

CROWN ESTATES FUNDING ALLOCATIONS 2025/26

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Scottish Government has written each year to Councils advising of the distribution of the net revenue generated from the Scottish Crown Estate's marine asset out to 12 nautical miles for their respective council area. These annual revenue allocations are distributed in arrears following the finalisation of the annual accounts for the Scottish Crown Estate.
- 1.2 The expectation is that Local Authorities will use the funding for additional expenditure that specifically benefits coastal communities, with individual authorities making decisions on funding of projects to benefit coastal communities and being transparent and accountable to their communities and others for expenditure.
- 1.3 The Scottish Government wrote to Local Authorities on 25th November 2025 confirming that Argyll and Bute Council's net Crown Estate revenue allocation for the 2025/26 financial year is £2,358,044.07. This is from a total funding allocation of £15.98m distributed to 26 local authority regions.
- 1.4 The Council have previously agreed to allocate £1,407,000 and this report brings forward proposals for a further £949.5k of funding from the remaining 2025/26 Crown Estates funding allocation. A full breakdown of proposed and approved spend is provided in **Appendix 1** of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Policy and Resources Committee:

- a) Agree to the allocation of the remaining Crown Estate funding for 2025/26 to the priority projects outlined in Table 1, paragraph 4.2.1.
- b) Note that these projects are additional to the £800k of funding approved by Policy and Resources Committee on 21st August 2025 and detailed in Table 2 of this report.
- c) Members are asked to delegate authority to the Council's Executive

Director with responsibility for Development and Infrastructure Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council to endorse changes to the approved programme of projects. It is not considered that new projects will be introduced however, there may be the requirement to move funding between agreed projects.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Scottish Ministers made a commitment in 2014 that they would provide 100% of the net revenue from Scottish Crown Estate marine assets out to 12 nautical miles to Local Authorities for coastal community benefit if management of the assets was devolved. It is for each local authority to determine how best to spend their allocation to best benefit coastal communities and Councils are advised to follow their own processes to ensure that monies spent deliver value for money. The Scottish Government have also advised that Councils may wish to consider how Crown Estates funding can be used to contribute towards realising Scotland's Blue Economy Vision and other priorities around tackling the twin crises of climate and biodiversity.
- 2.2 The Scottish Government wrote to Local Authorities on the 25th November 2025 confirming that Argyll and Bute Council's net Crown Estate revenue allocation for the 2025/26 financial year is £2,358,044.07. This is from a total funding allocation of £15.98m distributed to 26 local authority regions.
- 2.3 This report brings forward proposals for a further £949.5k of funding from the remaining 2025/26 Crown Estates funding allocation and follows the report approved by Policy and Resources (P&R) Committee on 21st August 2025 where an initial £800k of investment was approved. A full breakdown of proposed and approved spend is provided in **Appendix 1** of this report.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Policy and Resources Committee:
- a) Agree to the allocation of the remaining Crown Estate funding for 2025/26 to the priority projects outlined in Table 1, paragraph 4.2.1.
 - b) Note that these projects are additional to the £800k of funding approved by Policy and Resources Committee on 21st August 2025 and detailed in Table 2 of this report.
 - c) Members are asked to delegate authority to the Council's Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Infrastructure Services in

consultation with the Leader of the Council to endorse changes to the approved programme of projects. It is not considered that new projects will be introduced however, there may be the requirement to move funding between agreed projects.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 BACKGROUND

- 4.1.1 The Scottish Government has written each year to Councils advising of the distribution of the net revenue generated from the Scottish Crown Estate's marine asset out to 12 nautical miles for their respective council area. These annual revenue allocations are distributed in arrears following the finalisation of the annual accounts for the Scottish Crown Estate.
- 4.1.2 It is for each local authority to determine how best to spend their allocation to benefit local coastal communities. Councils are advised to follow their own processes to ensure that monies spent deliver value for money, however, the Scottish Government also recommends that local authorities may wish to consider how funding is contributing towards realising Scotland's Blue Economy Vision and other priorities around tackling the twin crises of climate and biodiversity.
- 4.1.3 Crown Estates funding can be used by the council to deliver projects or can be provided as grants to third sector organisations to assist in the delivery of community projects.
- 4.1.4 This report brings forward proposals for the remaining 2025/26 Crown Estates funding allocation following the report previously approved by the P&R Committee in August 2025.

4.2 2025-26 ALLOCATION

- 4.2.1 The proposed projects and associated allocation for Crown Estate funding in 2025-26 are listed below in **Table 1**.

Table 1 – Crown Estate 2025/26 Allocation

Crown Estates 205/26 – Proposed Projects			
Proposed Project	Budget	Project Lead	Description
Town Centre support for shopfronts and empty business properties across Argyll and Bute to support the ongoing Love Local campaign and	£260k	Lorna Pearce / James Lafferty / Daniel MacIntyre	Additional funding to support the highly successful shopfront scheme which was heavily oversubscribed in the previous funding round. Additional funding

place based regeneration.			will be prioritised for business owners who were unsuccessful at the last funding round. Governance and funding criteria have previously been approved by P&R Committee.
Helensburgh Skating Pond – focus on path improvements and benches.	£100k	Arlene Cullum	Funding to support initial phases of improvements with a focus on improving path infrastructure and seating as these costs are not eligible for nature restoration funding.
Dunoon Public Realm	£80k	Jonathan Welch	Funding to supplement the Dunoon public realm project part funded by Community Regeneration Partnership monies.
Albert Pier Car Park Resurfacing	£150k	Jonathan Welch	Match funding for Place Based Investment funded project (£100k) to supplement project budget and support resurfacing and lining of Albert Pier. Particular focus on enhanced parking for coaches. This is a Council owned facility within Rothesay Town Centre.
SAMS STEM Hub	£80k	Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS)	Funding to support design works associated with STEM Hub. This marine based STEM project is

			part of the Council's Rural Growth Deal (RGD) and is being led by SAMS. This funding will help accelerate the business justification case which is necessary in advance of drawdown of RGD funding.
Public CCTV in towns	£90k	Shona Barton	Add cameras / functionality to the deployment of the replacement digital cameras so we are able to generate place-based analytics for our town centres (vital for business cases/benefits realisation of other projects)
Campbeltown War Memorial	£40k	James Lafferty	Match funding to restore this important civic memorial which will require stone masonry refurbishment. This funding supports an existing Council commitment.
Helensburgh CARS match funding commitment	£135k	Claire Hallybone	Funding to meet a previously agreed commitment to match fund the Helensburgh Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS)
Strategic Events and Festivals supplementary funding.	£14.5k	Arlene Cullum	Funding award to supplement the Council's SEF Round 8 budget to ensure all approved projects receive the

			total value of funding requested.
Priority Projects Total Funding	£949.5k		

- 4.2.2 Members are asked to note that the Town Centre support for shopfronts and empty business properties will cover all towns in Argyll and Bute and will add value to previous and existing funding which has been very successful and heavily oversubscribed. This will support activities such as shopfront upgrades and smaller repairs to commercial properties within local towns. Project leads have previously undertaken an open call for funding which was oversubscribed resulting in some local businesses being unsuccessful with bids. Projects which were unsuccessful at the previous round of funding will be prioritised for both the shopfront and smaller repair grants.
- 4.2.3 This funding will also support measures being delivered via the Council's Empty Business Property grants which are targeted at interventions that support property owners and tenants to bring vacant business premises back into productive use.
- 4.2.4 Funding for the Helensburgh Skating Pond will supplement an existing programme being developed at part of the Nature Restoration funding. A proposed scheme was presented to the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee in December 2025. The support provided via the Crown Estates programme will enable an initial phase of works to be delivered which will focus on path infrastructure and seating enhancements. These elements of the project are not eligible for funding via the Nature Restoration Programme.
- 4.2.5 The additional funding for Dunoon Public Realm will supplement the wider programme of works which were recently awarded £1.08m of funding via the UK Governments Community Regeneration Partnership. Priority areas for action include the fire damaged gap site on Argyll Street. Some of this funding will also be used to support local business owners to address the high number of vacant commercial properties in Dunoon Town Centre.
- 4.2.6 The Albert Pier car park resurfacing project will formalise and improve parking at this site following the demolition of a vacant and derelict property on the pier. A scheme is currently being designed which will also include options to improve coach parking at this location. Funding via Crown Estates will provide match funding for the project which was previously awarded £100k of Place Based Investment funding. It is anticipated that this project will be delivered by the Council's Roads and Infrastructure Services.
- 4.2.7 Further investment in local CCTV will be focused on additional functionality that enables local CCTV cameras to provide analytic data such as vehicle movements and footfall. Such data could be very valuable to inform future funding bids and support more data led priorities for future investment in our town centres.

4.2.8 The SAMS STEM Hub project is one of two STEM Hubs being progressed via the Council's Rural Growth Deal Programme. This STEM hub will serve the north of Argyll and will be located within the European Marine Science Park at Dunstaffnage. Local STEM hubs will provide a fully digitally immersive education experience for local visitors and school pupils and the SAMS facility will have a particular focus on marine based STEM which is critical to support future growth in the local blue economy. Crown Estates funding will support essential pre-construction activities such as detailed design which are required in advance of the draw down of Rural Growth Deal funding.

4.2.9 Funding for the Strategic Events and Festivals programme will help to supplement the Round 8 budget and ensure that all approved projects receive the total value of funding requested. Estimated economic impacts associated with the 10 approved SEF Round 8 projects total £10.8m demonstrating an excellent return on investment.

4.2.10 The funding included above is additional to the £800k approved at the August 2025 P&R Committee. A summary of projects previously awarded funding is included in Table 2 below:-

Table 2 – Crown Estate 2025/26 Allocation – Endorsed August 2025

Project	Delivery by	Crown Estate Allocation
Inveraray Avenue Screen refurbishment	Development & Economic Growth	£120k
Gallanach Road - Rock Slope Protection	Road and Infrastructure Services	£300k
Tarbert Heritage and Place Programme - Match Funding (note this was agreed by Council in June and is noted here for information)	Development & Economic Growth	£115k for the next 4 years*
CARS Projects - flexible fund to support businesses with capital improvements to shopfronts/buildings building on previous CARS investment	Development & Economic Growth	£150k
Victoria Hall, Campbeltown – repair and refurbish entire front elevation.	Development & Economic Growth	£50k
Dunoon Public Realm	Development & Economic Growth	£65k
TOTAL		£800k

4.3 MANAGING CHANGE

4.3.1 As with any funding programme, the ability to manage change is vital to allow the Council and funding partners to be agile and avoid delays to the delivery of projects. As such, members are asked to delegate authority to the Council's Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Infrastructure Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council to endorse changes to the approved programme of projects. It is not considered that new projects will be introduced however, there may be the requirement to move funding between agreed projects in certain circumstances e.g. a project is no longer viable to progress.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1.1 The Scottish Government wrote to Local Authorities on 25th November 2025 confirming that Argyll and Bute Council's net Crown Estate revenue allocation for the 2025/26 financial year is £2,358,044.07. This is from a total funding allocation of £15.98m distributed to 26 local authority regions.

5.1.2 The expectation is that Local Authorities will use the funding for additional expenditure that specifically benefits coastal communities, with individual authorities making decisions on funding of projects to benefit coastal communities and being transparent and accountable to their communities and others for expenditure.

5.1.3 This report brings forward proposals for the remaining 2025/26 Crown Estates funding allocation and follows the report approved by P&R Committee in August 2025 where an initial £800k of investment was approved.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 **Policy:** The expectation is that Local Authorities would use the funding for additional expenditure that specifically benefits coastal communities, with individual authorities making decisions on funding of projects to benefit coastal communities and being transparent and accountable to their communities and other for expenditure.

6.2 **Financial:** Grant funding is provided for all projects identified.

6.3 **Legal:** The Transformational Projects and Regeneration Team will ensure that all funds committed are compliant with grant funding conditions.

6.4 **HR:** Resourced from existing staff.

6.5 **Customer Service:** None.

6.6 **Risk:** The projects are continually monitored to ensure that funds can be spent and that the projects meet the criteria as set out by Scottish Government.

6.7 **Climate Change:** Funds can support activities which promote the drive

towards net zero.

- 6.8 **Fairer Scotland Duty:** The Fund supports our coastal communities in line with Scottish Government funding criteria.
- 6.9 **Equalities – protected characteristics:** The KSS project could enhance opportunities for all ages and abilities to partake in marine leisure and training activities.
- 6.10 **Consumer Duty:** None.
- 6.11 **Island Communities:** The Fund supports coastal communities and has the potential to align with and add value to other funding programmes such as the Islands Programme, PBIP and RCGF.
- 6.12 **Children’s Rights and Wellbeing:** The KSS project will improve outcomes for local children as demonstrated by the highly successful partnership with Campbeltown Grammar School. KSS has introduced more than 120 Campbeltown Grammar School pupils to sailing, with 56 achieving internationally recognised sail- and powerboat qualifications. This in a school with 360 pupils, of whom more than 10% are Registered Young Carers.

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8th January 2026

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Total Crown Estates Funding Commitments 2025/26

Appendix 1: Total Crown Estates Funding Commitment 2025/26

Proposed Project	Budget	Proposed / Approved
Town Centre support for shopfronts and empty business properties across Argyll and Bute to support the ongoing Love Local campaign and place based regeneration.	£260k	Proposed
Helensburgh Skating Pond – focus on path improvements and benches.	£100k	Proposed
Dunoon Public Realm	£80k	Proposed
Albert Pier Car Park Resurfacing	£150k	Proposed
SAMS STEM Hub	£80k	Proposed
Public CCTV in towns – More information required on what is required.	£90k	Proposed
Campbeltown War Memorial	£40k	Proposed
Helensburgh CARS match funding commitment	£135k	Proposed
Strategic Events and Festivals Round 8 Supplementary Funding	£14.5k	Proposed
Inveraray Avenue Screen refurbishment	£120k	Approved
Gallanach Road - Rock Slope Protection	£300k	Approved

Tarbert Heritage and Place Programme - Match Funding (note this was agreed by Council in June and is noted here for information)	£115k for the next 4 years*	Approved
CARS Projects - flexible fund to support businesses with capital improvements to shopfronts/buildings building on previous CARS investment	£150k	Approved
Victoria Hall, Campbeltown – repair and refurbish entire front elevation.	£50k	Approved
Dunoon Public Realm	£65k	Approved
Capital Plan	£500k	Approved
Staff Costs	£107k	Approved
Contingency	£2k	Approved
Total Funding Commitment	£2.35m	