

Bad á Cheò Wind Farm Community Fund

Year 1 Summary Report (1st June 2019 to 31st May 2020)

About the Fund

The Bad á Cheò Wind Farm Community Fund is provided by RWE Renewables, owner of the 26.65 MW Bad á Cheò Wind Farm, near Achkeepster in Caithness in the north of Scotland. The area of benefit, or 'Fund Area', covers three Community Council areas: Halkirk District; Latheron, Lybster & Clyth; and Watten.

Foundation Scotland, an independent charity with expertise in grant making and community development, provides governance and administrative support to the Fund, under contract to RWE Renewables. The Foundation's costs for this service are paid from the Fund.

The Community Fund is split into three sub-funds. Each community council area has its own local **Community Benefit Fund**, with an **Education and Training Fund** for each area to support a range of education, training or re-training opportunities.

Annual donations to the Fund are £5,000 per MW of installed capacity at the wind farm and index linked, and will be made over the 25 years the windfarm is likely to be operational. In Year 1, the annual donation to the Fund was £133,250.

Fund Set Up

The Fund was launched in September 2019.

Through discussions it was agreed that the Community Fund would be split into three sub-funds with each community council area having its own local decision making Panel. Each sub-fund would operate a **Community Benefit Fund** to support community groups, and an **Education and Training Fund** which would support a range of education, training or re-training opportunities.

Decisions on awards are made by the three communities as follows:

Halkirk District: Panel comprises up to 14 local people with four funding rounds per year. The Panel oversees this and one other local fund.

Latheron, Lybster & Clyth: Panel comprises up to 14 local people with two funding rounds per year. This Panel does not oversee any other funds.

Watten: Panel comprises up to 12 local people with two funding rounds per year. The Panel oversees this and three other local funds, including the RWE Billbster Community Fund.



Fund Launch - September 2019

Each community opted for drop-in days in local village halls to publicise the Fund and to encourage volunteers to join the decision making Panels.

One was held in Watten Village Hall which five people attended. One was held in Scotscladder Hall which six people attended. One was held in Latheron Hall (photo) which eight people attended.

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The three sub-fund Community Panels

The Panels are each governed by a Terms of Reference that has been agreed between community representatives and Foundation Scotland and is reviewed from time to time. The Panel members have all had an induction to Foundation Scotland practices and bring a range of experience and knowledge with backgrounds including education, agriculture, nuclear, health and social care and many others.

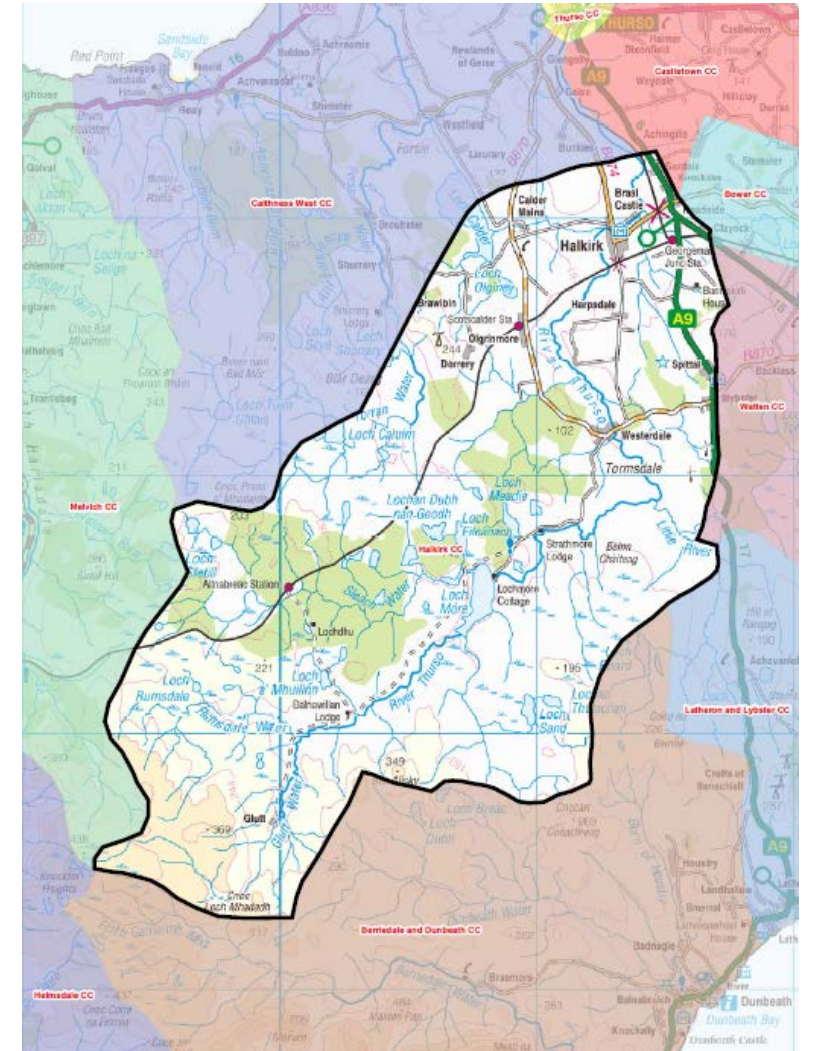
In **Halkirk District** the Panel meets four times per year to make recommendations on awards from the Fund and advise on overall Fund strategy. The Panel comprises up to 14 people who live in the Fund Area. The inaugural Panel has eight members: Kathrin Haltiner, Linda Levack, Stuart Mills, Anne Gunn, Barbara Van Rooyen, Victoria Spencer, Gordy Levack, David Busby and Donald Mackay.

In **Latheron, Lybster and Clyth** the Panel meets twice per year to make recommendations on awards and once as an annual review of the Fund. The Panel comprises up to 14 local people and currently has six members: Aimee McTierney, Andrew Falconer, Sheena MacLeod, Joanna Garrett, Alison Kirk and Maria Foulis.

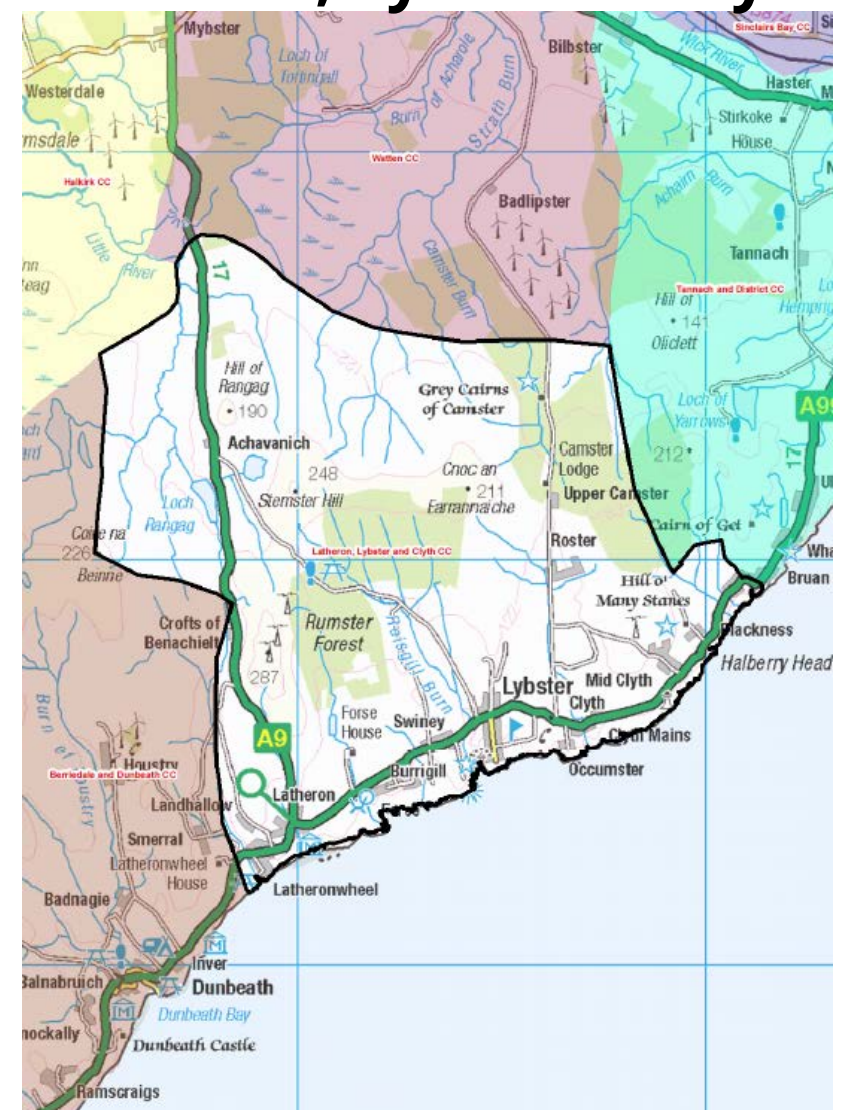
In **Watten** the Panel comprises up to 12 local people with two funding rounds per year and scheduled additional e-votes to make decisions on the Education and Training Fund which is operating on a rolling basis. There are currently 10 people on the Panel: Jim MacDonald, Liam Swanson, John Sinclair, Anne Alexander, Helen Campbell, Rosalyn MacDonald, Lesley Young, David Thomson and Aileen Mackay. There was also one person who recently stood down: Robert Roy.

The three sub-fund areas

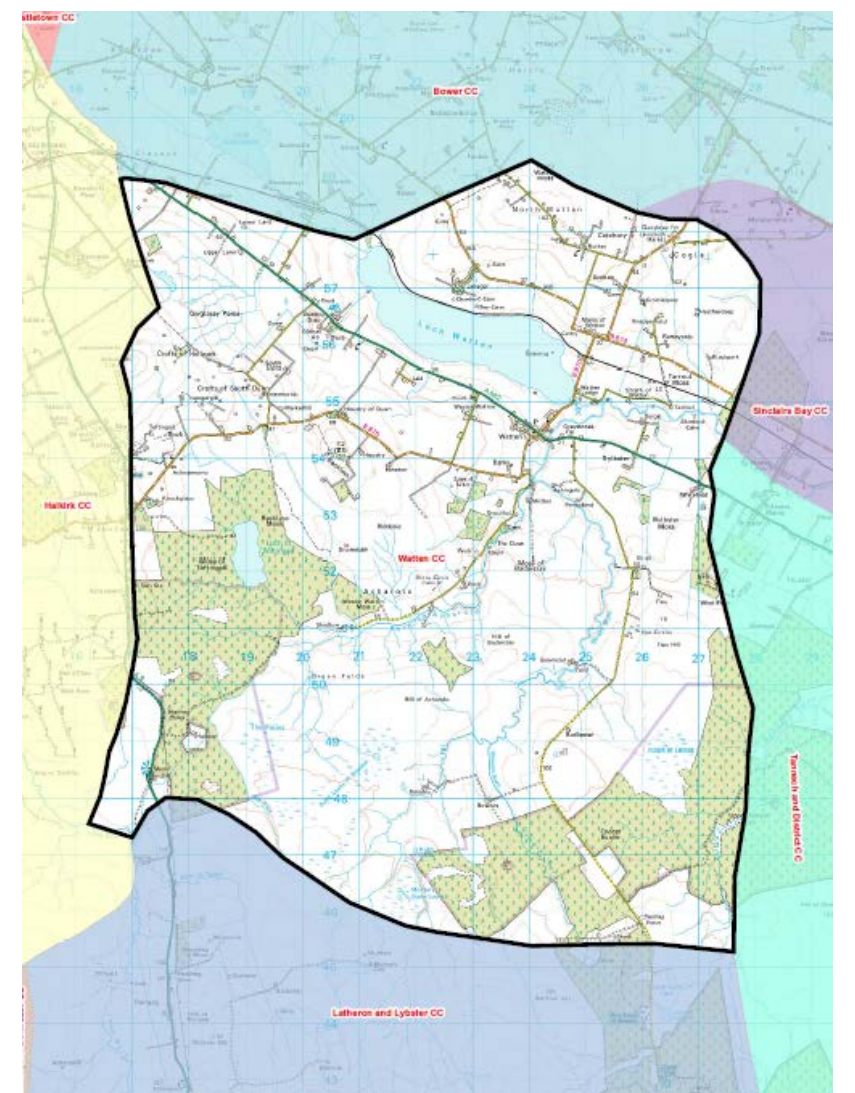
Halkirk District



Latheron, Lybster & Clyth



Watten



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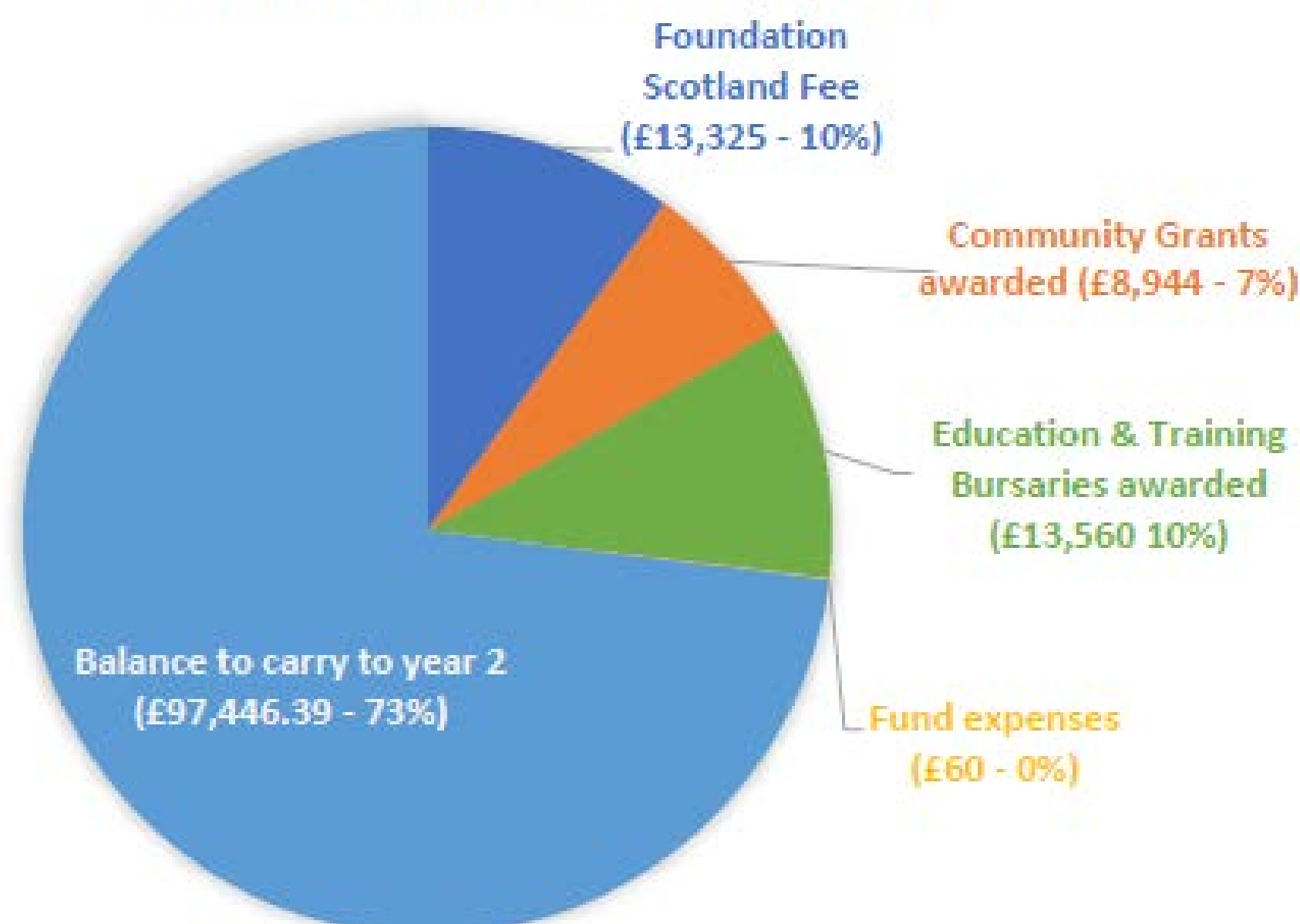
Year 1 Fund Distribution

A summary of Bad á Cheò Wind Farm Community Fund finances for Year 1 is provided below. The Foundation Scotland contribution of £13,325 (10% of the Fund donation) is removed from the fund balance before splitting the donation between the three communities. Each community allocated £39,975 for award making.

	Administrative Account	Community Council Area Accounts			TOTAL
		Halkirk District	Latheron, Lybster & Clyth	Watten	Area Accounts
Income:					
Opening Balance at 1 June 2019	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Donation	£133,250.00				£133,250.00
Interest to 31 Dec 2020		£26.07	£29.59	£29.73	£85.39
Expenditure:					
Foundation Scotland Fee	£13,325.00				£13,325.00
Split to Area Accounts	£119,925.00				£119,925.00
Grants awarded and paid		£4,000.00			£4,000.00
Grants awarded not yet paid		£4,944.00			£4,944.00
Education & Training bursaries paid		£8,060.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£11,060.00
Education & Training bursaries not paid		£2,500.00			£2,500.00
Panel Expenses			£60.00		£60.00
Balance as at 31 May 2020	£0.00	£20,497.07	£38,444.59	£38,504.73	£97,446.39

The amount awarded in grants represents 17% of the donation to the Fund in Year 1. This was split with 7% (£8,944) being awarded to community groups and 10% (£13,560) being awarded to individuals undertaking education or training. The balance carried forward into Year 2 (£97,446.39), represents 73% of the donation.

YEAR 1 FUND DISTRIBUTION



During Year 1, the Panels have considered eight **community benefit** applications, of which four were awarded. One project was rejected as it was for an ineligible purpose. Three have been deferred as the applications were received just as the effects of the covid-19 pandemic were beginning to be felt. These three applications will be reviewed by the Panel again once they are in a position to proceed.

The **Education & Training Fund** received 12 application of which 11 were successful. Nine were from Halkirk District residents, one was to a Latheron, Lybster and Clyth resident and one was to a Watten resident. One award is a multi-year award so has only been partially paid to the grantee, while one has not been paid as the course has been delayed due to the covid-19 pandemic.

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Four awards made to Community Groups

Science 03 awarded £1,500 to contribute to a series of shows and workshops at the local primary school for the 2020 festival for the 121 pupils at Halkirk Primary School and the 32 Halkirk Playgroup pupils.

Science 03 organises the Caithness International Science Festival each year during National Science week to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) to local schools and the general public.

The Science Festival has an intensive programme of presenters who bring science alive for young people across Caithness. It receives excellent feedback each year and allows participation in subjects which would not otherwise be available without travelling out of the county. Unfortunately the 2020 Festival was already underway when the covid-19 pandemic began and this caused significant disruption and eventually the cancellation of the latter half of the Festival. It is not known at this point whether Science 03 will be liable to pay all the presenters in full or whether some refunds will be possible. The group continues to work with its partners to assess the financial impact and will feed back to Foundation Scotland in due course.

Halkirk Playgroup and Toddler Group awarded £2,701 improve the outdoor learning environment and the transition areas for the 32 Playgroup pupils and 11 children attending mother and toddlers sessions.

Halkirk Playgroup and Toddler Group is a safe and fun place where children learn to take a constructive place in the community and where parents take part when appropriate. Halkirk Playgroup employs its own staff and makes use of a classroom and outdoor space within Halkirk Primary School.

The Committee, along with the staff, regularly consider improvements to existing resources in order to give the best learning environment for the children and had noted some improvements required to both the outdoor area and the transition area for the children. The grant will also enable the group to purchase new indoor sensory equipment for the benefit of children within the nursery have additional support needs.

Halkirk School Parent Council awarded £2,500 to fund transport costs for extracurricular activities throughout 2020.

Halkirk School Parent Council works in partnership with Halkirk Primary School to create a welcoming school inclusive to all parents. The School has a roll of 121 pupils who, along with their families, benefit from the work of the Parent Council.

As a rural school, bus transport is essential to take part in extracurricular activities such as swimming, the annual music festival, other educational trips through the year and the traditional end of term trip. Transport for such trips is not provided as part of the statutory education provision and so the cost of transport must be met by parental contributions or fundraised by the Parent Council. The Parent Council has calculated an average spend of around £3,000 annually on transport and a contribution towards this of £2,500 will significantly ease the burden on families to self fund this, whilst still encouraging some traditional fundraising to be undertaken.

Without extracurricular trips some children may not learn to swim, or experience many of the cultural visits, or have the opportunity to get together with other schools to take part in larger activities.

No Limits Caithness awarded £2,243 to contribute to the cost of running life skills sessions over the year 2020/2021 impacting two young people from the Halkirk District area who regularly attend.

No Limits Caithness runs a Holiday Club and Saturday Club in Wick for children and young people with additional needs including physical, learning and communication difficulties. The group helps them overcome the barriers they face in carrying out normal day-to-day tasks, providing them with the skills to challenge their perceptions of their abilities, to build resilience and become more independent. Most importantly the activities are fun. Grant funding allows the group to offer a full and varied programme which is developed by the children and reflects their favourite hobbies, interests and pastimes.

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Eleven Education & Training Awards

1 Multi-year course:

- £2,500 SQA Customised Award in Traditional Kiltmaking at the Keith Kilt and Textile Centre.

After taking an Introduction to Kiltmaking course in Keith, Moray, Zoe Farquhar realised that there is a demand locally for handmade kilts by participants in Highland Dance Schools as well as sympathetic repairs to older garments.

4 Short courses:

- £580 Authorised Witness for the Deer Stalking Certificate through South Ayrshire Stalking.
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- £1,500 Senior welding inspector qualification through The Welding Institute in Aberdeen.
- £1,500 SOMM Diploma in Orthopaedic Medicine Units 1 and 2. through the Society of Musculoskeletal Medicine.

"My aim after completing the SQA in Kiltmaking is to start up my own business. As there is no kilt supplier or repair shop in Caithness, hundreds of local dancers are having to purchase their outfits out with the area. I am delighted that I will be able to provide a much-needed service locally."



Louise Todd, has been successfully compiling accounts on a freelance basis for several years, but without a professional qualification. This is about to change as she embarks on the AAT Level 3 Advanced Diploma in Accounting.

"Upon completing the course, I will have the skill set to successfully undertake senior accounting tasks including advanced booking keeping and more. I will be awarded AAT Bookkeeper status which will give me the added confidence to expand my business."



6 One-year courses:

- 1,500 AAT Level 3 Advanced Diploma in Accounting through The Association of Accounting Technicians, via e-Careers.
- £500 BA History and Social Policy at Strathclyde University.
- MSc Environmental Management (Energy) £1,500 To contribute towards course fees through the University of Stirling.
- £1,500 Diploma in Sports and Remedial Massage through The Highland Institute of Massage.
- £400 MA Art and Social Practice through the University of the Highlands and Islands, Centre for Rural Creativity, Shetland College.
- £1,500 BA (Hons) Child and Youth Studies through the University of the Highlands and Islands, Thurso.

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Fund Impact through themes

The Fund Outcomes have been derived from the Caithness Conversation which began in 2013 and included facilitated discussions between community members, businesses and other key local stakeholders. The output of this work was (amongst other things) five key themes demonstrating how funds can best be used to benefit Caithness communities. These themes were then ratified during the 2016, 2017 and 2018 community consultation undertaken by RWE Renewables through the planning and development phases of the Bad á Cheò Wind Farm.

The five themes are:

1. Getting around and getting connected
2. Preserving and enhancing the environment
3. Increasing skills and knowledge
4. Sustaining and creating employment
5. Developing services or facilities

Each of the three communities have further refined these themes and produced their own unique set of Fund Outcomes. However, all local fund outcomes are easily aligned within these five themes.

The four community awards made during Fund Year 1 were all made by the Halkirk Panel. Two were aligned to Theme 3 'Increasing skills and knowledge', one was aligned to Theme 1 'Developing services or facilities' and one was aligned to Theme 5 'Getting around and getting connected'.

To ensure the Fund is meeting the needs of the community, and to allow the Panel to reflect on awards made and how they fit with the Fund Priorities, at the assessment stage all awards are matched to a local Fund Priority. The table below shows the breakdown of Year 1 awards across the five themes by number of grants awarded and by funding allocated.

Local Fund Priority	Amount Awarded	No. of Awards
1. Developing services and facilities.	£2,243.00	1
2. Sustaining and creating employment.	£0.00	0
3. Increasing skills and knowledge.	£4,201.00	2
4. Preserving and enhancing the environment.	£0.00	0
5. Getting around and getting connected.	£2,500.00	1
TOTAL	£8,944.00	4

With only four awards across five themes, analysis of the spend during Fund Year 1 across the themes is unlikely to be helpful. However as more awards are made in future years, analysis of spend across the themes will likely be of value.

The 11 education and training bursaries are aligned to Theme 3: 'Increasing skills and knowledge', but not included in the summary table above.

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Marketing and Communications

July 2019:

- Press release “News for Bad á Cheò Wind Farm Community Fund” <https://community.caithness.org/group.php?id=3345>

September 2019:

- Press release “Innogy Launches Flexible Wind Farm Fund To Increase Employment Potential” <https://caithness-business.co.uk/article/9846>
- Drop-in sessions, Watten Hall, Scotscalder Hall and Latheron Approx. 20 attendees
- Press release “Wind farm to give cash for vital projects” https://greentechnewstoday.com/renewable_energy/wind-farm-to-give-cash-for-vital-projects/

October 2019

- Update on Caithness Voluntary Group webpage “Community Benefit Funding
- Advice Day – 07/11/19” <https://www.cvg.org.uk/community-benefit-funding-advice-day-07-11-19/>
- Press release “How to access wind farm funds for your community” <https://www.johnogroat-journal.co.uk/news/advice-sessions-on-accessing-wind-farm-community-funding-185400/>

November 2019

- Fund Coordinator speaker slot at ‘Meet the Funders’ Event in Lybster, Thrumster and Wick Approx. 50 attendees.
- “Guide to new wind farm Funds” leaflet prepared for and distributed at Halkirk District Benefit Fund AGM and hand delivered by Panel members to residents near to the wind farm.

December 2019

- Press release “Two Caithness Residents Benefit From First Wind Farm Education And Training Fund” <https://community.caithness.org/article/6445>

February 2020

- Stand at local event ‘Your Cash Your Caithness’ - Approx. 100 attendees.

June 2020

- Press release “Deadline drawing near for Watten and Tannach bursary schemes” <https://www.johnogroat-journal.co.uk/news/deadline-drawing-near-for-watten-and-tannach-bursary-schemes-202757/>
- Press release “Local residents enhance their skills and boost employability with wind farm funding”.

Conclusion

Year 1 has seen several positive outcomes for, and from, the Fund:

- A well-attended series of Fund launches
- A good response to the opportunity to join the Panel
- 17% of the year’s donation awarded in grants to community projects and educational bursaries
- A good conversion rate from application to award for applications to the Education & Training Fund, at 92%
- A high level of press coverage and publicity for the Fund
- A positive working relationship developed with the other Funds in the areas including some which are also administered by Foundation Scotland and some which are not.