

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FUND - Monitoring of Projects Funded

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide monitoring information on the funding given to community projects from the council's Supporting Communities Fund.
- 1.2 12 constituted, not-for-profit community organisations were awarded funding by the Area Committee in the 2022/23 round of funding. Community organisations are required to spend their funding within 18 months and to submit an End of Project Monitoring Report outlining the project's projected costs, actual costs and beneficiaries.
- 1.3 Members are asked to consider the contents of the report showing a summary of the information supplied by organisations in their End of Project Monitoring Reports.
- 1.4 Members are asked to note any return of unspent funds and that these are made available in future allocations of the Supporting Communities Fund.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report highlights the positive outcomes for communities in Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands through the allocation of the Council's Supporting Communities Fund in the 2022/23.
- 2.2 A total of £24,619.59 was awarded to 12 organisations in 2022/23. Organisations have 18 months to spend the funds, and up to two months from the end of the project, to complete and return a project monitoring report.
- 2.3 A total of £117.50 in total has been identified as unspent funds and returned. This can be included in the distribution of the SCF in MAKI for 2024/25.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Area Committee:

- 3.1 Note and consider the positive contribution of the Supporting Communities Fund to communities detailed in section 4 of this report and the attached table.
- 3.2 Note that a total of £117.50 of unspent funds has been identified and returned, and agree that this be included in the distribution of the SCF for 2024/25.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 The 12 funded projects supported approximately 2,258 people to participate in a variety of activities including outdoors, sports, music and projects to impact mental health. Highlights include:

- Acquacare, provided by **Islay and Jura Community Enterprises** continues to provide a unique service to provide relief from pain and injury in the pool. During the funded year they had 11 new referrals from GPs and had a total of 153 visits. One participant wrote: *“I find it not only helps keeps the joints from seizing up there is the mental aspect too, it helps clear the mind. I really don’t know what I would do without the Wednesday and Thursday sessions.”*
- Over 25 people improved their mental wellbeing at the **Kintyre Link Club**, where they had formerly described social isolation, they now felt they were becoming part of the community again and growing in confidence. One attendee wrote: *“I don’t know how I would cope without the support of the group....”* The manager noted the increase in people currently suffering with poor mental health in the area.
- **Craignish Village Hall Arts** programme for young people brought a high quality and varied programme of activities for young people and families to a remote rural area, achieved by matching funding, partnership working and encouraging volunteering. The final event, paid for largely by this grant, included lead-in workshops during half-term and finished with a big Halloween Lantern Parade attended by families from all around and described as a *“BIG impression of light and wonder”*.

- 4.2 The attached table summarises information received from individual projects.
- 4.3 10 grant recipients have submitted an End of Project Monitoring Report.
- 4.4 Note that a total of £117.50 in total has been returned; £117.50 to be included in the distribution of the SCF for 2024/25. The return of funds is a combination of projects under budget or funds unable to be spent.

2022/23 SCF Round of Funding					
No	Organisation	Project Funded	Award	End of Project Achievements	No. of people in communities benefiting
1	19th Argyll Scout (Lochgilphead) Group	Hire of specialist instructors for 128 hours to run a series of adventurous and outdoor activities for children and young people	£2,400.00	No EPMR received.	
2	Achnamara Village Hall Committee	A series of 26 community activities and training sessions to improve physical, mental and social health and wellbeing and to learn and share rowing and coxswaining skills	£2,365.00	We managed to deliver more activities than we had hoped within the budget. The Hall was buzzing throughout the year. There were a few changes to the details of activities over the year, including less money spent on skiff training, film nights and arts and crafts, and so more funding available to deliver additional activities: Café Connect, book club, table tennis and a concert. The grant enabled the hall to remain open and play our vital role.	125
3	Argyll & Bute Befrienders	32 sessions of therapeutic and personal development activities for young people	£602.00	We met the aims of the project in that we provided opportunities for disadvantaged children and young people to experience a range of recreational and therapeutic activities with the support of their befriender. The main activities undertaken were various sports including climbing, swimming, cycling and minigolf, arts and crafts activities such as pottery painting and felting and several of our young people benefited from horse-riding in small groups to build their confidence and help them learn to regulate their emotions.	19 (A&B wide)
4	Craignish Village Hall	materials, tutor fees and publicity for a series of 7 lantern-making workshops, a community parade and a storytelling workshop	£2,500.00	We have delivered 111 hours of workshops, craft and play sessions to 56 young people under 18 in the financial year 2022/23. Our main event, a series of Lantern making workshops over a week and a parade culminating in a social event at the hall, took place during October and November 2022. These workshops and the Lantern parade used the bulk of the funding from Argyll & Bute. The workshops enabled participants (aged 3–80+ but predominantly children and young people) to build new skills in working with willow and building lanterns.	199

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5	Dochas Carer Centre	staff costs (manager/finance/admin), social event costs for befriendees, first aid training and volunteer mileage expenses	£2,500.00	The "Circle of Friends" increased their number of volunteers and hence the support they could offer befriendees, with 29 persons receiving essential friendly contact during the period and the opportunity to attend 3 social gatherings. They also delivered first aid training to carers and were able to recompense volunteers for their travel.	29
6	Heart of Argyll Wildlife Organisation	An Otter road casualty remediation feasibility study. Funds are for equipment costs, staff time, travel expenses and a community engagement event	£640.92	We addressed the concern within the Craignish Community of the number of otter deaths occurring along a 1 km stretch of the A816 in the vicinity of the Craobh Haven junction through the completion of a feasibility study to explore mitigation measures to reduce the casualty rate including: A walkover survey followed by data logging with trail cameras to establish signs of otter activity and road-crossing points; discovery of a blocked culvert, a discussion with Argyll and Bute Council's roads department regarding clearance of culverts and implementation of signage and learning from other communities. Solutions were proposed and costed and reported to a meeting of the Craignish Community Council.	450
7	Islay & Jura Community Enterprises Ltd.	45 minute Aquacare warm water therapy sessions for up to 30 mentally and physically disabled adults per week	£2,500.00	The funding has been used to provide one 45 minute Aquacare session per week. Aquacare aims to provide a form of individualised water therapy for people living with physical injuries or long-term conditions. It helps to provide a form of physical exercise in a zero gravity environment. We have had 17 people attend Aquacare this year, with many of them having been attendees to the session for a long period of time. We have had 11 new referrals from GPs.	34
8	Kintyre Alcohol and Drug Advisory Service	23 weekly arts workshops (April 2022- April 2023) for up to 10 women with problems associated with drug and alcohol dependency. Funds are for	£1,179.27	No EPMR received.	

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		equipment and materials, and towards wages for two sessional workers (@1.5h/wk x 23 weeks)			
9	Kintyre Link Club	Social, creative and walking activities 3 days a week for around 30 beneficiaries for 13 weeks, costs for a sessional worker at 10 hours per week plus materials	£2,500.00	The project supported people suffering with poor mental health to enjoy some fun but meaningful activities to help promote positive lifestyle choices and boost their self-esteem. These activities included creative writing where members produced some very interesting work which was subsequently incorporated into funding applications. They also took part in arts and crafts sessions, guided meditation and walking, beach sessions and cold water swimming.	43
10	Kintyre Seaspots	A sailing instructor training programme working in partnership with Campbeltown Grammar School. Funds will cover costs for 12 people to complete basic sailing skills course and 6 to continue to a Powerboat Level 2 course and continuing after school club	£2,432.40	The project exceeded its aims and 32 Campbeltown Grammar School pupils have so far gained internationally recognised RYA qualifications. This has improved their skills and their employability with the school noting also an increase in confidence and learning to work confidently with different people. The students themselves are now promoting the programme. Youth workers help to ensure that there is fair access to this training across the school.	59
11	Shopper-Aide Ltd	Activity boxes. Funding for 2 hours per week sessional worker costs, admin support at 1 hour per week, fuel costs and 2 tables	£2,500.00	Since the easing of restrictions we have been able to restart our social groups at our premises, allowing our clients to meet and participate in activities after 2 years of reduced interaction and isolation since many of our clients have been isolating. We are now running Elderberries twice a week, an art group once a week, a bingo session once a week, groups for clients living with MS and Parkinson's once a week/month and 3 weekly local groups in the rural villages surrounding Campbeltown. The restarting of these group sessions has had a major positive impact on our client's mental and physical wellbeing.	100

2022/23 SCF Round of Funding

12	Tarbert & Skipness Community Trust (TSCT)	Appointment of a part-time contractor for 8h/wk between April 2022 and September 2023, to inform, engage and consult the community about progress on various projects.	£2,500.00	The project was aimed at improving Community Confidence. Having a dedicated communication budget was very effective, leaving no space for misunderstanding or alteration of information. Effective communication provides people of the community with information, structure, knowledge and creates a positive environment ultimately leading to a growth in community confidence and resilience.	1200
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5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The project monitoring form has a section asking for comments on the Supporting Communities Fund process. Not all applicants have completed this section but of those received, the comments have largely been very positive.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy: None
- 6.2 Financial: The report sets out the expenditure of Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands 2022/23 allocation of Supporting Communities Fund
- 6.3 Legal: None
- 6.4 HR: None
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty/Equalities/Islands: Compliant with policy and noting that 1 of the funded projects were on islands.
- 6.6 Climate Change: None
- 6.7 Risk: None
- 6.8 Customer Service: None
- 6.9 The Rights of the Child (UNCRC): None

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