



CARRICK FUTURES

Fund Strategy

1 Purpose of this Fund Strategy

The purpose of the Carrick Futures Fund Strategy is to set out the Fund's priorities and the processes by which funding will be made available. This strategy has been updated for 2024 in response to a fund review process in 2023.

The Fund Strategy will:

- Enable proposals to be prioritised for funding and for decisions to be made in a fair and consistent manner;
- Ensure the Fund achieves measurable impact against agreed Fund priorities;
- Provide clear messages to applicants and the wider community about what the Fund supports;
- Ensure the funding is accessible to those who are well placed to deliver impact in the Fund area.

The Strategy has been developed by Carrick Futures in conjunction with Foundation Scotland and will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure it continues to meet the evolving needs of the communities.

2 Background

Arecleoch and Mark Hill Wind Farms are owned and operated by ScottishPower Renewables. From the community benefit agreements for these windfarms, a Community Fund has been established that will benefit the areas served by the following Community Councils:

- Ballantrae
- Barr
- Barrhill
- Colmonell & Lendalfoot
- Dailly
- Girvan & District
- Pinwherry and Pinmore.

The overall value of the fund is around £500,000 per annum.

The Fund is administered by Foundation Scotland, an independent grant-making charity, under contract to Carrick Futures.

The Fund makes four rounds of awards per year, (see 5.3 for dates). The amount awarded will be allocated on merit which means the sum awarded entirely depends on the nature of the applications. Any balance will be carried forward for future rounds of funding.

The decision-making body for the Fund is Carrick Futures, the Board of which comprises representatives drawn from each of the Fund's Community Council areas, The Board also has the ability to co-opt Trustees from outwith the area of benefit in order to provide specialist skills and expertise where identified as needed by the Board.

3 Making a Difference

Fund Purpose

Carrick Futures' aim is to support and strengthen communities across South Carrick. It supports activities and opportunities that create thriving places where people want to live, work, raise their families and grow old.

Fund Priorities

The Fund priorities reflect stakeholder views from the Review process, along with analysis of local action and place plans, and research into the operating context for the Fund, for example the demographics and health and social care context for the communities the Fund serves. Carrick Futures has six strategic priorities to support this purpose. Funding will be used to support initiatives that:

- 1. Improve access to public services, education and recreation**
- 2. Tackle inequality, including poverty and disadvantage**
- 3. Support good health and wellbeing**
- 4. Provide support and/or opportunities for children and young people**
- 5. Support the sustainable development of community led assets**
- 6. Foster climate smart approaches that protect and promote our environment**

These priorities are underpinned by a community wealth building approach which provides a proportionate response to local priorities in relation to jobs, business and the local economy.

These examples are not intended to be exhaustive. If applicants are unsure as their fit with the Fund, they will be encouraged to seek advice from Foundation Scotland.

4. Fund Distribution

Following the Fund Review, new ways of distributing the fund have been introduced in response to applicant and community representative views.

The Fund is currently distributed as follows:

4.1 Direct grant-making by Community Councils

This is a grant award to each Community Council for localised distribution (formerly referred to as Small Grants). The arrangement provides £5,000 to each Community Council in

- Ballantrae
- Barr
- Barrhill
- Colmonell & Lendalfoot
- Dailly
- Pinwherry and Pinmore

And, in recognition of the larger population base and town's function as service centre for many of the communities: £10,000 to Girvan & District, with a further £5,000 available if the £10,000 is spent down within the year.

Each Community Council is permitted to use this grant to provide a 'microgrants' scheme where it funds local activities that provide community benefit. These activities must be charitable.

Individuals, informal non-constituted groups and constituted groups are all eligible for microgrants. Individuals may be supported up to the level of £250 and groups to the level of £1,000. Where an informal non constituted group is seeking funds, an individual or a host organisation can apply on their behalf.

Community Councils may combine the Carrick Futures grant with other donations from other sources from the same purpose of running a microgrants scheme. If this

situation applies, the Community Council should bear in mind that other donors will have differing guidance on maximum sums to be awarded and that if these are lower than the Carrick Futures' maximum award of £1,000, these should be adhered to unless the Community Council has agreed a change to upper threshold with the other donors.

Written guidance for applicants must be made available by each participating Community Council.

Constituted groups should not use the micro-grants scheme to circumvent applying for grants through the main fund, for example through submission of multiple micro-grant applications for the same activity within one year, or by making an application to each Community Council in the area of benefit for the same project, with a total project cost of more than £1,000.

Full guidance on running a microgrants scheme is available [here](#) and this information will be also be provided with the grant offer. Carrick Futures guidance is available [here](#).

Offers of grant will be made to established, operating Community Councils in August each year. Each Community Council will report annually on its expenditure to Carrick Futures.

All participating Community Councils are eligible for microgrants scheme training provided by fund administrator Foundation Scotland. Carrick Futures may require Community Councils which are holding a high fund balance or have had operational challenges to undertake this training before further grant instalments are released.

Top up for Early Years

In addition, each Community Council may request a top up of £1,000 as a top up to its microgrants budget, specifically restricted for the purpose of supporting and enabling local early years activity (such as playgroups). The aim is specifically to enable small grants for early years groups who want to keep things going, get together or try out new ideas.

This is in recognition that, in comparison to school age children and young people, this section of the community has benefited less from grant funding from Carrick Futures. Investigation as part of the fund review process indicated that this is not because groups applying are unsuccessful, but because these groups don't exist.

Early provision can make a significant difference to children's start in life. However, in rural communities, early years activities are often relatively informal and groupings can form and dissolve rapidly as parents move through the stages of parenting most relevant to them. They can also be difficult to sustain financially as the cost of hall hire often outweighs the subscriptions possible from a small number of parents, and costs for participation may put people off, particularly during the current cost of living crisis.

Participating Community Councils will be expected to promote the availability of this funding. Community Councils are permitted to apply flexibility to who can apply, i.e. Community Councils may choose to accept applications from unconstituted groups.

Guidance will be issued with the microgrants offered to each Community Council.

5.1 Health in Pregnancy Grants

Carrick Futures' recent fund review had a particular focus on children and young people and how the fund was supporting these members of the community.

One of the items considered was the lack of awards being made for very early years support and the socioeconomic context for the fund, including child poverty data. The Board considered the findings of research into the Health In Pregnancy grant, a short-lived intervention introduced in England and Wales in 2009 aimed at reducing inequalities and improving pregnancy outcomes, and which was subsequently removed in 2011 as part of austerity measures. This lump sum transfer of £190 to all women in the third trimester of pregnancy was subsequently studied, with the findings published in the Journal of Health Economics in 2023, long after the initiative had been defunded. The highlights from this study suggested that there were health benefits for the babies whose mothers were eligible for the grant and these babies were on average heavier and less likely to be premature than babies born shortly before or after the grant was available; babies born to younger mothers, particularly those on a low income, benefited the most; the effects could not be explained by antenatal health attendance, nutrition, or smoking; and a reduction in (financial) stress during pregnancy was posited as the most likely mechanism.

Therefore, the Board has agreed to introduce a modest individual grant of £250 to all pregnant women in the third trimester of pregnancy on evidence of residency and production of at Mat B1 form; with the aim of tackling inequalities and providing upstream (preventative) benefits to families, which are relevant to the area of benefit in the context of the deprivation indicators and the low birth weight data.

This scheme will open for applications during 2025.

5.2 Targeted/strategic award-making and commissioning

Strategic, or targeted grant-making, is designed to develop Fund grant-making from a traditional open reactive grant-making process, without the specificity of commissioning but still ensuring accountability and transparency for the communities the awards are designed to benefit. In the context of the findings of the fund review, the Carrick Futures' board has decided to implement targeted grant making with local organisations supporting young people.

The child poverty data for the Fund area of benefit is notable. Of the 12 datazones in the Fund area of benefit, 9 show child poverty levels well above the South Ayrshire and Scottish averages (24.4% and 25% respectively) with rates between 28.1% and 43.5%. Six datazones show a third or more children living in poverty. The focus is primarily in Girvan, but also the datazone focused primarily on Ballantrae Community Council area, crossing east into Barrhill, where rates are 29.8%. The current cost of living crisis brings these figures into ever sharper relief. In terms of the fund leaving a legacy, support for its children and young people to have happy and fulfilled lives is one of the most positive outcomes the Fund can deliver.

As a result of this, the Board had decided to make a multi-year core funding investment in key local organisations where it already has existing relationships and the groups have a track record of successful delivery, to provide these services with stability and guarantee some level of provision to children and young people in the area over the next three year period. For the period 2025-2027 this will be provided to Stepping Stones for Families and Girvan Youth Trust.

The Board also intends to use **commissioning**, which, in the context of Carrick Futures Community Fund, can be defined as using community benefit monies to acquire services or works in order to meet evidenced community needs or priorities. The services or works can be commissioned in a range of ways:

- by an open tender process (whereby potential contractors set out how they would deliver the service and what the costs would be);
- by inviting proposals from a selected number of potential contractors (closed tendering, such as the 'three quotes' approach frequently used in grant awards); or
- by identifying a single provider in a non-competitive process, which is also legitimate, as long as the process is transparent.

Providers of services can be private sector, community organisations, charities or social enterprises; as long as the commission has charitable purpose, in line with Carrick Futures' own objects. Carrick Futures itself is a charitable company.

Commissions must be evidence based and in alignment with the Fund Strategy. Other criteria for community led commissioning include one or more of the following:

- There is no local body in a position to deliver a sought service or activity, commissioned or otherwise, and so help from outwith the area must be proactively sought
- There is no body (local or otherwise) likely to spontaneously seek a grant funding to deliver a service/activity identified as a community priority
- Specialised/expert input is required
- Commissioning work might positively move forward a challenging situation for the community

5.3 Main Grants Programme

An **open grant-making process**, with advertised funding rounds widely promoted across the Fund area. This is the 'Main Grants Programme'.

The Main Grants Programme will operate on four rounds per year: spring, summer, autumn and winter.

Proposed dates for 2025 are as follows:

25.02.2025	27.05.2025	28.08.2025	04.11.2025
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As already stated, the funds allocated will be allocated on merit and this could result in less than the full annual allocation being awarded, depending on the nature of the applications. Any balance will be carried forward for future rounds of funding.

The Fund operates three levels of award through the main grants programme:

1. **Small Grants** – the minimum grant that can be applied for is £500 and the maximum £5,000. These grants are applied for on a 'light touch' application form
2. **Standard Grants** – the minimum grant that can be applied is £5,001 and a maximum of £50,000. These grants are applied for on the standard application form.

3. **Large Grants** – the minimum grant is £50,001 and no upper limit has been set. Large grants are a two stage process. The first stage is a short enquiry form which is available from the Fund's web pages. Enquiries can be submitted at any time. The Board will review enquiries at the next Board meeting and agree whether to invite a full application to future rounds. If invited to make a full application, the applying organisation will be sent the large grant application form. The two stage process aims to make best use of an applicant organisation's time, so that only robust projects with a good chance of being funded are spending the time working up a full application.

Multi-year grants may be awarded covering more than one year (whereby a repeat activity such as a salary or a rental cost comprises part or all of the grant). This is called a 'multi-year' grant. Multi-year grants will usually be provided for up to three years. These are available via all application types.

Funding rounds will be advertised in advance, so groups have the opportunity to plan. Potential applicants can seek **one to one information sessions** by phone or on online with Foundation Scotland, which will provide opportunities for groups to learn more about applying to the Fund and to support applicants in completing the forms.

The Fund Administrator, Foundation Scotland, will receive and assess all applications and supporting materials, based on eligibility and fit with scheme criteria. This will involve a follow-up telephone call, or occasionally an email, from a Foundation Scotland representative.

The call is not meant to be a test, but enables Carrick Futures to be provided with information about the capabilities and experience of the applicant organisation as well as gathering and clarifying project specific information relevant to the application. This process also levels the playing field between different types of applicant – whether a small local community group making its first ever funding application or a national charity with a professional fundraising team, the call enables the project to be fully presented to the Board using a consistent format. Drawing on the application, supporting material and subsequent phone call with the applicant, Foundation Scotland will then compile an objective appraisal of the application, forming a detailed written report which will be considered by Carrick Futures to inform its funding decisions. Carrick Futures is advised of all applications received, including those not eligible for funding.

Groups are not prohibited from submitting more than one application in any round or including more than one project in a single application. However there are many groups and organisations in the area, of varying types, scale and capacity, applying

for support from the Carrick Futures Community Fund. If more than one application is made, or where more than one project features in an application, the organisation may be asked to confirm the priority order of the applications or projects to facilitate decision making by Carrick Futures.

5.3 Emergency Funding

There may be cases where an emergency situation arises that affects the communities in the area of benefit and which Carrick Futures wishes to respond to. Examples are for example the response to storm damage to the Quayzone, or the Covid response funding made available in 2020.

Carrick Futures may choose to provide some assistance by way of a grant or donation to a group with immediate and critical needs and/or to intermediaries with the infrastructure to provide the support. Such instances will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

As the quarterly Fund application deadlines have been set in advance there is an expectation that local organisations will have taken these deadlines into account when planning their funding strategies. Non-emergency applications from groups which simply missed a deadline will not be considered for out of cycle funding. Applicants should first contact fund administrator Foundation Scotland to discuss.

6 Eligibility

Awards from the **main grant-making programme** can support **a wide range of costs and activities** including equipment costs, staff or sessional worker costs, consultations and feasibility studies, maintenance or refurbishment of community facilities, and so on. Activities funded (including capital and running costs) must be consistent with **recognised charitable purposes** as set out in the Charities and Trustee Investments (2005) Act Scotland¹.

The fund will support core costs. *Direct project costs* are all the costs clearly and directly incurred as the result of a project. *Overheads* are costs which are necessary for an organisation to operate, but do not relate specifically to just one project. These are sometimes also referred to as indirect, core, central or support costs.

The Fund will support contributions to overheads on the basis that these are a necessary cost and often form an important part of successful delivery. However, where these are requested as part of a project-based application the applicant must ensure there is a clear rationale behind how the sum was calculated, and during

¹ See <https://www.oscr.org.uk/guidance-and-forms/meeting-the-charity-test-guidance>

assessment applicants may also be asked about other funding sources for these costs, to avoid any risk of double funding.

Full cost recovery is an approach to securing funding for all an organisation's costs where all overheads are shared proportionately across the organisation's different projects. If an organisation is choosing to use full cost recovery, applicants may be asked to demonstrate their calculation on a full cost recovery spreadsheet supplied by Foundation Scotland, depending on the scale of the award sought.

Applicants may provide commentary on any 'in kind' contributions their organisation is making towards a project in any application made. However, in kind contributions should not be included in any application project budget table with a financial value placed against them. In kind support put in a project budget may be noted, but it will set aside when an assessment is being made of the financial position of any project seeking support.

To be eligible to apply to the Main Grants programme, applicants must be able to comply with the [standard eligibility criteria](#). Applicants should ensure they have read these before starting an application.

The Fund **cannot support** the following types of activity:

- The advancement of religion or politics (including requests to support the core activities of religious or political groups).
- Activities understood to be the primary responsibility of statutory authorities (including teaching equipment in schools). Whilst schools cannot be funded, Parent Teacher Associations / Parent Councils can apply if they are appropriately constituted.
- Organisations or groups with unduly restrictive membership criteria and/or where the committee or board is not elected by, or otherwise accountable to, a wider group of people.
- Grants to individuals or unconstituted groups (other than through the discretionary Community Council schemes and where that grant provides community benefit) or grants to private for-profit businesses.
- Projects primarily benefiting residents outwith the area of benefit.
- Activities contrary to the interests of Carrick Futures, ScottishPower Renewables or Foundation Scotland, or likely to bring any of them into disrepute.
- Anti-renewable energy/anti-windfarm activities;
- Retrospective funding (i.e. paying for costs incurred before a decision on an application to the Fund is made).
- The repayment of loans or payment of debts.

- General fundraising appeals or activities
- Trips abroad
- Costs directly related to the sale of alcohol, including but not limited to the refurbishment of a bar area

Further detail on some of these points is provided below:

There is sometimes confusion around **support for community activity connected with religious groups**. The Fund will not support activity that promotes the advancement of religion. However, grants can be made to religious organisations for non-religious activity that benefits the wider community without excluding anyone on religious grounds. For example, it can fund improvements to a hall owned by a church and accessed by various groups beyond the organisation's own specific congregation alone, and where religious affiliation or practice does not present a barrier to groups wishing to use the facilities. The service or facility in question should be widely promoted to other groups (non-religious or of other religious affiliation) and/ or already accessed by these.

Funds will not normally make grants towards the construction, alteration or restoration of buildings or associated features whose primary purpose is worship, e.g. replacement of stained-glass windows in churches. An exception may be made where there is significant heritage or other community benefit to doing so, such as improvement to the visual appearance of the village/ town and its tourism potential.

Another area that can be challenging is where and how an existing or proposed project may **overlap with statutory provision**. Determining whether applications are additional to statutory provision can be difficult, whether funding is sought by either statutory authorities (such as local authorities, schools, health or emergency services) or by a community group. As part of the assessment process, Foundation Scotland will consider on a case-by-case basis whether any proposed project is additional to statutory provision and will report on their findings in the assessment report that is provided to Carrick Futures.

Carrick Futures wants to encourage applicants to **work in an inclusive way, in line with equalities legislation** – and that they can demonstrate how they do this.

This means that:

- Access to activities or services should not exclude beneficiaries on the grounds of age, disability, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sex, sexual orientation or gender reassignment (known as “protected characteristics” under the Equalities Act 2010) unless this can be justified (see below). It also means that applicant groups should seek to

remove any barrier to participation and it should be possible for anyone in the intended beneficiary group to find out about the activity or service. Ideally, the activities/services should be widely promoted within the community or specific interest groups. Potential further barriers may be: physical (e.g. accessibility of the venue); financial (e.g. relating to any charge or transport costs); geographical (relating to transport availability / journey time); psychological (e.g. to do with confidentiality); cultural, language or literacy barriers.

- Similarly, the organisation's membership criteria should not exclude any individual on the basis of protected characteristics, unless this can be justified (as below). In addition to equalities considerations, organisations that welcome a diverse range of interests and perspectives may bring in a wider set of skills and experience, innovation, and/or engage new sections of the community.
- Where an organisation restricts membership and / or access to its services or activities to people who share one or more of the protected characteristics (e.g. by gender), Carrick Futures may only consider an application for funding if it is clear that excluding other individuals is objectively justified, or is done to prevent or compensate for disadvantage linked to the protected characteristic. For example, it may be justifiable to have membership and/or access to a service restricted to women only if a mixed gender environment would act as a barrier to their participation, or to restrict membership to parents / carers of children accessing a service if unrestricted membership could pose a risk to children.

Supporting **activity that takes place outwith the area of benefit** but which benefits or involves those living within it is another factor that may be an issue for potential applicants. Carrick Futures acknowledges that those living in the Fund area may make use of facilities and services outwith the area. Carrick Futures wishes to allow those organisations providing services or activities outwith the Fund area of benefit to apply to the Fund where they can demonstrate that the service or activity in question does (or will) primarily benefit people living in the Fund area. Where this is the case, there will be an expectation that the proportion of the project costs funded will not normally exceed the proportion of beneficiaries from the Fund area. Applicants will be expected to have systems in place to allow them to identify and report the number of beneficiaries from the Fund area.

6 Value for Money

All applications will be expected to follow the Fund guidance on Evidencing Value for Money. This covers the number of quotes required at differing item/budget line levels and the expectation that applicants will manage any conflicts of interest when procuring services or goods.

In rural settings such as the Carrick Futures area of benefit, it is recognised that procurement can be more challenging. There may be fewer suppliers for some types of services and goods, and this is considered at assessment.

As highlighted on the application form, for item costs of between £301 and £3,000 at least one quote or reference to a catalogue cost is expected. For item costs over £3,000 at least three quotes or references to catalogue costs are expected. For budget lines over £30,000 it is normally expected that an open procurement tender process will have been followed. For single item purchases, three quotations remain acceptable.

Full information is set out [here](#).

7 Future Distribution

Over time other methods described below may be developed and implemented as needs and/or opportunities arise and as agreed by Carrick Futures.

8 Evaluation and Review

Evaluation of funded activity is important to show how the Fund is making a difference and so that Carrick Futures and other stakeholders learn lessons for the future, informing Fund reviews.

All applicants will as part of their application be asked to select an outcome that they think best describe what their funded activity will achieve. These will be reported on, as part of the completion report.

All funded projects are required to submit a completion report to Foundation Scotland identifying the project's impact. The completion report invites the group to share how the project went and what has been achieved. We will be asking for some feedback and the extent to which the project has made a difference in any of the Fund's main change areas. This will be both quantitative and qualitative information.

Foundation Scotland will produce a Fund annual report showing projects funded, as analysed by outcomes etc. The report will also contain a selection of case studies which capture impact and lessons learned.

The Fund was reviewed in 2023. The next Fund review will be delivered by 2028, in line with the Scottish Government's Good Practice Principles for Community Benefit from Onshore Renewables.

9 Promotion and Communications

A successful Fund requires clear and ongoing communication, for example about what will be supported, how to apply, what has been supported, and the success and learning of funded projects.

Carrick Futures and Foundation Scotland work together to ensure the Fund is promoted across the area of benefit and information about awards and the difference being achieved through them is widely shared.

This will include using local print newspapers and social media as much as possible, alongside creating an annual report to summarise and celebrate the work of the Fund. Outreach events will provide an opportunity for prospective applicants to discuss their project ideas with Foundation Scotland and Carrick Futures.

In addition, Carrick Futures will look to run at least one annual event that can bring awardees together to share project progress and potentially identify new opportunities for collaboration.

The Fund has a dedicated page on Foundation Scotland's website and its own website at www.carrickfutures.org.uk. The Foundation Scotland fund page can be found at: <https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/apply-for-funding/funding-available/carrick-futures>

The Fund Strategy will be available to download. Applications are made through an online application portal. Applicants are required to have an email address and Foundation Scotland will send written material by email.ⁱ A Word version of the application form is available on request.

10. Terms & Conditions, Payments and Grant Acknowledgement

Terms and Conditions

All recipients of awards are required to accept terms and conditions for their grant award. These are managed by the fund administrator, Foundation Scotland. From

time to time, the Board may also set additional conditions on a grant, which provides the Board with additional assurances in relation to the provision of an award. These will always be communicated clearly to the applicant at the point of award.

- Standard organisational terms and conditions can be read [here](#)
- Individual terms and conditions can be read [here](#)
- Micro grant terms and conditions (for the Community Councils, not onward beneficiary groups) can be read [here](#).

Each year, the fund donor ScottishPower Renewables selects grant awards at random for audit. All grantholding organisations are required to retain evidence of expenditure (invoices and receipts) for the grant they received, for six years.

Payments

Payments will be issued on Carrick Futures' behalf by fund administrator Foundation Scotland. Grantholding organisations will receive an email from Foundation Scotland with a remittance notice attached to it.

Applicants should ensure they read the attached remittance notice as well as the email, as it will provide details of the payment and which grant it is for.

Acknowledging Your Grant

Grant applicants should always acknowledge the support of Carrick Futures in any publicity for or promotion of their funded activities.

While the payment remittance for a grant will come from Foundation Scotland, applicants should ensure that grants awarded are ringfenced and acknowledged as being from Carrick Futures in their annual accounts. This is a condition of grant.

Plaques can be provided for building or other physical assets.

The Carrick Futures logo is available for download.

ⁱ Carrick Futures Community Fund Strategy Approved 4th December 2024