

# CASE STUDY

## SCOTTISH CANOE ASSOCIATION

Funding Amount: £48375.84

Community Led local Development - Rural Communities Into Action fund (2021/22)

### BACKGROUND

Based at Grandtully Perthshire, the Scottish Canoe Association (SCA) obtained funding from the Scottish Government's Rural Communities into Action fund as part of the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) commitment to Community Led Local Development (CLLD). The funding was awarded to improve visitor management facilities and delivered through Inspiring Scotland who supported the applicant through the process.

Below, Stuart Smith (SCA Chief Executive) shares details of the project development and lessons learned.

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project that developed and grew through consultation over several months set out to address the lack of parking and toilets at Grandtully. EV charging, e-bike charging and a bike shelter were added into scope. This led to consideration being given to active travel and commuting - leading to the provision of showers and lockers for the approximately 50 people that commute into the village each day to work at the different hotels, inns, chocolatier, post office, golf course etc.

These facilities will equally serve residents going for a run or cycling along the Rob Roy Way and holiday makers visiting the area for cycling, canoeing, white water rafting etc.

### WHAT STAGE IS THE PROJECT AT NOW?

We completed the application process, which was good, clear and appropriate for the level of funding. Nearly all the elements funded by the Scottish Governments Rural Ideas into Action (RCIA) in partnership with Inspiring Scotland were completed or committed in line with the 31st March 2022 deadline attached to the grant.



### AT A GLANCE

#### CHALLENGES

- Restricted parking
- Lack of facilities
- Poor visitor experience

#### BENEFITS

- Improved facilities
- Increased visitor traffic to local businesses



### STUART SMITH

SCA Chief Executive

“The application process was good - clear and appropriate for the level of funding.”

These were the elements of the overall site development project that could be acted upon within the timescales for the grant.

The wider building and facility development project is only just going out to tender for the works to commence in May 2023 with completion of building works in March/April 2024 in line with other funding deadlines.

## WHO WILL THE PROJECT BENEFIT AND HOW?

The facilities will provide a range of services to local residents, businesses and visitors.

### Local residents

- Parking for walking, cycling, water sports and for attending events at the village halls, recreation ground, playpark, football ground and for visiting neighbours who do not have off-road parking at their home.
- Toilets - even though the majority of residents will likely not use the toilets, the fact that they are provided means that visitors will use them and this keeps the area clean and tidy.
- Those that commute to work by bike - due to the provision of showers, lockers, e-bike chargers and secure bike storage

### Visitors

- The information board will benefit anyone arriving in the village. Because there are no clear lines of site from our car park to the rest of the village and the river, this info point is essential to orientate people and to avoid them wandering off in completely the wrong direction
- Those with e-bikes and traditional bikes are catered for by the bike maintenance point, e-bike charging stations, lockers and secure bike storage.
- The Campervan Service Point provides a location for anyone with a campervan to properly dispose of all of their rubbish/recycling/ grey water/ chemical toilet waste. We allow campervans to use our facilities for an £8 fee and this also keeps the surrounding area clean and tidy



### Local businesses

- More visitors and more business for the local establishments as visitors can park in a car park that is not attached to a particular business. This means that people can stop in the village and have a look around without having to commit to using the services of any particular business.
- The car park also takes the pressure off the car parks belonging to the businesses leading to more trade - keeping the local businesses sustainable and being able to provide services to the local community outside of the busy summer.

## WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU ENCOUNTERED DURING THIS PROJECT AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?

Rising costs for the wider project - we have raised additional funds through grants. For example, the info board was budgeted for £1,900 but the total cost including installation turned out to be close to £10,000!

We had under scoped certain elements of the project, including the size of the board required and the cost to get it designed. So, initial underscoring and not allowing enough contingency for time and money has proved a challenge.

The fact that the architect, engineer, etc were all busy on other projects - everything took a long time, from arranging the new electricity supply for EV chargers with SSE to getting the council's permission to close the road to get the new electricity cable across the road to our site. Everything took longer and cost more than planned!

## WHAT BENEFITS HAVE YOU SEEN AS A RESULT OF THE PROJECT?

So far, the 6 x EV chargers are providing residents and visitors with the ability to charge their vehicles without having to travel to either Aberfeldy (5 miles west) or Pitlochry (10 miles north).

The bike maintenance point has proved extremely popular during the summer of 2022 with the increased number of people having taken up cycling.

The information board has been designed by a local (Pitlochry) designer to include all the walks, points of interest, activities and local businesses that visitors have always asked us about previously.

The additional parking spaces have been needed by residents and visitors alike. They serve the adjacent village halls and recreation ground, playpark and football field as well as the village school allowing safe drop off and pick up of pupils.

## WHAT ADVICE COULD YOU OFFER FOR ANYONE LOOKING TO TAKE ON A SIMILAR PROJECT?

What has held the wider project back has been delays with planning permission for the major building work and also delays obtaining Building Warrant.

This is why the existing building has not yet been refurbished and the showers and lockers, that will support active travel and commuting, are not yet in place.

So, delays with the formalities of a larger building project together with contractors being busy and already committed elsewhere have been an issue.

The inflationary pressures due to the war in Ukraine has pushed up prices, making everything far more expensive than originally budgeted. Community engagement and partnership working have been great - without which we would not have put the project together or made any progress.

## FINALLY, ON REFLECTION, IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY?

Allow for inflation, allow contingency for delays and assume that architects, engineers and other specialists are all going to be extremely busy and time-pressured.

## FUNDING INFORMATION

The [Rural Communities Ideas into Action](#) (RCIA, 2021-22) funding builds on the positive legacy of the LEADER Programme funding and was part of two test of change pilots which were delivered in 2021-22 (RCIA and the 'Rural Communities Testing Change (RCTC)').

These funds jointly made £3.3 million of funding available to test future approaches to CLLD in rural and island communities in Scotland.

You can find further information about current funding availability at the Scottish Rural Network Website including a free local, online [funding search tool](#) for your charity, community group or social enterprise.

From small grants to funding for big capital projects, we can help you track down the funding you need to make a difference in your community. The Scottish Rural Network is a one-stop-shop for news and information about rural development.

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