



Review of the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund

Rural Policy Centre Research Report
Final Report

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Contents

Executive Summary	3
1 Review of the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund.....	8
1.1 Introduction	8
1.2 Review aim and objectives	9
2 The Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund	10
2.1 Distribution of the funding	10
2.2 Governance arrangements	11
2.3 Funding priorities and evolution.....	12
2.4 Coverage of the review	12
2.5 Structure of the report	13
3 Regional Context	13
4 Method.....	15
4.1 Introduction	15
4.2 Stage 1: online survey.....	15
4.3 Stage 2: follow-up interviews	17
5 Results	17
5.1 Respondent characteristics and awareness of the Fund	17
5.1.1 Community Action Plans.....	19
5.1.2 Importance of the Community Fund's priorities	21
5.1.3 Ways people find out about the Fund.....	25
5.2 Applying to the Fund	26
5.2.1 Reasons for applying.....	27
5.2.2 Experiences of the application process and reporting.....	29
5.3 Impacts of the Fund	31
5.3.1 Positive impacts for communities	32
5.3.2 Sustaining projects beyond their funded period	35
5.4 Future of the Fund	36
5.4.1 Geographic area of the Fund.....	37
5.4.2 Supporting Covid-19 recovery	40
5.4.3 Enhancing the impact of the Fund in the future	41
6 Key findings and recommendations	45
6.1 Awareness and understanding of the Fund.....	45

6.2	Engagement with communities	47
6.3	Flexibility of the Fund	49
6.4	A lasting legacy	51
Annex 1:	Copy of the survey	55
Annex 2:	Interview questions.....	59

Executive Summary

Background

- In late 2020, Kilgallioch Community Benefit Company (KCBC) commissioned the Rural Policy Centre at SRUC to conduct an impartial and objective review of the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund in keeping with the Scottish Government's 2019 Good Practice Principles (GPPs) for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments.
- The aim of the review was *"To assess and learn about what the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund is achieving in the communities it serves and how it can become even more effective over the next three to five years."*
- Approximately £1.2 million per annum is available through the Fund for voluntary groups and charities in Wigtownshire (Dumfries and Galloway) and Girvan and South Carrick (South Ayrshire). 60% of the total funding is provided to four 'primary communities' (15% each) and is managed by four Primary Community Organisations (PCOs), each with its own arrangements for spending in the local area: the Old Luce Community Fund; New Luce Community Trust; Kirkcowan Community Development Trust and Barrhill Community Interest Company.
- The remaining 40% – known as the Community Fund – is made available each year across the whole area of benefit (covering 28 community council areas, and including the four primary communities) and is managed by KCBC. There is a grant application process for Standard Grants (£500–£10,000 for up to one year) and for Large Grants (projects over £10,000 for up to three years) and a set of seven priorities for applications to address.
- KCBC is a not for private profit Company Limited by Guarantee, run by a Board of (voluntary) Directors. Administration of applications and grants is provided by Foundation Scotland.
- This review explored the characteristics of all of the arrangements provided by the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund monies i.e. the Community Fund (the £400,000 across the area of benefit by KCBC) and the PCO arrangements (with their 15% allocations). The report specifies where the analysis only relates to the Community Fund and otherwise it should be assumed that the analysis relates to the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund as a whole (i.e. the Community Fund and the four primary community funds), referred to as 'the Fund'.

Methodological Approach

- A two-stage methodological approach was designed for the review: (1) an online survey across the area of benefit which included five sections: background information; awareness of the Fund; experience of the Fund; impacts of the Fund; and future of the Fund; and (2) follow-up interviews with a sample of respondents. This review therefore focused on gathering the views of individuals and community groups both within and outside the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund area of benefit. Based on this evidence, and shaped by

the GPPs, recommendations are suggested to improve the effectiveness and lasting legacy of the Fund in future.

- The survey was distributed as widely as possible by the research team and a range of relevant organisations across the area of benefit. Interviewees were selected to ensure: an even spread in terms of their experience of the Fund (successful, unsuccessful and non-applicants); a range of types of respondent (individual, household and on behalf of a community group); varied geographical locations across the area of benefit; and thematic spread across topics that emerged in the survey as requiring further investigation.

Results

- In total, 255 survey responses were analysed, with most respondents aged 55–74, from across the whole area of benefit of the Fund and beyond.
- The GPPs encourage communities to develop a Community Action Plan (CAP) or equivalent to support discussions about community benefits and needs. 53% of survey respondents didn't know if their community had a CAP, with 35% answering 'yes'. 35% of those respondents who stated that their community had a CAP felt that the Fund priorities were either 'strongly linked' or 'very strongly linked' to their community's CAP, with 17% saying the Fund was 'not at all linked' with their community's CAP.
- Overall, survey respondents and interviewees were very positive about the importance of the seven priorities of the Community Fund to their communities, with priorities 1, 2, 4 and 5 (on young people, reducing poverty and disadvantage, improving quality of life, health and wellbeing, and building local capacity, respectively) regarded as particularly important.
- Priorities 6 and 7 (on building sustainable community assets and promoting natural and cultural heritage) were viewed as less important by survey respondents but results also suggested a lack of understanding of the terminology used in the priorities amongst some respondents.
- The majority (90%) of survey respondents had heard about the Fund before completing the survey and mostly this was through involvement in their local community and/or word of mouth. Some respondents and interviewees felt that awareness of the Fund could be improved, for example, through involvement at local events and information placed on community noticeboards and sent directly to local clubs and organisations.
- It is worth bearing in mind when interpreting the results of the survey in particular that the funding distribution arrangements for the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund are relatively complex. 56% of survey respondents reported that they had not applied to the Fund, and of those who had applied (40%), 79% had been successful. Those who had applied provided a range of reasons for doing so, including complementarity between their project(s) and the fund priorities and the importance of the Fund being local with those making funding decisions familiar with the local area.
- Those who had applied were generally positive about the application process from pre-application to finding out the outcome. A relatively small proportion of

applicants accessed support at different stages of the application process with feedback on this generally positive. The majority of respondents who said that they had experienced challenges in applying or felt changes should be made were from non-primary communities and they referred to changes such as providing more clarity in the guidance and more comprehensive feedback. For most respondents, the interview part of the application process was a positive opportunity to provide more information about the proposal. 96% of respondents felt that the reporting requirements were appropriate.

- 54% of respondents from the primary communities felt that the Fund has had positive impacts on their community, although 29% said 'I don't know', suggesting some lack of awareness of the impacts of the Fund. In non-primary communities, 39% of respondents noted positive impacts in their community, with a similar proportion again saying 'I don't know'. A higher proportion of respondents in primary communities (43% compared to 36% in non-primary communities) reported that there had been positive impacts from the Fund on other communities outwith their own. Respondents mentioned a wide range of positive impacts from the Fund, including purchasing new equipment, increasing tourism potential, supporting community clubs, improving mental health and reducing isolation, and increasing digital connectivity. Less 'tangible' impacts included an increase in community spirit and bringing the community together, and improvements to quality of life. 81% of respondents said that their project has been/would be sustained beyond the funding period.
- In the final part of the survey, respondents were asked what difference they thought the Fund will have made in 20 years' time to where they live. 'Legacy', 'community-led projects' and 'improved local facilities' were prominent themes in the responses, and respondents also made reference to economic and social regeneration, increasing skills in the local community and reducing unemployment and poverty.
- Some negative comments were also received relating to three key themes:
 - *The geographic area of the Fund:* 33% of respondents in the non-primary communities stated the geographic area covered by the Fund was no longer appropriate. While some respondents felt that the focus of funding on smaller communities closer to the wind farm was positive, others felt the distribution (with 60% going to the four primary communities) was unfair. 43% of respondents who commented in this question referred to one particular community, Cree Valley, not being designated as a primary community.
 - *Supporting Covid-19 recovery:* 28% of respondents to this question felt that nothing should be changed or were unsure, while other respondents provided specific suggestions for changes that could be made, including increasing the flexibility of the funding, increasing support for elderly people, setting up a community network to combat isolation, and providing day-to-day running costs for existing organisations and projects that have faced difficulties specifically relating to the pandemic.

- *Enhancing the impact of the Fund in future*: this is a key theme of the GPPs, and four key aspects were noted by respondents:
 - *Allocation and governance of the Fund* – this theme focused on the perception of some respondents/interviewees of the unfairness in the distribution of funding between primary and non-primary communities, particularly if this is a long-term arrangement.
 - *Strategic connections to increase impact* – Respondents/interviewees called for more inter-community collaboration, which might be made easier by the recent increased use of online technology to connect people.
 - *Raising awareness* – While the review revealed a good level of awareness of the Fund, respondents/interviewees still referred to the lack of awareness amongst some groups and a lack of understanding about the Fund and how it operates, and a need to increase local engagement with the Fund.
 - *Increased focus on the needs of individuals and small businesses* – In particular there was a recognition amongst respondents/interviewees that poverty still persists in the area of benefit and that perhaps more could be done by the Fund to directly address this challenge.

Recommendations

- Based on the results, the Review makes 14 recommendations for changes to the Fund to increase its effectiveness in meeting the current and future needs and aspirations of the communities it serves.

Awareness and understanding of the Fund

1. KCBC should check the wording of the Community Fund's priorities to ensure that they accurately, clearly and fully reflect the range of projects that will be considered for funding and that the language used is accessible and easily understood.
2. KCBC should continue to work with communities and community organisations across the area of benefit to improve understanding of the Fund, with a particular focus on young people and ensuring that individuals, households and community groups know which funding they can apply for and how, and which other projects have received funding.

Engagement with communities

3. Where possible, KCBC should engage with communities that are developing/updating CAPs to ensure alignment of the Community Fund with the priorities of CAPs across the area of benefit. At the same time, any changes made to the Community Fund priorities should continue to consider all communities within the area of benefit, whether or not they have a CAP.
4. KCBC should continue to signpost communities to additional financial and other support at local, regional and national levels, including the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES).

5. KCBC and the PCOs, alongside Foundation Scotland and SPR, should consider re-engaging with all local communities to understand any concerns about the administration and distribution of the Fund in more detail. Following guidance on consultation in the Good Practice Principles may be appropriate.
6. There is an opportunity for KCBC and PCOs to revisit their approaches to ensure that decision-making related to the Fund is clear and accessible to communities across the area of benefit.

Flexibility of the Fund

7. KCBC and the PCOs should consider whether they can increase the flexibility of funding to support projects that help individuals/households most in need.
8. Where possible, KCBC and the PCOs should encourage collaboration and joint funding proposals from across communities that will increase the impact and legacy of the Fund for more residents. In these instances, additional support may be required (e.g. from Foundation Scotland, community development workers, etc.) to facilitate joint working particularly amongst communities that have not collaborated previously.
9. KCBC and the PCOs should consider increasing the number of funding application windows and whether a 'rapid response fund' would complement the current funding structures in place.
10. KCBC should consider the possibility to engage with other community benefit funds in the area to develop a strategic action plan that will help identify gaps in funding for communities that may require more support than is currently provided, or to discuss ways in which funding opportunities may be delivered jointly, or 'best practice' learning shared.

A lasting legacy

11. Where possible, KCBC and the PCOs should continue to support funding applications that clearly demonstrate outcomes that have long-lasting positive impacts for communities. Applications that clearly demonstrate a pathway to ensuring the sustainability of a project beyond the funded period should be particularly supported.
12. KCBC and the PCOs (and other stakeholders, including Foundation Scotland and SPR) should particularly consider ways in which information about the long-term benefits of projects and how they can be achieved can be shared across the area of benefit; this might encourage those communities/individuals/households that have not yet engaged to do so, thereby enhancing the lasting legacy of the Fund across a wider area.
13. If a point is reached when PCOs have addressed the priorities set out in their CAP through funded projects, this may be a good time for them, KCBC and SPR to consider altering the distribution of funding between primary and non-primary communities in order to enhance the legacy of the funding across the wider area of benefit.
14. It may be appropriate for KCBC and the PCOs, in consultation with local communities across the area of benefit, to consider designing a more ambitious and creative funding strategy which might move beyond grant-funding to consider other mechanisms for supporting the rural regeneration and sustainability of communities in Wigtownshire and Girvan and South Carrick.

1 Review of the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund

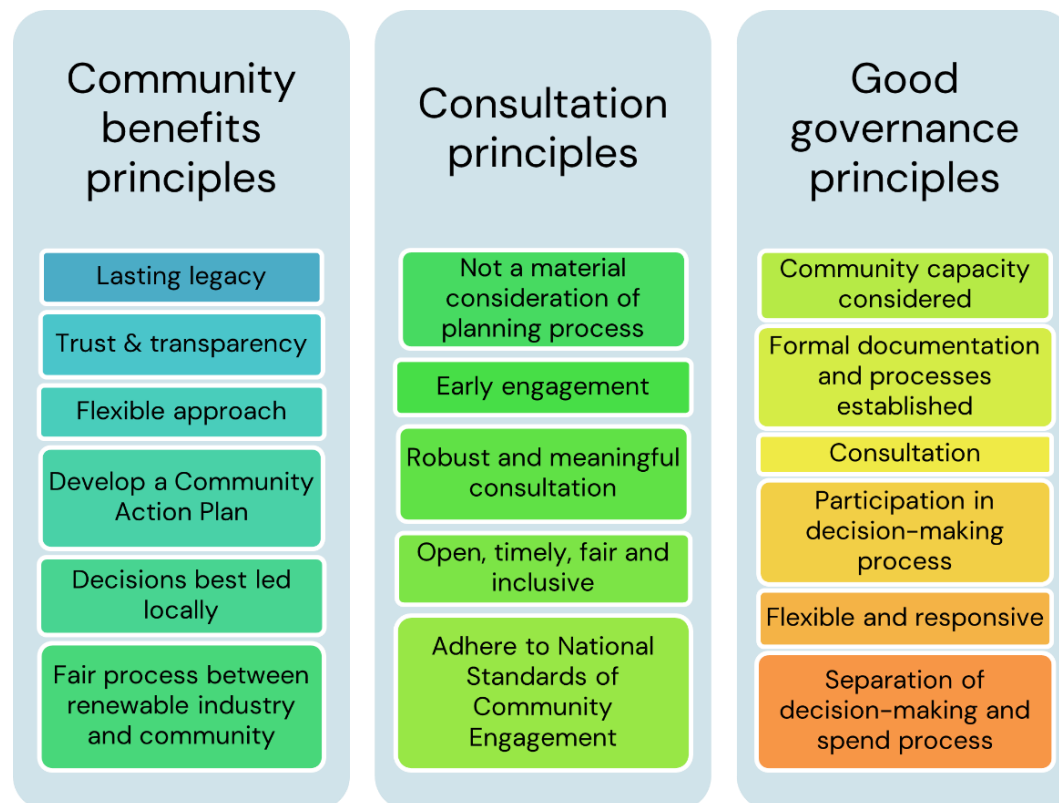
1.1 Introduction

ScottishPower Renewables (SPR) generates community benefit funds from its windfarms across the UK. To date, these funds have enabled communities to spend more than £43 million on local initiatives¹.

SPR's Kilgallioch Windfarm, which gained Scottish Government consent in early 2013, is located in south west Scotland, 5km south of Barrhill in South Ayrshire and 5km north east of New Luce in Dumfries and Galloway². Kilgallioch Community Benefit Company (KCBC) was incorporated in August 2017 by a steering group of community representatives to distribute the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund.

Since 2018, the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund has provided financial support to voluntary groups and charities in Wigtownshire (Dumfries and Galloway) and Girvan and South Carrick (South Ayrshire) to undertake community-led charitable activities that support the rural regeneration and sustainability of communities.

Figure 1: Summary of the Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments (adapted from Scottish Government 2019)



¹ See: https://www.scottishpowerrenewables.com/pages/powering_communities.aspx

² More information about Kilgallioch Windfarm is available [here](#) (Kilgallioch Windfarm – ScottishPower Renewables).

1.2 Review aim and objectives

In late 2020, KCBC commissioned the Rural Policy Centre at SRUC³ to conduct an impartial and objective review of the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund⁴, in keeping with guidance set out in the 2019 Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments (see Figure 1)⁵. The review focuses on the good practice principles related to community benefits and good governance, although the principles of consultation are also considered in relation to recommendations made about the future of the Community Benefit Fund.

The review provides an opportunity for KCBC to assess the overall functioning and effectiveness of arrangements for distribution of the fund in its first three years, including the distribution of the Community Fund (funding across the whole area of benefit) by KCBC and of the funding to the four designated primary communities by the Primary Community Organisations (see Section 2.1 for more information on these arrangements). It is also an opportunity to build interest in and engagement with the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund, and to ensure that it is meeting the current needs and future aspirations of the communities it serves.

An Impact Report was published in November 2020 which showcases many of the locally funded activities and outlines the overall impact of the fund on the local community during its first two years of operation⁶.

The overall **aim** of the review was:

To assess and learn about what the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund is achieving in the communities it serves and how it can become even more effective over the next three to five years.

The specific **objectives** of the review were to:

- Check that the Fund’s priorities are still in line with priorities of the communities in the area of benefit
- Review the current area of benefit, impact and long-term socio-economic benefits to the community
- Assess the effectiveness of the delivery mechanism and if it is still fit for purpose
- Assess the likelihood of the fund achieving a lasting legacy for the community.

³ More information is available about the Rural Policy Centre [here](#) (Rural Policy Centre | SRUC).

⁴ See the full invitation to tender: https://www.kilgallioch.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Kilgallioch-Review_FINAL-TOR-16.09.2020.pdf

⁵ The Scottish Government encourages a review of community benefits packages to be undertaken on a regular basis, to ensure that priorities remain relevant. See: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-good-practice-principles-community-benefits-onshore-renewable-energy-developments/> (p.29)

⁶ For more information, see: [Kilgallioch wind farm community benefit fund impact report | Foundation Scotland](#)

2 The Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund

2.1 Distribution of the funding⁷

Approximately £1.2 million is available through the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund per annum, totalling around £30 million over 25 years going to voluntary groups and charities in Wigtownshire and Girvan and South Carrick.

Of the total funds, 60% is provided directly to each of the four 'primary communities' of Old Luce, New Luce, Kirkcowan and Barrhill for projects which benefit those communities (i.e. 15% each). These primary communities were designated prior to the windfarm becoming operational⁸. This money is managed locally by four 'Primary Community Organisations' (PCOs): the Old Luce Community Fund, New Luce Community Trust, Kirkcowan Community Development Trust and Barrhill Community Interest Company. Each PCO has its own arrangements for making decisions about spending in their local area⁹.

The remaining 40% (around £475,000) is made available each year across the whole area of benefit (including the four primary communities, and a total of 28 community council areas) through the Community Fund (see Figure 2).

KCBC is a private not for private profit Company Limited by Guarantee, run by a Board of (voluntary) Directors drawn from across the area of benefit (i.e. all communities covered by the community benefit arrangements). KCBC is responsible for distributing the Community Fund. There is a grant application process for Standard Grants (projects of £500–£10,000 and lasting up to one year) and for Large Grants (for projects over £10,000, lasting up to three years). There is a two-stage application process for Large Grants. Development grants of up to £5,000 can also be requested as part of Stage 1 of a Large Grant. The purpose of this funding is to support applicants to develop their project and submit a strong application at Stage 2. Administration of applications and grants is provided by Foundation Scotland, a national grant-making charity with local presence in the South of Scotland¹⁰.

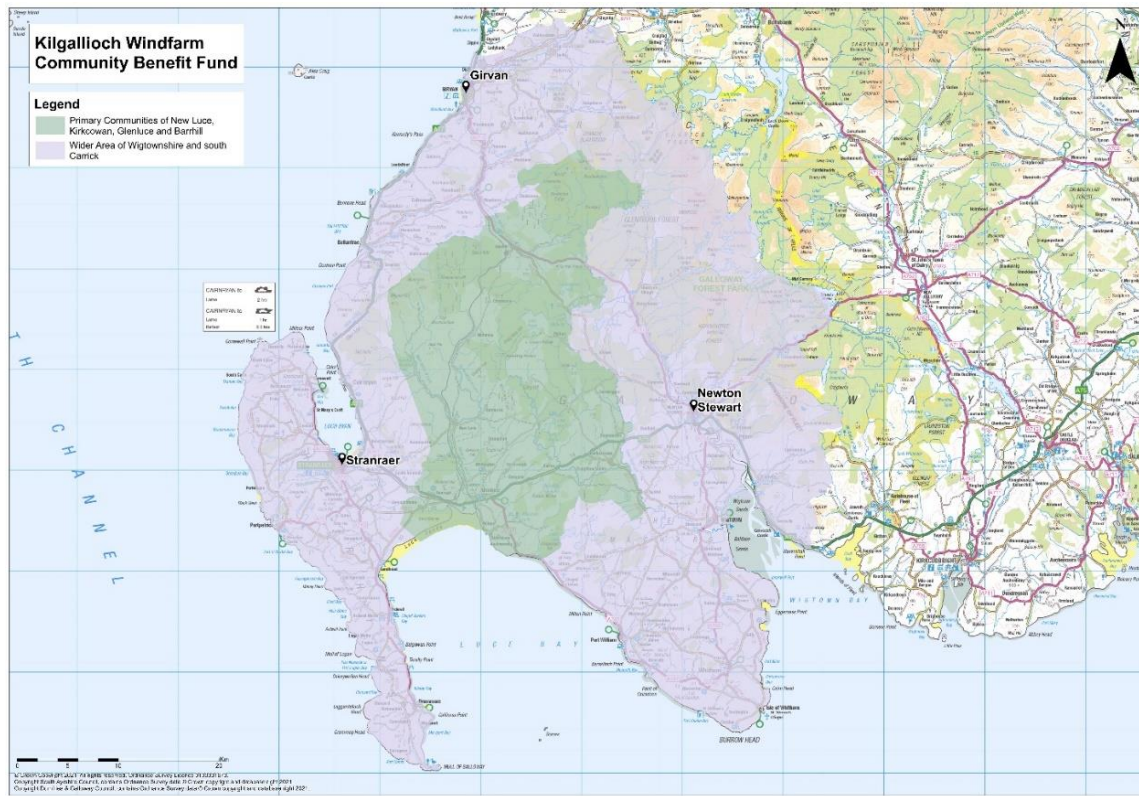
⁷ More information is available [here](#) ([Home | Kilgallioch Community Benefit Company](#)) – see particularly the Frequently Asked Questions.

⁸ More information on the consultation process for the designation of the primary communities is available in KCBC's Impact Report, online [here](#).

⁹ More information on these arrangements can be found via each PCO website: [Community Fund – Old Luce](#); [Welcome – New Luce Community Trust \(newlucect.org\)](#); [Kirkcowan Community Development Trust – Home \(chessck.co.uk\)](#); and [BCIC – Barrhill Community Interest Company](#).

¹⁰ See: <https://www.foundationScotland.org.uk/>

Figure 2: Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund area of benefit (Source: SPR)



2.2 Governance arrangements¹¹

KCBC has a Board of up to 12 local volunteer (unpaid) Directors who make decisions about spending from the fund. All of the Directors must be a Member of the Company. Eight of the Directors are drawn from the four primary communities (i.e. two each, one of whom must be a serving community councillor, while the other must be resident in the community council area and is elected at the KCBC AGM). Four of the Directors come from the wider area of benefit. The latter four individuals must stand for election at the KCBC AGM.

Each primary community council (i.e. Kirkcowan, New Luce, Old Luce and Barrhill) can nominate up to 10 people to become members of KCBC. The governing document encourages that as far as possible there is an equal number of members across the four primary communities. Members are not required to be serving community councillors. Further members are drawn from the wider area, with the maximum number of members being 44. Members have voting rights at general meetings, and receive a biannual update on the activities of the Company. Each year the membership list is updated ahead of the AGM¹².

¹¹ More information is available [here](#) (Home | Kilgallioch Community Benefit Company) – see particularly the Frequently Asked Questions.

¹² The Memorandum and Articles of Association of KCBC are available online [here](#).

2.3 Funding priorities and evolution

In terms of the Community Fund spending (i.e. the 40% of the total fund which is available across the area of benefit), the KCBC Board prioritises support for one-off or new projects¹³, with ongoing running costs (although eligible) less likely to be supported. Priority is given to applications that address one or more of the fund's seven aims¹⁴:

1. Engage and empower young people, increase employment opportunities for young people and/or attract young families to the area.
2. Reduce poverty and disadvantage.
3. Improve connectivity, including transport, access to services and opportunities.
4. Improve quality of life, health and well-being.
5. Build capacity for local groups and promote community spirit.
6. Build sustainable community assets, including capital assets.
7. Promote, protect and celebrate natural and cultural heritage.

Projects are also encouraged to consider: community engagement; leverage or match funding; local procurement; sustainability; building community capacity; and partnership working¹⁵.

It is worth noting here that, although the Fund has only been running for three years, some modifications have been made by the KCBC Board in response to feedback already received. For example, the number of funding rounds has been increased in the Community Fund each year to avoid a repeat of the situation in year one when all the funding was spent in a single round due to demand from local groups; in 2020–2021, for example, there are three standard grant rounds and two large grant rounds. The possibility of multi-year funding has also been introduced.

A range of work has been undertaken to promote the Community Fund and the PCO activities, including: promotion online and using social media, and through others' newsletters (e.g. Third Sector Interface); press releases in local newspapers advertising upcoming rounds of funding and awards made; posters for community noticeboards, 1 to 1 information sessions of potential applicants; and (pre-Covid-19) attendance at funding roadshows and other community events.

2.4 Coverage of the review

It is important to be clear at the outset that the review explored the characteristics of all the arrangements provided by the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund monies, i.e. both the Community Fund (the £400,000 distributed across the area of

¹³ See: <https://www.kilgallioch.co.uk/what-we-fund/>

¹⁴ These priorities were developed through a multi-stage process, including: desk-based research to review existing community plans and their priorities; mapping existing funding opportunities and identifying gaps (including through liaison with existing funders); incorporating the requirements of SPR around the use of its funds; a review of recommendations on key themes by KCBC Board; and a community consultation event on fund priorities in early 2018.

¹⁵ See: <https://www.kilgallioch.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Kilgallioch-Fund-Factsheet-2021.pdf>

benefit by KCBC) and the arrangements with the PCOs to spend their 15% allocations. Where the report presents results relating only to the Community Fund (e.g. in relation to its seven priority aims) this is specified, otherwise it should be assumed that the results relate to the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund as a whole (i.e. five funds in total, the Community Fund and the four primary community funds), hereafter referred to as 'the Fund'.

2.5 Structure of the report

The remainder of this report presents the results of the review. Section 3 provides some brief contextual information about the Dumfries and Galloway and South Ayrshire Council areas in which the Kilgallioch Windfarm is located, while Section 4 explains the methodological approach. Section 5 presents the results from the online survey undertaken across the Fund area of benefit, and the follow-up interviews. Based on the evidence collected, Section 6 provides recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the Fund over the next three to five years.

3 Regional Context

The area of benefit of the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund includes community council areas in both Dumfries and Galloway Council and South Ayrshire Council areas (see Figure 2). It is worth noting that both local authority areas have a number of windfarms within their boundaries. Both local authority areas have identified regional priorities, plans and strategies, which provide an important contextual framework for the Fund. These are briefly reviewed in this section to provide some regional contextual information for the review.

Dumfries and Galloway Council (which covers the Wigtownshire area of benefit) has identified a set of five priorities and related commitments that provide a focus for the services they deliver¹⁶. The five priorities are:

1. Build the local economy
2. Provide the best start in life for all of our children
3. Protect our most vulnerable people
4. Be an inclusive council
5. Urgently respond to climate change and transition to a carbon neutral region.

The Council's Plan 2017-22¹⁷ sets out how these priorities will be delivered and highlights some of the particular challenges facing the region, including the region's rurality, relatively low levels of car/van (i.e. private transport) ownership, its ageing population¹⁸,

¹⁶ For more information see: [Council priorities and commitments \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](https://dumgal.gov.uk/council-priorities-and-commitments)

¹⁷ The Plan can be downloaded here: [Council priorities and commitments \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](https://dumgal.gov.uk/council-priorities-and-commitments)

¹⁸ The number of younger people is reducing (including children and those of working age) and the number of people aged 65-84 is increasing.

the need to attract/encourage the return of younger people, a high proportion of carers in the population, and persistent (and often hidden) poverty and deprivation.

The Dumfries and Galloway Regional Economic Strategy 2016–20¹⁹ sets out how the Council and its stakeholders will achieve the core vision:

“By 2020, Dumfries and Galloway will have a more diverse and resilient economy. One which is capable of taking advantage of opportunities by combining an appropriately skilled workforce and connected infrastructure to support more prosperous and inclusive communities where every member of every community has equality of access to that prosperity.” (p.13)

The Strategy identifies a set of core priorities of *“building our economy, supporting children, protecting vulnerable people and being inclusive”*. In terms of the opportunities facing the region, the Strategy emphasises the importance of the region’s natural resources, including renewable energy which can be developed to maximise community benefit (and to deliver to the Scottish Government’s national ambitions around renewable energy generation and storage).

The renewable energy sector is already recognised as important to the region, and the sector also offers the potential for further growth (as noted on p.8 of the Strategy). Importantly, and in the context of this study, the Strategy also sets out a series of Strategic Objectives, one of which is focused on empowering the region’s communities. One of the identified activities for delivering this objective relates to maximising community benefits from investment.

Turning to the regional context in South Ayrshire, South Ayrshire Council’s Plan 2018–2022²⁰ sets out the area’s similar challenges, in particular relating to an ageing population and its significant rural area (with a network of towns), with pockets of poverty and deprivation.

The Plan sets out the Council’s six strategic objectives, including reducing poverty and disadvantage, making the most of the local economy, and enhancing the environment through social, cultural and economic activities. The Plan does not contain any specific activities relating to renewable energy generation in the region. Like Dumfries and Galloway, South Ayrshire has many windfarms operated by different energy companies with associated community benefit funds focused on delivering community impacts.

¹⁹ For more information see: [Regional Economic Strategy 2016 – 2020.pdf \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](#)

²⁰ For more information, see: [SAC0503208 appendix 1 Council Plan Refresh.pdf \(south-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](#)

4 Method

4.1 Introduction

The SRUC research team designed a two-stage methodological approach to the review:

- **Stage 1:** an online survey, the design of which was underpinned by a desk-based review of relevant documents.
- **Stage 2:** follow-up interviews with a sample of survey respondents.

Three meetings were held with the Kilgallioch Review Group, which includes representatives from KCBC, Foundation Scotland and SPR, during the project in order to report on progress. An inception meeting was held when the project commenced; a second meeting was held in early 2021 to gather feedback on a draft online survey prepared by the research team and the strategy for survey dissemination; and a third meeting was held to present preliminary findings (April 2021). A draft of this report was presented to the Kilgallioch Review Group and KCBC Board members in July 2021, after which it was finalised by the SRUC team.

4.2 Stage 1: online survey

The SRUC research team reviewed relevant documents and developed the online survey. This included the 2019 Scottish Government Good Practice Principles and other material relating to:

- the history of the Fund and its purpose;
- governance of the Fund by KCBC and the PCOs;
- other material relevant to the region (e.g. community plans, regional plans and policies).

The survey included five sections as listed in [Figure 1](#). Respondents were able to complete Section C of the survey up to a maximum of four times if they had applied to the Fund more than once. Respondents were automatically routed through the relevant parts of each section, so that they were only asked questions applicable to them (e.g. non-applicants were not asked questions about their experience of the application process).

Most of the questions required respondents to select option(s), although some questions encouraged respondents to enter free text to express their views. Feedback on the draft questions was provided by the Kilgallioch Review Group and this was incorporated by the research team into the final version. All the survey questions are listed in [Annex 1](#).

Figure 1: Sections of the survey

Section A: Background information

Questions about the individual/group responding to the survey.

Section B: Awareness of the Fund

Questions to gauge the respondent's awareness of the Fund and its priorities, as well as the relative importance of each priority in the respondent's community.

Section C: Experience of the Fund

Questions to understand experiences of applying to Fund, project development, award conditions, reporting, and help/support. Respondents were able to answer these questions repeatedly if they had experience of more than one application.

Section D: Impacts of the Fund

Respondents were asked to describe direct and indirect benefits of the Fund for local and wider communities.

Section E: Future of the Fund

Questions to explore general ideas for future changes to the Fund, as well as specific ideas about how the Fund might help local recovery from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns. This section also asked about the appropriateness of the geographic area of benefit and invited other general feedback about the Fund.

The survey was hosted on JISC online surveys²¹, which is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and certified to ISO 27001 standard. The survey was uploaded and tested on different devices for compatibility and ease of use by the SRUC research team, Kilgallioch Review Group and two Directors of KCBC. No changes were made to the survey questions after this testing stage. The survey was publicly available between 11 February and 31 March 2021.

The link to the survey was sent by email from the research team to: all Fund applicants (successful and unsuccessful) since 2018; all community councils within the area of benefit; Development Trusts within the Dumfries & Galloway area (contact details sourced via Development Trusts Association Scotland); Dumfries & Galloway College; and several other individuals and professional networks known to the research team in the area of benefit or the wider Dumfries and Galloway council area. Two reminder emails were also sent to all applicants and relevant community organisations before the survey closed. In the emails, all recipients were also encouraged to share the information about the survey through their own networks.

In addition, the link was shared on the KCBC website, the Foundation Scotland Communities South Facebook page, the Third Sector Dumfries & Galloway Facebook page, and the Rural Policy Centre Twitter feed. We are aware that several community councils and organisations within the area circulated the link via their own Facebook pages, community council meetings and in local newspapers.

²¹ JISC is a membership organisation, providing digital solutions for UK education and research organisations. See: [Online surveys](#)

Raw survey data collected by the research team was treated as confidential and was stored securely. The data has not been shared with Kilgallioch Review Group members or anyone else outside the SRUC research team. Any personal information that could identify individual responses was removed before presentation of preliminary findings to the Review Group in April 2021.

Data gathered from the survey was tested according to standard statistical procedures to look for bias in results from over-representation of particular demographic characteristics. This is explained in more detail in the results where relevant.

4.3 Stage 2: follow-up interviews

At the end of the online survey, 98 respondents left their contact details, indicating their willingness to talk to the research team in more detail about their experiences of the Fund. Purposive sampling techniques were used to select interviewees from this group. This approach ensured an even spread across respondents in terms of both their experience of the Fund (successful applicants, unsuccessful applicants and non-applicants) and the type of respondent (individual, household, on behalf of a community group). The selection process also ensured geographical spread across the area of benefit and thematically across topics that emerged in the survey results as requiring more investigation.

Interviews were completed with 12 individuals in April/ May 2021. The interview questions focussed on the benefits and impacts of the Fund and how to make the Fund more effective in the future (see [Annex 2](#)). A project information sheet was sent in advance to the interviewees, and each completed a participant consent form. The interviews lasted, on average, between 45 and 60 minutes and most were recorded via Microsoft Teams, with the transcripts saved securely. Detailed notes, including direct quotes, from each interview were analysed thematically.

5 Results

This section presents the results of the survey and the interviews. Direct quotes from the free text survey responses and interviews illustrate and expand on key points.

5.1 Respondent characteristics and awareness of the Fund

In total, 241 people submitted responses to the survey. It was possible to submit more than one response if participants had been involved in more than one project or represented different organisations. After checking for duplicate submissions, a total of 255 responses were analysed. Respondents were categorised into three groups:

- 104 responding as individuals (41%);
- 51 responding on behalf of a household (20%); and
- 100 responding on behalf of a community group/organisation (39%).

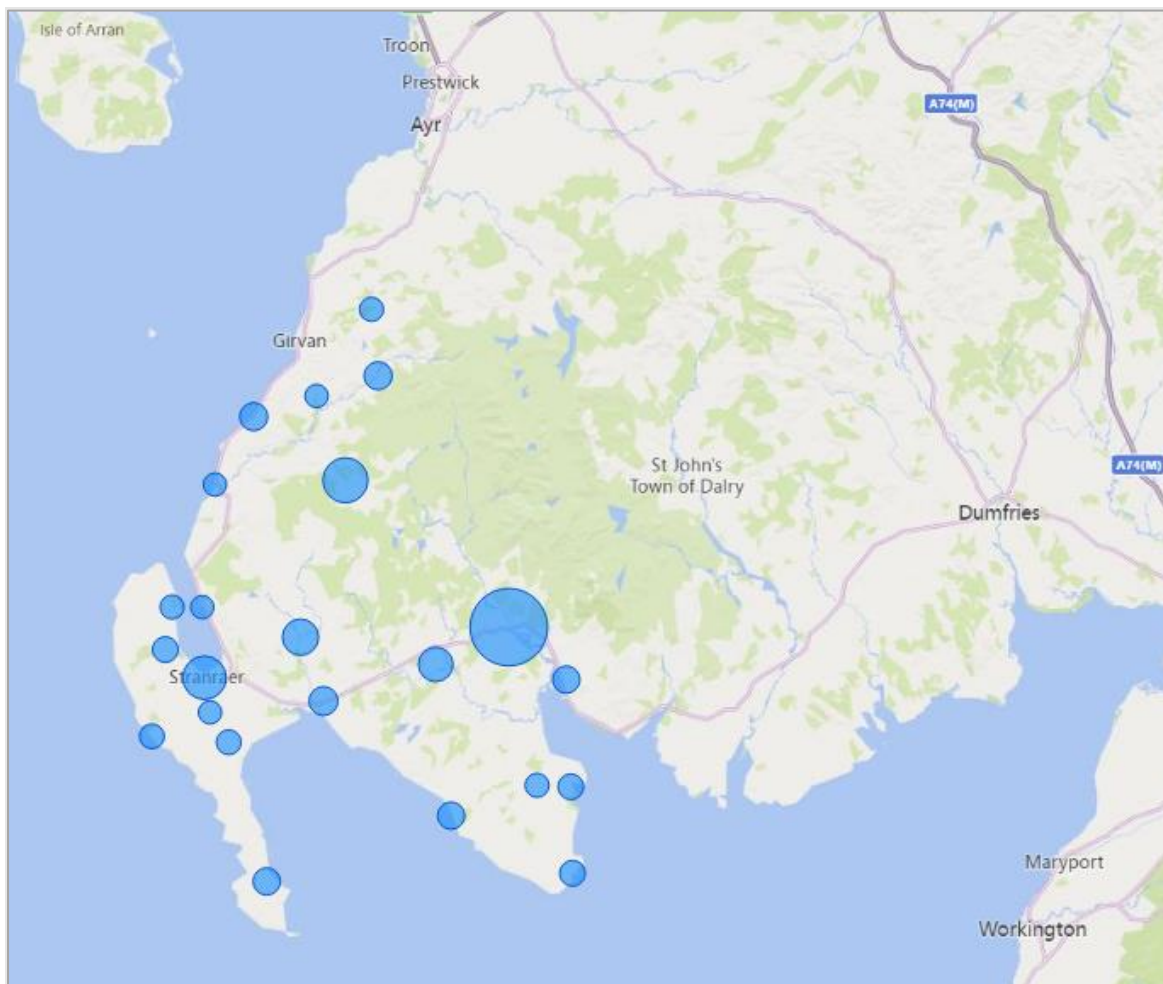
Over half of the responses were from women (56%). Most of the respondents were aged 65–74 (30%) or 55–64 (29%), with 20% aged 45–54, 11% aged 35–44 and 5% under 35.

Respondents were also asked if they were a Member or Director of KCBC: 89% were neither a Member nor a Director, 22 were Members (9%) and six were Directors (2%).

Respondents lived in community council areas inside and outside the Fund area of benefit (see Figure 2). Responses were received from residents of all the primary communities: Barrhill (28), New Luce (17), Kirkcowan (15), Old Luce (8), i.e. a total of 68 responses (27%) came from the primary communities. The total number of responses received from within the wider area of benefit was 160. The highest number of respondents lived in Cree Valley (68 responses – 27%).

No responses were received from just two communities across the area of benefit. Thirteen responses (6%) were received from respondents who stated they were from communities outside the area of benefit: Dumfries (5), Newton Stewart (4), Annan (1), Kirkcinner (1), Polbae (1) and Wigtown (1). However, it should be noted that some of these communities are within the wider area of benefit (though are not primary communities) and thus were treated in our analysis as so.

Figure 2: Density of response by community of residence in area of benefit. – The larger the dot the larger the number of respondents from that area, although locations are only indicative. Map produced using Bing.



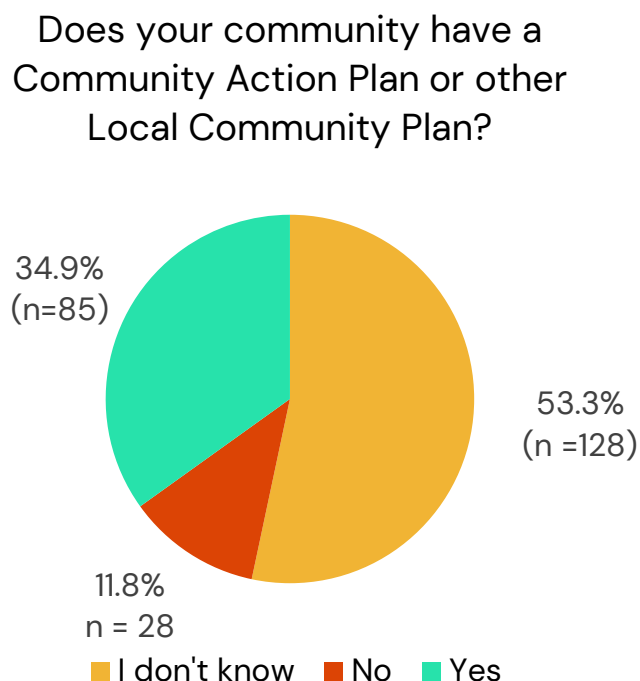
5.1.1 Community Action Plans

The ‘community benefits principles’ of the Scottish Government’s Good Practice Principles encourage communities to develop a Community Action Plan (CAP) to support discussions about community benefits and community needs. Indeed, the revised 2019 Good Practice Principles place a greater emphasis on communities having a CAP to maximise the potential for lasting legacy from community benefit funded projects and activities. A CAP should be:

“strategic, outline a long-term vision, incorporate broad themes or outcomes in order to achieve that vision and, where possible, identify local projects and contribute to those”²².

Survey respondents were asked whether their community has a CAP or other local community plan. The majority of respondents did not know whether their community has a CAP or similar (53%). Of the remainder, 35% answered ‘yes’ and 12% answered ‘no’ (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Proportion of respondents aware of a Community Action Plan or Local Community Plan



In order to understand more fully how respondents’ awareness of CAPs compared to the actual situation on the ground, a desk-based review found that seven communities within the Fund area of benefit had a CAP or local community plan.²³ This includes Cree

²² See the Good Practice Principles (p.19): <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-good-practice-principles-community-benefits-onshore-renewable-energy-developments/>

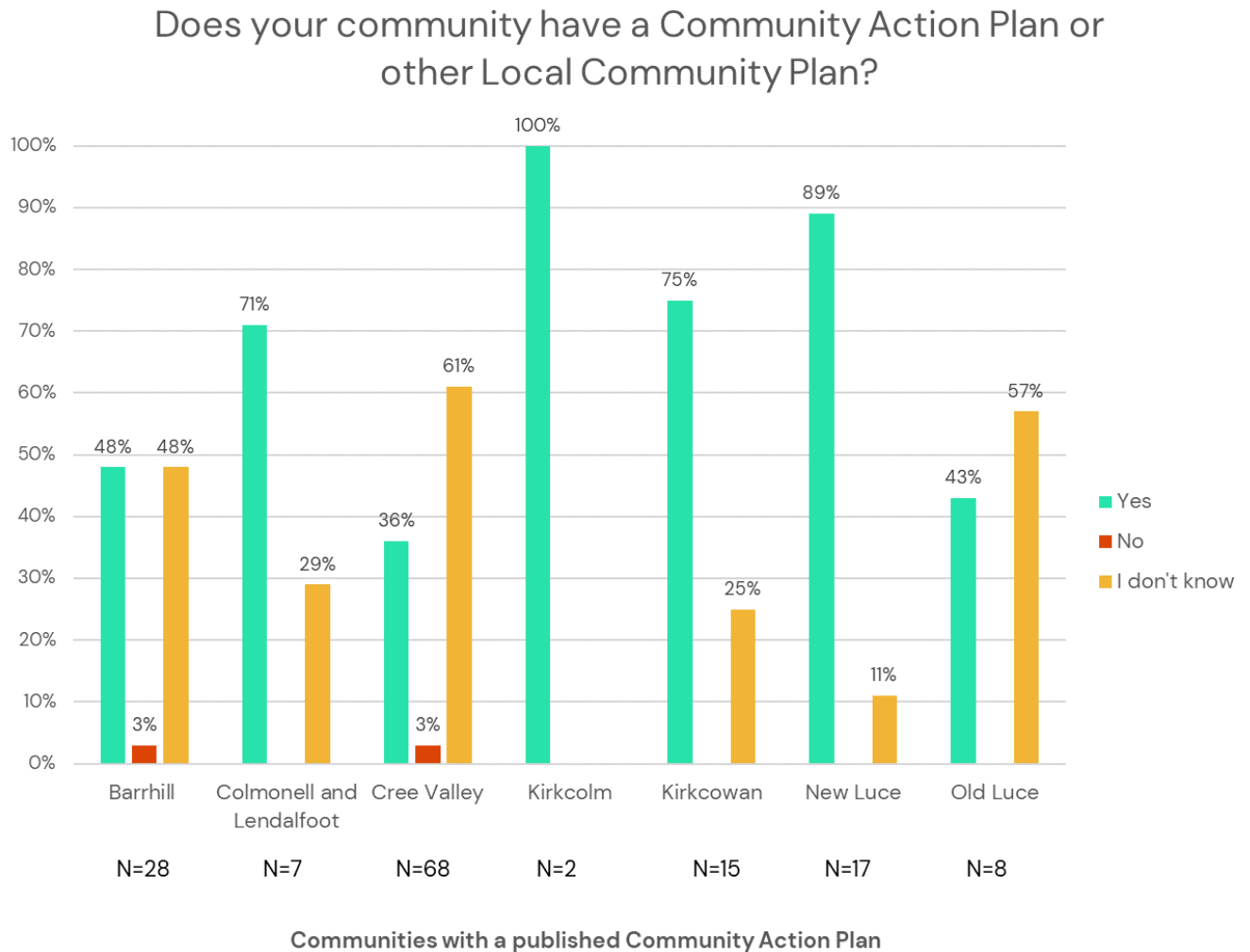
²³ Please note that these findings are based on a desk-based web-search. Some communities within the Fund’s area of benefit may have a Community Action Plan or local community plan that has not been highlighted within this report.

Valley, Barrhill, Colmonell & Lendalfoot, Kirkcowan, Kirkcolm, New Luce and Old Luce. CAPs were also found for Barr and Dailly, although these plans appear to have expired in 2012. Girvan Place Plan was published in May 2021 (after the survey date) and is therefore not included within this analysis. We are also aware that a number of communities are currently in the planning and consultation stages of CAP development. Of those respondents living in the seven communities with a published CAP (based on our desk-based review), 52% were aware that their community had an action plan and 46% did not know if there was a plan. There appears to be some variation between communities in awareness of CAPs (see Figure 6).

Over 70% of respondents from Colmonell & Lendalfoot (5), Kirkcolm (2), Kirkcowan (11) and New Luce (15)²⁴ were aware of their CAP or local community plan. Only 48% of respondents from Barrhill (13) and 43% of respondents from Old Luce (3) were aware of their CAP – both of these are primary communities with funding distributed through PCOs. Only 36% of respondents from Cree Valley (24) reported awareness of their CAP.

²⁴ Please note the low response levels from communities such as Kirkcolm and Colmonell & Lendalfoot may impact these figures.

Figure 6: Proportion of respondents in communities with a Community Action Plan or local community plan who are aware of the existence of the Plan



Respondents were also asked how well they think the Fund links to their community's plan, if it has one. For respondents who stated their community had a CAP, 22% 'do not know' if the Fund links with their community's CAP. However, 35% stated that the Fund was either 'strongly linked' or 'very strongly linked' with their community's CAP. 17% stated that the Fund was 'not at all linked'.

5.1.2 Importance of the Community Fund's priorities²⁵

Respondents were asked how important they think the Community Fund's priorities are in the community where they live (see Section 2.3).²⁶ For the seven priorities,

²⁵ PCO priorities were not within scope of this review, therefore all analysis and recommendations related to priorities in this report refer to the Community Fund.

²⁶ The difference in the responses received from the primary communities and the non-primary communities was tested for statistical significance. No significant relationship was found between the

respondents selected whether they perceived each one as 'not at all important', 'slightly important', 'important', 'fairly important' or 'very important'. They were also able to select 'I don't know' or 'not applicable'.

Figure 7 summarises the respondents' views about the importance of the Community Fund's priorities. All priorities were described as 'very important' by over half of the respondents.

Priorities 1–5 were all regarded particularly positively by respondents, with priorities 4 and 5 being described as 'very important' by the highest proportion of respondents:

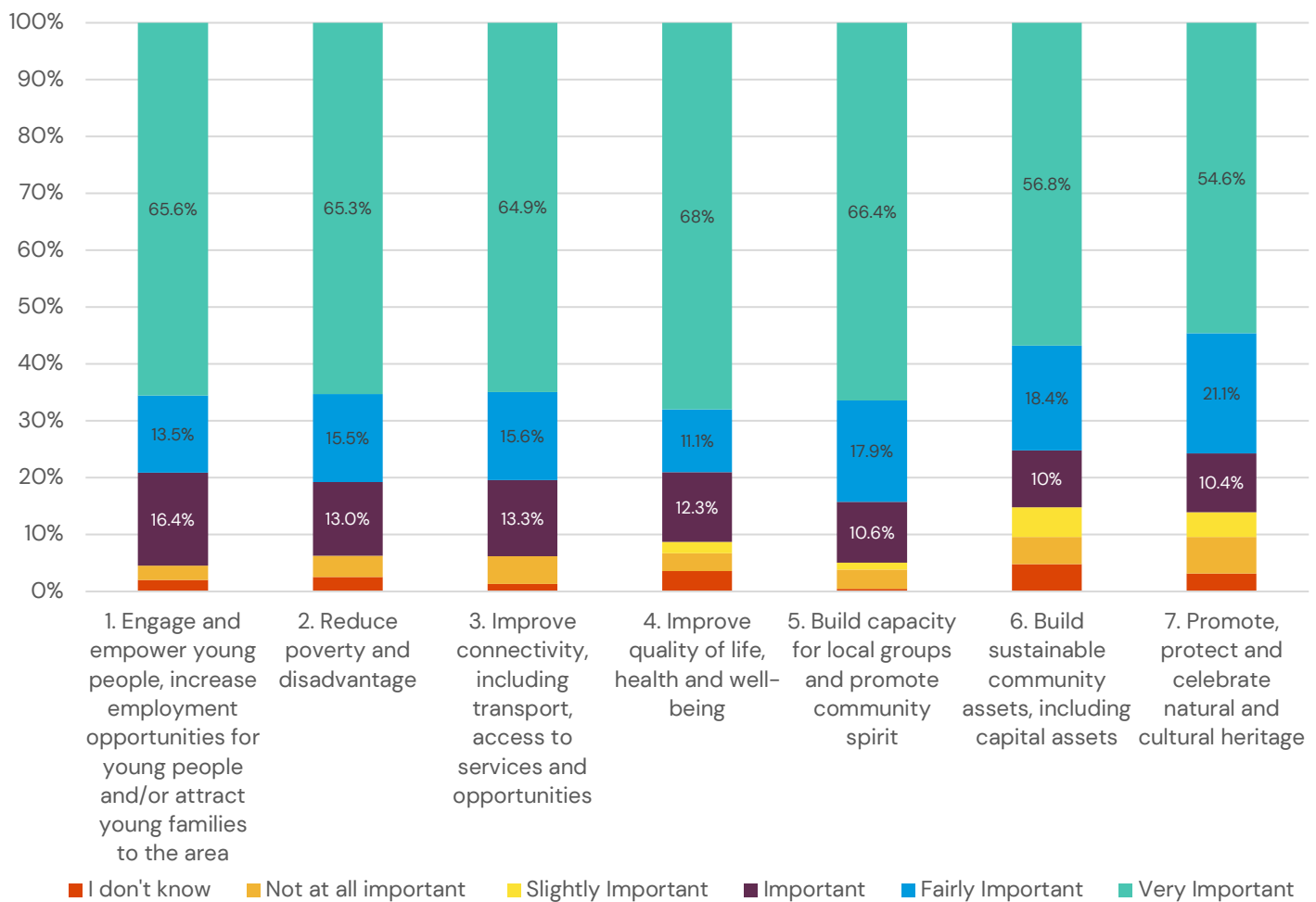
- 1: Engage and empower young people, increase employment opportunities for young people and/or attract young families into the area. (65.6% *very important*)
- 2: Reduce poverty and disadvantage (65.3% *very important*)
- 4: Improve quality of life, health and well-being (68% *very important*)
- 5: Build capacity for local groups and promote community spirit area (66.4% *very important*).

The priorities that appear less important are '6: *Build sustainable community assets, including capital assets*' and '7: *Promote, protect and celebrate natural and cultural heritage*'. However, over half of respondents still described these as 'very important' (57% and 55% respectively). It is worth noting that priorities 4, 6 and 7 also received a higher percentage of 'I don't know' responses than the other priorities. This may suggest that the terminology used in these priorities is not as well understood as in priorities 1, 2, 3 & 5. For example, four respondents suggested the need for additional priorities related to environmental protection, the natural environment and climate change, even though these would arguably be included in priority 7 in relation to natural heritage.

respondents' perceptions of the importance of the Community Fund's priorities and whether they reside in a primary or non-primary community.

Figure 7: Respondents' views on the importance of the Community Fund's priorities (N =241)

Priorities Overview



In the open-ended survey responses, the Community Fund was described as “*well-tailored to local priorities*” and the priorities “*pretty broad*” to allow a wide range of projects to be funded. Nonetheless, some suggestions were made in both the survey and the interviews for additional priorities (see Box 1).

Box 1: Suggestions for additional Community Fund priorities²⁷

Children and young people

- more experiences for young people who are “*generationally poor*” (particularly outdoor education and extra-curricular activities)
- updated facilities for children across the region

Older people

- helping older/*all* members of the community to find work (rather than focusing on young people in priority 1)
- support for the elderly

Health

- grassroots sport and fitness
- mental health improvements

Arts & culture

- religion and religious activities
- access to the arts and education

Community & local economy

- improving the tourism industry
- bringing derelict buildings into use
- community wealth building
- affordable housing
- broadband connectivity

The point in

In the open-ended survey responses, the Community Fund was described as “*well-tailored to local priorities*” and the priorities “*pretty broad*” to allow a wide range of projects to be funded. Nonetheless, some suggestions were made in both the survey and the interviews for additional priorities (see Box 1).

²⁷ These additional priorities refer to the Community Fund, although may also be relevant for PCOs to consider in assessing the relevance of their priorities.

Box 1 about broadband connectivity was made by several survey respondents, suggesting some confusion about whether this is included in priority 3: *'Improve connectivity, including transport, access to services and opportunities'*.

Interviewees noted the importance of transport and considered the role of the Fund in improving local transport options. As one interviewee described, *"A good transport system is essential"*, particularly for young people commuting to college or employment. However, another was *"never very sure how realistic that is given the area, geography, sparse population"*, recognising that *"transport is never going to be a money-making operation in Dumfries and Galloway"*. There was also confusion about whether the Fund can be used to improve transport: *"My understanding is that the windfarm funds cannot give funds that should be run by statutory bodies. So, I'm not sure where transport would fall in that being the case"*. Linked to this, some respondents (particularly when discussing the rationale for reorienting the Fund as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic later in the survey), felt that the Fund should not 'step in' to deliver services such as transport or health where public sector organisations have a statutory obligation.

5.1.3 Ways people find out about the Fund

Most of the respondents (90%) had heard of the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund before completing the survey. The majority noted that they knew about the Fund 'through involvement in my local community' (67%) and/or 'through word of mouth' (37%), while 17% had become aware of the Fund through their job. In relation to media, 23% acknowledged local printed media as a source of their knowledge of the Fund and 21% mentioned social media. Other ways in which respondents had learned about the Fund include *via* the recent KCBC Impact Report²⁸, the KCBC Fund website and local events (respondents could select more than one option in relation to how they had found out about the Fund). Section 2.3 provided information about how the Community Fund and the PCO activities have been promoted.

Twenty-five respondents from the survey (six from primary communities and 19 from non-primary communities) made comments about lack of awareness of the Fund within their communities with many also making suggestions on how awareness could be increased. Specific ideas from survey respondents about raising awareness included: sending letters about the Fund to all clubs, schools and organisations in the area of benefit; more coverage about the Fund on social media; and sending written material to those who do not have access to social media (particularly older residents).

Some examples of comments made by non-primary community respondents on the need to raise awareness of the Community Fund can be seen in Figure 8.

²⁸ See <https://www.kilgallioch.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/KCF-Impact-Report-2020-FINAL.pdf>

Figure 8: Comments and suggestions from interviewees about raising awareness of the Fund



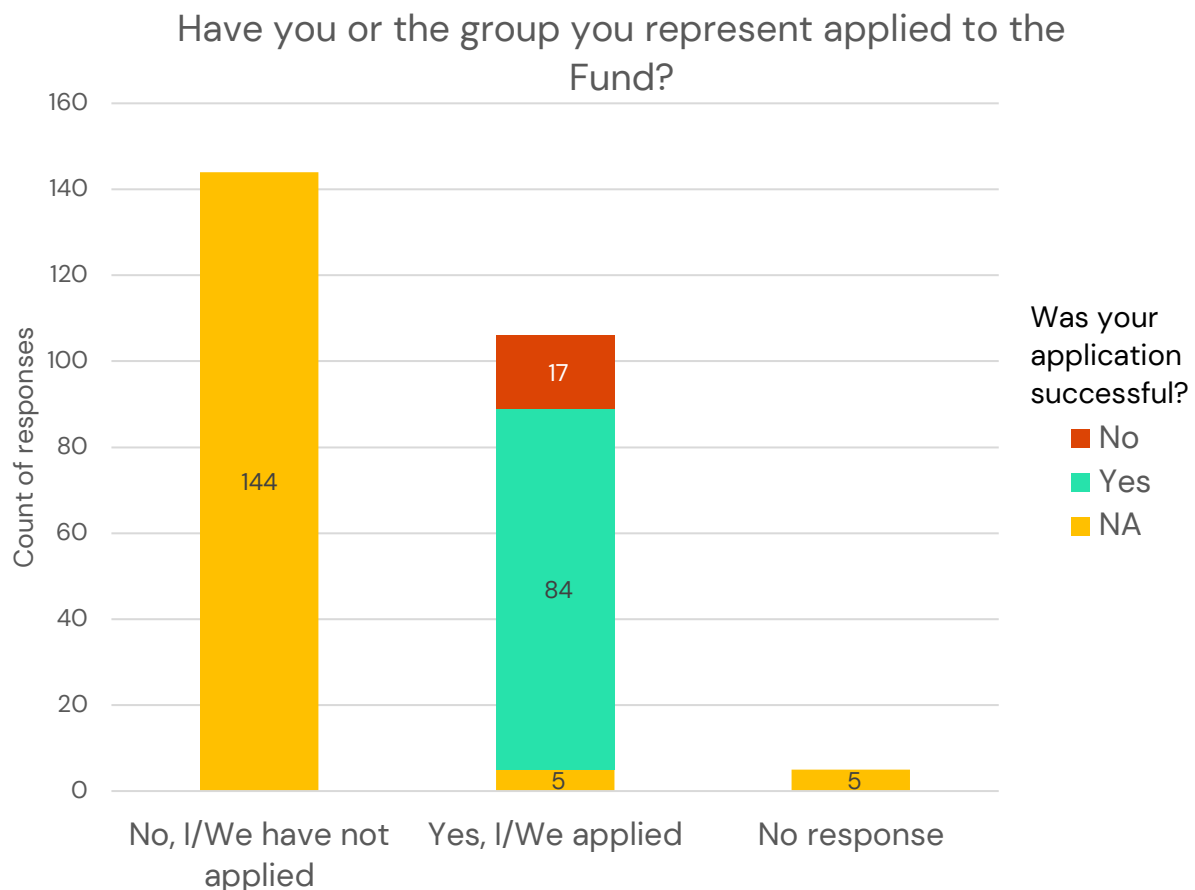
5.2 Applying to the Fund

As set out at the start of this report, the set-up of the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund is relatively complex, with KCBC managing the Community Fund (40% of the total funding) across the area of benefit, and 60% of the funding being managed by PCOs in the four designated primary communities.

Respondents were asked in the survey to indicate whether they had applied to the Fund, with information provided to respondents at the start explaining that the survey questions referred to the whole Fund. However, it must be acknowledged that the arrangements for applying for funding to KCBC and the four PCOs vary, with different types of application process. It is also possible that applicants to the PCOs may not have been aware that they were applying for/in receipt of Kilgallioch Windfarm monies as it is often managed in combination with funding from other sources (including other windfarms). It is therefore possible that different respondents interpreted this question differently when answering and this must be borne in mind when reading these results.

Over half of the respondents (56%) reported that they had not applied to the Fund, while 40% had applied, and 5% did not answer the question. Of those who had applied to the Community Fund and/or via a PCO, 79% had been successful (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Applications to the fund and success of applications (N=255)



The sampling methodology for the survey sought to ensure a good spread of survey respondents who had applied to the Fund – both successfully and unsuccessfully – and survey respondents who had not applied to the Fund. This was to gain an accurate picture of the perceptions of different groups across the local communities about the Fund. There were some variations in the proportions of applicants and non-applicants by community. However, standard statistical tests did not show any statistically significant impact on the results from these variations (including in the case of Cree Valley which made up the largest proportion [27%] of all survey respondents).

5.2.1 Reasons for applying

Respondents provided a range of reasons for why they applied to the Fund, with the majority describing their project(s) and noting how these complemented the Fund's priorities. Several comments were made about the Fund being 'local' and in line with community needs. As one interviewee explained: *"the key thing is that the Fund is local and so those deciding on projects are familiar with the local area"*. These and additional reasons are listed in Box 2.

Box 2: Reasons for applying to the Fund

Alignment with community needs and local in nature

- Alignment of projects with the fund priorities
- Good links between the fund and the needs of the local community
- A sense of the fund being 'local' and 'accessible'

Positive experience with/ reputation of the fund

- Encouragement to apply received from other local organisations
- Attending a local meeting at which fund representatives were present and promoted the opportunity
- Reputation of the fund for supporting local groups involved in community sports
- Involvement in a previous successful bid to the fund

Lack of other suitable funds in the area

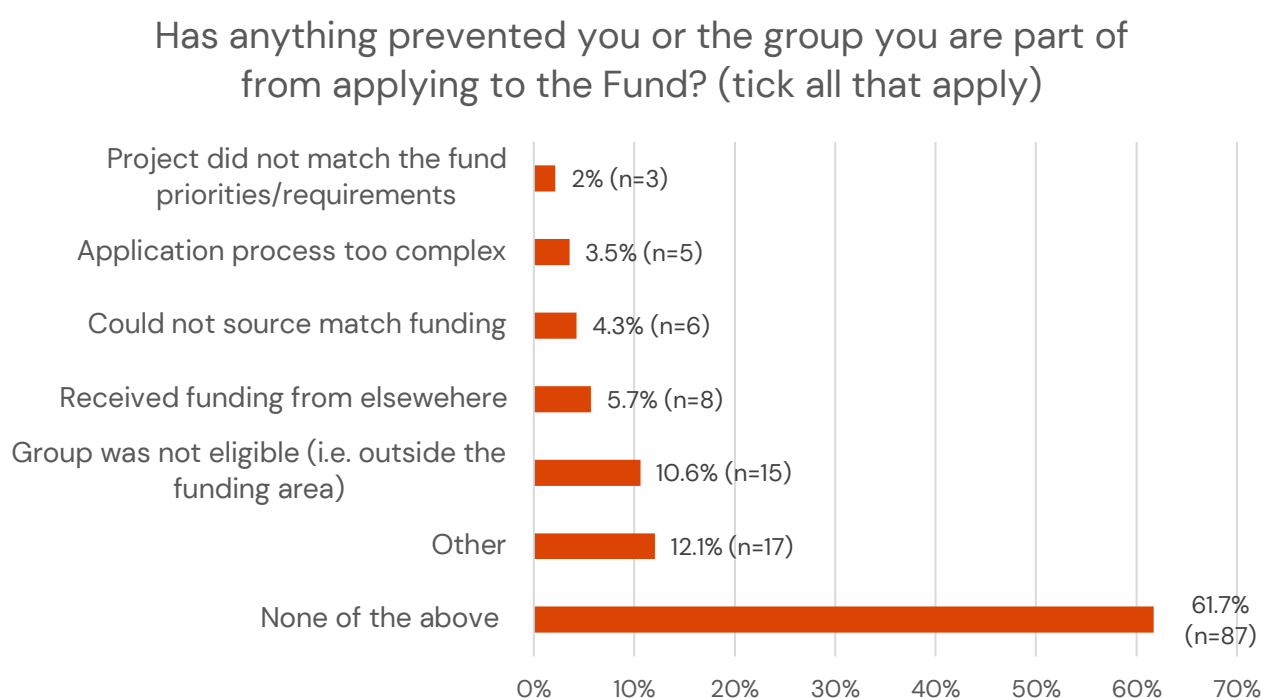
- Lack of alternative funding, with specific mention of no alternative funds available for addressing local transport issues
- The fund providing the 'only way' to raise a large amount of money
- Inclusion of staff costs and training costs in the grants

Alternative funding sources mentioned by survey respondents and interviewees included South of Scotland Enterprise, community councils, the local authorities, other local community benefit funds (e.g. Carrick Futures), NatureScot and the Scottish Land Fund.

All survey respondents were asked if anything had prevented them from applying to the Fund. A majority of respondents selected 'none of the above' (61.7%) (see Figure 10). Fifteen survey respondents selected that their community group was not eligible to apply to the Fund, and eight people selected that they had received funding from elsewhere. Only three people noted that they did not apply to the Fund because their project did not match the fund priorities/requirements, while five said they did not apply because the application process was too complex.

Of the 17 people who selected 'other', 15 provided comments as to why they had not applied to the Fund. Six comments referred to a lack of awareness that they could apply to the Fund. Other comments included *"lack of audited accounts"*, *"not being directly involved in a group"*, *"already receiving money through PCOs"* and one comment noted their ethical concerns regarding the windfarm's development.

Figure 10: Survey responses to 'Has anything prevented you from applying to the Fund?'



5.2.2 Experiences of the application process and reporting

In general, respondents who had applied to the Fund were positive about the application process. Most respondents described 'accessing the application form' as 'very easy' or 'easy' (84%). Similarly positive scores were given to 'pre-application enquiries' (77%), and 'finding out about the outcome of an application' (79%).

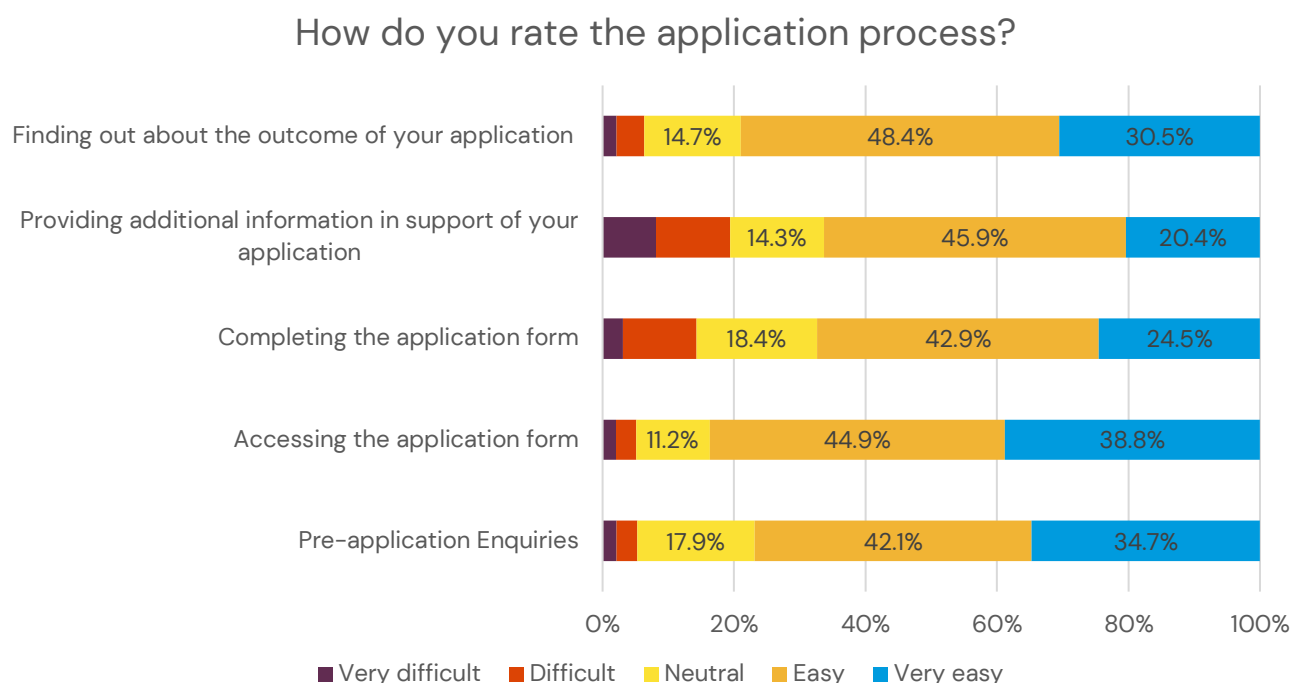
Some respondents experienced difficulties with 'completing the application form' (14%) and in 'providing additional information' in support of their application (19%)²⁹. The survey asked what, if anything, could be changed to make the application process more straightforward, and the answers provided insight into the issues that respondents had experienced. Challenges and suggestions for improvements were also discussed in the interviews with people who had applied to the Fund.

Of the 56 survey respondents who answered the question about changes that could be made, 34 did not think any changes were needed, 33 of whom resided in a non-primary community (i.e. only one individual resided in a primary community). Examples of comments from these respondents describe the process as "*efficiently organised*", "*straightforward*", "*rigorous*" and "*easy to follow*", with many stating that "*nothing*" or "*no change*" is needed.

²⁹ The 'additional information' required differs between the Community Fund and the PCOs, but in terms of the Community Fund, a standard set of information is required and this is set out on the application form. Additional information includes quotes from suppliers for any capital items above £300 or copies of relevant documents (e.g. the constitution/governing document, most recent independently examined annual accounts, bank statement or safeguarding policy).

For those who had experienced challenges (22 respondents), suggestions for improvement included: *“more clarity in the application guidance”, “fewer questions requiring shorter answers”, “a shorter application form for those applying for less funds”* and *“an easier form for clubs etc. who have the same reason for applying each year”*. Only four of these 22 respondents were from non-primary communities, with the majority (18) from primary communities.

Figure 11: Respondents' views about the application process (N=104)

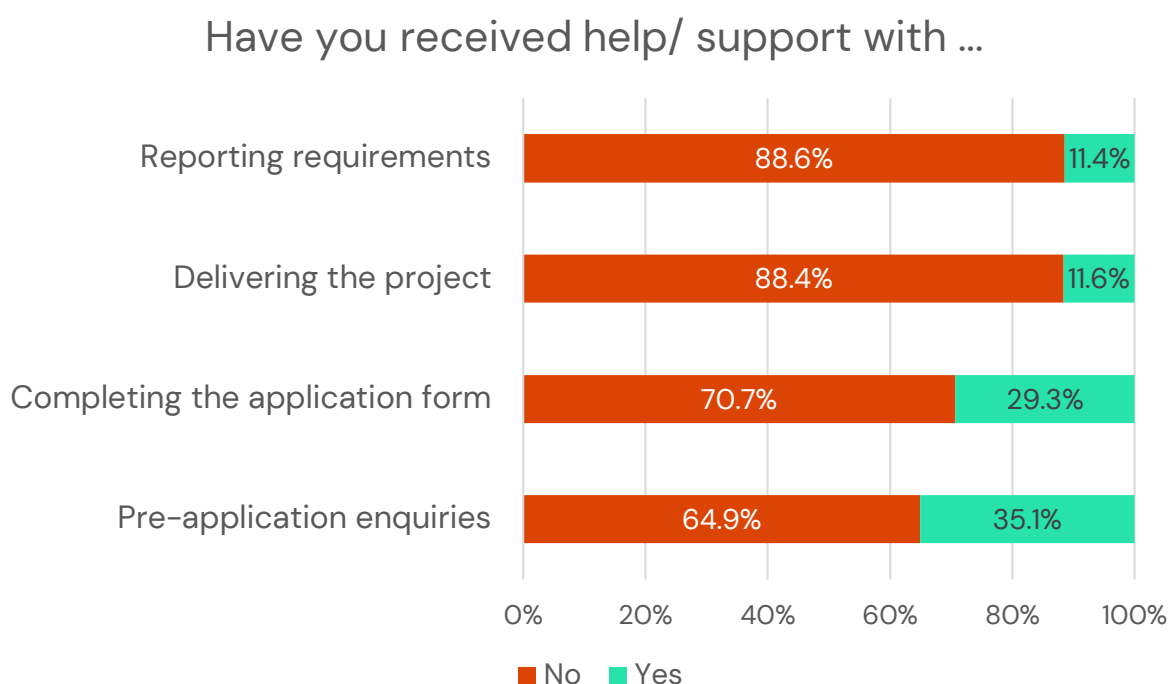


Only one respondent expressed negative feelings about the interview stage of the application process, saying they felt it was *“hard hitting”* while another was frustrated because they had expected to be able to provide more information in an interview but was not invited to do so. On the other hand, some respondents felt that the follow-up phone call was a positive experience, with the conversation providing an opportunity to share more information about the project.

Only a few negative comments were made about a lack of comprehensive feedback provided when an application was unsuccessful. One person noted that *“a two-sentence response – that is not sustainable, not enough feedback”*, while another felt that the feedback *“wasn’t very constructive”*.

Overall, a small proportion of respondents accessed support during the various stages of the application and funding processes (between 11% and 35% at different stages, see Figure 12). In the accompanying comments, support was described by some as *“supportive”, “very helpful”* and *“good”*, with specific mention of the support from Foundation Scotland and a development officer in one of the primary communities. Only one respondent noted that they experienced *“plenty of obstacles”* when seeking support.

Figure 12: Help/support received during the application process and the project/reporting (N=82)



Respondents were also asked about the reporting requirements for their project(s) and associated match funding (see Figure 13). Overall, 96% of respondents felt that the reporting requirements for the Fund were appropriate, while this figure dropped to 85% in relation to reporting requirements for match funding. This indicates that a higher proportion of applicants to the Fund felt that reporting requirements were appropriate than applicants to match funders (though it is worth noting that, in both cases, the proportions are high).

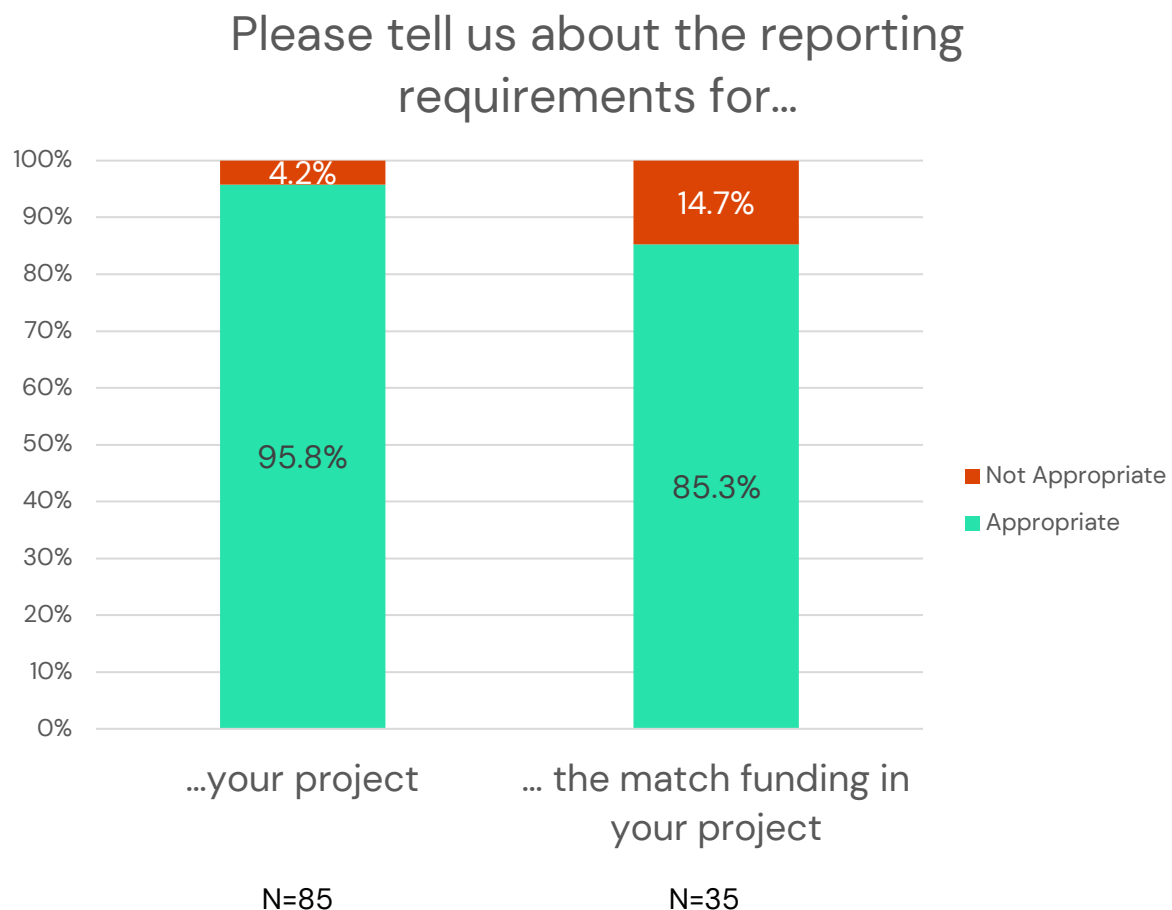
In relation to the questions about reporting requirements, 27 respondents provided some additional detail. In general, the requirements for the Fund were described as *"nothing too complex"*, *"reasonably straightforward"* and *"very easy"*. As one respondent explained, *"we were asked to complete a simple report on the event"*, and another noted that there were *"just receipts to be submitted after the money was spent"*.

5.3 Impacts of the Fund

KCBC recently published a report on the impacts of the Community Fund between 2017 and 2019³⁰. The report provides information about the types of projects supported by the Community Fund. Although survey respondents were asked to describe their projects, these descriptions are not listed in this review report to ensure participant anonymity. Instead, the analysis presented here focuses on the benefits that have been generated from the funded projects (including projects funded through the Community Fund and the PCOs) and considers the sustainability of projects beyond their funding period.

³⁰ See <https://www.kilgallioch.co.uk/our-first-two-years-read-our-impact-report/>

Figure 13: Respondents' views about the Fund reporting requirements



5.3.1 Positive impacts for communities

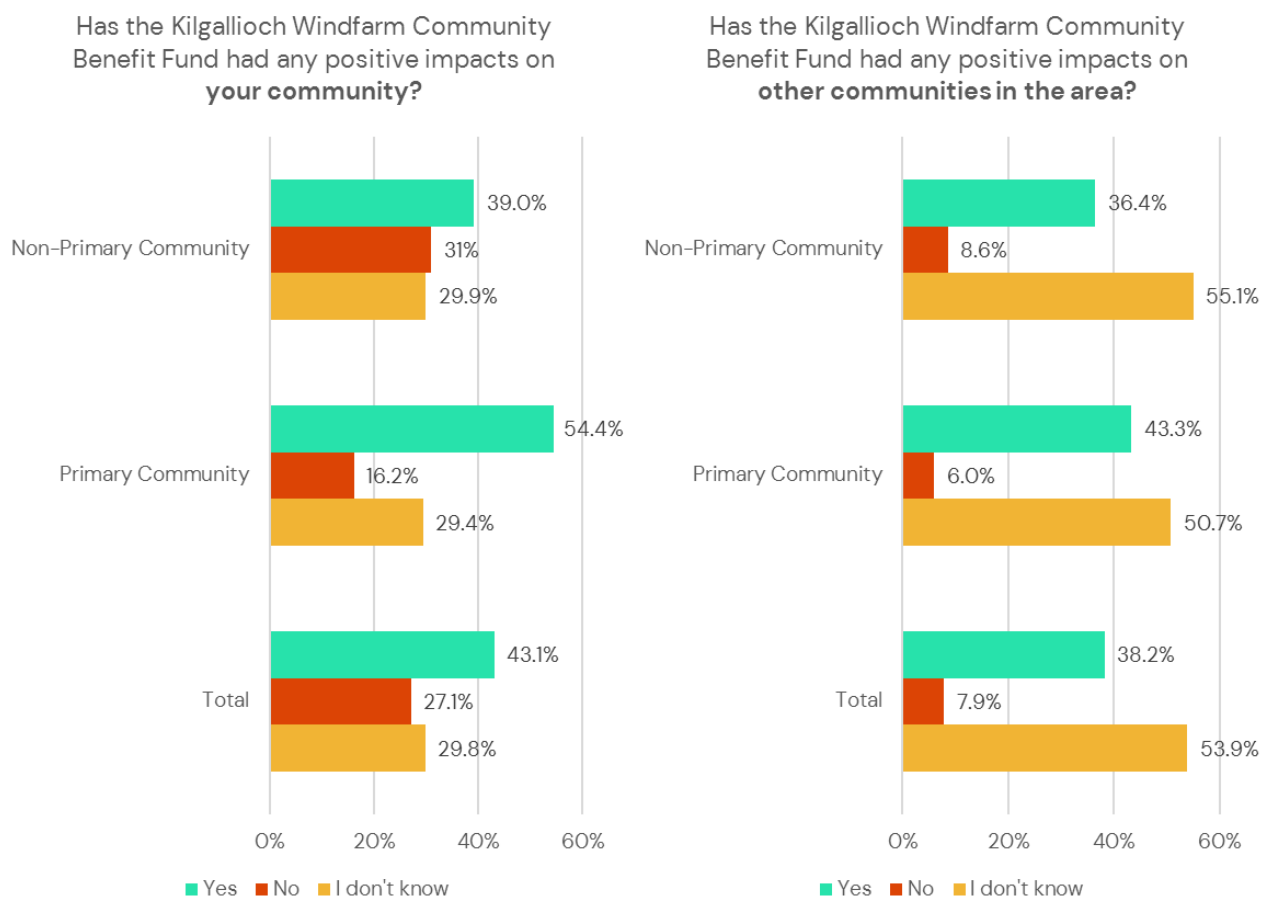
The survey asked respondents whether the Fund has had any positive impacts. Respondents were asked to answer this question in relation to both their own community and other communities in the area of benefit. Figure 14 shows the results, with responses categorised according to whether the respondent lives in a primary community or non-primary community. It is perhaps worth noting that, when interpreting this section, as a result of the set-up of the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund – with the distinction between the Kilgallioch Fund across the area of benefit and the dedicated funding available to primary communities through PCOs – there is a considerable difference in the per capita level of funding between primary and non-primary communities. This might be expected to influence the responses to this question from respondents in the different communities.

Over half of respondents (54%) living in the primary communities felt that the Fund has had positive impacts on their community. Of the remainder, 16% did not see any positive impacts and 29% selected 'I don't know'. Almost one in three respondents selecting 'I don't know' is a relatively high proportion and perhaps demonstrates a lack of awareness of the Fund and the projects (and associated impacts) it has funded.

In the non-primary communities, 39% of respondents noted positive impacts on their community and 31% said that there had not been any positive impacts, with again just less than one in three respondents responding 'I don't know' to this question.

When asked about positive impacts on other communities, 38% of all respondents said that there had been positive impacts. This figure was slightly higher in the primary communities (43%) than in the non-primary communities (36%). It is worth noting that around half of all respondents in both primary and non-primary communities selected 'I don't know' about positive impacts in other communities.

Figure 14: Positive impacts of the Fund on respondent's community and other communities N=241



In reviewing these responses about the positive impacts of the Fund, the research team decided it was important to analyse whether there was significant difference in responses between primary and non-primary communities due to the nature of the Fund distribution set-up. High response numbers in Cree Valley (a non-primary community) also meant it was important to test whether their over-representation in the data impacted on the survey results.

We found that there was a statistically significant relationship between whether a respondent was from a primary community or a non-primary community and their response to 'Has the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund had any positive impacts on your community?'. In other words, respondents from primary communities were statistically more likely to say 'yes' than 'no' or 'I don't know', compared to

respondents from non-primary communities. Removing Cree Valley respondents from the analysis has no impact on the significance of this finding.

The research team identified the possibility that a survey respondent's awareness of the Fund may have impacted their response about the positive impacts of the Fund. However, after testing whether awareness of the Fund impacted survey respondents' perceptions of positive impacts on the community, we found this in fact had no statistically significant impact. In other words, awareness of the Fund had minimal impact on responses regarding whether the Fund had positive impacts in a respondent's community.

There do appear to be some differences in the perception of positive impacts of the Fund between previous applicants to the fund and those who have never applied to the Fund. For example, 67% of survey respondents who had previously applied to the Fund noted that the Fund had a positive impact on their community. In contrast, only 25.7% of survey respondents who had not applied to the fund noted positive impacts on their community.

There were also differences in the perception of positive impacts of the fund between successful applicants and unsuccessful applicants to the fund. 73.5% of successful applicants said that there had been positive impacts in their community. 41.2% of unsuccessful applicants said there had not been any positive impacts from the fund.

Respondents were also asked to list up to five positive impacts that the Fund has had in their own community and up to five positive impacts it has had in other communities. Listed benefits related to a wide range of themes, including:

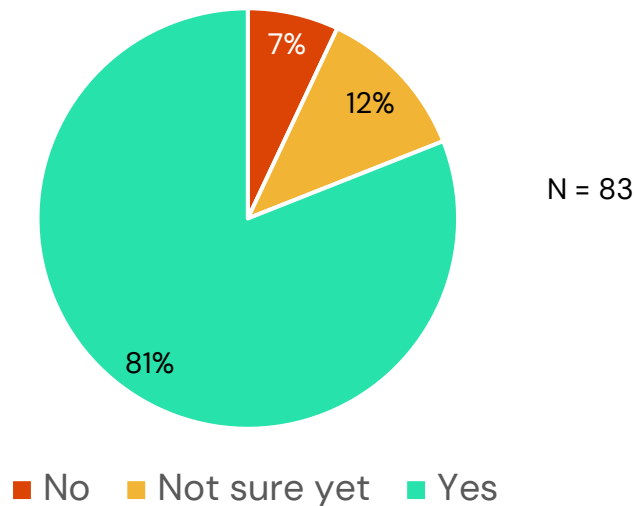
- Purchasing new equipment
- Refurbishing and/or purchasing community facilities
- Supporting community sports clubs; providing new infrastructure
- Improving community participation and collaboration
- Training volunteers
- Increasing the potential for tourism
- Developing business plans
- Increasing digital connectivity
- Improving mental health
- Reducing social isolation
- Developing healthier lifestyles
- Making environmental improvements
- Winter fuel payments.

Figure 15 presents a 'word cloud' of the most frequently used terms in the text provided in the answers. Words that are larger (e.g. 'community', 'improved') were mentioned more frequently than words that are smaller. As one interviewee from a primary community described, the Fund has *"made a massive difference to this area. We can actually look to the future and plan things"*. Survey responses from primary communities noted how the Fund has *"allowed the community the opportunity to access monies that*

council. For many respondents, the Fund had enabled them to purchase new equipment, which would be used for many years to come. As one interviewee explained: *“the short answer is because the hardware is there and there is core funding for the project workers’ time and that will continue”*.

Figure 16: Percentage of successful applicants whose projects will be sustained beyond the funding period (N = 83)

Will your project be sustained beyond the funding period?



For those who have been unable to sustain their project(s) beyond the funded period, the majority need annual funding and/or ongoing fundraising activities. The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns have also curtailed several projects.

It is worth noting that, in the interviews, there were concerns raised about the long-term sustainability of some of the larger projects in the primary communities, in particular in those communities with small resident populations and a limited tourism offer.

5.4 Future of the Fund

Respondents were asked what differences they think the Fund will have made in 20 years’ time to where they live. ‘Legacy’, ‘community-led projects’ and ‘improved local facilities’ were prominent themes in the responses. One survey respondent explained that:

“Without the fund, by this time, our village would have no village shop. No village pub. No village hall. No church. No primary school. All those things that existed 40 years ago and by now they would all be gone.”

Other hopes about the difference the Fund would have made included: more cycling/walking routes; economic and social regeneration; increased skills in the local community; preservation of businesses and village centres; safeguarding community assets; reduced unemployment; reduced poverty; better health profiles of residents; cultural benefits; and achievement of community plan objectives.

However, many negative comments were also noted here (57 of 171 comments), particularly in relation to the fairness of the allocation of the Fund. This is considered in more detail in the next section.

5.4.1 Geographic area of the Fund

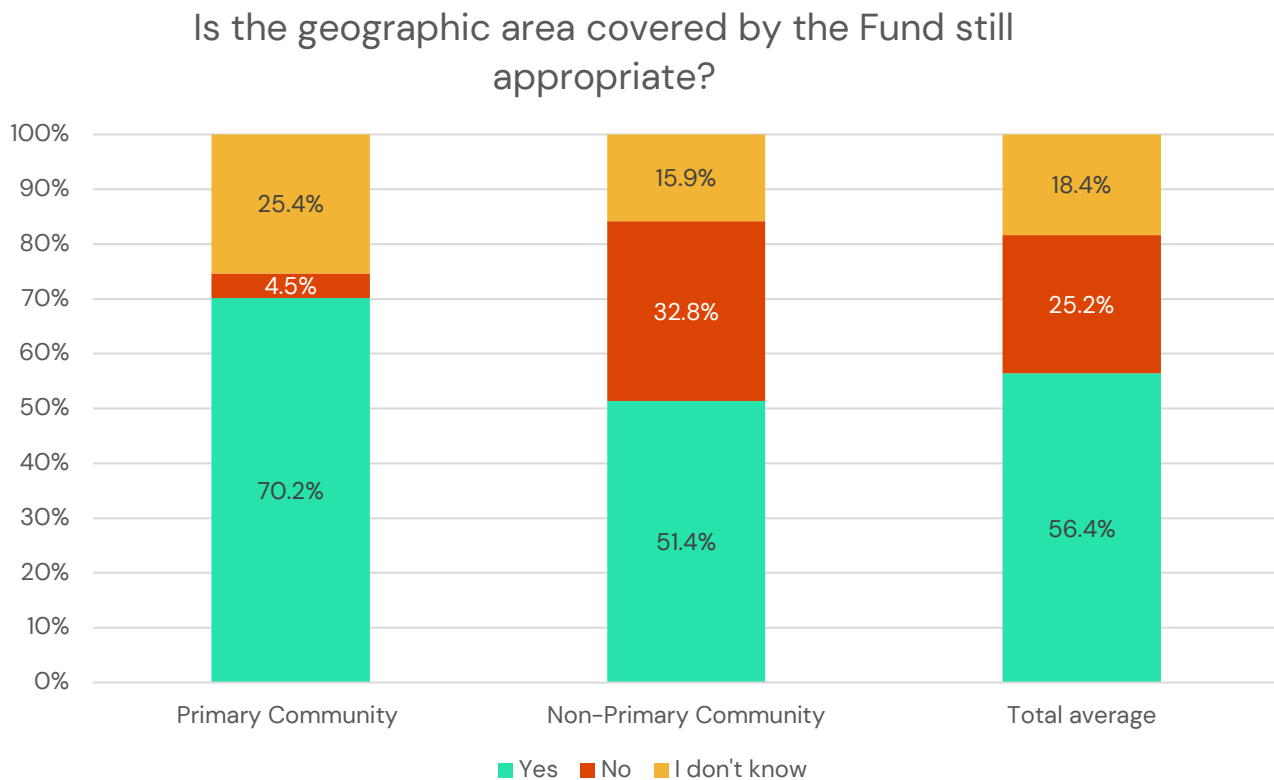
The Scottish Government Good Practice Principles recommend that any review of a community benefit fund includes a review of the area of benefit. Survey respondents were therefore asked whether they think the geographic area covered by the Fund is still appropriate. A map of the area of benefit was included in the survey and an explanation was provided about how the Fund is split between the primary communities and the wider area of benefit. This information was also provided in the project information sheet given to interviewees.

Of those who responded to the survey question about the geographic area, 56% (132) selected 'yes', indicating their view that the area of benefit is still appropriate. Of the remaining respondents, 25% (59) answered 'no' and 18.4% (26) answered 'I don't know' (see Figure 17).

There is a statistically significant relationship between the selected answer and whether the respondent lives in a primary community. This indicated that respondents living in primary communities are more likely to respond that the area of benefit is still appropriate. However, when removing Cree Valley respondents from the analysis (due to the high proportion of respondents from that area, a non-primary community), this relationship was no longer significant.

When removing Cree Valley from the analysis, we found that 68% of all survey respondents responded 'yes', that the geographic area of benefit was still appropriate. In other words, when removing Cree Valley respondents, the views about the geographic area covered by the Fund are not significantly different between primary and non-primary community residents and there is a general feeling across the area of benefit that the geographic area is appropriate. In this instance, it is clear that the views of Cree Valley respondents differ from those respondents elsewhere in the area of benefit. The result highlights the importance of recognising that different communities have different and often complex views about, and relationships with, the Fund, and these are not always related to whether a community is a primary or non-primary community.

Figure 17: Views on the appropriateness of the geographic area of benefit (N=241)



After indicating a view on the appropriateness of the geographic area of the Fund, respondents were able to leave a comment. Of the comments received from 87 respondents, 11 people left comments which were supportive of the current area of benefit. One respondent, for example, commented:

"The local Fund area is ideal as it ensures the small communities that are closest to the wind turbines gain the most benefit from them. All four of those communities were in deep trouble before the advent of windfarm community benefits. Strategic spending by the regional authority meant that investment was being directed towards the larger towns and the smaller villages were being squeezed more and more".

Another interviewee (from a non-primary community) felt that:

"...the balance is right. The four communities are most visually impacted. I know there is discontent in the wider area about that. The communities that are arguing about this maybe need to look at this for future things. I don't think it's right to change what was already agreed. Change could have a huge impact on the four core communities³¹".

Eight survey respondents made general comments at this point in the survey related to the 'fairness' of the distribution of the fund (i.e. relating to the distinction and different arrangements between primary and non-primary communities). For example: "remove

³¹ Some respondents referred to the primary and non-primary communities as core and non-core communities.

the unfair distribution of funds”, “fairer distribution of funds” and “more realistic and fair distribution of the core funding”. Only two suggested that the geography of the area of benefit should be increased (no distinction was made between Community Fund and PCO funds in these responses). Additional comments made about fairness elsewhere in the survey and interviews are presented in Section 5.4.3.

Thoughts relating specifically to Cree Valley (which includes the town of Newton Stewart) were noted by 37 respondents at this point in the survey (43% of those commenting). All these comments related to Cree Valley not being one of the primary communities³². A selection of comments is presented in Box 3 to illustrate the sentiments shared by survey respondents and interviewees in relation to this.

Box 3: Comments relating to Cree Valley and the geographic area of the Fund

“My area of Cree Valley is nearer to the Windfarm – and as it is a major centre of population and contains all the local services [it] should be (as per the Scottish Government Guidelines) a Core Community.”

“The largest area which includes the town used for most services is the Cree Valley should have been included.”

“Not sure why Newton Stewart is not one of the priority areas.”

“We were always puzzled that Cree Valley was not included as a primary community area.”

“It seems very strange that Cree Valley is not one of the core communities, given that it is so close to the actual Windfarm and the main access route passes through so much of Cree Valley.”

“It remains a disappointment that Newton Stewart and the Cree Valley are not one of the core areas for fund distribution.”

“Cree Valley should have been included from the start and this failure will impact on decisions by the remaining four communities as they hold the purse strings. Cree Valley is the commercial hub of the region and if it fails it will have a far-reaching impact on all the satellite villages including the four core communities.”

“The geographical area is fine but Cree Valley should be represented on the Trust.”

“It was Newton Stewart that provided all the accommodation for workers, put up with road disruption, provided emergency services when required and was the hub for the windfarm as it was built.”

“Cree Valley should be a core community because it is closer and affected more by the windfarm than some of the other core communities.”

“Newton Stewart should have been a core community as that is where there is a population concentration and core facilities, but it gets absolutely nothing. Certainly, the current core communities deserve something as they are directly affected by, and situated close to the Windfarm, New Luce in particular, but Newton Stewart should be a core community too.”

³² It is worth noting that several comments mentioned the process by which the primary communities were originally selected. We have not discussed these comments here as this issue was not included in the remit for this review. More information on the consultation process through which the primary communities were designated is available in KCBC’s Impact Report which is available online [here](#).

It is clear from the number and content of the comments provided on the geographic area of the Fund that there are conflicting and often strong views on this issue. It should also be noted that there are misunderstandings and factual inaccuracies in several of these comments. For example, one respondent notes that Newton Stewart “*gets absolutely nothing*”, but there have been a number of projects within the Newton Stewart area funded by the Community Fund³³. This comment may reflect observations made earlier in this report that there may be a lack of awareness in some communities about the funding mechanisms of the Fund, and there may be a need for KCBC to clarify confusion around who can apply for funding from the Community Fund and for what kind of projects.

5.4.2 Supporting Covid-19 recovery

Respondents were asked whether there is anything about the Fund that could be changed to meet new challenges or opportunities associated with the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown restrictions. Of the 157 people who answered the question, 44 (28%) thought that nothing should be changed, or they were unsure.

Specific suggestions for potential changes and/or improvements to the Fund in light of the impacts of the pandemic and lockdowns included:

- increased awareness raising and promotion of the Fund
- increasing support for elderly people
- devoting part of the Fund to improving broadband connectivity, access to digital devices, and training in digital skills
- training/skills courses to help improve employment opportunities (particularly for younger people)
- setting up a community network/support group for people who have felt isolated
- focussing on projects that improve health, fitness and engagement with the outdoors
- supporting micro-business start-ups and businesses providing ‘Fair work’ (and seedcorn funding)
- extending the payment timescale for projects affected during the ‘lost year’ of 2020 (particularly sporting events/social projects)
- increasing the focus on attracting visitors to the area to support economic recovery and employment
- support for domestic heating costs
- focussing on strategic, long-term support rather than ‘short-term fixes’
- more regular applications ‘windows’ to enable more frequent applications (including a ‘fast-track’ application process for urgent need); and
- providing day-to-day running costs for existing organisations and projects that have faced difficulties specifically relating to the pandemic.

Additional comments in the interviews about Covid-19 recovery are shown in Box 4.

³³ For more information on projects funded by the Community Fund, see: <https://www.kilgallioch.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/KCF-Impact-Report-2020-FINAL.pdf>

Box 4: Comments from the interviews about the Fund and Covid-19 recovery

"As so many smaller charitable/community groups have struggled during the pandemic, it may be appropriate for some funds to reconsider if they would cover ongoing running costs."

"The Fund is and should be about 'doing positive things', encouraging people to do stuff, clubs and young people on trips and into sport etc. And old people out and having a good time. And if it was reoriented there is a danger it would become too focused on health-related service provision which is not what it should be paying for, it would become more social services oriented. It's about prevention e.g. for mental health problems, through sport, socialising etc."

"The need for increased communications and bad broadband because of more home working – I think it will be more along those lines we will need to look."

Reflecting on the need for flexible funding that can respond in a crisis to support local communities, some comments made in other questions in the survey are relevant here. For example, one interviewee explained how the Fund applications windows can be problematic:

"We were too large to claim on the smaller fund and the larger fund round does not even have a date announced yet. And we need to do this ASAP. For me, this is the biggest downfall of this Fund. The timings seem to be quite rigid and not suitable for small organisations like us that need funding quickly. As far as I can see we qualify everywhere, we just can't afford to wait."

Another was concerned that projects need to apply every year, even for events that take place annually, for example. One interviewee suggested *"they could perhaps look at annual funding for three years"*³⁴. Several comments were also made in this section about the geographic area of the Fund and the allocation of funding between primary and non-primary communities. These are discussed in more detail below.

5.4.3 Enhancing the impact of the Fund in the future

Survey respondents and interviewees were asked to share their thoughts about how the positive impacts of the Fund could be supported/enhanced in the future. This is the key focus of the 2019 revision of the Scottish Government's Good Practice Principles which: *"places a greater focus on achieving a lasting legacy for local communities underpinned by a well-developed Community Action Plan"*.

³⁴ It is worth noting here that it is possible for groups to apply to KCBC for multiannual funding from the Community Fund.

This final section summarises the key themes that emerged and acknowledges other comments made in the survey and interviews that have not been captured in the preceding sections. The key themes are:

1. Allocation and governance of the Fund
2. Strategic connections to increase impact
3. Raising awareness
4. Increased focus on the needs of individuals and small businesses

1. Allocation and governance of the Fund

Fairness in the allocation of the Fund was a frequently mentioned theme in the comments made at the end of the survey, with 27 respondents once again referring to the fairness/appropriateness of the allocation of the Fund between the primary and non-primary communities – nine of these comments came from respondents in primary communities and 18 from non-primary communities. Unlike the earlier survey question on the geography of the Fund (where the majority of respondents were from Cree Valley), comments regarding allocation of the Fund (particularly in reference to distribution of monies between PCOs and the Community Fund) were made by respondents from multiple communities, suggesting that this is not a concern only to Cree Valley respondents. Specific comments in relation to the future of the Fund included suggestions that:

- *“the Fund would have more of a positive impact if it was fairly distributed”*
- *“the whole Fund could be used to benefit all of the area rather than be weighted to only a few communities”*
- *“very little [would have changed in 20 years’ time] given the current set up of the fund body which is predominantly concentrated in four small communities where the population are a tiny percentage of the whole of the area it is supposed to support”*
- *“set amounts of funding each year for each community would allow local groups to have a more secure financial future with the opportunity to apply for further funding for new projects”.*

Specific issues noted by survey respondents and interviewees relate to the balance of the allocation of the Fund, raising strong concerns: one interviewee who had successfully applied to the Community Fund noted how *“the amounts of money going to the current core communities is absurd – the way it’s being done is absurd”*, while another described *“pie in the sky projects”* in the core communities. Another felt it is harder for larger projects in the non-primary communities to get started:

“It is hard for projects, including those mentioned in the Community Action Plan, when they are bidding for £10k. This is only the first stage and projects find it hard to get off the ground. More seed money is needed for community projects. For the core communities, they have £180k in the bank on an ongoing basis so it’s much easier to get projects off the ground and then apply elsewhere for

funding. They can also employ someone to get projects off the ground which is a huge help."

Another concern noted particularly by interviewees was a lack of understanding/transparency about what happens to 'unallocated funds' in the primary communities. One interviewee would like *"to see unallocated funds that are handed back on to other local organisations who could distribute to local groups who are daunted by larger funds and applications – simplified funding applications to kickstart wee businesses [...] KCF is quite strict with criteria so pass on unallocated funds to local organisations"*. Another suggested that *"any surplus funds should somehow be distributed to residents"*.³⁵

Reflecting on what achievements might be possible in 20 years from now, one survey respondent explained:

"I think that is largely to be determined by the management of the fund. There may be concerns that, at some point in the future, some of the smaller communities rightly benefitting from the fund will have exhausted the projects and schemes which are realistic to their population and geography. To continue to invest heavily there and less so in other areas beyond the core may mean the fund runs the risk of having supported a number of white elephant projects in some locations while failing to deliver strategic or sustainable benefits elsewhere."

Although survey respondents and interviewees were not asked specifically about the governance of the Fund (e.g. representation of communities on the Board, decision-making processes, etc.)³⁶, seven comments were made about this in the answers at the end of the survey. Concerns related mostly to transparency of decision-making processes and public access to KCBC information and documents.

2. Strategic connections to increase impact

The notion of increasing the strategic benefits and connections between projects was a commonly noted theme in the final questions of the survey. Some respondents noted the potential to connect projects more explicitly, supporting more long-term, strategic change. There was a call for *"more and enhanced inter-community collaboration"*, as well as acknowledgement of the *"useful and good"* local plans led by the local authority and how these *"help to provide some focus for the voluntary sector"*. As an interviewee described:

"Maybe there is something in connecting projects. Particularly one that maybe [are] a wee group that's slaving away on a daily basis knowing that they are not alone and that they can look up from time to time".

³⁵ It is worth noting that under the terms of the legal agreement, SPR requires that, each year: (i) the PCOs allocate 60% of their funding; and (ii) 60% of the Community Fund is allocated.

³⁶ More information about KCBC's governance information can be found online [here](#).

As this interviewee went on to note, making these connections may be easier than in previous years, if meetings are held remotely and do not require travel time/cost to network with other fund recipients.

3. Raising awareness

Awareness raising was once again important to respondents commenting in this final stage of the survey and would help to make the strategic connections noted in the previous point. This would ensure *"all residents in the community council areas are aware of the benefits on offer and treated equally"*, address the *"perception that the Fund is only for the area local to the windfarm"*, and signpost the *"routes to apply for the available funding"*.

Specific suggestions included:

- *"more co-operation between the trusts and the people of the community areas to ensure everyone that is entitled to a payment from the Fund knows"*
- *requiring a "community celebration event on the completion of funded projects";*
- *a "half-yearly newsletter [to] give communities a better idea of what is going on in different communities that are close to them"*
- *"making sure the case studies section of the website is regularly updated [to] keep the public informed on what has been funded and why".*

The notion of increasing local engagement with the Fund and its outcomes was quite well-supported in the comments. This would ensure not only that more people become aware of the Fund, but that this would *"encourage more proactive involvement of the community"*. Respondents noted opportunities to *"look into younger generations being involved on the community council and the trust"* and to have a *"wider body of people in to administer [the Fund], that reflects the communities it is supposed to serve"*.

There was also a suggestion that:

"Kilgallioch Fund managers should be out and about in the relevant communities, speaking directly to the local people who care about their community. Local councils may run services, but 3rd sector groups are of vital importance when a place needs to be revitalised. Please contact our groups!"

A small number of respondents also noted the need for awareness raising among those tasked with making decisions about awards of the funding. While we have previously noted the positive comments from respondents about the Fund being well tailored to local priorities (see Section 5.2.1), other respondents commented here that, in some cases, it was felt that a lack of local knowledge when making decisions about applications had led to unfair outcomes. As one unsuccessful applicant explained:

"[...] if someone from the Fund was able to visit [X], to see in future what we are actually doing or what we could accomplish, I think that would have more effect than doing everything online where you don't have the face to face or the experience of communication."

However, as mentioned, several comments from survey participants (from both primary and non-primary communities) also noted the positive impacts resulting from the Fund due to it being a *“funding avenue assessed by local people”*.

4. Increased focus on the needs of individuals and small businesses

Despite the high number of positive impacts of the Fund noted by participants in earlier questions (see Section 5.3.1), some concerns were raised that, despite the availability of funding, many individuals and families continue to experience poverty and financial hardship. As one survey comment noted: *“this village has lots of money coming in and yet still poverty is vast”*. Another described how, in Stranraer, there are *“children whose families have no car, no internet and no computer. Yet this Fund will do nothing to help them connect with society.”*

There may be challenges in communities without an active community group/organisation to take forward a project application. For example, one survey respondent felt that the Fund is unlikely to have made a difference in 20 years’ time because *“there’s nobody that really takes a lead in [community X] with any great gumption”*. Similarly, it was felt that new or not yet well-established community groups might be less likely to receive funding as *“funders see that as a weakness”* (although it should be noted that this criticism was not only directed at KCBC or the PCOs).

Linked to the comments about the need to support micro-businesses through Covid recovery (see Section 5.4.2), points were also noted about the potential for the Fund to create more employment. Some survey respondents and interviewees had experienced challenges in relation to applying for project(s) that involved using the Fund to pay for staff time. One interviewee explained how *“we feel like criminals because we are applying for money to create jobs”*, feeling that the *“priority for KCF should be creating jobs”*.

6 Key findings and recommendations

This final section highlights the key findings of the review and sets out 14 recommendations.

6.1 Awareness and understanding of the Fund

The Scottish Government’s Good Practice Principles place emphasis on ensuring that awareness and understanding of community benefit funds is high. This review has found that there is generally good awareness of the Fund (90% of respondents had heard of the Fund before completing the survey). However, despite this high level of awareness, a clear theme emerging from comments in the survey and interviews is the need for improved knowledge and understanding of the Fund, as well as better highlighting of its positive impacts.

At various points, the research team identified conflicting statements, false information and/or lack of clarity and understanding, for example with regards to:

- Who can apply to the Fund(s), and for how much money
- How the Fund is distributed between primary and non-primary communities
- The governance and set-up of KCBC
- Why funding applications were rejected
- Terminology used within some of the Community Fund priorities
- What type of projects would be classed as statutory activities and whether these can be funded through the Kilgallioch Community Benefit Fund.

Given these examples of misunderstandings, there is an opportunity for KCBC and the PCOs (and others involved in the Fund e.g. Foundation Scotland and SPR) to consider ways to improve understanding of the Fund and how it operates.

Improving understanding of the Fund can be achieved in various ways using different media. Picking up on suggestions made by some of the respondents, these include: increased social media postings; a dedicated newsletter or more contributions to other relevant newsletters (we are aware that there are instances of this already happening); and perhaps face-to-face (where possible) or digital contributions to community meetings or events (e.g. via community councils, Development Trusts, etc.), and in community buildings/facilities such as village halls, noticeboards and shops.

It is worth noting that our survey found that there are high levels of awareness of the Fund through word of mouth and through involvement in the local community. Although this form of communication has a role to play in increasing understanding, high levels of awareness via word of mouth may have contributed to some of the confusion around funding eligibility and fund distribution. We therefore encourage KCBC to increase direct communication with community residents, whether in person or via print and/or social media. Effort should be focussed particularly on raising awareness outside the four primary communities as lower rates of awareness and understanding were particularly evident in the non-primary communities (i.e. across the wider area of benefit).

Good awareness and understanding of the Fund are essential to support community residents in having greater involvement with the Fund. This involvement might include contributing to a CAP, standing as a member of community council, representation within the governance structure of KCBC, or simply participating in surveys or interviews such as in this review.

There may be a rationale for focusing efforts on improving awareness, understanding and engagement amongst young people (only 5% of respondents in the survey were under the age of 35). This could be achieved by working with local Scottish Youth Parliament members, Young Scot, etc. and regional and local schools and training and education providers.

Recommendations

1. KCBC should check the wording of the Community Fund's priorities to ensure that they accurately, clearly and fully reflect the range of projects that will be considered for funding and that the language used is accessible and easily understood.
2. KCBC should continue to work with communities and community organisations across the area of benefit to improve understanding of the Fund, with a particular focus on young people and ensuring that individuals, households and community groups know which funding they can apply for and how, and which other projects have received funding.

6.2 Engagement with communities

As explained in the Good Practice Principles (p.3): *"Empowering communities to engage in the decisions affecting their future, making their voices heard is a priority for the Scottish Government, and we are committed to enabling them to participate fully in and benefit from Scotland's low carbon transition.* The updated 2019 Principles (p.6) also place strong emphasis on CAPs as documents that are critical to: (1) informing the discussions with renewable energy businesses, regardless of the community benefits package being offered; and (2) delivering the goal of a lasting legacy in line with a community's aspirations and ambitions (as set out in a CAP).

This review has highlighted that awareness of CAPs within the area of benefit is variable – 53% of survey respondents did not know if their community has a CAP or other local community plan. Section 5.1.1 described the existence of CAPs in seven communities in the area of benefit. In addition, awareness of how well CAPs link with the Community Fund priorities also varied. For example, 22% of respondents who were aware that a CAP or local community plan exists, did not know how well the Fund priorities link with the community plans. At the same time, some survey responses indicated that in some areas there are community members who have a good understanding of their CAP (or equivalent), and that the Fund priorities link well with these.

For CAPs to have maximum positive impact, there should be processes in place to update them regularly and adjust them according to the changing priorities of the community. Developing a CAP can be a long and complex process, usually taking between four and six months. Across Scotland, some communities are well placed to undertake the work to produce a CAP but others lack capacity and skills and require additional (external) support. The provision of such support is in line with the Scottish Government's wider agendas of community empowerment and devolution of decision-making to local community levels. There is funding, support and advice available from the Scottish Government CARES programme, delivered by Local Energy Scotland, to support communities in setting up a Community Action Plan³⁴. There is also an ongoing and important role for community support organisations (such as Foundation Scotland, Development Trusts Association Scotland, Scottish Community Alliance, community development workers, Dumfries and Galloway Council, South of Scotland Enterprise,

etc.) to work with communities and relevant organisations (including community councils, development trusts, etc.) when developing/updating their plans, and indeed in circumstances where plans are being reconciled. There is an opportunity for KCBC and the PCOs to be involved in these processes with a view to raising awareness of the Fund and ensuring complementarities between priorities.

The area of benefit is already fairly wide (in line with the Good Practice Principles, 2019, p.16 – see p. 6 of this report) but, given the evidence gathered in this review, now is perhaps the time for all relevant partners to revisit the governance and distribution of the Fund. It may be helpful for KCBC and other relevant partners (including the PCOs and SPR) to consider the principles of consultation in the Good Practice Principles (see Figure 1), although it should be noted that this guidance is specific to the initial consultation process surrounding the set-up of the benefits fund and will not always be appropriate: *“Consultation should be open, timely, fair and inclusive; enabling everyone with an interest the opportunity to be involved and heard”* (Good Practice Principles, 2019, p.13).

All stakeholders have a role to play in contributing to transparency and encouraging positive engagement with one another. KCBC has an opportunity to promote best practice across the communities it serves with regards to open consultation and clear decision-making. Engaging with other organisations in the community to promote and improve trust and fairness in decision-making will leave a lasting and positive legacy for communities beyond the lifetime of the Fund.

The reporting requirements for projects funded by KCBC also help to contribute to this transparency and are generally felt to be appropriate by the communities the Fund serves (see Figure 12). Most respondents were positive about the application process, with unsuccessful applicants valuing support and encouragement to re-apply for funding for their project. Supportive written feedback and/or follow-up phone calls with applicants are important for both successful and unsuccessful applicants.

Recommendations

3. Where possible, KCBC should engage with communities that are developing/updating CAPs to ensure alignment of the Community Fund with the priorities of CAPs across the area of benefit. At the same time, any changes made to the Community Fund priorities should continue to consider all communities within the area of benefit, whether or not they have a CAP.
4. KCBC should continue to signpost communities to additional financial and other support at local, regional and national levels, including the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES).
5. KCBC and the PCOs, alongside Foundation Scotland and SPR, should consider re-engaging with all local communities to understand any concerns about the administration and distribution of the Fund in more detail. Following guidance on consultation in the Good Practice Principles may be appropriate.
6. There is an opportunity for KCBC and PCOs to revisit their approaches to ensure that decision-making related to the Fund is clear and accessible to communities across the area of benefit.

6.3 Flexibility of the Fund

The need for a flexible and holistic approach to community benefit funding has been re-emphasised in the 2019 Good Practice Principles with the Scottish Government stating that they *"want to promote a more flexible approach to discussions about community benefits in future – a process which allows both renewable energy businesses and communities to identify clearly the best and most meaningful community benefits options and packages."*

The Scottish Government recognises that each fund and package of benefits agreed upon should be individual and best-tailored to the communities it serves. Fund governance is therefore encouraged to be *"Flexible and Responsive"* (Good Practice Principles, 2019, p.24) and to *"revisit and review a community's needs and wishes at regular intervals"*. The flexibility of the Fund should ultimately support a lasting legacy for the community it serves, as the GPPs state: *"It is important to focus on achieving a lasting legacy for a community – the outcome – and not the process"* (p.22).

The flexibility of a fund to evolve and respond to new demands provides an opportunity for community benefit packages to enable real, ongoing and future impacts for the communities they serve. This review has shown that the majority of survey respondents and interviewees felt that the current Community Fund priorities are important. However, there were some indications that changes to the Fund that will help directly support families/households, or young people in persistent poverty, should be explored (see Section 5.1.2, and the brief review of the regional context in Section 3). This might also be an issue for the PCOs to consider too.

The review has also identified potential opportunities for more 'joined-up, strategic thinking' between communities in terms of how funding is distributed in the region. For example, some respondents felt that decisions about funding should take into account potential impacts/benefits across a wider geographical area in order to avoid either duplication of projects or circumstances in which projects could have been sited in more appropriate locations (see Section 5.4.2.). It may also be appropriate to be cognisant of other funding available to communities when making decisions, including other windfarm community benefit funding (Good Practice Principles, 2019, p.31).

There are clearly similarities in priorities across the communities within the area of benefit and these appear to align with current priorities of the Community Fund. However, the capacity of some smaller communities to carry out larger or longer-term projects has been identified as a barrier to seeking support. For example, projects such as improving cycle tracks and improving the natural environment were highlighted in interviews as having benefits for multiple communities within the area. Supporting projects that cross community boundaries is likely to enhance positive impacts.

One of the benefits of the Fund is that *"Community benefit funds do not have to reflect the conventions of more traditional funding – they can be more flexible and responsive"* (Good Practice Principles, 2019, p.25). Survey respondents and interviewees noted that the Fund currently has a limited number of application windows, although it is acknowledged that KCBC have made changes to this since the first year of the Fund's operation. Interviewees also noted that similar community funds in the area had set up 'rapid response funds' during the Covid-19 pandemic to respond to the communities' evolving needs.

Recommendations

7. KCBC and the PCOs should consider whether they can increase the flexibility of funding to support projects that help individuals/households most in need.
8. Where possible, KCBC and the PCOs should encourage collaboration and joint funding proposals from across communities that will increase the impact and legacy of the Fund for more residents. In these instances, additional support may be required (e.g. from Foundation Scotland, community development workers, etc.) to facilitate joint working particularly amongst communities that have not collaborated previously.
9. KCBC and the PCOs should consider increasing the number of funding application windows and whether a 'rapid response fund' would complement the current funding structures in place.
10. KCBC should consider the possibility to engage with other community benefit funds in the area to develop a strategic action plan that will help identify gaps in funding for communities that may require more support than is currently provided, or to discuss ways in which funding opportunities may be delivered jointly, or 'best practice' learning shared.

6.4 A lasting legacy

The Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund has supported a wide range of projects that have positively impacted the communities it serves. Evidence collected for this review suggests that the Fund is already beginning to contribute to a 'lasting legacy' within many of the communities in the area of benefit (see Section 5.3.2). Survey respondents also noted the importance of the Fund in encouraging people within communities to come together and make real positive changes that would not otherwise have been possible (see Figure 18).

Figure 18: Survey respondent comments (from primary and non-primary communities) to question "In 20 years' time what differences do you think the Fund will have made to where you live?"



Residents generally have a positive perception of the Fund (see Section 5.3.1), although some work is needed to raise awareness of the Fund's impacts and, as previously mentioned, to ensure improved understanding of how it operates. Some differences exist between the perceptions of primary and non-primary communities, with residents in primary communities reporting higher levels of perceived impacts from the Fund than residents in non-primary communities. While this may not be surprising given the variation in the level of funding between the communities, there may be opportunities to raise both *awareness* of the Fund's impacts and its *actual* impacts, in non-primary communities that are geographically further away from the windfarm.

In future, it may be worth considering whether changing the distribution of funding between the primary and non-primary communities is appropriate, perhaps if a point is reached at which applications to the PCOs from local community groups slow down or cease. At this point, considering making more funding available across the wider area of benefit may help to increase the lasting legacy from the Fund.

Given the size and geographic scale of the existing Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund, there is the potential for KCBC and the PCOs to consider the development of a more ambitious and creative funding strategy. This could be tailored to particular issues, for example, exploring innovative solutions for tackling persistent challenges such as poverty, or encouraging joint-working between communities – not necessarily only those that are geographic neighbours, but across communities of interest relating to particular issues, perhaps. There could also be consideration of other ways of supporting local communities beyond traditional grant-making, as recognised in the Good Practice Principles³⁷.

Due to the complexity and size of the Fund, any changes in the funding strategy that aim to contribute to a lasting legacy in communities will require significant consultation with community leaders and residents. Communities should be prepared to mobilise and engage in constructive dialogue with KCBC and SPR, and should consider the added value that young people – or other groups who have traditionally been underrepresented in community councils – may have in presenting new and innovative ideas.

As previously noted, the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund has supported a wide variety of projects within the communities it serves. Although the Community Fund is one of the larger community benefit funds in the area it continues to be in high demand with large numbers of applications submitted each year since its launch in 2017. As awareness of the Fund increases it is likely that the number of applications may also increase. As funding becomes more competitive it will be important for KCBC to clearly assess the lasting legacy that applications for projects will have on the community. In addition, encouraging funding for innovative projects and to groups with limited access to funding elsewhere will remain important.

Based on the evidence collected in this review, there is a strong indication that the Fund will have a lasting legacy within the communities it serves as a large proportion of respondents noted that their funded projects will be sustained beyond the funding period (see Figure). There were several projects reported by survey participants that encourage community wealth building and others that have helped buy community assets – these were reported from both primary and non-primary communities.

³⁷ See p.26 of the Principles for more information on other forms of support for local communities.

Recommendations

11. Where possible, KCBC and the PCOs should continue to support funding applications that clearly demonstrate outcomes that have long-lasting positive impacts for communities. Applications that clearly demonstrate a pathway to ensuring the sustainability of a project beyond the funded period should be particularly supported.
12. KCBC and the PCOs (and other stakeholders, including Foundation Scotland and SPR) should particularly consider ways in which information about the long-term benefits of projects and how they can be achieved can be shared across the area of benefit; this might encourage those communities/ individuals/households that have not yet engaged to do so, thereby enhancing the lasting legacy of the Fund across a wider area.
13. If a point is reached when PCOs have addressed the priorities set out in their CAP through funded projects, this may be a good time for them, KCBC and SPR to consider altering the distribution of funding between primary and non-primary communities in order to increase the legacy of the funding across the wider area of benefit.
14. It may be appropriate for KCBC and the PCOs, in consultation with local communities across the area of benefit, to consider designing a more ambitious and creative funding strategy which might move beyond grant-funding to consider other mechanisms for supporting the rural regeneration and sustainability of communities in Wigtownshire and Girvan and South Carrick.

Annex 1: Copy of the survey

Review of the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Fund

Introductory text

The Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund supports projects benefitting communities in Wigtownshire (Dumfries and Galloway) and South Carrick (South Ayrshire). The fund comes from annual payments from Kilgallioch Windfarm which is owned and operated by ScottishPower Renewables (SPR).

Approximately £1.2 million is available each year for the operational life of the windfarm, anticipated to be 25 years, with 60% of the fund shared across Old Luce, New Luce, Kirkcowan and Barrhill (the primary communities). The remaining 40% is made available across the wider area. [Option to click to view a map of the primary communities and wider area].

In this survey, 'Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund' refers to all the arrangements provided via the SPR Kilgallioch Windfarm community benefit monies, including the Kilgallioch Community Fund (wider area fund) and the arrangements with the Primary Community Organisations (which are New Luce Community Trust, Old Luce Community Council, Kirkcowan Development Trust and Barrhill Community Interest Company).

The survey is being undertaken independently by Scotland's Rural College (SRUC). Your answers to the questions will help SRUC review how the fund is meeting the current needs and future aspirations of the communities it serves. SRUC's report will help the Kilgallioch Community Benefit Company (KCBC) decide if any changes are needed to the way the fund operates and its priorities, to maximise lasting impact for communities in the area of benefit.

The project is being funded by KCBC. The data we collect from you is confidential and will be stored securely; any personal data will be destroyed after one year. Data will only be used for the purposes of this project and will only be reported to KCBC in a summarised format. This ensures that any personal information that could identify you is removed before the data is passed on to KCBC. We will not attribute responses to individuals or groups.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and on the basis that you have sufficient understanding of the project and who is undertaking it. You may exit the survey at any time by closing your browser – your answers will not be saved or sent to SRUC. If you would like to stop the survey and complete at a later time you can click on the 'Finish Later' button at the bottom of the survey page. To navigate through the survey please use the 'Next' and 'Previous' buttons found at the bottom of the survey page – Please do not use the back button on your browser. By clicking on the 'Next' button below you are agreeing to participate in the survey.

If you have any questions about this survey please contact Abigail Williams abigail.williams@sruc.ac.uk. For further information, SRUC's Privacy Policy can be found [here](#).

List of questions

Section A: Background information

This section collects general information about you.

1. Which community do you live in?
2. How long have you lived there?

3. How old are you?
4. Are you male or female?
5. Are you completing this on behalf of a community organisation/group, on behalf of a household, or as an individual? (please name the organisation)
6. Are you a member or Director of KCBC?
7. Does your community have a Community Action Plan or other Local Community Plan?

Section B: Awareness of the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund

This section asks about your awareness of the fund and the fund's priorities, which are to:

- Engage and empower young people, increase employment opportunities for young people and/or attract young families to the area
- Reduce poverty and disadvantage
- Improve connectivity, including transport, access to services and opportunities
- Improve quality of life, health and well-being
- Build capacity for local groups and promote community spirit
- Build sustainable community assets, including capital assets
- Promote, protect and celebrate natural and cultural heritage

8. Had you heard of the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund before completing this survey?
 - a. How do you know about the fund and the projects it supports?
9. How important are each of the fund's priorities in the community where you live?
10. Are there any priorities for the community where you live that are not included in the list?

Section C: Experience of the fund

This section asks you about your experience of applying to the fund and delivering successful projects (where applicable). If you have been responsible for/involved in multiple applications (either for the same or different organisations/households) you can complete this section for each application if you wish (up to a maximum of 4), but you are not required to do so.

If you choose to just answer this section about one of the applications you have been responsible for or involved in, please tell us about the most recent application.

11. Have you or the group you represent applied to the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund?
 - a. What project/activity did you apply for funding for?
 - b. Why did you apply to this fund?
 - c. Has anything prevented you or the group you are part of from applying to the fund?
 - d. What type of funding did you apply for?
 - e. How do you rate the application process? Please tell us about the different parts of the process.

- f. What, if anything, could be changed to make the application process more straightforward?
- g. Was your application successful?
 - i. Did you think that the feedback you received for an unsuccessful application was [options from very helpful to very unhelpful]?
 - ii. How much money was awarded to your group?
 - iii. We would like to know about match funding received by your project. Please can you tell us whether your project was awarded match funding?
 - iv. Did your award have any conditions that needed to be met? (for example, confirmation of match funding, provision of quotes, confirming adequate insurance/storage arrangements in place, submitting outstanding documentation,) etc.
 - Did you experience any challenges with meeting the award conditions?
 - v. Did you experience any issues with payment of the award to your group?
 - Please tell us about the issue(s) (e.g. in relation to payment timings, processing, etc.)
 - vi. Please tell us about the reporting requirements for your project. Was this appropriate?
 - vii. Please tell us about the reporting requirements for the match funding in your project (if applicable).
 - viii. Have you received help/ support with pre-application enquiries, completing the application form, delivering the project, reporting requirements, other?
 - ix. Will your project be sustained beyond the funding period?
 - How have/will you sustain/ed it?
 - If no, or you are not sure, what would need to happen for it to be sustainable?
12. Would you like to repeat this section for another project/ organisation/ household? [participants are able to repeat Section C for up to four projects/applications].

Section D: Impacts of the fund

This section asks you about the impacts of the fund and the benefits it has brought to communities.

13. Has the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund had any positive impacts on your community?
 - a. Please can you list up to 5 positive impacts the fund has brought to your community?
14. Has the Kilgallioch Windfarm Community Benefit Fund had any positive impacts on other communities in the area?

- a. Please can you list up to 5 positive impacts the fund has brought to other communities in the area?
- 15. We'd like to find out here about the benefits from funded projects. Have you been involved in a successful application to the fund?
 - a. Please list up to 5 direct benefits of your project(s) to your group(s) or household.
 - b. Please list up to 5 wider economic, social or environmental benefits of your project to your community.
- 16. A report on the impact of the fund was published in 2020. Have you seen the report?
 - a. Do you have any feedback on the report? We would welcome any comments you have.
- 17. How well do you think the fund links with your local Community Action Plan (if your community has one)?
 - a. How do you think these links could be strengthened to bring benefits for your community?

Section E: The future of the fund

This section asks for your thoughts about the future of the fund.

- 18. Do you think there is anything that could be changed with the fund to meet new challenges or opportunities associated with the Covid-19 pandemic?
- 19. Do you have any thoughts about how the positive impacts of the fund could be supported/enhanced in the future?
- 20. In 20 years' time, what differences do you think the fund will have made to where you live?
- 21. Is the geographic area covered by the fund still appropriate?
 - a. Please provide any additional comments regarding the geographic area of the fund.
- 22. Please provide any other feedback you think would help improve the support to, and impact for, Wigtownshire and South Carrick in the future.
- 23. If you would be happy to be contacted by a member of the research team to talk further about this research, please enter your email address/phone number.

Annex 2: Interview questions

Interview questions were tailored to suit the type of interviewee – not all questions would be relevant (e.g. if the interviewee had not applied to the fund).

Introduction and preamble

Thank participant. Introduce yourself. Recap details from invitation email:

SRUC is carrying out research for the Kilgallioch Community Benefit Company (KCBC) to review how the fund is meeting the current needs and future aspirations of the communities it serves. SRUC's report will help KCBC decide if any changes are needed to the way the fund operates and its priorities, to maximise lasting impact for communities in the area of benefit. We have conducted an online survey and we are now keen to explore some themes in more detail.

Consent

Check they have read, signed and returned the consent form and information sheet (sent in advance by email). If no, go through the consent form verbally and confirm consent.

Check if they have any questions about the form/information sheet.

Confirm permission to record interview.

Background

1. Which community do you live in and how long have you lived there?
2. How do you know about the fund and the projects it supports?

Priorities of the fund

The community fund has seven priorities (listed on participant information sheet): engage and empower young people; reduce poverty and disadvantage; improve connectivity and transport etc.; improve quality of life and wellbeing; build capacity for local groups; build sustainable community assets; promote, protect natural and cultural heritage (summarised).

3. Are there any priorities for the community that you live in that are not on the list?
 - Prompt to suggest other priorities
 - Prompt to say if any are not priorities in their community
4. Do you know if your community has a Community Action Plan or other Local Community Plan?
 - Prompt to ask if any plan has similar or different priorities to those of the fund

Project impacts and application process

5. Can you tell me a bit more about the funded project (or projects) that you have been involved with? Or, if not involved directly, comments about projects in community/aware of elsewhere.
 - Prompt to understand why they applied to this fund and not another one
 - Prompt to confirm which type of funding they applied for
6. Can you tell me about your experience of the application process?
 - Prompt to understand how easy it was
 - Prompt to check if anything could have been done differently (e.g. complexity of the process, application routes)

- Prompt for any comments about the feedback they received
 - Prompt for any other issues
7. Can you tell me about how the money from the fund has been/will be used?
 8. How will you sustain the project beyond the current funding? (or understand how it has been sustained if funding already ended)
 - Prompt to see if they have sought additional funding and, if yes, from where
 9. What will be the legacy of the project(s)?
 - Prompt to consider economic impacts, social impacts, possible future impacts
 - Prompt for wider benefits in the community
 10. Beyond your project, are you aware of any positive impacts of the fund on other communities in the area?
 - Prompt for specific impacts and locations
 - Prompt to understand why types of groups have benefitted most
 - Prompt to understand if any groups have been excluded

The future of the fund

11. Do you have any thoughts about how the positive impacts of the fund could be supported/enhanced in the future?
 - Prompt to explore if the fund is addressing issues seen as important locally and how to ensure positive impacts in that regard
 - Prompt to consider changes to the funding mechanism/process
 - Prompt to reflect back to fund priorities
 - Prompt to think about new beneficiaries/who could benefit who hasn't already
12. Is the geographic area covered by the fund still appropriate (refer to map in information sheet)?
 - Prompt related to capacity of communities to apply, balance of allocation, core communities, etc.
13. Do you think there is anything that could be changed with the fund to meet new challenges or opportunities associated with the Covid-19 pandemic?