

The Highland Council

Agenda Item	8
Report No	SCC/23/25

Committee: Sutherland

Date: 1 September 2025

Report Title: Community Regeneration Fund Assessment of Applications

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 To present current funding requests from Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) allocation for discussion and decision by Sutherland Members.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:-

- i. **Consider** the CRF applications presented and agree whether to approve, defer or reject each application. An approval of funding should detail the amount approved and outline any conditions of funding that Members wish to attach to the approval over and above the required technical conditions. A deferral would allow an applicant to resubmit the current application at a future date with updated information or for the project to be approved subject to further funding becoming available. A rejection would mean that the application will not proceed and any future application to the fund should be brought forward initially as a new expression of interest or application;
- ii. **Agree** the approved CRF grant award for each application up to the value of the available area allocation;
- iii. **Agree** to approve £250,000 CRF towards a Development Officer Support Scheme as set out in Appendix 3; and
- iv. **Agree** by homologation to approve £48,134 for project CRF4152 - Ardvreck Castle.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** – Sutherland area has available funding of £1,092,918.46 from the current CRF allocation. Grant requests under consideration total £767,940.11 therefore there are no resource implications in approving the CRF funding award as requested.
- 3.2 **Risk** - A balanced approach to risk is necessary when disbursing grant funds as sometimes it is necessary if a community led project is to proceed, to advance grant payment. Factors such as past knowledge of and project experience of the grant recipient, release of funds related to invoices/works completion certificates etc are considered in such assessments.
- 3.3 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** - No risks arising directly from this report. Risks within projects are identified and managed on a project-by-project basis by the applicant organisation.
- 3.4 **Gaelic** - No risks arising directly from this report. Risks within projects are identified and managed on a project-by-project basis by the applicant organisation.

4 Impacts

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 A separate screening for impact for each application is not required, however consideration of impacts for equalities, socio-economic impact and consideration of the impact on the individual community is part of the assessment criteria and included within the assessment report. This supports the decision-making process.

5 Background

- 5.1 Community Regeneration Funding is an umbrella term for a number of funds that are available for communities/organisations to access in Highland. It currently comprises elements of the Highland Coastal Communities Fund (HCCF) and the Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP), both of which are Scottish Government Funding streams to support economic regeneration and sustainable development in Highland. Area Committees are awarded devolved allocations according to approved formulae and decision making on which projects should receive funding sits with elected Members.

5.2 Broad eligibility criteria for the fund are as follows:-

All projects are expected to be able to meet at least one of the following priorities:-

- increasing community resilience;
- tackling poverty & inequality;
- addressing the causes of rural depopulation;
- helping economic recovery & sustaining growth; or
- tackling the climate emergency and working towards net zero

Projects should be able to demonstrate that they are:-

- sustainable/viable;
- providing value for money;
- providing additionality; and
- able to evidence positive impacts and wide community benefit

6 Assessment of Applications

6.1 Applications brought to this committee meeting were either previously submitted to the Highland Strategic LAG for consideration for CLLD (Community Led Local Development) funding or invited to apply to area funds following submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the same CLLD funding round or to the CRF Project Officer.

6.2 Within Sutherland, the following funding for 2025/26 is shown in the table below:-

HCCF – tranche 5	Revenue or Capital	£491,399.77
HCCF – tranche 6	Revenue or Capital	£550,865.25
PBIP (confirmed to date) 2025/26	Capital Only	£50,653.44

Therefore, presently Members have a total of £1,092,918.46 available to allocate.

6.3 A total of 10 projects, including the Development Officer Support Scheme, are under consideration by Members today with a total grant request value of £767,940.11. A small number of projects that were invited to make an application for funding by Members, have asked for more time to develop their application. They will be brought to a future area committee meeting once they have been submitted and assessed as eligible. To aid Members in their decision making, the following appendices are provided to this report:-

- **Appendix 1** – Project Application Form; and
- **Appendix 2** - RAG Summary Spreadsheet

RAG status on key criteria is based on the application form and supplementary information provided during the application process. All applications presented are technically eligible - if any criteria are marked as red this does not indicate an eligibility concern but reflects the quality of information provided or outstanding requirements that will require technical conditions to be applied to any award of funding.

6.4 The following projects that were invited to make an application for funding by Members, have asked for more time to develop their application. They will be brought to a future area committee meeting once they have been submitted and assessed as eligible.

- Dornoch & District Community Association – Community Centre Heating; and
- North West Highlands Geopark Limited – Upgrading The Rock Stop Visitor Centre – Celebrating 20 years of the Geopark

7 Homologation of Application

7.1 CRF4152 – Ardvreck Castle Visitor Facilities was invited forward by members following an Expression of Interest. The project has secured a time-sensitive match funding package, which was at risk of being withdrawn if the remaining funding was not approved and the project could not commence. As the match funding must be spent by March 2026, it was essential for the project to begin promptly to meet the timelines outlined in their application - the Chair of the Sutherland Committee was supportive of this proposal. The full application and assessment are included in the appendices, with the project aligning with the Sutherland Area Place Plan.

8 Development Officer Support Scheme

8.1 The Sutherland Area Place Plan identifies key challenges including depopulation, limited access to services, and housing shortages, while also recognising strengths such as strong community engagement and a vibrant third sector. Development Trusts, Community Companies, and voluntary groups play a central role in addressing these issues, though they continue to face significant funding pressures. To support their essential work and ensure alignment with the priorities of the Area Place Plan, it is proposed that members ringfence £250,000 of Community Regeneration Funding for Sutherland-based Trusts and Community Development Companies to bid into. Governance arrangements are detailed in **Appendix 3**.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 13 August 2025

Author: Fiona Cameron, CRF Programme Manager
Chloe Murray, Project Officer

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Project Application Forms
Appendix 2 – Project Technical Assessment RAG Summary
Appendix 3 – Development Officer Support Scheme

Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) Application Form

(June 2025 – CRF Area Funds)

Key considerations



Please refer to the **Application Guidance** (link below) and **Fair Work First Summary Guidance** when completing the application form as there is important supplementary information you need to be aware of. Answer the questions concisely, describing clearly and directly what the project you are seeking funding for is delivering. Please do not exceed the word limit given.

To ensure you have the best opportunity to score well during the assessment, please refer to the **Assessment Criteria Matrix** (link below) when completing the application form.

In this current round of CRF, we are seeking well-developed and robust projects that are ready to commence, and can complete within 12 months of funding being awarded.

The deadline for application submission is 9am on Friday 4th July 2025.

Double click the icons below to download the documents. If you have any issues with downloading the documents, please contact us at communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk

<u>Application Guidance</u>	<u>Assessment Criteria Matrix</u>
 CRF_Application_Guidance (Sutherland 2025)	 CRF Assessment Criteria (Sutherland 2025)

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1	Project reference number	CRF4021
1.2	Organisation	Clyne Heritage Society
1.3	Project title	Old Clyne School redevelopment – Fit Out Phase
1.4	Summary of project you wish to be funded (max 250 words)	<p>Clyne Heritage Society is nearing completion of its £5m regeneration of the derelict Old Clyne School to create Brora Heritage – a new, independent community heritage centre and museum at the heart of the village. Located directly on the A9 and North Coast 500 tourist route, it will become a major year-round cultural and tourism hub for East Sutherland.</p> <p>Opening in mid-August 2025, the centre will celebrate Brora's remarkable industrial, social, and environmental history. It will also provide flexible, accessible spaces for community use, learning, volunteering, and creative activity.</p>

		<p>The building will be handed over in July 2025, and we now seek CRF support for the vital fit-out phase – the final step in making the centre fully operational.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installing museum interpretation, immersive displays, and digital storytelling. • Equipping community areas for workshops, talks, and intergenerational learning. • Fitting out the café and shop to support local makers, producers, and suppliers. • Purchasing essential operating equipment, from IT systems to donation boxes. • Creating outdoor interpretation, including a striking tribute to local, world-renowned salmon fly-tyer, Megan Boyd. <p>Once open, Brora Heritage will drive economic regeneration by attracting thousands of visitors annually, boosting local spend on food, retail, and accommodation in the village and wider area. It will support at least 10 year-round jobs and work closely with local suppliers, makers, and the travel trade to retain and grow value in the area.</p> <p>With CRF support, we can complete this transformational project – securing Brora’s heritage for future generations, while delivering a thriving cultural and economic asset for the region.</p> <p>Cost below is for fit out (Total project costs are £4.98M)</p>	
1.5	Project costs	Total project cost	£762,898.88
		Match funding	£662,898.88
		CRF grant requested	£100,000
1.6	Start date	Ready now!	
1.7	End date (<i>max 12 months from start date</i>)	31/08/2025	
1.8	Please confirm you have read and understood the CRF privacy notice	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION 2: CONTACT AND ORGANISATION DETAILS		
2.1	Organisation	Clyne Heritage Society
2.2	Address and postcode	Brora Heritage, Victoria Road, Brora, Sutherland, KW9 6LN
2.3	Main contact name	
2.4	Position in the organisation	

2.5	Contact number		
2.6	Email address		
2.7	Website address		
2.8	Organisation type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Company limited by guarantee
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Constituted group
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Public body
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Charity
		<input type="checkbox"/>	SCIO
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):
2.9	Organisation registered number	Charity No SC028193 Company No SC557763	
2.10	Is the organisation VAT registered?	By confirming this, you are declaring the organisation VAT status as per HMRC. If this changes at any time during the project, you <u>must</u> notify the CRF Team as this may affect the offer of grant. Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
2.11	If the organisation is VAT registered, please provide the number.	464 7497 46	
2.12	Is the VAT related to the project being reclaimed from HMRC?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whole
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Partial
		<input type="checkbox"/>	None
2.13	Provide details of VAT exemptions.	We are able to recover 86% of VAT on capital fit out.	

SECTION 3: PROJECT DETAILS			
3.1	Please confirm the location of the project including post code.	KW9 6LN	
3.2	Are you applying on behalf of a partnership project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3.3	Is there a partnership agreement in place?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3.4	Is your organisation the lead applicant?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.5	Do you own the land or asset?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.6	Are you leasing the land or asset? If so, what is the term left on your current lease agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> Years Months </div>	
3.7	If ownership or lease agreements are not in place, please provide details if applied for and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	N/A	
3.8	Does the project require planning permission or other statutory regulatory consents?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

3.9	If consents are required, please provide details if applied and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	All in place: 22-00914-FUL (3rd May 2022)
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SECTION 4: THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

4.1	List the main activities required to deliver the project including timescales.
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Activity name	Achieve by (date)
Fit out retail area and café	09/08/2025
Fit out Museum	31/08/2025
Fit out remainder of building	31/08/2025

4.2	(a) What local need or opportunity will the project address?
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Clyne Heritage Society's redevelopment of the derelict Old Clyne School to become 'Brora Heritage' addresses an urgent local need and delivers a transformational opportunity for Brora and the wider East Sutherland area -socially, culturally, and economically.

Brora has never had a dedicated, permanent, fully equipped museum or heritage centre. Yet its unique Highland industrial history, involving the mining of coal and using it in the manufacture of salt, brick, whisky, and textiles, together with herring and salmon fishing, the Clearances and crofting, is of national significance.

For almost three decades, we have filled the gap by delivering popular, well-attended heritage events, activities and projects. However, without a permanent home, our ambitions to expand and better our offer have been severely curtailed. Access to our collection is limited, interpretation is piecemeal, opportunities for schools, families, and the wider community to engage with heritage are restricted and the temporary facilities from which to hold our activities are unsuitable and remote. Meanwhile, thousands of visitors pass through the area each year, unaware of Brora's rich heritage due to a lack of interpretation infrastructure.

The project directly meets this need by transforming a derelict eyesore into a purpose-built, highly visible and accessible space to house exhibitions, run workshops and talks, support volunteering, and make heritage a core part of Brora's identity and everyday life.

In parallel, the project responds to an urgent economic opportunity. Located directly on the A9 and the North Coast 500, Brora sits on one of Scotland's busiest visitor routes. But despite this, the village lacks a high-quality, all-weather attraction to encourage tourists to stop, explore, and spend locally. Brora Heritage will fill that gap, drawing visitors into the village, extending dwell time, and supporting local businesses.

The project will create at least 10 year-round jobs, plus seasonal and freelance roles. It will underpin local enterprise through its café, retail space, and event programme, all showcasing local produce, crafts, and talent. Heritage-based tourism will help offset the challenges of a seasonal economy, and provide new career, training, and volunteering routes, particularly important for young people and older residents in a rural context.

Socially, the project meets deep-rooted needs for community cohesion, wellbeing, and inclusion. It will offer a welcoming space for intergenerational activity, learning, and collaboration, and provide the infrastructure needed for people of all ages and abilities to participate in local culture. In doing so, it helps tackle rural isolation and encourages local pride of place.

The project also delivers major environmental and placemaking benefits. It brings a long-derelict, C-listed landmark back into sustainable public use, preventing further decay while promoting low-carbon reuse. The finished building will be energy-efficient and accessible, and its outdoor elements, including interpretation, sculptures and installations, will enhance the visual character of the village gateway.

This is not just a museum project, it is a cultural and economic renewal for Brora. By anchoring our future in the strength of our past, Brora Heritage will provide enduring benefit for residents, visitors, and the wider region.

(b) Has this need been recognised in a local place plan?

Yes. The need for a permanent heritage centre in Brora, and the wider regeneration aims of the Brora Heritage project, has been clearly and repeatedly identified in formal place plans, community-led strategies, and regional policy frameworks. These documents confirm strong strategic alignment between the project's aims and the wider vision for Sutherland and the Highlands.

The most recent and direct expression of community priorities is the **Sutherland Place Plan**, developed in collaboration with local communities and informed by extensive engagement. The Plan identifies the importance of celebrating local identity, investing in sustainable tourism, regenerating disused buildings, and supporting community-led culture and heritage projects. It highlights Brora as a key settlement and explicitly refers to the redevelopment of the Old Clyne School as a major opportunity for heritage-led regeneration. The project aligns with Place Plan ambitions to retain population, create jobs, enhance cultural life, and ensure that communities are empowered to shape and deliver their own future.

This recognition builds on the spatial zoning of the Old Clyne School for community and cultural use in the **Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan, 2018)**. This formal policy allocation followed public consultation and supports the longstanding local aspiration to create a heritage centre on this site.

At the Highland-wide level, the project aligns with policies within the **Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP)**, particularly those promoting the re-use of vacant buildings, community resilience, and sustainable rural development. It also responds to the ambitions in the **Highland Community Planning Partnership's Local Outcome Improvement Plan**, which identifies heritage and tourism as key themes for improving wellbeing and economic participation in rural areas.

Brora Heritage also contributes to the objectives of the **Highland Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan (2020–2030)**, which calls for improved all-weather visitor attractions, especially in under-served areas like East Sutherland. The centre will encourage visitors to stop in Brora, increase dwell time, and stimulate the local economy — all recognised as essential to making tourism work for Highland communities.

Environmental alignment is also strong. The project promotes adaptive reuse, reducing demolition and construction waste in line with climate goals. It supports environmental education through interpretation of Brora's landscape and industries. These aims reflect the goals of **Highland Nature: Biodiversity Action Plan 2021–2026**, which champions public engagement with nature and sustainable land-use heritage.

Though not a food project, Brora Heritage will feature a café showcasing local produce and stories of historical food production (e.g. salt, herring, mutton, beef and oats). This aligns with the **Highland Food Growing Strategy**, which promotes understanding of local food heritage as part of community wellbeing.

The project is also consistent with the **Scottish Government's Place Principle**, and with ambitions emerging from **Local Place Plans** now being developed by other Highland communities. It demonstrates best practice in community ownership, place-based regeneration, and cultural participation.

In short, our Brora Heritage project is not only recognised in key local plans, it actively fulfils their objectives. It is a shovel-ready, community-led response to needs identified by planning policy, community consultation, and regional strategy alike.

4.3	How do you know there is local support for the project? How can you evidence this? Provide evidence as supporting documents as requested at 8.2
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Our Brora Heritage project is strongly and demonstrably supported by the community. This support is wide-ranging, sustained over many years in the project development, and evidenced by formal consultation, local and visitor endorsements, volunteer engagement, and public participation in our activities.

We have undertaken extensive engagement over several years, including surveys, drop-in events, public exhibitions, and informal consultation. All have confirmed strong local appetite for a permanent heritage centre, and a desire to see the Old Clyne School repurposed for community and cultural use. The project is rooted in ideas raised by the community itself, and has evolved in response to what people have told us they want and need.

Our own consultations have reinforced this. Residents (and visitors) consistently expressed strong support for a permanent, fully accessible heritage centre with:

- A community resource for events, exhibitions, and heritage learning;
- A base for volunteer activity, youth engagement, and lifelong learning;
- Access to collections and stories that reflect local identity and pride.
- Space for community events, exhibitions, and learning;
- Opportunities for all ages to participate in and benefit from local heritage;
- A year-round visitor attraction to boost the local economy.

Many people commented on the importance of creating year-round activity in the village, and on the value of Brora's unique Highland industrial past as something to celebrate and promote.

This support is not passive. We now have over 40 active volunteers, many of whom have become involved specifically because of the Brora Heritage project. Others continue to donate items, photographs, and stories to our growing collection. This reflects genuine local ownership of the vision.

Our events regularly attract strong numbers - talks average around 50 attendees, with peaks of over 90. Heritage walks draw 30+ participants, and our annual magazine, The Clyne Chronicle, is requested each year by the National Library of Scotland. Our self-published local history books have sold thousands of copies to date. These figures demonstrate consistent demand for our work and the local appetite to engage with Brora's heritage.

The project has been formally supported by both Brora Community Council and Brora Development Trust, and is recognised by Highland Council through its inclusion in the CaSPlan. We have also received over 50 letters of support from a wide range of individuals and organisations, including:

- Elected councillors, MSPs, and MPs;
- Schools, tourism businesses, and local businesses;
- National and regional heritage bodies;
- Voluntary community organisations;
- Site neighbours.

These letters describe Brora Heritage as a long-overdue development and a much-needed economic, educational, and cultural resource for the area. Many stakeholders have also offered future partnership and collaboration.

This support is further evidenced by community fundraising contributions, in-kind offers, and public visibility. Brora Heritage is not being delivered to the community - it is being delivered with the community.

As a well-established and respected organisation with a strong track record, Clyne Heritage Society is trusted to deliver. Our ability to sustain engagement and volunteer support over decades is a key indicator of confidence in our work - and in this project's future success.

4.4	Outputs and outcomes – Please refer to the application guidance for further information and a definition of what constitutes “outputs” and “outcomes”.	
	(a) Please select below ONE of the CRF main strategic objectives that you believe your project’s outputs and outcomes will best align with.	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Increasing community resilience
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling poverty and inequality
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Addressing causes of rural depopulation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Helping economic recovery and sustaining growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling the climate emergency and working towards net zero	

	(b) What are the immediate and short-term outputs that your project will achieve? How will you measure them?
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We are a little confused by the apparent difference in the question numbers in this section (4.4) compared to those in the Guidance (see table, below).

Question No	Application form states:	Guidance states:
4.4 (a)	Single choice tick box	Outputs
4.4 (b)	immediate and short-term outputs	Outcomes and legacy
4.4 (c)	outcomes, benefits, and legacy	Single choice tick box

Thus, we have answered the actual questions as they stand in this application form.

The immediate and short-term outputs of the Brora Heritage project will be significant in terms of economic recovery, community benefit, and social value. These outputs relate to the final fit-out and mobilisation of our new community heritage centre and café at the Old Clyne School in Brora, enabling us to open fully to the public from late summer 2025.

Key outputs within the first 6–12 months:

1. Employment Creation

- Creation of 10 year-round jobs, including museum, café, visitor services, community engagement roles.
- Additional seasonal, freelance, and casual opportunities during events and peak visitor periods.

Measurement: staff records, HR data, and payroll information, reported quarterly.

2. New Visitor Attraction Opened

- Launch of a new, accessible, highly visible, year-round visitor attraction for East Sutherland, located directly on the A9/North Coast 500 route.
- Target: 16,000 visitors in Year 1, rising in subsequent years.

Measurement: confirmed opening date; visitor management systems active; launch press/media coverage; CRM and donation systems live.

3. Stimulated Local Spend

- Increased footfall in the village, supporting local shops, accommodation providers, cafés, and service businesses.
- Brora Heritage’s own café and shop will prioritise local suppliers and creative crafters.

Measurement: baseline and follow-up local business surveys, income monitoring, and supplier data.

4. **Volunteer Engagement**

- Support for 40+ core volunteers and opportunities for new participation through museum operations, events, and guided walks.
- Target: 1,500 volunteer hours in Year 1.

Measurement: volunteer sign-ins, time tracking, and feedback forms.

5. **Community Use of Facilities**

- Flexible indoor and outdoor spaces for use by schools, community groups, artists, and local businesses.
- Target: 40+ community bookings/events within Year 1.

Measurement: booking system records and participant feedback.

6. **Increased Heritage and Learning Access**

- Delivery of school sessions, talks, workshops, and outreach through a structured engagement programme.
- Target: 20+ heritage learning sessions within Year 1.

Measurement: session records, teacher/participant feedback, and engagement metrics.

7. **Increased Public Awareness and Pride of Place**

- Promotion of Brora's identity through new exhibitions, marketing campaigns, interpretation, and public art.

Measurement: audience engagement statistics, media coverage, and qualitative feedback.

8. **Increased Visibility and Access to Local Heritage**

- Public access to Brora's industrial, social, and environmental history through digital storytelling, immersive exhibits, and hands-on displays.

Measurement: visitor feedback forms, digital analytics, media coverage.

Our monitoring and evaluation framework will include baseline data collection at opening, followed by quarterly reviews, annual reports, and stakeholder feedback. Evidence will be gathered through:

- Visitor numbers and postcode analysis;
- Financial and trading data;
- Volunteer records;
- Surveys and testimonials from visitors, community groups, and local businesses.

These outputs will provide a strong foundation for long-term outcomes:

- sustained economic impact;
- heritage preservation;
- inclusive access to culture;
- increased wellbeing across East Sutherland.

We anticipate that Brora Heritage will deliver immediate results and long-lasting social, cultural, and economic returns for the people of Brora and the wider region.

(c) What do you think the outcomes of your project will be and how will you measure them? Please note an outcome is the longer-term change that your project will achieve. What will be the lasting benefits and legacy?

Brora Heritage will deliver a lasting legacy of cultural, social, and economic benefit for Brora and the wider East Sutherland area. **It will ensure the long-term sustainability and guarantee the future of heritage in Brora.** The fit-out phase will enable the vital opening and operation of the centre from late summer 2025, but the longer-term outcomes go far beyond simply opening the doors.

1. Increased Access to Culture and Heritage

The centre will be the only permanent, purpose-designed heritage venue fronting onto the entire length of the A9 from Falkirk to Thurso, and eastern leg of the NC500 tourist route, offering exhibitions, talks, workshops and community and visitor events all year round. This will provide meaningful access to local heritage for people of all ages and backgrounds, particularly those previously excluded due to lack of provision or accessibility.

Measurement:

- Visitor feedback and satisfaction surveys;
- Annual visitor numbers and demographics;
- Programme diversity and number of cultural events delivered.

2. Strengthened Local Economy through Heritage-Led Regeneration

By attracting visitors, supporting jobs, and showcasing local food and crafts, Brora Heritage will help diversify the local economy and reduce its dependence on seasonal tourism. It will support year-round employment and create new revenue opportunities for local producers, artists, and tour operators.

Measurement:

- Annual economic impact reports (including visitor spend estimates);
- Tracking the number and value of local suppliers and stockists;
- Monitoring of employment levels and freelance opportunities generated.

3. Improved Community Wellbeing and Social Connection

Brora Heritage will be a hub for inter-generational learning, volunteering, social activity and pride of place. It will address rural isolation by bringing people together around a shared love of place and history.

Measurement:

- Volunteer participation rates and satisfaction surveys;
- Feedback from community users and partners;
- Case studies of personal impact (e.g. from youth groups, older residents).

4. Lifelong Learning and Skills Development

The centre will offer educational opportunities for all ages, from school groups to adult learners, and support skills training through volunteering, digital engagement, tour guiding, event planning and more.

Measurement:

- Number and type of learning sessions delivered annually;
- Qualitative feedback from schools and learners;
- Tracking volunteer progression into employment or further training.

5. Sustainable Use of a Community Asset

Bringing the derelict Old Clyne School back into sustainable public use removes an eyesore at the northern gateway to the village, prevents further decay of a listed building and provides a long-term asset for community benefit.

Measurement:

- Annual operational and maintenance reviews;
- Energy use and sustainability indicators;
- Public use data and partner organisation bookings.

6. Lasting Cultural Legacy

Brora's unique Highland industrial heritage, formerly under-represented, will be preserved, celebrated and passed on. Our collections, oral histories and exhibitions will inspire future generations.

Measurement:

- Growth and use of our digital and physical archives;
- Partnership projects with schools, historians, and heritage organisations;
- Continued community donations of material and stories.

Brora Heritage will not only tell our history - it will be part of it. The long-term benefits will be a stronger economy, a more connected community, and a deeper sense of place for generations to come.

4.5 How will the project be supported/maintained/sustained after CRF funding?

This application to the Community Regeneration Fund seeks support for a specific and final phase of our £5m project: the fit-out and operational launch of Brora Heritage, a new, community-owned heritage centre and visitor attraction at the restored Old Clyne School. All other phases of capital redevelopment, including construction and major infrastructure, are now fully funded and nearing completion. Fit-out is shovel-ready from late July 2025, and Brora Heritage will open to the public in late August 2025, subject to securing this final phase of funding.

The fit-out phase includes everything required to operate: museum displays and interpretation, shop and café equipment, IT systems, digital infrastructure, and community-use furnishings. It also allows us to fully equip the centre to operate as a sustainable, high-quality visitor attraction and community hub.

Post-CRF Sustainability

Once the centre is operational, it will be fully self-supporting. This is underpinned by:

1. A Robust, Income-Generating Business Model

Clyne Heritage Society has developed a detailed 5-year Business Plan, reviewed by independent accountants, which projects a trading surplus from Year 1. Key income streams include:

- Admission income (including Gift Aid);
- Group tour bookings with travel trade;
- Café and retail sales (with strong local supplier support);
- Venue hires for meetings, events, and workshops;
- Heritage programming, talks, and paid experiences;
- Digital donations and online income;
- Grant support for programme activity (not core costs).

Income is based on conservative visitor projections (16,000 in Year 1) and draws on lessons from comparable Highland attractions. This business model covers all core running costs, including utilities, supplies, insurance, and staffing.

2. Staffing and Operational Costs

Post-opening, we will sustain 10 year-round posts, including visitor services, heritage curation, retail, café and community engagement. These roles are directly supported both by income from day-to-day operations and grant-funding. Freelance specialists and additional seasonal staff will be brought in based on need and programme activity.

To ensure resilience, we are also exploring funding streams for specific heritage engagement posts (e.g. through Museums Galleries Scotland, National Lottery Heritage Fund, or Skills Development Scotland), but these will supplement, not underpin, our core operations.

3. Long-Term Maintenance Planning

A scheduled maintenance and renewal plan has been developed for the building and fit-out. As the Society owns the asset outright, we retain full control over ongoing repairs and have built in contingency for renewal

of plant, equipment, and interpretation. The restored building incorporates high-efficiency renewable heating and electricity generation, insulation, and energy systems to minimise running costs.

4. Community and Volunteer Support

With over 40 active volunteers already engaged, and more expressing interest as we approach opening, our community involvement model adds capacity and reduces pressure on staff costs. Volunteers contribute to front-of-house roles, guided walks, exhibitions, events, and archival work.

In summary, CRF will enable the final, crucial step in a major capital regeneration project. Once operational, Brora Heritage will be maintained through a tested business model, strong governance, and deep local ownership, ensuring it thrives far beyond the CRF-funded phase.

4.6 Describe how you intend to mitigate negative environmental impacts that may arise in delivering the project. It may be that the project specifically seeks to address climate change issues or implement net zero ambitions/solutions.

Environmental responsibility and mitigation has been forefront in every design and planning stage of the Old Clyne School regeneration project. This final fit-out phase will continue that approach as part of our commitment to net zero ambitions and sustainable development.

Minimising Environmental Impact During Fit-Out

The fit-out phase will prioritise environmentally responsible procurement, reuse, and design. Wherever possible, we will:

- Source sustainable materials with low embedded carbon;
- Reuse or repurpose existing equipment and furnishings, where safe and appropriate (including restoring historic items in features and external artworks);
- Choose display systems, furnishings, and fittings that are durable, modular, and locally sourced to minimise transport emissions and waste;
- Work with contractors and suppliers who share our environmental values and can demonstrate low-carbon credentials during tendering;
- Select low-energy lighting, IT and AV systems, with power-saving.

Energy Efficiency and Low Carbon Operation

The capital redevelopment phase has already integrated energy-conscious measures into the building design. These include:

- A high-efficiency air-source heat pump system for heating;
- Photo-voltaic panels for electricity generation;
- LED lighting throughout with smart controls;
- High levels of insulation to improve thermal performance in the refurbished historic building;
- Mechanical heat recovery system;
- Building layout designed to maximise natural light and minimise energy demand.

All these features will contribute directly to our long-term carbon reduction strategy and keep operational energy use low for a facility of this size.

Promoting Low-Carbon Access and Active Travel

Brora Heritage is located within easy walking of Brora railway station and bus stops, and is easily accessible by foot or bicycle. Signage and interpretation installed during the fit-out phase will highlight these routes and encourage visitors to explore the village on foot.

We are also working with local schools and the travel trade to develop walking routes and walking tours, reducing the need for car or minibus transport for school visits and linking heritage to active travel and outdoor wellbeing.

Landscaping and Outdoor Interpretation

As part of our wider development plan, we are incorporating wildlife-friendly planting and native species into the landscaping around outdoor heritage features. Interpretation signage will include environmental stories from Brora's past, such as coal and salt production, and offer insight into how local industry is adapting to

future climate challenges. Historic items, such as Hunter's woollen mill machinery will be re-purposed as interesting industrial objects holding our site signage.

Policies and Monitoring

Clyne Heritage Society has adopted a Net Zero Action Plan, with clear goals on energy use, procurement, and visitor behaviour. Environmental impact is considered in all our governance and contracting processes.

In short, we recognise the importance of addressing environmental impact not just as a compliance issue, but as a core value of our organisation. Brora Heritage will model responsible heritage development—honouring the past while protecting the future.

4.7	In developing the project, explain how you have considered equalities issues and taken groups with protected characteristics into account in the development/delivery of the project. How will you ensure that no one is excluded or disadvantaged from benefitting from the project? Will the project target specific groups?
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Clyne Heritage Society has made a firm commitment to ensuring equality, diversity, and inclusion are embedded throughout the design, development, and delivery of the Brora Heritage project. Our objective is to ensure no individual or group is excluded or disadvantaged, in line with the Equality Act 2010 and best practice guidance for community and cultural venues. We want *everyone* to benefit from our project!

Inclusive Design and Physical Accessibility

Brora Heritage has been purpose-designed as an inclusive, fully accessible visitor attraction and community space. During the early design stage, **we consulted with the Sutherland Access Panel**, who reviewed and advised on accessibility features to ensure compliance with best practice and to meet the needs of people with a range of physical and sensory impairments.

Key design features include:

- Level access entrance, wide doorways and corridors, and step-free routes;
- A passenger lift to provide full access to both floors of the museum;
- Accessible toilets and seating throughout;
- Hearing loop systems, clear signage, and consideration for neurodiverse visitors through adaptable sound and lighting zones;
- Accessible interpretation, including large print, tactile and audio elements, and mixed-format storytelling to support varied learning styles and literacy levels.

These measures align with guidance from:

- Disability Equality Scotland – Holding Public Events
- Equality and Human Rights Commission – Accessible Design Guidance

Inclusive Programming and Participation

Our events, volunteering, and educational programming are intentionally inclusive, designed to accommodate:

- A wide age range, with intergenerational workshops and social history sessions;
- People with disabilities or long-term health conditions through adaptable formats and digital access;
- Individuals experiencing rural isolation, including older people and carers;
- Young people seeking cultural, social, and employment opportunities;
- Minority and under-represented groups who may not traditionally engage with heritage.

Delivery will be both in person and online, enabling access for those unable to travel or who prefer virtual participation. We will work with Brora Primary and Golspie High Schools, adult social care establishments (such as Brora Hub and Brora Learning Zone), and support organisations to ensure outreach to those least likely to access such resources independently.

Policy, Monitoring and Future Commitment

Clyne Heritage Society is finalising a formal Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and is committed to regular review and staff/volunteer training. Evaluation of our inclusive practice will form part of our annual reporting and visitor feedback.

We are following best practice outlined in:

- gov.scot – Engaging Communities
- Web Accessibility Guidance – MyGov.Scot

In summary, Brora Heritage is being developed as a place for everyone, where physical access, cultural inclusion, and respect for diversity are fundamental. Our approach ensures all groups, including those with protected characteristics, can actively benefit from, and shape, the project.

4.8 All applicants are required to provide a statement on how the organisation is committed to advancing the [Fair Work First Policy](#) including the ‘Real Living Wage’ and ‘Effective Workers Voice’ criteria. The statement should be agreed jointly by the employer and an appropriate workplace representative or a trade union representative if one is in place.

PLEASE NOTE- This statement is applicable to all groups and organisations even if you do not employ staff and/or only work with volunteers. Projects cannot progress without a signed statement - refer to the [Fair Work First guidance](#) for more information. Complete the following Fair Work First Statement and Declaration form and submit with the application. Double click the icon to download.



FWF statement and
declaration template.c

Have you provided a Fair Work First statement in a separate document with this application? Please ensure it is signed by an appropriate workplace representative.

Yes ☒ No ☐

Can you confirm if you have the Living Wage Accreditation or are planning to be certified?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Applied ☐

Is the Fair Work First statement on your organisation's website?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Do not have a website **(yet)** ☒

How many people do you employ or how many volunteers do you have?

6 staff and around 40 volunteers

Do you currently pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?

Yes ☒ No ☐ NA ☐

As part of your procurement assessment process, do you ensure that traders/suppliers also pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?

Yes ☐ No ☐ **Where we can**

How do you provide channels for Effective Voice in the workplace for staff and/or volunteers?

- ☒ Line Management Relationship
- ☒ Staff /Engagement Surveys
- ☐ Suggestions Schemes
- ☐ Intranet/Online Platforms
- ☒ Staff Forums / Networks
- ☐ Trade Union Recognition/Collective Bargaining

SECTION 5: PROJECT BUDGET

5.1 Main project expenditure – costs should be as accurate and current as possible from recent quotations or price comparisons.

Please refer to the guidance note on eligible expenditure. Only download and complete the overheads and management fees summary spreadsheet below, if you would like to claim more than 10% of total project costs as overheads.



CRF overheads and
management fees sun

Budget Heading	Detailed Costs	Revenue/Capital	Amount
Ground Floor			
Reception/Shop	Fitting out – various	Capital	£11,047.12
Reception Office	Fitting out – various	Capital	£6,561.00
Escape Stair Lobby	Fitting out – various	Capital	£250.00
Cleaners Cupboard	Fitting out – various	Capital	£755.00
Toilets	Fitting out – various	Capital	£1,166.00
Kitchen/Servery	Fitting out – various	Capital	£16,130.76
Café	Fitting out – various	Capital	£43,902.00
Museum	Fitting out – various	Capital	£413,681.00
		Sub-Total	£493,492.88
Upper Floor			
Project Room	Fitting out – various	Capital	£9,792.00
Cleaners Cupboard	Fitting out – various	Capital	£459.00
Education Room	Fitting out – various	Capital	£3,937.00
Toilets	Fitting out – various	Capital	£111.00
Staff Room	Fitting out – various	Capital	£7,089.00
Artefact Store	Fitting out – various	Capital	£6,393.00
Archive Store	Fitting out – various	Capital	£7,954.00
Landing	Fitting out – various	Capital	£702.00
		Sub-Total	£36,437.00
Externals			
Shed	Fitting out – various	Capital	£16,199.00
Signage	Fitting out – various	Capital	£13,404.00
Salt Pan	Fitting out – various	Capital	£17,970.00
Groundworks	Fitting out – various	Capital	£185,396.00
		Sub-Total	£232,969.00
Total revenue expenditure			£0.00
Total capital expenditure			£762,898.88
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS			£762,898.88

Is VAT included in these costs?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can you confirm that the costs above have not already been incurred or committed to?		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	Reasonableness of cost – Are the project costs listed in 5.1 based on valid quotes as per the procurement guidance provided? Please provide any quotes as supporting documents to this application.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	<div> <div>Please explain how your project will achieve value for money.</div> <div> <p>Our application to CRF for £100,000 is a vital part of a c£760k fit-out budget for Brora Heritage's new community heritage centre and museum.</p> <p>This grant leverages substantial prior investment in a c£5 million capital project, ensuring excellent value for money. Competitive procurement prioritises local suppliers and sustainable sourcing.</p> <p>The fit-out will enable a self-sustaining facility projected to attract 16,000 visitors in Year 1, support 10+ local jobs, and boost the local economy through tourism and community use. With strong governance and a verified business plan, the project promises lasting social and economic benefits, fully aligned with CRF's aims.</p> </div> </div>	
SECTION 6 – MATCH FUNDING (if applicable) Please note match funding for this round is not essential, however efforts to secure match funding for the project is reflected within the assessment criteria.		
6.1	Please provide details of any match funding applied for and whether it is awaiting a decision or confirmed.	
Name of funder		Confirmed? Date Confirmed or Decision Expected Amount £
Highlands & Islands Enterprise		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> £250,000
Garfield Weston Foundation		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> £50,000
E B Scotland (Landfill)		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> £20,000
Ena & Gordon Baxter Foundation		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> £15,000
Own funds		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> £327,898
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Total match funding		£662,898
CRF requested		£100,000
Total funding		£762,898
6.2	Will the project involve “in kind” support? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

6.3	If yes, please detail.	Countless (thousands) voluntary hours of planning, preparing and delivering the project over the last 16 years since the project was first mooted.
6.4	Please explain why public funding is required to deliver the project.	<p>Public funding is essential to deliver the final phase of our project because it fills the critical funding gap needed to complete the fit-out of the redeveloped Old Clyne School.</p> <p>While the c£5 million capital redevelopment has been largely secured through grants, donations, and partnerships, the final c£760k fit-out phase, covering museum displays, IT systems, furniture, visitor facilities, and landscaping cannot be fully financed through existing resources. Public funding, including the requested CRF grant, enables us to equip the centre with the infrastructure and lay out the grounds necessary for a high-quality, accessible visitor experience. Without this support, the project cannot be completed, seriously affecting its potential economic, cultural, and community benefits.</p> <p>As a community-led initiative, Brora Heritage relies on public investment to ensure the heritage centre becomes a sustainable, year-round asset that creates jobs, supports local businesses, and strengthens community pride. Public funding, therefore, is vital to unlock these long-term social and economic gains.</p>
6.5	Please explain what the remaining bank balances are for in your accounts.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completing fit out. 2. Contingency – especially opening at the end of the season with the long winter months to come.
6.6	Please explain why unrestricted funding in your annual accounts cannot be used to deliver the project and/or used as match funding.	All unrestricted funds allocated to cost centres above.
6.7	If you are applying for 100% funding for your project, please explain why no match funding is available.	N/A

SECTION 7 – INCOME GENERATION

7.1	Will the project generate income?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.2	If yes, how will the income benefit the organisation? Will it be re-invested to help with the sustainability of the project – if so, how? A copy of a business plan and/or budget forecast must be provided with the application.	<p>As a not-for-profit charity, Clyne Heritage Society (CHS) reinvests all income generated back into the organisation to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Brora Heritage project. Retail and café income will be managed through our trading arm, Clyne Trading Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of CHS. All profits from Clyne Trading Ltd are donated directly back to CHS, providing a vital and ongoing revenue stream to support museum operations, maintenance, community programmes, and future development.</p> <p>This model allows us to generate unrestricted income, reducing reliance on grants and donations over time. Income will fund staff salaries, training, heritage conservation, marketing, and visitor experience enhancements. By reinvesting trading profits, we strengthen financial resilience and secure a sustainable future for Brora Heritage as a thriving cultural and economic asset for the community.</p>
7.3	How will you ensure that local organisations/businesses are not disadvantaged because of the project? Are they supportive of the project?	<p>We are committed to ensuring that local organisations and businesses are <i>not</i> disadvantaged by the Brora Heritage project but, instead, benefit from its positive impact. From our surveys, most local businesses, including key community businesses, like the Royal Marine Hotel and Linda's Café, have expressed strong support, recognising that the new heritage centre will attract <i>more</i> visitors to the village, increasing footfall, and boosting the local economy.</p> <p>Our wider aim is to make Brora more of a destination, rather than a drive-through stop, encouraging visitors to extend their time and spend in the area. We want visitors to enjoy, not only Brora Heritage, but also nearby attractions such as Clynesh Distillery, Brora Golf Course, and a variety of local food, hospitality, and accommodation providers. Additionally, the area's spectacular natural features, including our sandy beaches, beautiful rivers and loch, and surrounding hills, all offer rich opportunities for visitors to explore and enjoy.</p> <p>Our approach is inclusive and partnership-driven, aiming to create a thriving environment where all local enterprises can share in the project's economic and community benefits.</p>

7.4	Have you considered taking out a loan for the project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.5	If not, please state why?	The Board does not want to commit the organisation to a financial burden at the start of the project.
7.6	Have you previously received public funding?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.7	If yes, please provide details of awards for the last 3 fiscal years and if any were awarded under Public Subsidy.	

Funding	Date	Amount £	Public Subsidy?
Hugh Fraser Foundation	19/07/2022	£50,000	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Robert Barr's Charitable Trust	13/04/2023	£50,000	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
National Lottery Heritage Fund	06/09/2023	£51,636	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Community Ownership Fund	20/12/2023	£1,900,000	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
North Highland Initiative - CISP Fund	21/11/2024	£2,500	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ena & Gordon Baxter Foundation	13/01/2025	£15,000	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Garfield Weston Foundation	22/01/2025	£50,000	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
E B Scotland (Landfill)	18/03/2025	£17,647	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Highlands and Islands Enterprise	02/04/2025	£250,000	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gordonbush SSE	05/11/2025	£9,435	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 8 – SIGNATURE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

8.1	Main applicant, chairperson or equivalent – the person signing this application has the authority within the organisation to apply for grant funding.	
<p><i>I declare that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read the guidance notes and understand and accept the terms and conditions noted within them.</i></p> <p><i>The data provided in the application (and claim) forms are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.</i></p>		
Signature: Print:		Date: 03/07/2025

Please Ensure You Also Complete the Attachments Checklist Below

8.2	You must enclose the following supporting documents (where applicable) with the application. If they are not available, please state why.	Yes / No / Not applicable
1	Bank statement – please provide a full bank statement with the organisation address. It must be the latest statement at the time of application submission.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Annual financial accounts – latest available.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Constitution or articles and memorandum.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Committee Members or Directors List.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Policies – relevant organisational policies applicable to the project such as child protection, health and safety, equal opportunities, Fair Work First policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

6	Valid organisation insurance policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7	Evidence of need and demand i.e. letters of support, community consultation reports, photos, feasibility study	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Confirmation of match funding letters	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
9	Permissions – i.e. planning, building warrants, marine licences	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
10	Business plan (income generation projects only)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
11	Job descriptions (for CRF funded posts)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Evidence of control/ownership of asset – i.e. lease, title deeds	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
13	Partnership agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reason for missing documentation: 8 – Included are the major funders for the fit-out phase. All others available on request.		

Completed forms and supporting documentation should be emailed to communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk quoting your unique project reference number.

Please ensure you have labelled the supporting documents as per 8.2 of the guidance note:

The application form should follow the naming convention example:

(Name of organisation) final application form

Supporting documentation should be labelled as: **document type followed with the title** – for example:

- Match funding – The Highland Council
- Match funding – National Lottery
- Insurance – Zurich 2022/23 annual policy
- Organisational policy – health and safety
- Organisational policy – Fair Work First statement
- Permissions – Planning granted July 2022
- Permissions – Building warrant granted Aug 2022
- Bank statement – Bank of Scotland Nov 2022
- Letter of support – name of Councillor
- Letter of support – community council/group
- Letter of support – name of local business

Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) Application Form

(May 2025 – CLLD version only)

Key considerations



Please refer to the [Application Guidance](#) (link below) and [Fair Work First Summary Guidance](#) when completing the application form as there is important supplementary information you need to be aware of. Answer the questions concisely, describing clearly and directly what the project you are seeking funding for is delivering. Please do not exceed the word limit given.

To ensure you have the best opportunity to score well during the assessment, please refer to the [Assessment Criteria Matrix](#) (link below) when completing the application form.

In this current round of CRF, we seek well-developed and robust **capital projects** that can commence after 1st July 2025 and must be completed and the grant claimed no later than 27 February 2026.

The deadline for application submission is 9am on Monday, 2nd June 2025.

Double click the icons below to download the documents. If you have any issues with downloading the documents, please contact us at communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk

Application Guidance	Assessment Criteria Matrix
 CRF_application_Guid ance (May 2025 - CLL	 CRF Assessment Criteria (v1 May 2025

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1	Project reference number	CRF4030
1.2	Organisation	Elphin, Ledmore & Knockan Community Association Ltd
1.3	Project title	Community Hall Heating
1.4	Summary of project you wish to be funded (max 250 words)	Installation and commissioning of four infrared panel heaters. The community has expressed a need for a heating solution that is environmentally sound, quiet and effective and will help safeguard their precious historic highland community meeting venue.
1.5	Project costs	Total project cost £3,458.77
		Match funding none
		CRF grant requested £2,594.08

1.6	Start date (<i>not before 1st July 2025</i>)	30/07/2025
1.7	End date (<i>by 27th February 2026</i>)	01/11/2025
1.8	Please confirm you have read and understood the CRF privacy notice	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 2: CONTACT AND ORGANISATION DETAILS

2.1	Organisation	Elphin, Ledmore & Knockan Community Association Ltd	
2.2	Address and postcode	Elphin Community Hall, Elphin IV27 4HH	
2.3	Main contact name		
2.4	Position in the organisation		
2.5	Contact number		
2.6	Email address		
2.7	Website address	www.elkcal.org/elkcal	
2.8	Organisation type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Company limited by guarantee
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Constituted group
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Public body
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Charity
		<input type="checkbox"/>	SCIO
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):
2.9	Organisation registered number	SC381507	
2.10	Is the organisation VAT registered?	<p>By confirming this, you are declaring the organisation VAT status as per HMRC. If this changes at any time during the project, you <u>must</u> notify the CRF Team as this may affect the offer of grant.</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
2.11	If the organisation is VAT registered, please provide the number.		
2.12	Is the VAT related to the project being reclaimed from HMRC?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whole
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Partial
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	None
2.13	Provide details of VAT exemptions.		

SECTION 3: PROJECT DETAILS

3.1	Please confirm the location of the project including post code.	Elphin Community Hall, Elphin IV27 4HH
3.2	Are you applying on behalf of a partnership project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Is there a partnership agreement in place?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>


3.4	Is your organisation the lead applicant?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.5	Do you own the land or asset?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.6	Are you leasing the land or asset?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.7	If ownership or lease agreements are not in place, please provide details if applied for and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	
3.8	Does the project require planning permission or other statutory regulatory consents? Projects must have all permissions in place by 02/06/2025. Evidence of secured permissions must be emailed to the CRF team no later than 02/06/2025 otherwise the application will not be progressed.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.9	If consents are required, please provide details if applied and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	

SECTION 4: THE PROJECT PROPOSAL


4.1	List the main activities to deliver the project including timescales. Projects must be completed and fully claimed by 27 th February 2026.	
	Activity name	Achieve by (date)
	Install and commission of 4 infrared panel heaters to the ceiling of the community hall to replace inefficient, noisy and ineffective fan heaters.	01/11/2025
4.2	(a) What local need or opportunity will the project address?	
	<p>The project aligns to the vision for Caithness and Sutherland in 2035 as outlined in the Caithness and Sutherland local development plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Growing communities: The steering committee, comprised of local residents, has been charged with securing a viable future for the hall, mindful of wider environmental concerns and net zero. We have developed an accessible entrance and parking to assist our community members with access needs. The hall is the focus point throughout the year for a remote and dispersed rural highland community and as such has a calendar of diverse, well attended events for children and adults. We now need to ensure that the hall warm, dry and comfortable for users of all ages and abilities. The current heating system is not suitable as it is noisy, inefficient and relatively ineffective. A quiet heating system would greatly benefit our hearing impaired users, musicians and our yoga group. - Employment: Regular events at the hall include a local crofters produce market, large community gatherings and celebrations which help to showcase the community to both tourists and Highland residents. The sale of produce from croft diversification projects increases the sustainability of our local economy. - Connectivity and transport: Elphin Community Hall sits on the A835 between Lochinver (21 miles), Ullapool (15 miles) and Rosehall (20 miles) and is on the North Coast 500 route. The Hall itself is nestled amongst the crofting community of Elphin and Knockan and also serves as a convenient central point for neighbouring isolated settlements. We are supporting the community's economic growth by providing a venue for local crofters to serve 	

	<p>tourists travelling on the North Coast 500 route. The Hall has visitor parking and accessible entry for additional access needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environment and heritage: The community wish to keep the hall in use and safeguard its future. The building itself was the former Assynt Primary School from 1847 to 2001. It is a much loved historic and cultural landmark with the only green play space in the area. <p>Representation from local groups has identified the following needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The building needs to be warm and comfortable for all users all year round. - The building needs an economically viable heating solution that can help address damp issues associated with the current heating solution. - When in use, we need to eliminate extraneous noise for our users including those with hearing impairment, yoga group and musicians. <p>This project is an excellent opportunity to address the above concerns and also to address our community net zero concerns. We hope to do this by using the most efficient low carbon heating solution available to us.</p> <p>We have a vision of a warm, quiet, comfortable and dry building easily usable by all members of the community.</p>
	(b) Has this need been recognised in a local place plan?
	There is no specific local place plan for Elphin and the surrounding community, however the project aligns to the vision for Caithness and Sutherland in 2035 (see 4.2A above).
4.3	How do you know there is local support for the project? How can you evidence this? Provide evidence as supporting documents as requested at 8.2
	<p>Letters of support</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Toddler group 2. Music group 3. Weekly Crofters and Craft Market 4. Minutes of steering committee meetings discussing the ongoing need
4.4	Outputs and outcomes – Please refer to the application guidance for further information and a definition of what constitutes “outputs” and “outcomes”.
	<p>(a) What are the immediate and short-term outputs that your project will achieve? How will you measure them?</p> <p>This is the only available community venue within 15 miles.</p> <p>It addresses social isolation in the rural community by bringing people of all ages together for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - community events including Chicken Day (September), mid-summer fete (June), Christmas dinner (December), curry nights, film nights, ceilidhs (winter season). - Several separate weekly groups for crafters and crofters - Elphin community heritage organisation <p>The hall supports the economic resilience of the area by hosting weekly markets enabling crofters to sell their products. This ensures the ongoing economic viability in crofting diversification</p> <p>The community wish to move the hall to be a greener and more efficient asset. Elkcal is developing a long-term solution in which this is the first phase. This phase aims to install 4 infrared heating panels to the ceiling of the hall to make the heating more effective, quieter and much more efficient. The hall was built in the 1870s of solid stone walls, it is insulated and has draft proofing. Despite this, the high ceiling and historical design of the building mean that heat is easily lost to the external environment. At present, heated air is lost and so the electric fan heaters are not energy efficient and running costs are excessive. A low carbon solution such as heat pumps are not a viable solution for this historic building. The Elkcal steering committee is excited at the prospect of the community benefitting from infrared heating panels and embarking on a longer term phased plan to a warm, dry, comfortable, quiet and efficient heating solution which aligns to net zero goals.</p>

	<p>We plan to survey community hall users on an ongoing basis in order to assess the effectiveness of this project. We will inform our community stakeholders of progress and will respond to their feedback.</p> <p>The main outcome of our project is to provide a welcoming environment that is warm, dry and comfortable with a heating solution that is also quiet enough for our users with hearing impairment and those who require a quiet environment for their activity, e.g. music and yoga groups.</p> <p>We are having increasing requests for hall hire from local interest groups including Northwest Geopark, Coigach Arts group and Grampian Speleological group. Other workshops in recent years have been drystone walling, fabric dyeing with natural dyes and wool spinning. Bespoke community events such as wakes and carol singing have also taken place in the last year. All will benefit from a warm, dry, comfortable, quiet and efficient heating system.</p> <p>This phase will help the long-term viability and good stewardship of this historic building. Future generations will receive a community building in good order upgraded to operate with a low carbon footprint, proudly serving a thriving highland community. We passionately believe that all community members should have the opportunity to take part in community events supporting the economic viability and social fabric of the area.</p> <p>We propose that the Community Regeneration Fund grant supports this phase of our net zero goals. We are developing a long-term plan which will include solar photovoltaic panels, small scall wind generation and battery energy storage. The aim is to reduce our carbon footprint and work towards a net zero energy infrastructure in Elphin.</p>	
	<p>(b) What do you think the outcome of your project will be and how will you measure them? Please note the outcome is the longer-term change that your project will achieve. What will be the lasting benefits and legacy?</p>	
	<p>Climate change issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The building is of similar construction to other buildings and homes in the area. The original heating method was coal and this is not suitable to address the issues of climate change. Infrared heating is a low carbon solution that will dry out the internal fabric of the building. Alternative low carbon solutions such as heat pumps are more suitable for modern well insulated buildings, rather than a historic building dating from the 19th century. <p>Community resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is the first step in lowering the carbon footprint of the building. The infrared solution provides a steady and quiet heating source as requested by the community. This will be powered initially by the electrical grid. Grid scale hydroelectric and wind generation provide our local electricity. We aim to increase our local resilience in the future in line with the will of our community. Low impact wind generation and solar photovoltaic panels located on site will be developed in ongoing consultation with the local community. <p>Support the community to move toward decarbonisation and achieve net zero</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The community has expressed a desire to improve energy resilience by decarbonising its energy sources moving forward. Use of this solution in the community hall will meet the needs of our stakeholders as well as demonstrating a sustainable and viable heating option for our community. 	
	<p>(c) Please select below ONE of the CRF main strategic objectives that you believe your project's outputs and outcomes will best align with.</p>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Increasing community resilience</p>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Tackling poverty and inequality</p>

	<input type="checkbox"/>	Addressing causes of rural depopulation
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Helping economic recovery and sustaining growth
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tackling the climate emergency and working towards net zero
4.5	How will the project be supported/maintained/sustained after CRF funding?	
<p>The 4 infrared panels will be checked and serviced as part of our routine maintenance schedule. No additional costs are anticipated owing to the nature of the panels and their siting on the ceiling the hall, out of reach of accidental damage that could befall other solutions such as wall mounted radiators. The project will continue beyond CRF funding as the first phase of a longer-term plan to secure a environmentally sound energy generation and storage solution for the hall. This initial dry, quiet and environmentally sound heating solution for the building will increase community engagement with the hall. The community will be continually surveyed, and feedback will be sought to help promote the benefits of the project. Future phases of our plan will be amended accordingly.</p>		
4.6	Describe how you intend to mitigate negative environmental impacts that may arise in delivering the project. It may be that the project specifically seeks to address climate change issues or implement net zero ambitions/solutions.	
<p>The project does seek to address climate change issues and net zero ambition as desired by community stakeholders. The project anticipates a reduction in electricity required to heat and dry the building. It aims to significantly reduce condensation on the interior walls of the building and will reduce the maintenance cycle by reducing the need to tackle mould and will help to preserve internal insulation. The carbon footprint of the building will thereby be reduced in the future. A more comfortable heated building will enable increased use of the hall throughout the year and the building will be safeguarded from accelerated decay. Legacy heating equipment will be recycled back into the community or recycled in the Ullapool waste management centre.</p>		
4.7	In developing the project, explain how you have considered equalities issues and taken groups with protected characteristics into account in the development/delivery of the project. How will you ensure that no one is excluded or disadvantaged from benefitting from the project? Will the project target specific groups?	
<p>The Elphin Community Hall serves the entire community with a variety of events that aim to develop strong bonds between all members of our community. We are especially keen to ensure that we are welcoming to all, irrespective of age, additional needs and other protected characteristics. The nature of this project means that all community members, visitors and stakeholders will benefit equally.</p>		
4.8	<p>All applicants are required to provide a statement on how the organisation is committed to advancing the Fair Work First Policy including the 'Real Living Wage' and 'Effective Workers Voice' criteria. The statement should be agreed jointly by the employer and an appropriate workplace representative or a trade union representative if one is in place.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE- This statement is applicable to all groups and organisations even if you do not employ staff and/or only work with volunteers. Projects cannot progress without a signed statement - refer to the Fair Work First guidance for more information. Complete the following Fair Work First Statement and Declaration form and submit with the application. Double click the icon to download.</p> <p> FWF statement and declaration template.c</p>	
Have you provided a Fair Work First statement in a separate document with this application? Please ensure it is signed by an appropriate workplace representative.		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Can you confirm if you have the Living Wage Accreditation or are planning to be certified?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applied <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the Fair Work First statement on your organisation's website?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do not have a website <input type="checkbox"/>
How many people do you employ or how many volunteers do you have?		No formal volunteer roles, community members assist on an ad-hoc basis.

Do you currently pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
As part of your procurement assessment process, do you ensure that traders/suppliers also pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
How do you provide channels for Effective Voice in the workplace for staff and/or volunteers?	<input type="checkbox"/> Line Management Relationship <input type="checkbox"/> Staff /Engagement Surveys <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suggestions Schemes <input type="checkbox"/> Intranet/Online Platforms <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Forums / Networks <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Union Recognition/Collective Bargaining

SECTION 5: PROJECT BUDGET			
5.1	<p>Main project expenditure – costs should be as accurate and current as possible from recent quotations or price comparisons.</p> <p>Only capital funding is available in this round. Revenue costs cannot be funded via the CRF grant but may be included in the project budget IF the relevant match funding is in place.</p> <p>Please refer to the guidance note on eligible expenditure. Only download and complete the overheads and management fees summary spreadsheet below, if you would like to claim more than 10% of total project costs as overheads.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <small>CRF overheads and management fees summary spreadsheet</small> </div>		
Budget Heading	Detailed Costs	Revenue/Capital	Amount
Electrical Services	Remove old switchgear, install, commission and certify a new consumer unit and four infrared heating panels	Capital	3458.77
Total revenue expenditure			£
Total capital expenditure			£3458.77
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS			£3458.77
Is VAT included in these costs?			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Can you confirm that the costs above have not already been incurred or committed to?			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<p>Reasonableness of cost – Are the project costs listed in 5.1 based on valid quotes as per the procurement guidance provided?</p> <p>Please provide all quotes as supporting documents to this application (as requested at 8.2). Please note that current valid quotes must be submitted no later than 02/06/2025 otherwise your application will not be progressed.</p>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	<p>Please explain how your project will achieve value for money.</p>	<p>This phase aims to install 4 infrared heating panels to the ceiling of the hall to make the heating more effective, quieter and much more efficient. The hall was built in the 1870s of solid stone walls, it is insulated and has draft proofing. Despite this, the high ceiling and historical design of the building mean that heat is easily lost to the external environment. At present, heated air is lost and so the</p>	

		<p>electric fan heaters are not energy efficient, contribute to condensation on the cold wall surfaces and running costs are excessive. A low carbon solution such as heat pumps are not a viable solution for this historic building. An infrared heating solution heats solid objects such as walls and floors, not the air. This means that it is best economically viable solution for the building. The Elkcal steering committee is excited at the prospect of the community benefitting from infrared heating panels and embarking on a longer term phased plan to a warm, dry, comfortable, quiet and efficient heating solution which aligns to net zero goals. Hall users will be able to use the space year-round, and more community groups will therefore be able to access this important community resource. Groups that have expressed a desire to do this include the toddler group and the fledgling community choir.</p>		
<p align="center">SECTION 6 – MATCH FUNDING (if applicable) Please note match funding for this round is not essential.</p>				
6.1	<p>Match funding details – Match funding must either be confirmed by the time the CRF application is submitted or no later than 02/06/2025. Otherwise, your application will not be progressed.</p>			
Name of funder		Confirmed?	Date Confirmed or Decision Expected	Amount £
n/a		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Total match funding				£
CRF requested				£
Total funding				£
6.2	Will the project involve “in kind” support?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
6.3	If yes, please detail.			
6.4	Please explain why public funding is required to deliver the project.		<p>The steering committee has identified a need to refurbish and/or replace parts of the ageing slate roof. We have been provided estimates of £28,000.00 to £35,000.00. This is in excess of our current modest reserves but we are mindful that funds will need to be prepared for this in the future. We are beginning to ringfence a fund to contribute towards this. This means that we are not able to pay fully for replacing the heating system in the hall.</p>	
6.5	Please explain what the remaining bank balances are for in your accounts.		<p>The steering committee has identified a need to refurbish and/or replace parts of the ageing slate roof. We have been provided estimates of £28,000.00 to £35,000.00. This is in excess of our current modest reserves but we are</p>	

		mindful that funds will need to be prepared for this in the future. We are beginning to ringfence a fund to contribute towards this. This means that we are not able to pay fully for replacing the heating system in the hall.
6.6	Please explain why unrestricted funding in your annual accounts cannot be used to deliver the project and/or used as match funding.	The steering committee has identified a need to refurbish and/or replace parts of the ageing slate roof. We have been provided estimates of £28,000.00 to £35,000.00. This is in excess of our current modest reserves but we are mindful that funds will need to be prepared for this in the future. We are beginning to ringfence a fund to contribute towards this. This means that we are not able to pay fully for replacing the heating system in the hall.

SECTION 7 – INCOME GENERATION

7.1	Will the project generate income?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.2	If yes, how will the income benefit the organisation? Will it be re-invested to help with the sustainability of the project – if so, how? A copy of a business plan and/or budget forecast must be provided with the application.	
7.3	How will you ensure that local organisations/ businesses are not disadvantaged because of the project? Are they supportive of the project?	No local organisations are in competition with any aspect of the operation of the community hall and so they will not be disadvantaged by this project.
7.4	Have you considered taking out a loan for the project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.5	If not, please state why?	Income is not sufficient to service such a loan
7.6	Have you previously received public funding?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.7	If yes, please provide details of awards for the last 3 fiscal years and if any were awarded under Public Subsidy.	

Funding	Date	Amount £	Public Subsidy?
Exterior Lights – Energy Saving Trust	12/08/2023	£821.42	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 8 – SIGNATURE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

8.1	Main applicant, chairperson or equivalent – the person signing this application has the authority within the organisation to apply for grant funding.
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I declare that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read the guidance notes and understand and accept the terms and conditions noted within them.

The data provided in the application (and claim) forms are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.

Signature:	Date: 01/06/2025

Please Ensure You Also Complete the Attachments Checklist Below

8.2	You must enclose the following supporting documents (where applicable) with the application. If they are not available, please state why.	Yes / No / Not applicable
1	Bank statement – please provide a full bank statement with the organisation address. It must be the latest statement at the time of application submission.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Annual financial accounts – latest available.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Constitution or articles and memorandum.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Committee Members or Directors List.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Policies – relevant organisational policies applicable to the project such as child protection, health and safety, equal opportunities, Fair Work First policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
6	Valid organisation insurance policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7	Evidence of need and demand i.e. letters of support, community consultation reports, photos, feasibility study	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Confirmation of match funding letters	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Permissions – i.e. planning, building warrants, marine licences	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Business plan (income generation projects only)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Job descriptions (for CRF funded posts)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Evidence of control/ownership of asset – i.e. lease, title deeds	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
13	Partnership agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reason for missing documentation:		

Completed forms and supporting documentation should be emailed to communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk quoting your unique project reference number.

The deadline for application submission is 9am on Monday, 2nd June 2025.

Please ensure you have labelled the supporting documents as per 8.2 of the guidance note:

The application form should follow the naming convention example:

(Name of organisation) final application form

Supporting documentation should be labelled as: **document type followed with the title** – for example:

- Match funding – The Highland Council
- Match funding – National Lottery
- Insurance – Zurich 2022/23 annual policy
- Organisational policy – health and safety
- Organisational policy – Fair Work First statement
- Permissions – Planning granted July 2022
- Permissions – Building warrant granted Aug 2022
- Bank statement – Bank of Scotland Nov 2022
- Letter of support – name of Councillor
- Letter of support – community council/group
- Letter of support – name of local business

Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) Application Form

(June 2025 – CRF Area Funds)

Key considerations



Please refer to the **Application Guidance** (link below) and **Fair Work First Summary Guidance** when completing the application form as there is important supplementary information you need to be aware of. Answer the questions concisely, describing clearly and directly what the project you are seeking funding for is delivering. Please do not exceed the word limit given.

To ensure you have the best opportunity to score well during the assessment, please refer to the **Assessment Criteria Matrix** (link below) when completing the application form.

In this current round of CRF, we are seeking well-developed and robust projects that are ready to commence, and can complete within 12 months of funding being awarded.

The deadline for application submission is 9am on Friday 4th July 2025.

Double click the icons below to download the documents. If you have any issues with downloading the documents, please contact us at communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk

<u>Application Guidance</u>	<u>Assessment Criteria Matrix</u>
 CRF_Application_Guidance (Sutherland 2025)	 CRF Assessment Criteria (Sutherland 2025)

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1	Project reference number	CRF4050
1.2	Organisation	Ardgay Public Hall
1.3	Project title	Ardgay Hall Upgrade 2025
1.4	Summary of project you wish to be funded (max 250 words)	<p>Ardgay Public Hall is an important community asset. Having been built in 1969, some elements now require major repairs and improvements to meet current standards.</p> <p>Roof Area. We have been advised that part of the roof is coming to the end of its life. Rust and is evident.</p> <p>The fascia and soffits over the whole building are in a poor state of repair. The guttering detached from the fascia boards in heavy snow which required part of the car park having to be coned off for safety. A temporary</p>

		<p>repair was made, where it was noted that lengths of the fascia boards are rotten.</p> <p>Doors. The current external doors are old, poorly fitting, insecure, and leak heat, The fire doors are difficult to open and close and one is rotting. Front Door / Vestibule area: Replacement with well-insulated, modern, part-glazed doors will reconfigure the area to: improve access, reduce heat loss, increase solar gain, admit light to the entrance, and improve safety and security. Additionally, this will reduce the Hall's carbon footprint. Internally, the main hall and kitchen door upgrades will improve fire and general safety, accessibility and, again, reduce draughts and improve heat retention.</p> <p>These repairs will secure the future of the Hall, making it safe & comfortable for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>Our project is robust with limited risk. Everything has been soundly evaluated. We are able to start as soon as we have funding. The project cannot progress without funding, even on a reduced capacity.</p>	
1.5	Project costs	Total project cost	£87,353.83
		Match funding	£2000.00
		CRF grant requested	£85.353.83
1.6	Start date	17/11/2025	
1.7	End date (<i>max 12 months from start date</i>)	31/03/2026	
1.8	Please confirm you have read and understood the CRF privacy notice	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION 2: CONTACT AND ORGANISATION DETAILS		
2.1	Organisation	Ardgay Public Hall
2.2	Address and postcode	Ardgay Public Hall, Carron Place, Ardgay. IV24 3BQ
2.3	Main contact name	
2.4	Position in the organisation	
2.5	Contact number	
2.6	Email address	

2.7	Website address	ardgayhall.co.uk	
2.8	Organisation type	<input type="checkbox"/>	Company limited by guarantee
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Constituted group
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Public body
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Charity
		x	SCIO
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):
2.9	Organisation registered number	SC008669	
2.10	Is the organisation VAT registered?	<p>By confirming this, you are declaring the organisation VAT status as per HMRC. If this changes at any time during the project, you <u>must</u> notify the CRF Team as this may affect the offer of grant.</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No x</p>	
2.11	If the organisation is VAT registered, please provide the number.	na	
2.12	Is the VAT related to the project being reclaimed from HMRC?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whole
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Partial
		x	None
2.13	Provide details of VAT exemptions.	na	

SECTION 3: PROJECT DETAILS

3.1	Please confirm the location of the project including post code.	Ardgay Public Hall, Carron Place, Ardgay. IV24 3BQ	
3.2	Are you applying on behalf of a partnership project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No x	
3.3	Is there a partnership agreement in place?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No x	
3.4	Is your organisation the lead applicant?	Yes x No <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.5	Do you own the land or asset?	Yes x No <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.6	Are you leasing the land or asset? If so, what is the term left on your current lease agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No x <div style="text-align: right;">Years Months</div>	
3.7	If ownership or lease agreements are not in place, please provide details if applied for and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	na	
3.8	Does the project require planning permission or other statutory regulatory consents?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No x	
3.9	If consents are required, please provide details if applied and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.		

SECTION 4: THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

4.1 List the main activities required to deliver the project including timescales.

Activity name	Achieve by (date)
New Doors	31/03/2026
Roof & Gutters (Replace Lower Roofing, Repair Fascia, Soffits, Gutters, Downpipes)	31/03/2026
	Click or tap to enter a date.
	Click or tap to enter a date.
	Click or tap to enter a date.
	Click or tap to enter a date.

4.2 (a) What local need or opportunity will the project address? (500 words max)

Our project strongly meets the needs and priorities in both the area and the local place plans. Both require the hall to be maintained and in a good state of repair.

Ardgay Public Hall has been in continuous use (apart from Covid) since it was built in 1969. The building has been well maintained and used. This project will deliver major maintenance upgrades, ensuring the Hall remains safe and secure for the foreseeable future. It is a focal point for village activities and is now part of the Kyle of Sutherland Resilience Plan as a key safe location with a defibrillator and generator. This project will safeguard the building to meet the diverse needs of the community.

The Hall is currently used by a range of long-standing users such as the Ladybird Nursery Group, Badminton, Scottish Country Dancing and various keep fit and social activities. It is also popular for private functions e.g. ceilidhs, weddings, children's parties and funeral teas. It is the largest venue in the area, supporting one hundred and fifty people. There is no local hotel.

It has a strong committee and a large number of active volunteers, which has enabled the Hall to expand the range of its activities to include, local markets, book and arts fairs, repair cafes, garden events and more.

With these improvements to the building, the future of the Hall is enhanced allowing all the above activities to continue and expand. In addition to being a more energy efficient, it will also be a more sustainable, attractive, comfortable venue.

(b) Has this need been recognised in a local place plan? (500 words max)

The Kyle of Sutherland Local Place Plan (Ardgay & Gledfield Actions) indicates the need to maintain and improve community facilities, specifically including Ardgay Hall. Such community facilities are required to benefit and improve community resilience and cohesion.

The Local Place Plan also notes the importance of supporting and improving local business and commercial growth. Upgrading the hall will encourage greater use of the hall by all, including support of our local markets and events that provide outlets and opportunities for local business.

Further background information to our Local Place and Resilience Plans:

In 2022 the districts of Ardgay, Creich and Lairg undertook a thorough consultation using

external consultants which resulted in the Kyle of Sutherland Community Action Plan (CAP). This informed the Kyle of Sutherland Place Plan.

The CAP references village halls:

page 17: 'financial support to improve and maintain' cited under the heading "Sustainable Spaces, Delivering for the Community".

page 27: 'Support for village halls' cited as a Key Infrastructure issue.

Further, the Kyle of Sutherland Resilience Plan indicates Ardgay Hall as a key safe location with defibrillator and generator hook up.

4.3	How do you know there is local support for the project? How can you evidence this? Provide evidence as supporting documents as requested at 8.2 (500 words max)
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There is strong evidence of community engagement and support, including with the wider community.

The Hall has a number of user groups who have a long-standing relationship with the Hall. It allows activities to happen locally, reducing travel, travel time and costs. The Community Markets, for instance, catalysed ideas for a range of further activities: garden swaps, repair cafés, book and art festivals, music and craft groups.

Many of our user groups state that the Hall works well for their activity, for example, badminton and country dancing. The large capacity of the hall (one hundred and fifty) is also welcomed for a number of community activities including weddings and larger music events and meetings. There is no other local venue of this size.

We evidence this further with letters of support from

- the Ardgay Badminton Club
- the Scottish Country Dancing Club
- the Camera Group
- the Dornoch Firth Church of Scotland (incorporating also
- the Sutherland Lieutenancy)
- The local primary Gledfield PTA
- Market Vendor – Julie Cribb
- Jamie Stone MP
- the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust
- the Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust
- the Ladybird club
- the Long Distance Walkers Association
- local resident and businessman, Les Waugh
- Sutherland Session (local music event charity)
- the Tai Chi group
- The Hirsell (local business benefiting from various hall events and use)
- Voluntary Groups Sutherland

The project has been frequently discussed and supported in our committee and public meetings.

4.4	Outputs and outcomes – Please refer to the application guidance for further information and a definition of what constitutes “outputs” and “outcomes”. (a) Please select below ONE of the CRF main strategic objectives that you believe your project’s outputs and outcomes will best align with.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Increasing community resilience	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling poverty and inequality	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Addressing causes of rural depopulation	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Helping economic recovery and sustaining growth	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling the climate emergency and working towards net zero	
	(b) What are the immediate and short-term outputs that your project will achieve? How will you measure them?(500 words max limit)	
<p>The works will immediately improve the overall building structure, keeping it wind and watertight, and improving usability and safety.</p> <p>Roof, Gutters, Fascias etc: The Hall will immediately look better and avoid any ongoing worries of further rot.</p> <p>Doors: replacing the doors will immediately improve safety, reduce heat loss, draughts and energy use. There will also be more natural light and solar gain to the hall. The look of the building will be enhanced, encouraging wider use.</p> <p>Measurement: We will approach the community for comments, evaluate usage numbers and monitor energy use, comparing with previous consumption records.</p>		
	(c) What do you think the outcomes of your project will be and how will you measure them? Please note an outcome is the longer-term change that your project will achieve. What will be the lasting benefits and legacy? (500 words max limit)	
<p>Our strategic objective of this project and the criteria that we most strongly meet is: Increasing Community Resilience.</p> <p>We consider this a Legacy project with long lasting benefits to the community. The upgrades and repairs to the building will need no further maintenance for a significant time. They will safeguard the hall for the future, facilitating our community resilience.</p> <p>Our outcomes will benefit community growth both economically and socially, by continuing to offer opportunities to gather, additionally improving emotional and physical health and wellbeing.</p> <p>By securing our safe, warm and amenable location for the foreseeable future, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that our longstanding and newer user groups continue to use the hall, • ensure that the community will be attracted to our markets and other events, growing business and opportunities for social gathering, • encourage new groups to form, meet, and thrive, • and continue to attract large event organisers. <p>Social isolation and exclusion persist as a significant health and wellbeing factor in our remote Highland Communities. Providing a location for a broad range of activities, enables opportunities for a wide range of community interests suiting all ages and sectors. This helps to increase community cohesion and resilience and benefits emotional and physical health. We have frequently found that one activity is likely to catalyse another; further increasing opportunities.</p>		

Further, the Hall is central to the village and clearly visible. Keeping the hall well-maintained and looking appealing, enhances the feel of the whole village for the community and tourists alike.

Measurement: We will approach the community for comments, evaluate usage numbers and monitor energy use, comparing with previous consumption records.

4.5 How will the project be supported/maintained/sustained after CRF funding? (500 words max limit)

The upgrades will, by their nature, implicitly and immediately reduce maintenance overheads of the building.

Ardgay Hall's strong committee will continue to maintain the Hall and ensure all statutory requirements are met as committees have done since 1969. These improvements to the Hall will reduce future problems and make the task of running the Hall much easier. This makes Hall committee work less onerous and easier to attract and retain committee members and volunteers. This will help to ensure a vibrant committee and volunteer base, committed to maintaining the hall.

There is currently a committee of 11 and 25 regular volunteers.

4.6 Describe how you intend to mitigate negative environmental impacts that may arise in delivering the project. It may be that the project specifically seeks to address climate change issues or implement net zero ambitions/solutions. (500 words max limit)

The overall environmental impact for this project will be positive, making a major contribution to the Hall's net zero ambitions. Business Energy Scotland estimated the installation of high performance external doors would save £347 per year and 0.2 Tonnes Co2e. We are expecting further savings through draught reduction and solar gain by replacing internal doors.

Whilst the fascias and soffits are being over-clad with PVC, thus increasing plastic use, this will reduce the need for regular re-painting and associated environmental impacts which that incurs.

We have a strong recycling ethos in the community, evidenced by our Repair Cafes. This will help towards ensuring that removed items and parts will be offered for local reuse and otherwise, disposed of responsibly.

Meetings and discussions have been held with Business Energy Scotland and Local Energy Scotland. With their help, we have extensively reviewed the implementation of further carbon savings and concluded that this project outline is the most likely to have the biggest impact.

The Hall is a key safe location for the Kyle of Sutherland Resilience Plan and as such will be used in the event of any climate emergency such as flooding or wild fire. It is therefore very important to ensure that the building remains safe, secure, watertight and warm.

4.7 In developing the project, explain how you have considered equalities issues and taken groups with protected characteristics into account in the development/delivery of the project. How will you ensure that no one is excluded or disadvantaged from benefitting from the project? Will the project target specific groups? (500 words max limit)

Ardgay Hall is available for the whole community. Whilst it does not *specifically* focus on those with protected characteristics, we offer the hall to all groups, sectors, interests and ages. Good consideration of equalities has been demonstrated through our broad range of regular groups and our Letters of Support. We expect that the upgrades will encourage increased use.

The Hall is promoted as being available for use by the whole community. Our fund-raising activities provide everyone with a warm welcome and user groups from all areas of the community use the hall. We have activities happening for both the young and older community members and across the generations.

Further:

- we have regular committee and public meetings where hall maintenance (including this project) and usage are discussed and everyone is invited to comment.
- We provide a regular column in our quarterly local magazine where we invite the community to make comment and join us.
- our regular fund-raising events invite all sectors of the community and we regularly seek ideas for further opportunities.
- our AGMs invite the public where all are invited to contribute.
- our web site is plain and clear.
- our community notice board highlights ongoing local events and also contains information to help vulnerable people.
- the door replacement part of this project will improve the hall's accessibility.

We have an equalities policy which is regularly reviewed.

4.8 All applicants are required to provide a statement on how the organisation is committed to advancing the [Fair Work First Policy](#) including the 'Real Living Wage' and 'Effective Workers Voice' criteria. The statement should be agreed jointly by the employer and an appropriate workplace representative or a trade union representative if one is in place.

PLEASE NOTE- This statement is applicable to all groups and organisations even if you do not employ staff and/or only work with volunteers. Projects cannot progress without a signed statement - refer to the [Fair Work First guidance](#) for more information. Complete the following Fair Work First Statement and Declaration form and submit with the application. Double click the icon to download.



FWF statement and
declaration template.doc

Have you provided a Fair Work First statement in a separate document with this application? Please ensure it is signed by an appropriate workplace representative.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Can you confirm if you have the Living Wage Accreditation or are planning to be certified?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Applied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the Fair Work First statement on your organisation's website?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have a website <input type="checkbox"/>
How many people do you employ or how many volunteers do you have?	1 self employed cleaner and 36 regular volunteers
Do you currently pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
As part of your procurement assessment process, do you ensure that traders/suppliers also pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
How do you provide channels for Effective Voice in the workplace for staff and/or volunteers?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Line Management Relationship <input type="checkbox"/> Staff /Engagement Surveys <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suggestions Schemes <input type="checkbox"/> Intranet/Online Platforms <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Forums / Networks

		<p>company each for the doors and roof work were willing to quote and do the work. Our door quote has been maintained for us since July 2024 and roof quote since March 2025. Evidence of attempts to seek other quotes can be provided. The suppliers are local to Highland and their work known in the community, and they are supportive of charities.</p> <p>Our own volunteer management team will be heavily involved in discussions and planning.</p> <p>Further, the project delivery will stop the need for regular spend on painting and repairing the fascias and soffits and doors. The doors will also provide improved accessibility and safety as well as reducing energy use. In addition, removing these maintenance overheads will allow the Hall committee and volunteers to focus on other beneficial work.</p>
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SECTION 6 – MATCH FUNDING (if applicable)

Please note match funding for this round is not essential, however efforts to secure match funding for the project is reflected within the assessment criteria.

6.1	Please provide details of any match funding applied for and whether it is awaiting a decision or confirmed.
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Name of funder	Confirmed?	Date Confirmed or Decision Expected	Amount £
Ardgay & District Community Council – Beinn Tharsuinn Fund.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	2/6/25	£2000
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Total match funding			£2000
CRF requested			£85,353.83
Total funding			£87,353.83

6.2	Will the project involve “in kind” support?	Yes x No <input type="checkbox"/>
6.3	If yes, please detail.	Our committee management team will be involved ensuring the project’s success as well as enabling items to be recycled / re-used in the community.

6.4	Please explain why public funding is required to deliver the project.	The building is owned by the community. Whilst we do work hard on fund-raising projects, it is not feasible to raise the amount required for this major project. The project will not progress without this level of funding.
6.5	Please explain what the remaining bank balances are for in your accounts.	Our bank balance is healthy but is not sufficient to deliver the project. The balances are used for: core costs including insurance, PEL, fire inspections, licensing; statutory regulatory costs; for emergency repairs; electricity costs; for minor upkeep projects, and for ensuring our rent costs are kept feasible for our users.
6.6	Please explain why unrestricted funding in your annual accounts cannot be used to deliver the project and/or used as match funding.	We feel that our unrestricted funds are required for emergencies, general costs, other operating costs and also to enable flexibility for other general projects.
6.7	If you are applying for 100% funding for your project, please explain why no match funding is available.	

SECTION 7 – INCOME GENERATION

7.1	Will the project generate income?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.2	If yes, how will the income benefit the organisation? Will it be re-invested to help with the sustainability of the project – if so, how? A copy of a business plan and/or budget forecast must be provided with the application.	na
7.3	How will you ensure that local organisations/ businesses are not disadvantaged because of the project? Are they supportive of the project?	These improvements will not displace any other business or activity. Local organisations and businesses are supportive of this project and will benefit from both being able to use the hall and from increased throughput in the village being brought to the shops from the community and tourists.
7.4	Have you considered taking out a loan for the project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.5	If not, please state why?	We have no ability to pay a loan back.
7.6	Have you previously received public funding?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.7	If yes, please provide details of awards for the last 3 fiscal years and if any were awarded under Public Subsidy.	

Funding	Date	Amount £	Public Subsidy?
Highland Council Village Hall Revenue Grant	15/09/2022	£500.00	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Click or tap to	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

	enter a date.		
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 8 – SIGNATURE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

8.1	Main applicant, chairperson or equivalent – the person signing this application has the authority within the organisation to apply for grant funding.		
<p><i>I declare that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read the guidance notes and understand and accept the terms and conditions noted within them.</i></p> <p><i>The data provided in the application (and claim) forms are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.</i></p>			
Signature: Print:			Date: 03/07/2025

Please Ensure You Also Complete the Attachments Checklist Below

8.2	You must enclose the following supporting documents (where applicable) with the application. If they are not available, please state why.	Yes / No / Not applicable
1	Bank statement – please provide a full bank statement with the organisation address. It must be the latest statement at the time of application submission.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Annual financial accounts – latest available.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Constitution or articles and memorandum.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Committee Members or Directors List.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Policies – relevant organisational policies applicable to the project such as child protection, health and safety, equal opportunities, Fair Work First policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
6	Valid organisation insurance policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7	Evidence of need and demand i.e. letters of support, community consultation reports, photos, feasibility study	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Confirmation of match funding letters	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
9	Permissions – i.e. planning, building warrants, marine licences	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Business plan (income generation projects only)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Job descriptions (for CRF funded posts)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Evidence of control/ownership of asset – i.e. lease, title deeds	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
13	Partnership agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reason for missing documentation: We have title deeds regarding the original gift to the hall trustees from 1967 and then our constitution reflects the structural change to a SCIO in 2018.		

Completed forms and supporting documentation should be emailed to communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk quoting your unique project reference number. Please ensure you have labelled the supporting documents as per 8.2 of the guidance note: The application form should follow the naming convention example:

•

(Name of organisation) final application form

Supporting documentation should be labelled as: **document type followed with the title** – for example:

- Match funding – The Highland Council
- Match funding – National Lottery
- Insurance – Zurich 2022/23 annual policy
- Organisational policy – health and safety
- Organisational policy – Fair Work First statement
- Permissions – Planning granted July 2022
- Permissions – Building warrant granted Aug 2022
- Bank statement – Bank of Scotland Nov 2022
- Letter of support – name of Councillor
- Letter of support – community council/group
- Letter of support – name of local business

Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) Application Form

(June 2025 – CRF Area Funds)

Key considerations



Please refer to the **Application Guidance** (link below) and **Fair Work First Summary Guidance** when completing the application form as there is important supplementary information you need to be aware of. Answer the questions concisely, describing clearly and directly what the project you are seeking funding for is delivering. Please do not exceed the word limit given.

To ensure you have the best opportunity to score well during the assessment, please refer to the **Assessment Criteria Matrix** (link below) when completing the application form.

In this current round of CRF, we are seeking well-developed and robust projects that are ready to commence, and can complete within 12 months of funding being awarded.

The deadline for application submission is 9am on Friday 4th July 2025.

Double click the icons below to download the documents. If you have any issues with downloading the documents, please contact us at communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk

<u>Application Guidance</u>	<u>Assessment Criteria Matrix</u>
 CRF_Application_Guidance (Sutherland 2025)	 CRF Assessment Criteria (Sutherland 2025)

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1	Project reference number	CRF4064
1.2	Organisation	Durness Parish Hall Trustees SC021539
1.3	Project title	Durness Parish Hall energy efficiency project 2025
1.4	Summary of project you wish to be funded (max 250 words)	Installation of energy efficiency improvements to our community hall, comprising of a modern ground source heat pump to replace our existing unsalvageable system which broke down in 2023; and loft insulation to meet current building standards thus improving heat retention and reducing energy use.
1.5	Project costs	Total project cost £49,818.83
		Match funding £26,318.22
		CRF grant requested £23,500.61

1.6	Start date	04/08/2025
1.7	End date (<i>max 12 months from start date</i>)	01/12/2025
1.8	Please confirm you have read and understood the CRF privacy notice	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 2: CONTACT AND ORGANISATION DETAILS

2.1	Organisation	Durness Parish Hall Trustees SC021539
2.2	Address and postcode	Durness Parish Hall Durness Sutherland IV27 4PA
2.3	Main contact name	
2.4	Position in the organisation	
2.5	Contact number	
2.6	Email address	
2.7	Website address	https://durnessvillagehall.weebly.com/
2.8	Organisation type	<input type="checkbox"/> Company limited by guarantee <input type="checkbox"/> Constituted group <input type="checkbox"/> Public body <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Charity <input type="checkbox"/> SCIO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Please note that we are in the process of upgrading to become a SCIO; we anticipate this process being complete within the next 3 – 6 months.
2.9	Organisation registered number	SC021539
2.10	Is the organisation VAT registered?	By confirming this, you are declaring the organisation VAT status as per HMRC. If this changes at any time during the project, you <u>must</u> notify the CRF Team as this may affect the offer of grant. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.11	If the organisation is VAT registered, please provide the number.	N/A
2.12	Is the VAT related to the project being reclaimed from HMRC?	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole <input type="checkbox"/> Partial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None
2.13	Provide details of VAT exemptions.	VAT relief applies to the installation of energy saving materials to buildings which are used for charitable purposes. This applies to our village hall.

SECTION 3: PROJECT DETAILS

3.1	Please confirm the location of the project including post code.	Durness Parish Hall Durness Sutherland IV27 4PA
3.2	Are you applying on behalf of a partnership project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Is there a partnership agreement in place?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.4	Is your organisation the lead applicant?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.5	Do you own the land or asset?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.6	Are you leasing the land or asset? If so, what is the term left on your current lease agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Years Months
3.7	If ownership or lease agreements are not in place, please provide details if applied for and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	N/A
3.8	Does the project require planning permission or other statutory regulatory consents?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.9	If consents are required, please provide details if applied and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	N/A

SECTION 4: THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

4.1	List the main activities required to deliver the project including timescales.
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Activity name	Achieve by (date)
Acquire funding	04/08/2025
Appoint contractor	18/08/2025
Remove broken heat system	20/10/2025
Install new ground source heat pump	03/11/2025
Install loft insulation	03/11/2025
Submit final reports – date to be confirmed by funder	01/12/2025

4.2	(a) What local need or opportunity will the project address?
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(500 words max limit)

The installation of a functioning and efficient heating system alongside upgrading our loft insulation addresses two local needs. Firstly, it will allow us to maintain an operational and economical village hall capable of remaining open for use by our community all year round; and secondly, it will support our journey towards net zero.

Established in 1936, the hall itself is the hub of village life. It is the only facility in a 20-mile radius that can provide a venue for many of the services essential to rural and remote living, including funerals, weddings, community meetings, vaccination clinics, an electoral station and satellite vet

services. The hall comprises a sports facility which is used by various local groups for recreational sport and fitness activities. There are no other indoor venues in our village suitable for children and families to meet together and play. As such, the hall is viewed as key to maintaining strong bonds within our community and to providing a social life outside of school for our children and their families, as well as for our more vulnerable and isolated residents.

Maintaining a fully functioning village hall with a working heating system allows the hall to remain open and accessible to all throughout the year. In turn, this means that our community can continue to attend the various health, social and wellbeing activities that the hall facilitates, thus reducing loneliness, isolation and low mood, particularly during the winter. For example, our weekly knit and natter sessions are well attended by our more socially isolated older adults. These sessions are dependent on being able to provide a warm space for them.

Furthermore, ensuring that the hall can stay open means that the various local organisations and agencies who utilise the hall can continue to provide much needed services for our local community, including Durness community council and Durness Community Group.

Making improvements to the energy efficiency and environmental impact of our hall will have a significant impact on cutting down carbon emissions and supporting our journey towards net zero, in line with national targets.

Whilst the energy efficiency measures we have identified contribute towards achieving net zero, they will also reduce our running costs which means we can let the hall at an affordable rate and focus our spending on costs that improve the quality of life for our community, rather than on electricity bills. The comfort of the hall will be improved so it becomes more popular and can be hired out to groups for more events. Thus, the benefits of this project are amplified at the local level.

	(b) Has this need been recognised in a local place plan?
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(500 words max limit)

Specifically, the measures for improved energy efficiency in Durness Parish Hall have been identified in a bespoke energy audit. This was conducted by an independent energy consultant commissioned by Business Energy Scotland. The measures indicated will improve the longer-term sustainability of the hall and enhance the facility, making it a more attractive venue for year-round use for all of our residents.

Our aspirations for a cleaner, greener and more efficient community hall which provides a warm and welcoming space for the benefit of local people are reflected at national, regional and local scales, and across different themes.

The Sutherland Area Place Plan (SAPP) highlights supporting increased community capacity and resilience as a key factor in securing a thriving future for the county, explicitly stressing that community centres such as ours play a key role in improving wellbeing and reversing depopulation. The SAPP recognises that existing community facilities are under-funded and that the volunteers running them are often overstretched, thus additional funding and support to ensure these much-needed facilities can remain operational is essential.

Similarly, the Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan) aims to achieve a network of sustainable and socially inclusive communities where people want to live, whilst recognising that an ongoing challenge for rural areas is retaining existing facilities. CaSPlan

advocates a flexible approach to supporting communities in remote and rural areas and indicates that enabling community-led sustainable growth and development is key.

Taken together, the SAPP and CaSPlan show strong support for the approach of supporting halls like ours to identify and develop our own solutions for sustainability. Our proposal to install energy efficiency measures not only supports us on our journey to net zero, but will allow us to keep our hall open during the winter for the benefit of the entire community, whilst also reducing our running costs, thus redirecting our income and energy to providing wellbeing activities for hall users.

At a more local level, members of the Durness Community Council, the Durness Community Group and the Durness Parish Hall Trustees are working together to develop a local place plan, which views the Hall as a vital asset for future community development work in the village. The latest Durness Community Plan indicates an ageing population, with evidence of rural to urban migration of younger residents. Maintaining a functioning village hall contributes to stemming depopulation and supports existing residents to access social and wellbeing services, including a sports hall, cultural activities and the opportunity to be involved in local decision making.

At the national scale, Scotland is committed to reaching net zero emissions by 2045 and our project proposal is aligned with this ambition.

The realisation of this project to improve the energy efficiency of Durness Parish Hall will move us closer towards carbon neutral, improve our resilience in the face of fluctuating energy costs and climate uncertainty, and engender a feeling of community spirit brought about through working collectively towards our shared goals.

4.3	How do you know there is local support for the project? How can you evidence this? Provide evidence as supporting documents as requested at 8.2
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(500 words max limit)

Our hall is entirely community owned and is managed by the community, for the community, by a team of fifteen volunteers who live within the village. Representing a small parish of less than four hundred people, we have strong personal links with our wider community – they are our relatives, friends and colleagues – thus, we have anecdotal evidence from our everyday interactions that there is significant support for this project.

This is bolstered by the results of our recent community consultation carried out in early 2025. Over 80% of respondents stated that improving the energy efficiency of our building should be one of our top three priorities for the year ahead, therefore we have formal evidence that our wider community supports our endeavour.

Our community demonstrates its support for this project most strongly in its patronage of our local fundraising efforts. Over the past year, we have raised around £10,000 towards our overall programme of energy efficiency improvements (£5,000 of this is committed to this project; £5,000 is reserved for phase two of the development), which is a substantial sum considering the small number of residents.

As a hall committee, we work closely with the Durness Community Council and the Durness Community Group, both of whom have endorsed this programme of work in their attached letters of support. Durness Parent Council who represent the wider population of parents in our parish have provided a letter of support for our project, reflecting the value of this asset to children and families. The Durness Golf Club has indicated its support for this project, recognising that the hall enables sporting activity of all kinds to continue through the winter. The Durness Highland

Gathering Association has expressed its support as the hall is central to its programme of activities for our yearly Highland Games, one of the highlights of the summer.

4.4 Outputs and outcomes – Please refer to the application guidance for further information and a definition of what constitutes “outputs” and “outcomes”.

(a) Please select below ONE of the CRF main strategic objectives that you believe your project’s outputs and outcomes will best align with.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Increasing community resilience
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling poverty and inequality
<input type="checkbox"/>	Addressing causes of rural depopulation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Helping economic recovery and sustaining growth
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tackling the climate emergency and working towards net zero

(b) What are the immediate and short-term outputs that your project will achieve? How will you measure them?

(500 words max limit)

- Output: Installation of ground source heat pump system
Measure: Presence/absence
- Output: Installation of loft insulation
Measure: Presence/absence

(c) What do you think the outcomes of your project will be and how will you measure them? Please note an outcome is the longer-term change that your project will achieve. What will be the lasting benefits and legacy?

(500 words max limit)

- Outcome: Reduction in overall energy use, and therefore carbon emissions, to support our journey towards net zero and help tackle the climate emergency.
- Measure: Comparison of units of energy used per annum prior to heating system breakdown (for year 2023) and following installation of energy efficiency measures (for year 2026).
- Outcome: Increased use of village hall by residents resulting in increased community resilience
- Measure: Comparison of bookings (measured by annual hours of use) prior to heating system breakdown (for year 2023) and following installation of energy efficiency measures (for year 2026).

4.5 How will the project be supported/maintained/sustained after CRF funding?

(500 words max limit)

Ongoing costs associated with this project include regular maintenance/servicing and insurance costs. These form part of our normal running costs, and we do not anticipate a significant increase on previous years. These costs will be met by our regular income acquired through letting the hall. The ground source heat pump we have selected provides a ten-year warranty against defects, thus ensuring product longevity, and it is anticipated that it will have a twenty-five year lifespan, thus ensuring that the benefits of this project continue for decades beyond the end of the funding period.

This project represents the first phase of a programme of retrofitting our building. The second phase, installation of solar PV and battery, is planned to take place in Spring 2026. This will complement the work carried out in phase one by further lowering our carbon emissions and reducing our electricity bills. Phase two will be funded by Local Energy Scotland CARES (80%) SSE Renewables (10%) and local community fundraising (10%).

The overall programme of work specifically seeks to make the hall more sustainable, futureproofing it against fluctuations in temperature and energy prices caused by climate instability and other world events.

4.6	Describe how you intend to mitigate negative environmental impacts that may arise in delivering the project. It may be that the project specifically seeks to address climate change issues or implement net zero ambitions/solutions.
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(500 words max limit)

This project specifically seeks to address issues associated with climate change and to support our net zero ambitions by installing an energy efficient heat pump and loft insulation. These measures will combine to reduce our overall carbon footprint by lowering our energy use.

We are working with a Highland-based contractor to install these technologies, thus reducing as far as possible the need for travel associated with the works, as well as supporting the performance of our regional economy.

Preserving a functioning village hall in such a remote and rural location ensures that residents do not need to travel long distances to access services that are currently delivered from the hall, thus reducing our communities wider carbon footprint. The nearest village hall is otherwise twenty miles away.

Green technologies are firmly embedded in the overall energy mix of the UK, but we are aware that anecdotal evidence demonstrates that rural populations can be slower to adopt renewable solutions. Whilst this may largely be due to structural barriers, a lack of awareness and trust are factors that can influence the slower rate of take up. Through the adoption of more sustainable approach to energy use in the village hall, we will provide a role model for our community and filter awareness of the benefits of greener energy use outwards.

4.7	In developing the project, explain how you have considered equalities issues and taken groups with protected characteristics into account in the development/delivery of the project. How will you ensure that no one is excluded or disadvantaged from benefitting from the project? Will the project target specific groups?
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(500 words max limit)

Durness Parish Hall is for the benefit of everyone in our community without distinction. All the events that Durness Parish Hall Trustees deliver are open to everyone in our community.

We are aware, however, that as a result of our broken heating, the temperature in the hall can be a prohibitive factor for some residents, particularly for those who are older, for babies and children, and for those suffering with chronic health conditions and disabilities. Therefore, the project proposed here will make the hall a more welcoming and accessible space for a wider range of people because, in ensuring the hall is suitably warm, our disabled, elderly and/or vulnerable residents will be better able to take part in existing activities. Additional activities, such as chair yoga or tai chi, will become feasible because the temperature of the hall will be adequate for slow or limited movement sessions. This applies equally to sessions for babies and children

who require a warm environment. Thus, the project will allow us to cater to a wider range of needs.

4.8 All applicants are required to provide a statement on how the organisation is committed to advancing the [Fair Work First Policy](#) including the 'Real Living Wage' and 'Effective Workers Voice' criteria. The statement should be agreed jointly by the employer and an appropriate workplace representative or a trade union representative if one is in place.

PLEASE NOTE- This statement is applicable to all groups and organisations even if you do not employ staff and/or only work with volunteers. Projects cannot progress without a signed statement - refer to the [Fair Work First guidance](#) for more information. Complete the following Fair Work First Statement and Declaration form and submit with the application. Double click the icon to download.



FWF statement and declaration template.doc

Have you provided a Fair Work First statement in a separate document with this application? Please ensure it is signed by an appropriate workplace representative.

Yes ☒ No ☐

Can you confirm if you have the Living Wage Accreditation or are planning to be certified?

Yes ☐ No ☒ Applied ☐
No employees

Is the Fair Work First statement on your organisation's website?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Do not have a website ☐

How many people do you employ or how many volunteers do you have?

0 employees
15 volunteers

Do you currently pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?

Yes ☐ No ☐ NA ☒

As part of your procurement assessment process, do you ensure that traders/suppliers also pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?

Yes ☒ No ☐

How do you provide channels for Effective Voice in the workplace for staff and/or volunteers?

☒ Line Management Relationship
☒ Staff /Engagement Surveys
☒ Suggestions Schemes
☐ Intranet/Online Platforms
☐ Staff Forums / Networks
☐ Trade Union Recognition/Collective Bargaining

SECTION 5: PROJECT BUDGET

5.1 Main project expenditure – costs should be as accurate and current as possible from recent quotations or price comparisons.

Please refer to the guidance note on eligible expenditure. Only download and complete the overheads and management fees summary spreadsheet below, if you would like to claim more than 10% of total project costs as overheads.



CRF overheads and management fees summary

Budget Heading	Detailed Costs	Revenue/Capital	Amount
Ground source heat pump	Safely remove and dispose of broken heating system. Supply and fit of new	Capital	46342.13

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project will be supported by match funding from Local Energy Scotland CARES, allowing us access to a local development officer who will support us with the planning, development and delivery of the entire project. - The project will allow us to develop a relationship with Local Energy Scotland and with our appointed contractor which will support further retrofitting of our hall in phase two of our planned programme of work. - The project is supported by significant volunteer time to enable successful delivery. - The installation is underpinned by a ten-year manufacturer's warranty.
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SECTION 6 – MATCH FUNDING (if applicable)

Please note match funding for this round is not essential, however efforts to secure match funding for the project is reflected within the assessment criteria.

6.1	Please provide details of any match funding applied for and whether it is awaiting a decision or confirmed.
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Name of funder	Confirmed?	Date Confirmed or Decision Expected	Amount £
Local Energy Scotland - CARES	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	August 2025	21318.22
Community fundraising events	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	June 2025	5000
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Total match funding			£26318.22
CRF requested			£23500.61
Total funding			£49818.83

6.2	Will the project involve “in kind” support?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
6.3	If yes, please detail.	Volunteer time to carry out project management and reporting requirements. Approximately fifteen days, equivalent to £3750 (@ £250 p/d).
6.4	Please explain why public funding is required to deliver the project.	Evidence of match funding is required by CARES who will

		<p>provide a significant percentage of the total project cost. Without match funding from the Community Regeneration Fund, the project will be unable to proceed.</p> <p>Durness Parish Hall is a small charity serving a sparsely populated area. Whilst maintaining a public building is essential to village life in such a remote region, the number of people who it serves mean that income from rentals scarcely covers our regular running costs. Investments from external sources to maintain and develop the building are essential to supplement our ongoing community fundraising efforts.</p>
6.5	Please explain what the remaining bank balances are for in your accounts.	<p>We have significant reserves in our account as we are simultaneously fundraising for the installation of solar PV with battery storage (phase two of the programme of energy efficiency measures we have identified) and for the replacement of our guttering and associated infrastructure. These projects are not yet 'ready-to-go' and will form a later phase of the hall development programme. These works will complement the project proposed in this application because they will further reduce our carbon footprint and improve our energy efficiency and will maintain the integrity of our building. Additionally, some £5K is ringfenced for the payment of legal fees associated with our charity's upgrade to a SCIO.</p> <p>£15K – 6 months running costs £5K – towards guttering £5K – towards GSHP and insulation £5K – towards solar PV and battery £5K – legal fees £5K – contingency</p>
6.6	Please explain why unrestricted funding in your annual accounts cannot be used to deliver the project and/or used as match funding.	<p>As noted above, we are simultaneously fundraising for the installation of solar PV with battery storage and for the replacement of our guttering. These two projects will cost in the region of £100,000 and the funding streams we have identified require us to have match funding in place.</p>

		<p>Additionally, some money is currently held in reserve to pay for anticipated legal fees associated with our upgrade to become a SCIO.</p> <p>We aim to hold at least £5K in reserve at all times for unexpected emergencies and/or contingencies associated with contracted projects.</p>
6.7	If you are applying for 100% funding for your project, please explain why no match funding is available.	N/A

SECTION 7 – INCOME GENERATION

7.1	Will the project generate income?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.2	If yes, how will the income benefit the organisation? Will it be re-invested to help with the sustainability of the project – if so, how? A copy of a business plan and/or budget forecast must be provided with the application.	N/A
7.3	How will you ensure that local organisations/ businesses are not disadvantaged because of the project? Are they supportive of the project?	N/A
7.4	Have you considered taking out a loan for the project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.5	If not, please state why?	N/A
7.6	Have you previously received public funding?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.7	If yes, please provide details of awards for the last 3 fiscal years and if any were awarded under Public Subsidy.	

Funding	Date	Amount £	Public Subsidy?
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 8 – SIGNATURE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

8.1	Main applicant, chairperson or equivalent – the person signing this application has the authority within the organisation to apply for grant funding.
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I declare that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read the guidance notes and understand and accept the terms and conditions noted within them.

The data provided in the application (and claim) forms are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.

	Date: 28/06/2025
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Please Ensure You Also Complete the Attachments Checklist Below

8.2	You must enclose the following supporting documents (where applicable) with the application. If they are not available, please state why.	Yes / No / Not applicable
1	Bank statement – please provide a full bank statement with the organisation address. It must be the latest statement at the time of application submission.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Annual financial accounts – latest available.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Constitution or articles and memorandum.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Committee Members or Directors List.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Policies – relevant organisational policies applicable to the project such as child protection, health and safety, equal opportunities, Fair Work First policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
6	Valid organisation insurance policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7	Evidence of need and demand i.e. letters of support, community consultation reports, photos, feasibility study	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Confirmation of match funding letters	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
9	Permissions – i.e. planning, building warrants, marine licences	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Business plan (income generation projects only)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Job descriptions (for CRF funded posts)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Evidence of control/ownership of asset – i.e. lease, title deeds	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
13	Partnership agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Reason for missing documentation: Evidence of match funding raised from local community is visible in our bank statement and annual account. Our application for match funding from Local Energy Scotland CARES will be assessed in July 2025.</p>		

Completed forms and supporting documentation should be emailed to communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk quoting your unique project reference number.

Please ensure you have labelled the supporting documents as per 8.2 of the guidance note:

The application form should follow the naming convention example:

(Name of organisation) final application form

Supporting documentation should be labelled as: **document type followed with the title** – for example:

- Match funding – The Highland Council
- Match funding – National Lottery
- Insurance – Zurich 2022/23 annual policy
- Organisational policy – health and safety
- Organisational policy – Fair Work First statement
- Permissions – Planning granted July 2022
- Permissions – Building warrant granted Aug 2022
- Bank statement – Bank of Scotland Nov 2022
- Letter of support – name of Councillor
- Letter of support – community council/group
- Letter of support – name of local business

Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) Application Form

(June 2025 – CRF Area Funds)

Key considerations



Please refer to the **Application Guidance** (link below) and **Fair Work First Summary Guidance** when completing the application form as there is important supplementary information you need to be aware of. Answer the questions concisely, describing clearly and directly what the project you are seeking funding for is delivering. Please do not exceed the word limit given.

To ensure you have the best opportunity to score well during the assessment, please refer to the **Assessment Criteria Matrix** (link below) when completing the application form.

In this current round of CRF, we are seeking well-developed and robust projects that are ready to commence, and can complete within 12 months of funding being awarded.

The deadline for application submission is 9am on Friday 4th July 2025.

Double click the icons below to download the documents. If you have any issues with downloading the documents, please contact us at communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk

<u>Application Guidance</u>	<u>Assessment Criteria Matrix</u>
 CRF_Application_Guidance (Sutherland 20:	 CRF Assessment Criteria (Sutherland 2

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1	Project reference number	CRF4095
1.2	Organisation	<p>Go Golspie Development Trust has been delivering community-led activities in Golspie since being set up in 2015. Our vision is to support Golspie achieve its collective needs and ambitions and make Golspie more attractive to live, work and visit.</p> <p>Our purposes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of recreational facilities • Relief of poverty • Advancement of citizenship or community development (including rural or urban regeneration) <p>Go Golspie covers the KW10 postcode and benefits the whole community regardless of age or background.</p> <p>Current projects include Community Transport (minibus, electric car, MIDAS training), refurbishing/running two intergenerational community buildings: Fountain Road Hall and the YMCA Building, Golspie Community Food, upgrading Playparks, Active Travel (led cycle rides and guided walks) and assisting with Flood Defence.</p>

1.3	Project title	Fountain Road Hall Heating and Access project.	
1.4	Summary of project you wish to be funded (max 250 words)	<p>The Fountain Road Hall Heating and Access project is led by community demand and need and focusses on upgrading two key areas of the building: heating and access along with further energy saving measures. All activities build community resilience as they increase the long-term sustainability of this popular intergenerational community resource.</p> <p>Heating: Fountain Road Hall (FRH) is heated mainly through an underfloor biomass boiler installed 15 years ago which is now showing its age and is increasingly unreliable and expensive to maintain. In the main hall there are radiant bar heaters, in most other areas there are electric panel heaters. Following a review by BES, the recommendation is to install a combination of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels with a battery bank with the backup of upgraded electric infra-red heaters replacement with more efficient versions. There is the possibility of installing further energy saving measures such as secondary glazing, draught-proofing and heater smart controls, all of which will help reduce costs.</p> <p>Access: Improving and extending the accessible parking immediately outside the hall with enough space for a car to turn will reduce inequalities in accessing the building. This will mean extending our current area, which already has access to the road through existing gates. Adding an additional WC just inside the main entrance will also improve the facilities available.</p> <p>Continuing to improve the building provides additionality and supports the move to net zero through energy saving measures and reducing the need and time to travel to access food, activities and events.</p>	
1.5	Project costs	Total project cost	£57,790
		Match funding	£2,000
		CRF grant requested	£55,790
1.6	Start date	01/10/2025	
1.7	End date (max 12 months from start date)	30/09/2026	
1.8	Please confirm you have read and understood the CRF privacy notice	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION 2: CONTACT AND ORGANISATION DETAILS

2.1	Organisation	Go Golspie Development Trust
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2.2	Address and postcode	East Millicent Avenue, Golspie, Sutherland, KW10 6TL	
2.3	Main contact name		
2.4	Position in the organisation		
2.5	Contact number		
2.6	Email address		
2.7	Website address	www.gogolspie.co.uk	
2.8	Organisation type	<input type="checkbox"/>	Company limited by guarantee
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Constituted group
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Public body
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Charity
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SCIO
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):
2.9	Organisation registered number	SC046438	
2.10	Is the organisation VAT registered?	<p>By confirming this, you are declaring the organisation VAT status as per HMRC. If this changes at any time during the project, you must notify the CRF Team as this may affect the offer of grant.</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
2.11	If the organisation is VAT registered, please provide the number.	N/A	
2.12	Is the VAT related to the project being reclaimed from HMRC?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whole
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Partial
		<input type="checkbox"/>	None
2.13	Provide details of VAT exemptions.	N/A	

SECTION 3: PROJECT DETAILS		
3.1	Please confirm the location of the project including post code.	<p>Fountain Road Hall Fountain Road, Golspie, Sutherland, KW10 6TH.</p> <p>Fountain Road Hall is near the centre of the village, close to shops and cafes and also to the mountain bike track on Ben Bhraggie. The building opened in 1906 as the United Free Church. In 1936 the United Free congregation agreed to unite with the Church of Scotland. Eventually the Fountain Road church stopped being used for services. In 1969 the fittings were removed, and the building was used as a hall.</p> <p>Go Golspie purchased Fountain Road Hall in 2021 with Scottish Land Fund support, bringing it back into community ownership for events and activities including weddings and funerals and making it accessible to all. As a designated resilience building for Golspie, it accommodates up to 120 seated for a</p>

		wedding meal and over 200 for a funeral or musical event. There is a smaller hall to the rear that accommodates up to 60 people and an upstairs gallery area accessed from the main entrance hall. This overlooks the main hall and has an office and storage space at the rear of it. There is a fully equipped kitchen, accessible WC and various storage areas.
3.2	Are you applying on behalf of a partnership project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Is there a partnership agreement in place?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.4	Is your organisation the lead applicant?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.5	Do you own the land or asset?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.6	Are you leasing the land or asset? If so, what is the term left on your current lease agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Years Months
3.7	If ownership or lease agreements are not in place, please provide details if applied for and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	N/A
3.8	Does the project require planning permission or other statutory regulatory consents?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.9	If consents are required, please provide details if applied and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	N/A

SECTION 4: THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

4.1	List the main activities required to deliver the project including timescales.
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Activity name	Achieve by (date)
Start work to upgrade heating and access to Fountain Road Hall	01/10/2025
Order solar panels, heaters and fittings required including for WC	01/11/2025
Remove old heaters and fit new ones	01/12/2025
Remove old solar panels and fit new ones and battery, work to create new WC	01/02/2026
Create new parking spaces and connect up battery and solar panels	01/04/2026
Complete project	01/06/2026

4.2	(a) What local need or opportunity will the project address?
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(500 words max limit)

To keep a community building welcoming and pleasant to be in, we need to ensure it is reliably warm. We inherited a fairly old Biomass boiler installed in 2010 and have electric back up heaters but the heaters cannot be operated remotely making it hard to ensure FRH is warm enough for bookers.

We need to replace outdated heaters in both main and small halls with modern infrared options that are more energy efficient and which can be programmed remotely to ensure they are only on when needed.

The pellet boiler is located in the boiler room, fed by auger from the adjacent store. It supplies underfloor heating throughout the main hall, small hall and extension and the megaflo water heating cylinder situated in the adjacent plant room. The boiler is regularly serviced but systems have moved on considerably in 15 years. The control panel randomly throws up error messages at times which cause the system to shut down without warning.

This project addresses identified community needs by improving recreational community spaces. All our work is community-led and improved heating and access are identified as priorities by those using FRH through community engagement and direct verbal feedback.

FRH is a designated Golspie resilience building and we need to keep it open and warm in case it is required. Direct feedback from community bookers tells the lack of reliable heating and access is affecting bookings so there is urgent need these are resolved.

This project addresses identified access needs by creating two accessible parking spaces within the grounds of FRH approached via our existing gates and with no planning required as it is within our grounds.

The new WC near the entrance also meets identified access needs as the others are beyond the main hall or accessed via the side entrance.

At a recent meeting we had to sit wearing coats until it warmed up. Verbal feedback was that something has to be done as a priority or we will lose bookers putting the hall at risk.

Keeping FRH open and warm for the community food larder as well as recreational events and activities is a crucial community need addressing poverty and rural deprivation and providing physical and mental health and wellbeing benefits particularly during winter months.

The building being pleasant to be in and easy to access are key needs. Delivering this project will enable Go Golspie to respond to community requests. Positive feedback tells us the improvements already made such as the new automatic entrance doors are already making FRH more welcoming and warmer.

This project addresses issues Go Golspie inherited and builds on work to date improving the building. With the pandemic affecting how much FRH could be used we have to prioritise covering running costs.

Existing activities such as Community Food will be put at increased risk if this project does not go ahead as the older heating system requires more repairs with associated costs and will continue to become even less reliable.

	(b) Has this need been recognised in a local place plan?
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(500 words max limit)

FRH meets the need to provide affordable and accessible recreational facilities which has been consistently identified as a community priority in all local and area place plans, surveys and community consultation carried out since Go Golspie was set up in 2015 and before FRH was purchased in 2021. This need is one of the reasons why Go Golspie purchased Fountain Road Hall.

This priority need was confirmed again in a Community Survey undertaken in January 2024 which was the first stage of the Community Engagement and Consultation carried out as part of the recent Golspie Place Plan. This survey was hand delivered to every household in Golspie by Go Golspie and available online and at various outlets throughout the community.

Go Golspie activities are all community-led and are delivered following local consultation and engagement identifies community needs that are recognised in local and area place plans. Improved Recreational spaces are consistently identified as a priority need in both local and area place plans.

Addressing recreational needs and making sure they are affordable and accessible to all who need them in the community has therefore been a constant priority for the development trust. The demand for this continues to grow, particularly post pandemic with the need to address poverty and provide activities that improve physical and mental health and wellbeing.

FRH is currently extremely costly to heat as the system increasingly does not work well. Direct feedback shows this reduces the building's attractiveness for new bookers placing the building at risk long-term. Feedback also tells us that lack of accessible parking nearby also presents a barrier to participation and needs to be addressed.

Improved access to community food to address poverty and to facilities offering affordable recreational activities are identified priority needs for many living in this rural and remote disadvantaged community.

FRH addresses the need for employability opportunities identified in local and area Place Plans as it provides volunteers and employees with skills, experience and social connections that can lead towards or continue employment.

Overseeing and delivering this project will be the remit of Go Golspie existing employees – the Development Officer for FRH and the Development Manager who they report to. This project will contribute towards securing their continuing roles. Through doing so, the project will protect local employment which is a need identified in local and area place plans.

The importance of retaining recreational spaces and of this particular building to the community was demonstrated through community surveys ahead of purchasing it. Also through our survey in early 2024 that fed into the Golspie Place Plan produced in 2024.

4.3	How do you know there is local support for the project? How can you evidence this? Provide evidence as supporting documents as requested at 8.2
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(500 words max limit)

Fountain Road Hall is a central recreational venue for Golspie and very important to the local community, holding community events and activities open to all and used by all ages. The local strength of feeling and affection for this intergenerational building and its importance to the local community were demonstrated when over £20,000 was pledged by individuals to help Go Golspie secure match funding to purchase it.

Demonstrating on-going support, volunteers help maintain the building, keep the grounds and garden tidy and do heating checks as required. This project will update and refresh the building and maintain it and the grounds surrounding it.

An improved building with better heating and access will make easier for people to use which will increase bookings. We know of people who transferred bookings to other venues due to the heating situation.

Since purchasing the hall in 2021, we have been looking at all the costs aiming to reduce them where possible, working with other groups and individuals focusing particularly on long-term sustainability.

Knowing the Development Officer role will continue lets us look at the same time at expanding our pool of volunteers. The willingness for people to volunteer and to continue to use the building even if means dealing with unreliable heating demonstrates local commitment and support for FRH.

There is also independent support backing up the local identified need as a full Energy Assessment review by Business Energy Scotland in 2025 covers a number of options. It recommends installing solar photovoltaic (PV) panels with a battery bank with the backup of upgraded electric infrared heating replacements with more efficient versions. It also explains that high ceilings make FRH unsuitable for heat pumps, the roof is suitable for solar panels, the building is not listed and the current heater system is outdated. Newer versions of the heaters operate at a lower wattage using less energy to run and may take up less space and be more visually acceptable.

Evidence of local support is attached including feedback, photos and the most recent newsletter. Feedback shows what a vital difference the building makes locally to those who use it.

4.4 Outputs and outcomes – Please refer to the application guidance for further information and a definition of what constitutes “outputs” and “outcomes”.

(a) Please select below ONE of the CRF main strategic objectives that you believe your project’s outputs and outcomes will best align with.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Increasing community resilience
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling poverty and inequality
<input type="checkbox"/>	Addressing causes of rural depopulation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Helping economic recovery and sustaining growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling the climate emergency and working towards net zero

(b) What are the immediate and short-term outputs that your project will achieve? How will you measure them?

(500 words max limit)

Immediate and short-term Outputs will include:

- Improved experience when booking or visiting as the building is warm and more welcoming
- Secure improved home for Golspie Community Food tackling poverty and food inequalities
- Increased use of the spaces and bookings
- Reduced carbon emissions and energy costs helping towards net zero targets.

Methods to measure changes will include but not be limited to:

- Feedback, verbal and written from those using the hall
- Comments received on social media pages and via our website
- Continued community engagement and consultation
- Keeping note of building bookings and user numbers.

Go Golspie being seen to be upgrading and refurbishing areas within Fountain Road Hall is a visible boost and directly improves the resilience of the whole community. Maintaining and improving a much loved and valued intergenerational community building providing recreational facilities that contribute towards improved mental and physical health and wellbeing benefits helps attract people to stay, live and work in Golspie.

Work will start as soon as funding is secured and funding will provide a much-needed immediate boost to this building and through it to the whole community in Golspie.

This project links to the strategic objective Increasing Community Resilience as maintaining and improving community facilities addresses issues that provide mental and physical health and wellbeing benefits and help attract people to stay, live and work in Golspie. Increased resilience helps tackle rural depopulation.

This project will support resilience infrastructure, strengthen community resilience and build viability of FRH so it attracts increased bookings and sustainability.

FRH recently hosted the well-attended East Sutherland VE day celebrations and holds up to 300 with weekly footfall averaging around 700. Used regularly by 15-20 groups and individuals, it hosts funerals, parties, choirs and classes alongside food larders (3 times a week) and markets.

We aim to protect existing activities and services and develop larger events (every 2 months) which are a boost locally. They raise the building profile and build community resilience.

Following acoustic improvements, we are liaising with The Touring Network and Sutherland Sessions to attract more live bookings. After a recent successful music concert, FRH is now booked by a well-known musician in October 2025.

Funding will enable Go Golspie to protect and develop FRH's welcoming intergenerational community spaces that bring people together, connect communities, impact on loneliness and isolation and build community resilience.

(c) What do you think the outcomes of your project will be and how will you measure them? Please note an outcome is the longer-term change that your project will achieve. What will be the lasting benefits and legacy?

(500 words max limit)

The main Project Outcome will be improvement of a much-loved iconic community asset, helping the sustainability and viability of the building and providing additionality to the community.

Outcome 1: Additionality to the building providing increased potential to attract/retain bookings

Outcome 2: Reduced social isolation and loneliness through increased activities

Outcome 3: Improved community resilience infrastructure.

Outcomes will be measured by increased bookings and reduced energy costs as direct project results. Feedback from those using the building will demonstrate increased impact on social isolation and loneliness as the hall attracts more activities.

Methods to measure changes will include but not be limited to:

- Surveys/Feedback forms in the building and office
- Continued community engagement and consultation
- Noting how people knew about the building
- Keeping note of building bookings and user numbers
- Noting numbers of volunteers.

The long-term legacy of this project will be to place Go Golspie in a stronger position to attract bookings and maximise the buildings' sustainability through reduced running costs. Making Fountain Road Hall more pleasant to be in helps strengthen Go Golspie as an organisation and boosts Golspie overall as it becomes a better place to live work or visit.

Delivering this project shows the community we are looking after the hall and the grounds which provides additionality and impacts on the resilience of the whole community.

Improving access will address ill-health, lack of mobility, isolation and loneliness and learning. These impact on mental health and wellbeing, promote social connections and enable people who may be vulnerable to feel included and supported.

Fountain Road Hall is an important local historic building (but not listed) and it is the responsibility of Go Golspie to make sure it is upgraded and maintained as necessary for the benefit of the community as part of its ownership.

Improving the facilities on offer in Golspie helps attract and retain younger generations and addresses the causes of rural depopulation. This long-term benefit boosts the community and provides improved opportunities for people to access recreational activities, removing the need to travel to access similar services and community facilities.

These improvements are driven by community feedback and need and will make the building more attractive to book, more pleasant to attend events in, more energy efficient to run and through these outcomes help its long-term sustainability.

4.5	How will the project be supported/maintained/sustained after CRF funding?
<p>(500 words max limit)</p> <p>Golspie is an hour north of Inverness and has a population of 1,300. This is a remote and rural area with limited recreational facilities. Golspie is identified as one of the five most disadvantaged communities in the county of Sutherland.</p> <p>Income from bookings contributes towards ongoing running costs and an improved environment will help attract more bookings leading to more income being generated and improved long-term sustainability for the building.</p> <p>Go Golspie does also fundraise and has recently distributed more collecting cans around the village as well as trying to hold a fundraising stall at our community markets. To keep the building activities affordable and accessible, we have few options for capital work other than grants, donations and fundraising activities as well as continuing to reduce ongoing costs as much as we can. We review costs regularly to keep them as low as possible and will continue to do this after CRF funding.</p> <p>Continuing to improve the building and attract more bookings will help support the Development Officer role who co-ordinates bookings and volunteers and is crucial to the organisation to increase bookings going forwards. They are already building connections with organisations such as The Touring Network and Sutherland Sessions which is leading to events such as a concert in October that was a word-of-mouth recommendation.</p> <p>This booking is also due in part to the acoustic improvements carried out last year which are being recognised already by those using the hall. The plan is to be able to hold more events such as this following this project when the hall is a warmer and more pleasant place to be in.</p> <p>This project protects local employment and volunteering opportunities helping retain people in Golspie supporting the local community to thrive and making Golspie a better place to live, work and visit.</p>	
4.6	Describe how you intend to mitigate negative environmental impacts that may arise in delivering the project. It may be that the project specifically seeks to address climate change issues or implement net zero ambitions/solutions.
<p>(500 words max limit)</p> <p>The project will support and raise awareness of climate change issues and implement net zero solutions through installing solar panels linked to a battery bank and improving a community building with energy saving measures. Business Energy Scotland undertook an efficiency assessment review of FRH in 2025 which is complete and attached. It shows Go Golspie could save £4,263 on its annual energy bill and that implementing their recommendations has the potential to reduce carbon emissions by 89% (3.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide).</p> <p>The project will look at add-on energy saving measures to help reduce general energy use including insulation, draught-proofing and smart controls for new heaters. Each hall will be controlled by its own thermostat which can be controlled remotely.</p> <p>Funding for improvements to a community building will encourage people to attend recreational activities in Golspie and reduce the need to travel to access similar facilities. This mitigates negative environmental impact and supports low emission and active travel options.</p> <p>Encouraging use of the community food larder will raise awareness of food waste and the need to live in a more sustainable and environmentally friendly way.</p> <p>With direct experience running community buildings Go Golspie provides support and advice to other local organisations taking one on for the first time and is well placed to promote eco-friendly options.</p>	

Securing and expanding activities at this resilience building will unlock additional community benefit through the improvements which will be enabled. Providing improvements to FRH tackles barriers to taking climate action through increasing knowledge and awareness of greener options.

4.7 In developing the project, explain how you have considered equalities issues and taken groups with protected characteristics into account in the development/delivery of the project. How will you ensure that no one is excluded or disadvantaged from benefitting from the project? Will the project target specific groups?

(500 words max limit)

This project reduces inequalities and address poverty in Golspie by enabling improved access to recreational activities for those facing barriers to participation caused by lack of reliable heating and accessible parking.

FRH is available to everyone but particularly used by those who are older, less mobile or affected by ill health and disabilities. All will benefit from improved access and better heating which are the central focus of this project.

At present there is no accessible parking near to the Hall and feedback from bookers and those attending events at the hall shows this is a factor when using the hall for those with reduced mobility. As we do have space within the grounds of the hall, we would like therefore to reduce barriers to attending activities and events in the hall for those with protected characteristics.

Improving and extending the accessible parking immediately outside the hall with enough space for a car to turn will reduce inequalities in accessing the hall. This will mean extending our current space, which already has access to the road through existing gates.

Similarly it will be useful to have a WC close to the main entrance for many people using the building.

With lived experience of using the building, we are looking to replace the existing heating with more efficient options to make the building more pleasant to be in. The new accessible parking spaces will help those who need to park closer to the entrance to access the building.


Ongoing and regular feedback and community engagement with those using the hall evidences that not having accessible spaces near the hall restricts those with reduced mobility. This illustrates the direct need to improve access for everyone so no one is excluded.


Securing funding will unlock the potential for additional bookings benefitting more people and enable us to support more people. Knowing we have an improved heating system and a building which is more accessible will make a huge difference to those using FRH and the organisation.

Delivering these improvements will enable Go Golspie to address the needs and demands of the local community evidenced through their confidence and support for our existing building. They also increase capacity and resilience within Go Golspie and the local community.

4.8 All applicants are required to provide a statement on how the organisation is committed to advancing the [Fair Work First Policy](#) including the 'Real Living Wage' and 'Effective Workers Voice' criteria. The statement should be agreed jointly by the employer and an appropriate workplace representative or a trade union representative if one is in place.

PLEASE NOTE- This statement is applicable to all groups and organisations even if you do not employ staff and/or only work with volunteers. Projects cannot progress without a signed statement - refer to the [Fair Work First guidance](#) for more information. Complete the following Fair Work First Statement and Declaration form and submit with the application. Double click the icon to download.

 FWF statement and declaration template.doc	
Have you provided a Fair Work First statement in a separate document with this application? Please ensure it is signed by an appropriate workplace representative.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Can you confirm if you have the Living Wage Accreditation or are planning to be certified?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applied <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the Fair Work First statement on your organisation's website?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have a website <input type="checkbox"/>
How many people do you employ or how many volunteers do you have?	We employ 1 full-time and 6 part-time (2.5 FTE)
Do you currently pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
As part of your procurement assessment process, do you ensure that traders/suppliers also pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
How do you provide channels for Effective Voice in the workplace for staff and/or volunteers?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Line Management Relationship <input type="checkbox"/> Staff /Engagement Surveys <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suggestions Schemes <input type="checkbox"/> Intranet/Online Platforms <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Forums / Networks <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Union Recognition/Collective Bargaining

SECTION 5: PROJECT BUDGET			
5.1	<p>Main project expenditure – costs should be as accurate and current as possible from recent quotations or price comparisons.</p> <p>Please refer to the guidance note on eligible expenditure. Only download and complete the overheads and management fees summary spreadsheet below, if you would like to claim more than 10% of total project costs as overheads.</p> <div>  CRF overheads and management fees sun </div>		
Budget Heading	Detailed Costs	Revenue/Capital	Amount
Heating: Solar Panels	For removal of existing old solar panels including disposing of all waste. Fit new solar 16 panels including battery station including all scaffolding to high roof.	Capital	£21,000
Heating: Infra-red heaters	For removal of existing heaters, fitting if required new boards to take heaters, supply & fit infra-red heaters to main hall & small hall including removing and disposing of all waste.	Capital	£12,000
Access: Accessible Parking Area	To create parking area to right of gate coming in, lifting all turf from edge of path to end of building out to wall. Fitting terran to area and then putting scalpings over all of area with heel kerb all way along end including removing and disposing of all waste.	Capital	£3,500

Access: additional WC close to new parking	To strip out store of existing sink, cupboards etc, fit new toilet & small wash hand basin including all associated works. Fit small cupboard to wall for storage, fit small heater, fit lock to door, box in mains if required, fit new lino to floor or similar, paint whole of room.	Capital	£5,000
VAT	VAT @ 20% of total capital costs (£49,800)	Capital	£8,300
Contingency costs	5% capital costs plus VAT (totalling £49,800) to cover the unforeseen/additional costs that are quite possible when working within an historic building	Capital	£2,490
Salary	Development Officer FRH costs to manage and deliver project: overseeing and liaising with contractors, sourcing items required, re-organising bookings when needed, keeping bookers informed, keeping spaces safe and secure. £17,222 salary pa with oncosts in addition (20 hr p/w: £16.56 p/h)	Revenue	£5,000
Overheads	Towards Development Officer overhead costs	Revenue	£500
Total revenue expenditure			£5,500
Total capital expenditure			£52,290
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS			£57,790
Is VAT included in these costs?			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Can you confirm that the costs above have not already been incurred or committed to?			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	Reasonableness of cost – Are the project costs listed in 5.1 based on valid quotes as per the procurement guidance provided? Please provide any quotes as supporting documents to this application .		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	<p>Please explain how your project will achieve value for money.</p> <p>This project builds on other work carried out since Go Golspie purchased Fountain Road Hall including the recent entrance doors, office spaces, acoustic work in the main hall and new curtains and heaters in the small hall. Gradually upgrading the hall futureproofs it to ensure it remains an attractive venue for the much-needed recreational facilities it provides and helps its sustainability.</p> <p>Improving the heating system will achieve value for money as if the recommendations made within the BES Efficiency Assessment report are implemented, it is estimated that Go Golspie could potentially achieve annual cost savings of £4,263 and 3.4 tonnes of carbon dioxide.</p>		

		The project will save costs as the current heating system is over 15 years old and inefficient and unreliable. The heating and improved access will provide additionality as the building is upgraded and attracts more bookings. The project will unlock more income to be generated which will give the whole building a new lease of life and provide additionality in terms of the venue we can provide. It will be a visible boost to the whole community.	
SECTION 6 – MATCH FUNDING (if applicable)			
Please note match funding for this round is not essential, however efforts to secure match funding for the project is reflected within the assessment criteria.			
6.1	Please provide details of any match funding applied for and whether it is awaiting a decision or confirmed.		
Name of funder		Confirmed?	Date Confirmed or Decision Expected
Go Golspie Development Trust		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	3 rd July 2025
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Total match funding			£2,000
CRF requested			£55,790
Total funding			£57,790
6.2	Will the project involve “in kind” support?		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
6.3	If yes, please detail.		The board of Go Golspie Development Trust are all volunteers which includes the sub-group heads and the FRH sub-group. They provide their time, advice and support as ‘in kind’ help.
6.4	Please explain why public funding is required to deliver the project.		Public funding is required so Go Golspie can replace its current heating system which is unreliable and failing. New heating systems along with improved access will unlock the organisation to secure existing building activities and help ensure we develop additional and repeat bookings. This will enable Go Golspie to meet growing demand for

		<p>this vital and much-loved community building which builds resilience.</p> <p>FRH has not been able to become more self-sufficient as quickly as anticipated due to the effects of the pandemic slowing down bookings and the increased costs of running the building.</p> <p>At the same the Cost-of-Living crisis has meant more people affected by poverty and inequalities and needing to use the building to address this such as Community Food. Cost can be a barrier to accessing activities and community food which this project addresses. Having food available in the building for all who need it makes a big difference to those living in Golspie building resilience locally.</p> <p>Without securing public funding to deliver this project, it will not be able to go ahead which will affect the building's capacity to generate income. There will be an associated impact on all the work that Go Golspie Development Trust does and on the staff the building supports.</p> <p>This in turn will have a major impact on both the resilience of the organisation and the resilience of those in the community that we support and help particularly with the Food Support lifeline service based out of Fountain Road Hall.</p>
6.5	Please explain what the remaining bank balances are for in your accounts.	<p>The majority is restricted funding for existing posts and projects. The remainder is unrestricted reserves to meet the reserves policy.</p>
6.6	Please explain why unrestricted funding in your annual accounts cannot be used to deliver the project and/or used as match funding.	<p>The unrestricted funding is to meet the board's reserves policy to keep 3 months running costs in the account.</p> <p>Go Golspie carries out fundraising events and activities but that has not really fully built back up post pandemic. and so its reserves are lower than they generally would be.</p>

		At the same time, there has been substantial increased demand for services such as Community Food and Community Transport due to the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.
6.7	If you are applying for 100% funding for your project, please explain why no match funding is available.	N/A

SECTION 7 – INCOME GENERATION

7.1	Will the project generate income?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.2	If yes, how will the income benefit the organisation? Will it be re-invested to help with the sustainability of the project – if so, how? A copy of a business plan and/or budget forecast must be provided with the application.	<p>Yes once completed as opening up the building to more bookings and making the building more attractive to use will lead to new income generating streams and increased bookings strengthening the sustainability of the building. Copy of Business Plan attached.</p> <p>Having improved heating and access and storage will reduce costs and unlock additional income to help with running costs for the building and associated salaries.</p> <p>Increasing income/donations from these streams will be re-invested to benefit the organisation and enable Fountain Road Hall to become more sustainable and gradually reduce reliance on grant funding.</p>
7.3	How will you ensure that local organisations/ businesses are not disadvantaged because of the project? Are they supportive of the project?	<p>Local organisations and businesses have not been disadvantaged so far by our ownership of Fountain Road Hall and there is nothing in the planned heating and access project that will disadvantage them either. They are supportive of our work and use the buildings themselves - the local funeral directors for example will benefit from improved facilities.</p> <p>However we will continue to make sure we are open and transparent about our projects and encourage direct communication and feedback with local organisations and businesses.</p> <p>The project to improve the building will continue to benefit local organisations and businesses in a number of ways: Some of our volunteers work for local organisations and by using local businesses to deliver the work, we are directly helping make Golspie a better place to live, work and visit which also benefits local businesses and organisations.</p> <p>Using local contractors where possible to undertake the project work supports local</p>

		organisations which helps retain people in the area stemming rural depopulation.
7.4	Have you considered taking out a loan for the project?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.5	If not, please state why?	As a SCIO it is not easy to secure a loan and we are not keen to do that and have the liability hanging over the organisation. We would also need to consider if we could service the loan repayments on top of running costs.
7.6	Have you previously received public funding?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.7	If yes, please provide details of awards for the last 3 fiscal years and if any were awarded under Public Subsidy.	

Funding	Date	Amount £	Public Subsidy?
Highland Council – Community Transport Fund (Transport)	1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025	£5,000	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
National Lottery Community Fund YMCA Building Activities		£13,500	
Highland Council – Community Regeneration Funding (Minibus)		£58,783	
Highland Council – Community Regeneration Funding (Playpark)		£85,000	
Highland Council – Community Regeneration Funding (Development Manager)		£30,071	
Highland Council – Community Regeneration Fund (FRH)		£13,904	
Highland Council – Community Transport Fund (Transport)	1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024	£4,750	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
National Lottery Community Fund (YMCA Building Phase 3 – Activities)		£16,170	
Highland Council - Ward Discretionary Fund (FRH)		£500	
Highland Council - Sutherland Food Initiatives		£1,250	
Highland Council Community Regeneration Funding (Transport)		£9,075.75	
Highland Council Community Regeneration Funding (Development Manager)		£13,500	
Highland Council - Ward Discretionary Fund (Development Officer)	1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023	£3,000	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
National Lottery Community Fund (YMCA Building Phase 3 – Activities when open)		£46,229	

Highland Council - Ward Discretionary Fund (Transport)		£3,250	
Highland Council – Community Transport Fund (Transport)		£4,752	
Highland Council – Cost of Living Initiatives (Store Vouchers)		£3,050	

SECTION 8 – SIGNATURE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

8.1	Main applicant, chairperson or equivalent – the person signing this application has the authority within the organisation to apply for grant funding.	
<p><i>I declare that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read the guidance notes and understand and accept the terms and conditions noted within them.</i></p> <p><i>The data provided in the application (and claim) forms are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.</i></p>		
Signature: Print:		Date: 03/07/2025

Please Ensure You Also Complete the Attachments Checklist Below

8.2	You must enclose the following supporting documents (where applicable) with the application. If they are not available, please state why.	Yes / No / Not applicable
1	Bank statement – please provide a full bank statement with the organisation address. It must be the latest statement at the time of application submission.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Annual financial accounts – latest available.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Constitution or articles and memorandum.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Committee Members or Directors List.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Policies – relevant organisational policies applicable to the project such as child protection, health and safety, equal opportunities, Fair Work First policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
6	Valid organisation insurance policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7	Evidence of need and demand i.e. letters of support, community consultation reports, photos, feasibility study	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Confirmation of match funding letters	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
9	Permissions – i.e. planning, building warrants, marine licences	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Business plan (income generation projects only)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
11	Job descriptions (for CRF funded posts)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
12	Evidence of control/ownership of asset – i.e. lease, title deeds	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
13	Partnership agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reason for missing documentation: 9 and 13. Not required for this project.		
Additional documents:		

- 14. Quotes for the project work
- 15. BES review May 2025

Completed forms and supporting documentation should be emailed to communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk quoting your unique project reference number.

Please ensure you have labelled the supporting documents as per 8.2 of the guidance note:

The application form should follow the naming convention example:

(Name of organisation) final application form

Supporting documentation should be labelled as: **document type followed with the title** – for example:

- Match funding – The Highland Council
- Match funding – National Lottery
- Insurance – Zurich 2022/23 annual policy
- Organisational policy – health and safety
- Organisational policy – Fair Work First statement
- Permissions – Planning granted July 2022
- Permissions – Building warrant granted Aug 2022
- Bank statement – Bank of Scotland Nov 2022
- Letter of support – name of Councillor
- Letter of support – community council/group
- Letter of support – name of local business

Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) Application Form

(June 2025 – CRF Area Funds)

Key considerations



Please refer to the **Application Guidance** (link below) and **Fair Work First Summary Guidance** when completing the application form as there is important supplementary information you need to be aware of. Answer the questions concisely, describing clearly and directly what the project you are seeking funding for is delivering. Please do not exceed the word limit given.

To ensure you have the best opportunity to score well during the assessment, please refer to the **Assessment Criteria Matrix** (link below) when completing the application form.

In this current round of CRF, we are seeking well-developed and robust projects that are ready to commence, and can complete within 12 months of funding being awarded.

The deadline for application submission is 9am on Friday 4th July 2025.

Double click the icons below to download the documents. If you have any issues with downloading the documents, please contact us at communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk

<u>Application Guidance</u>	<u>Assessment Criteria Matrix</u>
 CRF_Application_Guidance (Sutherland 2025)	 CRF Assessment Criteria (Sutherland 2025)

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1	Project reference number	CRF - 4110
1.2	Organisation	Assynt Leisure
1.3	Project title	Sustainable Future for Assynt Leisure & Learning Centre (Urgent repairs)
1.4	Summary of project you wish to be funded (max 250 words)	<p>Assynt Leisure & Learning Centre is the only sports and learning community facility in Assynt, serving a remote population of around 1,400 people in west Sutherland. We are applying for capital funding to complete urgent repairs essential to the continued safe and energy-efficient operation of the centre.</p> <p>The project involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrading outdated lighting across the building to efficient LED systems to reduce energy consumption and improve visibility and accessibility, particularly for older and disabled users.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replacement of three storm-damaged fire exit doors in the main sports hall, which are currently rotten, draughty, and pose a significant health and safety risk. <p>These repairs are critical to maintaining our function as a safe, welcoming, and resilient space for the whole community, including families, older adults, school pupils, and NHS/social prescribing partners.</p> <p>Our centre plays a vital role in addressing rural inequality, isolation, and poor health by offering affordable fitness, social activities, after-school clubs, and support groups in a region where no other comparable services exist within an hour's travel.</p> <p>The project is ready with quotes being finalised and will be delivered within 12 months. The work directly supports the Sutherland Area Place Plan's priorities under People, Place and Prosperity, particularly through enhancing health and well-being infrastructure, tackling depopulation, and building community capacity.</p>	
1.5	Project costs	Total project cost	£31,457.20
		Match funding	£1,000
		CRF grant requested	£30,457.20
1.6	Start date	05/08/2025	
1.7	End date (<i>max 12 months from start date</i>)	31/12/2025	
1.8	Please confirm you have read and understood the CRF privacy notice	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION 2: CONTACT AND ORGANISATION DETAILS		
2.1	Organisation	Assynt Leisure
2.2	Address and postcode	Culag, New Pier, Lochinver LAIRG Sutherland IV27 4JP
2.3	Main contact name	
2.4	Position in the organisation	

2.5	Contact number		
2.6	Email address		
2.7	Website address		
2.8	Organisation type	<input type="checkbox"/>	Company limited by guarantee
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Constituted group
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Public body
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Charity
		<input type="checkbox"/>	SCIO
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):
2.9	Organisation registered number	SC030350	
2.10	Is the organisation VAT registered?	<p>By confirming this, you are declaring the organisation VAT status as per HMRC. If this changes at any time during the project, you <u>must</u> notify the CRF Team as this may affect the offer of grant.</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
2.11	If the organisation is VAT registered, please provide the number.	N/A	
2.12	Is the VAT related to the project being reclaimed from HMRC?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whole
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Partial
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	None
2.13	Provide details of VAT exemptions.	N/A	

SECTION 3: PROJECT DETAILS		
3.1	Please confirm the location of the project including post code.	Assynt Leisure Culag, New Pier Lochinver, LAIRG Sutherland IV27 4JP
3.2	Are you applying on behalf of a partnership project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Is there a partnership agreement in place?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.4	Is your organisation the lead applicant?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.5	Do you own the land or asset?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.6	Are you leasing the land or asset? If so, what is the term left on your current lease agreement	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>8 Years Months</p>
3.7	If ownership or lease agreements are not in place, please provide details if applied for and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	Currently we are undergoing activity to secure a further increase in the lease with partners.

3.8	Does the project require planning permission or other statutory regulatory consents?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.9	If consents are required, please provide details if applied and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	N/A

SECTION 4: THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

4.1	List the main activities required to deliver the project including timescales.
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Activity name	Achieve by (date)
Final quotes confirmed and contractor selected	04/08/2025
Grant awarded and project start confirmed	05/08/2025
Fire door replacement work begins	30/09/2025
LED lighting installation (sports hall & centre)	30/09/2025
Project evaluation and final reporting	01/12/2025
	Click or tap to enter a date.

4.2	(a) What local need or opportunity will the project address?
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Assynt Leisure & Learning Centre is the only facility of its kind serving the Assynt area, a rural, remote, and economically vulnerable part of west Sutherland. Our catchment covers over 1,400 people across scattered communities, with over 600 in Lochinver.

We provide the only indoor sports hall, fitness suite, learning hub, and social space within an hour's drive. The Centre supports physical activity, health referrals, youth and family activities, older adult programmes, and vital third-sector services.

Our sports hall is also the primary indoor PE and activity space for Lochinver Primary School, which uses the hall multiple times per week. Safe, well-lit conditions are essential for pupils and staff.

However, the building is now facing critical infrastructure failures that put our continued operation at risk:

- Our lighting system is failing across the entire building. In the sports hall, just 13 of the 49 lights are currently working, creating safety risks and deterring bookings. The remainder of the centre also suffers from poor-quality lighting, with bulbs becoming increasingly difficult or impossible to replace due to their age and obsolescence.
- Three fire exit doors from the sports hall are damaged by years of Highland weather and past storms. They are rotting, insecure, and draughty, posing safety concerns and driving up energy costs. This puts users and staff at risk and limits the building's compliance for public use.

These issues have led to cancelled bookings, increased heating bills, and growing user concerns. Without urgent action, damage and costs will worsen. We risk partial closure of the building, with serious implications for children's education, public access, and community health and wellbeing.

Despite our remote location, demand has grown. We deliver warm spaces, after-school activities, older adult fitness classes, and host NHS and mental health groups. We rely on volunteers and low-cost pricing to remain inclusive, but our limited income can't cover major capital repairs.

The Centre is also used by tourists, families using soft play, court hire, and gym users, especially during poor weather. This boosts income and offers a rare indoor activity for visitors, helping support local resilience. As the only indoor facility for over an hour's drive, we are a vital asset for residents and visitors alike.

This project addresses, health and wellbeing infrastructure (Sutherland APP – “People” priority), supporting rural community capacity (APP – “Place” and “Resilience”), Fuel efficiency and climate action (APP – “Environment” and “Prosperity”).

CRF funding will ensure essential repairs can be completed before winter. Without them, core services will be compromised. With them, we can continue serving as a safe, accessible, and sustainable hub for Assynt.

	(b) Has this need been recognised in a local place plan?
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Yes — the need for this project is strongly aligned with several priorities and actions identified in the Sutherland Area Place Plan (APP), particularly under the People, Place, and Prosperity themes.

1. People – Community Health, Wellbeing & Services:

The APP highlights a need to improve access to inclusive health, fitness, and wellbeing services across rural communities. Our centre delivers fitness and wellbeing programmes for all ages, including older adults, families, and pupils. It is used regularly by NHS services, referrals, mental health support groups, and local families. Without safe fire exits and adequate lighting, we cannot continue providing these essential services safely.

The APP also notes that indoor and all-weather facilities are especially important in rural and remote areas, exactly what Assynt Leisure provides. Our project directly supports this aim by upgrading the safety and usability of our only indoor community space in Assynt.

2. Place – Infrastructure and Community Facilities:

The plan identifies “improving existing infrastructure” and “maintaining safe, welcoming community buildings” as a key priority for community resilience. Assynt Leisure is a critical hub for Lochinver and the wider area. It provides indoor space for school PE, clubs, classes, meetings, and local events.

Replacing our storm-damaged fire exit doors and upgrading to energy-efficient LED lighting addresses these infrastructure concerns head-on. The work also improves building accessibility, reduces long-term maintenance costs, and enhances safety for vulnerable users, including children and older people.

3. Prosperity – Sustainable Communities & Energy Efficiency:

The APP calls for greater energy efficiency and carbon reduction in community assets. Our lighting upgrade will significantly reduce electricity use, cut carbon emissions, and help tackle energy costs. Replacing the fire exit doors will reduce heat loss and improve insulation, supporting both climate action and financial sustainability.

By maintaining a functioning indoor space that is accessible to both residents and visitors year-round, we also support the Plan's goal to sustain community income, local jobs, and activity in areas with seasonal economies. We host activities used by tourists during poor weather and provide a warm space in winter for the local population, reducing isolation, promoting wellbeing, and generating modest revenue.

In summary, the project supports multiple Sutherland APP priorities:

- *"Provide safe, accessible and inclusive places to support health and wellbeing"*
- *"Strengthen community capacity and resilience"*
- *"Make better use of existing community spaces"*
- *"Reduce building emissions and support net zero"*

This is not just a repair project — it's a key investment in the resilience, safety, and sustainability of one of west Sutherland's only community-owned public indoor spaces. Without these upgrades, the centre cannot meet current or future demand.

4.3	How do you know there is local support for the project? How can you evidence this? Provide evidence as supporting documents as requested at 8.2
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This project will benefit a wide cross-section of the Assynt community, as well as visitors to the area. The Assynt Leisure & Learning Centre is the only indoor community facility within an hour's travel, making its continued safe operation vital for community wellbeing, education, health services, and social cohesion.

Local Residents (approx.1,400people):

Residents of all ages rely on the Centre for affordable access to sport, fitness, wellbeing classes, learning opportunities, events, and warm social spaces. This project will ensure the building remains safe, accessible, and comfortable year-round, particularly important in winter when outdoor alternatives are limited.

Lochinver Primary School:

The school has no indoor PE space of its own and depends on the Centre's sports hall for physical education multiple times per week. Ensuring the fire exits and lighting are safe and functional is essential to the delivery of core school activities in a secure environment.

Children and families:

We run a weekly Parent & Toddler Group, as well as a growing After-School Club and School Holiday Programme. These provide vital childcare, enrichment, and social interaction for local children and support working families in a remote rural area. Safe, warm, and well-lit spaces are essential to the success of these programmes.

Older adults and people with limited mobility:

Many older residents attend weekly fitness classes, soft archery lessons, and coffee mornings. Improved lighting and energy efficiency will enhance comfort and safety for users who are more vulnerable to poor visibility, cold, and draughty conditions.

NHS and social partners:

The Centre is used for non-clinical interventions and mental health support. Its ongoing availability is crucial to delivering early intervention and preventative care strategies in a rural setting.

Local clubs and activity organisers:

Groups including indoor football, badminton, short mat bowls, and youth clubs will benefit from enhanced lighting and safer, warmer facilities. We are supported by letters from the Lochinver

Badminton Group, Indoor Bowls Group, and the Assynt Christian Community Youth Project, who all emphasise how critical the building is to their work and the wellbeing of their members.

Volunteers and staff:

Improved safety and lighting conditions will also support the wellbeing of those who run the Centre day to day, helping to retain volunteers and reduce maintenance strain on our small team.

Visitors and tourists:

Families and individuals visiting Assynt use the gym, soft play, and courts, especially during poor weather. The Centre offers a rare year-round indoor option in a tourism-dependent economy, contributing to resilience and local income.

This project will protect and enhance access to a vital rural facility, ensuring it remains a welcoming, inclusive space for all.

4.4 Outputs and outcomes – Please refer to the application guidance for further information and a definition of what constitutes “outputs” and “outcomes”.

(a) Please select below ONE of the CRF main strategic objectives that you believe your project’s outputs and outcomes will best align with.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Increasing community resilience
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling poverty and inequality
<input type="checkbox"/>	Addressing causes of rural depopulation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Helping economic recovery and sustaining growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling the climate emergency and working towards net zero

(b) What are the immediate and short-term outputs that your project will achieve? How will you measure them?

This project will deliver the following measurable capital outputs within a 12-month period:

1. Replacement of three emergency fire exit doors

- Removal and safe disposal of damaged wooden external fire doors
- Supply and installation of three compliant, insulated, steel/UPVC emergency exit doors with anti-panic push bars
- Improved building security, emergency egress, and thermal retention in the main sports hall
- Reduced heat loss and improved energy efficiency in one of the highest-usage areas of the building

2. Full building-wide lighting upgrade to LED

- Replacement of 49 light fittings in the main sports hall with modern LED fixtures
- Replacement of failing, obsolete lighting in all other areas: fitness suite, reception, corridors, changing rooms, toilets, meeting room, and café/social space
- Improved visibility, safety, and energy performance across the entire facility
- Elimination of maintenance issues caused by hard-to-source or discontinued bulbs

3. Delivery of safety and usability benefits for all users

- Compliance with fire regulations and emergency access requirements
- Improved lighting for all programmed activities including: primary school PE, after-school club, badminton, bowls, football, fitness classes, and older adult sessions
- Enhanced conditions for visitors, NHS partners, and community events

4. Environmental efficiency

- Reduction in electricity usage by an estimated 40% for lighting
- Lower heating costs due to improved building insulation and door performance

All works will be delivered by local contractors, with oversight by the Centre Manager and Board of Trustees.

(c) What do you think the outcomes of your project will be and how will you measure them? Please note an outcome is the longer-term change that your project will achieve. What will be the lasting benefits and legacy?

This project will deliver significant outcomes for the Assynt community, strengthening the long-term resilience, safety, sustainability, and accessibility of the Assynt Leisure & Learning Centre.

1. Improved safety and compliance

By replacing three storm-damaged fire exit doors and upgrading lighting throughout the building, the Centre will meet current health and safety standards. This ensures continued access for schools, older adults, children, and vulnerable users. Staff and volunteers will also benefit from safer working conditions.

2. Sustained access to vital rural services

The Centre is a lifeline facility in a remote area, the only indoor community venue for over an hour's travel. This project enables the safe continuation of programmes that support health, learning, childcare, and wellbeing. These include primary school PE, after-school and holiday clubs, NHS mental health referrals, social prescribing, and older adult fitness classes.

3. Increased usage and participation

Improved lighting and thermal conditions will encourage more bookings and enable expanded programming, particularly in darker winter months. User confidence will increase, especially for older adults, families with young children, and visiting groups. Demand is expected to rise in response to improved safety and comfort.

4. Greater energy efficiency and cost savings

Upgrading to LED lighting and replacing draughty fire doors will reduce electricity and heating bills significantly. This supports the Centre's long-term financial sustainability and environmental goals. The project contributes directly to the local Place Plan's ambition to reduce emissions and operating costs in community buildings.

5. Reduced isolation and improved wellbeing

Safer, warmer, and more welcoming spaces will allow more people to take part in physical activity, social connection, and learning, addressing health inequalities and rural loneliness. This is particularly important in Assynt, where geographic isolation, poor weather, and transport challenges can limit participation in community life.

6. Stronger community resilience

By investing in the Centre's core infrastructure, the project protects a key community asset that plays a central role in local life. It strengthens the Centre's ability to host community events, crisis responses, and support networks, all of which contribute to local resilience.

This project leaves a lasting legacy by safeguarding one of west Sutherland's most valued community assets. The upgraded fire doors and LED lighting will remain in place for over a decade, ensuring the Centre remains accessible, safe, and welcoming for current and future generations. Without these urgent works, the risk of reduced access or partial closure would grow, jeopardising critical services and local resilience. With them, the Centre will continue to provide inclusive, year-round access to health, education, and wellbeing opportunities in one of Scotland's most remote areas.

By stabilising the infrastructure now, this project also lays the foundation for future growth, supporting the Centre's ambition to expand programming, partnerships, and community impact in line with the Sutherland Area Place Plan.

4.5 How will the project be supported/maintained/sustained after CRF funding?

This project addresses urgent one-off capital repairs, with all works fully scoped and ready to go. Once complete, the improvements will provide long-term financial, operational, and environmental benefits to help sustain the Assynt Leisure & Learning Centre for years to come.

Long-term durability and low maintenance

The new fire exit doors will be made of high-quality, weather-resistant materials, reducing draughts, improving heat retention, and eliminating the need for regular repairs or temporary fixes. The new LED lighting system will be energy-efficient, longer-lasting, and easier to maintain — replacing outdated fittings that regularly fail due to discontinued or hard-to-source bulbs.

Reduced energy and running costs

The Centre's utility bills are currently over £10,000 per year. This project will reduce both electricity usage and heat loss, easing pressure on operating costs. These savings will support the Centre's ability to maintain affordable pricing for users and to reinvest in core staffing and programming.

Improved income potential

A safer, warmer, and better-lit building will encourage more bookings and usage, supporting income from gym memberships, facility hire, after-school clubs, and community events. It will also enhance our value as a partner for NHS Highland, schools, and other agencies offering health and wellbeing services.

Ageing infrastructure and forward planning

As the Centre reaches its 20th year, repairs and capital investment are essential to maintain safe, inclusive, and accessible facilities. This project represents the first, but critical, step in a phased approach to modernising the building. By addressing urgent issues now, we reduce future costs, disruption, and protect the Centre's long-term viability.

Commitment to Net Zero and climate action

We are committed to adapting our building and operations to reduce emissions and contribute to Scotland's Net Zero targets. This project directly improves energy performance and forms the

foundation for future sustainability upgrades, including heating and insulation. It is a key milestone in our transition to a more resilient and low-carbon facility.

Strong governance and community leadership

The Centre is run by an experienced Board of Trustees and Centre Manager, with robust financial oversight and commitment to long-term sustainability. A preventative maintenance plan will be updated following the works to ensure continued care of the improved infrastructure.

4.6	Describe how you intend to mitigate negative environmental impacts that may arise in delivering the project. It may be that the project specifically seeks to address climate change issues or implement net zero ambitions/solutions.
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This project will have a positive and measurable environmental impact by significantly improving the energy efficiency and carbon footprint of the Assynt Leisure & Learning Centre, and supporting our wider goal of transitioning to a Net Zero-ready building.

Reduced electricity consumption through LED lighting

The current lighting system is outdated, inefficient, and failing. By replacing all lighting across the building with modern LED systems, we will reduce electricity consumption for lighting by an estimated 40–60%. LED lighting also has a much longer lifespan, reducing maintenance waste and resource use. This is a key improvement in line with the Centre's energy reduction strategy.

Reduced heating loss through insulated fire doors

The existing storm-damaged fire exit doors are poorly sealed, rotten, and contribute to significant heat loss, particularly in the large sports hall. Replacing them with secure, insulated steel/ UPVC doors will help stabilise internal temperatures and reduce the need for constant heating in colder months. This is a practical, cost-effective step toward lowering the Centre's heating demand and carbon emissions.

Extended life and improved resource efficiency of the building

By upgrading essential components now, we extend the life of the building and reduce the risk of larger, more carbon-intensive interventions in future. These works will protect the existing structure, improve thermal performance, and reduce overall resource demand.

Foundation for further sustainability improvements

As the Centre reaches 20 years old, we are actively planning improvements to insulation, ventilation, and heating. This project represents the first phase of that journey, a critical stepping stone in aligning our operations with environmental targets. It will also help unlock future investment by demonstrating our commitment to energy efficiency and climate responsibility.

Local delivery and low-waste procurement

All works will be delivered by local contractors where possible, reducing travel emissions. Components will be responsibly sourced and installed to minimise waste and maximise lifespan.

This project directly supports the Sutherland Area Place Plan's priorities to improve energy efficiency in community buildings and reduce building emissions.

4.7	In developing the project, explain how you have considered equalities issues and taken groups with protected characteristics into account in the development/delivery of the project. How will you ensure that no one is excluded or disadvantaged from benefitting from the project? Will the project target specific groups?
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Assynt Leisure & Learning Centre is committed to being a safe, inclusive, and welcoming facility for all members of our community, regardless of age, ability, gender, race, religion, or background. Equalities and accessibility are at the heart of our operations and have been fully considered in the design and delivery of this project.

We serve a rural population where many residents face multiple barriers to participation, including poor transport links, limited income, social isolation, and physical or mental health conditions. The Centre is used by people across a range of protected characteristics, including:

- **Older adults**, who attend fitness classes, bowls, walking groups, and our soft archery programme
- **Children and young people**, through our After-School Club, Holiday Programme, and school PE provision
- **Disabled people or those with mobility impairments**, who rely on level access, safe lighting, and compliant emergency exits
- **People with learning disabilities and mental health needs**, including those referred via NHS Highland and our archery sessions
- **Parents and carers**, who attend our weekly Parent & Toddler Group or make use of warm, child-friendly spaces


A current example is our soft archery sessions, which have proved particularly popular with older adults and individuals with severe learning difficulties. These sessions take place in the sports hall, where the poor lighting and draughts are especially noticeable. Participants have commented on discomfort due to cold conditions, and staff have had to make adjustments to lighting to improve visibility and safety. These issues limit the ability of vulnerable groups to fully participate, and the repairs proposed in this project will directly address that.

We ensure that no one is excluded by maintaining affordable pricing, offering targeted access to low-income families and partner referrals, and ensuring staff and volunteers are trained to be inclusive and welcoming. Our building has accessible toilets changing facilities and a lift, and we are proactive in responding to user feedback to remove barriers to participation.


The Centre actively supports those most at risk of exclusion in our community, including:

- Older people and those living alone in remote settlements
- Adults with learning disabilities and physical health issues
- Young families in need of low-cost, indoor, year-round activity
- People experiencing rural isolation or poor mental health

This project ensures that the Centre continues to meet the needs of all users, and directly removes physical and environmental barriers affecting the most vulnerable. By improving warmth, lighting, and safety, we create a more equitable, dignified, and inclusive environment for the whole community.

4.8	<p>All applicants are required to provide a statement on how the organisation is committed to advancing the Fair Work First Policy including the ‘Real Living Wage’ and ‘Effective Workers Voice’ criteria. The statement should be agreed jointly by the employer and an appropriate workplace representative or a trade union representative if one is in place.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE- This statement is applicable to all groups and organisations even if you do not employ staff and/or only work with volunteers. Projects cannot progress without a signed statement - refer to the Fair Work First guidance for more information. Complete the following Fair Work First Statement and Declaration form and submit with the application. Double click the icon to download.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="font-size: small;">FWF statement and declaration template.c</p>														
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> Have you provided a Fair Work First statement in a separate document with this application? Please ensure it is signed by an appropriate workplace representative. </td><td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> </td></tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> Can you confirm if you have the Living Wage Accreditation or are planning to be certified? </td><td style="padding: 5px;"> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Applied <input type="checkbox"/> </td></tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> Is the Fair Work First statement on your organisation’s website? </td><td style="padding: 5px;"> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have a website <input type="checkbox"/> </td></tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> How many people do you employ or how many volunteers do you have? </td><td style="padding: 5px;"> Employed: 4 Volunteers : 10 </td></tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> Do you currently pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate? </td><td style="padding: 5px;"> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/> </td></tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> As part of your procurement assessment process, do you ensure that traders/suppliers also pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate? </td><td style="padding: 5px;"> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> </td></tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> How do you provide channels for Effective Voice in the workplace for staff and/or volunteers? </td><td style="padding: 5px;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Line Management Relationship <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff /Engagement Surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Suggestions Schemes <input type="checkbox"/> Intranet/Online Platforms <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Forums / Networks <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Union Recognition/Collective Bargaining </td></tr> </table>		Have you provided a Fair Work First statement in a separate document with this application? Please ensure it is signed by an appropriate workplace representative.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Can you confirm if you have the Living Wage Accreditation or are planning to be certified?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Applied <input type="checkbox"/>	Is the Fair Work First statement on your organisation’s website?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have a website <input type="checkbox"/>	How many people do you employ or how many volunteers do you have?	Employed: 4 Volunteers : 10	Do you currently pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>	As part of your procurement assessment process, do you ensure that traders/suppliers also pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	How do you provide channels for Effective Voice in the workplace for staff and/or volunteers?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Line Management Relationship <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff /Engagement Surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Suggestions Schemes <input type="checkbox"/> Intranet/Online Platforms <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Forums / Networks <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Union Recognition/Collective Bargaining
Have you provided a Fair Work First statement in a separate document with this application? Please ensure it is signed by an appropriate workplace representative.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>														
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SECTION 5: PROJECT BUDGET

5.1	<p>Main project expenditure – costs should be as accurate and current as possible from recent quotations or price comparisons.</p> <p>Please refer to the guidance note on eligible expenditure. Only download and complete the overheads and management fees summary spreadsheet below, if you would like to claim more than 10% of total project costs as overheads.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <small>CRF overheads and management fees summary spreadsheet</small> </div>			
Budget Heading		Detailed Costs	Revenue/Capital	Amount
Sports Hall fire Exit Doors		Supply and installation of 3 insulated emergency fire doors	Capital	16,178.40
Sports Hall Lighting		Upgrade of 49 fittings in the sports hall to high-efficiency LED	Capital	8,949.60
Centre Internal & External Lighting		Replacement of failing lights across rest of building	Capital	5,329.20
Total revenue expenditure				£0
Total capital expenditure				£30,457.20
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS				£30,457.20
Is VAT included in these costs?				Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Can you confirm that the costs above have not already been incurred or committed to?				Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<p>Reasonableness of cost – Are the project costs listed in 5.1 based on valid quotes as per the procurement guidance provided?</p> <p>Please provide any quotes as supporting documents to this application .</p>			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	<p>Please explain how your project will achieve value for money.</p> <p>While we do not currently have confirmed cash match funding, we are actively seeking a contribution of up to £1,000 from local sponsors. We recognise the importance of shared investment and will continue these efforts in parallel with the application.</p> <p>In addition, this project is underpinned by substantial in-kind support from our volunteer team. Our volunteers are not passive helpers, they include our Board of Trustees, fitness instructors, and after-school club facilitators, all of whom contribute time and expertise to the successful running of the Centre. Their contribution to project planning, supplier liaison, programme coordination, and public communication reflects a strong and active local commitment.</p> <p>Although this in-kind support does not offset capital expenditure directly, it ensures that the project will be well managed, delivered efficiently, and embedded in the community. It also reduces reliance on paid staff and contractors, supporting value for money and long-term sustainability.</p> <p>Together, this combination of volunteer contribution and pursuit of modest match funding demonstrates excellent</p>			

		leverage and local ownership for a project that will deliver wide community benefit.	
SECTION 6 – MATCH FUNDING (if applicable)			
Please note match funding for this round is not essential, however efforts to secure match funding for the project is reflected within the assessment criteria.			
6.1	Please provide details of any match funding applied for and whether it is awaiting a decision or confirmed.		
Name of funder		Confirmed?	Date Confirmed or Decision Expected
Assynt Crofters Trust		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	August 2025
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Total match funding			£1,000
CRF requested			£30,457.20
Total funding			£31,457.20
6.2	Will the project involve “in kind” support?		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
6.3	If yes, please detail.		<p>The project is supported by significant in-kind contributions from our volunteer team. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and expertise from our Board of Trustees in project planning, governance, and supplier engagement • Support from volunteer fitness instructors and after-school club helpers, who contribute to service continuity while the project is delivered • Staff time contributed beyond contracted hours to assist with coordination, fundraising, and communications <p>While these contributions do not offset capital costs directly, they demonstrate strong community commitment and ensure the project will be managed effectively and embedded within local delivery.</p>

6.4	Please explain why public funding is required to deliver the project.	<p>As a small, community-run charity serving a rural area of just 1,400 people, we operate with tight budgets and limited earned income. We must keep pricing low to ensure accessibility for families, older adults, and those referred via NHS/social pathways.</p> <p>Our reserves are minimal and committed to covering core running costs and staffing. This urgent capital project, to replace fire exit doors and upgrade lighting, is beyond our financial capacity without public funding support. Without CRF funding, we risk service disruption, safety concerns, and reduced access to vital health, education, and wellbeing programmes.</p>
6.5	Please explain what the remaining bank balances are for in your accounts.	<p>Our remaining bank balance is fully allocated to essential operational costs, including staff wages, utilities, insurance, and basic maintenance. In recent years, we have been operating at a deficit, gradually using our limited reserves to stay open and maintain core service delivery.</p> <p>To manage this, we've had to reduce our opening hours, but this comes at a cost. Each reduction in hours means less opportunity to generate income, from gym usage, court hire, tourist visitors, and local events, and, more importantly, less ability to serve our community, particularly families, older adults, and NHS-referred service users. The remaining funds are critical to prevent service collapse and cannot be reallocated to capital works.</p>
6.6	Please explain why unrestricted funding in your annual accounts cannot be used to deliver the project and/or used as match funding.	<p>Our unrestricted funds are committed to covering essential deficits in day-to-day operations. While these are technically unrestricted, they are functionally ring-fenced to keep the building open and services running.</p> <p>Reallocating any of these funds to pay for capital repairs would result in further centre closures, staff cuts, and cancellations of key community services. This would reduce footfall, diminish our ability to generate income (especially from tourists using our facilities), and weaken our role as a rural health and wellbeing hub.</p> <p>We are already taking active steps, like reducing hours and overheads, to preserve services, but these alone cannot cover capital investment. Public funding is essential to secure the building and prevent further decline in access and use.</p>
6.7	If you are applying for 100% funding for your project, please explain why no match funding is available.	<p>We are requesting 100% capital funding because we do not have confirmed match funding available at this time. We are actively pursuing small grants and local contributions, but none are confirmed by the CRF deadline.</p>

		Due to rising energy, staffing, and insurance costs, we are running at a deficit and have limited reserves. The reduced opening hours intended to cut costs are also reducing footfall, income potential, and community access, making capital repairs even more urgent to reverse that trend. Our in-kind volunteer contributions demonstrate strong local commitment, but public capital investment is critical to safeguarding the Centre's long-term viability and ability to serve the Assynt community.
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SECTION 7 – INCOME GENERATION

7.1	Will the project generate income?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.2	If yes, how will the income benefit the organisation? Will it be re-invested to help with the sustainability of the project – if so, how? A copy of a business plan and/or budget forecast must be provided with the application.	<p>The project will enable increased income through expanded use of the Centre, particularly during darker, colder months when usage has historically dropped due to poor lighting and draughty conditions. Improved facilities will allow us to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase bookings for gym, fitness classes, and sports hall hire • Host community events and private functions • Offer a safer, warmer space for tourists and local families during poor weather • Bring back tournaments and inter-club competitions, which had to be paused due to safety and lighting issues <p>These tournaments and events will attract visiting clubs and spectators, creating opportunities for additional income (e.g. entry fees, hall hire, and café/social space usage) and boosting the local economy through increased footfall in the village. All income will be re-invested into the Centre's operations, including staffing, utilities, and programme development, helping us reduce our deficit and become more financially sustainable. It will also help maintain affordable pricing for local users while supporting essential services like our after-school club and older adult programmes.</p>
7.3	How will you ensure that local organisations/ businesses are not disadvantaged because of the project? Are they supportive of the project?	<p>The project will not disadvantage any local businesses or organisations. In fact, we work in partnership with many local groups and service providers, offering them space to deliver activities and services that would otherwise not be available in the area. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS and mental health support groups

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and after-school providers Local sports groups and fitness instructors Tourist groups using our facilities during poor weather <p>We have received letters of support from community groups including the Assynt Christian Community Youth Project, Indoor Bowls group, and Lochinver Badminton Group, all of whom welcome the improvements this project will deliver. Our focus is on enabling more local activity and increasing the quality of what's available, not competing with existing businesses.</p>																				
7.4	Have you considered taking out a loan for the project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>																				
7.5	If not, please state why?	<p>As a small rural charity operating at a deficit, taking on a loan is not financially viable or responsible. Our income is modest and inconsistent, and we cannot commit to monthly loan repayments without placing our services and staffing at risk.</p> <p>We are instead pursuing grant funding as the appropriate mechanism for essential infrastructure repair in a remote, high-need area with limited revenue potential.</p>																				
7.6	Have you previously received public funding?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>																				
7.7	If yes, please provide details of awards for the last 3 fiscal years and if any were awarded under Public Subsidy.																					
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Funding</th> <th>Date</th> <th>Amount £</th> <th>Public Subsidy?</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>CRF – Assynt Learning Hub</td> <td>03/06/2024</td> <td>£16,125.67</td> <td>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Scottish Government Children and Young Peoples Mental Health and Wellbeing Funding Application</td> <td>23/12/2024</td> <td>£12,000</td> <td>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>CRF – 3081</td> <td>06/09/2024</td> <td>£12,512</td> <td>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Click or tap to enter a date.</td> <td>£</td> <td>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Funding	Date	Amount £	Public Subsidy?	CRF – Assynt Learning Hub	03/06/2024	£16,125.67	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Scottish Government Children and Young Peoples Mental Health and Wellbeing Funding Application	23/12/2024	£12,000	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	CRF – 3081	06/09/2024	£12,512	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>																			

SECTION 8 – SIGNATURE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

8.1	Main applicant, chairperson or equivalent – the person signing this application has the authority within the organisation to apply for grant funding.
<p><i>I declare that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read the guidance notes and understand and accept the terms and conditions noted within them.</i></p> <p><i>The data provided in the application (and claim) forms are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.</i></p>	

Signature:	Date: 03/07/2025
Print:	

Please Ensure You Also Complete the Attachments Checklist Below

8.2	You must enclose the following supporting documents (where applicable) with the application. If they are not available, please state why.	Yes / No / Not applicable
1	Bank statement – please provide a full bank statement with the organisation address. It must be the latest statement at the time of application submission.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Annual financial accounts – latest available.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Constitution or articles and memorandum.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Committee Members or Directors List.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Policies – relevant organisational policies applicable to the project such as child protection, health and safety, equal opportunities, Fair Work First policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
6	Valid organisation insurance policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7	Evidence of need and demand i.e. letters of support, community consultation reports, photos, feasibility study	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Confirmation of match funding letters	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Permissions – i.e. planning, building warrants, marine licences	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Business plan (income generation projects only)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Job descriptions (for CRF funded posts)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Evidence of control/ownership of asset – i.e. lease, title deeds	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13	Partnership agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reason for missing documentation:		

Completed forms and supporting documentation should be emailed to communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk quoting your unique project reference number.

Please ensure you have labelled the supporting documents as per 8.2 of the guidance note:

The application form should follow the naming convention example:

(Name of organisation) final application form

Supporting documentation should be labelled as: **document type followed with the title** – for example:

- Match funding – The Highland Council
- Match funding – National Lottery
- Insurance – Zurich 2022/23 annual policy
- Organisational policy – health and safety
- Organisational policy – Fair Work First statement
- Permissions – Planning granted July 2022
- Permissions – Building warrant granted Aug 2022
- Bank statement – Bank of Scotland Nov 2022
- Letter of support – name of Councillor
- Letter of support – community council/group
- Letter of support – name of local business

Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) Application Form

(June 2025 – CRF Area Funds)

Key considerations



Please refer to the **Application Guidance** (link below) and **Fair Work First Summary Guidance** when completing the application form as there is important supplementary information you need to be aware of. Answer the questions concisely, describing clearly and directly what the project you are seeking funding for is delivering. Please do not exceed the word limit given.

To ensure you have the best opportunity to score well during the assessment, please refer to the **Assessment Criteria Matrix** (link below) when completing the application form.

In this current round of CRF, we are seeking well-developed and robust projects that are ready to commence, and can complete within 12 months of funding being awarded.

The deadline for application submission is 9am on Friday 4th July 2025.

Double click the icons below to download the documents. If you have any issues with downloading the documents, please contact us at communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk

<u>Application Guidance</u>	<u>Assessment Criteria Matrix</u>
 CRF_Application_Guidance (Sutherland 2025)	 CRF Assessment Criteria (Sutherland 2025)

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1	Project reference number	CRF 4113
1.2	Organisation	Scourie Community Development Company
1.3	Project title	Repopulating Scourie 2 Relocating Scourie School Car Park
1.4	Summary of project you wish to be funded (max 250 words)	<p>The relocation of Scourie School Car Park to free up access to H1</p> <p>The SLF has supported our application to purchase H1 from Scourie Estate for the construction of 9 affordable homes, in order to access H1 the Scourie School Car Park needs to be relocated in front of the school. Planning permission (Ref; 24/02147/FUL) was granted on May 8th 2025. When completed the car park will be maintained and adopted in perpetuity by THC. This constitutes Phase One of the overall development and whilst this element forms the basis of our application, the car park is fundamentally linked to the overall delivery of affordable housing.</p>

		<p>The Planning Permission stipulates that “The new Scourie Primary School Car Park shall be completed in full and made available for use prior to the commencement of the housing development associated with permission Ref;24/02147/FUL)”</p> <p>140</p>	
1.5	Project costs	Total project cost	£260,536.98
		Match funding	£190,291.28
		CRF grant requested	£70,245.70
1.6	Start date	06/10/2025	
1.7	End date (<i>max 12 months from start date</i>)	09/01/2026	
1.8	Please confirm you have read and understood the CRF privacy notice	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION 2: CONTACT AND ORGANISATION DETAILS			
2.1	Organisation	Scourie Community Development Company	
2.2	Address and postcode	The Pavilion, Scourie, Sutherland IV27 4TD	
2.3	Main contact name		
2.4	Position in the organisation		
2.5	Contact number		
2.6	Email address		
2.7	Website address	www.scouriedevelopment.scot	
2.8	Organisation type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Company limited by guarantee
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Constituted group
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Public body
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Charity
		<input type="checkbox"/>	SCIO
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):
2.9	Organisation registered number	SC43558 Charity Number SC415281 Company Number	
2.10	Is the organisation VAT registered?	<p>By confirming this, you are declaring the organisation VAT status as per HMRC. If this changes at any time during the project, you <u>must</u> notify the CRF Team as this may affect the offer of grant.</p>	

		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.11	If the organisation is VAT registered, please provide the number.	
2.12	Is the VAT related to the project being reclaimed from HMRC?	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole <input type="checkbox"/> Partial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None
2.13	Provide details of VAT exemptions.	NA

SECTION 3: PROJECT DETAILS		
3.1	Please confirm the location of the project including post code.	East of Scourie Primary School IV274TG
3.2	Are you applying on behalf of a partnership project?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> The Highland Council will become the project lead SCDC will secure sufficient funding and forward the contribution to THC to undertake the project delivery with its own team, this will ensure an experienced team working with Highland Council colleagues, using relationships within the council structure.
3.3	Is there a partnership agreement in place?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> See 3.7
3.4	Is your organisation the lead applicant?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.5	Do you own the land or asset?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.6	Are you leasing the land or asset? If so, what is the term left on your current lease agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <div style="text-align: center;"> Years Months </div>
3.7	If ownership or lease agreements are not in place, please provide details if applied for and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	There is not yet a formal agreement in place with The Highland Council but we have been in discussions for the necessary partnership working agreement with the Property and Assets, Estates Team during the application formulation. In the interim, we have an agreed understanding with the Highland Council, to formalise and implement the arrangement, subject to funding success and delegated Highland Council approvals.
3.8	Does the project require planning permission or other statutory regulatory consents?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.9	If consents are required, please provide details if applied and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	Planning Permission Granted 8 th May 2025 Ref 24/02147/FUL

SECTION 4: THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

4.1

List the main activities required to deliver the project including timescales.

Activity name	Achieve by (date)
Construction of Car Park Scourie Primary School - Capital	31/01/2026

4.2

(a) What local need or opportunity will the project address?

(500 words max limit)

The project will open up the door to mitigating the effects of depopulation by freeing up the access route to H1. Scourie has Circa 200 people with 126 households and 20 social housing properties with 21 registrations currently lodged with the Communities Housing Trust

The project has been in the planning stage for three years. The overarching issue is **DEPOPULATION**, The Highland Council 2024-27 Plan projects the fall in 0-15 year olds to be 15% by 2040, Figures extracted from the 2011-2022 Census % population change data for Scourie indicates a 14.0% negative change from 275 in 2011 to 240 in 2022 reducing further still. Pupils attending Kinlochbervie High School, serving NW Sutherland currently number 27, further predictions indicate a reduction of 3 to 24 pupils by 2029.

Issues;

- Our ageing population puts pressure on local services
- The fall in working age population impacts upon the ability to support and deliver services.
- The lack of housing along with the limitations on childcare and transport creates challenges in sustaining and growing our population.
- The large drift of young people out of the area results in challenges to attracting investment.
- Local businesses struggle to find accommodation for staff, key workers have to travel huge distances
- Local families are priced out of the housing market by second /holiday home owners
- Our geographical location - 200miles return trip to a main centre proves a barrier to some
- Limited health and wellbeing services
- The overall cost of living significantly higher than elsewhere
- Falling school role

Only by providing good quality, affordable social housing can we begin to repopulate our community

The Image below outlines the repositioning;



- H1 – Zoned for 9 affordable homes
- Scourie School
- Repositioned car park
- Existing Car Park, positioned on a dangerous bend at the bottom of Scouriemore Hill

The project will fill existing gaps by providing;

- Safe parking for 12 vehicles including 2 bays for use by disabled drivers, currently there are 10 spaces, two taken up by a bin store and no disabled bays
- A safe and full turning circle within the car park to allow the school mini bus ease of manoeuvrability
- An access route to H1
- Remove the congestion by vehicles at drop off and pick up times
- A level surface for ease of movement, particularly important for those with limited mobility
- A footpath linking the school to the car park removing the need to walk along the road to reach the school from parked vehicles
- A permanent low maintenance solution to the existing problem
- A soft landscaped area with hedges and shrubs to aid biodiversity
- A car park maintenance and adoption scheme managed by the Highland Council

	(b) Has this need been recognised in a local place plan?
<p>The Scourie area Place Plan is in the early stage of development, other local, national and Scotland wide plans and frameworks which support repopulation stating the lack of affordable housing as the main contributor to depopulation include;</p> <p>Locally;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Scourie Housing Needs Assessment Survey 2021<ul style="list-style-type: none">✚ noted 8 households to be considering moving way but wish to remain in Scourie✚ 12 future potential home leavers would like to stay in Scourie✚ 15 non residents wished to relocate to Scourie➤ Scourie Business Housing Survey 2021<ul style="list-style-type: none">✚ Clear support for the provision of additional housing in Scourie and evidences the fact that the area is at risk of losing crucial business and local employment opportunities if suitable housing is not provided in the short term✚ 3 out of 4 businesses have staff that require housing in Scourie, in particular staff employed in the fin farming and seasonal tourism sectors✚ 3 businesses aim to expand within 5 years, requiring more homes for employees➤ The North West 2025 Research - Review and Update on the NW2045 Vision: Call to Action 2025 on 16th May 2025<ul style="list-style-type: none">✚ <u>Exec Summary - Review and Update on the NW2045 Vision: Call to Action 2025</u>✚ <u>Report - Review and Update on the NW2045 Vision: Call to Action 2025</u> <p>Highland Wide;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The NPF4 Policy 16; Quality Homes (Highland) for small scale opportunities within existing settlements➤ The NPF4 Policy 17: Rural Homes➤ The CaSPlan identifies Scourie as a Growing Settlement align to Policy 3 Growing Settlements➤ The Highland Council Sutherland Settlement Plan notes the following Placemaking Priorities;<ul style="list-style-type: none">✚ Support future development that helps to sustain existing services✚ The traditional crofting landscape in the centre of the village should be safeguarded✚ Development on the land between the village hall and caravan and camping site should be sensitive to the coastal view✚ Development at Scouriemore should not create skylining along the ridge✚ Any proposed development should have good regard to the nearby natural heritage designations <p>Scotland Wide;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Scottish Government Action Plan to Address Repopulation 2024➤ The Scottish Human Rights Commission – quote;<ul style="list-style-type: none">✚ They recognise that good quality, affordable housing is essential to help attract and retain people in rural and island communities.	

- ✚ They remain focussed on their target delivery of 11,000 affordable homes by 2032 with a minimum of 10% in rural and island communities
- ✚ Their Addressing Depopulation Action Plan includes funding to support interventions with the overarching aim of delivering communities which are sustainable now and into the future

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4.3 How do you know there is local support for the project? How can you evidence this? Provide evidence as supporting documents as requested at 8.2

(500 words max limit)

7 support letters attached, all citing the lack of affordable housing as the main factor in population decline and that without sustained, committed investment in our community, the wider spiral of depopulation will continue;

- ✚ Councillor Marianne Hutchinson
- ✚ Loch Duart Fin Farm
- ✚ Scourie Community Council
- ✚ Assynt Development Trust
- ✚ Kinlochbervie Estate
- ✚ Coigach Development Company
- ✚ North West Sutherland School Parent Council,

- ✚ Without the financial support needed to take forward this project and free up an access route to H1 the planned housing development will fail
- ✚ Affordable housing has not been provided for around 30 years
- ✚ There are 21 applications lodged with the Communities Housing Trust, others with the Highland Council Housing Register which notes the following (at 1/7/2025);

Type	People on housing register
1 bed bungalow	27
1 bed house	27
2 bed bungalow	7
2 bed house	7
3 bed bungalow	1
3 bed house	1
5 bed house	1

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4.4 Outputs and outcomes – Please refer to the application guidance for further information and a definition of what constitutes “outputs” and “outcomes”.

(a) Please select below ONE of the CRF main strategic objectives that you believe your project’s outputs and outcomes will best align with.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Increasing community resilience
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling poverty and inequality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Addressing causes of rural depopulation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Helping economic recovery and sustaining growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling the climate emergency and working towards net zero

b) What are the immediate and short-term outputs that your project will achieve? How will you measure them?

(500 words max limit)

Outputs;

- The agreed handing over the project lead for the delivery of the car park to The Highland Council. SCDC will secure funding for the work and forward the contributions to The Highland Council to undertake the project delivery with its own team and liaise directly with the school, this will ensure an experienced project team working with The Highland Council colleagues, using existing relationships within the council structure .Our pre design team to date are all approved framework consultants and contractors with The Highland Council,
- 10 new car parking bays plus 2 designated for disabled drivers will be created directly in front of the school
- The new arrangement will provide the school mini bus a full turning circle for ease of movability
- During the build stage, opportunities will be made available for local contractors e.g. local quarry operator
- The overall spend in the village will increase during the construction
- Responsibility for the maintenance of the car park will revert to The Highland Council
- Construction sequencing will be planned to minimise disruption to the school's normal operations

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(c) What do you think the outcomes of your project will be and how will you measure them? Please note an outcome is the longer-term change that your project will achieve. What will be the lasting benefits and legacy?

(500 words max limit)

A successful application will categorise our project as “shovel ready”, with an anticipated full time line for construction works of 6-8 weeks, easily deliverable within the criteria set.

Mitigating Risk;

- The risk factor will be minimal due to the engagement of THC as project lead and eventual adoption
- The technical team involved since the outset are approved framework contractors and consultants with Highland Council
- The completing of reports for funding contributors, claims and payments will be carried out by an experienced SCDC Development Officer

- THC will be responsible for road safety during the construction period and ensure the free flow of traffic on the public road

Outcomes;

- The car park will be safer, more accessible removing the current congestion at pick up/drop off times
- The footpath provision will remove the need for pupils to walk along the road from their vehicles creating a safe route of passage
- Capital investment will be made
- The landscaped area will be maintenance free
- The access route to H1 will be made available
- In time, school children residing in the new housing will no longer require to be transported to school by car, making their journey time shorter and reducing the impact on the environment
- 4 of the 6 National Planning Frameworks will be met
- The project location is central to the village and as such complies with the criteria set within the 20 Minute Neighbourhood concept for remote, rural communities
- The overall development will enable people to live and work in an area where the community actively works hard to reverse the effects of depopulation
- 18 months from now we anticipate having sufficient funding in place to commence building the homes

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4.5 How will the project be supported/maintained/sustained after CRF funding?

(500 words max limit)

The principal long term benefit relates to The Highland Councils pledge to maintain and adopt the car park in perpetuity reducing the need for future grant dependency and the opportunity to build much needed affordable homes


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4.6 Describe how you intend to mitigate negative environmental impacts that may arise in delivering the project. It may be that the project specifically seeks to address climate change issues or implement net zero ambitions/solutions.

(500 words max limit)

In mitigation soft landscaping measures will form part of the overall plan including;

- ✚ Topsoil obtained from the site spoil heaps will be repurposed in landscaped areas
- ✚ Cultivating - de-stoning, treating with weedkiller and rotoation of the landscaped area
- ✚ Seeding – A mixture of bird and butterfly mix

 Tree, shrub and hedge planting is the subject of the provisional sum

- Materials used in the construction will adhere to The Highland Council's standards of practice for road construction
- Where possible local materials will be sourced e.g. Quarry materials from Laxford Quarry, the existing bus shelter repurposed
- The Highland Council will be responsible for reducing the environmental impact during the construction

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4.7 In developing the project, explain how you have considered equalities issues and taken groups with protected characteristics into account in the development/delivery of the project. How will you ensure that no one is excluded or disadvantaged from benefitting from the project? Will the project target specific groups?

(500 words max limit)

Car Park Specific;

The project does not specifically target individual groups, albeit the most frequent users will be school pupils, teachers and parents, having a level surface, direct footpath and disabled parking bays in direct proximity to the school will encourage and open up opportunities for those who previously found accessing the school difficult


Housing;

The layout and size of the houses was designed around the needs of the community taking account of the feedback provided by the open day event. The mixed development includes detached, semi-detached with two, three and four bedroom units, single and double storey, made available to local people and key workers.


To achieve the optimum development for Scourie, including the relocation of the car park and the construction of affordable homes the project has collaborated between;

- Scourie Community Development Company – purchaser of H1
- Scourie Estate – sellers of H1
- Scourie Primary School
- Scourie Crofters
- The Communities Housing Trust
- Scourie Community Council
- Scourie Parents Council
- Loch Duart Fin Farm
- Local residents – via an open day event with the design team **
- The Scourie Housing Assessment Survey **
- Scourie Business Survey **

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4.8	<p>All applicants are required to provide a statement on how the organisation is committed to advancing the Fair Work First Policy including the 'Real Living Wage' and 'Effective Workers Voice' criteria. The statement should be agreed jointly by the employer and an appropriate workplace representative or a trade union representative if one is in place.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE- This statement is applicable to all groups and organisations even if you do not employ staff and/or only work with volunteers. Projects cannot progress without a signed statement - refer to the Fair Work First guidance for more information. Complete the following Fair Work First Statement and Declaration form and submit with the application. Double click the icon to download.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <small>FWF statement and declaration template.doc</small> </div>		
Have you provided a Fair Work First statement in a separate document with this application? Please ensure it is signed by an appropriate workplace representative.		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you confirm if you have the Living Wage Accreditation or are planning to be certified?		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Applied <input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the Fair Work First statement on your organisation's website?		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have a website <input type="checkbox"/>	
How many people do you employ or how many volunteers do you have?		1 x part time Freelance Development Officer + 1 Seasonal part time Freelance Community Growing Facilitator. In addition to our volunteer Board of Directors an average of 8 people volunteer their time to assist with activities	
Do you currently pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>	
As part of your procurement assessment process, do you ensure that traders/suppliers also pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
How do you provide channels for Effective Voice in the workplace for staff and/or volunteers?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Line Management Relationship <input type="checkbox"/> Staff /Engagement Surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Suggestions Schemes <input type="checkbox"/> Intranet/Online Platforms <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Forums / Networks <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Union Recognition/Collective Bargaining	

SECTION 5: PROJECT BUDGET

5.1	<p>Main project expenditure – costs should be as accurate and current as possible from recent quotations or price comparisons.</p> <p>Please refer to the guidance note on eligible expenditure. Only download and complete the overheads and management fees summary spreadsheet below, if you would like to claim more than 10% of total project costs as overheads.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <small>CRF overheads and management fees sun</small> </div>		
Budget Heading	Detailed Costs	Revenue/Capital	Amount
	Prelims from Bill of Quantities July 2025	C	52,459.98
	Preparation	C	32,338.52

	Site Works	C	129,150.10
	Drainage	C	9,178.62
	Soft Landscaping	C	4,909.76
	PC and Provisional Costs	C	32,500.00
Total revenue expenditure			
Total capital expenditure			£260,536.98
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS			£260,536.98
Is VAT included in these costs?			Yes
Can you confirm that the costs above have not already been incurred or committed to?			Yes
5.2	Reasonableness of cost – Are the project costs listed in 5.1 based on valid quotes as per the procurement guidance provided? Please provide any quotes as supporting documents to this application .		Yes
5.3	<p>Please explain how your project will achieve value for money.</p> <p>Tenders; Invitations to tender were forwarded by the QS to 8 potential contractors, only one, Strath Civil Engineers applied, the majority of contractors are remote from the site which causes a number of issues;</p> <p>Location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Difficulty in persuading operatives in either travelling to remote locations or staying over. ➤ Shortage of accommodation in this location to allow operatives to 'lodge' ➤ Lack of local Sub-contractors or Supply Chain potential partners. ➤ Weather – not necessarily at site but affecting ability to get to site. <p>Construction Market</p>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Contractors have a surplus of local work available to them and for convenience, choose not to travel ➤ Many smaller Contractors work predominantly for a small number of Main Contractors and are loyal to them. ➤ Expansive amounts of Civil Engineering works currently available across the Highlands due to 'Green Energy' projects such as Off-shore wind, power line upgrades, substations, windfarms, battery storage all more lucrative than small community based projects. <p>Size of Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Car-park project is not a particularly large project so not overly attractive. <p>Client</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Contractors will always tend to be loyal to regular clients so when there is a glut of work tend not to favour new clients. <p>To minimise costs and provide value for money, where possible, materials such as quarry stone will be sourced locally reducing transportation costs, road mileage and driver time.</p>
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SECTION 6 – MATCH FUNDING (if applicable)

Please note match funding for this round is not essential, however efforts to secure match funding for the project is reflected within the assessment criteria.

6.1	Please provide details of any match funding applied for and whether it is awaiting a decision or confirmed.		
Name of funder	Confirmed?	Date Confirmed or Decision Expected	Amount £
Scottish and Southern Energy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	08/05/2024	117,000.00
Scourie Community Development Company	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	31/05/2025	7,000.00
The Highland Council Loan	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	2024	20,000.00
North Highland Initiative	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	26/06/2025	2,000.00
THC Estates x 17%	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	July 2025	44,291.28
Total match funding			£190,291.28

CRF requested		£70,245.70
Total funding		£260,536.98
6.2	Will the project involve “in kind” support?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
6.3	If yes, please detail.	<p>SCDC secured the £87,000 needed to reach the Planning Approval stage</p> <p>The nature of the project limits “in kind” support from SCDC to that of an administrative role, including the processing of invoices and claims for payments, updating stakeholders and contributors and securing funding for capital contributions towards full costs</p>
6.4	Please explain why public funding is required to deliver the project.	We are a small community without the means to provide income generation other than monies derived from running small local events e.g. gala day.
6.5	Please explain what the remaining bank balances are for in your accounts.	The remaining balance is restricted funding paid in advance in support of ongoing projects e.g. Community Growing
6.6	Please explain why unrestricted funding in your annual accounts cannot be used to deliver the project and/or used as match funding.	Our unrestricted funds are required to meet the core costs of running the organisation
6.7	If you are applying for 100% funding for your project, please explain why no match funding is available.	NA

SECTION 7 – INCOME GENERATION		
7.1	Will the project generate income?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.2	If yes, how will the income benefit the organisation? Will it be re-invested to help with the sustainability of the project – if so, how? A copy of a business plan and/or budget forecast must be provided with the application.	NA
7.3	How will you ensure that local organisations/ businesses are not disadvantaged because of the project? Are they supportive of the project?	<p>The relocation of the car park will not impact negatively on any local business. Some disruption may be felt by residents travelling by car from the Scouriemore Hill to the junction and by the school, albeit disruption will be kept to the minimum. The main employer in the region Loch Duart Fin Farm has provided a letter of support</p>

7.4	Have you considered taking out a loan for the project?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.5	If not, please state why?	We have the balance of a Highland Council loan in place
7.6	Have you previously received public funding?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.7	If yes, please provide details of awards for the last 3 fiscal years and if any were awarded under Public Subsidy.	

Funding	Date	Amount £	Public Subsidy?
HIE – Contribution towards Development Officer Post	13/06/2025	£19700	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
CRF Funding No CRF2308	03/06/2024	£ 18309	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CRF Funding NO CRF 3113	05/09/2024	£21968	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CRF Funding No 2120	19/09/2023	£30000	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 8 – SIGNATURE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

8.1	Main applicant, chairperson or equivalent – the person signing this application has the authority within the organisation to apply for grant funding.	
<p><i>I declare that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read the guidance notes and understand and accept the terms and conditions noted within them.</i></p> <p><i>The data provided in the application (and claim) forms are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.</i></p>		
Signature:		Date:
Print:		02/07/2025

Please Ensure You Also Complete the Attachments Checklist Below

8.2	You must enclose the following supporting documents (where applicable) with the application. If they are not available, please state why.	Yes / No / Not applicable
1	Bank statement – please provide a full bank statement with the organisation address. It must be the latest statement at the time of application submission.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Annual financial accounts – latest available.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Constitution or articles and memorandum.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Committee Members or Directors List.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Policies – relevant organisational policies applicable to the project such as child protection, health and safety, equal opportunities, Fair Work First policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Valid organisation insurance policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Evidence of need and demand i.e. letters of support, community consultation reports, photos, feasibility study	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Confirmation of match funding letters	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Permissions – i.e. planning, building warrants, marine licences	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Business plan (income generation projects only)	NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

11	Job descriptions (for CRF funded posts)	NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Evidence of control/ownership of asset – i.e. lease, title deeds	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13	Partnership agreement	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reason for missing documentation: There is no partnership agreement as such with Highland Council Estates, the owners of the car park, but confirmation of acceptance attached		

Completed forms and supporting documentation should be emailed to communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk quoting your unique project reference number.

Please ensure you have labelled the supporting documents as per 8.2 of the guidance note:

The application form should follow the naming convention example:

(Name of organisation) final application form

Supporting documentation should be labelled as: **document type followed with the title** – for example:

- Match funding – The Highland Council
- Match funding – National Lottery
- Insurance – Zurich 2022/23 annual policy
- Organisational policy – health and safety
- Organisational policy – Fair Work First statement
- Permissions – Planning granted July 2022
- Permissions – Building warrant granted Aug 2022
- Bank statement – Bank of Scotland Nov 2022
- Letter of support – name of Councillor
- Letter of support – community council/group
- Letter of support – name of local business

**Community Regeneration Funding (CRF)
Application Form**
(June 2025 – CRF Area Funds)

Key considerations



Please refer to the **Application Guidance** (link below) and **Fair Work First Summary Guidance** when completing the application form as there is important supplementary information you need to be aware of. Answer the questions concisely, describing clearly and directly what the project you are seeking funding for is delivering. Please do not exceed the word limit given.

To ensure you have the best opportunity to score well during the assessment, please refer to the **Assessment Criteria Matrix** (link below) when completing the application form.

In this current round of CRF, we are seeking well-developed and robust projects that are ready to commence, and can complete within 12 months of funding being awarded.

The deadline for application submission is 9am on Friday 4th July 2025.

Double click the icons below to download the documents. If you have any issues with downloading the documents, please contact us at communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk

<u>Application Guidance</u>	<u>Assessment Criteria Matrix</u>
 CRF_Application_Guidance (Sutherland 2025)	 CRF Assessment Criteria (Sutherland 2025)

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1	Project reference number	CRF4129
1.2	Organisation	Communities Housing Trust
1.3	Project title	Borgie Affordable Housing
1.4	Summary of project you wish to be funded (max 250 words)	<p>The proposed development at Borgie, Skerray comprises 2 affordable homes for rent, provided by CHT. The site is part of an existing property, which is a C listed building and is being sold to help fund the provision of 2 new affordable homes.</p> <p>The project has full planning consent, Building Warrant, and technical approval for water and drainage. There is existing access, so Road Construction consent is not necessary.</p>

		<p>The tender process is complete, with returns received in February 2025. We have appraised the tenders, and CHT can appoint a preferred contractor subject to securing the funding package.</p> <p>This development will help address the existing high demand for affordable rental properties within the Melness-Tongue-Skerry area and is included in the Highland Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan and the community's development plan. The development also complements additional proposed developments within the area.</p> <p>The project will also support business development and community resilience through supporting services such as social care, the shop and school to remain viable and providing accommodation for staff.</p>	
1.5	Project costs	Total project cost	£ 674,000
		Match funding	£ 574,000
		CRF grant requested	£ 100,000
1.6	Start date	25/08/2025	
1.7	End date (<i>max 12 months from start date</i>)	24/08/2026 The project may take longer than 12 months but we can commit to spending any CRF award within 12 months.	
1.8	Please confirm you have read and understood the CRF privacy notice	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION 2: CONTACT AND ORGANISATION DETAILS

2.1	Organisation	Communities Housing Trust	
2.2	Address and postcode		
2.3	Main contact name		
2.4	Position in the organisation	Community and Development Project Officer	
2.5	Contact number		
2.6	Email address		
2.7	Website address	https://www.chtrust.co.uk/	
2.8	Organisation type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Company limited by guarantee
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Constituted group

		<input type="checkbox"/>	Public body
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Charity
		<input type="checkbox"/>	SCIO
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):
2.9	Organisation registered number	Company Limited by Guarantee (SC182862) Scottish Charity (SC027544)	
2.10	Is the organisation VAT registered?	By confirming this, you are declaring the organisation VAT status as per HMRC. If this changes at any time during the project, you <u>must</u> notify the CRF Team as this may affect the offer of grant. Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
2.11	If the organisation is VAT registered, please provide the number.		
2.12	Is the VAT related to the project being reclaimed from HMRC?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whole
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Partial
		<input type="checkbox"/>	None
2.13	Provide details of VAT exemptions.	As the project is to develop a new build, construction costs will not be subject to VAT. Professional fees and other costs will be subject to VAT	

SECTION 3: PROJECT DETAILS

3.1	Please confirm the location of the project including post code.	Land at 6 Borgie Thurso Caithness KW14 7TH	
3.2	Are you applying on behalf of a partnership project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3.3	Is there a partnership agreement in place?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3.4	Is your organisation the lead applicant?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.5	Do you own the land or asset?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.6	Are you leasing the land or asset? If so, what is the term left on your current lease agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> Years Months </div>	
3.7	If ownership or lease agreements are not in place, please provide details if applied for and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	N/A	

3.8	Does the project require planning permission or other statutory regulatory consents?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.9	If consents are required, please provide details if applied and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	<p>Planning Permission Granted – 14th June 2024 https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=S9TLHGIHL2G00&activeTab=summary</p> <p>Building Warrant Approved – January 28th 2025 https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/scottishBuildingWarrantDetails.do?keyVal=SLK8LNIHKHV00&activeTab=summary</p>

SECTION 4: THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

4.1	List the main activities required to deliver the project including timescales.		
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Activity name	Achieve by (date)
Finalise private finance	01/08/2025
Appoint contractor, Clerk of Works, Development Agent and Employers Agent	25/08/2025
Construction of the properties	01/10/2025
Project handover	01/10/2026
Marketing and allocations	31/07/2026
End of defects	01/10/2027

4.2	(a) What local need or opportunity will the project address?		
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The project will provide high quality, new build, low energy demand, low cost housing for social rent equivalent, addressing the need for affordable housing in the area.

The demand for housing in the Melness-Tongue-Skerray is great, but spread over several small townships and settlements, consistent with the local population, and these homes will go somewhat to alleviate the housing pressure. The Highland Housing Register indicates that there is a high number of applicants awaiting social housing in the area. The search also highlighted that there is limited housing stock and few relets within the last year, leading to a lack of opportunity to secure affordable rental houses. Correct as of 28th May 2025.

Skerray	Highland Housing Register	Housing Stock	April 24 / March 25 Relets
1 Bed Bungalow	20	2	1
1 Bed House	20	1	0
2 Bed House	0	1	0
Bettyhill			
1 Bed Bungalow	31	7	1

2 Bed Bungalow	8	7	0
2 Bed house	8	6	2
3 Bed House	1	4	0

A search for private rental opportunities returned no properties for rent advertised via onthemarket.com, zoopla.co.uk or primelocation.com within 20 miles of the development site. This highlights a lack of opportunity to access rental accommodation, even on the open market. Correct as of 28th May 2025.

CHT's Rent-to-Buy development in Bettyhill, completed in 2023, had 8 formal applicants for 2 homes, after many more expressed an interest during the construction period. This highlights that there is a demand for affordable properties of all tenures.

The lack of affordable housing, as seen in other highland communities, affects the ability of businesses to attract and retain staff, leading to diminishing school roles within the area as families are forced to leave in search of secure accommodation. Lack of affordable housing also prevents young people from returning to the area following higher, further or work-based education.

(b) Has this need been recognised in a local place plan?

The Local Authority is supportive of the site being developed for social rent equivalent homes as there is a demand for this type of property demonstrated on the Highland Housing Register. The development is currently included in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for the 2025/26 financial year.

This development also follows the aspirations of the Melness-Tongue-Skerry Community Plan, which identified a lack of affordable housing and rental housing having a knock-on effect on economic development in the area.

This housing development compliments other developments in the area which includes CHT's housing in Melness which will be delivered in partnership with Melness Crofter's Estate (Planning submitted for 12 homes), Melness Crofters Estate Spaceport project supported by HIE and Orbex, the newly renovated Strathnaver museum and private investment by Wildland Scotland in the hospitality sector in and around Tongue.

4.3 How do you know there is local support for the project? How can you evidence this? Provide evidence as supporting documents as requested at 8.2

CHT have been working closely with the Tongue Community Council and local groups like the Farr North Development Trust, Up North! and neighbouring Bettyhill Community Council for many years to help deliver new homes in the north. We have recently completed 3 homes for rent in Durness and 2 homes in Bettyhill. This project is the next in line to help support the community. The community are in support of new affordable homes to help rebuild the population of younger people with families in the village, to help address depopulation.

The project is supported in the Highland Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan and has received funding from both the HC and the Scottish Government's feasibility funding.

The local community were consulted through the statutory planning process and no objections were received.

4.4 Outputs and outcomes – Please refer to the application guidance for further information and a definition of what constitutes “outputs” and “outcomes”.

(a) Please select below ONE of the CRF main strategic objectives that you believe your project’s outputs and outcomes will best align with.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Increasing community resilience
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling poverty and inequality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Addressing causes of rural depopulation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Helping economic recovery and sustaining growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling the climate emergency and working towards net zero

(b) What are the immediate and short-term outputs that your project will achieve? How will you measure them?

Once the finance package is secured, the delivery of these houses will have short term positives for the area:

- Economic growth for local services during the construction period.
 - Construction contract awarded
The project was tendered to 3 local contractors who expressed interest. Due to future workloads, only one tender was received by K MacRae & Sons (Durness)
 - Contractors, subcontractors and consultants appointed.
- 2 new affordable, social rent equivalent properties will be made available, helping towards reaching the targets for affordable housing in Sutherland.

(c) What do you think the outcomes of your project will be and how will you measure them? Please note an outcome is the longer-term change that your project will achieve. What will be the lasting benefits and legacy?

The project's legacy and outcomes will be

- Two affordable homes will be delivered at social rent levels and allocated via a process that ensures the communities needs, wants and aspirations are taken into account.
- Population growth will be supported through the provision of accommodation suitable for families and for those looking to return after studying or working elsewhere.

- The community will be more resilient
 - Local services such as the school, transport and health services will be more viable, supporting the elderly and families to live and work within the community.
 - Local businesses, who have struggled with recruitment due to a lack of suitable accommodation, will benefit from the additional accommodation locally, which could lead to business development and expansion.
- The site will be dramatically improved visually, having a positive effect on local people's outlook, well-being and optimism for the community's future.

4.5 How will the project be supported/maintained/sustained after CRF funding?

CHT has an in-house housing management team who are responsible for allocations other associated aspects of tenancies. There is an allocation policy in place which is agreed with each community in advance of development progressing. A standard private rented tenancy agreement will be used for the tenants of the properties, and CHT are a registered private landlord.

The homes will be rented at social rent equivalent rents with annual rises following the published guidance by the Scottish Government for social rent benchmarks, which track Consumer Price Indexes. These homes will be maintained as affordable long-term in line with the Articles of Association adopted by Communities Housing Trust and approved by its board of trustees. The homes will be kept affordable in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Rural & Islands Housing Fund Offer of Grant. Any changes made to the rents to take them above affordable levels will only be done with the express written permission of the Scottish Government More Homes Division.

CHT manages a range of properties and sets aside a budget to cover admin, management and maintenance costs. A selection of approved contractors is used in each location to undertake required works. In the first year of the new build properties, the contractor is required to rectify any defects which may arise. The rental of our property portfolio provides CHT with a regular income stream alongside an element of grant support and earned income.

4.6 Describe how you intend to mitigate negative environmental impacts that may arise in delivering the project. It may be that the project specifically seeks to address climate change issues or implement net zero ambitions/solutions.

The houses have been designed to provide a high standard of energy efficiency, with hot water and heating being provided via air source heat pumps.

In the report of handing the planners commented that this proposed development includes the incorporation of timber cladding that will aid climate change as this natural material is effectively carbon neutral with minimal energy usage and pollution associated during the construction process, in addition to low lifetime energy costs.

The development will act as a case study for the deliverability of zero emission homes in a geographic area where there is a significant degree of scepticism over the efficacy and affordability of Air-Source Heating over traditional methods.

4.7 In developing the project, explain how you have considered equalities issues and taken groups with protected characteristics into account in the development/delivery

of the project. How will you ensure that no one is excluded or disadvantaged from benefitting from the project? Will the project target specific groups?

We are keen to support local contractors so that the economic and social benefits are retained locally. Three companies known to operate in the area were asked to submit a tender response. Responses were limited due to the future workload of local contractors.

Once constructed, the properties will be allocated via an agreed allocation policy. Applications are open to all, and the allocation policy does not exclude or disadvantage those with protected characteristics. The allocation policy will ensure that those with the greatest need, who meet the eligibility criteria for social housing, will benefit.

4.8 All applicants are required to provide a statement on how the organisation is committed to advancing the [Fair Work First Policy](#) including the 'Real Living Wage' and 'Effective Workers Voice' criteria. The statement should be agreed jointly by the employer and an appropriate workplace representative or a trade union representative if one is in place.

PLEASE NOTE- This statement is applicable to all groups and organisations even if you do not employ staff and/or only work with volunteers. Projects cannot progress without a signed statement - refer to the [Fair Work First guidance](#) for more information.

Complete the following Fair Work First Statement and Declaration form and submit with the application. Double click the icon to download.



FWF statement and
declaration template.c

Have you provided a Fair Work First statement in a separate document with this application? Please ensure it is signed by an appropriate workplace representative.

Yes ☒ No ☐

Can you confirm if you have the Living Wage Accreditation or are planning to be certified?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Applied ☐

Is the Fair Work First statement on your organisation's website?

Yes ☐ No ☒ Do not have a website ☐

How many people do you employ or how many volunteers do you have?

10 employees

Do you currently pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?


Yes ☒ No ☐ NA ☐

As part of your procurement assessment process, do you ensure that traders/suppliers also pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?

Yes ☒ No ☐

How do you provide channels for Effective Voice in the workplace for staff and/or volunteers?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Line Management Relationship <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff /Engagement Surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Suggestions Schemes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intranet/Online Platforms <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Forums / Networks <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Union Recognition/Collective Bargaining
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SECTION 5: PROJECT BUDGET

5.1	<p>Main project expenditure – costs should be as accurate and current as possible from recent quotations or price comparisons.</p> <p>Please refer to the guidance note on eligible expenditure. Only download and complete the overheads and management fees summary spreadsheet below, if you would like to claim more than 10% of total project costs as overheads.</p> <p> CRF overheads and management fees summary spreadsheet</p>		
Budget Heading	Detailed Costs	Revenue/Capital	Amount

Build costs	Design and build contract	Capital	595,000
Professional fees	Clerk of Works, Development Agent and Employers Agent	Revenue	54,000
Misc expenses	Bins, CAG, Developer Contributions	Revenue	18,000
Professional fees	Legal Fees, Deed of Conditions, and property sale	Revenue	4,000
Finance costs	Fees associated with private finance	Revenue	3,000
Total revenue expenditure			£ 79,000
Total capital expenditure			£ 595,000
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS			£ 674,000
Is VAT included in these costs?			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can you confirm that the costs above have not already been incurred or committed to?			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	Reasonableness of cost – Are the project costs listed in 5.1 based on valid quotes as per the procurement guidance provided? Please provide any quotes as supporting documents to this application .		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	Please explain how your project will achieve value for money.	The project will achieve value for money through effective tendering procedures and budget management. The contract will be on a design and build basis to minimise unforeseen costs. A QS/Employer's agent will be appointed to oversee costs during the construction phase.	
SECTION 6 – MATCH FUNDING (if applicable)			
Please note match funding for this round is not essential, however efforts to secure match funding for the project is reflected within the assessment criteria.			
6.1	Please provide details of any match funding applied for and whether it is awaiting a decision or confirmed.		

Name of funder		Confirmed?	Date Confirmed or Decision Expected	Amount £
Rural and Island Housing Fund		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	August 2025	399,000
Private finance		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	August 2025	90,000
Property sale		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Currently being marketed for sale	85,000
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Total match funding				£ 574,000
CRF requested				£ 100,000
Total funding				£ 674,000
6.2	Will the project involve “in kind” support?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
6.3	If yes, please detail.		N/A	
6.4	Please explain why public funding is required to deliver the project.		Public funding is required to ensure that the project can be viable, while offering the properties developed at a social rent equivalent level and taking into account the costs of developing in rural areas.	
6.5	Please explain what the remaining bank balances are for in your accounts.		Utilised for core costs and other projects	
6.6	Please explain why unrestricted funding in your annual accounts cannot be used to deliver the project and/or used as match funding.		Utilised for core costs and other projects, as well as property management/maintenance costs	
6.7	If you are applying for 100% funding for your project, please explain why no match funding is available.		N/A	

SECTION 7 – INCOME GENERATION

7.1	Will the project generate income?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.2	If yes, how will the income benefit the organisation? Will it be re-invested to help with the sustainability of the project – if so, how? A copy of a business plan and/or budget forecast must be provided with the application.	The income generated will be utilised to cover the ongoing management and maintenance costs of the properties.
7.3	How will you ensure that local organisations/ businesses are not disadvantaged because of the project? Are they supportive of the project?	We work with local contractors to ensure that the economic benefit of the project remains within the local economy.

		We have consulted with the local community and businesses, and they support the project.
7.4	Have you considered taking out a loan for the project?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.5	If not, please state why?	
7.6	Have you previously received public funding?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.7	If yes, please provide details of awards for the last 3 fiscal years and if any were awarded under Public Subsidy.	

Funding	Date	Amount £	Public Subsidy?
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 8 – SIGNATURE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

8.1	Main applicant, chairperson or equivalent – the person signing this application has the authority within the organisation to apply for grant funding.	
<p><i>I declare that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read the guidance notes and understand and accept the terms and conditions noted within them.</i></p> <p><i>The data provided in the application (and claim) forms are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.</i></p>		
Signature:		Date:
Print:		02/07/2025

Please Ensure You Also Complete the Attachments Checklist Below

8.2	You must enclose the following supporting documents (where applicable) with the application. If they are not available, please state why.	Yes / No / Not applicable
1	Bank statement – please provide a full bank statement with the organisation address. It must be the latest statement at the time of application submission.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Annual financial accounts – latest available.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Constitution or articles and memorandum.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Committee Members or Directors List. Available at https://www.chtrust.co.uk/our-board--advisors.html	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Policies – relevant organisational policies applicable to the project such as child protection, health and safety, equal opportunities, Fair Work First policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
6	Valid organisation insurance policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7	Evidence of need and demand i.e. letters of support, community consultation reports, photos, feasibility study	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Confirmation of match funding letters	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
9	Permissions – i.e. planning, building warrants, marine licences See section 3.9 for links	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
10	Business plan (income generation projects only)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Job descriptions (for CRF funded posts)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Evidence of control/ownership of asset – i.e. lease, title deeds	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
13	Partnership agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reason for missing documentation: 8.2.8 – still awaiting decision		

Completed forms and supporting documentation should be emailed to communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk quoting your unique project reference number.

Please ensure you have labelled the supporting documents as per 8.2 of the guidance note:

The application form should follow the naming convention example:

(Name of organisation) final application form

Supporting documentation should be labelled as: **document type followed with the title** – for example:

- Match funding – The Highland Council
- Match funding – National Lottery
- Insurance – Zurich 2022/23 annual policy
- Organisational policy – health and safety
- Organisational policy – Fair Work First statement
- Permissions – Planning granted July 2022
- Permissions – Building warrant granted Aug 2022
- Bank statement – Bank of Scotland Nov 2022
- Letter of support – name of Councillor
- Letter of support – community council/group
- Letter of support – name of local business

Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) Application Form

(June 2025 – CRF Area Funds)

Key considerations



Please refer to the **Application Guidance** (link below) and **Fair Work First Summary Guidance** when completing the application form as there is important supplementary information you need to be aware of. Answer the questions concisely, describing clearly and directly what the project you are seeking funding for is delivering. Please do not exceed the word limit given.

To ensure you have the best opportunity to score well during the assessment, please refer to the **Assessment Criteria Matrix** (link below) when completing the application form.

In this current round of CRF, we are seeking well-developed and robust projects that are ready to commence, and can complete within 12 months of funding being awarded.

The deadline for application submission is 9am on Friday 4th July 2025.

Double click the icons below to download the documents. If you have any issues with downloading the documents, please contact us at communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk

<u>Application Guidance</u>	<u>Assessment Criteria Matrix</u>
 CRF_Application_Guidance (Sutherland 2025)	 CRF Assessment Criteria (Sutherland 2025)

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1	Project reference number	CRF
1.2	Organisation	The Highland Council
1.3	Project title	Ardvreck Visitor Facilities
1.4	Summary of project you wish to be funded (max 250 words)	<p>Ardvreck Castle is a site of rich and tumultuous history, it sits on a rocky outcrop looking over Loch Assynt, Sutherland making it a very picturesque stop off for visitors. The castle also sits next to the ruins of Calda House an ambitious Georgian mansion built in 1726–27 located approximately 475 metres southeast of Ardvreck Castle and another historic attraction for people to stop for.</p> <p>The area is known more for its natural beauty than for built-up tourist facilities, which adds to its charm but also creates some challenges. Many people stop briefly to enjoy the scenery, while others especially</p>

		<p>motorhome users use the stop to stay overnight. In the height of the summer, visitor numbers stopping at Ardvreck (many travelling the NC500) increases so significantly it causes frequent congestion and insufficient parking capacity across the area.</p> <p>Parking around Ardvreck Castle is currently spread across a mix of on-street laybys and a small off-street parking area which can cause road safety issues and inappropriate parking.</p> <p>This project proposes a comprehensive solution to address these challenges by extending and formalising the existing car park, introducing marked bays for both cars and motorhomes. Additionally, it will formalise the various on-street parking laybys to improve traffic flow, safety, and the overall visitor experience.</p> <p>To improve the visitor experience, the site will also incorporate refreshed interpretation, public and active travel options and improved accessibility.</p>	
1.5	Project costs	Total project cost	£652,538
		Match funding	£604,404
		CRF grant requested	£48,134
1.6	Start date	07/07/2025	
1.7	End date (<i>max 12 months from start date</i>)	16/03/2026	
1.8	Please confirm you have read and understood the CRF privacy notice	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION 2: CONTACT AND ORGANISATION DETAILS			
2.1	Organisation	The Highland Council	
2.2	Address and postcode	Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX	
2.3	Main contact name		
2.4	Position in the organisation		
2.5	Contact number		
2.6	Email address		
2.7	Website address	www.highland.gov.uk	
2.8	Organisation type	<input type="checkbox"/>	Company limited by guarantee
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Constituted group
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public body

		<input type="checkbox"/>	Charity
		<input type="checkbox"/>	SCIO
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):
2.9	Organisation registered number	BRN: 163733	
2.10	Is the organisation VAT registered?	<p>By confirming this, you are declaring the organisation VAT status as per HMRC. If this changes at any time during the project, you <u>must</u> notify the CRF Team as this may affect the offer of grant.</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
2.11	If the organisation is VAT registered, please provide the number.	663 7582 03	
2.12	Is the VAT related to the project being reclaimed from HMRC?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Whole
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Partial
		<input type="checkbox"/>	None
2.13	Provide details of VAT exemptions.	All VAT is reclaimable on this project.	

SECTION 3: PROJECT DETAILS		
3.1	Please confirm the location of the project including post code.	Ardvreck Castle, off A837, Lairg, IV27 4HL What Three Words - ///divisible.pitch.trips
3.2	Are you applying on behalf of a partnership project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Is there a partnership agreement in place?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.4	Is your organisation the lead applicant?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.5	Do you own the land or asset?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.6	Are you leasing the land or asset? If so, what is the term left on your current lease agreement	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3 Years 8 Months</p>
3.7	If ownership or lease agreements are not in place, please provide details if applied for and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	Lease variation in progress with Inchnadamph estate who are keen to see the project progress. Heads of Terms agreed and submitted to estates solicitors - planned for completion by end of July 25.
3.8	Does the project require planning permission or other statutory regulatory consents?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.9	If consents are required, please provide details if applied and/or the arrangements to obtain these and by when.	25/01822/FUL – Planning Reference Number Determination Deadline - Sat 12 Jul 2025

SECTION 4: THE PROJECT PROPOSAL	
4.1	List the main activities required to deliver the project including timescales.

Activity name	Achieve by (date)
Planning Permission	12/07/2025
Lease Variation	31/07/2025
Tender Period	28/08/2025
Pre Construction Preliminaries	29/09/2025
Construction Period	16/01/2026
Construction Period Retention	16/01/2026

4.2 (a) What local need or opportunity will the project address?

(500 words max limit)

The Ardvreck Castle Visitor Facilities project is designed to address a range of pressing local needs and unlock significant opportunities for sustainable tourism development in the North West Highlands. Located along the increasingly popular North Coast 500 route, Ardvreck Castle has become a key stop for visitors due to its dramatic setting, historical significance, and scenic views. However, the site currently suffers from inadequate infrastructure, including a small, poorly defined car park and a series of unformalised laybys that are frequently overwhelmed during peak tourist seasons. This has led to serious road safety concerns, including congestion and near misses. The project directly responds to these issues by formalising and expanding the parking provision, improving traffic flow, and enhancing safety for both visitors and local residents.

The project will increase parking capacity in the main car park from approximately 10 to 25 spaces, including dedicated bays for motorhomes and accessible users. It will also formalise 7 surrounding laybys, some of which will be closed and restored to their natural state due to safety concerns. These improvements will better arrange car and bus usage, remove inappropriate on street parking, protect the surrounding environment, and ensure safer access to the site. The Highland Council Sutherland roads team also plan to include a clearway order to prohibit vehicles from stopping, parking, loading, or waiting around the site where there is no parking available. The development has been shaped through community engagement, with support from the Assynt Community Council, Assynt Development Trust, and Inchnadamph Estate, all of whom have raised concerns about tourist numbers at Ardvreck for several years.

The project also delivers significant community benefits. By easing congestion and improving road safety, it enhances the quality of life for residents who rely on the A837 for daily travel and essential services. It supports local economic development by providing better facilities for visitors encouraging them to stay longer in the area. The project will also support local business opportunities during construction.

This project addresses a critical infrastructure gap, enhances safety, supports sustainable tourism infrastructure development, and delivers lasting benefits to the local community and surrounding environment. It represents a strategic, community backed investment in one of the North Wests' most iconic and culturally significant visitor sites.

(b) Has this need been recognised in a local place plan?

(500 words max limit)

The project fits with the local North West 2045 place plan a community-led initiative focused on shaping the future of the North West Highlands of Scotland, aiming to create a sustainable, resilient, and thriving region by the year 2045. A key ambition of the NorthWest2045 vision is to promote slow tourism and foster deeper connections with the region's people, culture, and landscapes. By enhancing infrastructure around this popular cultural asset, this project supports those goals and meets the aim of the plan to targeted investment in roads and facilities to meet tourism demand and bring benefit to communities.

This project proposal stems directly from the Highland Councils [Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan](#), which identified the North West Highlands as one of the eight hotspot areas where a holistic package of measures is required to address significant pressures such as: the lack of appropriate parking at numerous locations, informal camping and especially motorhome stopovers, as well as outdoor

toileting. Pages 57 to 67 detail the proposed issues and solutions for the area, with a specific proposal for the car park improvements pages 63-64. Ardvreck represents one part of the wider proposals for the area.

The Assynt area, where this proposed car park improvement is located, was one of four sites where Highland Council retained an Access Ranger over the winter of 2021/22 to develop a Location Action Plan. This plan analysed key visitor management challenges and recommended targeted solutions as part of a wider effort to reduce visitor pressure across the region. While the plan identified a range of short-term, low-impact measures, it also highlighted the need for longer-term investments, such as expanded parking provision, with Ardvreck identified as a priority site within the Assynt Plan.

Nationally the project also fits with Scotland Outlook 2030 which has been developed to grow the value and positively enhance the benefits of tourism across Scotland by delivering the very best for our visitors, our businesses, our people, our communities and our environment. Two of the key priorities of this plan are to create and develop sustainable destinations and provide the best authentic and memorable experiences. In order to do this successfully, the strategy recognised that infrastructure and services must meet firstly meet the needs of the community and visitors – something this project is intended to do.

4.3 How do you know there is local support for the project? How can you evidence this? Provide evidence as supporting documents as requested at 8.2

(500 words max limit)

This project is one stage in a multi-site plan for improvements across the North West Sutherland to not only offer a high-quality visitor infrastructure, but to also support the resilience of our local communities and their social, cultural and economic wellbeing.

Tourism capacity on the North West coast of Highland has become an increasingly contentious issue, particularly due to the rising number of vehicles placing pressure on local infrastructure and the environment. In most cases in the height of the season, visitor numbers can vastly exceed the number of residents and the results of this can be felt throughout the communities.

Ardvreck Castle has been a site of focus for local community groups with the Community Council, the local Inchnadamph Estate and the Assynt Development Trust all raising concerns with the Council over road safety and inappropriate parking at the site. Located off the main A837 road which is the main access road to the north west and on the North Coast 500, the site is often over overflowing in the height of the season due to the lack of available parking within the car park and unformalised laybys surrounding the site, which impacts on residents trying to get about their daily business. This causes safety issues with multiple vehicles waiting on the main road trying to find a space causing a back log of traffic and on occasion has led to many near misses, road traffic collisions (one of which tragically resulted in a loss of life).

The Highland Council is committed to consulting and collaborating with community groups that may be impacted by local projects. For this project, the Council Tourism Team has already engaged with Local Council Members, Assynt Community Council, Assynt Development Trust, Historic Assynt, and Inchnadaph Estate to ensure their input and concerns were addressed. Overall community feedback has been positive with good feedback being fed into the design planning for the development. A letter of support from Assynt Development Trust has been included with this application.

4.4 Outputs and outcomes – Please refer to the application guidance for further information and a definition of what constitutes “outputs” and “outcomes”.

(a) Please select below ONE of the CRF main strategic objectives that you believe your project’s outputs and outcomes will best align with.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Increasing community resilience
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling poverty and inequality
<input type="checkbox"/>	Addressing causes of rural depopulation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Helping economic recovery and sustaining growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tackling the climate emergency and working towards net zero

(b) What are the immediate and short-term outputs that your project will achieve? How will you measure them?

(500 words max limit)

In the short term the project sets to deliver the following outcomes. These practical improvements are aimed at enhancing access, safety, and the overall visitor experience at Ardvreck Castle and Calda House:

- Main Car Park – The extended car park will offer approximately 25 spaces, including 7 dedicated spots for motorhomes/campers, 1 accessible parking bay, cycle racks, refreshed interpretation, a waste bin, and fencing to prevent on verge parking around the site.
- Layby 1 – (South Ardvreck Viewpoint) Formalise the layby for parking with new white line markings. Incorporate formed verge offlets* to reduce overspill and congestion, as well as improve drainage. Parking signage will be installed south of the layby to direct visitors to the main car park.

*offlets are small ditches less than a car width apart to stop cars being able to park along the roadside

- Layby 2 – (Calda House Viewpoint) Formalise the layby for parking with new white line markings. Widen the tapered edges to improve access and safety. Include formed verge offlets to manage overspill and congestion while enhancing drainage.
- Layby 3 – (Coach Layby) Create a dedicated coach layby with sufficient depth to accommodate larger vehicles, including international coaches that exit opposite to UK coaches. Linking pathways will be established to connect the layby to the main car park. Coaching signage will be installed to designate the space. Additionally, formed verge offlets will help reduce overspill, congestion, and improve drainage.
- Layby 4 (Ardvreck Waterfall Parking)– Increase the depth of the existing layby and remove the rock face on the opposite side of the road to improve visibility splays for stopping vehicles. Formalise the space with white line markings and create a formal footpath access to the castle from this layby, helping to reduce forming desire lines.
- Layby 5 – (Road Safety Concern) Close the layby on grounds of safety and as per the estates request, rehabilitate the area by removing surfacing and restoring it to its natural state and plant with native seeding, and install fencing to prevent unauthorised parking.
- Layby 6 – (Road Safety Concern) Close the layby grounds of safety, rehabilitate the area by removing surfacing and restoring it to its natural state and plant with native seeding.
- Layby 7 – (North Assynt Viewpoint) Formalise the layby for parking with new white
- Refreshed Interpretation Boards (condensed, simplified, and featuring clearer, more impactful messaging)
- One cycle rack for active travel provision, one large waste bin and 204m of paths network.

The Highland Council recently purchased vehicle and pedestrian counters to collect data and monitor sites across Highland. Both a vehicle and pedestrian counter are due to be installed at Ardvreck Castle. These counters will provide valuable data on annual visitor numbers, offering a semi-accurate measure of site usage. In addition, they will enable The Highland Council to monitor monthly car park activity, with particular attention to peak periods. This data will help assess the effectiveness of the development and

inform any decisions regarding potential future phases or expansions. The environment team also recently appointed a new Facilities Officer to help manage these sites in both a monitoring and maintenance capacity.

(c) What do you think the outcomes of your project will be and how will you measure them? Please note an outcome is the longer-term change that your project will achieve. What will be the lasting benefits and legacy?

(500 words max limit)

The longer terms outputs for this project will be:

Improved Road Safety and Traffic Flow

Formalised parking and laybys across the site will reduce congestion and unsafe roadside parking, directly addressing community concerns and reducing the risk of accidents. Long-term, this will create a safer environment for both residents and visitors, particularly during peak tourist seasons.

Environmental Protection & Cultural and Heritage Preservation

By formalising paths and parking, the project will reduce damage to verges and informal desire lines, allowing the landscape to regenerate. The site will also use native reseedling where possible to support biodiversity and visual integration into the surrounding National Scenic Area. Refreshed interpretation will promote local history as well as responsible behaviour and respect for the historic Ardvreck Castle and Calda House, aligning with the goals of Historic Assynt.

Community Wellbeing and Resilience

Reducing traffic disruption will improve quality of life for residents and support local businesses by maintaining access and letting them get about their day. The project will also support local contractors and suppliers, contributing to the regional economy.

Enhanced Visitor Experience

The project will provide a more welcoming and accessible surrounding, with improved signage, interpretation panels, and designated parking for accessible access. This supports the goal of promoting “slow tourism” and deeper engagement with the region’s cultural and natural heritage.

The site will be monitored more longer term by ongoing engagement with local groups such as the Assynt Community Council, Assynt Development Trust, and Inchnadamph Estate who are in tune with the local pressures at Ardvreck and will help identify any emerging issues to the Council. The Council’s Environment Team will also undertake regular visual and environmental monitoring to assess the condition of the landscape, parking areas, and footpaths over time with any repairs being maintained by the service. As mentioned in the short terms outputs, vehicle and pedestrian counters will track visitor numbers and usage patterns, providing data to assess the effectiveness of the development and help plan for any future development.

This project will leave a lasting positive impact on the Ardvreck Castle and Calda House area by improving area and managing visitor numbers more effectively, promoting responsible access and tourism.

4.5 How will the project be supported/maintained/sustained after CRF funding?

(500 words max limit)

The delivery of the project will be led by The Highland Council, with primary responsibility assigned to its Property and Facilities Management Service. This internal team bring a wealth of experience and a proven track record in successfully delivering complex, large-scale infrastructure projects across the Highland region - most recently the CRF funded Achmelvich car park and toilets project. Their multidisciplinary expertise ensures that the project will be managed efficiently, with attention to quality, compliance, and sustainability throughout all phases of development.

The ongoing management and maintenance of the site post-delivery will be the responsibility of The Highland Council's Environment Team, which oversees the care of council-owned, leased, and adopted outdoor and visitor recreation sites across the region. Although operating with a modest but dedicated maintenance budget, the team has accounted for the future upkeep of this development within its financial planning. This ensures the site will remain clean, safe, and welcoming for both residents and visitors over the long term.

As previously noted in this application, due to the informal and short-stay nature of the parking arrangement, there are no plans to introduce parking charges or generate income from this site. The focus remains on accessibility, safety, and preserving the character of the area rather than revenue generation.

4.6 Describe how you intend to mitigate negative environmental impacts that may arise in delivering the project. It may be that the project specifically seeks to address climate change issues or implement net zero ambitions/solutions.

The most positive aspect of this project is that the Council is enhancing parking facilities by utilising existing sites more effectively. By repurposing these locations, the Council is not only improving accessibility and convenience for residents and visitors but also demonstrating a commitment to sustainable rural development. This approach minimises the need for new construction, reduces environmental impact, and makes efficient use of available space.

Undertaking the site improvements as a single, comprehensive project is essential to ensure both cost-efficiency and effective use of resources. Completing the works in one coordinated phase allows for economies of scale, reducing overall construction and administrative costs compared to a piecemeal approach. It also minimises disruption to the site and surrounding community, ensures consistency in design and implementation, and delivers the full range of intended benefits such as improved access, safety, and environmental protection more quickly and efficiently. Investing in the project this way represents a smarter, more strategic approach to long-term infrastructure planning.

The design approach of the car park extension will require organic material to be stripped to accommodate the new parking area and laybys. It is planned that all of the material stripped on site will be relocated to other parts of the project, in particular to build up the new area for the coach layby. The rest of the material will also be used to create bunding, verges, base course (sub-base) and backfilling around the car park to manage weather related water runoff, prevent erosion, and define traffic flow. This will improve environmental resilience, enhance safety, and help maintain the integrity of both the car park surface and surrounding landscapes. We do not anticipate removing any material from the site, as all excavated material is expected to be reused within the project.

The project will also promote responsible waste disposal practices among users through signage and interpretation panels directing people to the local sites and community setups. This helps ensure everyone contributes to waste reduction efforts to keeping the area clean and beautiful and supports local businesses. The Council will approach local contractors through its tendering process to minimise the carbon footprint on the site this will not only significantly cut down on fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions associated with long distance transport, but local contractors often source building materials from nearby suppliers, and in this case using the local quarries for stone, reducing emissions from transporting heavy materials over long distances. Professional staff overseeing the build will also be locally based so there will be less need for frequent long-distance travel for meetings and site inspections.

Minimising and strategically managing resource use in the car park development supports the project's broader sustainability goals by reducing environmental impact and promoting more efficient use of materials.

4.7 In developing the project, explain how you have considered equalities issues and taken groups with protected characteristics into account in the development/delivery of the project. How will you ensure that no one is excluded or disadvantaged from benefitting from the project? Will the project target specific groups?

The car park has been designed to improve accessibility and inclusivity for all visitors, regardless of age, mobility, or ability. A designated accessible parking bay will be provided near the interpretation and path to

the castle, with the firm, tarmacked bay suitable for wheelchair users and individuals with limited mobility. Clear signage, adequate space for manoeuvring, and gentle gradients will ensure safe and comfortable access. The site also provides dedicated parking for both cars and motorhomes creating safe access for both vehicle users.

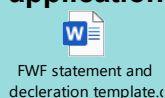
The car park design also incorporates cycle racks to enable visitors who cycle to access the site safely and conveniently, promoting non-motorised, low-impact transport options. Not everyone has access to a car or choose to use a vehicle to holiday providing secure cycle parking ensures greater inclusivity for those who rely on or want to use a bicycle as their primary mode of transport. Cycle racks also make it easier for people to combine cycling with public transport or walking routes, improving last-mile access to remote or rural locations.

The coach layby has been designed with inclusivity and safety in mind. It will be extended to a width of 4 metres to accommodate both UK-based and International coaches (who exit the vehicle on the right). This ensures safe and convenient access for all passengers, regardless of coach configuration.

Interpretation at the site will be designed with accessibility and inclusion at its core. Panels will be positioned at wheelchair-accessible heights, using appropriate font sizes, high-contrast colours, and clear, easy-to-read layouts to support visitors with visual impairments. By prioritising inclusive design, the interpretation will help create a welcoming and engaging experience for all visitors, regardless of ability, age, or background. The Highland Council also actively promote the use of Gaelic as part of its commitment to preserving and revitalising the language and culture across the region and will include this on the refreshed interpretation panels.

4.8 All applicants are required to provide a statement on how the organisation is committed to advancing the [Fair Work First Policy](#) including the 'Real Living Wage' and 'Effective Workers Voice' criteria. The statement should be agreed jointly by the employer and an appropriate workplace representative or a trade union representative if one is in place.

PLEASE NOTE- This statement is applicable to all groups and organisations even if you do not employ staff and/or only work with volunteers. Projects cannot progress without a signed statement - refer to the [Fair Work First guidance](#) for more information. Complete the following Fair Work First Statement and Declaration form and submit with the application. Double click the icon to download.



Have you provided a Fair Work First statement in a separate document with this application? Please ensure it is signed by an appropriate workplace representative.

Yes ☒ No ☐

Can you confirm if you have the Living Wage Accreditation or are planning to be certified?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Applied ☐

Is the Fair Work First statement on your organisation's website?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Do not have a website ☐

How many people do you employ or how many volunteers do you have?

10,000+

Do you currently pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?

Yes ☒ No ☐ NA ☐

As part of your procurement assessment process, do you ensure that traders/suppliers also pay the Real Living Wage hourly rate?

Yes ☒ No ☐

How do you provide channels for Effective Voice in the workplace for staff and/or volunteers?

- ☒ Line Management Relationship
- ☒ Staff /Engagement Surveys
- ☒ Suggestions Schemes
- ☒ Intranet/Online Platforms

- ☒ Staff Forums / Networks
- ☒ Trade Union Recognition/Collective Bargaining

SECTION 5: PROJECT BUDGET

5.1 Main project expenditure – costs should be as accurate and current as possible from recent quotations or price comparisons.

Please refer to the guidance note on eligible expenditure. Only download and complete the overheads and management fees summary spreadsheet below, if you would like to claim more than 10% of total project costs as overheads.



CRF overheads and management fees sun

Budget Heading	Detailed Costs	Revenue/Capital	Amount
Staff Fees	Property Service Staff Fees Staffing Pay Rates HC08 £114.73 charge out rate (Clerk of Works) HC10 £143.94 charge out rate (Project Manager) HC11 £162.03 charge out rate (Principal Architect)	Revenue	£75,659
Construction	Construction of the project (<i>Breakdown Provided</i>)	Capital	£504,393
Interpretation	Refreshed Interpretation Boards for Visitors	Capital	£15,000
Contingency	10% Contingency	Capital	£51,989
Waste Bin	As stated	Capital	£500
Planning	Planning Fee and Advert	Capital	£4,997
Total revenue expenditure			£75,659
Total capital expenditure			£576,879
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS			£652,538
Is VAT included in these costs?			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Can you confirm that the costs above have not already been incurred or committed to?			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	Reasonableness of cost – Are the project costs listed in 5.1 based on valid quotes as per the procurement guidance provided? Please provide any quotes as supporting documents to this application .		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> The project has been priced up by the Highland Council's internal Quantity Surveyor who is very experienced in delivering robust costs for large

		scale projects for the Council.	
5.3	Please explain how your project will achieve value for money.	<p>Work will be contracted to an external specialist via the Council's procurement system. Procurement will be done using a transparent procurement process following Highland Council Guidelines and managed through Public Contract Scotland to ensure robustness against the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Price - Quality - Environmental credentials of Contractor - Environmental impact / carbon footprint from delivery - Sustainability - Ethical business - Ability to complete work within the timeframe <p>This process will make sure the project achieves value for money.</p>	
SECTION 6 – MATCH FUNDING (if applicable) <p>Please note match funding for this round is not essential, however efforts to secure match funding for the project is reflected within the assessment criteria.</p>			
6.1	Please provide details of any match funding applied for and whether it is awaiting a decision or confirmed.		
Name of funder		Confirmed?	Amount £
Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	£489,404
UK Shared prosperity Fund		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	£115,000
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Total match funding			£604,404
CRF requested			£48,134
Total funding			£652,538
6.2	Will the project involve “in kind” support?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6.3	If yes, please detail.		n/a
6.4	Please explain why public funding is required to deliver the project.		This project is not a statutory requirement for the Council and therefore there is no budget allocation in the existing capital

		programme for a project of this type. If external funding is not sought it simply will not go ahead. The Highland Council have been and continue to be long term leaseholders of the site and therefore there is an obligation and a want to make sure the site is maintained and managed to a good standard for our communities, businesses and visitors, however, a development of this scale is unachievable within existing service budgets.
6.5	Please explain what the remaining bank balances are for in your accounts.	The Highland Council's accounts represent a combination of earmarked and uncommitted reserves. These balances are maintained to ensure financial resilience and flexibility in responding to both planned investments and unforeseen challenges. Earmarked reserves are allocated for specific purposes such as infrastructure projects, service improvements, or statutory obligations.
6.6	Please explain why unrestricted funding in your annual accounts cannot be used to deliver the project and/or used as match funding.	The unrestricted portion of the Council's funding is used to manage in-year budget pressures, support service continuity, and maintain financial stability. This project is not a statutory obligation for the Council.
6.7	If you are applying for 100% funding for your project, please explain why no match funding is available.	n/a

SECTION 7 – INCOME GENERATION

7.1	Will the project generate income?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.2	If yes, how will the income benefit the organisation? Will it be re-invested to help with the sustainability of the project – if so, how? A copy of a business plan and/or budget forecast must be provided with the application.	n/a
7.3	How will you ensure that local organisations/ businesses are not disadvantaged because of the project? Are they supportive of the project?	<p>Ardvreck is a remote rural location with no economic activity generated from the site. Local organisations and businesses are supportive of the project, which was developed through direct consultation.</p> <p>The project encourages longer stays, supports local businesses, and promotes responsible tourism without introducing charges or commercial facilities that would locally compete.</p>

7.4	Have you considered taking out a loan for the project?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.5	If not, please state why?	Unlike other sites visitor sites where the Council have been able to take out loans to deliver capital projects based on the sites income generation plans to return the loan investment e.g. car parking charges. The Council does not have any plans for this site to generate income and therefore a loan was not considered a responsible option.
7.6	Have you previously received public funding?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.7	If yes, please provide details of awards for the last 3 fiscal years and if any were awarded under Public Subsidy.	

YES – The Highland Council as local authority is responsible for a large range of vital services for people and businesses across the Highland region. The majority of funding to run these services comes from the Scottish Government (public funds) although the Council does raise additional income through Council tax, business rates, parking income etc. It would be near impossible (plus an extremely lengthy task) to gather all the evidence of public funds the Council have received from public funding.

Funding	Date	Amount £	Public Subsidy?
n/a	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Click or tap to enter a date.	£	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 8 – SIGNATURE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

8.1	Main applicant, chairperson or equivalent – the person signing this application has the authority within the organisation to apply for grant funding.	
<p><i>I declare that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read the guidance notes and understand and accept the terms and conditions noted within them.</i></p> <p><i>The data provided in the application (and claim) forms are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.</i></p>		
Signature:		Date:
Print		03/07/2025

Please Ensure You Also Complete the Attachments Checklist Below

8.2	You must enclose the following supporting documents (where applicable) with the application. If they are not available, please state why.	Yes / No / Not applicable
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1	Bank statement – please provide a full bank statement with the organisation address. It must be the latest statement at the time of application submission.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Annual financial accounts – latest available.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Constitution or articles and memorandum.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Committee Members or Directors List.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Policies – relevant organisational policies applicable to the project such as child protection, health and safety, equal opportunities, Fair Work First policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
6	Valid organisation insurance policy.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7	Evidence of need and demand i.e. letters of support, community consultation reports, photos, feasibility study	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Confirmation of match funding letters	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
9	Permissions – i.e. planning, building warrants, marine licences	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
10	Business plan (income generation projects only)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Job descriptions (for CRF funded posts)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Evidence of control/ownership of asset – i.e. lease, title deeds	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/>
13	Partnership agreement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reason for missing documentation:		
Point 3 – N/A		

Completed forms and supporting documentation should be emailed to communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk quoting your unique project reference number.

Please ensure you have labelled the supporting documents as per 8.2 of the guidance note:

The application form should follow the naming convention example:

(Name of organisation) final application form

Supporting documentation should be labelled as: **document type followed with the title** – for example:

- Match funding – The Highland Council
- Match funding – National Lottery
- Insurance – Zurich 2022/23 annual policy
- Organisational policy – health and safety
- Organisational policy – Fair Work First statement
- Permissions – Planning granted July 2022
- Permissions – Building warrant granted Aug 2022
- Bank statement – Bank of Scotland Nov 2022
- Letter of support – name of Councillor
- Letter of support – community council/group
- Letter of support – name of local business

Appendix 2 - Project technical assessments - RAG Summary Spreadsheet
Sutherland Committee - 1st September 2025

[illegible]

CRF4113	Scourie Development Company	Repopulating Scourie 2	The relocation of Scourie School Car Park to free up access to H1. The SLF has supported our application to purchase H1 from Scourie Estate for the construction of 9 affordable homes, in order to access H1 the Scourie School Car Park needs to be relocated in front of the school. Planning permission (Ref; 24/02147/FUL) was granted on May 8th 2025. When completed the car park will be maintained and adopted in perpetuity by THC. This constitutes Phase One of the overall development and whilst this element forms the basis of our application, the car park is fundamentally linked to the overall delivery of affordable housing.	Place Housing Page13. Development Trusts in some communities (for example in north west Sutherland) are trying to take forward community housing projects, but the costs, time and expertise required present significant challenges for community groups, who usually need paid project officers to lead developments as well as funding for feasibility work, planning etc.	£ 260,536.98	£ 70,245.70	27%		2	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	26
CRF4129	Communities Housing Trust	Borgie Affordable Housing	The proposed development at Borgie, Skerray comprises 2 affordable homes for rent, provided by CHT. The site is part of an existing property, which is a C listed building and is being sold to help fund the provision of 2 new affordable homes. This development will help address the existing high demand for affordable rental properties within the Melness-Tongue-Skerray area and is included in the Highland Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan and the community's development plan. The development also complements additional proposed developments within the area.	Place Housing Page13. Development Trusts in some communities (for example in north west Sutherland) are trying to take forward community housing projects, but the costs, time and expertise required present significant challenges for community groups, who usually need paid project officers to lead developments as well as funding for feasibility work, planning etc.	£ 674,000.00	£ 100,000.00	15%		2	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	27
CRF4152	Highland Council	Ardvreck Castle Facilities	Parking around Ardvreck Castle is currently spread across a mix of on-street laybys and a small off-street parking area which can cause road safety issues and inappropriate parking. This project proposes a comprehensive solution to address these challenges by extending and formalising the existing car park, introducing marked bays for both cars and motorhomes. Additionally, it will formalise the various on-street parking laybys to improve traffic flow, safety, and the overall visitor experience.	Place Page 13. Infrastructure and Connectivity Parking and overnight camping – highlighted as an issue	£ 652,538.00	£ 48,134.00	7%		3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	29

NOTE - RAG assessment criteria scoring. Red Amber Green ratings are based on information provided during the application process and are provided as a guide only. The ratings are converted into scores as follows: Red - 1, Amber - 2, Green - 3. This allows a total score for each project to be provided. All projects presented above are eligible for funding. Where a project has been awarded Red or Amber against any criteria, this does not reflect an eligibility issue but does flag up that there are outstanding concerns, or that only brief information was provided within the application. If Members wish to approve projects that have Red or Amber ratings then we would seek to address these concerns by applying technical conditions to any funding award made.

CRF Development Officer Support Scheme – Sutherland

Introduction to the Scheme

[The Sutherland Area Place Plan \(2025\)](#) identifies significant challenges and opportunities across the region, including depopulation, limited access to services, and housing. Despite these challenges, Sutherland demonstrates strong community engagement and a vibrant third sector, with Development Trusts, Community Companies and voluntary groups playing a central role in community development and regeneration. These organisations have made it clear to both the Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) team and local members that they are struggling to fund the vital work that these officers carry out across the region.

To ensure fairness, due diligence and alignment with the overarching themes of CRF and the Sutherland Area Place Plan, we propose to ringfence £250,000 of CRF funds for organisations in Sutherland to bid into as set out below. The scheme will be administered by the CRF team on behalf of Sutherland elected members.

To support the delivery of the Sutherland Area Place Plan's priorities under the themes of People, Place, and Prosperity, this scheme provides targeted funding to support *Development Officer* roles within community organisations across Sutherland. These officers play a key role in driving change by developing and delivering community-led projects, engaging with stakeholders, and building community capacity. The fund aims to strengthen these efforts by enabling organisations to sustain or expand their work in line with the priorities of the Sutherland Area Place Plan.

Governance

Publicity

The fund will be publicised by the Community Regeneration team via multiple channels to ensure applicants receive clear and accessible information. The CRF team will get in touch with all relevant contacts on their mailing list. The CRF team will liaise with the corporate communications team to submit a press release on the Highland Council webpage and relevant social media channels.

Application process

This is a rolling scheme therefore there will be no set times or dates that applicants must apply by. The scheme will close once funding has been fully allocated with the intention that this will not run beyond March 2026. To check eligibility or to request an application form, applicants will be required to contact the CRF team in the first instance.

Assessment and approval

Applications will be received to the CRF team and assessed by the relevant project officer. Assessments will be carried out based on the assessment criteria matrix. Please note the additional assessment criteria specific to this support scheme: Monitoring and Evaluation and Partnership Working. Approval of funding will be delegated to the Chair of the Sutherland Committee (or vice Chair if the Chair is not available), along with the CRF Programme Manager. Decisions will be made based on a full technical assessment, RAG assessment and recommendation from the Project Officer. Should declarations of interest mean that a decision cannot be delegated to the Chair/Vice Chair, decision making will be delegated to ACE – Place and the CRF Programme Manager.

Broad Criteria

- Eligible applicants: Development Trusts and Community Development Companies.
- Minimum grant: £5,000
- Maximum grant: £25,000 per project



- Project delivery should not exceed 12 months from date of approval of funding.

More detailed criteria will be made available to applicants in line with the overall requirements of the Highland Coastal Communities Fund.

This is a competitive process, so the Council is highlighting that projects with secured match funding or in-kind contributions are likely to score higher during assessment.

Eligible Project Costs

Project costs must predominantly be revenue expenditure i.e. the wages and expenses of positions including overheads (phone bills, travel and subsistence, insurance) and on-costs. A small allowance to purchase equipment to support the positions may be eligible (office and IT equipment).

Further application guidance and the assessment criteria matrix will be provided by request to eligible applicants.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Individual projects will be monitored and evaluated in line with the overarching CRF framework including specific indicators developed through the Social Value Engine.

Regular reporting on fund commitment and progress of projects will be brought to Elected members via Area Business Meeting.