

# Greencoat UK Wind Carcant Wind Farm Community Fund

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Fund Report 2025

# Highlights



£140,000 awarded since Carcant Wind Farm Community Fund inception



45 Grants awarded to community projects



Funded projects have particularly contributed to SDG11 and SDG3



Heriot - 2025 marked largest grantmaking round for funding allocated and number of applications received



Heriot awarded a 5 years grant to Heriot Country Kids Club



Moorfoot - over £17,000 invested in Carrington Village Hall over the past 5 years

## Highlights

This is the seventh annual report prepared by Foundation Scotland since becoming the Carcant Fund administrator in 2018.

Cumulative grant-making since the Fund transitioned to Foundation Scotland's stewardship (October 2018) to the end of December 2025 totalled just over £140,000, to support the communities of Moorfoot (36 grants) and Heriot (9 grants).

In 2025, the **Carcant Fund awarded funding to six projects** across the collective Fund area. Three groups were awarded for projects within the Moorfoot community. Heriot also received awards for three projects, including towards a continuation of the Heriot Country Kids Club after-school care provision.

### Moorfoot

In 2025, the Moorfoot Fund drew down its balance in one funding round to support two projects: upgrading Carrington Village Hall windows to ensure a more energy-efficient building, and continuing support for the popular Moorflix Community Cinema event for an additional year, as well as awarding its annual microgrant funding for the Community Council to distribute.

Carrington Village Hall received £1,500 to contribute towards the total project cost of just over £6,300 for replacing all windows. The award to the Village Hall group acted as a catalyst, unlocking additional funding that enabled all remaining windows to be upgraded, demonstrating the power of leveraging funding. Please refer to the Spotlight section for more details relating to this project. A £671 award was made to Moorflix Community Cinema, towards the cost of showing four films to enhance community connection and foster shared experiences in Moorfoot, promoting conversation and social connectivity.

### Heriot

2025 marked Carcant (Heriot) Fund's **largest grantmaking round** in terms of both funding allocated and number of applications received, with the Fund drawing down a large portion of the balance it had accumulated over the past few years.

In 2025, Heriot Country Kids Club was awarded a five-year grant totalling just over £55,000, just over £27,500 of which was allocated from the Carcant (Heriot) Fund. This award will support the school's role in retaining pupils, which is vital for both the school and the sustainability of the community. By providing quality childcare and after-school provision, the Club plays a crucial role in attracting and retaining young families in the area.

This helps maintain a thriving population base and preserves the vibrant character of rural community life that makes Heriot a desirable place to live and raise children. The Spotlight section of the report provides an in-depth overview of the Club's journey with the Carcant (Heriot) Fund to date.

A further £2,500 was awarded from the Fund to support the same group with core running costs throughout year one of the project. This investment will play an important role in helping the group establish its financial reserve in line with its reserve policy, strengthening the group's financial security and creating a safety net to cover unexpected expenses or urgent operational needs.

Another key highlight was the £1,250 grant awarded to Heriot Primary School Parent Council to enrich pupils' experiences through two educational trips. The funding will support tickets for a festive outing to see a pantomime in December 2025, and a summer excursion planned for June 2026. These trips will provide valuable opportunities for pupils to engage with arts and culture outside of their usual environment, while building lasting memories and strengthening peer connections beyond the classroom.

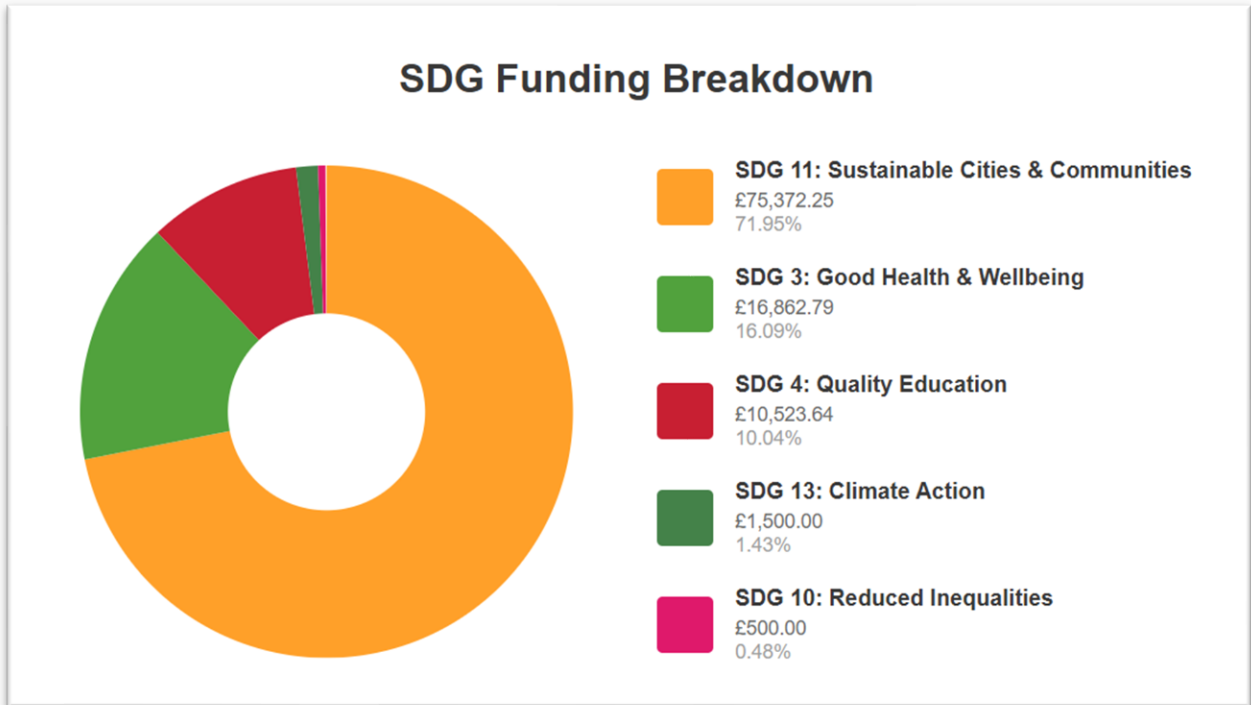
In the summer of 2025, Foundation Scotland and SSE hosted two community project development sessions in Heriot, supported by members of the decision-making Panel. These sessions aimed to help the Heriot community identify project ideas that could make a real difference locally, whilst providing information about available funding and how it could support community initiatives.

The sessions offered an opportunity to share ideas, discuss community activities, and explore projects that could potentially be delivered within Heriot. Please refer to the Heriot section for further information about the Fund's progression over the reporting period.

## **Impact**

Foundation Scotland has evolved its reporting systems to better align project activities with the internationally recognised Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Since launch, the Fund has contributed to achieving at least five of the SDGs, particularly supporting projects contributing to SDG11 (Sustainable Cities & Communities, 71% of funds awarded) and towards SDG3 (Good Health & Wellbeing, 16% of funds).



The funded projects this year have primarily contributed to achieving two different Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



## Fund Background and arrangements

The Carcant Community Fund is provided by Greencoat UK Wind, owner of Carcant Wind Farm, located in Midlothian. It benefits the communities served by the community councils of Moorfoot and Heriot.

Following Greencoat UK Wind's acquisition of the Carcant Wind Farm from SSE, Foundation Scotland worked with both to enable the transition of Carcant Community Fund administration to Foundation Scotland, taking account of specific contexts and capacity for each community.

The agreement between Carcant Wind Farm (Scotland) Ltd and Foundation Scotland was signed in October 2018. The Wind Farm's Year 9 community benefit payment (in February 2019) represented the Year 1 payment within Foundation Scotland's administration.

Annual payments into the Fund are index-linked and calculated based on the base value of £13,800 from the date of the wind farm being first commissioned (June 2010). Payments will be made over the lifetime of the windfarm, which is initially planned to be 25 years. The Fund distributes monies via two 'sub-Funds'. Two-thirds of the annual payments are distributed via the Carcant (Heriot) Community Fund, and one-third via the Carcant (Moorfoot) Community Fund.

**In Moorfoot**, a local Panel guides how the Fund is spent and promotes it within the community. The Panel consists of up to eight members: two from the Community Council, one each from the three community hall management committees within the Fund's area of benefit, and up to three other local residents.

Following the Fund's success in allocating its balance in 2024, alongside strategic multi-year awards that extend beyond 2025, the Panel decided not to draw down its pending balance for subsequent years. Instead, they chose to retain a reserve to enable the Fund to make impactful awards through projects in 2026. Consequently, only the available balance was awarded in 2025, and just one funding round took place before the Fund closed to new applications. It will reopen in spring 2026 with a return to rolling applications.

The Carcant (Moorfoot) Fund provides grants of £150 – £1,500 (including multi-year awards of up to £1,500) to support charitable activities that:

- Enhance quality of life for local residents.
- Contribute to vibrant, healthy, successful and sustainable communities.
- Promote community spirit and encourage community activity.

**In Heriot**, a similar local Panel arrangement is in place, with responsibilities for guiding and promoting both the Carcant (Heriot) Community Fund and a separate SSE-owned and administered Fund (Toddleburn). In practice, Foundation Scotland has worked with SSE to create a joint application process promoted locally as the Heriot Community Fund, to simplify arrangements for applicants.

Advised by Foundation Scotland and SSE (and in line with each Fund's priorities), the Panel determines how grant awards should be split between the two Funds, and Foundation Scotland makes all subsequent arrangements with recipients of Carcant monies. The Heriot Panel consists of up to seven members; two nominated by the Community Council and five local residents.

Heriot Community Fund currently provides grants of £250-£10,000 to support charitable activities that:

- 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.

Either Fund can consider a wide range of costs and activities, including kit and equipment; running costs for local groups and events; staff or sessional workers; consultations and feasibility studies; maintenance or refurbishment of community facilities; and a range of others.

**A microgrants scheme** has also been established in Moorfoot, providing small grants up to £150 to unconstituted groups or individuals for small projects. Heriot Community Council has access to other funds to operate a microgrants scheme and so elected not to use Carcant (Heriot) funding for this purpose.

Foundation Scotland provides governance and administrative support to the Fund, under contract to Greencoat UK Wind. The Foundation's costs for this service are paid separately by Greencoat, over and above the Fund value.

## Financial Overview

The following table summarises Fund finances from January 2025 to December 2025.

	<b>Carcant (Moorfoot) Fund</b>	<b>Carcant (Heriot) Fund</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Available balances as at 1st Jan 2025</b>	<b>-£5,428.61</b>	<b>£38,496.96</b>	<b>£33,068.35</b>
Income	-	-	-
Greencoat UK Wind	£8,274.28	£16,536.16	£24,810.44
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£8,274.28</b>	<b>£16,536.16</b>	<b>£24,810.44</b>
Expenditure			
Grants awarded	£2,998.43	£31,378.16	£34,376.59
Grants returned	-	-	£0.00
Net expenditure - grants	£2,998.43	£31,378.16	£34,376.59
Fund expenses	-	-	£0.00
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£2,998.43</b>	<b>£31,378.16</b>	<b>£34,376.59</b>
<b>Available balances as of 31st Dec 2025</b>	<b>-£152.76</b>	<b>£23,654.96</b>	<b>£23,502.20</b>

The Moorfoot Fund has a current available balance of -£152.76, but a positive cash balance of £5,847.24. This negative balance available reflects all grants awarded and allocated in 2024 and 2025, as well as future commitments made by the Panel, including multi-year awards scheduled to commence in 2025 and beyond. As mentioned above, grantmaking capacity in 2025 was scaled to align with the balance that was available following the 2025 annual donation to the Fund.

Greencoat UK Wind payments to the Carcant Fund are typically received in mid- to late summer, with the 2025 payment arriving in August. Historically, the Carcant (Moorfoot) Fund made funding decisions in late June or July.

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However, to ensure the donation is received before allocating awards and to accommodate Panel members' summer availability, the Panel agreed that the annual decision-making round will now take place in September each year.

Heriot receives a larger share of Carcant Funds and has access to additional wind farm community benefit funds not administered by Foundation Scotland. By the end of 2025, the Carcant (Heriot) Fund had awarded nine grants totalling just over £85,000 since inception.

Income received in mid- to late summer is typically reserved for the following calendar year's awards, as was the case this year. Funding decisions are typically made biannually in April and October/November. Heriot also operates a rolling application deadline, which means that applications can be made at any time throughout the year. In 2025, an application was received in May, and the Panel met in June to make the decision.

## Moorfoot

Moorfoot is a relatively small area composed of the villages of Temple, Carrington and North Middleton, with a population of approximately 1,400 people. There are only a few community groups or registered charities in the area, and village halls in each of the three settlements are central to village life. A single open grant-making round each year is typically sufficient to ensure the modest pot of funds has maximum effect in this context. Historically, the Panel has agreed to make out-of-round decisions where appropriate. Due to the low fund balance following several strategic multi-year awards, the Panel agreed to hold one round in 2025, though it remains open to considering out-of-round applications in 2026 once the 2026 donation to the Fund has been received.

By the end of 2025, the Carcant (Moorfoot) Fund had awarded a cumulative total of 36 grants totalling just under £55k to eight different groups or organisations since the transfer of Carcant Fund responsibilities to Foundation Scotland in 2018. Four applications were submitted to the Fund during 2025, two of which were approved. Carrington Village Hall received its full requested amount (please refer to Spotlight section for further detail), while Moorflix was awarded half of its request, reflecting the remaining balance available in the Fund. Two applications were rejected at the time the application was made to the Fund as neither was able to demonstrate sufficient evidence of need within the Fund area.

Moorfoot Community Council (MCC) is represented on the Panel and administers the community microgrant scheme. The scheme operated successfully throughout 2025, with additional funding tranches expected to be released to it for further distribution in 2026. Foundation Scotland continues to monitor Fund impact, including through completion reports for each grant awarded. The full list of awards made in 2025 is shown below:

Year Awarded	Grant Application Name	Project Description – Summary	Amount
2025	Moorfoot Community Council (Microgrant) - FR-0097915	To provide a fund for distribution to local groups and individuals in the form of micro-grants for general charitable purposes.	<b>£827.43</b>
2025	Moorflix Community Cinema - FR-0093863	Towards the cost of showing 4 films to enhance community connection and foster shared experiences in Moorfoot, promoting conversation and social connectivity.	<b>£671.00</b>
2025	Carrington Village Hall Association - FR-0094997	To contribute to the cost of replacing a window in the village hall, enhancing energy efficiency and creating a more welcoming environment for the local rural community.	<b>£1,500.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£2,998.43</b>

## **Spotlight: Carrington Village Hall – A five-year journey from rescue to revival**

At the time Foundation Scotland began administering the Carcant Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund (Moorfoot) in 2019, Carrington Village Hall was facing serious challenges, and there was a significant risk that this important community asset would close without financial support. Over the following years, strategic funding from the Fund, totalling just over £17,200, transformed the hall from a vulnerable facility on the brink of closure into a thriving, energy-efficient, and financially resilient community hub.

### **A Hall at Risk (2019-2020)**

In 2019, Carrington Village Hall Association was managing the hall with minimal financial resources, generating only a few thousand pounds annually. With virtually no reserves and limited capacity for improvements or emergencies, the organisation faced increasingly difficult circumstances.

### **The COVID-19 Crisis (2020)**

The coronavirus pandemic in 2020 brought the situation to crisis point. With the hall forced to close, income streams dried up while essential costs continued. The community launched fundraising initiatives and applied for emergency grants, but financial pressure remained severe. The situation was compounded by reduced volunteer numbers, leaving one person managing the hall single-handedly. With no income and ongoing costs for insurance and maintenance, the trustees faced the difficult prospect of permanent closure.

### **The Turning Point**

In the midst of the pandemic crisis, Carrington Village Hall Association took a crucial step by applying for support from the Carcant (Moorfoot) Fund. During the assessment phase, Foundation Scotland's careful evaluation revealed the full extent of the hall's vulnerability. The assessment process identified not only the immediate financial pressures but also critical governance challenges, with just one person managing the hall single-handedly, the organisation lacked the resilience and capacity needed for sustainable operation. The assessment revealed the fundamental fragility of the hall's position, with minimal reserves, a governance structure stretched beyond capacity, and the very real prospect of permanent closure.

Foundation Scotland's initial assessment became a catalyst for action, recognising this was not simply a temporary cash flow issue but a community asset at genuine risk of being lost. Importantly, the assessment process itself helped the community understand the scale of the challenge facing the hall, particularly around governance and volunteer capacity. This clarity proved important in galvanising the community response.

Following the assessment, the governance concerns were reviewed by the community. A committed group of volunteers came together to address the challenges, bringing fresh energy and capacity to the hall's management. This new group recognised both the risk the hall faced and their responsibility to preserve the hall for the community's future. Their willingness to step forward and take on governance responsibilities marked a turning point, transforming the hall from a struggling organisation dependent on a single volunteer into a committed group capable of strategic planning and sustainable operations.

### **The Response: Strategic Emergency Support**

In June 2020, the Carcant Moorfoot Fund awarded £1,000 in emergency support. This grant was specifically designed to:

- Cover critical utility bills and immediate expenses
- Provide additional financial breathing space beyond the group's request of £800
- Ensure the hall could retain the asset for future community use

The assessor's rationale was clear: given that closure could last longer than initially anticipated and the group's minimal reserves, £1,000 would provide crucial additional support beyond their conservative estimate.

In October 2020, with the pandemic continuing to impact operations, a second grant of £660 was awarded. By this point, the hall had partially spent the first grant, with ongoing income losses and continuing essential expenditure. The fund recognised that while Carrington accounted for approximately 10% of the three local halls' collective financial activity, it remained a significant community asset requiring sustained support through the extended pandemic period.

### **Recovery and Investment: Building for the Future**

**Infrastructure Improvements (2022):** As the hall emerged from the pandemic, the focus shifted from survival to sustainability. In July 2022, the Carcant Moorfoot Fund awarded three grants to support with replacement lighting, hall running costs and a three-year grant to contribute to recurring costs (2022-2025).

**Environmental Sustainability (2023-2024):** Recognising both the cost-of-living crisis and the importance of environmental sustainability, the fund provided ongoing support through multiple interventions. Beginning in mid-2023, funding was allocated for immediate running costs during the cost-of-living crisis and for environmental improvements to enhance energy efficiency. The following year saw continued investment in the building's fabric, including window replacements and insulation measures such as loft insulation and pipe lagging.

Most recently, a multi-year grant was awarded to provide stability for core running costs through 2027, ensuring the hall could continue serving the community while managing rising operational expenses.

Continued Growth (2025): In September 2025, the Fund awarded an additional £1,500 for window replacements, further enhancing energy efficiency and creating a more welcoming environment for the rural community. By this point, Carrington Village Hall had been described in assessments as 'increasingly well-used,' demonstrating the success of the sustained investment.



This particular award acted as a catalyst to leverage an additional £4,800, which led to all remaining windows in the hall being replaced. This was a unique leverage situation that demonstrated the community's innovative fundraising strategies. A community member had pledged funding for one of the four windows on the condition that the hall raised money for the remaining three. A local businessman then committed to fund another window, while a bride who had celebrated her wedding at the hall asked guests to contribute towards a window replacement in lieu of wedding gifts. Having secured funding for three windows, the hall required £1,500 for the fourth window, which the Fund's award provided, enabling all four windows to be installed and the project to be completed.



**Conclusion: A Model of Sustained Support**

From a position of acute vulnerability with virtually no reserves in 2020, the hall has achieved remarkable transformation. The success story is fundamentally one of governance renewal, a committed new management group emerged from the ashes, galvanised by the Fund's strategic support.

This dedicated group of volunteers took on the challenge of preserving the hall, bringing the leadership capacity and vision needed to secure its future. With strong governance in place, the group was able to make strategic use of the grants, achieving enhanced financial resilience through emergency support, long-term stability through multi-year core funding commitments, and reduced operational costs through energy efficiency improvements. Most importantly, the hall has evolved from a facility at risk of closure to an 'increasingly well-used community hall facility' serving the local rural community.

The Carrington Village Hall story demonstrates how thoughtful assessment combined with sustained funding can catalyse community action. Foundation Scotland's initial assessment identified not just financial challenges but fundamental governance vulnerabilities.



This honest evaluation helped the community understand what was at stake, mobilising a committed group of volunteers who stepped forward to lead. The grants that followed empowered this new group to act decisively, implementing strategic improvements while building the hall's long-term resilience.

The partnership between Carrington Village Hall Association and the Carcant (Moorfoot) Fund exemplifies how strategic, sustained funding, combined with strong community leadership, can transform a community asset from vulnerability to vitality.

## Spotlight: The Role of Village Halls

In 2024, strategic funding was awarded to the three local village halls in the Moorfoot Community Council, through Panel-led decisions to support core running costs, enabling local communities and volunteers to maintain access to their vital community hubs. In a world increasingly defined by digital connectivity, genuine human connection can be challenging, particularly within rural communities where social hubs and meeting spaces can be limited.



Community benefit funding can play an important role in keeping people connected, and the Carcant Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund in Moorfoot is one such example, supporting three village halls nestled in the Moorfoot Community Council areas of Middleton, Temple, and Carrington. While these halls share a Community Council, they each serve their individual community as a social hub and community connector.

### **The power of small local groups**

Due to the rural and somewhat isolated nature of Moorfoot, there are only a handful of community groups. However, these groups play an important role in ensuring sustainability and connectivity across the villages. Each group has a representative on the decision-making Panel to ensure fair representation from across the three villages in Fund decision-making.

These dedicated volunteers give up their spare time and resources to ensure their respective village halls continue to operate and sustain, while providing a lifeline to their communities. They enable the halls to keep their doors and spaces open and welcoming.

### **Communities connecting through shared space**

As village halls across Scotland face mounting pressures from increased running costs and maintenance requirements, many are turning to grant funding to help sustain their community services. The Carcant (Moorfoot) Fund is an example, with grants supporting these essential community hubs. Recognising the value that village halls bring to local communities, in 2024 the Panel awarded multi-year, unrestricted funding to each of the three halls within the Fund area.

This flexible approach allows each hall to address its running costs in whatever form is most needed, whether for utilities, maintenance, programming, or other operational expenses. As the funding term is now in its second year, the response from the Village Hall Associations has been overwhelmingly positive.

Their feedback consistently expresses gratitude and appreciation for this continued support, particularly noting how the removal of some financial pressures has enabled them to focus more effectively on serving their communities.

Community programmes are varied and include nursery and childcare provision in Temple Village Hall, yoga and badminton at Carrington Village Hall, Moorflix Cinema (funded through Carcant) and community takeaways and pub evenings, as well as after-school club provision at Middleton Village Hall. These vibrant social hubs have thrived and connected communities.

### **Not just multi-year funding**



In addition to the multi-year awards, the Panel has awarded Middleton Village Hall funding to support upgrade works to its kitchen. They have also awarded funding to Temple Village Hall to support a stonemason to conduct repointing stone repair, and to Carrington Village Hall to install a new window and lag pipework to ensure the energy efficiency of the building is improved.

These awards have created warm, welcoming spaces, and increased footfall and user activity, which in turn has increased revenue to allow further improvements to be made – and so the positive cycle continues.

### **Community Benefit at its Best**

Carcant Morfoot's small but mighty grants have played a significant role in ensuring that the community of Moorfoot's village halls remains open and accessible, and helping to remove some of the financial pressures for volunteer committees who are the cornerstones of their community.

## Heriot

The Heriot Community Council area chiefly comprises three areas: the original village containing Heriot School and Church; Heriot Station (the settlement adjacent to the Borders Railway where there was historically a station); and Nettlingflat on the other side of the A7 trunk road through the region, plus scattered individual dwellings. It has a population of circa 400 but no local services, shops, post office or banking facilities.

Public transport has been halved to hourly bus services, following the reintroduction of the Borders Railway, which runs through Heriot, but whose nearest station is six miles away. The introduction of the Sunday Café, running from April to September, has encouraged passing cyclists and walkers to stop by Macfie Memorial Hall, increasing visitor activity and community engagement. The area now has good broadband access, having been the catalyst for a community broadband scheme now embracing multiple locations across the Borders and South Lanarkshire.

There are relatively few community groups or registered charities operating locally, and Heriot Community Council (HCC) is very active. The area also has access to community benefit funding from several other wind farms, and so HCC does not need to avail of Carcant Funds for microgrants activity. HCC developed an 'initial' community action plan following some local consultation in January 2019 and discussed developing this further in 2025.

Foundation Scotland has worked closely with SSE throughout the reporting period to reinvigorate the Community Action Programme (CAP) and maximise the impact of Community Benefit Funds (CBFs). This collaborative effort has been pursued through multiple channels, including Panel discussions and community workshops, where the community has explored strategies to stimulate further community activity and ensure communities derive maximum benefit from available funding.

These engagement sessions have focused on identifying barriers to community participation, sharing insights on successful approaches, and developing mechanisms to better support communities in accessing and utilising CBF resources. Through this ongoing partnership, Foundation Scotland and SSE are working to continually support the community with the development of a CAP that will be responsive to community needs and better positioned to deliver meaningful outcomes for the local community. The Fund received three external applications during the year. Two were approved for funding; however, a portion of one of them was deferred and rolled into a separate application pending further information and assessment, making the total applications received four with three being funded.

An application from the Central Citizens Advice Bureau (a regional Citizen Advice Bureau service) was rejected. It sought funding to deliver an outreach programme to the community in the village hall. The Panel determined that the applicant had not sufficiently demonstrated community need for the project; however, it invited the group to resubmit with evidence of further community consultation.

In 2022, £30,000 (£10,000 per year) was awarded to Heriot Country Kids Club to underpin its after-school and holiday club service, with 2024 marking the group's third and final instalment under this arrangement. Building on this success, a new five-year, multi-year award was approved for Heriot Country Kids Club, building further upon the previous three-year project that had been funded through the Carcant Fund. The Panel agreed to allocate 50% of the requested amount from the Carcant Fund and 50% from the SSE Toddleburn Fund. The total award of £55,256.32 therefore includes £27,628.16 from the Carcant Fund, distributed over five years and incorporating an annual inflation allowance of 5%.

Heriot Primary School Parent Council received an award of £1,250 to support the local pupils in attending two school excursions. A portion of the award was to support tickets for the pupils to see the Beauty and the Beast Pantomime in Portobello, Edinburgh. The second portion of funding is for the pupils to go on a summer excursion in 2026, with the final destination being confirmed in early 2026 following further engagement with the pupils. The partially deferred application mentioned above was in relation to Heriot Country Kids Club's request to use a portion of funding to strengthen its reserves.

The Panel requested to see a more robust reserve policy that clearly outlined how the organisation had calculated its required reserve amount. Following receipt of the reserve policy, the Panel agreed to award funding to support the group with core running costs for the first year of the project, which provided the group with an opportunity to build its reserve from income generated from its after-school and holiday club services.

Finally, following an award received by Heriot Parent Council in 2019 to install a Wild Garden in the primary school, a new cohort of Parents revitalised the initiative in 2024, and the project reached its conclusion in 2025. Please refer to the Spotlight below for further details.

By the end of 2025, the Carcant (Heriot) Fund had therefore awarded a cumulative total of nine grants totalling just over £85,000 to three different groups and organisations since the transfer of Carcant Fund responsibilities to Foundation Scotland in 2018. Given the Fund balance available and the area's access to other sources of community benefit funds from wind farms, Foundation Scotland and SSE are offering encouragement and advice to HCC to help it consider how best to further develop the Community Action Plan.

This would help to identify residents' development priorities. To support this process, two community development workshops were organised in Heriot by Foundation Scotland and SSE, with participation from decision-making Panel members. The purpose of these gatherings was to assist local residents in developing project proposals that would benefit the area, whilst also providing information about funding opportunities and their potential to strengthen community programmes. Participants were able to exchange concepts, consider various local activities, and examine feasible projects for implementation in Heriot.

The first meeting, held in June, was well attended by a diverse mix of local residents and representatives from various community groups. Participants engaged in collaborative discussions about individual projects and shared their aspirations for the community's future. Following the initial meeting, the Parent Council made an application to the Fund to support school trips, mentioned above. The second meeting in September brought together members from the local decision-making Panel, a representative from the village hall, SSE and Foundation Scotland to discuss what had emerged from the first session and explore project ideas in more detail.

The group took a more focused approach, examining specific project opportunities, including the upgrade of the village playpark, and exploring the potential for developing a Community Action Plan to help identify the wider community's priorities. Some attendees from this session are now actively working to explore potential plans for improving the playpark within the Heriot community. It is anticipated that 2026 will see further community development projects being explored following these sessions. In the meantime, Foundation Scotland and SSE will continue to support the Panel to develop awareness of other methods of fund distribution and adopt a strategic approach for identifying projects and ideas for the Panel.

Year awarded	Grant Application Name	Project Description – Summary	Amount
2025	Heriot Country Kids	To contribute towards the salary costs of a Lead Practitioner at Heriot Country Kids, enabling the provision of essential after-school and holiday childcare services for the families in the Heriot area.	£27,628.16
2025	Heriot Primary School Parent Council	To fund two school trips in 2025-26, ensuring rural pupils access similar experiences to urban peers, supporting school sustainability and community vibrancy.	£1,250.00
2025	Heriot Country Kids	To provide funding for staff costs within the group's core operating budget, enabling the organisation to develop and implement a sustainable financial reserve policy.	£2,500.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£31,378.16</b>

## Spotlight: Heriot Country Kids Club

Heriot Country Kids Club has been awarded a five-year grant in 2025 to support core running costs to help sustain this vital community service.



Heriot Country Kids (HCK) operates in a rural community with no alternative wraparound childcare options. As a small after-school and holiday club serving families with pupils at Heriot Primary School, the organisation cannot cover all running costs through fees alone, with staff salaries representing the largest expense.

Without secure funding to underpin its operations, the club would close, leaving working families without childcare provision and the school at risk of losing pupils as parents identify other childcare provisions or even feel compelled to move out of the village.

### Previous Support

HCK previously received a three-year grant from the Carcant Fund in 2022, which enabled the club to maintain its services and continue operating. Following the successful delivery of the club during this funding period, the organisation returned to the Fund to apply for continued support for a further five years.

## The Solution

In May 2025, HCK applied for a five-year grant of £10,000 per year (increasing by 5% annually) to fund a Lead Practitioner position. The funding is supporting:

- Daily oversight of after-school care (Monday-Thursday 15:15-18:00, Friday 12:15-15:00).
- Holiday club provision during Easter, summer, and October breaks.
- Inclusive care for all children, including those with disabilities and neurodivergent needs.

## The Impact

The club directly benefits approximately 100 people annually — around 25 young people attending after-school sessions and 55 using holiday clubs, along with 40-50 parents who can remain in employment and resident in the area. One parent stated: *"We rely heavily on the Heriot Country Kids Afterschool Club and Holiday Clubs, as it offers top quality, affordable childcare with a helpful number of hours provision, in a rural area."*

Staff have accommodated children with additional needs, with one parent describing the club as *"the highlight of my son's week."*

The project also supports the viability of Heriot Primary School and helps retain young families in the village, contributing to the sustainability of this rural community. This funding came at an important time for both the Club and the Primary School, as class sizes have been in decline. The childcare provision has helped to encourage families with children to stay in the area, in turn helping to ensure the survival of the primary school, in turn maintaining the village's appeal to young families.

Without wraparound care, parents would face difficult choices between employment and relocation, potentially accelerating rural population decline and threatening the school's future enrolment numbers. By contrast, the Fund's support to underpin the after-school club costs appears to have contributed to a virtuous circle of retaining young families and the school in the area, and hence the potential for that to continue longer-term.

## Final Thoughts

With 18 families using the club each month and regularly booked sessions averaging 28 per week, HCK provides consistent, affordable childcare that enables parents to work and remain resident in Heriot whilst ensuring children are cared for in a safe, inclusive environment. The club's continued operation is particularly important during the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, as families increasingly rely on dual incomes and need accessible childcare options in rural areas where alternatives do not exist.

## Spotlight: Heriot Primary School Wild Garden

The Heriot Primary School Community Garden Project showcases the value of the IVAR principles of flexibility and partnership in community funding.



Foundation Scotland's commitment to IVAR (Institute for Voluntary Action Research) Principles guides its approach to fostering meaningful partnerships. In 2021, it adopted IVAR's 'Eight Commitments' to become a more open, trusting, and flexible funder through simpler practices that make life easier for funded organisations.

The Wild Garden project at Heriot Primary School exemplifies these principles in action. This community-led initiative emerged from documented local needs and demonstrates how funders can balance community autonomy with practical oversight. By supporting this multi-generational project benefiting children, toddlers, parents, and volunteers, Foundation Scotland illustrates how IVAR principles can guide funders in creating lasting positive change through genuine partnerships that strengthen communities.

### Project Background

Within this Scottish Borders community, Heriot's primary school is one of three community spaces. The Heriot area lacks green communal spaces, and while the school grounds showed promise with unused raised beds and under-utilised open areas, staff and the Parent Council lacked technical expertise for development. A 2018 resident survey revealed strong environmental interest, with 30% of locals eager to participate in green initiatives. The vision was centred on creating an integrated community garden and wildlife hub within the school grounds for educational and community use. Drawing on expertise from established gardens in Innerleithen and Peebles, the planning process ensured the project would build on proven success while addressing Heriot's unique needs and remaining sustainable.

### **Local Opportunities**

Regular users included diverse groups from Heriot Babies & Toddlers to the after-school club, with over 50 weekly participants spanning pupils, families, and volunteers. The initiative complemented Scottish Borders Council's food production strategy while addressing well-documented national and international environmental priorities at a local level. Beyond physical improvements, the project delivered enhanced environmental education, outdoor engagement, community cohesion, and improved well-being for participants.

### **Fund Support**

In 2019, Heriot Parent Council submitted a funding request to the Carcant (Heriot) Fund for the Wild Garden project. The Heriot Decision Making Panel approved total funding of £9,221.95, split into two tranches. The initial funding phase provided resources for essential site equipment and development materials. As the project evolved, the second phase of funding was designated for a part-time maintenance position.

### **The Challenge**

The first tranche of funding was released in 2019 and the project commenced, however, due to COVID-19 the project progressed slowly and then eventually came to a halt. During this time, the original members of the Parent Council responsible for the delivery of this project moved on as their children left primary school, and so the project initially remained dormant post-pandemic. In 2023, a new Parent Council formed, and part of their duties was to reignite the project and progress it forward.

### **Emerging in 2024 and finishing in 2025**

In 2024, the new Parent Council revitalised the dormant project, completing phase one with the original funding by clearing the space and acquiring maintenance equipment.

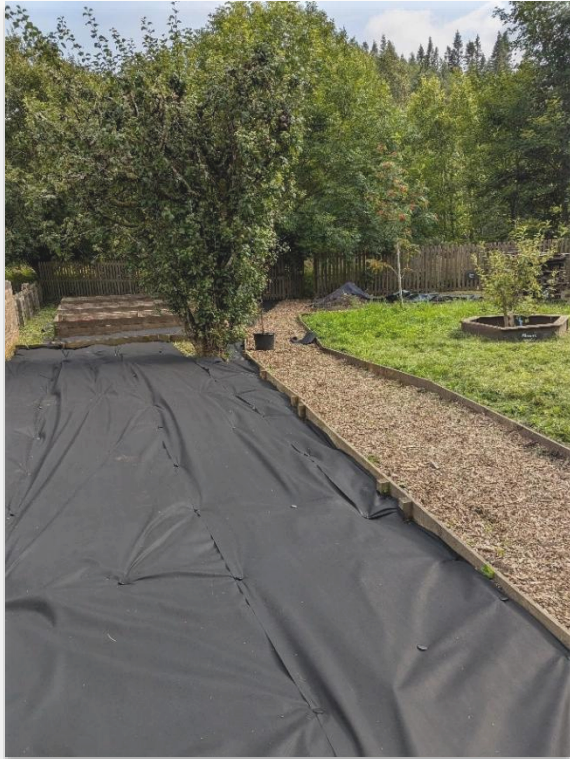
Committed to the project's success, the Parent Council engaged in fresh community consultations, including the primary school, and sought expertise from a local horticultural consultant. This renewed engagement led them to approach the Fund with a variation request to modify the project's scope.

The revised scope focused on enhancing biodiversity through the addition of compost, seeds, and a starter pond, while retaining the provision for part-time garden maintenance from March to September 2025.

The Panel approved the reallocation of £3,740.00 to support this modified vision and the overall project was completed in the summer of 2025.

## Impact & Outcomes

The Wild Garden project at Heriot Primary School has and will continue to deliver substantial benefits to the Heriot community.



With over 50 regular weekly users, including pupils, toddler groups, after-school clubs and community volunteers, the garden has become a vibrant hub for outdoor learning and social connection. Participants have gained environmental knowledge and practical gardening skills, while the shared space has strengthened community bonds and improved well-being.

Despite COVID-19 setbacks, the project's 2024 revival demonstrates community resilience. The addition of biodiversity elements, including a starter pond and enhanced growing spaces, has enriched the educational experience and created a lasting legacy at Heriot Primary School.

The project's success demonstrates how place-based, flexible grant-making can create more meaningful community change than traditional, more restrictive funding models.

## Conclusion

2025 marked a significant year for the Fund as a whole, particularly driven by progress in Heriot both in terms of both grant-making and community development support from Foundation Scotland in partnership with SSE and local stakeholders. The decision to award a five-year grant to support Heriot Country Kids Club underscores the Panel's commitment to sustaining essential services within the rural landscape that make a fundamental impact on the community.

The community project development work hosted by Foundation Scotland and SSE appears to have created momentum within the community to identify potential projects and take the next steps to understand the feasibility of these initiatives, with the hope that they will take shape over 2026/2027.

The Moorfoot Panel's strategic decision in 2024 to award grants towards the three local village halls' core running costs over three years has continued to support rural villages in 2025 and beyond.

This is helping to ensure the long-term sustainability of these important facilities and reducing the financial pressures associated with fundraising, enabling local community hubs to maintain their vital services to small communities.

The 'Spotlights' above demonstrate the Fund's growing influence and positive outcomes, while the continued success of Moorfoot's microgrants scheme also highlights the value of accessible funding for smaller community initiatives. Looking ahead, the Carcant (Moorfoot) Fund will reopen to rolling applications in spring 2026, with a reserve balance enabling transformative projects that can make a significant impact.

Looking ahead to 2026, priorities in both areas will include promoting the Funds and continuing grant-making activities, whilst also in Heriot encouraging the development of a Community Action Plan to generate new ideas and fundable future projects.

## Contact and information

For further information about the Fund you can visit the [Carcant Wind Farm funding page here](#)

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