



CARES CASE STUDY

FINDERNE DEVELOPMENT TRUST

OVERVIEW

Finderne Development Trust (FDT) was set up in 2018 to drive the sustainable rural regeneration of Finderne, a beautiful area in Moray.

After gaining community benefit funding from the developers of the Logie Wind Farm, Hill of Glaschyle Renewables LLP, to operate the Trust for 25 years, FDT used CARES funding to commission a community consultation. This looked to set out a long-term vision for Finderne and identify priority areas for regeneration and development.

Following the six-month community engagement process, FDT's 5-year Strategic Plan was launched in May 2019.



- Project: Finderne Development Trust - Community Engagement
- Location: Within the Finderne Community Council boundary, Moray
- CARES funding: £14,771
- Date of award: August 2018
- Community Benefit fund donor: Hill of Glaschyle Renewables LLP
- Related renewable energy scheme: Logie Wind Farm
- Technology: Onshore wind
- Year of fund commencement: 2018, for 25 years

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BACKGROUND

Finderne Development Trust (FDT) was formed in 2018 to act as the anchor organisation and key driver of the sustainable rural regeneration of the area of Finderne, Moray. Finderne is steeped in rural heritage and natural beauty and is home to a population of 1,090 people, residing in a number of small settlements, including Rafford, Easter Lawrenceton, Dunphail, Edinkillie, Logie, Cathay, Altyre, Burgie, Blairs, Blervie, Brodieshill, Relugas, Glenorney and Braemoray.

The communities of Finderne are stable and long-staying, but there is a lack of young people and adults between the ages of 16 and 44. A reduction in employment opportunities and housing provision means younger people are more likely to move elsewhere. With an increasingly older population, there is a growing need for access to vital services such as transport and health care.

FDT aims to bring together active members of the community to creatively address local issues and in doing so, create a social, economic, environmental, and cultural legacy which will contribute to Finderne being a sustainable and vibrant community.

The developers of the Logie Wind Farm, Hill of Glaschyle Renewables LLP, provided community benefit funding to facilitate the Trust's operation over the next 25 years. The funding was awarded subject to FDT undertaking a thorough consultation with its members and the wider Finderne community to establish a shared vision and to find out about the community's issues and challenges, aspirations and views on priority projects.

PROJECT AIMS

With funding of £14,771 from CARES, the Trust commissioned Athena Solutions to design and facilitate an extensive community engagement process that would help FDT develop a 5-year Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan would guide and support the Trust's short, medium and long-term direction and provide a framework to deliver FDT's vision and strategic aims in collaboration with its members, the wider Finderne community and other stakeholders.



PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

The community engagement process was carried out in the summer and autumn of 2018 and involved:

- A community wide postal survey
- Two community engagement events at Edinkillie Community Hall and Rafford Village Hall
- A follow up community engagement event at Logie Steading.

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168 households in Finnerne responded and the information gathered identified how people felt about Finnerne, how often people used community facilities, how they spent their social time and what made them feel safe. The survey also gathered thoughts on areas for development and potential projects.

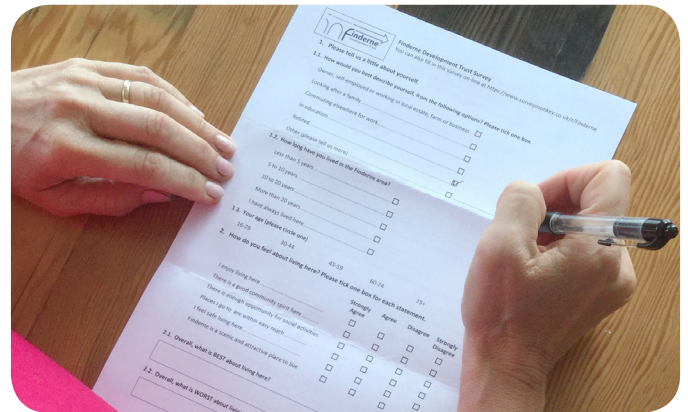
The community engagement events were well-attended and clear themes began to emerge from the findings, highlighting the challenges of rural living in Finnerne.

StrategyStory, a delivery partner of Athena Solutions, worked for several months to interview community members from all walks of life. They were asked for their views on what Finnerne needed and what the Trust could deliver.

A short video featuring local people, from young professionals to school children and retired members of the community, was produced and used to successfully launch the Trust's Strategic Plan as a way to further engage the community.

The 5-year Strategic Plan was developed and launched at an event in May 2018, attended by members, community members, partners and stakeholders.

The engagement process was also beneficial to the voluntary Board of Directors who were able to establish strong relationships with the wider community which fostered community buy-in and allowed FDT's vision to be shared and adopted.



LESSONS LEARNED

As an organisation in its infancy, it was invaluable for FDT to have the support of CARES and the benefit of its resources, such as its invitation to tender templates and evaluation matrices to guide the Trust through the tender process. This enabled FDT to contract a rural development consultant who had a deep understanding of what the Trust was trying to achieve.

However, this process was not without its challenges. Finding local rural consultants to invite to tender was difficult. Other organisations who are about to embark on the same journey could benefit from an up-to-date list of renowned rural consultants and organisations working in the field which would reduce the time needed for research.

Engaging the rural Finnerne community, which is made of several small settlements, was also a challenge. Gaining support from other local organisations was invaluable, for example the community council who were already well established in the area.

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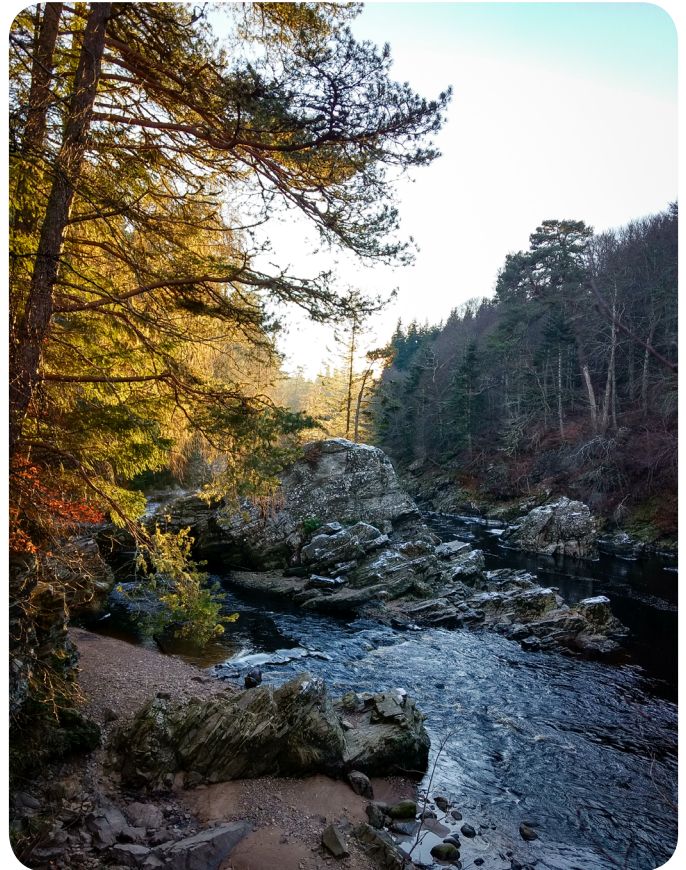
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The Trust also learned about the importance of using a variety of marketing channels to reach the community, such as door to door flyers, word of mouth and social media, and would recommend that other organisations use every method possible and go the extra mile to encourage community members to get involved. The success of the community engagement has given FDT a solid foundation for consultation on future projects.

One pitfall to be aware of is project date slippage. The final outputs of the project were delivered 4 months later than expected because of various factors.

With this experience and lessons learned, the project has given FDT confidence in taking forward its 5-year Strategic Plan.

Chris Piper, FDT's Chairman said: "Our 6-month long community engagement process has been both inspiring and challenging – taking a considerable amount of hard work from Trust Directors. The support from CARES has allowed us to set FDT off on the right foot, taking our community with us on an ambitious journey which is set to be truly exciting."



Website: www.findernedevelopmenttrust.com

To find out more about community benefits from renewable energy projects, visit www.localenergy.scot/community-benefits



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