



CARES CASE STUDY

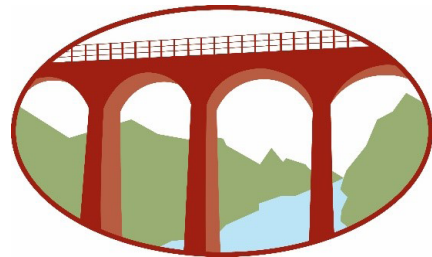
OLD LUCE COMMUNITY FUND

BACKGROUND

Old Luce is located in Wigtownshire, Dumfries and Galloway and is home to around 1300 people. The community council area covers three villages: Dunragit, Auchenmalg and Glenluce. The area is largely rural and remote with poor access to services. This presents a serious challenge for local people, particularly those who don't drive.

Like many rural areas, Glenluce has an older population with almost a quarter of residents aged over 65. The population in Dumfries and Galloway as a whole is set to see a significant decline in the numbers of young and working age people, and an increase in people of retirement age by 2020. Glenluce also suffers from unemployment, with 34% of people aged 16-74 in full time employment, compared to 38% nationally. Unemployment among young people is a significant problem as 75% of 16-24 year olds are unemployed, much higher than the national average of 30%.

With funding from CARES and support from Community Enterprise Ltd and Foundation Scotland, a community plan was developed in 2015/16 after consultation with local residents.



- Fund Name: Old Luce Community Fund
- Fund Donors: Barlockhart Moor Wind Energy Ltd, Carscreugh Renewable Energy Park Ltd, Glenchamber Wind Energy Ltd, SSE, 2020 Renewables, Greencoat and ScottishPower Renewables
- Related Renewable Energy Schemes: Artfield Fell, Balmurrie Fell, Kilgallioch, Airies, Glenchamber, Barlockhart, Carscreugh, North Rhins
- Technology: Onshore wind
- Annual Fund Value (total): £316,000
- Year of Fund commencement: 2014
- Fund Area of Benefit: Area served by Old Luce Community Council, Dumfries and Galloway
- Fund Administrator: Foundation Scotland

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This highlighted the following priorities for the area:

- **Connecting people:** Local residents value family connections and friendships and are keen to build on this, to strengthen community spirit and establish a place to come together to reduce isolation.
- **Enhancing the natural environment:** Old Luce is situated in a beautiful natural landscape which is valued by residents of all ages. The natural environment provides the main source of employment through tourism, farming and forestry. The community would like to see the natural environment preserved and access to it increased.
- **Improving the built environment:** People like living in the area but feel that Glenluce in particular has deteriorated over the years. Services have been lost, shops have closed, buildings lie empty and open spaces are lacking in development. Local people want to improve the services, facilities and aesthetic look of the area.
- **Jobs and volunteering:** The community believes there is a pressing need for more opportunities, particularly for young people to secure long term, skilled employment.

FUND ARRANGEMENTS

Before 2014, Old Luce Community Council had been accessing relatively small amounts of funding from three neighbouring wind farms - SSE Artfield Fell, SSE Balmurrie Fell and AES (now Greencoat) North Rhins. The Community Council recognised the increasing numbers of new wind farms with community benefit funds coming on stream, meaning by the end of 2018 Old Luce would be receiving community benefit from 8 different developers and wind farms with a total combined income of around £300,000 a year.

The Community Council wanted to provide a single 'one stop' access point for funding for community groups. Consolidating the funds would make sure there was robust governance and objective assessment of applications, and could allow funds to be invested for long term growth. There was also a need for professional support with fund administration, to free up volunteer Community Councillors from the day-to-day responsibility of engaging with and reporting to eight different fund providers. The Community Council also wanted decision-making to take place separately from Community Council meetings, which are open to the public and regularly attended by local press.

In 2013, Old Luce Community Council contracted Foundation Scotland to administer a bespoke single fund. A steering group of community councillors and other local residents worked with Foundation Scotland to agree the fund arrangements, and the Old Luce Community Fund launched with a community event in 2014 attended by over 150 local people.

Old Luce Community Fund is made up of 8 ring-fenced sub-funds, with a single application form, consistent application criteria and clear process for awarding funding. Decisions on awards are made by a voluntary Advisory Panel, with representatives from the Community Council and the wider community. Awards can support things like equipment costs, running costs for local groups, staff or sessional worker costs, consultations, maintenance or refurbishment of community facilities.

The single fund makes things more straightforward for applicants and the Advisory Panel. It also helps the community to have oversight of all the funding available and to plan how to use this strategically. The Fund arrangements are reviewed regularly and seen to be working well for the community.

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KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

A significant achievement for the community has been the establishment of the Old Luce Development Trust, which was set up in 2016 to deliver on the Old Luce Community Plan priorities and respond to the emerging funding opportunities. The Trust has accessed the Fund for several significant projects, including taking ownership of and re-developing some areas in the community:

- Balkail Glen, an amenity wood well used by local residents and with potential for small-scale wood fuel. The Fund supported costs to transfer ownership of the wood and develop a management plan.
- A derelict site at 21 Main Street, Glenluce, a former shop which was demolished and seen as an eyesore by local residents. The Trust has used the Fund to purchase the site and re-develop it as a small public park with seating and a noticeboard.
- Brambles, a former café in Glenluce's main street, which closed some years ago leaving the community without anywhere to meet and socialise during the day. The Fund provided match funding for a successful bid to the Scottish Land Fund and is supporting the refurbishment of the property.



LESSONS LEARNED

The Community Council's original vision of a single fund has worked well and provided a strong community-led framework for new funds to be incorporated into. Wind farm owners are pleased with the quality of decision-making and reporting, and have confidence that the funds they are donating are well-managed.

Commenting on one of the first projects delivered by Old Luce Development Trust, supported by a grant from the Fund, a spokesperson at the Trust said:

"The Back Burn path project has had a significant impact on the reputation of our organisation. All residents and visitors to the Parish will benefit from the revitalised, attractive, and safer route along the Back Burn, either through improved amenity through personal use, or by simply improving the attractiveness of our natural environment. Feedback through multiple channels has been exceptionally positive. It has shown the Trust as being an organisation that brings positive change."

The spokesperson went on to say that the Trust's experience of the grant application and award process was "very positive, with good feedback, and focused questions when clarity was required."

Website: www.foundationscotland.org.uk/oldluce and www.oldluce.org.uk

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

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