

nadara



**Foundation
Scotland**

Nadara Glenkerie Wind Farm Community Fund

Fund Review: 2019 to 2024



Key Highlights.....



£5.3 Million Leveraged
Fund investment of £974,858 generated total community investment of £5.3 million (1:5 ratio)



131 Projects Supported
Funding awarded to 131 projects across 71 organisations - a 77.5% application success rate



Community Assets Transformed
15+ community buildings enhanced including Crook Inn (£122,622) and Village Store (£60,000)



Legacy Fund Growth
Community Investment Fund increased from £135,000 to £190,477 ensuring sustainability



13 Communities Reached
Geographic spread across 13 communities in 6 Community Council areas within 15km radius



Decade Long Impact
Ten years of sustained community development from 2014-2024 with operations continuing to 2039

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Fund Performance Summary	4
Geographic Distribution up until December 2024.....	5
Fund Priority Performance.....	6
Major Impact Achievements.....	6
Introduction and Background	7
Review Aims and Methodology	7
Operating Context and Challenges	8
Fund Area of Benefit and Eligibility	8
Fund Priorities Framework.....	9
Fund distribution.....	10
Operational data and analysis.....	11
Financial Performance and Distribution Patterns	11
Award Size Distribution:.....	12
Leverage	12
Largest Award Recipients and Projects.....	12
Geographic Distribution Analysis and Panel Decision-Making Analysis	13
Application Success Rates by Geographic Area	14
Priority Area (10km radius).....	15
Extended Area Performance (15km radius).....	15
Impact data and analysis	17
Fund priorities.....	17
Fund Performance Against Strategic Priorities	17
Fund Approach to Applications	17
Consultation Findings and Stakeholder Feedback	22
Fund Priorities Assessment.....	22
Geographic Distribution and Access Assessment.....	22
Fund Operation and Decision-Making Assessment.....	23
Impact Recognition and Challenges.....	23
Fund Review outcomes and actions	25
Overview of Panel Consultation.....	25
Revised Fund Priorities and recognition of hyper-local priorities	25
Enhanced Cross-Cutting Themes	26
Revised & refined Fund distribution arrangements.....	27
i.Standard Grants (£1,000 - £10,000).....	28
ii.Large Grants (£10,001+).....	28
iii.Multi-year awards	28
Recommendations.....	30
Conclusion.....	32

Executive Summary

The Nadara Glenkerie Wind Farm Community Fund supports projects benefiting communities within a 15km radius of the Glenkerie Wind Farm, with preference given to communities within 10km including Tweedsmuir, Broughton, Drumelzier, and Coulter.

The Fund priorities and framework were established through comprehensive community consultation with Community Councils and local residents, supported through informed desktop research including local Community Action Plans and socio-economic profiling.

Between 2014 and December 2024, the Fund received £1,022,481 in donations from Nadara (previously Ventient Energy and Infinis Energy) and awarded £870,905 to 131 successful projects across 71 organisations, achieving a 77.5% application success rate and generating £5.3 million in total community investment (leverage ratio 1:7.10).

Fund Performance Summary



Geographic Distribution up to December 2024

Geographic spread is across 13 communities in 6 Community Council areas.






Awards within the 10km area of preference

Area	Award Amount	% of Total	Distribution
Broughton & Upper Tweed	£167,797.00	42.3%	100%
Tweedsmuir	£162,797.00	41.0%	97%
Coulter	£32,150.00	8.1%	19%
Other areas in 10km or Scottish Borders	£20,555.00	5.2%	12%
Drumelzier	£14,210.00	3.6%	8%
Total	£397,024.00	100.0%	

Awards within a 15km radius of Nadara Glenkerie Wind Farm

Area	Award Amount	% of Total	Distribution
Biggar	£297,468.00	62.8%	100%
Symington	£57,836.00	12.2%	19%
Skirling	£41,626.00	8.8%	14%
South Lanarkshire	£38,218.00	8.1%	13%
Stobo	£25,000.00	5.3%	8%
Duneaton	£13,733.00	2.9%	5%
Wiston, Robertson & Lamington	£0.00	0.0%	0%
Total	£473,881.00	100.0%	

Fund Priority Performance

Category	Percentage	Amount	Description
 Community Assets Development	32.7%	£284,555	Infrastructure providing foundation for community activities
 Adequate Access to Services	31%	£270,406	Essential services including emergency response, education, healthcare
 Community Spirit and Engagement	28.5%	£248,091	Activities fostering participation and social cohesion
 Supporting Sustainable Communities	6.5%	£56,353	Long-term community viability initiatives
 Local Economic Growth	1.3%	£11,500	Tourism, cultural events, business infrastructure

Major Impact Achievements

- Transformative projects including Tweedsmuir Community Company (£122,622) to contribute towards the upgrading of the Wee Crook Inn, Upper Tweed Community Enterprise (£60,000) to renovate and upgrade Broughton Village Store and Symington Tinto AFC (£49,660) to contribute towards extension and renovation of the clubhouse facilities.
- Comprehensive support for 15+ community buildings that have been enhanced or refurbished, including a £30,000 multi-year award for Coulter Village Hall to support with core running costs.
- Youth development through sustained educational facility and service investment, including £10,000 to Biggar Youth Project for building renovations.
- Endowment Fund growth from £135,000 (2016) to £190,477 (2024) ensuring future sustainability.

Introduction and Background

Review Aims and Methodology

The Nadara Glenkerie Wind Farm Community Fund was established in 2014 to provide community benefit funding from the Glenkerie Wind Farm development. In accordance with Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments, Foundation Scotland conducted this Fund Review covering performance from 2019-2024, building on the previous review undertaken in 2019.

The review aimed to:

- Evaluate Fund achievements and impact through project outcome analysis.
- Assess Fund alignment with evolving community priorities and stakeholder needs.
- Review community awareness levels of, and access patterns to, the Fund across the benefit area.
- Review Panel decision-making processes, including in relation to implementing the Fund's geographic preference criteria.
- Consider the need for, and options for, revisions to Fund Strategy, including alternative distribution methods and large grant round processes.
- Develop 'Fund legacy' planning approaches.

This review employed several methodologies, including stakeholder surveys, stakeholder consultation workshops and survey, Panel surveys and review meetings detailed analysis of application and project outcomes data, and financial performance data. The Panel also undertook two review meetings in September and November 2024 to review the Fund's progress to date. Cumulative data relates to the period 2014 to 2024, with additional focus on the last five years.

Panel member surveys achieved 90% response rate (10 responses from 11 members), while the community stakeholder survey gathered 11 responses from applicants and residents across the catchment area.

Stakeholder workshops held at Biggar Museum and Stobo Village Hall provided geographic accessibility to the process, while interviews with Panel current and past representatives. Survey results from past and present applicant organisations ensured detailed input from across the Fund area.

Operating Context and Challenges

The review period encompassed significant contextual changes affecting local communities throughout the Fund area. Economic pressures from rising living costs impacted both residents and service-providing organisations within the catchment area. Post-pandemic effects continue to influence communities, with social isolation affecting mental health and wellbeing among residents, particularly in rural areas.

Ongoing reductions to public sector services, transport links, and commercial provision have created challenges for residents accessing essential services. Despite these pressures, it is apparent that communities have demonstrated strong enthusiasm and vision for establishing sustainable, flourishing environments supporting local residents and workers.

The Fund operates across a geographically diverse region spanning South Lanarkshire and Scottish Borders local authority boundaries, serving communities ranging from a key urban service centre (Biggar) to rural villages such as Tweedsmuir, Stobo and Coulter. This diversity presents both opportunities for varied project types and challenges in considering equitable access to funding and appropriate support for different community needs and capacities.

Fund Area of Benefit and Eligibility

The Fund supports projects that benefit and support the communities located within the Fund area, that includes people living within a 15km radius of the Glenkerie Wind Farm. While all communities within this area remain eligible, preference is given to applications from communities within 10km of the wind farm, as outlined in the original community benefit agreement at the Fund's inception by Infinis.

Priority Area (10km radius):

- Tweedsmuir: Rural village with strong community company presence.
- Broughton and Upper Tweed: Active community with educational and recreational facilities.
- Drumelzier: Small rural community with heritage assets.
- Coulter: Village with community trust managing local assets.

Extended Area (15km radius):

- Stobo: Rural community with village hall facilities.
- Biggar: Largest population centre with diverse organisations and cultural assets.
- Symington: Community focused on sports and recreational development.
- Skirling: Small rural community with an active village hall committee.
- Robertson, Lamington, Wiston: Rural communities with varying organisational capacity.
- Duneaton: Rural area with dispersed settlement pattern and a Community Trust.

Fund Priorities Framework

The Fund has sought to direct funding according to four key priorities established through extensive community consultation conducted during the initial Fund development phase. These priorities reflect community-identified needs and strategic development opportunities across the diverse geographic area.

All applications for funding and award decisions are evaluated against these priorities – some projects/awards will span more than one.

Priority 1: Adequate Access to Services for All Community Members: Supporting comprehensive service provisions, including healthcare access support, educational infrastructure development, youth and elderly service provision, and emergency response capabilities. This priority ensures all residents can access essential support for daily life, health and wellbeing across the rural area of benefit, where service provision faces particular challenges due to geographic isolation and population density.

Priority 2: Improved Local Transport: Enhancing transport infrastructure and services to connect communities and improve accessibility through public transport initiatives, road infrastructure improvements, active transport pathway development, and transport services supporting access to employment, healthcare, and education. This priority addresses mobility challenges that impact economic participation and access to essential services in rural and remote areas.

Priority 3: Opportunities to Grow the Local Economy: Stimulating community-led economic growth through business development support, cultural programming and heritage tourism initiatives, skills development programs, and initiatives attracting investment and visitors while enhancing regional profile and creating sustainable employment opportunities for local residents.

Priority 4: Developed or Maintained Community Assets: Investing in physical and organisational infrastructure that provides the foundation for community activities, including community facility development and upgrades, technology infrastructure supporting modern service delivery, recreational facility enhancement, and natural asset preservation, creating long-term community benefit and supporting local quality of life.

Fund distribution

The Fund operates through Standard Grants (£1,000-£10,000) via quarterly rounds and Large Grants (£10,001+), which shifted from first-come, first-served to bi-annual rounds following this Fund review for improved fairness. A Community Investment Fund was established between 2016-2018 with £135,000 transferred to create an endowment (now worth £190,477).

Operational data and analysis

Financial Performance and Distribution Patterns

Annual Donations to the Fund: Annual donations from the Donor, totalling £1,022,481, represent the Fund's primary income source, supplemented by £4,674 in interest earned on reserve funds. This donation income stream has enabled consistent annual grant-making and strategic planning for community development initiatives.

Grant Distribution Analysis: The Fund has supported 131 successful applications across 71 different organisations, demonstrating broad community engagement while enabling some organisations to develop progressive project portfolios over time.

Total grants awarded and ratified since the Fund's inception reached £974,858, with £870,905 paid out to completed or active projects and £103,953 pending payment to recently approved projects as at 31st of December 2024. This means the Fund has committed 12% more in grants than it has received in income (£103,953 over income). This represents future commitments that exceed current funding.

From a positive perspective, this demonstrates strong demand for grants and active deployment of resources, may indicate confidence in future funding streams, and shows the Fund is not hoarding resources but actively fulfilling its objective. However, there are potentially concerning aspects as this creates a funding gap that must be filled by future income, which could indicate over-commitment.

To support the Fund's legacy, the Panel made a strategic decision to transfer an initial amount to establish an endowment fund for long-term sustainability. Between October 2016 and October 2018, a total of £135,000 was transferred to the endowment through four transactions: two transfers of £50,000 each in late 2016, followed by £25,000 in March 2017 and £10,000 in October 2018.

All transfers were formally classified as "Restricted to Endowment", creating a permanent capital base to generate ongoing income for community initiatives and ensuring the Fund's impact continues.

Award Size Distribution:

- Largest single award: £62,500 (Tweedsmuir Community Company - Crook Inn Café & Community Hub).
- Smallest award: £250 (Skirling Kirk - Community Christmas concerts).
- Awards exceeding £30,000: 8 projects representing major strategic investments.
- Awards under £5,000: 67 projects demonstrating accessibility for grassroots initiatives.
- Average grant size: £6,648, reflecting a balance between strategic (larger) grants and smaller-scale awards.

Leverage

The Fund demonstrated strong leverage capability, with the total payments amounting to £870,905, leveraging £5,314,026 in total project costs across the 131 successfully awarded projects. This figure represents the additional community investment unlocked beyond the direct Fund awards, demonstrating the Fund's effectiveness as a catalyst for funding that enables communities to access significantly larger resources from other funding bodies, private investment, volunteer contributions, and match funding sources. For every £1 paid by the Fund, £6.10 of total project value was delivered to communities.

Largest Award Recipients and Projects

Tweedsmuir Community Company (£122,622 across 9 awards): The Fund's largest single beneficiary, receiving progressive support for community asset development, including the Crook Inn Café and Community Hub project. This investment leveraged over £400,000 in additional funding from Historic Environment Scotland, VisitScotland, and other sources, creating sustainable employment and tourism infrastructure.

Upper Tweed Community Enterprise (£60,000 across 2 awards): Successful community enterprise development from initial £10,000 establishment support to £50,000 to expand Broughton Village Store, demonstrating a progression model supporting community business development through different growth stages.

Symington Tinto AFC (£49,660 across 3 awards): Comprehensive clubhouse renovation, achieving a strong leverage ratio of 1:28, with Fund investment contributing to total project value exceeding £1.4 million through partnership funding arrangements.

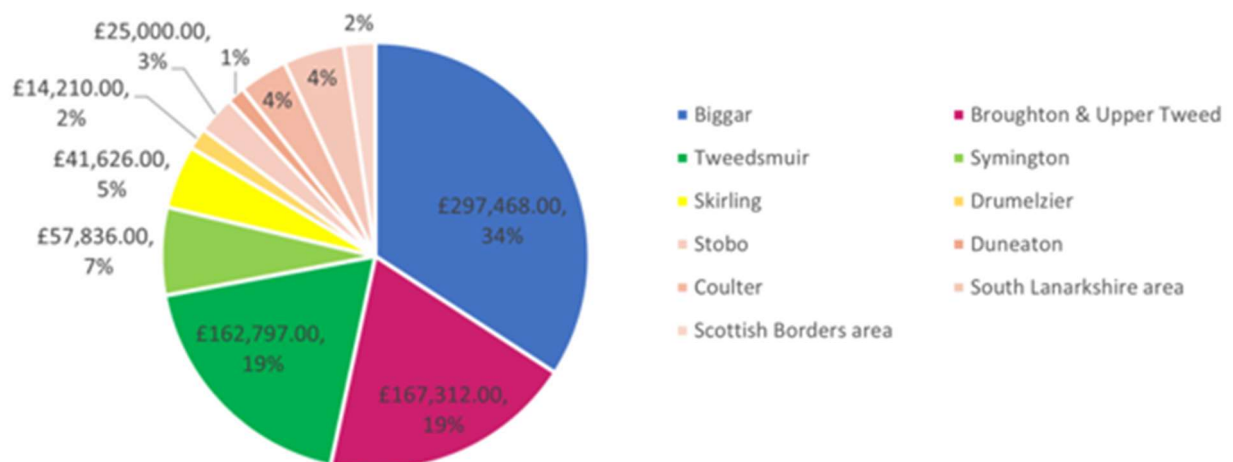
Biggar Little Festival (£49,022 across 4 awards): Multi-year cultural programming support establishing an annual festival as a regional cultural asset, supporting the local creative economy while attracting visitors and enhancing the area's profile.

Biggar Rugby Football Club (£42,456 across 5 awards): Facility development supporting both sports activities and broader community use through improved accessibility and modern amenities, including contributing towards the playpark extension.

Geographic Distribution Analysis and Panel Decision-Making Analysis

The chart below indicates the overall geographic distribution of funding awarded since Fund inception.

All awards across the Fund area up until December 2024



Application Success Rates by Geographic Area

The Fund demonstrated consistently high success rates across five key geographic areas within the Fund area, with evidence of strategic Panel decision-making that prioritised equitable geographic distribution of resources.

Overall Performance of Priority Areas

The five areas of preference, including Tweedsmuir, Upper Tweed, Broughton, Drumelzier, and Coulter, achieved a high overall success rate of 97.9%. Across these communities, 49 applications were submitted, of which 46 were awarded funding with only one rejection. Two applications were withdrawn by the applicants themselves. When considering only those applications that proceeded to a decision (excluding withdrawals), the success rate reached 97.9%.

Area-Specific Results

Tweedsmuir generated the highest volume of applications with 23 submissions, achieving a 91.3% success rate with 21 awards from 23 decided applications. Upper Tweed submitted 17 applications with a perfect 100% success rate for all 15 applications that proceeded to decision. Broughton contributed 15 applications, also achieving 100% success for the 13 applications that were decided. Both Drumelzier and Coulter demonstrated complete success, with all five combined applications, respectively, being awarded funding.

Comparative Performance: Evidence of Geographic Prioritisation

The success rate differential provides evidence that the Panel weighted geographic considerations in their decision-making processes. The five preference areas substantially outperformed the Fund's overall success rate of 82.4% (131 awards from 159 total applications), creating a 15.5 percentage point differential that indicates applications from these priority areas received more considered treatment during the assessment process. The preference areas secured 35.1% of all successful applications (46 out of 131 Fund-wide successes) despite representing only 30.8% of total applications (49 out of 159). This performance suggests the Panel applied a geographic lens to their evaluations, likely reflecting strategic priorities to ensure equitable distribution of Fund benefits across the Fund area.

Population Context and Community Engagement

These five areas of preference represent very small rural communities with a combined estimated population of fewer than 1,000 residents. The Upper Tweed Community Council area, which encompasses several of these communities, has between 697 and 822 residents according to official estimates.

For comparison, nearby Biggar had a population of 2,640 in 2020, highlighting how sparsely populated the area of preference are. Given this demographic context, the generation of 49 applications represents very high community engagement relative to population size. The application density of roughly one application per 16-18 residents demonstrates strong community organisation and project development capacity in these small rural areas. This context makes the 97.9% success rate even more significant, suggesting the Panel recognised and supported community mobilisation in these sparsely populated but highly engaged areas.

Implications for Fund Strategy

The analysis reveals that while community capacity and demand levels varied geographically, the Panel's decision-making effectively compensated for these disparities through preferential treatment of applications from priority areas. The relatively modest application volume from these areas (30.8% of total demand) reflects the smaller population base and fewer active community groups within this geographic zone compared to the wider catchment area. However, rather than disadvantaging these communities, the Panel's approach ensured that less densely organised communities still received proportionate Fund support. The data indicated a strategy to recognise particular development needs within these communities and ensure equitable distribution of Fund benefits across the entire Fund area.

Priority Area (10km radius)

Communities within the preference area received £397,024 (46% of total awards), reflecting a level of focus and priority.

Priority Area (10km) Awards:

- Tweedsmuir: £162,797 (19% of total)
- Broughton & Upper Tweed: £167,797 (19% of total)
- Drumelzier: £28,500 (3% of total)
- Coulter: £32,150 (4% of total)

Subtotal: £391,244 (45%)

Extended Area Performance (15km radius)

The broader catchment area received £473,881 (54% of total awards), with Biggar area projects representing the largest single area of geographic investment, reflecting population size, organisational density, and project diversity. This is perhaps unsurprising given that it acts as the main service centre in the Fund area. This distribution demonstrates Fund accessibility across the full eligible area while recognising natural variation in community capacity and project development.

Extended Area (15km) Awards:

- Biggar: £297,468 (34% of total)
- Symington: £57,836 (7% of total)
- Stobo: £25,000 (3% of total)
- Skirling: £41,626 (5% of total)
- Other communities: £57,731 (7% of total)

Subtotal: £479,661 (55%)

Lower Engagement Areas (15km)

Lamington, Robertson, and Wiston, whilst located within the Fund's 15km Fund area, represent areas of lower engagement that lie beyond the core areas of preference. These three communities have received no direct awards to date, though residents may have benefited from cross-community projects and regional service investments. These areas present opportunities for enhanced promotional activity and capacity-building support to improve access and awareness of Fund opportunities.

Impact data and analysis

Fund priorities

Fund Performance Against Strategic Priorities

The Fund's £870,905 investment across 131 successful projects demonstrates strategic alignment with community development priorities, with funding distributed to address the specific challenges and opportunities facing rural communities in the Scottish Borders and South Lanarkshire regions.

Fund Approach to Applications

The Fund maintained an inclusive approach to community development, recognising that whilst applications were encouraged to align with the four strategic priorities, projects which did not clearly meet one of these outcomes were still welcome. This flexible framework enabled the Fund to support diverse community-led initiatives that contributed to overall community wellbeing and social cohesion, even when they fell outside traditional priority categories. This approach is reflected in the significant 28% of funding (£243,386) allocated to "Other Community Initiatives" - projects that, whilst not fitting neatly within the four main priorities, delivered valuable community benefits through youth development, cultural programming, educational activities, and local coordination efforts. This demonstrates the Fund's recognition that thriving communities require support across multiple dimensions beyond the formal strategic framework.

Developed or Maintained Community Assets (31.2% - £271,958)

This priority achieved the highest investment level, reflecting the importance of community infrastructure in enabling broader development activities. The projects funded under this priority created lasting foundations for community activities and services across the catchment area.

Key Strategic Investments:

- **Gillespie Centre Management** (£37,500) - Two-year funding for professional centre management enabled efficient multi-group facility operation and coordinated community programming.
- **Symington Tinto AFC** (£30,000) - Clubhouse renovation project improved facilities quality and accessibility, creating enhanced community sports infrastructure whilst providing social spaces for broader community use. This [case study](#) highlights how support from the Fund has contributed to village hall regeneration across the Fund area.

- **Village Hall Modernisation** - Major upgrades, including Stobo Village Hall's accessibility improvements (£25,000) and Skirling Village Hall's toilet facility upgrades (£17,410), enhanced community spaces throughout the area.
- **Sports Facility Development** - Broughton & District Tennis Club's floodlight installation (£10,000) exemplified investments extending facility usage and improving training capabilities.

The awards demonstrate systematic investment in community buildings, sports facilities, and essential infrastructure. These projects created accessible, energy-efficient, and modern facilities that serve as focal points for community life whilst ensuring long-term sustainability through improved functionality and reduced operational costs.

Adequate Access to Services for All Community Members (21.1% - £183,805)

Projects addressed service accessibility challenges, recognising that geographic isolation can create barriers to essential services. This priority achieved significant impact through strategic investments totalling over £213,000.

Emergency and Safety Services:

- **Tweed Valley Mountain Rescue** (£20,000) - Vehicle replacement enhanced rescue capabilities serving the broader region whilst providing essential emergency response capacity for remote communities. This [case study](#) provides further information about the project.
- **Lanarkshire Cancer Care Trust** (£10,000) to support with transporting cancer patients to medical facilities to receive lifesaving treatment. This [case study](#) highlights how this project support the Fund area.

Social Support and Inclusion:

- **Food Security** - Clydesdale Food Bank's operational support (£16,550) addressed food poverty whilst ensuring vulnerable residents maintained access to nutrition.
- **Youth Support Services** - Community Volunteers Enabling You (£10,000) delivered targeted support programs addressing social isolation amongst young people.
- **Biggar Youth Project** – Received five funding awards (£24,995) to support with renovating its youth centre, as well as funding for core running costs. To find out more, please visit this [case study](#).

Community Sports and Recreation Access:

- **Broughton Bowling Club** (£19,000) – Received funding to support with accessibility ramp and facility upgrades, improved inclusive participation opportunities, ensuring community recreational facilities remained accessible to all residents. Please see this [case study](#) to find out more.

Cultural and Community Programming:

- **Biggar Little Festival** (£14,782) - Multi-year support established sustainable cultural programming whilst building volunteer capacity and community pride across demographic groups. To find out more about this project please see this [case study](#).

The investments demonstrate an understanding of rural service challenges, addressing emergency response, social support, cultural access, and community inclusion through targeted strategic funding.

Opportunities to Grow the Local Economy (18.3% - £159,661)

This priority achieved substantial impact through strategic investments averaging £15,966 per project. The focus on community enterprise development created sustainable employment whilst ensuring essential service provision in areas where commercial viability presents challenges.

Community Enterprise Development:

- **Tweedsmuir Community Company** (£72,500 across multiple phases) - The Wee Crook Inn development represents a transformational community enterprise, creating permanent community infrastructure whilst establishing a sustainable revenue-generating model for ongoing community development. To find out more, please visit this [case study](#).
- **Upper Tweed Community Enterprise** (£60,000 total) - Progressive support from startup through expansion demonstrates effective development methodology, enabling the [Broughton Village Store](#) to provide essential retail services whilst creating local employment.

Heritage and Tourism:

- **Biggar Museum Trust** (£9,600) - Infrastructure investment supported heritage tourism whilst preserving local history, demonstrating integrated approaches to economic and cultural development.

These investments underscore how strategic community enterprise support can address rural economic challenges whilst maintaining essential services that underpin community sustainability.

Improved Local Transport (1.4% - £12,095)

Although representing the smallest funding allocation, the transport projects addressed critical rural connectivity challenges with targeted interventions totalling £12,095.

Public Transport Innovation:

- **Upper Tweed Community Council** (£1,670) - Edinburgh bus service pilot demonstrated innovative community-led solutions to public transport gaps, trialling vital connections between remote areas and Scotland's capital for essential services and opportunities.

Educational Access:

- **School Transport Support** (£10,425 combined) - Funding for Broughton Primary School's three-year transport program (£5,925) and scout group international trip support (£4,500) ensured rural young people could access educational and cultural opportunities despite geographic disadvantages.

The modest investment level reflects the challenges of addressing transport connectivity in rural areas. Though the projects funded demonstrate a clear understanding of how transport barriers can limit rural community participation and development.

Other Community Initiatives (28.0% - £243,386)

A significant portion of funding has supported diverse community initiatives that, whilst not falling clearly within the four main priorities, contributed to overall community development and social cohesion. The following case studies from the Biggar Men's Shed and Bee Friendly, as well as the projects mentioned below, demonstrate the Fund's flexible approach to supporting community-led initiatives across various sectors.

Youth Organisation Support:

- **1st Biggar/Tinto Scout Group** (£4,500) - International expedition support enabling young people to participate in cultural exchange programmes.
- **1st Castlecraig Brownies** (£555) - Equipment and activity support for youth development programming.

Community Coordination and Development:

- **Biggar Community Council** (£2,000) - Community coordination activities and local governance support.
- **Biggar Albion Foundation Limited** (£2,000) - Community sports development initiatives.

Cultural and Educational Programming:

- **Biggar Science Festival (£1,382)** - Educational outreach including school science activities, museum trips, and STEM ambassador programmes. These diverse investments enhanced quality of life across the catchment area through cultural programming, youth development, environmental initiatives, and community events that strengthened social cohesion and local identity whilst supporting volunteer capacity building and community pride.

Strategic Observations

The funding distribution reveals a balanced approach prioritising sustainable community infrastructure (27.8%) whilst ensuring comprehensive service access (24.5%) and economic development opportunities (18.3%). The relatively modest transport investment (1.4%) represents an area where enhanced strategic focus could further strengthen community connectivity and inclusion.

The funding distribution reveals a balanced approach prioritising sustainable community infrastructure (31.2%) whilst ensuring comprehensive service access (21.1%) and economic development opportunities (18.3%). The transport investment (1.4%) reflects the specific challenges of addressing connectivity issues in rural areas through direct funding interventions.

Consultation Findings and Stakeholder Feedback

Fund Priorities Assessment

Continued Priority Relevance: Consultation revealed a strong consensus that the existing four Fund priorities remain relevant and appropriate for community needs, with enhancement rather than fundamental change required. Panel survey results showed particularly strong support for 'community assets development' (67% Very Important, 33% Important) and 'adequate access to services' (77% Very Important, 27% Important).

Geographic Distribution and Access Assessment

Preference Area Understanding and Implementation

All Panel members (100% of survey respondents) indicated they actively consider the 10km preference area in decision-making processes, with comments emphasising understanding of rural community needs and additional assistance requirements for very rural locations.

Panel members demonstrated a nuanced understanding of preference area application, balancing immediate community impact consideration with commitment to ensuring all communities within the 15km catchment can access appropriate support for legitimate community development needs.

Rural Community Challenges: Consultation identified particular recognition that smaller rural communities require enhanced support due to limited organisational capacity, higher per-capita project costs, and reduced volunteer availability affecting project development and delivery capability. Geographic equity concerns balanced preference area consideration with commitment to Fund accessibility across all eligible communities, recognising natural variation in community capacity.

Community Awareness and Access Challenges: The consultation identified communities with lower Fund awareness, particularly Lamington, Robertson, and Wiston. Analysis of application data reveals that no community groups or organisations based in these three areas have submitted applications to the Fund to date. Additionally, no projects from other areas have been proposed that specifically operate in or provide services to these communities, resulting in zero direct Fund investment in these locations.

Contributing factors were felt to include limited numbers of constituted groups within these communities, volunteer capacity constraints, reduced funding opportunity awareness, and lower confidence in application processes. The absence of both locally-based applicants and external organisations proposing projects for these areas suggests a combination of limited local organisational infrastructure and reduced visibility of these communities' needs within the broader catchment area.

Several respondents noted that the most effective promotion occurs through successful project demonstration and community networks rather than formal advertising, suggesting value in peer-to-peer promotion and success story sharing.

Fund Operation and Decision-Making Assessment

Panel Decision-Making Effectiveness: 60% of Panel members rated collective decision-making as working well, with positive feedback on opportunity for all members to voice opinions, willingness to listen and consider different perspectives, and thorough application consideration processes.

Panel composition representing diverse communities and combining local knowledge with professional expertise received a positive assessment, with interest expressed in occasional development sessions on community development best practice and funding sector evolution.

Application Process and Support Needs: Stakeholders identified needs for enhanced pre-application guidance, particularly support for non-constituted groups through anchor organisation partnerships, and clearer communication about funding criteria and decision-making processes.

Large Grant Process Requirements: A significant increase in large grant applications (over £10,000) in the period during the review necessitated review of decision-making frequency and process enhancement. Strong support emerged for large grants' transformational impact capability, with examples including progressive community company development and major facility improvements.

Impact Recognition and Challenges

Fund Success Recognition: Panel members provided unanimous recognition of the Fund's positive community impact, with comments including appreciation for projects that would not have been possible without grant funding, visible community asset improvements, and benefits spreading across the majority Fund area, with each community able to cite specific examples.

There was strong recognition of leverage achievement, with feedback provided that Fund support has provided credibility, enabling organisations to access much larger funding from other sources for project development.

Operational Challenges and Limitations: Promotion and awareness were consistently identified as the primary operational challenge, with specific recognition that no applications emerged from or for some villages and a general lack of awareness in certain communities about funding availability.

The constituted organisation requirement (for the Maqin Fund) was recognised as potentially limiting access, particularly in areas with few formal groups, though balanced against accountability and project delivery assurance needs. Such groups are eligible for microgrants.

Capacity variation between communities was acknowledged as affecting application success rates and project scale, with recognition that communities have different development readiness levels and support needs.

Fund Review outcomes and actions

Overview of Panel Consultation

Following consultation and performance analysis, the Panel has agreed on some changes to the Fund Framework and operations. They agreed to update the Fund priorities while enhancing clarity, contemporary relevance, and strategic focus for the Fund's remaining operational period. This approach recognises proven effectiveness while incorporating learning from community feedback and changing development context.

The updated framework reflects evolving community needs, including increased focus on resilience, sustainability, and inclusion, while maintaining accessibility for diverse project types and organisational capacity levels across the geographic catchment area.

Revised Fund Priorities and recognition of hyper-local priorities

Priority 1: Adequate Access to Services for Community Members: *Enhanced scope encompassing service quality, accessibility, and innovation in service delivery approaches.*

Priority 2: Supporting Sustainable Communities: *Elevated recognition of sustainability as fundamental to long-term community viability, encompassing economic, environmental, and social sustainability dimensions.*

Priority 3: Opportunities to Grow the Local Economy: *Broadened approach expanding from tourism focus to comprehensive local economic development encompassing diverse sectors and innovative approaches.*

Priority 4: Developed or Maintained Community Assets: *Recognition that physical and digital assets provide an essential foundation for all other community activities and long-term development.*

Priority 5: Promote Community Spirit and Encourage Community Activity: *Enhanced focus on social connections and shared activities as fundamental to community resilience and individual wellbeing.*

Custom Question: To support decision-making within a diverse geographical region, recognising that individual communities have their own unique priorities, the Panel agreed to incorporate a bespoke question into the application process. The purpose was to assist the Panel in making decisions on awards whilst considering the Fund communities' individual priorities. –*“Please explain how their project aligns with your community-specific priorities within your local community – such as the Community Action Plan”.*

The refreshed priorities maintain the Fund's core commitment to comprehensive community development while providing clearer guidance for applicants and more targeted outcomes measurement, ensuring that projects align effectively with identified community priorities.

Enhanced Cross-Cutting Themes

The cross-cutting themes provide additional assessment criteria, encouraging applicants to consider broader community development objectives beyond their primary priority focus. These themes reflect best practice in community development while maintaining proportionality for different project scales.

Two new themes were introduced to the Additional Criteria, that included:

Benefit & Impact: The project should demonstrate sustained depth of benefit and impact. This reflects the Panel's aspiration to ensure a lasting legacy in the Fund area following the end of the wind farm's operational cycle.

Proportionate reach: The project should reach a proportionate number of people while maintaining depth of impact. This helps ensure value for money when evaluating projects and guarantees that funding delivers meaningful outcomes for both individuals and the broader community.

The following themes remained as part of the wide cross-cutting themes:

Match funding: Match funding requires applicants to secure additional financial contributions from other sources (such as their own fundraising, other grants, or organisational funds) rather than relying entirely on the primary fund, with the goal of leveraging resources and demonstrating broader support for the project.

Match funding ensures applicants have explored all available funding avenues and demonstrates their commitment to the project through co-investment.

It helps stretch the primary fund's impact further by leveraging additional resources, meaning more projects can be supported whilst preventing the fund from displacing other funding sources or reducing community groups' own fundraising efforts.

Local procurement: Local procurement asks applicants to prioritise local suppliers for goods and services where appropriate and feasible, with "local" defined flexibly from the Upper Tweed area to the broader Scottish Borders or South of Scotland.

Local procurement keeps money circulating within the community, strengthening the local economy and supporting regional businesses. It ensures funded projects contribute to broader local economic development rather than simply extracting resources from the area.

Sustainable development: That consideration has been given to helping achieve sustainable development, including minimising the environmental impact of projects and reducing the applicant organisation's 'carbon footprint'. This ensures funded projects contribute to environmental goals and encourages holistic thinking about long-term impact, aligning with broader climate commitments.

Local consultation: The organisation has consulted an appropriate number of the intended beneficiaries of the project, as appropriate, and can demonstrate they are supportive of the proposal. This ensures projects genuinely meet community needs rather than imposing solutions, and confirms there is actual demand and backing from those who will benefit from the initiative.

Partnership working: The organisation has considered whether delivering its project in partnership with other organisations/ groups will add value (financial, capability, or other). This could involve working with voluntary, private, or public sector bodies that operate at the local, regional, or national level. This encourages resource sharing and avoids duplication of effort whilst leveraging the expertise and networks of different organisations to maximise project impact and effectiveness.

Revised & refined Fund distribution arrangements

The Fund's Standard Grant distribution arrangements were reviewed, with the standard process for funding distribution remaining unchanged. However, the Panel reflected on opportunities to provide more impactful support for groups and organisations and made minor changes to support decision-making. The Large Grant process was revised in response to increased applications.

The previous first-come, first-served approach was deemed unfair for administering larger grants and was replaced with a more equitable selection process.

i. Standard Grants (£1,000 - £10,000)

Quarterly application rounds will be maintained for continued accessibility, supporting grassroots community initiatives and responsive funding for emerging needs. As mentioned above, the enhanced application process includes custom questions addressing local priority alignment and improved guidance on cross-cutting theme application.

ii. Large Grants (£10,001+)

Prior to the review, the Panel discussed and made decisions on large grant applications that had progressed to stage two at each of the four decision-making meetings held throughout the year. However, the Panel reached an agreement on bi-annual large grant rounds (Spring and Autumn) to improve strategic planning for applicants, enable a fairer approach for all applicants by removing the first-come, first-served approach, and manage Panel workload more effectively while maintaining quarterly accessibility for smaller grants. This approach allows for comprehensive assessment of complex applications requiring detailed evaluation and has been implemented and promoted on the Fund page.

The two-stage approach (initial enquiry followed by full application) will be maintained, with the Large Grant Enquiry system enabling initial project discussion and Panel guidance before full application development. This improves application quality while managing Panel workload effectively.

iii. Multi-year awards

The Panel reflected that it has not consistently engaged with the concept of multi-year awards, as the majority of applications do not request multi-year funding or fail to demonstrate a clear need for this approach. Currently, only 4.6% of all awards have been multi-year grants (6 out of 131 successful awards). The Panel therefore considered when and why it would agree to award multi-year funding and what criteria it seeks during the decision-making process. It agreed to refine its criteria on multi-year awards and include:

Core Funding Support: Enhanced provision for multi-year core funding supporting established anchor organisations demonstrating strong track records and strategic community development roles. This recognises that sustained organisational support enables greater community impact than project-only funding approaches.

Programme Funding Development: Support for multi-year programmes addressing community challenges requiring sustained intervention periods. Programme funding includes provision for adaptation responding to changing circumstances while maintaining core objectives and outcomes.

Staff Post Support: Recognition that community development staff positions require longer-term commitment for maximum impact achievement, with preference for minimum three-year commitments where organisational sustainability and community need investment.

Sustainability Requirements: Multi-year awards require clear financial sustainability planning, including diverse income development strategies and realistic transition planning.

The Panel reviewed the over-committed position and determined that this approach would not be adopted as a long-term strategic policy. Consequently, the Panel agreed to conduct a comprehensive review of funding distribution methodologies during the latter half of 2025, at which point it will have developed a clearer understanding of application volumes and funding requirements. This strategic consideration contributed to the Panel's decision to transition large grant administration to a bi-annual cycle.

Recommendations

Based on this review's findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the Glenkerie Community Fund's effectiveness and ensure maximum community benefit throughout its operational period until 2039.

Year 1 (2025 to 2026)

Implement Enhanced Assessment Framework for Geographic Equity

Updated Fund Priorities and Additional Criteria: Implement the revised five-priority structure, incorporating priority-specific assessment criteria that balance strategic focus with accessibility across diverse organisational capacity levels. Update the Fund page to include the additional Criteria Questions. Develop clear guidance for evaluating hyper-local alignment responses through the custom question framework, ensuring Panel decisions reflect community needs as outlined in local action plans while maintaining consistency in assessment approaches across the geographic catchment area.

Preference Area Implementation: Enhanced guidance for Panel decision-making on preference area consideration, including recognition of higher per-capita impact potential in smaller communities, acceptance of appropriate risk levels for innovative rural projects, and flexibility in assessment criteria for communities with limited organisational infrastructure.

Launch Comprehensive Promotional Strategy: Implement a promotional approach including the development of regular community newsletter content and social media presence, and impact case studies. Develop relationships with Community Councils and local organisations to extend reach into underrepresented areas.

Establish Bi-Annual Large Grant Rounds: Launch enhanced bi-annual application rounds with improved assessment processes to provide greater predictability for major community projects. Develop clear timelines and enhanced guidance materials to support applicants through the process.

Implement Financial Management Controls: Establish clear financial parameters to prevent future over-commitment of funds beyond available income and conduct a review to determine whether reducing the number of funding rounds per year from four to three would provide enhanced financial control and strategic oversight.

Implement Targeted Outreach Initiative: Establish an outreach programme including direct engagement with Community Councils or anchor organisations in the villages of Wilson, Lamington and Robertson.

Year 2 (2026 to 2027)

Strengthen Community Investment Fund Strategy: Develop a strategy for maximising Community Investment Fund growth, currently £190,477, through optimised annual payments from the main Fund and strategic investment management.

Ongoing (2025-2039)

Develop Community Capacity Building Programme: Support applicants in developing independent funding access capabilities and sustainable community development capacity. Provide signposting on alternative funding sources and knowledge sharing such as the Third Sector Interface.

Implement Annual Fund Review Process: Establish an annual review process that focuses on a geographic distribution analysis and equity assessment, performance evaluation by area with gap identification and application trend analysis. This review process is intended to enable adaptive Fund management responding to changing community needs while maintaining strategic focus on maximum community benefit achievement.

Asset Legacy Planning: Introduced through the new Fund priorities, this priority will ensure that funding applications focusing on developing and maintaining community assets are treated with priority, thereby ensuring that the Fund supports an asset legacy for communities within the Fund area.

Conclusion

The Nadara Glenkerie Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund review demonstrates strong Fund performance during the first decade, with strong community impacts achieved, widespread geographic reach, and strong financial leverage achieved. Notably, the Fund has successfully supported community groups to create and develop a robust foundation of community assets, and development expertise, benefiting communities well beyond direct investment levels and timeframes. Strategic investments in infrastructure, services, and community capacity have created lasting positive change while building resilience for future challenges.

The consultation process revealed continued strong community support for the Fund's approach and priorities, whilst identifying clear opportunities for enhancement through improved promotion, strategic grant processes, and legacy planning. Communities demonstrate sustained enthusiasm for development initiatives alongside growing sophistication in project planning and delivery.

The updated Fund framework and operational changes/plans respond to key tenets of the Review findings. The strategy maintains proven successful approaches whilst aspiring to enhance promotion, widen accessibility, and increase impact to maximise community benefit throughout the remaining operational period. Enhanced focus on legacy planning is intended to ensure that communities will benefit from Fund investment long after 2039, achieving the underlying ambition of providing lasting community benefit.

nadara



Foundation
Scotland

