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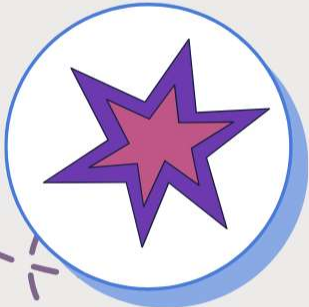
**Foundation
Scotland**

Langhope Rig Community Benefit Fund Case Study





Highlights since 2016 fund launch



Annual contribution to date: £853,000



Sub Fund A - awarded £399,000



Sub Fund B distributed over £425,000, with 300 awards to date



27 Education & Training grants made to 27 individuals with £29,000 awarded



Langhope Rig Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund

Executive Summary

The Langhope Rig Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund, established in 2016 and launched in 2017, represents a significant investment in the Scottish Borders region. Provided by Greencoat UK Wind, the Fund started with an annual contribution of £80,000, rising with inflation to £114,000 in 2024, with cumulative contributions reaching £853,000.00 to date.

The Fund is structured into three components:

Sub Fund A is a shared fund that provides grants ranging from £1,000-£20,000 in three community council areas: Ettrick & Yarrow, Lilliesleaf, Ashkirk & Midlem, and Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water.

Sub Fund B supports each of the above three areas, plus two additional communities - Hawick and Denholm & District – through devolved funding administered by the Community Council in each area.

An **Education & Training Fund** was launched in 2021, offering educational bursaries to individual residents of the Sub Fund A communities.

Since its inception, the overall Fund has distributed over £850,000 through:

- 50 awards (totalling just under £399,000) from Sub Fund A for community projects.
- Over 300 small grants through Sub Fund B totalling just over £425,500.
- 27 E&T bursary awards (totalling just over £29,000) supporting participation in education and training courses.

The Fund's six key priorities identified by communities during Fund set-up include community asset development, capacity building, community activity encouragement, local economic development, improvement to services, and transport infrastructure enhancement. Notably, Sub Fund A has catalysed £1.45 million in match funding, significantly amplifying its community impact.

Key achievements include:

- Development of key community facilities or 'assets', with 28% of Sub Fund A awards funding the sustainability of the area's village halls through activities including upgrading kitchens, implementing energy-efficient measures, redecorating, completing essential maintenance works, and ensuring these vital gathering spaces remain functional and welcoming for years to come.
- Substantial support for the Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company (just under £80,000) towards the development of five affordable rental properties in Ettrickbridge, boardwalk repairs in the Ettrick Marshes, creation of the Ring of the

Loch walking route, establishment of the "Captain's Road" link, and funding crucial staff positions including a project manager and countryside rangers.

- Enhanced educational skills and opportunities through bursary support to 27 residents across the area.
- Strengthened community engagement through local decision-making.

Combined together, the Sub Funds A & B have involved between 70 to 80 local residents in decision-making processes over the years, with 40 to 50 actively involved at any one time. This includes centralised oversight through a nine-member Panel for Sub Fund A with devolved control through Community councils for Sub Fund B. This model ensures both strategic investment and responsive local support.

Key challenges identified:

- Communities within the wider surrounding area (outwith the Fund area) may not always be aware of how Sub Fund A and Sub Fund B arrangements were established and which Fund to apply through.
- Variations in application assessment approaches across Sub Fund B, potentially affect decision quality and consistency.
- Managing parallel funding streams creates administrative complexity; Community volunteers administering Sub Fund B face pressure to balance time constraints with planning, reporting, and monitoring obligations.

Following the identification of these areas, Foundation Scotland has developed solutions and is progressing to address them. This will be discussed further in section 4 of the report. While this work is still in progress, the ongoing improvements will ultimately lead to a more robust and effective Fund.

Despite these challenges, the Fund demonstrates an effective approach to community benefit distribution, successfully balancing strategic investment with local control. Its evolution, including the addition of the E&T Fund, shows responsiveness to community needs, while its devolved elements enable both quick-response funding and support for transformative projects. This model has proven particularly effective in addressing the diverse needs of rural communities while maintaining strong governance and local accountability.

Fund Case Study: Langhope Rig Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund

Fund at a Glance

- Langhope Rig Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund
- Greencoat UK Wind
- Project name: Langhope Rig Wind Farm
- Annual Fund value: £80,000 rising with inflation (£114,000 in 2024)
- Cumulative value of annual contributions to date, just over: £853,000
- Year of Fund commencement: 2016
- Langhope Rig Sub Fund A Area of Benefit: Ettrick & Yarrow, Lilliesleaf, Ashkirk & Midlem and Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water
- Langhope Rig Sub Fund B Area of Benefit: Ettrick & Yarrow, Lilliesleaf, Ashkirk & Midlem, Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water, Hawick and Denholm & District
- Local authority area: Scottish Borders
- Webpage: [Langhope Rig Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund | Foundation Scotland](#)

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About the Fund area

The Scottish Borders region encompasses diverse rural and semi-rural communities, from the remote upland valleys of Ettrick & Yarrow to the principal town of Hawick. The Langhope Rig Community Fund area of benefit includes five distinct community council areas with a combined population of approximately 16,250 residents.

Ettrick & Yarrow, with around 400 residents, and Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water, with approximately 500 residents, represent the most rural communities. These areas face particular challenges regarding transport connectivity, service access, and population retention.

The villages of Lilliesleaf, Ashkirk & Midlem (650 residents) and Denholm & District (700 residents) serve as residential centres within commuting distance of larger towns, balancing rural character with reasonable access to services in nearby towns. Hawick, with 14,000 residents, functions as the primary service centre and faces its challenges around economic regeneration and an ageing population.

According to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), the community council area is considered one of the 10% least deprived areas. However, the communities still face unique employment barriers inherent to their remote geographic location, characterised by dispersed settlements, limited public transport infrastructure, and seasonal economic patterns typical of rural agricultural communities.

Community Action Plans (CAPs) have been developed at different stages and times across the communities. Of the five community council areas, Hawick, Denholm & District and Ettrick & Yarrow have Community Action Plans (CAP) currently in place. Upper Teviot and Borthwick Water are at the initial stage of developing a CAP, which it hopes to progress in 2025/2026.

They outline key opportunities and priorities for the three communities: tourism development, renewable energy initiatives, and enhancing transportation connectivity. Common challenges also include maintaining vital community services, supporting an ageing population, and ensuring affordable housing availability. Agricultural diversification and environmental conservation represent significant considerations for future development, while transport connectivity and youth retention remain persistent challenges throughout the region.

One notable recent opportunity for the area is in relation to the new Centre Parcs development proposal that is currently at the planning stage with the Scottish Borders Council. If successful, this will create socio-economic opportunities through increased tourism and employment.

Fund history

The Fund was originally established by energy company SSE¹ with 50% targeted towards what were deemed to be the communities most locally impacted by the Langhope Rig Wind Farm (Ettrick & Yarrow, Lilliesleaf, Ashkirk & Midlem and Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water) and the other 50% distributed through SSE's Sustainable Communities Fund (Scottish Borders).

When SSE sold the project to EFS Anemoui (a General Electric subsidiary) in 2015, Foundation Scotland was invited by the new owner to help support a new arrangement for the Fund. This led to the design of the two components: Sub Fund A continued the single joint panel arrangement with the three original communities at the same value and the new Sub Fund B component, with the consent of the original communities, widened the number of communities benefiting and introduced the concept of devolved funds into the Langhope Rig arrangement.

Greencoat UK Wind acquired the wind farm in 2017, and the Sub Fund A & B arrangement has continued.

Since then, the Langhope Rig Wind Farm Fund has evolved in response to community needs in particular, its expanding its scope in 2021 with the establishment of the Education and Training (E&T) Fund. By building skills and qualifications amongst residents and making access to training easier without the need to move out of the area, the E&T Fund was specifically designed to support population retention in rural areas while helping to maintain and expand local services that benefit the wider community.

The Fund's development continued in 2023/24 when the Sub Fund A Panel explored new possibilities for the Fund's accumulated balance. With a substantial sum having built up over several years, the Panel investigated opportunities to invest these monies for longer-term returns. However, this exploration was ultimately suspended due to two key factors: questions over the risk versus reward profile of potential investments and a significant uplift in grant applications during 2024, which effectively utilised the accumulated balance. The Panel has maintained a pragmatic approach to this situation, agreeing to revisit potential investment opportunities should significant funds accrue again in the future.

This pattern of evolution demonstrates the Fund's responsive and adaptable nature, showing how it continues to adjust its approach based on community needs and changing circumstances. The creation of the E&T Fund, in particular, represents a strategic response to specific local challenges, while the Panel's careful consideration of investment opportunities reflects their commitment to responsible financial stewardship.

¹ Known as Scottish and Southern Energy until 2011.

Fund design & decision making

The Fund is made up of three components:

Sub Fund A is a single, joint Fund that supports groups and organisations delivering projects and services across the three community council areas of Ettrick & Yarrow; Lilliesleaf, Ashkirk Midlem; and Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water. It awards grants between £1,000 to £20,000.

A Community Panel oversees Sub-Fund A distribution across the three local communities. The Panel comprises up to nine members, all of whom have strong local connections through living, working, or volunteering in the area. The decision-making Panel is a mix of Community Councillors and local residents, enabling a broad representation of views from across the communities.

Panel members serve terms ranging from three to four years, with a phased retirement system maintaining continuity of expertise. When vacancies arise, positions are advertised locally and on Foundation Scotland's website. Members are appointed through a transparent selection process, and former members are eligible to reapply.

The Panel convenes bi-annually in March and August to review and decide upon Sub Fund A applications, review Fund activity and impact, and consider Fund promotion needs. The minutes from these meetings are available upon request from Foundation Scotland.

The Panel demonstrates commitment and brings valuable local insight to their role. Their geographical distribution across the three community council areas ensures balanced representation. In their decision-making capacity, members take a thoughtful and equitable approach, evaluating each application on its individual merits. Their discussions are thorough and well-informed, drawing upon local knowledge to reach considered conclusions. This robust governance structure and strong decision-making body positively shape both the Fund's direction and its community impact.

The **Education & Training Fund** (within Sub Fund A) provides bursaries to residents of Ettrick & Yarrow; Lilliesleaf, Ashkirk & Midlem; and Upper Teviotdale & Borthwick Water community council areas to help individuals access training and education opportunities that better equip them with the range of skills needed to enter or retain employment. The E&T Fund can award funding over three years with maximum grant sizes per year outlined below.

- First-time/ first-year applicants: up to £1,500
- Second time/second-year applicants: up to £1,000
- Any further applications: up to £300 per year

Applications to the E&T Fund can be submitted at any time and decisions are made by the Panel via email on a rolling basis. Decisions are normally communicated within 6-8 weeks of applications being submitted.

However, a specific challenge exists within the E&T Fund's decision-making process. While the Panel has elected to maintain autonomy over these decisions through a rolling email-based application review system, participation levels are often limited to a small number of Panel members responding to decision-making requests. This process requires review to determine whether the current email-based decision-making approach remains appropriate.

Sub Fund B includes the above three community council areas and also extends to the community council areas of Hawick & District and Denholm & District.

Each Community Council submits a projected spending outline for the upcoming year, informed by wider community discussions about activity that will deliver broad community benefits. Foundation Scotland then transfers annual sums to each Community Council, which is responsible for the distribution of funding and reporting upon it.

Foundation Scotland provides bespoke support and due diligence to all five Community Councils, ensuring local spending aligns with the Fund's charitable aims. Awards tend to be for smaller amounts (often less than £1,000) and are decided by the individual Community Councils. For quality assurance, any project identified for funding of £1,000 or more undergoes a due diligence assessment by Foundation Scotland.

How the Fund is making a difference

Since opening, the Langhope Rig Community Benefit Fund has distributed over £850,000², via:

- 50 awards (£399,000) towards community projects and services from Sub Fund A.
- Over 300 awards distributed through the devolved Sub Fund B totalling just over £425,500.
- 27 E&T awards (£29,000) as bursaries to individual residents studying or training.

Significantly, this funding approach has enabled communities to either complete projects independently or leverage substantial additional resources. Sub Fund A has catalysed £1.45 million in match funding to date, demonstrating its effectiveness in driving transformative change through strategic investment.

The Fund supports charitable activities in the five areas of benefit:

- Encourage community activity and promote community spirit.
- Ensure adequate access to services for all community members.
- Improve local transport infrastructure.
- Build the local economy.
- Build community capacity and cohesion between groups.
- Develop or maintain community assets.

Grants can support a wide range of costs and activities, including but not limited to equipment costs, running costs for local groups, staff or sessional worker costs, consultations, and maintenance or refurbishment of community facilities.

² Awarded Total as of March 2025

Projects or services located outside the area of benefit or benefiting those other than residents of the area of benefit may also be supported, provided that there is also a clear benefit to residents of the Fund area. The Panel recognised that due to the rural nature of the Fund area, not all service providers are available locally or located within the area of benefit. As such, there are occasions when externally located organisations deliver projects within the Fund area.

The Central Borders Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) outreach project provides a good example. The CAB is based in the nearby service centre of Galashiels, but residents in the Fund area struggle to get there due to barriers such as cost and limited transportation. With a grant of just over £19,000 from the Fund, the CAB launched an outreach pilot project with the aim of delivering its services directly to the residents within the Fund area. The services offered by CAB help clients access benefits, funding, and services they might otherwise miss. CAB clients who have sought support and fall within one of the six priority groups achieved an average financial gain of £4,115, money that is generally reinvested in their local community. This demonstrates how external projects can effectively support and strengthen the local economy. A [case study](#) about the project provides further details. The above-mentioned priorities were determined when the Fund was originally established.

In 2019, a Fund review was undertaken by Foundation Scotland and the Panel, which established that the Fund's purposes remained relevant to the communities. The following section will provide an overview of how the Fund has contributed to achieving each of the priorities. Awards made show a clear emphasis on community infrastructure and social cohesion, with over 60% of funded projects contributing to these areas. The lower numbers in transport infrastructure and economic development suggest these might be areas for future focus, though the investments made have still impactful. It is worth noting that many projects serve multiple priorities, demonstrating an integrated approach to community development.

Develop or maintain community assets

Sub Fund A has made strides in this priority, with approximately 28% of all awarded funding (33 projects) allocated to local village halls, including Currie Memorial Hall, Foreman Memorial Hall, Teviothead Village Hall, Boston Memorial Village Hall, and Midlem Village Hall. These investments have played an important role in upgrading kitchens, implementing energy-efficient measures, redecorating, and completing essential maintenance work to ensure the continued survival of these vital facilities. This [case study](#) examining the renovation and improvement projects at Currie Memorial Hall in Lilliesleaf Village illustrates the impact of such grants.

The Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company (EYCDC) has been the largest single recipient of grant funding, receiving around £80,000 (21% of total grants) through five separate grants. These investments have supported various infrastructure improvements, including boardwalk repairs in the Ettrick Marshes and the development of five affordable rental properties. The grants have also funded crucial staffing positions, including a part-time project development manager and two countryside ranger posts. EYCDC manages community projects in the Scottish Borders area, with projects including the Ring of the Loch walking route around St Mary's Loch and the 'Captain's Road' link.

The organisation serves the residents of Ettrickbridge and Kirkhope areas, focusing on infrastructure development and community connectivity. These investments demonstrate a comprehensive approach to community enhancement, spanning environmental conservation, housing, staffing and local development while fostering environmental stewardship through initiatives such as the Ettrick Marshes conservation programme. This [Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company: Community Access and Conservation](#) case study provides further detail.



Ettrick Marshes

Vicky Davidson, Community Development Officer, Ettrick & Yarrow Community Development Company noted: *The Langhope Rig fund has been a huge help to us in our work over the last 8 years. It has provided the additional, flexible funding required to complete a number of projects including 5 affordable homes to rent in Ettrickbridge, bringing the old school into community management, fixing up the boardwalk in the Ettrick Marshes once we gained community ownership and allowing the charity to engage a project manager to take these, and other projects, forward. It has directly funded local employment, providing work for both the project manager and a senior and junior countryside ranger, as well as providing some valuable work experience for several young teenagers. It has also allowed the project manager to work with a neighbouring development trust one day a week to help them to progress plans for affordable housing, building on the Ettrick and Yarrow experience.*

Sub Fund B's grants have delivered substantial benefits across the area in terms of building community assets. Village Halls, the cornerstone of rural community life, have been preserved and enhanced through projects like Yarrowford Village Hall's roof insulation (£4,800) and Teviothead Village Hall's exterior painting (£980), ensuring these vital gathering spaces remain functional, energy-efficient, and welcoming for years to come.



Teviothead Hall

The addition of specialised facilities such as pétanque courts in Denholm (just over £6,000) and storage solutions like Denholm's Community Shed (£7,800) has expanded the range of activities available to residents, promoting physical wellbeing and social interaction across age groups.

Perhaps most significantly, the funding for Lilliesleaf Community Development's acquisition of Leaf Green (£16,000) exemplifies how these investments secure permanent community spaces that might otherwise be lost to private development. The Etrick Forest Sports and Recreation Club's specialised mower (£8,800) ensures that existing community spaces are properly maintained without overburdening volunteer resources.

Rachael Walker, Grants Officer, Foundation Scotland said: *"The Langhope Rig devolved fund is working well since its introduction in 2017. It allows local residents ownership of funding, which will provide the most benefit to their local community. Due to their local knowledge, the Community Councils are the best-placed distributors of these devolved funds to ensure the funds are being used effectively and providing the most value. Eight years into the Devolved Fund, it is still well used, with all five Community Councils drawing down their tranche of allocated funds each year. All of the distributing organisations provide feedback each year, advising on how well the process is working and providing any challenges they have encountered, such as a downturn in the number of applications. When there has been an occasional decrease in the volume of applications, the Community Councils have been proactive in publicising the fund and encouraging applications."*

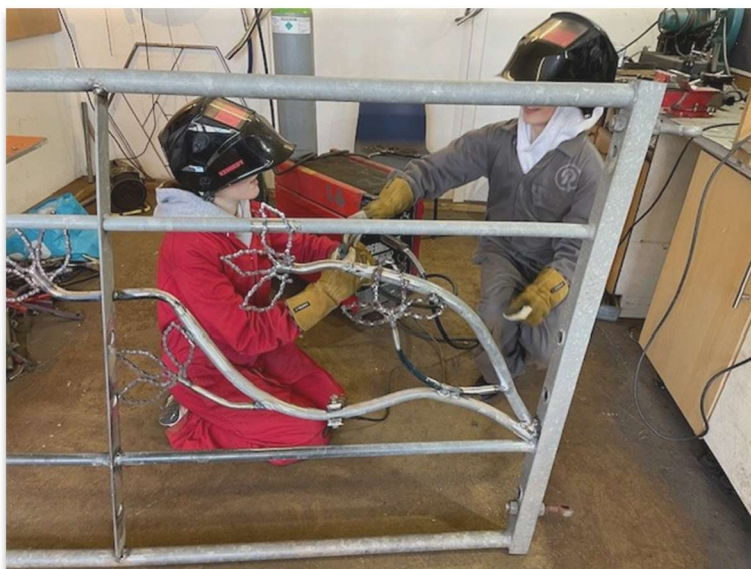
"The fund continues to be used for a wide range of activities such as running first aid courses, the installation of defibrillators, improvements to walkways, and grants to assist local groups activities. The number of awards demonstrates the need for and how well the fund operates to the benefit of both residents and visitors to the areas the fund serves."

These investments in community assets provide essential infrastructure for social cohesion, preserve important local facilities, and create spaces where community activities and services can flourish, directly addressing rural isolation and enhancing the quality of life in these remote areas.

Build community capacity and cohesion

This priority has been addressed through 32 different projects supported by Sub Fund A that strengthen community bonds and capabilities.

The 'Live, Learn, Earn' project exemplifies this, receiving nearly £8,000 to benefit pupils from the Fund area attending Selkirk High School. Through 'R-Evolve' metal-working, creative and bike-related sessions and workshops run by Live Learn Earn Community Interest Company, pupils created functional community installations for Lilliesleaf.



Mr. Aegir Maciver, Director, Live, Learn and Earn said:

Without the funding we have received, the project would simply not have happened. The fund has given young people from the catchment area opportunities to discover new abilities in practical and creative skills and work together with other young people to jointly create items that contribute significantly and visibly to community projects in their area.

Live, Learn, Earn

Willingly matched to a lesser degree by Selkirk High School itself, the fund has enabled the delivery of non-curricular metalworking sessions in which the young people learned the skills, designed the items for the community space, and fabricated them entirely by themselves. For the communities themselves, the project has brought young people into the centre of their efforts through their interactions with community members and groups, as they worked towards fabricating the new items for the community space in Lilliesleaf. Integrating young people's perspective and energies has enlivened the entire community in their efforts towards creating lasting improvements to the life and inclusivity of their localities."



Selkirk School Bike Club

Similarly, this [case study](#) examines how Selkirk High School Parent Partnership expanded its School Bike Club programme. The initiative aimed to improve pupils' mental health and well-being through cycling activities and to learn about bike mechanics, particularly benefiting young people in rural areas who were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A representative from the Bike Club at Selkirk High School noted: *"Financial support from the Langhope Rig wind farm Fund has transformed the ability of the bike club to provide a much wider range of experiences for pupils from the Fund area, by enabling access to trail centres across the Tweed Valley. This group of young riders has very much enjoyed accessing the new trails recently installed at Glentress, and their riding skills and confidence have developed enormously as a result."*

Sub Fund B grants have strengthened community capacity and cohesion across the Fund area. Regular funding for local communications, exemplified by Denholm Community Council's support for the Denholm Newsletter (£500-£650 annually), has fostered community identity and information-sharing between different community groups and residents. The coordinated approach to skills development, with multiple organisations receiving funding for first aid training, including Borthwick Water Community Development Trust (£440), Teviothead Village Hall (£555), and the Ettrick & Yarrow Community Development Company (£475), has created a network of trained individuals who share common skills and purpose across the Fund area.

The pandemic response funding, which provided £300 quarterly to multiple village halls including Ashkirk, Midlem, and Lilliesleaf, demonstrated the value of cohesive support during crisis periods. This consistent approach ensured that no single community was disadvantaged and allowed halls to collaborate on reopening strategies and COVID safety measures. By investing in both communication tools and shared skills development, these funding initiatives have created stronger connections between previously isolated community groups while building resilience through shared knowledge and resources.

Cross-community collaboration has flourished through various projects. Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water organised open meetings about funding opportunities, while first aid training across communities built emergency response capacity. Intergenerational activities, including Denholm's inter-school's rugby cup, have strengthened community bonds.

Encourage community activity

Sub Fund A has demonstrated success in fostering community engagement through diverse activities and events. 32 projects have specifically contributed to this priority, with many projects serving multiple purposes.

Projects including free boxing classes provided by Hawick Boxing Club across the three Fund primary schools demonstrate how the Fund encourages cross-community activities.

The [case study](#) exploring how Borders Forest Trust secured funding towards purchasing a minibus is particularly illustrative. The vehicle was essential for transporting participants to woodland events and workshops across the Scottish Borders (including a focus on those from the Fund area) after its previous minibus failed its MOT in 2023.

Within Sub Fund B, the Community Councils have successfully fostered community engagement and promoted community spirit by funding varied events and activities. The consistent funding of cultural events, including Denholm's Folk Festival and the Land, Light and Locals Festival (each receiving £500 annually), has created recurring occasions for social connection that residents anticipate and plan around. These events bring together diverse community members who might otherwise have limited interaction, creating a sense of shared identity and mutual support.

In the Upper Teviotdale area, the strategic funding of both infrastructure (£980 for a sound system) and programming (£900 for craft workshops) at Teviothead Village Hall has enabled sustainable community activities that can continue year after year. Similarly, Lilliesleaf's investment in both seasonal experiences (£614 for a community pantomime trip) and environmental enhancements (£700 for planters and Christmas lights offering lasting visual improvements) have created fostered community pride. Perhaps most significantly, Hawick Community Council's substantial investment in bandstand entertainment (£4,000) and Christmas celebrations (£4,800) have provided large-scale events that draw together residents from across the wider area, breaking down barriers between neighbouring communities and creating shared memories that strengthen social bonds.

Build the local economy

Economic development has been supported through 14 awards to projects generating infrastructure and skills development. In addition, the Education and Training Fund has been particularly impactful, supporting new business creation through retraining programmes, as evidenced by the [case study](#) of a resident who established a local business rather than leaving the area for employment. The funding pattern reveals a balanced approach between immediate economic support and long-term infrastructure development.

Building the local economy has also been the focus of a range of activity funded by Community Councils through the devolved Sub Fund B. Many of the local projects supported appear to have a positive impact on the local economy. For example, Lilliesleaf Growing Group's polytunnel development promotes local food production. The community garden currently offers a variety of fresh produce, including leeks, chard, spinach and kale, alongside developing garlic crops and two dedicated strawberry beds and berry growing areas. Planting decisions are made collectively, with surplus produce made available to village residents for optional donations.



Lilliesleaf Growing Group

Despite experiencing two markedly different growing seasons thus far, the group has established meaningful educational partnerships, allocating a bed to primary school pupils who successfully cultivated pumpkins and peas last year.

Both the schoolchildren and the local toddlers group participated in planting the fruit bushes, fostering community engagement.

The polytunnel currently houses overwintering cuttings, including rosemary, and has yielded exceptional tomato harvests for two consecutive years.

In 2021, residents got planning permission for a change of use from an agricultural field to 'form an outdoor recreation and communal space/garden. Inspiration for the tunnel and garden area came from conversations between villagers who wanted to grow food locally and in an environmentally friendly way.

"I've always been able to grow a few tatties in my small garden, but I wanted to grow enough for the year," said a local resident."

In 2023 the group applied for funding to purchase two 1000-litre IBCs (industrial bulk containers) to store water. Tile edging that collects water falling onto the tunnel and drains into the containers has been much more effective and cheaper than traditional guttering. The installation of the containers has reduced the labour-intensive task of bringing water to the site and allows the group more time to focus on growing.

The community garden strengthens the local economy by providing fresh produce to village residents whilst reducing reliance on imported foods. Its donation-based surplus sharing system keeps resources within the community, while educational partnerships with schools build valuable agricultural skills in younger generations. The garden enhances sustainability by minimising transportation costs and carbon emissions associated with commercial produce. Additionally, it fosters community resilience and self-sufficiency, builds social capital that can lead to other forms of economic cooperation, potentially attracts visitors to the village, and promotes better health outcomes that may reduce healthcare costs over time.

A Community Council representative said: *"I have to say this is one of my favourite projects Langhope Rig has funded."*

Support for local economic development has also included funding for projects that attract visitors and enhance local businesses. Hawick Community Council's Welcome Hosts Initiative (£1,000) and Future Hawick's "Scotland's Horse Country" project (£500) aimed to boost tourism. The St Mary's Loch Warden Service, funded by Ettrick and Yarrow Community Council (approximately £5,000 across multiple years), managed visitors and reduced anti-social behaviour, thereby protecting a key tourism asset.

Another example of building the local economy can be demonstrated through funding enhancements of community facilities and events that attract visitors to the communities. The Denholm Folk Festival has received funding to support its event. The Festival promotes local talented Scottish Folk Artists and unites the community by creating opportunities to hear folk music in local Denholm venues. It also attracts local residents and people visiting from further afield, which supports local businesses.

Ensure adequate access to services

Within Sub Fund A this priority has been addressed through 13 grants for essential community services, showing a strategic focus on ensuring service accessibility despite the challenges of the rural location of the Fund area. A notable example is the £19,000 grant to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for outreach services, providing vital advice on benefits, cost of living challenges, and debt management (see [case study](#)).



The [case study](#) examining how Tweed Valley Mountain Rescue Team raised funding to enable the volunteer rescue organisation to maintain its essential emergency services recognises the importance of local rescue services dedicated to operating in the area's rugged outdoor environments.

Tweed Valley Mountain Rescue

Within Sub Fund B, essential services and emergency response capabilities have also been supported, with a significant focus on maintaining defibrillator networks. Health and safety services were a major priority across all communities.

The Ettrick and Yarrow Community Council invested in defibrillator installation and maintenance, totalling approximately £16,000. Other Community Councils also invested approximately £5,600 in providing accessible defibrillators. Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water Community Council (UTBW CC) and Denholm Community Council coordinated their approach to placing life-saving equipment throughout the area, including the nearby Hassendean Hamlet, ensuring that even the most remote communities have access to critical emergency medical technology.

Additionally, the UTBW CC purchased a snowplough (£4,500) to ensure winter accessibility, while Denholm CC invested in emergency boxes for their Resilience Group (£800) to support community preparedness. Community newsletters ensure that information about these services and equipment reaches all residents, including those without internet access.

Improve local transport infrastructure

While this appears to be the priority with the fewest dedicated projects, Sub Fund A has nevertheless made 12 strategic investments in transport-related infrastructure. Within Sub Fund B there has been more focus on local access and safety and enhancing connectivity. Both Sub Fund A and Sub Fund B have contributed to the Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company's work on the Ring of the Loch walking route and the Captain's Road link (see [case study](#)), which demonstrates how transport infrastructure improvements have been integrated with other community development goals. By reinstating historic routes like the Captain's Road (circa £3,700 from Sub Fund B) and upgrading the Ring o' the Loch path (£2,000 from Sub Fund B), the Ettrick & Yarrow Community Development Company has restored vital walking connections between isolated settlements while preserving cultural heritage. These paths serve multiple purposes – providing safe walking routes for residents, creating tourism assets, and maintaining traditional access ways that have connected valley communities for generations.

Other Sub Fund B grants also illustrate a commitment to improving transport infrastructure and active travel. Further enhancing local mobility, the Borthwick Water Community Development Trust's (BWCDT) walking booklet (£1,500) has improved navigation and accessibility of local pathways, making them more usable for both residents and visitors. It also undertook an e-bike trial (£420), exploring sustainable transport options. The Midlem Village Hall's investment in e-bike batteries (£920) built capacity for sustainable transport. The improved paths around Lilliesleaf Village Hall (£2,500) ensure that the community hub is safely accessible to all residents regardless of mobility requirements.

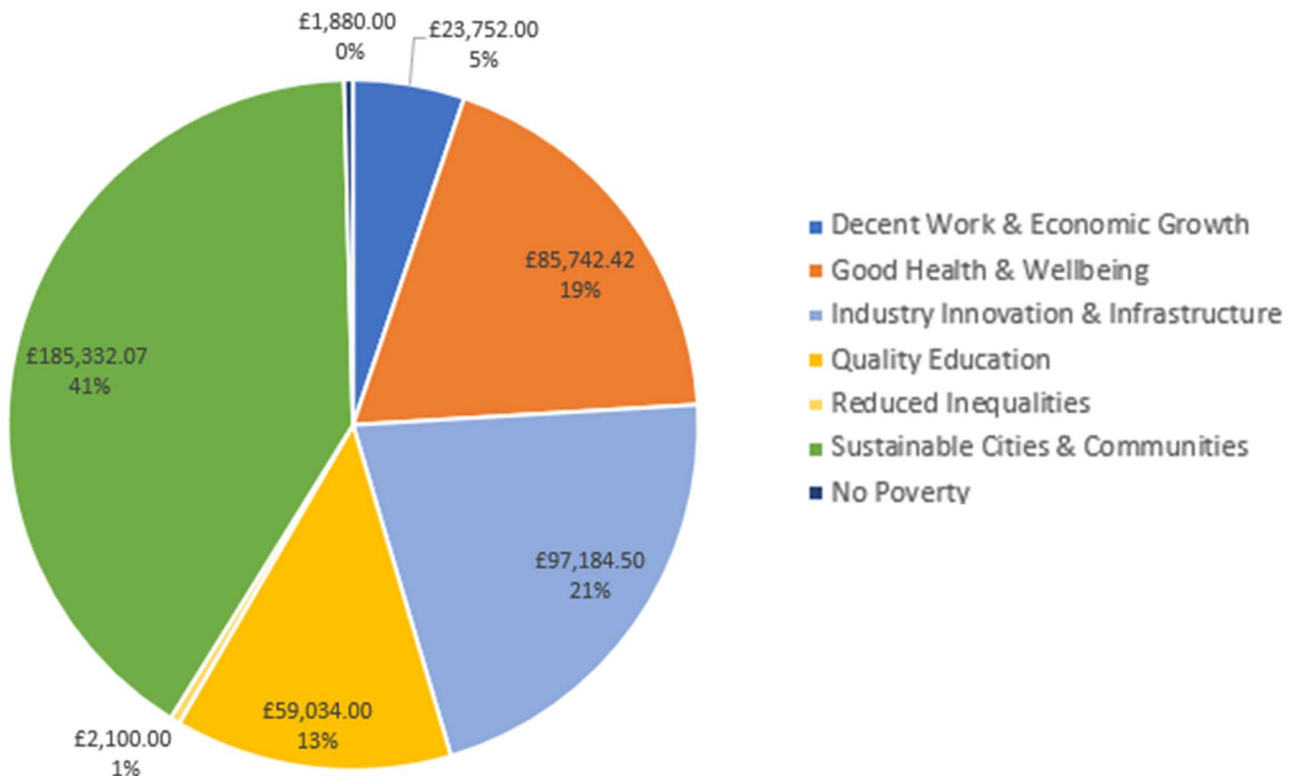
Finally, in terms of year-round accessibility, the Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water Community Council's snowplough investment (£4,500) ensures these rural communities remain connected during harsh Scottish winters when council snow clearance services may prioritise main roads over the small lanes and access roads that are lifelines for remote dwellings. The Ettrick and Yarrow Community Council also supported accessibility by installing salt bins in the Megget Valley (£1,500) to improve winter road safety in areas beyond council services, particularly helping remote community members maintain vital connections during challenging weather conditions.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

To further support with determining thematic impact, Foundation Scotland has evolved its reporting systems to better align project activities with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since Fund inception (see chart), grants have contributed to achieving at least seven of the SDGs. It is the case that most projects contribute to more than one of the SDGs; however, Foundation Scotland seeks to identify the 'best fit' primary SDG for illustrative purposes.

The largest proportion of funding has been to projects contributing primarily towards achievement of SDG 11 (Sustainable cities & communities, 41% of funds awarded), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovative and Infrastructure, 21%), SDG 3 (Good health & well-being, 19%) and SDG 4 (Quality Education, 13%).

Sub Fund A - SGDs



Education and Training Fund

In March 2020, the Panel expressed concern about the low volume of project applications being received by Sub Fund A, and its reach into the more sparsely populated areas covered by the Fund. In August 2020, Foundation Scotland presented a selection of potential distributing options to help the Panel consider how to extend Fund impact. Options considered included participatory grant-making events, outreach events and virtual surgeries, investing some of the funds for long-term returns, and an Education and Training Bursary scheme.

The Panel believed there was merit in exploring an Education and Training bursary scheme, particularly given the challenges faced by residents in accessing education and training due to the area's rurality. The Panel were keen to explore a scheme which could address barriers to education and training, including high transport costs, limited local training opportunities, and the financial pressures of accessing further education in a remote setting.

Foundation Scotland shared examples of Education and Training Funds operating in other parts of Scotland, as well as case studies which demonstrated how such schemes could support workforce development and help retain younger residents in rural areas. The Panel carefully considered how to structure the scheme to maximise impact. The focus was on creating accessible pathways to skills development that could strengthen local employment prospects and support economic resilience.

Having secured Greencoat UK Wind's approval, the E&T Fund launched later in 2021, with £30k initially allocated from Sub Fund A into the new E&T Fund.

This strategic shift has broadened the Fund's reach while maintaining alignment with its core purposes. Since the E&T Fund launched, 83% of the initial £30k allocated from Sub Fund A has been awarded. The impact of grants from the E&T Fund is described below.

"As a member on the panel for the Langhope Rig Wind Farm which awards E&T Grants to local residents, the applications presented support the applicant with furthering their education, learning and development. I cast my mind back to my student days South of the border 40 years earlier, when I was lucky enough to qualify for a full grant from the Scottish education department for four years of study. Apart from a few textbooks, all that was required for my course in those days was in today's money, a £15 lab coat. As a panel we wish to support applications that provide greater opportunities for our local residents to hopefully retain our rural population and strengthen local skills and workforce."

Langhope Rig Panel Member

The Education and Training Fund (E&T Fund), while experiencing a measured uptake initially, is now gaining traction. Since 2021, the Fund has supported 27 local residents with grants totalling over £29,000.

The grants, ranging from one-year to multi-year awards, have supported a diverse range of educational pursuits, including coaching, skills development and professional certifications to advanced educational programmes, enabling both career advancement and new business ventures. Its reach across different age groups and social backgrounds demonstrates its effectiveness as an inclusive resource, strengthening the community's resilience through skills development and economic diversification.



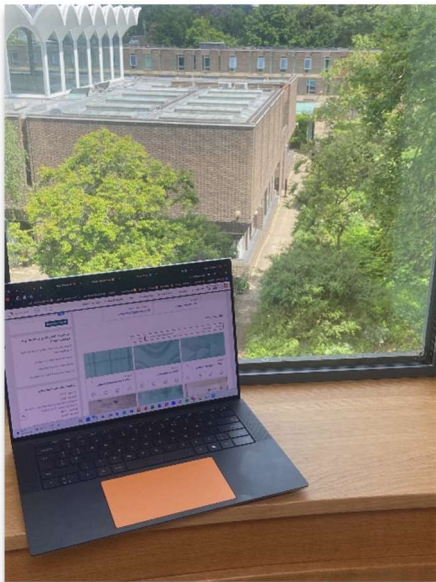
Below are several selected case studies showcasing the impact of the Education and Training Fund on local residents. The first three studies follow the journeys of young people as they progress from secondary school into higher education, highlighting their next steps and achievements.

The first case study ([Bursary helps competitive student get on his bike](#)) demonstrates how support from the E&T Fund can establish a strong foundation for success in an alternative career path, one which enhances and complements life within the recipient's rural community.

Oscar Mountain Biking

The following two case studies highlight the financial pressures students face when attending university, including costs for resources, living expenses and study materials. The Fund has played an important role in supporting the local residents through their studies, reducing their financial burden and enabling them to focus on their academic work at Cambridge and Strathclyde Universities, respectively:

- Selkirk student fulfilling Masters aspirations thanks to education bursary **Patrick, a recipient studying at Strathclyde University, said:** *"Thank you to the Langhope Rig Fund for offering this opportunity to apply for a grant. The laptop has made the world of difference to my performance within my studies and has helped keep me on track and do well."*
- Scottish student realises Cambridge dreams **Eden, who received support to attend Cambridge University, noted:** *"The fund helped relieve some of the financial burden of studying which allowed me to focus on making the most out of everything Cambridge University has to offer."*



The Fund's reputation is also reflected in comments from those who serve on its decision-making panels. One Panel member shared this insight about supporting a student's application to Cambridge University:

As a member on the panel for the Langhope Rig wind farm which awarded this grant to Eden, it became apparent very quickly from the application that this youngster deserved all the financial support we could give him... As a Panel, we were delighted to support this young man's application from the Ettrick and

Yarrow community council area."

Equipment purchased to support studies at Cambridge University

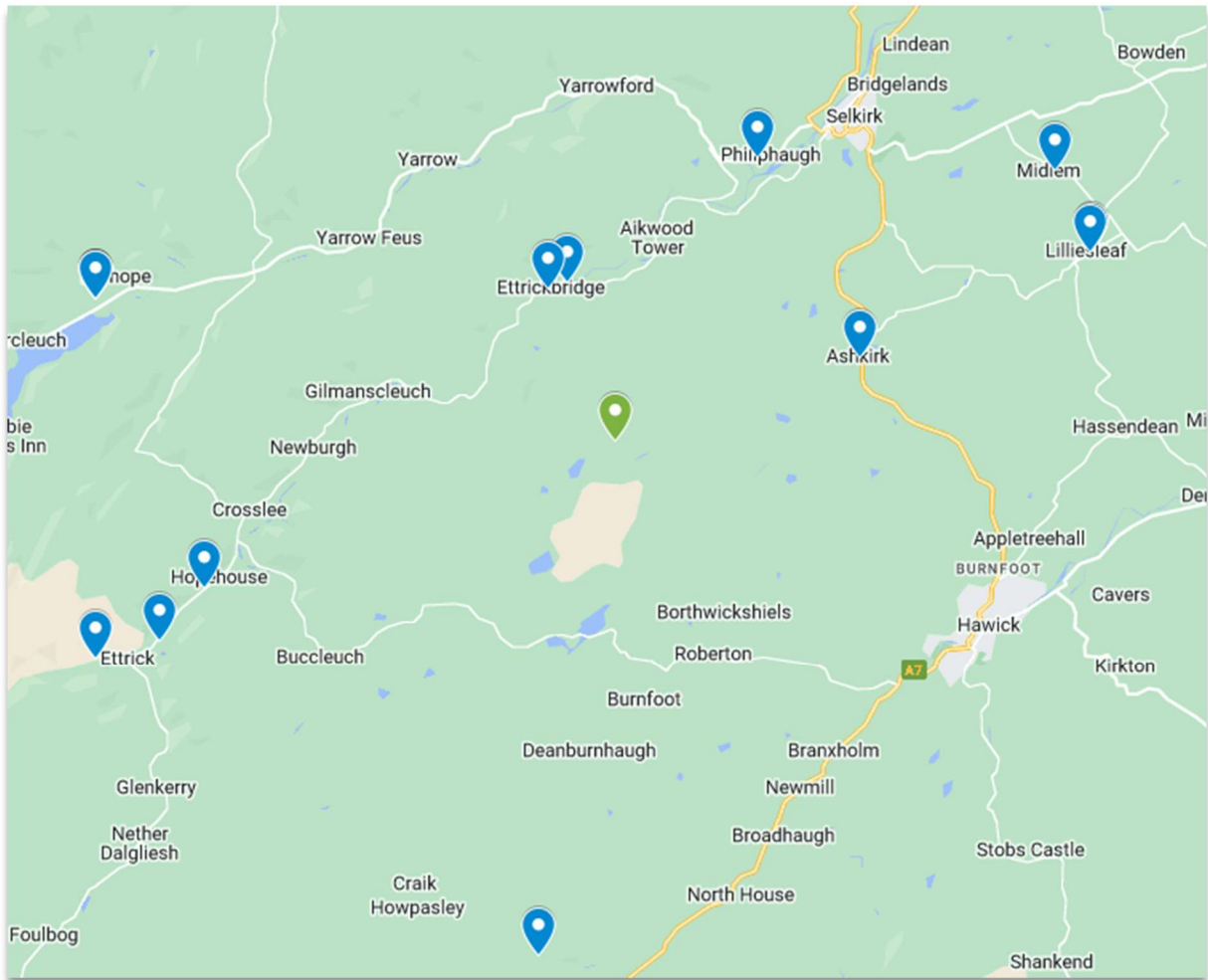
Two further case studies illustrate how the Fund supports retraining and reskilling, providing the foundation for new business creation. Where both local residents might otherwise have needed to leave the area to seek employment elsewhere, support from the Fund enabled him to retrain and establish his own small business locally:

- Education and Training grant supports new local business **David, who received funding to become a certified PAT tester, shared:** *"I would like to thank the Fund for its support as the grant has helped me to create an employment opportunity that keeps me in the area and will also support local community needs."*

- **Education and Training Fund Supports Local Mountain Biking Entrepreneur Gael, who received funding for mountain bike coaching certification, stated:**
"This funding is truly transformative for me. Without it, I would have had to pursue these qualifications one at a time over several years, delaying my ability to establish my business. The Langhope Rig Fund has essentially fast-tracked my career change and given me the confidence to pursue this path wholeheartedly."

Through these case studies, the E&T Fund has demonstrated its role in the Fund's rural communities. By supporting sports development, university education and local business creation through retraining, the Fund enables local residents to pursue their aspirations while maintaining their connection to the area. This opportunity not only supports their personal aspirations but also strengthens the area of benefit, creating a place where people can live, learn, and prosper.

As the map below shows, the Education & Training Fund has successfully expanded the Fund's reach into rural areas where Sub-Fund A previously had limited impact due to the sparse population and fewer community organisations operating in those localities.



*The green icon indicates the Langhope Rig Windfarm, and the blue icons represent the applicants' locations across the Fund area.

Reflections on the Fund Design

Funding Flexibility and Strategic Impact

The Langhope Rig Fund's unique combination of both a single joint Fund across three communities (Sub Fund A) and devolved funding into five communities (Sub Fund B) provides valuable insights into options for community benefit fund management. This complementary structure creates a comprehensive system that effectively serves diverse community needs across the Fund area of benefit.

Sub Fund A's structured approach enables substantial grants that can support transformative community development, as demonstrated for example by the success of Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company (EYCDC). as the [case study](#) demonstrates, through sustained and accessible funding opportunities, EYCDC has delivered long-term community benefits, including affordable rental housing, infrastructure improvements such as boardwalk repairs in the Ettrick Marshes, and the development of walking routes, including the Ring of the Loch around St Mary's Loch and the Captain's Road link. The Fund has also supported crucial staffing positions, including a part-time project development manager and two countryside ranger posts, which have enabled the organisation to expand its capacity and effectiveness in serving the community.

The governance framework of Sub Fund A ensures robust oversight of larger investments, while its open grant-making allows for responsive funding that adapts to emerging community needs. The ability to support complex, multi-year initiatives after proportionate initial assessment processes strengthens long-term community development.

Localised Decision-Making and Community Engagement

Sub Fund B's devolved structure empowers Community Councils with direct control over local funding decisions. This responsive model has proven particularly valuable for supporting smaller, grassroots initiatives that might otherwise struggle to access traditional grant funding. Local administration enables relatively quick response times for immediate community needs while enhancing community engagement through grassroots-level decision-making. The simplified access for smaller community groups removes barriers often associated with formal grant applications.

A local resident of Lilliesleaf affirmed this success: *"It [the local Sub Fund B] is absolutely brilliant, it helps local groups and organisations to thrive and makes a big impact. Having a devolved Fund allows us to directly support our community and the Funds complement each other. Our main focus is now on Fund promotion; trying to get the word out and get people to come forward."*

Small-scale initial funding available to a variety of local groups from Sub Fund B has seeded the emergence of new and growing community initiatives. Examples include the Denholm Folk Festival and various village hall improvements from which local groups and societies

then benefit. Denholm Community Council for example has secured a community shed and developed a pétanque court, whilst Lilliesleaf Sport & Social Club has upgraded its facilities, including football goalposts for the village sports pitch.

Hawick Community Council has supported bandstand events that brought together local performers and audiences throughout the summer 2023, creating valuable community engagement opportunities.

In Yarrowford, funding for New Age Kurling has created new pathways for community connection, particularly benefiting older residents. The Lilliesleaf Growing Group's polytunnel development has promoted local food production, reducing grocery expenses for participants and effectively increasing disposable income that can be spent elsewhere in the local economy. Sub Fund B has also ensured essential emergency services through investments in comprehensive defibrillator maintenance in Ettrick and Yarrow, with extended coverage to smaller hamlets through Denholm's initiatives.

The flexibility of Sub Fund B has served as an effective incubator for larger projects, with several smaller initiatives growing into more substantial undertakings that later secured larger grants through Sub Fund A, such as EYCDC's pathway project in Yarrow Bridge where funding for planning permission for the project from the devolved Sub Fund B underpinned subsequent continuation funding towards the wider project from Sub Fund A. This progression demonstrates how the tiered funding approach helps build community capacity and confidence.

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Operational Challenges

Despite these successes, the arrangement also presents several challenges. More notable challenges include:

The Fund has experienced promotion challenges as stakeholders have experienced confusion over eligibility between Sub Funds as the potential applicants are not fully aware of the respective Sub Fund arrangements and differences. Project applicants sometimes struggle to understand which Sub Fund best suits their needs, and the exclusion of certain areas from Sub Fund A eligibility, whilst including them in Sub Fund B creates slight additional complexity.

This is being addressed through the development of more precise guidelines that clearly distinguish and emphasise the specific geographic coverage of each Sub Fund. Feedback from the Community Council representative managing the devolved funds shows that Community Councils vary in terms of depth and approaches regarding how they examine Sub Fund B applications, which may affect decision quality. Recognising the different levels of knowledge and expertise among Community Council volunteers will help provide targeted support where needed.

Following a recent Fund review, we will develop plans to build capacity in this area. This will support decision-makers while ensuring all volunteers have access to consistent tools, expertise and guidance, whilst maintaining their independence to address local needs effectively.

Foundation Scotland already supports Community Councils by helping to assess grant requests over £1,000, a service which the Community Councils currently use. Managing and coordinating parallel funding streams increases administrative complexity and requires adequate resources for proper oversight and coordination. Community volunteers overseeing Sub Fund B encounter time constraints, whilst planning, reporting and monitoring obligations which can impact on administrative resources.

Following a recent Fund review, streamlined processes are being developed and will be implemented to reduce administrative burdens on community volunteers managing Sub Fund B, ensuring they can fulfil planning, reporting and monitoring obligations, reducing resource burdens associated with the current processes.

Less significant challenges have included:

Reaching local residents to promote the E&T Fund due to the rural nature of the geographic area. A promotion strategy has been recently undertaken utilising local communications across the Fund area, and this has seen an increase in the number of E&T applications. Decisions are made on a rolling basis via email; however, this has occasionally led to delays for E&T applicants due to slow response rates from Panel members. To improve this, a Panel Induction and refresher training has been scheduled, which clearly outlines the Panel's role and emphasises the importance of adhering to decision-making timeframes. Finally, one community council area within Sub Fund B is currently underutilised. Foundation Scotland has provided additional support to this Community Council through recommendations, including the development of a Community Action Plan (CAP). The Community Council is now undertaking pre-planning processes to develop a CAP for its area. This will help identify community priorities and support strategic long-term investment within the community, which can be supported through the accrued Fund balance.

Strategic Impact Across Multiple Domains

Despite these challenges, the funding strategy has strengthened grassroots initiatives across multiple themes and sectors. As outlined above in the Localised Decision-Making and Community Engagement section, this includes community health and wellbeing, environmental conservation, cultural heritage preservation, local food production, emergency preparedness, social inclusion, rural transportation infrastructure, education and skills development, community facilities improvement, and intergenerational activities. The varied investments have collectively addressed the distinct challenges faced by rural and semi-rural communities, enhancing physical infrastructure while strengthening social cohesion through improved access to essential services. This approach has also built economic resilience and environmental sustainability across the Fund area in the Scottish Borders.

The Education and Training (E&T) Fund has emerged as a strategic initiative that directly addresses barriers to training and educational facilities in rural communities. Feedback from grant recipients consistently demonstrates the Fund's positive impact on both individual livelihoods and the broader community's socio-economic resilience.

Effective Relationship Management

A key internal reflection highlighted the importance of wide-ranging relationship management. Foundation Scotland's approach focuses on maintaining connections with organisations throughout the region while supporting community projects. This work is implemented through several complementary strategies.

The Fund has demonstrated successful publicity and outreach efforts, evidenced by the diverse range of applications received from across the target area and surrounding communities. Examples of applicants have included Cash for Kids, Friends of Yarrow, Hawick Boxing, Kirkhope Parish Hall, Foreman Memorial Hall and Nurture the Borders. Foundation Scotland effectively manages relationships between all key stakeholders – Greencoat UK Wind (the current Donor), nine Panel members for Sub Fund A, five Community Councils for Sub Fund B, and the numerous community organisations receiving funding. This complex web of relationships requires skilled coordination and effective communication.

Foundation Scotland demonstrated adaptive relationship management when it identified low application volumes from rural areas and highlighted this to the Panel. Foundation Scotland was also able to highlight examples (from its work alongside other Panels and communities across Scotland) of potential strategies Panel could consider addressing this. This resulted in establishing the Education and Training Fund in 2021. Foundation Scotland strives to maintain an appropriate balance between providing necessary oversight for governance purposes and empowering local decision-making and action.

Transparent communication has been maintained with Greencoat UK Wind, which receives regular updates regarding the Fund's impact through sharing of case studies, press releases, notable news stories, and annual reports. This transparency helps maintain Donor confidence in the Fund's management.

"Foundation Scotland has been a trusted partner in managing the Langhope Rig Fund. Their close local relationships and clear communication have helped ensure our community funding reaches the right places and delivers visible impact. We value their responsiveness and ability to adapt, a good example being the creation of the Education and Training Fund after identifying low rural application volumes. It's also encouraging to see how our support has unlocked further investment into the area, and how consistent funding over time has both supported practical improvements and enhanced social cohesion in these rural communities". **Sara Sancho, Greencoat UK Wind**

The regular Panel meetings, rolling email-based application reviews for the E&T Fund, regular impact communications following awards, and annual reporting structures create a communication framework that keeps all stakeholders engaged and informed.

In summary, the Langhope Rig Fund's governance structure has successfully created pathways for community development while maintaining local accountability and transparency. The devolved decision-making process in Sub Fund B has enhanced community ownership and engagement, while the structured oversight of larger grants via the community Panel in Sub Fund A ensures responsible stewardship of resources. This balanced approach has enabled the Fund to respond effectively to both immediate community needs and longer-term development opportunities, creating a sustainable model for community benefit funding.

Beyond Financial Impact: Strong Community Participation & Ownership

Cultivating participation and knowledge

A significant achievement of the Langhope Rig Fund, beyond the impact of the grants themselves, has been its success in establishing and maintaining a diverse and dedicated decision-making structure through its Panel system. This governance model demonstrates how the Fund has fostered community leadership and participation.

Since Sub Fund A's inception, 20 local residents have contributed their expertise, bringing valuable perspectives to the grant-making process. These Panel members are located across different geographical regions, ensuring decisions benefit from local knowledge and understanding of community needs. Notably, the Panel demonstrates a progressive approach by embracing calculated risks in their decision-making, enabling transformative changes across the Fund area.

The governance structure extends further through Sub Fund B, where approximately 50 local community residents take responsibility for decision-making within their respective Community Council areas. This localised approach ensures that each of the five Community Councils maintains direct control over funding decisions affecting their communities. Collectively, between 70 and 80 individuals have actively participated in local decision-making since 2017, representing a notable level of civic engagement.

These community members have contributed hours of their time, showcasing a commitment to improving their local areas through thoughtful and informed decision-making. Their dedication has not only ensured the effective distribution of resources but also fostered community empowerment.

The Fund has established a robust decision-making framework that fosters local decision-making through its two-panel structure. While Sub Fund's diverse members provide regional insight and measured risk-taking, Sub Fund B enhances the empowerment of local residents across five Community Council areas. This governance model not only distributes resources effectively but also builds lasting community capacity by developing valuable skills in assessment, financial oversight and collaborative decision-making among participants. As experienced members mentor newcomers and document local insights form an important knowledge bank, the Fund has created a legacy of capable community leaders equipped to guide local development well beyond specific funding periods.

Building Community Capacity

Community empowerment generated through the Fund has emerged and developed gradually through a series of connected activities. When community members actively engage in identifying local issues and creating solutions, they develop a sense of ownership of the plans, of the process, of the results and of the desire to sustain these. This begins with creating and/or fostering inclusive forums where diverse voices can be heard, such as within Community Councils, Community Trusts, or Decision-Making Panels.

As individuals gain skills, knowledge, and can influence resource allocation, they become better equipped individually and collectively to address community challenges. Strengthened relationships and networks within the community create bonds of trust and reciprocity, enabling collective action and mutual support systems.

A model case of this community capacity building is the relationship development between the Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company (EYCDC) and Upper Teviotdale & Borthwick Water (UTBW) Community Council. EYCDC has established a track record of delivering projects within its community, while UTBW is currently developing a Community Action Plan (CAP). The two organisations have formed a collaborative partnership to support UTBW through this process.

The initial funding provided by the Fund to EYCDC has built the organisation's capacity, and its experience with delivering community-led projects has grown substantially. This has empowered the community to deliver large, transformative, and ambitious projects that will benefit residents for generations to come.

Strategic Investment in Successful Initiatives

The Langhope Rig Sub Fund A has demonstrated a commitment to investing in successful initiatives and organisations that deliver substantial community benefits. The relationship with EYCDC exemplifies this approach. EYCDC has received approximately £80,000 (21% of total grants awarded via the Fund) through five separate awards. Projects have included boardwalk repairs, affordable housing development, and staffing positions that support environmental stewardship.

Through Foundation Scotland's expertise in Fund management, the Fund has created a framework for supporting and leveraging community-led development initiatives across the region. Sub Fund A has awarded just over £399,000 across 50 funding requests since inception, demonstrating significant financial investment in the local communities.

The Fund has demonstrated success in catalysing additional investment:

- Total project costs facilitated: £1,818,074.72.
- Leverage ratio, for every £1 awarded by Sub Fund A, projects secured an additional £3.64 from other sources, creating a multiplier effect that substantially increases the Fund's impact.

The data reveals an upward trend in annual investment, with the average amount awarded annually from the Fund more than doubling in the last four years compared to the first three years of Fund operation:

- 2016-2019: Average amount awarded annually from the Fund was £27,562
- 2020-2024: Average amount awarded annually from the Fund was £56,318

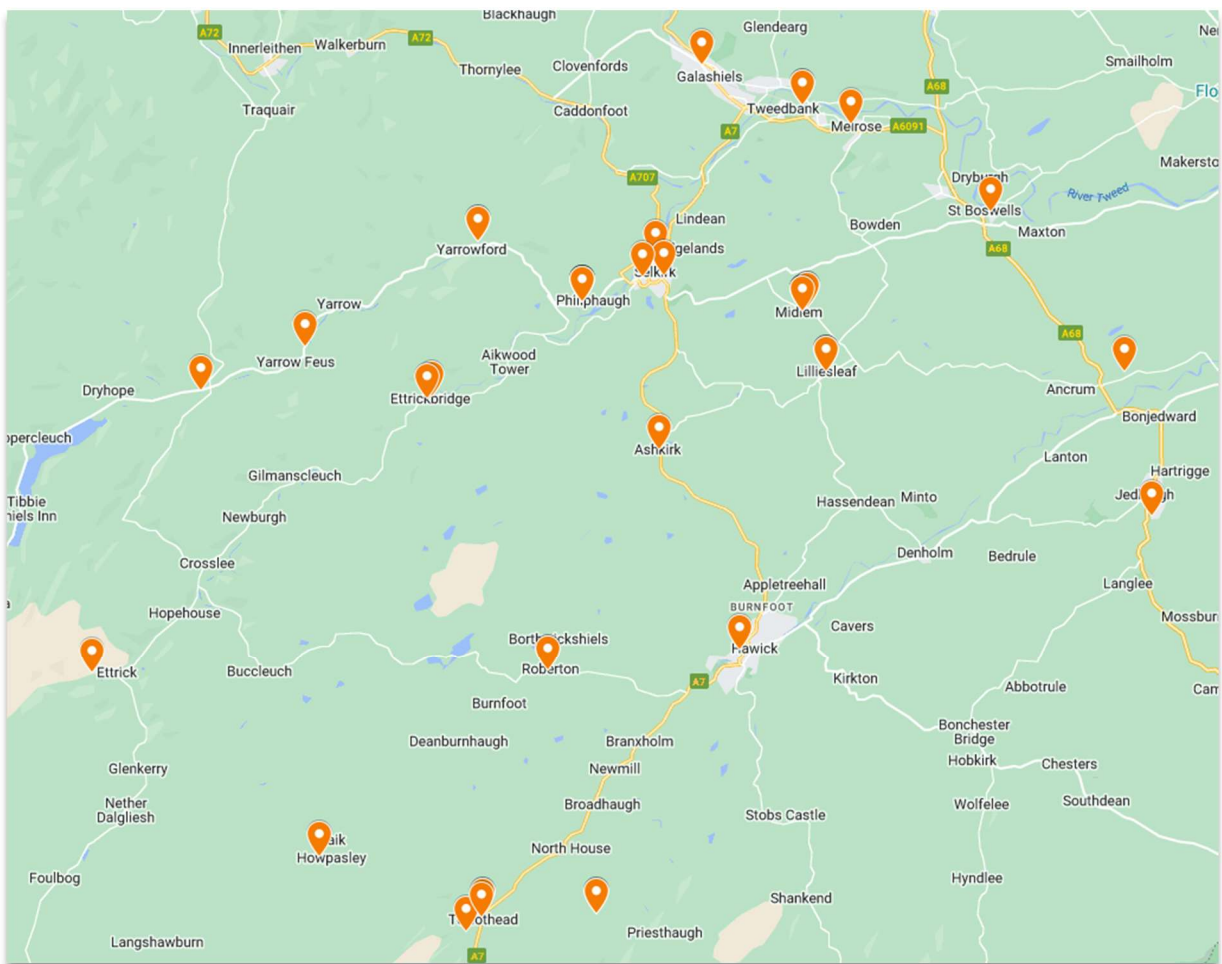
This increase demonstrates the Fund's growing impact and relevance.

The effectiveness of the Fund's publicity and outreach is evident in the diverse range of applications received across the region.

Data (see map below) shows geographically balanced engagement with Ettrick (8 awards), Yarrow (10 awards), and Midlem (7 awards) well-represented, whilst communities such as Teviotdale (2 awards), Hawick (1 award), and Ashkirk (1 award) have also accessed funding.

This varied distribution of just over £390,000 across different priority areas illustrates how the Fund has successfully engaged with a broad spectrum of community needs. Organisations ranging from established entities like Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company to newer initiatives such as Live Learn Earn CIC have benefited from the Fund's support, further demonstrating its ability to reach diverse groups throughout the region.

The map below demonstrates the reach of awards throughout the Fund area.



*The orange icons indicate the spread of projects delivered within the Fund area.

Effective Relationship Management

A key internal reflection highlighted the importance of wide-ranging relationship management. Foundation Scotland's approach focuses on maintaining connections with organisations throughout the region while supporting community projects. This work is implemented through several complementary strategies.

The Fund has demonstrated successful publicity and outreach efforts, evidenced by the diverse range of applications received from across the target area and surrounding communities. Examples of applicants have included Cash for Kids, Friends of Yarrow, Hawick Boxing, Kirkhope Parish Hall, Foreman Memorial Hall and Nurture the Borders. Foundation Scotland effectively manages relationships between all key stakeholders – Greencoat UK Wind (the current Donor), nine Panel members for Sub Fund A, five Community Councils for Sub Fund B, and the numerous community organisations receiving funding. This complex web of relationships requires skilled coordination and effective communication.

Foundation Scotland demonstrated adaptive relationship management when it identified low application volumes from rural areas and highlighted this to the Panel. Foundation Scotland was also able to highlight examples (from its work alongside other Panels and communities across Scotland) of potential strategies the Panel could consider to address this. This resulted in establishing the Education and Training Fund in 2021. Foundation Scotland strives to maintain an appropriate balance between providing necessary oversight for governance purposes and empowering local decision-making and action.

Transparent communication has been maintained with Greencoat UK Wind, which receives regular updates regarding the Fund's impact through the sharing of case studies, press releases, notable news stories, and annual reports. This transparency helps maintain Donor confidence in the Fund's management.

The regular Panel meetings, rolling email-based application reviews for the E&T Fund, regular impact communications following awards, and annual reporting structures create a communication framework that keeps all stakeholders engaged and informed.

Niome Lucjan, Community funds Advisor noted: *As the Community Funds Advisor for the Langhope Rig Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund, I've witnessed firsthand how effective relationship management serves as the foundation for sustainable community development. Managing connections between Greencoat UK Wind, nine Panel members, five Community Councils, and numerous community organisations requires careful coordination and clear communication. The positive outcomes we've seen stem from our ability to balance oversight with local ownership - understanding when to provide guidance and when to step back to allow local decision-makers to lead. Our role is to facilitate these relationships while maintaining transparency with all stakeholders, which has been crucial in building trust across the communities we serve.*

In summary, the Langhope Rig Fund's governance structure has successfully created pathways for community development while maintaining local accountability and transparency.

The devolved decision-making process in Sub Fund B has enhanced community ownership and engagement, while the structured oversight of larger grants via the community Panel in Sub Fund A ensures responsible stewardship of resources. This balanced approach has enabled the Fund to respond effectively to both immediate community needs and longer-term development opportunities, creating a sustainable model for community benefit funding.

The Fund's reputation is also reflected in comments from those who serve on its decision-making panels. One Panel member shared this insight about supporting a student's application to Cambridge University: *"As a member on the panel for the Langhope Rig wind farm, which awarded this grant to Eden, it became apparent very quickly from the application that this youngster deserved all the financial support we could give him... As a Panel, we were delighted to support this young man's application from the Ettrick and Yarrow community council area."*

Conclusion

The Langhope Rig Community Benefit Fund demonstrates an effective approach to community grant-making through its three-tiered funding structure. Since its inception in 2017, the Fund has distributed over £850,000 through its Sub Fund A, Sub Fund B, and Education and Training Fund, enabling transformative changes throughout the Scottish Borders region. The overall Fund's success lies in its ability to balance strategic, large-scale investments with responsive, locally controlled funding that addresses immediate community needs.

The Fund's capacity to leverage additional resources is noteworthy, with Sub Fund A alone catalysing £1.45 million in match funding, significantly amplifying its impact across the communities it serves.

The devolved decision-making model has proven particularly effective, with approximately 70-80 individuals actively participating in funding decisions since 2017. This civic engagement, combined with Foundation Scotland's oversight, has created a robust framework for ensuring accountability while maintaining local autonomy.

The Fund has demonstrated its responsiveness to emerging community needs through its evolution, particularly with the introduction of the Education and Training Fund in 2021. This targeted approach to skills development and educational support has already benefited 27 residents, contributing to both individual advancement and broader community resilience.

The comprehensive impact of the Fund is evident across all priority areas, from maintaining vital community assets to fostering social cohesion. Its flexible funding structure has enabled communities to either complete projects independently or secure substantial additional resources for larger initiatives, further enhancing its effectiveness in supporting community development throughout the Scottish Borders.

"The Langhope Rig Community Benefit Fund demonstrates how a well structured fund can deliver measurable impact across rural communities. The Fund's evolution over time, including the addition of the Education and Training Fund in 2021, shows how community benefit funds are uniquely placed to adapt to identified community needs. The leverage ratio of £3.64 secured for every £1 the Fund contributes represents solid value for money, while the outcomes include improved community infrastructure and enhanced local decision-making capacity. Foundation Scotland's partnership with the five communities and the Greencoat UK Wind Fund has enabled this assured funding to support broader community development initiatives that extend the reach and multiply the value of the original contribution." **Rachel Searle, Head of Communities & Impact**

