

Hutton Community Fellowship AGM

Chairs report on activity in 2018/2019 including the current year

The Fellowship met 3 times in 2019 - 24 February, 28 April, 25 August. They agreed and completed the funding application to be submitted in May 2019 for Minsca funding and secured £2364.95 for 2019/20. Projects funded using the Minsca funds include:

- Hutton Community Fellowship cost of Public Liability Insurance and admin costs.
- Hutton Primary School for a school trip
- Funding for the Open day at Chariots of Fire
- Funds for repairs to the Noticeboard
- Community trip to Edinburgh

Funding for further community events and training events and the school remain available for the rest of 2019/20. Ideas welcome.

Projects funded using the Ewe Hill Funds include:

- Quad bike training
- The Community Consultation exercise
- Crockery and a phone line for the Hall
- Funding for Hutton Curling Club
- Funding for Hutton Singers

There remain significant funds in the Ewe Hill pot. It is expected that the current community consultation exercise will give some new ideas that HCF can pursue to utilise these.

Community Consultation. The community consultation exercise has been funded in partnership with the other communities receiving Ewe Hill 6 funding. This has been done through the Dumfriesshire East Community Benefit Group (DECGB) formed by those communities to receive and distribute funds from the Ewe Hill Windfarm. DECGB secured £20k from Local Energy Scotland for this work. The communities have contributed £1k each from Ewe Hill 6 funding and DECGB £5k from the Ewe Hill 16 funding. This enabled DECGB to tender for consultants. The successful group, Creetown Initiative, were appointed in March 2019 and are now engaging the communities. They are due to present a draft community plan to DECGB by February 2020. The plan will contain a section relating to ideas from Boreland community. This will indicate the types of projects the community want to see funded going forward.

For people in the HCF area the next steps in the consultation include concluding face to face meetings, an online questionnaire, open public meetings, identification of potential projects, meetings re potential projects, presentation of draft plan.

Ewe Hill 16 Funds. HCF contributed to the work of DECGB by attending meetings to allocate the Ewe Hill 16 funds, normally for larger projects. These took place in March and September. The results are available on the DECGB website at: <https://www.decgb.org.uk/news/>. Thirteen projects were supported in March and four in September with a couple deferred for more information.

Crossdykes Windfarm. Meetings have also been held with Muirhall Energy who are developing the Crossdykes windfarm. In November they presented a report to the communities who will benefit from funds from this new wind farm. The report set out the benefits that might be had by communities if they took on part ownership of the windfarm. Muirhall are offering up to 10% of the income stream. The communities met with Local Energy Scotland (LES) in January and agreed the need for both legal and financial advice before they could consider the merits of such a major undertaking. DECBG agreed to seek funds to enable it to secure such expert opinion. This has been a complex undertaking due to its novelty (in terms of scale) and the original grant award from LES proved inadequate for the cost of the work after tenders were received. LES has increased the grant available and contracts have now been issued to two companies who will work on the proposal with the communities. Crossdykes has now commenced construction and the communities have until the end of 2020 to decide whether they take up this opportunity or not.

The communities have also been invited to meetings with Energiekontor who are proposing a 9 turbine windfarm near Crossdykes. This would also generate community benefit funding. The company are also offering the communities a share in ownership on a similar basis to Muirhall Energy at Crossdykes. That investigation will be helpful in informing the communities about this or other similar offers.