# Viking Community Fund – Community Grant Scheme (CGS)

SHETLAND COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND

Sustaining & developing Shetland communities

# Information for Community Councils



viking energy
Harnessing Shetland's natural resources

Living Wage Scotland

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## 1 Overview

In September 2024, the Community Grant Scheme replaced the Advanced Grant Scheme which had successfully operated from February 2021 until August 2024.

## 2 Key points

All applications go direct to SCBF, and administration of the fund is processed 'in-house' by SCBF. Tier 1 and Tier 2 applications are then be shared with the relevant community council for a decision. Tier 3 applications are considered directly by and SCBF Funding Panel.

## 3 Explanation of CGS Tiers

There are three tiers of funding.

**Tier One** – Grants of £50 to £1,000 to support small projects which might need only a small level of support. This could be for an existing project or to develop a new idea. The application is short and easy to access.

**Tier Two** – Grants of over £1,000 to support projects which need a larger investment. These applications should be from constituted groups with a bank account and up to date accounts. Projects should be sustainable without dependence on continued funding from SCBF.

Tiers 1 and 2 are considered by community councils.

**Tier Three** – Grants of £200 up to £15,000 from organisations whose projects cover more than 3 community council areas. Projects should be sustainable without dependence on continued funding from the VCF CGS.

Tier 3 is considered directly by SCBF.

## 4 CGS funding allocations

The CGS will divide funds of £236,840 between all Shetland community council areas, with the four areas that have a Viking turbine receiving five shares and the other 14 receiving one share. The annual allocation will be index linked.

The allocation will look as follows,

- 1 share area = £6,966

- 5 share area = £34,829

In addition to the £236,840 there will be an annual fund of £210,000 which will be allocated to Tier 3.

## 5 Decsion making

### Tier 1

The application process for Tier One is simple. All applications are sent to SCBF. The following process will be used:

1. Applications received by SCBF and checked against guidelines.
2. If an applicant is considering applying to more than one community council they are advised to contact SCBF beforehand to discuss their project.
3. Details of the proposal are sent to the relevant community council for a decision on whether to support it.
4. SCBF notified of the community council's decision within six weeks
5. After final checks SCBF will release the funds as quickly as possible.
6. SCBF intend that all applicants should be informed of a decision within eight weeks

Key factors for considering Tier 1 applications,

- Will the project make a positive difference for the community?
- Does the project meet with the SCBF guidelines and eligibility?

### Tier Two

The purpose of Tier Two grants is to assist larger projects which will make a lasting difference for the community. The funds are to support social enterprises, charities or organisations, that need assistance to enable projects or activities, which will sustain and develop the local community, to go ahead.

SCBF expects applicants for Tier Two grants to also seek other sources of funding for their projects - or to use CGS funding to access support from other sources.

### Tier Two Process:

1. SCBF will receive all applications and will check the eligibility, sustainability and achievability of fund objectives. This will include reviewing the constitution and accounts.
2. If an applicant is seeking over £5,000 of funding they must send an overview of the project to SCBF for an initial discussion before a formal application is made.
3. If an applicant is considering applying to more than one community council they are advised to contact SCBF beforehand to discuss their project.
4. SCBF will send the community council an overview of the application. The community council should discuss and recommend if the project is something they think fits with local priorities and should be assisted by CGS.
5. The community council should inform SCBF of their recommendation for the application.
6. SCBF will issue a grant offer and support evaluation and monitoring. SCBF will pay the grant either in full or in instalments depending on the project's needs.
7. SCBF intend that all applicants are informed of a decision within eight weeks of receipt by SCBF.

Key factors for considering Tier 2 applications

- Local need – to what extent is the project important in your local area.
- Fit with local priorities - to what extent does the project comply with the local aims and objectives of the community council area.
- Evidence of demand/need for project - to what extent can the project demonstrate evidence of community demand/need now and in the future.
- Community engagement - to what extent has the community been engaged in developing the project.
- Ongoing commitment - what degree of involvement will the community have in implementing and supporting the project.

### Tier 3

SCBF will fully administer and decide on Tier 3 applications. Tier 3 applications will be scored and appraised by SCBF staff and decided upon by an SCBF fund panel. The fund will open at set intervals throughout the year.

## 6 Role of Community Council

Community councils have an important role to play in ensuring the fund is used to address local needs and local priorities.

- Each community council must decide how to promote the scheme and attract applications.
- Up to 5% of their annual allocation can be used to promote the scheme.
- A maximum of 33% of each community council's annual allocation can be used for Tier One applications.
- Give consideration to the SCBF strategic priorities* where the fund for their area is oversubscribed when making decisions on applications.
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*Viking Community Fund Strategic Priorities

- More younger people wanting to stay and/or come back to Shetland.
- Better transport links within and between communities.
- Better broadband and/or mobile phone connections.
- Reduced cost of living in Shetland.
- Improved housing supply and affordability.
- Preservation and enhancement of Shetland's natural environment.

If a community council decides not to participate in the CGS, the SCBF officers will decide on any application under £25,000 for that area and any award will be deducted from that area's CGS allocation. Applications over £25,000 will be considered by the SCBF management committee.

## 7 Conflicts of interest when decision making

Each community council have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with SCBF, outlining the way the scheme will operate and their responsibilities.

All community council members should declare any interests that may have a bearing on their role in making recommendations for the CGS. Any conflict of interest should be recorded on the project's feedback form. If you are not sure what to declare, or whether/when you should make a declaration, please consult SCBF.

A conflict of interest is any interest in an application that may create a danger of bias or reasonably cause SCBF, other community council members, or the wider community to think that it could influence their recommendation. Conflicts of interest can be financial and might include a situation where you, or a close family member, are an employee of an organisation that hopes to receive a grant from the fund or can reasonably expect to be commissioned to carry out paid work as part of a funded project. The aim of this approach is to protect both

the community council, SCBF and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety.

- SCBF must be informed of all declared conflicts of interest which should also be recorded by the community council. SCBF should be consulted on any issues that may arise regarding conflict of interest.
- It is crucial that community councils make unbiased and fair judgements of grant applications against the general aims of the fund programme and summarised in the fund guidelines.
- Community councils should take the information provided in the application at face value and avoid making speculative assumptions about the applicant or project. If you have any additional questions about an application, please contact SCBF to request further information from the applicant.

## 8 GDPR

In 2018 new data protection legislation was implemented in the UK. The legislation is called the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The new law gives improved control to individuals on how their data is used e.g. they can request a copy of information that an organisation holds on them and they are entitled to transparency over how their data is processed and stored. You can find out more information on the legislation here: https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Data-protection-for-community-groups.pdf

Because of the way that SCBF will be handling the CGS applications, the personal data shared with community councils will be limited, however, there is still an obligation on community councils to handle Personal data within GDPR regulations. This is covered in the MoU and Data Sharing Agreement. That is why it is important for each community council to have signed both of these documents.

## 9 Other considerations

- If a community council has a question relating to an application, the query should be directed to the SCBF who will raise it with the applicant.
- Applicants should not try and influence or discuss directly with a community council member on fund decisions and if contacted the applicant should be directed to SCBF.
- Community councils should consider making arrangements for considering projects during periods when there are no formal meetings to ensure SCBF are informed of recommendation within six weeks of receipt of proposal.
- On any issues regarding the CGS the decision of SCBF will be final.

## 10 SCBF Contact details

If you have any queries regarding the CGS, please contact:

SCBF Fund Manager, Eleanor Gear.
Tel: 07538 417 175 or Email: eleanor.gear@scbf.org.uk

Or,

SCBF Senior Administration Officer, Emma McKay
Tel: 07785 991 945 or Email: emma.mckay@scbf.org.uk

## Appendix 1 – Further information on who can apply, how often and what cannot be supported

### Who can apply

**Tier 1**

- Any local organisation, community group, charity, or club can apply to their community council for funding. Applications can be considered from any group – including those who don't have a written constitution or set of rules – and individuals, but not for personal profit.

**Tier 2 and Tier 3**

- Social enterprises, charities, organisations, community councils or businesses* which need funding to support projects or activities consistent with SCBF objectives may apply for a grant. You must have a constitution (governing document or set of rules), be set up on a not-for-profit basis and have independently verified or audited accounts.

### How often can applicants apply

**Tier 1 and Tier 2**

- They can apply for more than one Tier 1 grant per year, up to a total value of £2,000, but not towards the same purpose.
- They can apply for one Tier 2 grant per year (12 months from the date on your last successful grant offer) but not towards the same purpose as a Tier 1 grant.
- They can reapply for the same project if 12 months has passed since their last grant award, however, they should be aware that repeat applications may gather less support.

**Tier 3**

- They can apply annually to the Tier 3 fund, subsequent applications are accepted 12 months from the date of their last successful grant award.
- They can apply for the same project if 12 months has passed since their last grant award, however, they should be aware that repeat applications may gather less support.

### What activities is the fund unable to support

- The advancement of religion or party politics.
- Activities that are generally understood to be the exclusive responsibility of a statutory authority.

- Projects primarily benefiting residents outside Shetland.
- Activities contrary to the interests of VEWF or its affiliates.
- Activities likely to bring VEWF or its subsidiaries into disrepute.
- The costs of energy consumption.
- Anti-renewable energy/wind farm activities.
- Trips abroad unless for educational purposes.
- General fundraising appeals or activities.
- Retrospective funding (i.e. paying for costs incurred before a decision on an application to the Fund for support can be made).
- Individuals for their direct gain
- The purchase of firearms
- Fees for performing at an event
- Fees for professional media broadcasting of an event