

Achlachan Wind Farm Fund

Year 1 Newsletter

1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020



Whirlwind Renewables, owner the Achlachan Wind Farm, makes an annual donation to benefit the groups and organisations in the Halkirk District Community Council area with a priority to the area within a 4km boundary of the Wind Farm. Decisions on awards are made by the Achlachan Wind Farm Fund Panel.

Annual payments index linked payments will be made over the 25 years the windfarm is likely to be operational. In Year 1, the annual donation to the Fund was £30,000 and the amount released through grants was £15,497.83.

The Fund is held and administered by Foundation Scotland who receive and process applications, under contract to Whirlwind Renewables. The Foundation's costs for this service is paid from the Fund. Decisions on awards are made by the Achlachan Wind Farm Fund Panel which is made of up to 14 local people, representing various groups and interests.

Fund Launch

In advance of the Fund opening two community drop in day's were held to publicise the Fund and to consult the local community about how the Fund should operate. The first was at the Ross Institute in November 2018 and the second was at Spittal Hall in January 2019. Around 40 people attended. The comments received helped to shape the structure of the Fund including its priorities, deadlines and grant size.

Fund Priorities

1. Developing services and facilities.
2. Sustaining and creating employment.
3. Increasing skills and knowledge.
4. Preserving and enhancing or giving better access to culture, heritage and the environment.
5. Getting around and getting connected.



How to apply to the Fund

There are four rounds per year with deadlines of **15th March**, **15th June**, **15th September** and **15th December**. The application form can be completed online using a web link and a user friendly online form. Or the application form can be downloaded as a word document. Paper copies of forms are available on request. For grants of over £10,000 please contact Eilidh Coll using the details below before submitting a form. Further information on the Fund is online at:

<https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/programmes/achlachan-wind-farm-fund/>.

Foundation Scotland

Eilidh Coll, based in Caithness, is happy to help with any queries.

Foundation Scotland, 15 Calton Road, Edinburgh EH8 8DL

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Achlachan Wind Farm Fund Awards Made in Year 1

The Achlachan Wind Farm Panel made seven awards in its first year totaling £12,497.83.

Organisation	Project	Estimated Impact
1. Halkirk District Community Council	£3,000 to provide a micro-grant scheme for the local community.	Any resident within the area can apply
The Halkirk District Community Council will make small grants, of less than £300, to any local individual undertaking a project which will directly benefit young people, sports, educational and art activities. Applications are welcomed by way of a letter detailing who will benefit and what activity will be undertaken and these will be assessed at normal HDCC meetings.		
2. Halkirk Playgroup and Toddler Group	£3,000 to contribute to the staffing costs for the summer term.	24 Playgroup children and 11 attending mother and toddlers
Halkirk Playgroup and Toddler Group operates from Halkirk Primary School and is run by a board of volunteers. Due to a national change in the way Playgroups receive funding, the group found themselves facing a shortfall. This funding allowed the staff to continue to deliver the full range of sessions for the rest of the term, safeguarding employment and providing childcare for local parents.		
3. Ormlie Community Association Ltd	£500 to contribute to the cost of activities for the Silver Surfer programme.	10 people from the area regularly attend Silver Citizens
The 'Silver Citizen' programme offers outings, regular coffee mornings, games and free weekly classes in a range of subjects. The aim of the programme is to enable people aged over 65 to meet regularly, reducing isolation and loneliness which can lead to more serious health issues.		
4. Caithness Disabled Access Panel	£200 to update the website to reflect the programme of surveying accessible toilets in community buildings.	Any local person with limited mobility
The Access Panel is working to improve the quality of access to facilities, particularly toilets for disabled people through the 'Accessible Toilet Award' scheme. Award certificates will be issued to participating organisations to display at the premises and publicise the quality of their facility and this information will be made available on the group's website.		
5. Halkirk Heritage and Vintage Vehicle Society	£2097.83 to seal and paint concrete floors of the Heritage and Vintage Motor Centre.	A projected 40 monthly visitors to the centre once complete
The Halkirk Heritage and Vintage Vehicle Society has been working on the development of a new Centre for a number of years and there are still some essential elements to be undertaken. Sealing and painting the concrete floors was felt to be the best use of the next stage of funding. Painting the concrete can lengthen its life and will reduce its maintenance. It also makes it easier to keep clean than bare concrete as it will absorb less stains, for example if there were an oil spill.		
6. Hearing and Sight Care	£1,000 to contribute to running costs including clinics and home visits.	87 registered users from within the area.
Hearing and Sight Care operates Sensory Centre's in Thurso and Wick where people can drop in for help with their hearing and sight loss issues. The group holds outreach clinics in the Ross Institute and does home visits. Sight or hearing loss can be particularly isolating for rural people who are dependent on transport to access services. People accessing the service can find ways to continue to live their normal lives, and can receive help with unfamiliar equipment, communication technique advice and can learn British Sign Language. Staff or volunteers can assess homes to reduce trip hazards that an untrained person would not spot which can help prevent accidents.		
7. Halkirk Parent Council	£2,700 to set up a 'Junior Librarian' library management system.	All 113 school pupils
The Halkirk School Library has a modern, extensive selection of age appropriate books. However it lacked the ability for children to take books home. Junior Librarian is a tracking system run by the children themselves so books can be checked out and taken home to share with families. It will also enable the senior pupils to run the library and gain new experiences, transferrable life skills and confidence, which they are keen to participate in.		