

Rural Communities Ideas into Action

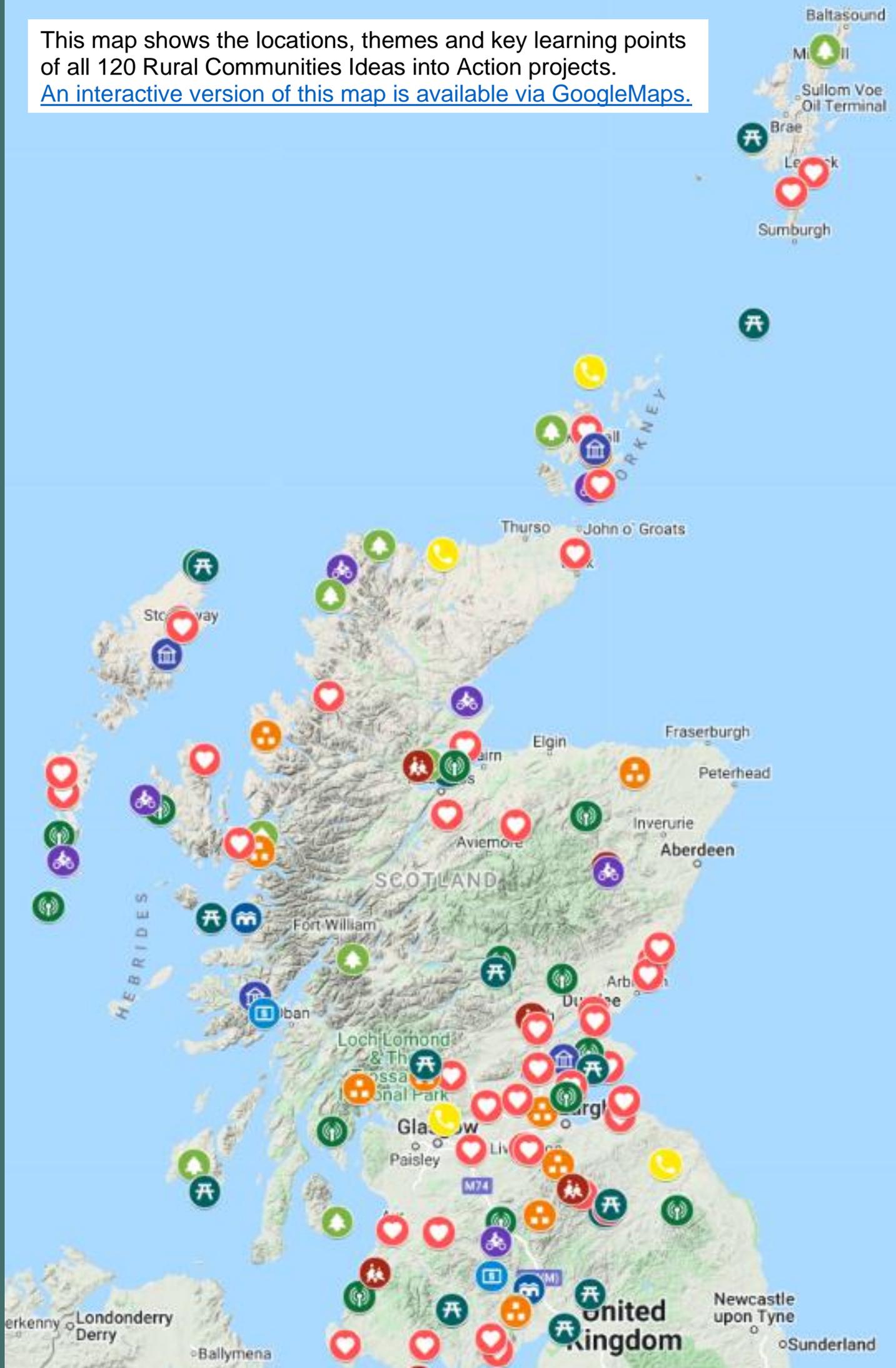
End of Fund Report – June 2022



Whithorn Re:Build - Skills Sabbaticals, The Whithorn Trust, Dumfries & Galloway

This map shows the locations, themes and key learning points of all 120 Rural Communities Ideas into Action projects.

[An interactive version of this map is available via GoogleMaps.](#)



RURAL COMMUNITIES IDEAS INTO ACTION

£4.6M

REQUESTED

203

APPLICATIONS

£1.8M

INVESTED

120

PROJECTS SUPPORTED

59%

SUCCESS RATE



SAID SUBMITTING APPLICATION WAS VERY EASY OR EASY



SAID APPLICATION QUESTIONS WERE PROPORTIONATE



SAID APPLICATION QUESTIONS WERE CLEAR

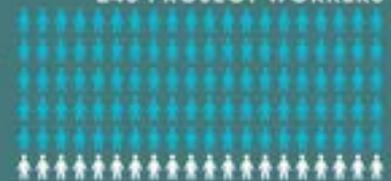
£2,728 AVERAGE SMALL GRANT SIZE AWARDED

£28,648 AVERAGE LARGE GRANT SIZE AWARDED

5x

THE NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS COMPARED TO PROJECT STAFF

1,253 VOLUNTEERS
60 INTERNS & TRAINEES
248 PROJECT WORKERS



389

COMMUNITY GROUPS SUPPORTED



273

NEW / IMPROVED COMMUNITY ASSETS



2,259

PEOPLE REPORTING IMPROVED WELLBEING



640

WORKSHOPS/EVENTS HELD



52

PILOT PROJECTS COMPLETED



4

PORTFOLIO EVENTS TO BUILD CAPACITY



57

INTERIM REVIEWS WITH LARGE PROJECTS



3

INSIGHT REPORTS TO INFORM FUTURE POLICY



3

GUIDANCE PAPERS - APPLICATION, WELCOME AND EVALUATION



RATE INSPIRING SCOTLAND'S SUPPORT AS 'EXCELLENT' OR 'GOOD'

SEPTEMBER 2021

MARCH 2022

"THIS ENTIRE FUND HAS FELT DIFFERENT TO OTHERS - FLEXIBLE, CREATIVE, MOTIVATING AND INSPIRING!"

EXPLORING DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY-LED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT



80

SOCIAL ENTERPRISES SUPPORTED



43

NEW / IMPROVED INCOME-GENERATING ASSETS



54

NEW TOURISM ASSETS / EXPERIENCES

BUILDING CONNECTIONS WITH NEW PARTNERS



295

PARTNERSHIPS ESTABLISHED



1077

PEOPLE RECEIVED TRAINING



132

QUALIFICATIONS AWARDED

TACKLING A PRIORITY NEED IN RURAL COMMUNITIES



29

TECHNICAL / FEASIBILITY STUDIES UNDERTAKEN



33

IMPROVED FACILITIES FOR DISABLED PEOPLE



11

E-CHARGING POINTS INSTALLED

EVIDENCE, INSIGHTS AND LEARNING TO INFORM FUTURE RURAL POLICY



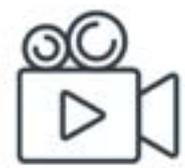
30

COMMUNITY STRATEGIES / PLANS DEVELOPED



33

RESEARCH PROJECTS COMPLETED



125

CREATIVE OUTPUTS PRODUCED

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXTEND DELIVERY TIMEFRAMES TO FACILITATE GENUINE CLLD

FACILITATE PEER SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES OF GEOGRAPHY AND INTEREST

MAINTAIN A SMALL GRANT PROGRAMME TO EXPAND ACCESS TO CLLD FUNDING

USE A TWO-STAGE APPLICATION TO MANAGE EXPECTATIONS AND RESOURCE

PROVIDE A RANGE OF SUPPORT THAT REFLECTS CAPACITY OF ORGS

Contents

- Executive Summary 2
- Introduction 6
- Ideas into Action 8
 - Outcome 1: Exploring different approaches to CLLD 9
 - Outcome 2: Building connections with new partners 10
 - Outcome 3: Tackling a priority need 11
 - Outcome 4: Evidence, insights and learning to inform future rural policy 12
- Testing Change: Project Learning 13
- Stories and Case Studies 16
- Insights and Recommendations 20
- Inspiring Scotland’s Support 22
- Beneficiary experience and feedback 23
- Financials 27

Tote Forest Community Plan, Staffin Community Trust, Isle of Skye, Highland



Introduction

Rural Communities Ideas into Action (RCIA) was a £1.8 million investment from the Scottish Government to test future approaches to Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) in rural and island communities in Scotland over 2021-22.

Part of the Rural Communities Testing Change programme, this second tranche of funding enabled rural groups to try new approaches to genuine community development: tackling local challenges and creating viable and resilient communities. In testing a less risk averse approach to funding rural communities, the fund also sought to develop insights and learning into what does and does not work in rural communities and why.

The Fund supported **120 community-led initiatives** across 20 different Local Action Group areas (26 Local Authority areas). All contributed positively to local people and local priorities, demonstrating how their activities were led by the communities they sought to support. Although diverse in approach, scale and issues being addressed, all funded initiatives addressed a number of cross-cutting priorities:

- *Support whole community priorities that recognise and respond to particular and distinct local opportunities and challenges;*
- *Deliver social, economic, and environmental benefits to people and communities;*
- *Positively impact upon Covid recovery; and*
- *Promote equality, inclusion, diversity, and participation of local people within the community, thereby enhancing local democracy.*

The primary constraint of this Fund was the timescale on which project activities could take place: all funding awards were made on 7 December 2021, and all projects were to be completed by 31 March 2022.

The fund launch was supported by applicant guidance [social media](#), webinar and written formats



Information Thread



Applications Received

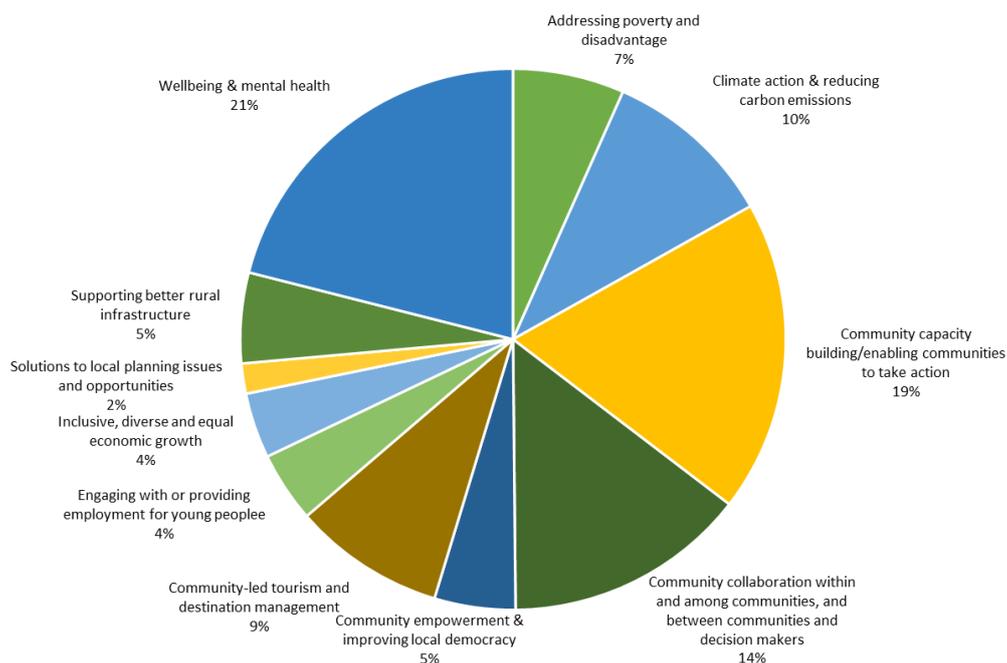
The Fund was open for applications from 13 September to 8 October 2021. A total of 203 applications were received requesting a total of £4.6 million. The LAG areas with the highest level of request relative to population size were Orkney, Outer Hebrides, Argyll & the Islands, and Highlands. The LAG areas with the lowest level of request relative to population size were Lanarkshire, Cairngorms, Kelvin Valley & Falkirk and Tyne Esk. The split of applications between remote and accessible rural locations was approximately 50/50. There was also a good spread across Scottish Government policy areas and support for building equality and supporting marginalised groups.

Applications were assessed against criteria relating to the fund outcomes, community-led design, innovation, and capacity to deliver. A panel, including representatives from Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the Scottish Community Development Centre, the Hutton Institute, and Scottish Government, recommended the portfolio of projects for funding. This was then approved by the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands on 6 December 2021.

There were two strands of funding available:

- 1) **Small Grants** of up to £3,000 were available for grassroots rural groups or organisations to support community projects that fit with local needs and were locally led, with a particular aim to make funding more accessible to those who had not previously been able to access it.
 - a. There were 69 applications from 18 LAG areas with a total ask of £188,898. There were no small grant applications from Cairngorms, Greater Renfrewshire & Inverclyde or Moray.
 - b. 63 Initiatives were funded with a total Investment of £171,898.00 Projects were funded in all 18 LAGs which applied.
- 2) **Large Grants** of between £3,001 and £50,000 for not for profit organisations to invest in community-led initiatives that respond to local need.
 - a. There were 133 applications from 21 LAG areas with a total ask of £4,426,505. There were also applications from rural communities not represented by a LAG and from communities of interest spanning multiple geographic regions.
 - b. 57 Initiatives were funded with a total Investment of £1,632,938.27. Initiatives were funded in 20 LAG areas (Greater Renfrewshire & Inverclyde being the exception).

Funded projects addressed a number of thematic policy areas, which many projects addressing more than one theme:





Lochalsh Loves Local, Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust, Highland

Ideas into Action

The four outcomes of the Rural Communities Ideas into Action fund each reflected the overall aim of testing new approaches to Community-Led Local Development.

1. *Rural communities will have the opportunity to try out different approaches to local community development;*
2. *Rural groups and organisations will work collectively with new partners to build connections;*
3. *Rural groups and organisations will tackle a priority need or issue in the community which hasn't been addressed before;*
4. *Activity will contribute to a body of evidence, insights and learning to help inform future rural policy and programmes*

Most funded projects contributed to more than one outcome, with larger projects often spanning across multiple outcome areas.



58 projects tested new approaches in their community



58 projects built new connections and partnerships



69 projects addressed a priority need



40 projects undertook research & collected evidence



Outcome 1: Exploring different approaches to CLLD

Projects addressing this outcome were broad in theme, but often highly strategic in nature. Projects typically reflected the unique situation, strengths and expertise of a community, supporting an approach to development which was reactive to the specific local context and community members, with an emphasis on enterprise and asset-creation or improvement.

80 social enterprises supported

Funding directly supported portfolio organisations to undertake their activities, but often these organisations and their projects had an extended reach in their community, with associate social enterprises engaged and supported through project activities. For example, Innerleithen, Traquair & Walkerburn Parish Church of Scotland hosted craft classes in four different community venues - each of which benefitted from venue hire fees and expanded engagement with village residents attending the community spaces for a new purpose.

43 new or improved income-generating community assets

Generating sustainable income to support community activities and build resilience was a focus of a number of projects, with some explicitly seeking to reduce dependence on statutory authorities.

These activities spanned a variety of areas of enterprise, including:

- Food cultivation and distribution (particularly community growing and access to local markets)
- Culture and leisure activities (including enhanced sports facilities, nature pursuits and festivals)
- Infrastructure to support residents and visitors, whilst generating funds for the community (e.g. meeting spaces, storage facilities for clubs and activities or car parks to support access and dwelling time in areas of commerce).

54 new tourism assets or experiences

Several rural communities highlighted an increase in local tourism following the Covid-19 pandemic, and had identified an opportunity to expand their tourist offer – both for new visitors for the area, and to increase their reach to those who may only be able to ‘visit’ digitally. These assets and experiences also demonstrated innovation in form, and included new static (e.g. visitor information material, interpretation board and signage), activity-based (walks, trails, hikes) and digital (e.g. podcasts, virtual tours) assets/experiences for their communities. For example, Fair Isle Marine Research Organisation (FIMRO) produced a virtual tour of Fair Isle and its Marine Protected Area, using drone videography and local writers/narrators. [The tour is available to view on YouTube.](#)

PROJECT EXAMPLES

Falkland Stewardship

Trust explored different ownership/stewardship models for the future of the Estate and their community.

Urras Oighreachd

Ghabhsainn rerouted and upgraded the Heritage Trail linking Ness and Tolsta on the Isle of Lewis, installing digital interpretation boards for the first time.

Yetholm Community Shop

completed the community purchase of the village shop and Post Office, creating new volunteer positions to facilitate greater community engagement and developing a sustainable business model.

Annan Town History

Group met with four successful community initiatives in Dumfries & Galloway to learn from their experiences, developing recommendations for their own town development project.

Colintraive & Glendaruel Development Trust

installed local food vending machines and associated business model. ‘The Larder’ will provide 24h access to food from local suppliers.



Outcome 2: Building connections with new partners

People and partnerships are the core of any rural community. Many Rural Communities Ideas into Action projects focused directly on building connections, capacity and comfort for people (and particularly vulnerable groups) in their area.

295 partnerships established

RCIA funding typically provided the means and motivation to initiate new partnerships, many of which are now early-stage or active:

- Between rural communities with shared geographies or challenges/opportunities which enabled them to apply shared learning more efficiently (e.g. villages with shared interests under a Community Plan).
- Between community groups and local service providers which enabled them to expand their activities to new participants. (e.g. schools and colleges, community centres).
- Between community groups and local, national or internationally-strategic professional organisations and suppliers which built the legitimacy and resilience of their activities. (e.g. Health & Social Care partnerships, local Councils for Voluntary Organisations, UNESCO biosphere reserve in Canada).

640 events/workshops held

Events, spanning community festivals, consultations, café meetings, led walks and structured workshops took place, both in-person and online. This figure includes one organisation who hosted 240 workshops across 9 different hubs through a diverse programme of activities delivered in partnership with 18 associate organisations.

1077 undertook training & 132 qualifications awarded

Training was often delivered as both a means and output of meaningful engagement with community members, responding to previously established demand. Although formal learning was not an explicit aim of this fund, some projects hosted or provided accredited training for members of their community, with positive implications for employment opportunities and knowledge retention these rural areas.

2259 participants with improved wellbeing

Several projects directly supported people to cope with the impacts and implications of the Covid-19 pandemic, whilst others responded to ongoing wellbeing challenges in their community (particularly relating to carers of neurodiverse people). Although it is difficult to ascertain wellbeing impact in this short timescale, projects cited increasing participation and engagement, reduced loneliness and social isolation, and feedback from participants.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

North Queensferry Community Trust formed a Harbour Management Trust with the local Rowing Club, Boat Club and Sea Kayaking Club to source resources, undertake collaborative volunteer work and develop income generation opportunities.

Live Learn Earn delivered the R-evolve mobile workshops on metal working to 7 schools in the Scottish Borders, partnering with Directing the Young Workforce and Community Learning & Development – increasing access to these facilities and developing practical skills.

Valleyfield Community Club worked with their local Home-Start support service to transform their toilet facilities to accommodate a baby changing unit and create more opportunities for family-based events.

East Fife Sports Council worked with 4 local and regional partners to qualify young people in swim teaching and lifeguarding – increasing employability and establishing Cupar Sports Centre as a training hub.



Outcome 3: Tackling a priority need

One core principle of CLLD is the concept that communities are best placed to identify and develop the solutions to meeting their own needs. Projects funded under this outcome demonstrated the clear need for their activities, justified through evidence of demand from their communities, previous projects or other external sources.

29 technical or feasibility studies undertaken

Although many community-led organisations have the capacity to deliver CLLD projects themselves, there are some activities which require specialist expertise or technical skill. Technical/feasibility studies undertaken through RCIA funding ranged from building site ground work investigations, to assessing the potential for community renewable energy generation, and feasibility research into the delivery of a new service or assessment of housing demand and supply.

33 improved facilities for disabled people

Some projects identified a need for their community to widen access to existing facilities, with a particular focus on increasing physical accessibility and expanding services for disabled people. These included the installation of ramps and landscaping to prevent falls, the creation disabled toilets and disabled parking bays, as well as the initiation of parent/carer and child groups for children with disabilities to enable peer support.

11 e-charging points installed

One theme across a number of projects was the increasing demand and opportunity for charging points for electric vehicles and bicycles. Some projects approached this as an opportunity to reduce their community's reliance on fossil fuels and support the uptake of EVs, whilst others saw it as part of their offer to visitors (providing a stopping point as part of a larger rural journey, enabling visitors to spend time and money in the local village). A number of the previously mentioned feasibility studies also included the development of further e-charging points.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

Islay Energy Trust enabled local contractors to undertake the necessary training and gain the qualifications required to register as accredited installers of Air Source Heat Pumps, Ground Source Heat Pumps and Solar Panel renewables: creating new employment opportunities and reducing installation costs for local people.

Perth Autism Support built a network of support in rural Perth & Kinross, expanding their work for autistic young people and their carers and overcoming the challenges of social isolation in rural locations.

Colinsburgh Community Trust launched their Community Café & Fridge initiative: diverting food waste from supermarkets to local families struggling with food poverty, whilst creating a social meeting point without stigma.

The Ayrshire Hospice developed a virtual Day Services platform for patients and families living with a life limiting illness, particularly supporting those in digital poverty.



Outcome 4: Evidence, insights and learning to inform future rural policy

Throughout the delivery of the RCIA fund, there was great interest from portfolio organisations to contribute to the wider body of knowledge on rural policy and Community-Led Local Development in Scotland. A number of projects explicitly focused on contributing to the evidence base for this work.

52 pilot projects undertaken

Pilot projects seek to trial an idea or approach for the first time in an area or community, with the resulting insights used to inform future projects or policy. Although innovation in delivery was present in all RCIA projects, these pilot projects specifically took a participatory action-research approach, with some enlisting external evaluation support to better understand and evaluate their activities, or undertaking similar activities in different areas to A/B test results. Pilots undertaken included testing new forms of woodland management; the introduction of new food delivery services; the best forms of integration support for recent refugees and migrants; and how a creative placemaking approach could support under-represented groups in community planning.

30 community strategies / plans developed

Some projects focused their activities on new forms of building community engagement and consensus on key local decisions - creating a strong foundation for ongoing CLLD, and producing plans for the future. These often contributed to wider regional master plans, or sought to align with previous local development strategies. Some projects brought together a number of community groups around a common theme (e.g. climate action) for the first time.

33 research projects completed

These projects typically explored the theoretical application of their idea, bringing together expert knowledge or surveys, interviews and other data to inform a final report. Often, they were motivated by a lack of information on the subject (e.g. a community business idea) or a noted gap in existing literature (e.g. food poverty in their area).

125 creative outputs produced

Creativity featured alongside innovation in many projects, with a small number also producing creative outputs as part of their project activities. These included short films, images, podcasts, interactive websites, decorative garden designs and multi-sensory resource boxes.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

Tide (Together in Dementia Everyday) co-produced a survey and analysis with rural carers to explore the personal experiences and specific challenges of caring for people with dementia in rural areas.

Voluntary Action Orkney undertook research, a community consultation and produced recommendation for the Orkney Food Dignity Working Group to understand income maximization, cash-first responses and early intervention opportunities.

The Southern Uplands Partnership piloted 'Recharge in Nature': researching the existing local EV car & bike recharging network, raising awareness of the Elektrek Explorer App, and exploring businesses interested in being part of the programme.

Wester Ross Biosphere hosted experts from Quebec to learn about their successful entrepreneurial model for managing their UNESCO Biosphere and explore how this could be applied in Wester Ross.

Testing Change: Project Learning

Across the portfolio of funded projects, there were a number of shared experiences around the value, impact and challenges of implementing these new approaches to Community-Led Local Development.

The value of piloting new ideas

Many organisations found the fund aim of ‘testing new ideas/approaches’ to be particularly useful for their work. The reasons for this varied: for some it helped to build the evidence base for future development or confirmed anecdotal reports in the community; for others it helped them assess how feasible a new service or development would be (some being affirmed, some dissuaded or leading to adapted plans). In helping to explore *new* ideas, it was possible to identify *good* ideas.

“Overall we have learned that this is a model with huge potential for delivery across Scotland.”

Live Learn Earn CIC

“Though we found that activities that work in towns also work in rural settings, the logistics, planning, preparation and resourcing required to meet needs is more complex.”

Fife International Forum

“This work has moved us from the “wouldn't it be great if someday we did something” stage to the “Here is what we need to do next.”

Alyth Development Trust

Responding to community need motivates further engagement

A critical outcome of CLLD is that communities are empowered to tackle their own, local challenges. Funded organisations highlighted how their communities responded to the investment of the RCIA grants with enthusiasm, often leading to expanded engagement, participation and reward.

“Our project was based on a real need identified by our community. We found that this is a compelling motivating factor for community members in making their own contributions in terms of making their voice heard and financial donations.”

Bornish Community Council

“Obviously a project like this takes a lot of work from volunteers, but the satisfaction of being able to tackle an issue that has been growing in our area for several years is huge.”

Avoch and Killen Community Council

“We have learned that the essence of success is associated with engagement with the local community and building up a healthy contingent of volunteers.”

Annan the History Town Group



Project images from Wester Ross UNESCO Biosphere, Scottish Canoe Association and Tasga Community Gardens

Balancing volunteer-led initiatives and a need for specialist skills

Some organisations funded by the Rural Communities Ideas into Action fund were very small and relatively inexperienced in project design (for around 20%, this was their first ever grant); other organisations were on the precipice of a step change in their activity (for example, taking ownership of a community space or undertaking a building project). Many relied on volunteers for much of their project delivery, and although they highlighted the benefits of this, they also reported learning around recognising the need for professional support at this stage in their development – either for project management or for specialist advice relevant to their activity.

“A key lesson for us was how important it is to have professional support. Having experienced professionals available has been a huge benefit to our rangers.”

Loch Ken Trust

“What did become evident was that for a project of this scale volunteers could not manage this on their own, and a project manager was required to steer, plan and support the volunteers.”

Tweedsmuir Community Company

“Each stage in the development of a community-led housing project entails a much higher degree of technical knowledge and expertise than the previous one.”

Hope Co-Housing CIC

However, Voluntary Action Orkney also highlighted the need to recognise and address the power dynamics which are created by bringing in external support: *“By consciously challenging and dismantling the hierarchy between professionals and experts by experiences, we saw more open and perceptive insights from all participants”*.

The need for expansive, accessible community engagement

Although funded organisations sufficiently demonstrated how their projects were community-led at the application stage, many highlighted how delivering their activities enhanced their awareness and skills around community engagement. In particular, the need to design more inclusive forms of community engagement, particularly when working with disadvantaged or often-excluded groups. Several organisations cited particular learnings around using social media (particularly Facebook) to widen their community engagement efforts, whilst also recognising ongoing challenges of digital exclusion.

“Being able to provide travel expenses, carer expenses, refreshments, programme materials as well as the resources needed to carry out the observed practice activity as part of the training is vital to enable people to participate ... We need to assess what we do and how we do it to ensure we factor in equity and social justice in terms of poverty and inequality and remove barriers to participate.”

The Hub Dumfries and Galloway

“Working with elderly audiences can require clear and concise language (and avoidance of jargon), consideration of visuals e.g. font size, the power of reminiscing to stimulate engagement, accommodating variation in motor skills, adaptation of activities for those who cannot go outdoors, engaging all of the senses where some individuals may be sensory impaired and offering options and variations within the resources created.”

Scottish Seabird Centre

“Community engagement takes time. People do not join in with a new narrative at the same pace - people may lead busy lives and feel they do not have time for issues outside of their home-life. Or people may have a slower pace of life and it takes time for them to understand all the aspects involved in community development.”

Paic Area Forum

The ongoing impact of Covid-19 in rural communities

Project delivery took place between December 2021 and March 2022, which included the period when the Covid-19 Omicron variant led to a surge in reported cases. Several projects noted the social and economic implications of the virus on their project activity, particularly highlighting staff, volunteer and support service personnel absences as a barrier to their delivery. Others commented on how Covid-19 had impacted their approach to community engagement, leading to rapid and ongoing adaptation to changing conditions, restrictions and comfort levels.

“The pandemic has left many people feeling vulnerable, isolated and very unsure of their own capacity to decide what is safe... Every time there is another spike, it is just as dangerous for many people. It is essential to approach every engagement with a completely blank sheet - just because being around (potentially infected) kids felt safe to one person, it may be deeply alarming to another.”

Ullapool Sea Savers

“We learnt that it is hard to develop strong engagement at a time of pandemic when businesses are struggling to survive.”

The Southern Uplands Partnership

“It has proved very difficult to gather enough volunteers to erect [our marquee] owing to the recent spate of Covid cases within the community.”

Taigh Dhonnchaidh

Short delivery timeframes challenge even well-prepared communities

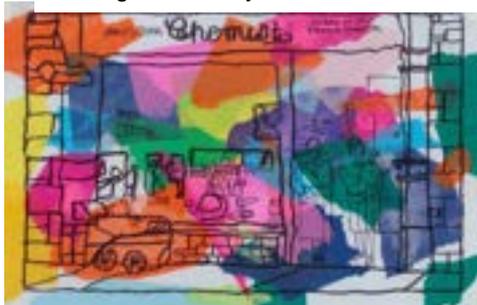
63% of organisations identified the short delivery timeframe (December 2021 – March 2022) as their biggest challenge to delivery. Many particularly commented on the stress and pressure created for community-led projects. This was heightened by the Christmas/New Year period being a difficult time to maintain delivery momentum, challenging weather conditions/storms affecting travel and outdoor activities (particularly in more remote rural locations), and the knock-on challenges of external delays or unexpected changes (common in new and innovative activities).

The impact of the Local Authority on small, community-led projects

Delays to Local Authority planning decisions, outwith the control of the funded organisations, led to standstill in a number of projects. Due the short delivery timeframe of the funding, these delays created a significant risk to the project (e.g. one Planning Committee only met every 2 months).

“It was hoped that a more proactive partnership with the planning department would have been achieved through this project, however, this has not been the case. Taking this forward for other projects, evaluators should note that communication between local groups and planners must improve if community projects are to work.”

Arisaig Community Trust



Project images from Arts Inc CIC, Hope Co-Housing CIC and KPT Development Trust

Stories and Case Studies

The breadth of ideas explored and activities undertaken across the 120 projects undertaken through the Rural Communities Ideas into Action fund is vast. These stories and case studies provide a small insight into the depth and impact of this work, and the people and communities it has supported.

Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust's 'Eigg Voices' project sought to create a podcast series to raise awareness of Eigg islanders' way of life to encourage sustainable tourism.

"Eigg attracts many journalists, photographers, film makers and bloggers who share their experience of exploring Eigg, the people they meet, and the impact it has on them. But sometimes it feels like we're not in there, that the story is their version of us, and not ours.

The podcast project has enabled us to create a new way of sharing what life on Eigg is like: to take control of the narrative and show what's important to us, whilst also providing people who don't live here with a more authentic picture of Eigg: the good, the bad and the challenging. We want to use the podcasts as part of a re-launched Friends of Eigg initiative enabling people who want to support Eigg's future development to receive something in return. The podcasts will be available free to all, but subscribers to the Friends of Eigg initiative will get additional benefits and opportunities to engage with what is happening on the island. The podcasts and the contribution it will make to an ongoing subscription series will have a lasting impact, but so too will the new skills learned to create them.

From interviewing to recording, production to promotion, and the through line from planning a podcast to taking a financial subscription for it and creating a Friend of Eigg Initiative has been interesting and valuable."

Yetholm Community Shop Redevelopment sought to repair and refurbish a local shop to support a community-owned business and develop economic and social opportunities.

"The COVID pandemic highlighted the importance of community centred resilience initiatives. Two members of our management committee were also heavily involved in the Yetholm community resilience effort. These resources were vital to the community while navigating the restrictions imposed as a result of the pandemic (e.g. delivery of prescriptions and food packages, but also acting as the "eyes" of the community and as a "good neighbour", checking up on customers and known vulnerable members of the community).

The community ownership model has provided the opportunity to expand on this approach to enshrine our community owned shop as the hub of our community resilience response. During the pandemic, food deliveries were made to individuals who were sheltering, and this has been continued for community members who are more vulnerable/isolated, or who may have mobility challenges. As we look to expand our volunteer bases, we will continue to seek further opportunities to expand this community resiliency effort.

As a rural remote community, we are also not infrequently exposed to severe weather events which can sometimes cut off our community for several days; strengthening the role of the shop as a core part of our resilience response not only allows us to support the community, but also increases the sense of pride in, and importance of, the shop which in turn helps our ability to increase our community engagement, both through volunteers and trade."

FEAT Trading CIC's activities in Silverburn Park included creating a Visitor Development Officer post to engage with Park visitors and gather intelligence to enable the Park to meet the needs and demands of the community.

"Part of the work undertaken by the Visitor Development Officer was to explore ideas for improving existing partnerships and generate ideas and leads for new potential partnerships. This included ways to work with local businesses, social enterprises and voluntary groups to develop opportunities for benefit to the rural community.

One emerging partnership is with "Wild Fife Babies and Bairns". A local sole trader business, Wild Fife Babies and Bairns (WFBB) has started to run weekly sessions in the Park for parents and toddler groups. After organising open-air sessions in a variety of locations during lock-down, WFBB has now partnered with Silverburn Park to make Silverburn the main base for the group with regular sessions held at Silverburn. There are 3 different age groups - Acorns (3-18 months), Fox Cubs (18-36 months) and Squirrels (c.4 year olds.) The Groups are fun and educational, encouraging children to interact with nature. This can involve walks, nature based crafts, outdoor activities with exploration of the natural surroundings. As well as providing a safe and secure environment, the community values of the Park are important to WFBB's founder, Hollie. She sees the partnership developing over time with opportunities to include some of the skills and experience of the growing cadre of Silverburn volunteers in sessions, as well as being able to encourage more direct experiences in the Park e.g. active gardening. There is also potential to offer sessions for campsite visitors.

For Silverburn, WFBB introduces a whole new generation of the local community to the Park and will help to foster a culture of inclusion and engagement. It is also part of helping to stimulate the local economy by working with local businesses and bringing income to the Park through spend in the café. Discussions with WFBB also helped to spark a new range of ideas for partnership development with other organisations, in particular local exercise and craft groups , with some of these ideas already in the course of follow-up. They are also delighted with the new introduction of baby-changing facilities in the Park thanks to this funding!"

The Whithorn Trust hosted "Skills sabbaticals" for young people to access advanced training which may not be available locally, and the purchase of specialised tools which they will need to progress further in their chosen crafts.

"Chris, now aged 25, came to us as an uncertain young man, whose nervousness sometimes gave him a facial tic. He suffers from dyspraxia, and despite a passion for woodworking, he had been thrown out of a job for being 'too slow' and had begun to doubt his abilities and his choice of a trade he was passionate about. He had been unemployed for two years before becoming a participant in the project. Chris chose to join in all the workshops (from leadwork to stone carving) offered through the RCIA funding (even ones chosen by others, just to support the team) and surprised us by offering to take minibus driver training so that he could assist our trainer with sharing driving of the crew to jobs and training.

Chris said : "When I lost my apprenticeship, it made me feel really low. This job is much better, it's about craftsmanship, not speed and the tutor, Shaun, is really patient and helps me with the structure of each activity or exercise." One of the things Chris commented on as a positive benefit from being on our training courses was the freedom which a salary gave him to be able to do "normal" things like go to the cinema, afford the fuel and not avoid it on grounds of cost. However, he has gone much further than this.

Chris has revealed a great love of the Viking period, one which is well represented at Whithorn. This enthusiasm has infected the rest of the team with an interest in Viking objects and history. Led by Chris, they proposed to us to create a Viking boat, inspired by last summer's work on a prehistoric logboat. Chris created a powerful essay, arguing for the boatbuilding project, which he presented to the Trust, later commenting that taking this step made him nervous. We were amazed by the fluent essay he presented and put his case to other funders, arguing that this would take woodworking skills to a new level.

Using the RCIA funding, the team agreed not only to increase their hewing skills, but to visit the Clyde and meet traditional boatbuilders, and to purchase a brand new bandsaw from Axminster, which will enable them to slice fine planks from green timber (larch and oak), also purchased through the RCIA grant. We are now in touch with leading traditional boatbuilders across Scotland as well as local experts and the team have chosen a boat of Norse heritage, which they will now be able to build over this summer.



Arran Eco Savvy Community piloted a zero-waste 'pop-up' café and Eco Hub in various location around their island

"We spoke with an attendee-turned-volunteer, Helen, about her thoughts on the Zero Waste Cafe. Here is what she had to say:

I recently retired as an allied health care worker, which was hastened by the recent pandemic and finally decided to make the permanent move to the Isle of Arran. I have always been interested in environmental matters, especially reducing food waste.

I thought that going to the Zero Waste Cafe would be an ideal opportunity/venue to meet other people in the community, have a cup of tea and sample some lovely home baking and also the chance to pick up some food staples e.g rice.

I saw the opportunity to give some of my time to volunteer at the Zero Waste Cafe, to help in the overall scheme of reducing food waste, a cause which I want to encourage. [The Zero Waste Cafe] is a real focal point for the community and supports the redistribution of food that can be still utilised, otherwise this food may have gone to landfill. It's giving the community the chance to socialise, exchange ideas, e.g recipes, that make use of food from Food Share.

In these times of the rising cost of living, especially living on this island, the Food Share may help to reduce the weekly food bill and provide value for money. The Zero Waste Cafe is also a social venue, especially as we are no longer in the restrictions of the pandemic, and the community is coming together again. It's non-judgmental!"

Zero Waste Café pilot, Arran Eco Savvy, Argyll & Bute

8 NEWS

The Arran Banner
Friday 18 March 2022

Eco Savvy launches Zero Waste Café initiative

Eco Savvy launched its Zero Waste Café initiative at St Mollo's church hall in Shiskine last week where those attending were treated to a warming lunch and an innovative shopping experience.

Supporters who ventured out on a stormy day last Wednesday were rewarded with warm lentil soup, rustic bread, bagels, and tea and coffee.

On offer, for those looking to fill up their own containers utilising no plastic packaging, were red lentils, leek, onion, white rice, macaroni, pasta and white beans, all dispensed from zero waste dispensers.

Those looking to stock up on some local produce were able to purchase kale and cabbages from Clachan Farm, as well as mixed kale which was donated by a Lamlash grower.

The purpose of the Zero Waste Café is to help get more

local, seasonal, affordable produce to people, support local growers, reduce food waste and packaging, reduce the need for travel, help the environment and to celebrate food and community.

The initiative was made possible through funding and support from Inspiring Scotland, North Ayrshire Council and the National Lottery.

'It was wonderful to see so many folk there'

Eco Savvy sustainable food co-ordinator Jess Wallace said: "The first Zero Waste Café was a great success and it was wonderful to see so many folk there. We look forward to the project growing and facilitating the increased availability of local produce, reduced packaging and supporting people in making sustainable

food choices. Thank you to our lovely volunteers who helped to run the café and to all who came."

In addition to hosting the event, Eco Savvy volunteers also transported in their electric vehicles, surplus frozen goods which were left over from the North Ayrshire Council's Covid response, and filled up the church's charitable freezer with food from the Eco Savvy and Co-op Food Share partnership.

The next Zero Waste Café will take place in Shiskine on Wednesday March 23, and Lochranza and Castrol Village Hall on Tuesday March 29.

Eco Savvy has issued an open invitation to everyone to go along and discover the experience. They are also keen to get feedback and suggestions from locals about what they would like to see at the Zero Waste Café in the future.



Project development officer Ruth McClaren and sustainable food coordinator, Jess Wallace, at the Zero Waste Café at St Mollo's Church in Shiskine.

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCE MARCH 2022 CLOSING DATE FOR AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP INCENTIVE

Arrange your home survey today to make sure you do not miss out

"My house is now always warm and cosy and my bills have halved!"
"I no longer worry about the cost of heating my home in the winter."
"I have been delighted with the service provided by T N Murray. From initial contact they were friendly, helpful and professional. The staff were all really good: no mask, tidy installation and they did the job in less than two days!"

• Funding available from both the UK

In addition to the zero waste products and produce on offer, visitors could also enjoy an environmentally friendly and hearty meal at the event.

Insights and Recommendations

As well as learning at a project level, there are a number of insights and recommendations for the future emerging at a fund level.

Extend delivery timeframes to facilitate genuine CLLD

The short timescale of the RCIA fund dominated project application, delivery, experience and feedback. The 16-week delivery window made it difficult for projects to overcome unexpected public health, supply chain and planning challenges. In addition, it likely effected the demography and quality of applications, with only organisations with 'ready to go' projects able to confidently apply and deliver in the timeframe available. This means that lower-capacity communities, or those which required longer-term community engagement and trust-building were unlikely to apply for, receive or successfully deliver a funded project.

Facilitate peer support for communities of geography and interest

Throughout the delivery of the RCIA fund, the value of peer connection and support was highlighted as a key support for community-led organisations, particularly those who identified themselves as remote or expected to be working in isolation. Co-ordinated fund management at a national level facilitated connections based on geography (cross-regional, but also based on landscape, e.g. coastal geographies), as well as project theme (e.g. climate action) and commonality of challenge (e.g. shared material sourcing).

Provide funding to pilot new ideas to manage risk and build capacity

In providing funding with the explicit opportunity to explore new ideas, community-led organisations were able to test assumptions or initiate new activities. This less risk-averse approach built confidence in these communities and increased capacity for future project delivery or the expansion of successful projects.

Trossachs Wellbeing Drumming Project, Shoshin Taiko Dojo, Forth Valley & Lomond



Maintain a small grant programme to expand access to CLLD funding

A significant number of RCIA portfolio organisations receiving small grants (up to £3,000) had either never applied for grant funding before, or were relatively inexperienced in applying for funding for their community-led projects. Many of these organisations would not have had the capacity or opportunity to apply for previous LEADER funding, particularly as the scale of the funding amount and administrative commitment were large. Offering smaller grants of up to £10,000 would continue to create more opportunities for newly-established or small-scale community-led organisations whilst expanding in scale and scope.

Use a two-stage application to manage expectations and resource

It is a significant time commitment for a community-led and/or volunteer-led organisation to prepare a full funding application without a clear expectation of the likelihood of their success in a competitive process. One way to address this would be to deliver future CLLD funding through a two-stage application process: an open call for short expressions of interest (which would confirm eligibility and outline a proposed project), with successful organisations latterly invited to prepare a full application. Although requiring more resource for fund management and assessment, project proposals are likely to be of higher quality and more efficient to complete for proposing organisations.

Provide a range of support that reflects organisational capacity

Within the RCIA portfolio, there are a range of community-led organisations. Those of higher capacity typically have a highly educated board, volunteer and/or staff team, are experienced in writing funding applications, have evidence of prior project delivery and impact, and are knowledgeable of how to relate their activities to wider national policy and regional strategy. Those of lower capacity tend to be less experienced, have less resource and fewer past examples of project delivery – but this does not mean that their projects are of lower value or are less suitable for funding. Fund management could be tailored or targeted to provide more supported application, assessment and project delivery for lower-capacity organisations.

Use portfolio ambitions to inform future fund design

At the time of project reporting, some projects were still identifying the next steps for their work. However, there were some emerging themes among the stated future plans, which could inform thematic distribution or design of future CLLD funds:

- Launching and promoting new services/resources created through RCIA-funded work
- Securing additional funding for the next stage of capital build projects
- Formalising and expanding pilot projects to new areas and new partners
- Taking forward the recommendations of technical/feasibility studies and research projects
- Resourcing and recruiting for project coordination support for longer-term sustainable delivery of new services.

North Queensferry Community Trust, Fife



Inspiring Scotland's Support

Inspiring Scotland's core approach is based around offering support, coaching and constructive challenge to our portfolio organisations to help them be their best for their communities.



Strengthening Organisations and Communities

- Ongoing email correspondence with 120 projects responding to queries and needs.
- Undertook interim progress calls with 57 large projects to make connections and mitigate emerging risks.
- Held 29 additional bespoke 1:1 support calls to portfolio organisations, including to facilitate project development & delivery
- Hosted 'Learning from evaluation' event hosted with Scottish Government & SRUC to demonstrate the need for, and impact of, high quality evaluation.



Support, Develop and Connect people

- Hosted 'Peer connection & networking' event with facilitated pairing and breakout rooms specific to thematic policy areas to broker cross-regional learning.
- Facilitated ongoing relationships through project introductions and use of shared portfolio noticeboard.
- Curation of [#RCIAfund Twitter 'moment'](#) to highlight and amplify projects through additional networks.
- Developed & distributed a comprehensive Welcome Pack and Evaluation guidance to support community organisations new to grant funding.



Making Money Go Further

- Provided pro-bono specialist support through the Inspiring Scotland Specialist Volunteer Network (SVN) on topics including HR & Employment Law; Fundraising; Strategic Communications and Legal Expertise and Mentoring.
- Worked collaboratively with other Funds managed by Inspiring Scotland (Island Communities Fund and Healthy Islands Fund) to share insights and reduce administration for organisations concurrently supported by more than one Fund.



Encourage New Ideas

- Provided feedback to all unsuccessful applicants, including specific individual feedback for unsuccessful small grant applicants – targeting those most inexperienced in funding applications.
- Hosted two portfolio welcome events using Mentimeter: enabling mass participation from portfolio organisations and creativity in digital delivery.



Inform and influence

- Produced an insights paper on the shared learning from the rural & islands funds managed by Inspiring Scotland
- Collaborated with Scotland's Rural College on their external evaluation of the Rural Communities Testing Change programme, providing data and analysis.
- Presented the emerging results of the RCIA fund to Local Action Group Chairs and Scottish Leader Staff Group.
- Developed and designed an interactive 'RCIA learning map' to enable wider sharing of the outputs and impact of the Fund.

Beneficiary experience and feedback

Although the Rural Communities Ideas into Action Fund sought to enable communities to test new approaches to Community-Led Local Development, the form of delivering this funding was also a new approach in itself (testing an alternative approach to CLLD funding following the conclusion of the LEADER programme). Throughout the process, applicant and funded organisations have provided feedback on their experience of the process.

The application process

Following the deadline for applications, all applicant organisations were asked for their feedback on the process. From the responses (which include successful and unsuccessful applicants):

- 98% found the questions on the application form ‘very clear’ or ‘clear’.
- 96% found the nature of the application questions proportionate for the funding
- 89% used the fund guidance to complete their application and 71% used the associated ‘Frequently Asked Questions’.
- 100% found submitting the application form to be ‘very easy’ or ‘easy’.
- 0% experienced barriers in accessing the application form.

There were a small number of constructive comments, which suggested a two-stage application approach (i.e. Expressions of Interest, followed by invited applications), Word document application versions and longer lead times for making an application.

“The application form was well laid out and easy to use.”

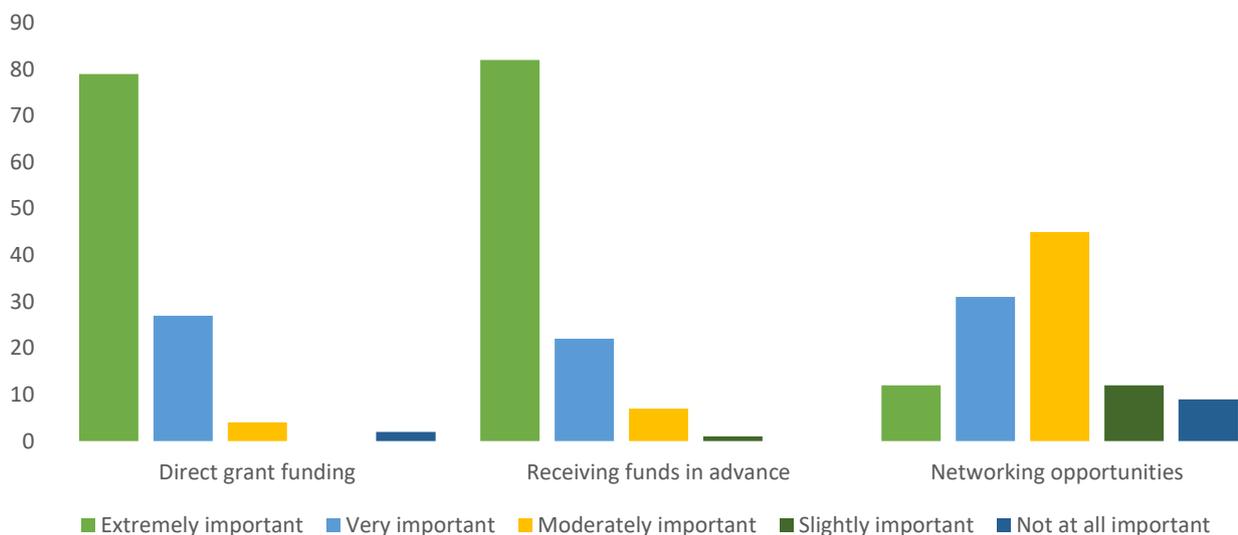
“The funding application is very lengthy with this being the first stage and you are never sure if this will be successful so you do spend a long time preparing the form for a possibility of being rejected.... I like the EOI way of the initial assessment being a brief outline of the project followed by a brief conversation then a full blown application to be completed.”

“We were expecting the application to be difficult in comparison to other Government funding we had applied to previously but were pleasantly surprised. It was still challenging as all applications are but also straight forward and again the team were really good.”

“We heard about the fund just a couple of days before due date but the questions were easy to answer and relevant so we were able to submit an application despite our late start.”

Project delivery

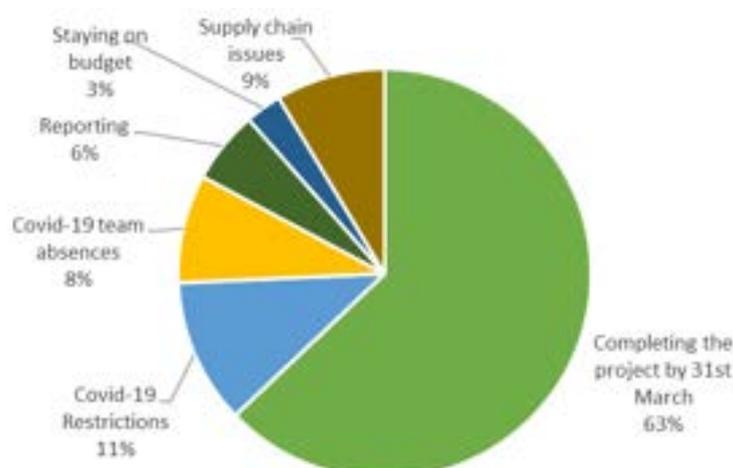
There were a number of elements of the Rural Communities Ideas into Action fund management which differed from previous forms of CLLD funding in Scotland. During the final evaluation report, projects were asked about how important they felt specific aspects of fund delivery were to the success of their project. Responses indicate that distributing grant funding directly to community organisations (rather than through an intermediary body) and receiving funds in advance (rather than claiming funds in arrears, in order to support good cash flow for small organisations) were most important for these organisations. Peer networking was seen as less critical, but was still 'extremely important', 'very important' or 'moderately important' for 79% of projects.



It is common for community-led projects to experience some challenge to their project delivery. Given the less risk-averse approach to CLLD funding trialled through this RCIA Fund, these are of particular interest when considering how to make CLLD more accessible in the future. Some of these challenges are the result of external factors beyond their control (e.g. the surge of the Omicron Covid-19 variant in winter 2021/22) and some are caused by internal factors (e.g. inexperience in project delivery).

When asked 'what was your biggest challenge when delivering your project?' a significant number of organisations (63%) stated that their main challenge was completing the project by the fund conclusion date of 31 March 2022. This was evidenced in the portfolio with a number of projects experiencing delays or constraints which necessitated delivery beyond the end of the financial year, adapted delivery plans or adjustments in scope.

It is important to note that applicants were assessed on criteria that included consideration of whether their project was feasible to deliver by 31 March 2022. Those in the funded portfolio were therefore the strongest of the applicant group, and had greatest capacity to deliver their projects in an exceptionally short time frame (16 weeks / less than 4 months). More simple projects (purchasing materials/equipment or commissioning research) were easier to deliver in the timeframe. As well as being a barrier to project delivery, this was likely also a barrier to application, with less experienced organisations less likely to be able to design and deliver a project in this timescale.



The impact of Inspiring Scotland

As the fund manager for the Rural Communities Ideas into Action fund, Inspiring Scotland worked closely with portfolio organisations. Funded organisations had dedicated support from a Fund Manager (Erica Judge) and Performance and Impact Advisor (Catriona Patterson), with additional support from the wider Inspiring Scotland team and Specialist Volunteer Network.

When asked for feedback on Inspiring Scotland’s support, funding organisations were generally very positive about the approach and expertise provided:

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Very poor</i>
<i>Flexibility</i>	66%	31%	2%	1%	0%
<i>Communication</i>	73%	25%	2%	0%	0%
<i>Accessibility</i>	65%	32%	3%	0%	0%
<i>Specialist knowledge</i>	49%	45%	6%	0%	0%
<i>Understanding your needs</i>	59%	37%	4%	0%	0%

Aggregated across all 5 areas, 96% of portfolio organisations reported Inspiring Scotland’s support as ‘Excellent’ or ‘Good’ across all categories.

“I have never worked with a group who were so efficient, so effective and so interested in seeing that we were successful first and foremost. It has been a real pleasure.”

Alyth Development Trust

“Genuinely, the approach of Inspiring Scotland to managing and distributing Government funding is a breath of fresh air. The flexible, pragmatic and sensible approach is welcome. Inspiring Scotland is focussed more on the destination and less on the journey!”

Mull and Iona Community Trust

“We have been very pleased overall with the level of support and guidance which the group has received from Inspiring Scotland. The entire funding process allowed us to be guided and supported throughout. Catriona Patterson, our designated officer was always on and prompt at replying to any queries. This efficiently also helped expedite the project at a timely pace. Personally, I have worked with many funding organisations and this is the first time there's been online support forums and the opportunity to connect with similar projects.”

KPT Development Trust

“If it wasn't for the funding and guidance from Inspiring Scotland I don't think we could have achieved what we have. It was a daunting task to start this project from scratch but with support from Erica and the excellent online workshops we have been able to focus better and make important key decisions confidently. The reference materials have also been invaluable as we review the project and look to what we can do next.”

East Fife Sports Council

“Truthfully, we've had nothing but a positive experience with Inspiring Scotland, and they have proved to be the best funding experience we've had yet.”

Colintraive & Glendaruel Development Trust

Opportunities for improvement

Inspiring Scotland is always seeking opportunities for evolving and improving fund design, process and delivery. Although the feedback on the management of the Rural Communities Ideas into Action fund was overwhelmingly positive, there were a number of ideas in response to the question ‘What could we do better in the future?’:

- Over 51% of these responses referred in some way to expanding the timescales for project delivery (mirroring the large proportion of organisations who cited delivering their project by the 31 March 2022 deadline as their ‘biggest challenge’).
- Some projects specifically referenced the delay of 4 weeks between funding awards being made and the public announcement: this impacted those projects that planned public and press engagement.
- A small number of organisations requested additional and more specific networking opportunities, including an opportunity to meet in-person.
- A small number of organisations highlighted the challenge of reflecting the nature of their project when reporting against expansive outcomes. As the portfolio included a wide scale of projects – from capital build initiatives to service delivery and research – it was challenging to provide specific reporting criteria that reflected the uniqueness of each individual project.

“Allow more time for project delivery. It is unreasonable to expect significant community engagement in such a short period and such short-termism it is not conducive to good project development or delivery.”

The Southern Uplands Partnership

“Give us more time to deliver our projects - 12 weeks was really tough! And if we hadn't managed to find that electric 9-seater when we did it would have been very challenging.”

Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust

“I expect this is outwith your control, but launching the fund a month earlier would have given us the extra time we needed to make up for bad weather. It was a very tight turnaround, but without the funding we could not have proceeded - so it fairly concentrated the mind! I have dealt with Inspiring Scotland previously, being part of the Go Play initiative in 2010, so I knew I was in safe, supportive hands that encourage community groups to strengthen and grow. Thank you - keep doing what you are doing!”

The Dornoch Area Community Interest Company

“Make funding announcements in line with the schedule set out so that arrangements can be made in time for the projects starting, including resourcing. With no news of funding being secured, resource is put onto different projects. Have the public announcement of projects in line with the awarding of funding so that projects can start properly rather than in secret. This is especially important when community input is needed.”

Community Energy Scotland

“Offering more time for completion (particularly when Christmas and New Year mean that most activities are paused) would help, especially when far-reaching impacts are involved. We could just about complete ordering of materials and equipment and fortunately managed to organise a group of winter courses - but slightly more time would have enabled us to deliver them in a less condensed way. At times, there were only days between courses before they had to travel again. Exciting but tiring!”

The Whithorn Trust

Financials

Investment by Award type and Local Action Group area

Fund investment spanned 20 Local Action Group areas:

Local Action Groups	Number of large projects	Funding awarded	Number of small projects	Funding awarded	Total number of projects	Total funding awarded
Angus	2	£54,656.14	1	£3,000.00	3	£57,656.14
Argyll & the Islands	5	£151,393.62	1	£2,076.00	6	£153,469.62
Ayrshire	2	£36,499.31	2	£6,000.00	3	£36,145.31
Cairngorms	1	£31,842.19			1	£31,842.19
Dumfries & Galloway	7	£241,992.40	8	£21,175.00	15	£263,167.40
Fife	6	£133,386.39	5	£13,039.00	11	£146,425.39
Forth Valley & Lomond	1	£48,500.00	2	£3,300.00	3	£51,800.00
Highland	14	£409,742.19	13	£33,646.00	27	£443,388.19
Kelvin Valley & Falkirk			1	£3,000.00	1	£3,000.00
Lanarkshire			1	£3,000.00	1	£3,000.00
North Aberdeenshire			1	£2,850.00	1	£2,850.00
<i>Multiple LAG areas</i>	2	£44,416.30			2	£44,416.30
Orkney	4	£105,470.42	4	£11,650.00	8	£117,120.42
Outer Hebrides	4	£98,843.89	8	£24,000.00	12	£122,843.89
Rural Perth & Kinross	3	£98,558.79	1	£3,000.00	4	£101,558.79
Scottish Borders	5	£141,176.23	4	£11,500.00	9	£152,676.23
Shetland			5	£13,300.00	5	£13,300.00
South Aberdeenshire			3	£9,000.00	3	£9,000.00
Tyne Esk			1	£3,000.00	1	£3,000.00
West Lothian			2	£5,362.00	2	£5,362.00
Grand Total	57	£1,632,938.27	63	£171,898.00	120	£1,804,836.27

Portfolio Underspend and Recommendations

Typically, underspend resulted from a reduction in external costs (e.g. reduced consultant fees, the introduction of the Young Persons' Free Bus Travel Scheme, volunteer support secured or the unavailability of some materials meaning alternatives being purchased), or external delays which prevented projects from taking place (e.g. delayed planning decisions).

The total underspend across the portfolio is £17,786.27 which represents less than 1% of the total fund investment.

Organisation	Underspend	Proposed Use of Funds
Cromarty Youth Café	£3,000	Delivery of intergenerational community project including courses in summer 2022
GCAT	£729	Delivery of Carbon Literacy training for community representative.
The Langholm Alliance	£3,739.27	Replacement of interpretation boards and website improvements to align with tourist offer developed through initial project work.
Mull and Iona Community Trust	£3,768.	Follow on development funding for technical surveys identified through feasibility report.
Street League	£10,318	Run second pilot to support young people into positive destinations, incorporating learnings from first phase in a new rural community in South Ayrshire: Maybole and surrounding villages.

