

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

'Making a Difference in East Ayrshire Communities'

ALERT



5 December 2025

Local Energy Scotland – CARES Community Solar Fund

This is a short-term pilot, funded by the Scottish Government and Great British Energy, funds must be spent and claimed by 31 March 2026.

Through the Fund, grants of up to £80,000 are available to community groups, registered charities, and other not-for-profit organisations across Scotland to support the installation of solar panels and battery storage in community buildings.

Demand is expected to be high for this funding, with many communities already in a position to mobilise projects very quickly. Funding will be allocated on a first come first served basis. If you are developing a new project, read the guidance and self-assessment checklist carefully and prioritise seeking a quote if you think you are eligible.

Funding is intended for self-managed community buildings, such as village halls, community centres, community hubs, sports facilities, and faith buildings.

To be able to install within the pilot timescale, easier installation projects will be more suited to this funding. Therefore, while it is not a requirement, it is suggested that the proposed project:

- Is not in a conservation area or within the curtilage of a listed building.
- Is under 50kW of solar PV.
- Is on an easily accessible roof, which is built after 1930s (as the roof will be more likely to meet structural requirements).
- Is not part of a more significant building renovation that would increase the risk of programme delays.

Funding will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

[Local Energy Scotland - CARES Community Solar Fund](#)

Bank of Scotland Foundation – Empower

Empower offers real security and certainty for charities with unrestricted funding of up to £250,000 over five years (£50,000 per year).

Eligible organisations must:

- Operate in Scotland.
- Have a minimum of three years of accounts lodged and checked at OSCR.
- Have an annual income of between £150,000 and £500,000.
- Work with vulnerable groups.

Funding is unrestricted to allow charities to use the funding in the way they feel to be most beneficial.

Eligible costs include core costs, delivery costs, project costs and general running costs.

The deadline for applications is 10 December 2025.

[Bank of Scotland Foundation - Empower](#)

Henry Smith Foundation – Holiday Grants

This grants programme helps to provide opportunities for children aged 13 years or younger who face financial hardship, systemic inequity or disability to go on a short recreational holiday or outing they would not otherwise have the opportunity to experience. Priority is given to fun and new experiences, such as camping, adventure activities, or visits to the seaside. Trips must take place within the UK, Isle of Man or Channel Islands.

Youth groups and UK based non-profits with an organisational income below £2 million and schools in the UK can apply for a one-off grant of between £500 and £3,000 (an increase of £250 for 2026) to support a day trip or a longer residential of up to a week for groups of children aged 13 years or younger.

Trips should be to low-cost places. Trips to high-cost places such as expensive theme parks, musicals or sporting events will not be considered as the funder wishes to support as many applications as possible. The average cost per child per day in 2025 was £64, though higher costs will be covered for groups with children who need additional support to meet their additional needs.

Applications should be received at least six weeks before the date of the trip.

This fund is open for applications three times a year and applications are accepted based on when the trip is happening.

The deadline for applications for trips between 12 January and 30 April 2026 is 10 March 2026.

[Henry Smith Foundation - Holiday Grants](#)

Macmillan – CARE Grants Programme

The Macmillan CARE (Culture • Agency • Respect • Equity) Grants Programme is a pilot programme provided and administered by Macmillan Cancer Support as part of its work to make cancer care better for everyone, no matter who they are or where they live in the UK.

The programme is designed to test how community-led approaches can tackle deep-rooted unfairness in cancer care.

Up to £1.5 million is available for this first round, with grants ranging from £50,000 to £150,000. Grants are for either one or two years.

This pilot programme will fund community-led projects that offer new insights and impact. Grants will focus on three key areas:

- Cultural Responsiveness in Cancer Care - projects that help healthcare services better understand and meet the cultural needs of different communities and remove barriers to person-centred care.
- Shared Decision-Making - projects that make it easier for people to understand their treatment options, take part in decisions about their cancer care, and reduce unfair differences in how this happens.
- Dementia-Friendly Cancer Care - projects that support people living with both cancer and dementia, improve their care experience, and help them and their carers take part in treatment decisions.

The grants will support:

- Staff and people costs.
- Project delivery costs.
- Evaluation and learning costs.

The programme is open to voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) organisations based and working within the UK.

The deadline for applications is 23 January 2026.

[Macmillan - CARE Grants Programme](#)

Music for All – Community Project Funding

The grants programme aims to give a helping hand to projects and initiatives across the UK that are seeking to bring music to their communities. The funding is for groups that need assistance to fulfil their potential in developing truly sustainable music programmes.

Groups, schools, any form of educational establishment, community projects, charities, organisations, companies and individuals that are bringing music to their communities in the UK can apply.

Applicants must be in deprived or marginalised areas developing music education for those living in the area (this includes but is not limited to social infrastructure).

The following grants are available for the current round:

- Grants of up to £1,500 for groups working with those facing chronic diseases and conditions affecting quality of life.

- Grants of up to £1,500 for groups working with those facing financial hardship.
- Grants of between £1,000 and £6,000 for youth clubs and comparable organisations to support mentoring/coaching of local young people outside of their school/higher education setting as well as eight-track software, audio interface hardware, cloud subscription, studio kit, instruments with cases and amps.

In addition:

- Up to 30 half-size pure tone classical guitars are available to groups/schools using entry level half-size acoustic guitars
- Up to 60 descant recorders are available to groups/schools. The recorders are suitable for beginners only and includes 'Walking in the Air' sheet music. Note, no cases available.

Priority will be given to applicants who are most in need of help.

Decisions are usually conveyed within three months of the application deadline.

The next deadline for applications is 14 January 2026.

[Music for All - Community Project Funding](#)

SUEZ Communities Fund Scotland

Through the SUEZ Communities Fund for Scotland, £200,000 is available annually for the following types of projects:

- Land Reclamation (Object A) - the reclamation, remediation, restoration, or other operation on land to facilitate economic, social, or environmental use.
- Community Recycling (Object B) – community-based recycling, reuse, and waste prevention projects.
- Public Amenities (Object C) - to provide, maintain or improve an amenity that is used primarily for leisure and recreation. The amenity must be open to all sections of the community for at least 104 days a year.
- Biodiversity (Object D) - the conservation or promotion of biological diversity through the provision, conservation, restoration or enhancement of a natural habitat or the maintenance or recovery of a species in its natural habitat.
- Historic Buildings, Structures or Sites (Object E) - the maintenance, repair or restoration of a building, other structure or a site of archaeological interest which is a place of religious worship, or a site of historic or architectural or archaeological interest and is open to the public.

Public Amenity, Biodiversity or Historic Building projects must be within 10 miles of a SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK landfill site or transfer station. Applicants can verify their eligibility through the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency's (SEPA) National Grid Reference [Search Tool](#).

Typically, there are three funding rounds per year.

The deadline for applications is 18 February 2026.

[SUEZ Communities Fund Scotland](#)

Tesco – Stronger Starts

Applications are being accepted from schools and organisations working with children and young people.

Examples of eligible projects include:

- School Breakfast clubs
- Holiday clubs
- Play areas
- Food banks
- Counselling and support services for children
- Equipment or non-statutory services for nurseries or schools e.g. forest schools, library books
- Equipment for Brownie, Guide or Scout Groups e.g. camping equipment, badges
- Services or equipment to support children and young people's health
- Equipment/kit for youth sports teams

Funding up to £1500 is available for projects and Tesco customers will be able to choose which project receives the most funding by voting in store every time they shop.

[Tesco - Stronger Starts](#)

The 7stars Foundation

Registered charities and organisations across the UK working with young people can apply for funding to deliver projects and work that supports young people aged 18 years and under across the priority themes of abuse, addiction, child carers, and homelessness.

- Project Grants: One-off grants of up to £5,000 for projects that support young people and align with the Foundation's themes.
- Shine Bright Long-Term Grants: Two-year grants of up to £30,000 per year for innovative, long-term projects that help future-proof children's lives and address the root causes of disadvantage.
- Child Poverty Grants: Two-year grants of up to £30,000 per year for bold, innovative ideas to end child poverty. Grants are unrestricted and designed to strengthen an organisation so it can tackle the complex realities of child poverty and make a lasting, meaningful impact.
- Social Impact Grants: Two-year grants of up to £5,000 per year for charities working to address key societal issues affecting young people, including both direct solutions and approaches that address the wider societal challenges linked to the Foundation's focus areas. In this funding round, there is an emphasis on child exploitation and child mental health.
- Individual Grants: Small grants of up to £500 for safeguarding professionals (such as social workers, lawyers, school outreach officers) representing a young person within the UK, in the care or legal system, who needs some extra help.

The next deadline for applications is 2 February 2026.

[The 7stars Foundation](#)

Youth Scotland – Grassroots Youth Work Fund

Youth groups across Scotland working with vulnerable people aged 11 to 25 can apply for small grants of up to £2,000 through the Youth Scotland Grassroots Youth Work Fund. The scheme aims to help organisations maintain safe spaces and provide positive experiences for young people.

The support is intended for work with those living in areas ranked SIMD 1–2 or experiencing multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) linked to poverty, criminal activity and anti-social behaviour. All activity must be completed by 31 March 2026.

Eligible applicants include Youth Scotland member groups and other community-based youth organisations. Groups must have an annual turnover below £500,000. Non-members must be constituted voluntary bodies with appropriate governance, safeguarding measures and a bank account.

Funding can be used for activity programmes, one-off events, equipment, materials, travel and youth worker costs. Examples include outdoor physical activity, peer mentoring, workshops addressing risk-taking behaviours and creative projects designed to support emotional wellbeing.

The deadline for applications is 11 December 2025 for non-members, and 15 December 2025 for member groups.

[Youth Scotland - Grassroots Youth Work Fund](#)

East Ayrshire Council Community Grant

The next deadline for applications is 13 February 2026

[East Ayrshire Council Community Grant](#)

Renewable Energy Fund

To check the next deadline for applications please contact Democratic Services at Council HQ on 01563 554400 or eaarenewableenergyfund@east-ayrshire.gov.uk.

[Renewable Energy Fund](#)

Tincornhill Quarry Fund

For further information on application criteria and deadline dates please go to:

[Tincornhill Quarry Fund](#)

East Ayrshire 4 Community

If you are looking for external funding for a particular project then please remember to register **FREE** at East Ayrshire 4 Community by going to the following link:

[East Ayrshire 4 Community](#)