

Vattenfall Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund

Year 10 Fund Report
1st June 2024 to 31st May 2025



Highlights.....



**Total grants paid in the year:
£227,459.75
(including awards agreed in previous
years)**



**Year 10 community benefit payment:
£276,213.29
(a 49% increase since the first
payment of £185,000 in 2015)**



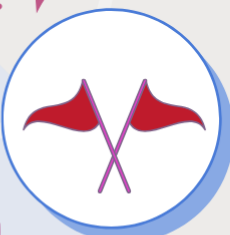
**40 applications were received,
24 awarded, 4 withdrawn, 1 pending,
11 rejected.**



**Total grants awarded: £215,627.07
(equivalent to 78% of the annual
donation for grant-making from
Vattenfall)**



**Closing balance held by Foundation
Scotland for the year ending 31st
May 2025: £176,372.80**



**195 awards, totalling £2,085,041.27,
have been awarded since the fund
opened in 2015**

Introduction

This report is the tenth annual report of the Vattenfall Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund, which is delivered by Foundation Scotland under an agreement with Vattenfall.

It covers the period from the 1st June 2024 to the 31st May 2025. During this time, there were three rounds of grant-making, resulting in 24 awards to 21 organisations.

Awards this year have included small microgrants through the community councils and the Cabrach Community Association, transport grants to primary schools in the area, equipment for Huntly Amateur Swimming Club, repairs to the bankside of the River Deveron by the Cabrach Trust and project support to Networks of Wellbeing, Gordon Rural Action and Aberdeenshire Community Recovery.

Making a Difference

The following case studies illustrate the positive impact that funding from the Vattenfall Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund had on the wider community between the 1st June 2024 and the 31st May 2025.

The case studies demonstrate how the availability of community funds has helped to build the capacity and potential in the communities within the Fund's area of benefit.

Case Study: From Empty Space to Adventure Place

In 2024, the Gordon Primary School Parent Teacher Association was awarded £13,624.69 as a contribution to the overall project costs of £24,268.82 to install outdoor play equipment in the playground of the school. This was to provide an outdoor development opportunity, helping to increase the young people's health and wellbeing.

The Gordon Primary School Parent Teacher Association in Huntly, Aberdeenshire, serves the local school community of 363 pupils. The PTA actively fundraises to provide extra resources to support learning and development in the school.

The project involved purchasing and installing eleven pieces of timber playground equipment, including interactive sensory panels, balance beams, climbers, and stepping equipment. The play equipment was installed by the end of February 2025, following ground excavation and the necessary surfacing work.



The PTA conducted extensive community consultation through monthly meetings, social media engagement, and newsletters, while also collaborating with school leadership and Aberdeenshire Council's Landscape Services to decide on the right equipment needed for the play site.

The project successfully transformed an empty and little-used space into an interactive play area, generating significant local media coverage and community pride. Sarah Jane Stewart of the PTA said:

“Overall, our dream did become a reality, and each and every day we get the joy of seeing how happy the children are with the new play area.”

The Huntly Express
 Tuesday, November 12
 November 10, 2024
 No. 5638
 Established 1863
 www.huntly-express.co.uk
 £1.70

‘Just the start’

By Lewis McBlane
 lewis.mcblane@hntly.co.uk

Parents raise £25,000 to improve ‘sad’ school playground



A HARD-WORKING team of parents and teachers have been ‘overwhelmed’ by the success of their campaign to improve a school playground.

Gordon Primary School’s PTA have raised more than £25,000 in less than a year to buy playground equipment which could be in place by March.

Key to the success was a grant from the Vattenfall Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund, which awarded the group £13,624.

Group secretary Sarah-Jane Stewart, whose son is in Primary 2, had a personal reason for leading the fund-raising effort.

“I went to that school, and my husband and parents went there,” she said.

“And when I was there, 40 years ago, it had a huge wooden fort.

“But now it is so sad, there hasn’t been any investment from the council due to funding cuts, like anywhere else.

“The kids deserve to have a lovely playground with equipment for everyone to play with because, at the moment, it’s basically just grass and a bit of dirt.”

A final decision on which play equipment should be purchased with the cash is still to be confirmed, however the PTA has received quotes from specialist companies.

Sarah-Jane said that, among the items of play equipment being considered are: “striding stilts, a clatter bridge, musical panels, a balance beam, a scramble climber, rig rig steps, chime tree, bell flowers, and a boogie tree”.

The equipment will be located in the play area reserved for Primary 1 and 2.

Children in Primary 1 and 2 currently have no outdoor playground equipment.

Due to the accessible location, the PTA secretary said improvements would be usable by the wider community and other year groups will be given chances to enjoy them.

The PTA opted mostly for wooden equipment, she added, so that the playground “will stand the test of time”.

Sarah-Jane paid tribute to the “absolutely phenomenal” support that the effort received from grant schemes, local businesses and the wider community.

“People really resonated with what we are trying to achieve,” she said.

“A huge, huge thank you to the Vattenfall Community Fund, because without them we would not have been able to do this quickly.”

“Huge thanks to them for believing in our project, we are incredibly lucky.”

The project also received donations from Riff Farquhar, Subsea 7, the Over 50s Club, Long Technologies, Baxter’s, Walker’s Shortbread and The Glendronach, as well as further grants from Aberdeenshire Council’s ACT2 Grant and the Drummuies Community Fund.

And fundraising events by the PTA also generated an impressive £6000.

The group is hosting a free-entry Christmas Fayre on November 23, with a Santa’s Grotto, crafts, face-painting, Christmas shopping stalls and a mince pie coffee morning.

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Case Study: Restoring the Riverbank at Inverharroch.

In October 2024, the Cabrach Trust were awarded £15,570 from the Vattenfall Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund towards the costs of repairing and mitigating any future damage to the bank of the River Deveron at Inverharroch.

Volunteers and staff from the Cabrach Trust, EDF Dorenell Ranger Service, the River Deveron Charitable Trust, the Atlantic Salmon Trust and Highlands Rewilding worked in the early winter and spring to install 60 metres of willow spiling to restore the eroded bank of the River Deveron.

This living wall of willow spiling was created by weaving lengths of freshly harvested willow between timber posts driven into the riverbed. Brash (left-over branches and twigs) was then backfilled behind the willow wall to create an environment that allows river debris and sediment to be trapped in the vegetation, rebuilding the riverbank season after season. The installation provides habitats for wildlife and increases the shade along the river, which is important for underwater ecology and fish health.

This project was part of the Rural Skills and Wellbeing programme offered by the Cabrach Trust. Sam Dowdall, Community and Development Manager of the Trust, said,

“When visitors come to the Discovery Trails, they will see a huge difference as the willow grows up and creates a completely new bank.” She continued, *“We believe that the 60 metres of this method of riverbank restoration is the longest stretch in the UK.”*



Case Study: A Class Act for the Gordon Schools, Huntly



In March 2025, the Vattenfall Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund Panel awarded £2,600.73 from the Fund to Traverse Theatre as part of its Class Act programme.

Class Act is the Traverse Theatre's flagship education project, challenging young people to become artists and writers and to create brand new creative work to be premiered on professional stages. Beginning in 1990, Class Act is central to the Traverse Theatre's commitment to connecting with, nurturing and unlocking the creative potential of young people. In 2025, 'Class Act on Tour' worked with pupils from the Gordon Schools in Huntly.

Class Act is a creative writing programme for young people aged 11-25 designed to break down barriers to the arts and culture that arise from socioeconomic, racial and geographical disadvantages. By empowering young people to write freely with the guidance of professional playwrights, Class Act promotes essential life skills, fosters a sense of cultural connection and instils pride in their creative achievements.

Through the connections that Traverse Theatre has with Aberdeen Performing Arts and the Light The Blue Festival, 15 young pupils from the Gordon Schools had the opportunity to work with a team of professional artists to write their own scripts and see their work brought to life by a team of professional theatre-makers, directors, actors and musicians live on the Lemon Tree Studio stage.

These opportunities for young people are rare in North Aberdeenshire, as theatre companies and creative opportunities do not come to Huntly often. The plays that the young people wrote were performed as a showcase of stories at the Lemon Tree Studio on the 11th June 2025 to a sold-out audience.

All participants were given the opportunity to see the performance. This performance was part of the Light the Blue Festival, which encourages young creatives to curate and deliver a festival programme that all are welcome to attend. This festival takes place in Aberdeen in June each year.

In delivering this programme, Traverse Theatre acknowledges that the delivery of the Class Act on Tour programme is a very focused and impactful package, with the six two-hour in-school sessions being delivered over a shorter period of time than if it were in Edinburgh. The programme has to take into account the exam timetable and other aspects of the school curriculum that it must fit around.

Without the funding from the Vattenfall Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund, it would have been difficult to include the Gordon Schools in the programme, as the funding helped with transport costs for the creative freelancers who worked with the pupils and helped pay for the pupils to attend the performance in Aberdeen. This small grant made a difference to the pupils who had the opportunity to participate, as the following quotes illustrate.

“It was brilliant and hilarious because we got to make funny pieces and then see people laughing at them.”

“I found it fun because we got to learn new skills and make our own work.”

“I am more connected to the theatre, and I didn’t know the Lemon Tree existed before.”

“It made me look forward to coming to the Promise group. I knew it would be a fun day at school. “

Fund Distribution

The majority of the funds donated to the Vattenfall Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund are allocated to an open grant programme that has three rounds per year with application deadlines in January, March and September. In addition, £7,000.00 was allocated to support transport to swimming lessons for local primary schools, £20,716.00 to the microgrants programme and £4,000.00 towards supporting volunteers' upskilling and training.

Following the 2024 donation from Vattenfall and taking into consideration the recommendations from the 2024 Fund Review, the amounts available to the microgrants programme were increased from 5% to 7.5% of the total donation awarded per year.

For 2024 to 2025, this amount is £5,179.00 per community council and the Cabrach Community Association, in comparison to the amount for 2023 to 2024 of £3,353.48. The amounts available per microgrant award have remained at £500.00 per grantee for charitable activities that will benefit any of the four areas.

Overall, 40 applications were received over the year, including microgrants and school transport awards. Of those, 24 were awarded a grant. This gives a conversion rate from application to award of 60%. Applications were rejected for various reasons, and these included individual rounds being over-subscribed, not a clear enough demonstration of the need for the project, the risk of duplication and projects being located out of the Fund boundary area. The Fund continued to support projects that improve local community assets, with £66,367.40 awarded to capital projects. In addition, £69,589.75 was awarded to projects that aim to improve the well-being and health of local people.

The diagram below shows the breakdown of awards per local priority across the year.



Foundation Scotland adopted 12 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals to understand the impact of its grant distribution and how its work contributes to achieving a more inclusive, equitable, prosperous and sustainable future for people and planet.

Last year, just over 40% of awards from the Fund contributed to the good health and well-being goal. Two of these awards were £23,912.00 for Aberdeenshire Recovery to run its wellbeing programme aimed at people in recovery from substance misuse and £21,200.00 to Networks of Wellbeing to run a range of wellbeing services to increase wellbeing for clients and build the resilience of the organisation.

The next highest percentage of awards (33%) went to projects that are supporting sustainable cities and communities. Awards in this strand included £11,405.00 to Huntly Community Council to set up a community resilience hub to support vulnerable individuals during emergencies such as bad weather and prolonged power cuts.

Other communities within the fund area that have also installed resources to provide emergency support for people within their communities were Kennethmont, with an award of £2,399.95 for a backup generator for its hub, and Glass Community Association, receiving £22,357.49 for work to enhance Glass Hall to become a warm hub for the benefit of the community.

The diagram below shows the SDG primary funding allocation.



Awards Summary

Funding Request	Awarded Amount	Project Purpose
Networks of Wellbeing Ltd	£21,200.00	To support the delivery of the wellbeing services provided by Networks of Wellbeing to enable them to build resilience, increase wellbeing for clients and address the challenges that the people in the Clashindarroch area of benefit experience
Aberdeenshire Community Recovery	£23,912.00	To fund Aberdeenshire Community Recovery running its Wellbeing Programme aimed at people in recovery from substance misuse in Aberdeenshire.
The Cabrach Trust	£15,570.00	To contribute towards the cost of repairing and mitigating any future damage to the bank of the River Deveron. This will benefit the local community through conservation learning and volunteering.
Huntly Community Council	£5,179.00	To provide a micro-grant scheme for the local community.
Huntly & District Pipe Band	£10,008.48	To support the purchase of a new range of drums, supporting the Huntly & District Pipe Band to continue playing at a high level.
Huntly Community Council	£11,405.00	To cover the cost of setting up a Community Resilience Hub at the OAP Hall in Huntly to support vulnerable individuals and reduce the risk to life in the case of an emergency.
Huntly Amateur Swimming Club	£5,000.00	To fund replacement diving blocks, as the existing ones are no longer fit for purpose.
Gordon Rural Action	£20,000.00	To contribute to the operating costs of Gordon Rural Action to enable the continued delivery of services to the communities within the area of benefit of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund.
Gordon Primary School PTA	£13,624.69	To contribute towards the installation of playground equipment at Gordon Primary School, thereby providing an outdoor development opportunity to increase the young people's health and wellbeing.
Drumblade Parent Council	£1,377.00	To support the costs associated with the school's annual Christmas trip to a pantomime.

Aurora Productions	£1,994.00	To fund construction and redecoration work at Stewarts Hall to create a safe and functional backstage space for local performers.
Full Colour Coaching	£12,942.72	To fund two staff members and provide resources to enable Full Colour Coaching to deliver a programme over 12 months that will increase the resilience of the organisation and support young people to maintain and improve their mental health and wellbeing.
Traverse Theatre	£2,600.73	To support the delivery of the Class Act creative writing programme at Gordon's School, Huntly.
Huntly Development Trust	£500.00	To fund a marketing professional and associated PR costs, enhancing Huntly's online presence, promoting local events, heritage, and businesses, and supporting sustainable travel, thereby boosting the local economy and tourism.
Drumblade Primary School	£570.00	To support travel costs for swimming lessons for the academic year 2023/24.
St Andrews Church	£2,837.38	To improve the outside fabric of St Andrews Church Glass, to preserve a historical building, which provides opportunities to bring people together for family life occasions, arts and cultural events, enhancing community cohesion and wellbeing.
Glass Community Association	£22,357.49	To contribute to the costs of developing Glass Hall into a warm hub for the benefit of the Glass community.
Glass Primary Parent Council	£870.00	To support travel costs for swimming lessons for the academic year 2024/25.
Tap o' Noth Community Council	£5,179.00	To provide a charitable micro-grant scheme for the local community.
The Rannes Hall Management Committee	£29,832.64	To contribute to the costs of replacing windows and blinds in the Rannes Hall to improve the condition of the building, reduce running costs and provide the community of Kennethmont with a warm and welcoming facility.
Rhynie Community Facilities Development Charitable Trust	£4,616.94	To cover the cost of installing a generator at Fourteen, The Square, to improve community resilience.

The Rannes Hall Management Committee	£2,399.95	To fund the installation of a mobile diesel generator at the community hall, providing a resilient emergency hub for Kennethmont and its outlying district during power outages and other crises.
Rhynie Primary School	£1,000.00	To support travel costs for swimming lessons for the academic year 2024/25.
Kennethmont School Partnership	£650.00	To support travel costs for swimming lessons for the academic year 2024/25.
Total	£215,627.02	

Finance

Fund Statement Summary Year 10 – 01 June 2024 to 31 May 2025

Opening Balance	£109,312.20
Total Donations received	£286,213.29
Grants Paid	£227,459.75
Grants Pending	£24,238.26
Total Grants Cancelled	£2,600.01
Interest Payments Received	£5,866.80
Room Hire Costs	£159.75
Available Balance	£152,134.54

It is important to note that the grants paid figure reflects grants that have been awarded in previous years, but released for payment in the period from June 1st 2024, to May 31st 2025.

Panel

During Year ten, the locally appointed panel continued to advise Foundation Scotland on grant awards from the Fund and on funding strategy.

The panel comprises up to 12 members, each serving an expected term of up to four years.

Panel Members during year ten were:

- Cabrach: Sam Dowdall, Patti Nelson, with a vacancy for a local resident
- Huntly: Mike Cowie, Tony Gill, Hazel McIntosh
- Strathbogie: David Rogalski, George Wordie, Calum Hislop
- Tap o' Noth: Peter Johnston, David Grant, Lachlan Rhodes.

During the year, several members retired from the panel due to moving out of the area or a wish to retire. These were Peter Johnston, Lachlan Rhodes, Mike Cowie and David Rogalski. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them for the contribution they have made to the panel and wish them well for the future.

Training for the panel has included induction training for new members, an update on the application processes carried out by Foundation Scotland and information about the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) principles (more information in Appendix 1) that Foundation Scotland has adopted and the opportunity to attend a 'Hot Topic' session on micro grants distribution.

Publicity



VATTENFALL   Foundation Scotland

**VATTENFALL CLASHINDARROCH
WIND FARM COMMUNITY FUND
APPLY NOW**

Grants available to charitable projects benefiting those living in the areas served by the community councils of Huntly, Strathbogie and Tap o'Noth and the area served by Cabrach Community Association.

APPLICATION DEADLINES:

Application deadline: **20th Jan 2025**
Panel meeting: **17th Mar 2025**
Application deadline: **5th May 2025**
Panel meeting: **23rd Jun 2025**



For more info, scan the QR Code or visit:
www.foundationscotland.org.uk/clashindarroch
Contact Debbie Herron
Tel: 07584 323 850
Email: deborahherron@foundationscotland.org.uk

The focus in the last twelve months has been on completing the Fund Review and identifying what is needed for the next fifteen years of the Fund. In addition, a press release was issued to celebrate the distribution of grants from the October 2024 round of the Fund. The webpage for the Fund was updated with all the awards from the year. The Fund has a dedicated page on the Foundation Scotland website which includes information on how to apply as well as details on fund balances, panel members, projects funded, case studies and recent news items.

During year ten, the webpage had a total of 671 visits, of which 334 were unique individual visitors (average of 2.01 views per user).

See: [Vattenfall Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund | Foundation Scotland](http://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/clashindarroch)

In addition, due to the retirement of several panel members, recruitment of new members was undertaken at the end of 2024 through a mailing campaign and social media releases.

Conclusion

The Vattenfall Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund is now ten years old and has celebrated some significant milestones, including giving over £2 million in grants and supporting 195 projects benefitting the four communities across the area of benefit.

Following a strategic review in 2024, the Fund is looking to increase support for projects that create opportunities for young people and those projects that can contribute to reducing poverty in the area. This is alongside the existing priorities of the Fund that can be seen in Appendix 2.

The Fund has continued to support capital projects across the area of benefit and has supported projects to increase the accessibility and resilience of community halls and venues. These have included Glass Hall, Rannes Hall and St Andrews Church.

Other recommendations from the Review have also been implemented with the awarding of the first three-year multi-year grants for Huntly Junior Cricket Club and Aberdeenshire Community Recovery.

Going forward, the Fund will take into consideration the recommendations of the 2024 Fund Review and the changing landscape regarding community benefit funds, the needs of communities within the area of benefit.

Appendix 1: Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) principles

Foundation Scotland's work as a grant maker and fund distributor is underpinned by its commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Institute of Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) principles around 'open and trusting' grant making.

The IVAR principles encourage funders to review and improve their practices that make their processes more transparent and efficient for the applicants and grantees. Funders are able to sign a pledge whereby they undertake to operationalise eight specific commitments. These are:

- Don't waste time – explain funding priorities clearly and be open and transparent about all requirements and exclusions
- Ask relevant questions- only collect information that is needed to make funding decisions
- Accept risk- accept a share of the risk, be realistic about how much assurance can reasonably be given. Explain how risk is assessed when funding decisions are made
- Act with urgency- seek to work at a pace that meets the needs of applicants, publish and stick to timetables and make decisions as quickly as possible
- Be open – be transparent about decisions, give feedback, analyse and publish success rates and reasons for rejection, share data
- Enable flexibility – respond flexibly to changing priorities and needs, give unrestricted funding, if this is not possible, make the funding as flexible as possible
- Communicate with purpose – be clear about the relationship from the start, be realistic about time commitments and ensure that contact is positive and purposeful
- Be proportionate- commit to light touch reporting and ensure that the formal reporting requirements are well understood, proportionate and meaningful

More information about the eight commitments can be found here:

<https://www.ivar.org.uk/flexible-funders/>

Appendix 2: Background to the Fund

Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund is provided by Vattenfall AB, the owner of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm in Aberdeenshire. The Fund supports charitable activity that benefits people living within the community council areas of Huntly, Strathbogie, and Tap o' Noth in Aberdeenshire, and the area served by Cabrach Community Association in Moray.

Donations to the Fund from Vattenfall are annual and index-linked (Retail Price Index, RPI). In Year One (2015/16), the donation for grant-making was £185,000. By year ten, it had risen to £276,213.29. The Fund has continued to provide grants of over £500 for community-led activity that is strategic, positive, creative and brings lasting impact in the above communities. Priorities for the Fund are based on local consultations in 2014 and again in 2019 and 2024, as follows:

- improve community services and facilities
- increase participation in and access to contemporary culture, events and recreational activity
- preserve and enhance the natural environment for residents and visitors
- promote rural regeneration
- celebrate the area's cultural, historic and archaeological heritage.

During 2024, these priorities were reviewed as part of the enhanced Fund Review, and it was recognised that these are still applicable. In addition, two more priorities were recommended, and these are:

Improving opportunities for young people and contributing to addressing the cost-of-living rise and the impact of poverty in the Fund area.

Grants can support a range of costs, including equipment, running local groups, consultations, staff salaries that are directly related to project delivery, and maintenance and or refurbishment of community facilities.

Further Information

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