hope to get back to our plans for other parts of the village."*



The work of the group is ongoing with regular fundraising, sponsorship from local businesses and overwhelming support from the community.

Sutherland Foot Care

The Sutherland Care Forum is based in Golspie, but the service is provided throughout Ardgay, Bonar Bridge, Rosehall and Lairg. In 2016 a pilot project 'Footcare Awareness' funded by Highland Council, was carried out which involved a professional podiatrist visiting venues and giving talks on maintaining foot health. Responses from these talks, and a consultation of healthcare workers suggested that a free toenail cutting and advice service would do much to promote foot health and sustain mobility amongst



residents within the Fund Area. Funding for a one-year pilot (December 2017 to December 2018) was provided through the RWE Rosehall Community Fund with an award of £7,098.

The Panel noted that this service is not provided by anyone else, including by the NHS unless a person has already been diagnosed with foot problems. The only alternative for people was to pay for private podiatry at up to £25 per treatment. It was noted that people were most likely not receiving an ideal level of foot care. This project being proposed by the Sutherland Care Forum would potentially improve people's foot health and potentially their mobility, while also preventing decline in these.

The award allowed the Golspie-based Service Coordinator to set up fortnightly foot health sessions across the Fund Area, delivered at village halls and the Bradbury Centre. Partnering with local care providers would also allow home visits to provide training for unpaid carers or family members whose lack of confidence prevents them from cutting nails themselves.

When this funded period came to an end there was a break in the service, the demand remained. The group approached the Fund a second time proposing to run and expand the service for two more years. A second award of £18,426 enabled this.

Service users rose from an initial 19 people within the Fund Area in 2016, to 30 during the 2018 pilot and then to around 80, with number's remaining steady thereafter.

The Service Coordinator, Tracey Campbell undertook the treatments including toenail cutting and trained two volunteers in the area to provide hand care and foot massage. New clients needed to purchase a nail care kit and the Coordinator would then visit regularly to ensure the client's feet were in a healthy state after which time the regularity of visits could be reduced.

Feedback from service users has been very positive with comments such as *"The service is great, just had three strokes which have left me unable to walk so having my feet looked after by the service is of great benefit to me."* And *"Footcare service is brilliant as I can't manage my own feet, I was worried if I tried to cut my own nails that I would cut myself."*

Barbara Watson, the groups Secretary said: *"The project means that clients are able to walk without pain and therefore enlarge their horizons in the world, taking little walks and doing their own shopping. This project has made a great difference in Central Sutherland in enabling clients, giving them confidence in remaining in their own homes and carrying out household tasks more safely. They are safer in their homes less likely to trip and fall. The service is free but donations have added to more than £300, illustrating the value placed on the service."*

The Forum has circulated leaflets on the service across the area, has contacted doctors and other health professionals to encourage referrals, and has placed articles and advertising in the community magazine so that the service can reach as many relevant people as possible.

Marketing and Communications

Foundation Scotland, working alongside the Community Panel, sought raise the profile of the Fund through a variety of channels during the year, as shown in the table below.

Table 6: Year 9 Marketing and Communications Activity for the Fund

| Activity | Frequency / Date | Coverage/ impact |
|--|------------------|---|
| Funders Fayre (online) for community groups across Sutherland | September 2020 | Approx. 25 attendees |
| Page in Kyle Chronicle (community magazine delivered to every household) | February 2021 | Advertising for two new Panel members |
| Press release by Foundation Scotland | April 2021 | "Rosehall wind farm fund pays out £580k in eight years" https://www.northern-times.co.uk/news/rosehall-wind-farm-fund-pays-out-580k-in-eight-years-234159/ |
| Press release by Grantee | May 2021 | "New map and guide to the heart of Sutherland" https://www.northern-times.co.uk/news/new-map-and-guide-to-the-heart-of-sutherland-237141/ |
| Guidance on "Acknowledging your Grant" | With award pack | RWE and FS logos plus guidance on acknowledging the funding source provided to each awardee |
| Fund webpage - https://wwwFOUNDATIONSscotland.org.uk/apply-for-funding/funding-available/rosehall | Ongoing | Up-to-date information about the Fund, including most recent grants awarded. Page views – 370 of which unique – 239 |
| Social media | Ongoing | On average posts on Foundation Scotland's Facebook page reached 400 people and Foundation Scotland's twitter page has 4,000 followers. The Facebook page: "RWE Rosehall Community Fund" is followed by 31 people, with each post reaching 8-19 people depending on the number of people who 'share'. |

Community Panel

The SSE & RWE Community Funds Panel is governed by a Terms of Reference that has been agreed between the Community Council and Foundation Scotland and is reviewed from time to time. All Panel members receive an induction to the Fund, their role, and Foundation Scotland's grant making processes. Together, Panel members bring a range of experience and knowledge with backgrounds including education, agriculture, health and social care and many others.

12 volunteer representatives serve on the Panel, comprising of two Community Councillors and two elected community representatives from each of the three Community Council areas.

During Year 9 Panel members were:

Ardgay & District Community Council area:

- Rob Pope – *Community Council representative*
- Silvia Murcus – *Community Council representative*
- David Hannah
- Marion Turner (joined September 2020)
- Catriona Hill (stood down September 2020)

Creich Community Council area:

- Pete Campbell – *Community Council representative*
- John White – *Community Council representative*
- Caroline Munro (joined May 2021)
- Sarah Forest (joined May 2021)
- Hayley Bangs (stood down January 2021)
- Elaine Kelly (stood down March 2021)

Lairg Community Council area:

- Andrew Mackay – *Community Council representative*
- Jackie Young – *Community Council representative*
- Steven McLean
- Robert Johnstone (joined June 2021)
- David Ross (stood down September 2020)

Conclusion

Year 9 has seen several positive outcomes for, and from, the Fund:

- The Panel made some bold strategic awards which will support several key community organisations for the next four years, enabling them to better concentrate of the day-to-day delivery of services and activities.
- There was a good response to the opportunity to join the Panels with four vacancies filled through the year.
- There was a healthy conversion rate from application to award, at 78%
- There were no rejections, only two applications withdrawn by the applicants in advance of Panel meetings.

Much of this has been brought about by close collaborative working between Foundation Scotland, the Panels and the local community organisations.

Foundation Scotland

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