Argyll & Kintyre 257kV Local Fund – Consultation Report

Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

T R A N S M I S S I O N

Part 1: Consultation Summary

Fund Overview

The Argyll & Kintyre 275kV Local Fund is made up of community benefit funding associated with the infrastructure of the following projects:

- Inveraray – Crossaig 275kV Overhead Line
- Crarae Substation
- An Suidhe Substation
- Craig Murrail Substation
- Creag Dhubh to Dalmally Overhead Line
- Creag Dhubh to Inveraray Overhead Line

As per the government guidance, and the SSEN Transmission community benefit approach, the value of the fund is £3,268,000.

Consultation Overview

Consultation for this fund took place across September and October 2025 with the aim of:

- Reaching as many community members and key stakeholders across the area as possible.
- Increasing local awareness of community benefit funding across the area.
- Engaging with community members and key stakeholders to understand the current priorities for the area and any local plans which may already be in place.
- Using the information gathered to define the area of benefit, fund structure and priorities for the fund.
- Identifying any need to develop local capacity to deliver local projects.

To achieve these aims, ahead of the consultation period, extensive stakeholder mapping took place as well as local area research. All key stakeholders were contacted to notify them of the upcoming consultation, and in addition, all events were advertised using social media, existing mailing lists, posters and local newspaper adverts. A number of meetings were held with the Argyll and Bute Council to understand the area and existing work on community priorities.

The consultation consisted of:

- 7 in-person events
- 2 online events
- Survey available in range of formats for completion

Across all in-person and online events, 116 people participated in the consultation. In addition, 26 people completed the survey, and 7 people responded with specific email feedback.

The key outcomes of the consultation are detailed in the summary below.

Key Community Priorities

Across both the consultation events and the survey responses, the following key community priorities were highlighted:

- Community infrastructure
- Amenities and local services
- Community / rural transport
- Youth engagement

- Health and wellbeing
- Housing
- Education
- Employment and Skills

These above themes were all highlighted across community actions plans and local place plans. In addition, these local action plans also highlighted the following priorities:

- Cycling and footpaths
- Outdoor spaces and sustainability
- Tourism

Community Capacity

The majority of survey respondents believed that there were already organisations in the area able to support in delivering community projects.

The importance of supporting Development Trusts and Community Action Planning was highlighted at the consultation events. There were also discussions around working strategically with delivery organisations to support projects which were already planned and supporting Community Trusts to build the capacity of local organisation to further project development.

Fund Structure

There was a general agreement that money should be made available across the whole area impacted by the infrastructure, taking into consideration the 10 key community council areas.
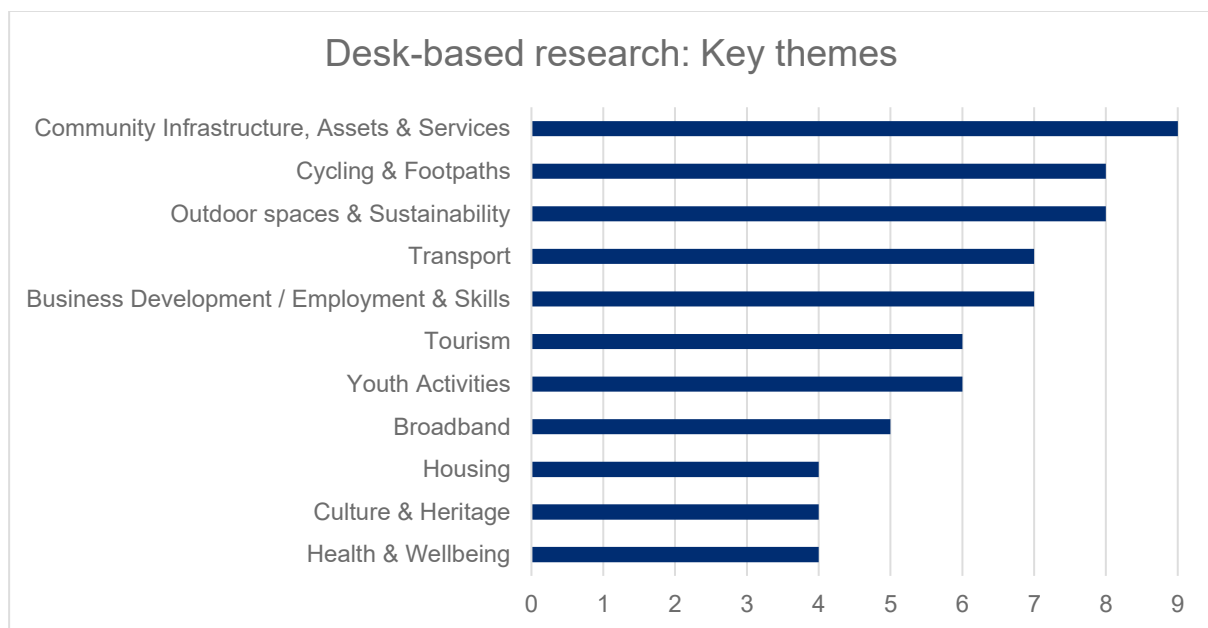
The need to access a wide range of funding was highlighted, e.g. microgrants as well as large project grants, both revenue and capital project support. Survey respondents highlighted the need to fund ongoing service provision, e.g.running costs.

There was general consensus that the funding should be available for a minimum of 3-5 years (possibly more to allow the time for project development).

Part 2: Consultation Details

Local Area Research

Ahead of the consultation events taking place, desk-based research was conducted with the aim of understanding the priorities of the local area and any current plans of local organisations. This involved reviewing all available Community Action Plans and Local Place Plans, as well as reviewing any relevant Local Authority documentation, e.g. Economic Strategy. A summary of this research can be found in Appendix 1, where the key themes of each plan have been categorised. These key themes are detailed below, according to the number of plans in which they were mentioned:

Desk-based research: Key themes

Theme	Value
Community Infrastructure, Assets & Services	9
Cycling & Footpaths	8
Outdoor spaces & Sustainability	8
Transport	7
Business Development / Employment & Skills	7
Tourism	6
Youth Activities	6
Broadband	5
Housing	4
Culture & Heritage	4
Health & Wellbeing	4

Consultation Events

Summary

Across all sessions, there was not a strong preference for the duration of the fund, with most people saying 3-5 years. There was a view that 3 years may be too short, as this would not allow enough time for ideas to progress from an idea to being ready to submit an application.

The key priorities raised across all sessions were:

- Community infrastructure – halls and hubs
- Community transport – the difficulties of rural transport and the wider problems that this causes
- Activities for young people
- Importance of funding projects that bring long-term benefit to the area
- Having easy access to smaller sums of money
- Community support – expertise to help with project development, community action planning, development trust support
- Access to mental health support
- Community ownership
- Housing
- Activities for older people

In addition, there was also discussion with East Kintyre Renewable Energy Group (EKREG) about potential strategic partnerships to support community plans that are already in place.

Event / Date & Time	No. of Attendees	Key Discussion Points
Dalmally Community Centre, Monday 8 September, 5.30pm – 8pm	16	• Community infrastructure – halls and hubs • Community transport – the difficulties of rural transport and the wider problems that this causes • Activities for young people • Importance of funding projects that bring long-term benefit to the area
Lochgilphead Community Centre, Tuesday 9 September, 10am – 12pm	17	• Youth activities • Having easy access to smaller sums of money • Having expertise to help groups with project development
Lochgilphead Community Centre, Tuesday 9 September, 1pm – 4pm	12	• Rural transport • Activities for young people • Access to mental health support
Tarbert Village Hall, Tuesday 9 September, 5.30pm – 8pm	21	• Community infrastructure • Community action planning • Development Trust support
Carradale Village Hall, Wednesday 10 September, 10am – 12pm	12	• Discussion with Trust (EKREG) representing a number of community council areas in Kintyre due to number of proposed and operating energy projects in area. Clear action plan and opportunities to consider strategic partnerships • Community ownership of vacated hotels and properties (draft plan being submitted by Ann Leslie, CEO LAR Housing Trust links to area) • Hall improvements
Inveraray (Loch Fyne Hotel), Wednesday 10 September, 1pm – 4pm	5	• Activities for young people • Housing
Inveraray (Loch Fyne Hotel), Wednesday 10 September, 5.30pm – 5pm	5	• Activities for young people • Activities for older people • Rural transport
Online Sessions, Tuesday 16 September, 6.30pm – 8pm and Friday 19 September, 12pm – 1.30pm	28	These were used as an information session, and key priorities were not discussed in detail. Attendees were encouraged to complete and return the survey.

Email & Key Stakeholder Feedback

In addition to the completed surveys, we received some individual email feedback. These highlighted the following priorities:

- Education / health and wellbeing – funding school water bottles; heating system at Taynuilt Primary School
- Community infrastructure / transport – repairing a bridge
- Youth activities – funding a pump track
- Cycling / walking routes

We received comprehensive consultation responses from Tarbert and Skipness Community Trust, Tarbert and Skipness Community Council, and Argyll and Bute Council, which outlined the following:

Tarbert and Skipness Community Trust

- Community Priorities: These are outlined in full in their Community Plan, which was developed through a community engagement process (Note: this plan has been reviewed as part of the Local Area Research detailed above). Within their response, the Trust highlighted affordable housing, mental health and isolation, apprenticeships for young people, local footpaths and managing motor homes / camper vans as key community priorities.
- Community Capacity: Issues highlighted around community organisations not having the capacity to develop project proposals to application stage. It was suggested that funding is provided to local Community Trusts to support in building this capacity.
- Area of Benefit: Funding to be made available to communities close to the infrastructure, with at least 75% of funded projects being located in the key priority community council areas.
- Funding Available: Grants of all sizes to be available, covering both revenue and capital projects. The Trust suggested that grants of up to £5,000 are administered by local Community Trusts. Funding to be available over a 5-year period.

Tarbert and Skipness Community Council

- Community Challenges: The need to protect the culture, nature and infrastructure of the area, including keeping vital local services open and in good condition, e.g. schools, libraries and village halls.
- Community Priorities: The main priorities highlighted were cycle/footpaths, amenities/local services and community infrastructure.
- Community Capacity: There are the relevant organisations in place in the area to progress community projects.
- Area of Benefit: Funding to be available only to the 10 Community Council areas that have been recognised within planning documentation for the infrastructure.
- Funding Available: Grants of all sizes to be available, covering both revenue and capital projects. Funding to be available for 3-5 years.

Argyll & Bute Council

- Community Challenges: Issues with an ageing population and population decline. The difficult geography of the area has led to disparities in terms of access to essential services, housing, employment opportunities, business efficiency and economic outcomes.
- Community Priorities: Recent engagement with communities via the Community Planning Partnership identified housing, transport connectivity, and community wealth building as the top three priorities across the Local Authority area. The priorities of the council cover the areas of communities; children and young people; environment; housing; economic growth and population; transport infrastructure and digital connectivity; sustainable service delivery and speaking up for Argyll and Bute.
- Community Capacity: There are a range of Community Councils, Development Trusts and charities across the area that can support in progressing community projects.
- Area of Benefit: Funding to be available across the whole local authority area.

- Funding Available: Grants of all sizes to be available, covering both revenue and capital projects.
- Additional Comments: Request that the public sector should be eligible to apply for funding, as long as this is not used for statutory services.

Survey Results

Demographics

26 individuals completed and returned the survey. The demographics of these individuals are broken down as below:

Gender	
Male	11
Female	11
Did not say	4

Age	
25 – 34	1
35 – 44	3
45 – 54	1
55 – 64	4
65+	15
Did not say	2

Community Council Area (Live or Work)	
Lochgilphead	3
Ardrishaig	3
Tarbert & Skipness	5
Glenorchy & Innishail	4
West Kintyre	3
East Kintyre	4
Outside of Priority Community Councils area	4

Community Priorities and Fund Structure

The survey (see Appendix 2) asked a series of questions regarding community priorities and views of fund structure. These were either open questions, or respondents were required to tick boxes. The results of these questions are detailed below. Where an open question was posed, these have been organised into common categories according to the responses received. Please note that for all questions, individuals may have responses with multiple answers (e.g. community priorities are cycle pathways and local amenities).
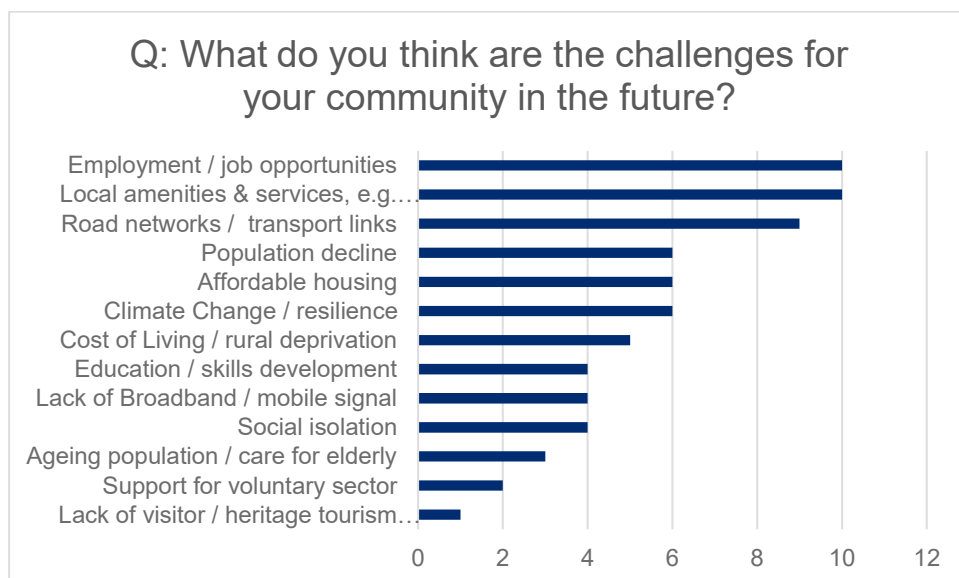
1. **What do individuals like most about their communities?**

The highest-ranking reasons for liking the local community were providing a sense of belonging / community spirit and access to the natural environment. Example answers were: "It is a beautiful area with space to live, breathe and enjoy nature"; "The people and the unspoilt areas"; "Wonderful countryside and seascapes"; and "A real sense of community and belonging."

Q: What do you like most about your community?

Category	Value
Sense of belonging / community spirit	~18
Nature / Environment	~17
Activities / facilities in the area	~5
Rural Community	~3
Peaceful	~3
Rural School	~1
Lack of crime	~1
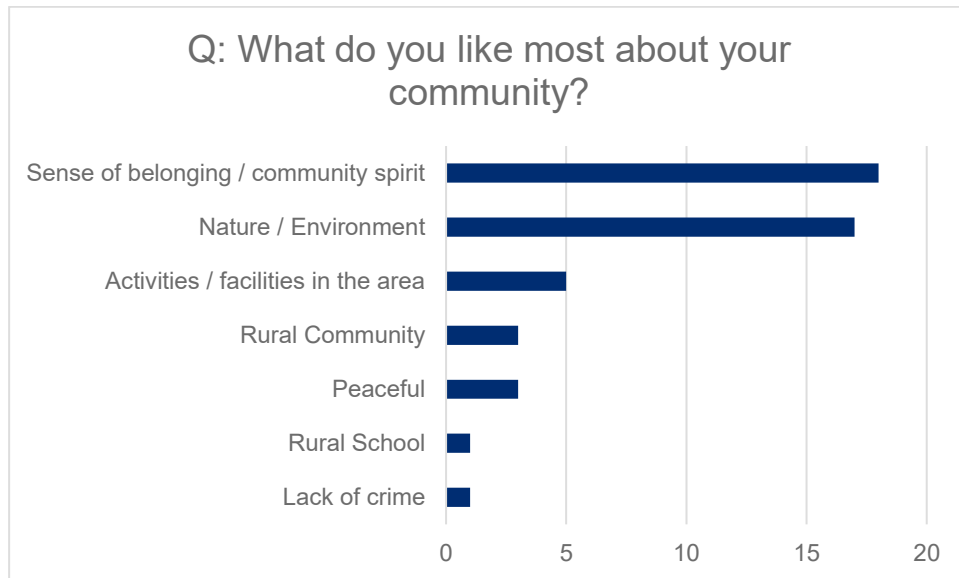
2. **What do individuals think are the upcoming challenges for the community in the future?**

The highest-ranking challenges were Employment / job opportunities; Local amenities & services; and road network / transport links. Example answers were: "Improved roads"; "Maintaining basic services in a remote rural area."; "There is a lack of available housing for local people. Businesses find it hard to recruit workers as there is a lack of places to live "; "Poor and unreliable transport links"; and "Employment – attracting people aged 20 – 40".

Q: What do you think are the challenges for your community in the future?

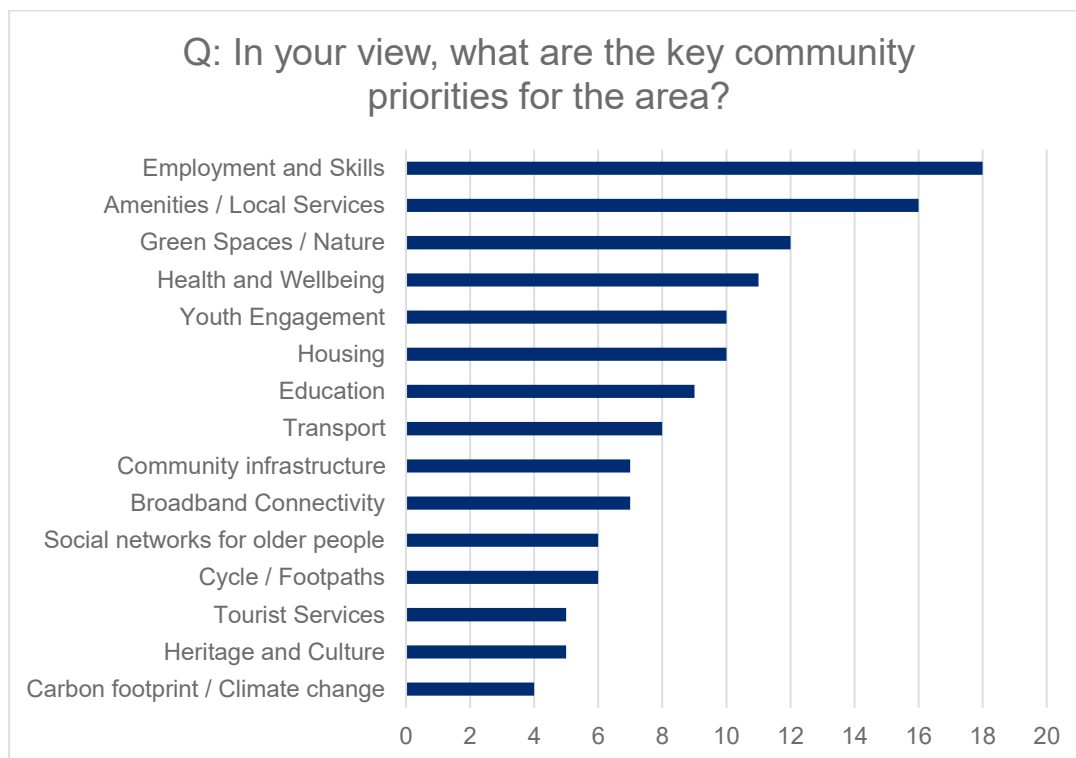| Category	Value
Employment / job opportunities	~10
Local amenities & services, e.g…	~10
Road networks / transport links	~9
Population decline	~6
Affordable housing	~6
Climate Change / resilience	~6
Cost of Living / rural deprivation	~5
Education / skills development	~4
Lack of Broadband / mobile signal	~4
Social isolation	~4
Ageing population / care for elderly	~3
Support for voluntary sector	~2
Lack of visitor / heritage tourism…	~1

3. What do individuals believe are the key community priorities for their area?

The highest-ranking priorities were employment and skills, amenities / local services and green spaces / nature. This was closely followed by health and wellbeing, youth engagement, and housing.

Example reasons given included:

- "These challenges unaddressed perpetuate the problem serving as a disincentive for young people to stay in the area and new people to move in"
- "Education / skills essential to hold families and provide essential workforce to allow other social priorities to follow and flourish."
- "Green spaces are a really important resource for wellbeing and need to be protected."

Q: In your view, what are the key community priorities for the area?

| Priority	Value
Employment and Skills	18
Amenities / Local Services	16
Green Spaces / Nature	12
Health and Wellbeing	11
Youth Engagement	10
Housing	10
Education	9
Transport	8
Community infrastructure	7
Broadband Connectivity	7
Social networks for older people	6
Cycle / Footpaths	6
Tourist Services	5
Heritage and Culture	5
Carbon footprint / Climate change	4

4. Do individuals believe that the community has appropriate organisations in place to support the progress of community organisations?

The majority of respondents (20 no.) believed that the area does have the organisations in place to progress community projects. Organisations that were named were:

- Community Councils – West Kintyre, East Kintyre, Lochgilphead, Ardrishaig, South Knapdale.
- Community Trusts / Development Associations – Glenbarr Community Development Association, Ardrishaig Community Trust, Tarbert & Skipness Community Trust, Carradale Community Trust.
- Other organisations – Tarbert Harbour Authority, Tarbert After School Care, East Kintyre Renewable Energy Group, Carradale Village Hall, LiveArgyll, Argyll & Bute Third Sector Interface, Mid Argyll Youth Development Service, Argyll & Bute Council.

Q: In your view, does the local area have the
relevant organisations to support in
progressing community projects?

■ Yes ■ No ■ Unsure
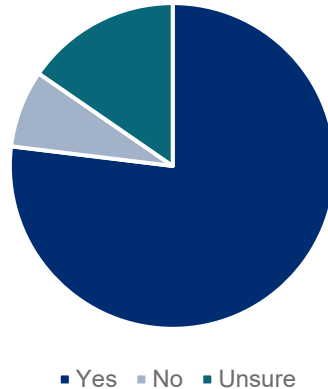
5. **Where do individuals believe that community funding should be available?**
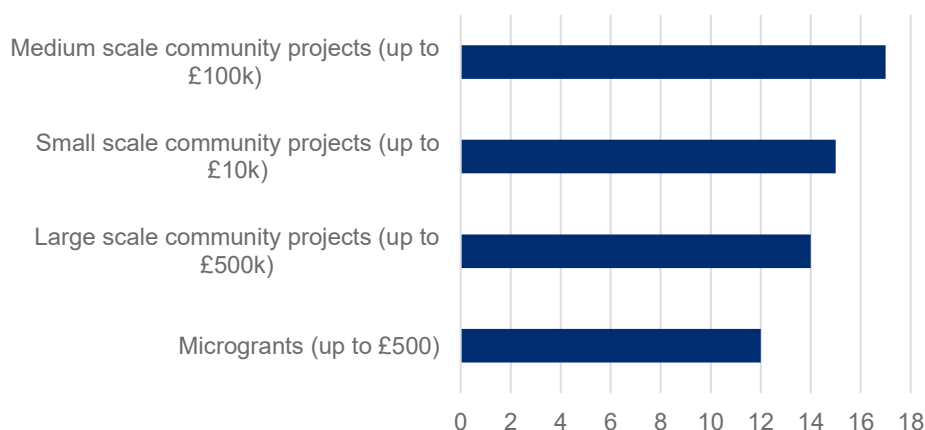
All respondents stated one of the following:

- Funding should be available within a specific community council area (all community councils named are already being considered a priority for the fund), or;
- Funding should be available across the wider area, e.g. "Distributed fairly across the whole length of the line"; "Communities living beside or near the electrical infrastructure"; "the funding should be spread throughout the area, allowing communities to feel that they are not being ignored".

6. **How much money do individuals believe should be available for individual projects?**

There was no clear majority answer to this question, reflecting a need for a range of different funding options.

Q: How much money do you believe should
be available for individual projects?

Medium scale community projects (up to £100k)

Small scale community projects (up to £10k)

Large scale community projects (up to £500k)

Microgrants (up to £500)

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18

7. **How long do individuals believe that community benefit should be available for?**

The majority of the answers suggest that funding should be available for longer than 2 years. Reasons given included: "3-5 years will provide time for communities to develop larger scale projects which take time to bring to fruition"; and "Longer term commitment is of great benefit to charities planning".

Q:How long do you believe community benefit should be available?
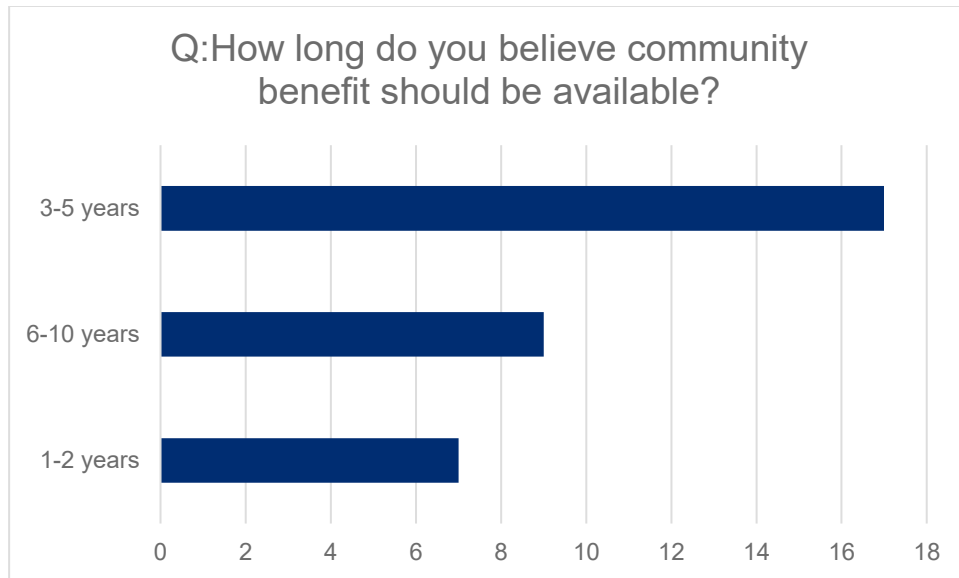
8. **What type of projects do individuals believe should receive funding?**

The highest-ranking answer was that funding should be available for both capital and revenue projects. Reasons given highlighted that flexible funding was required to meet varied needs of the different communities in the area:

- "Different communities have different priorities, some need capital project funding as ourselves, others need revenue support which we might also need in the long term"
- "To cover a diverse range of projects"
- "Quite often projects can consist of capital and revenue costs, therefore it would broaden the options for organisations/groups, dependant on their current circumstances".

Others highlighted the need for funding for ongoing support for services and local community organisations:

- "Lack of funds for maintaining services"
- "I would prefer that existing bodies continue to exist and benefit from support"
- "Supporting pre-existing organisations rather than starting new initiatives will be a more effective use of the funding."

In addition, 2 individuals commented that funding should be made available to third parties to distribute:

- "Funding should be disbursed by third parties who have local plans in place"
- "There are community trusts across this area which have the capacity to distribute funds within their communities and have structures to ensure they meet community priorities."

Q: What types of projects should be prioritised for funding?
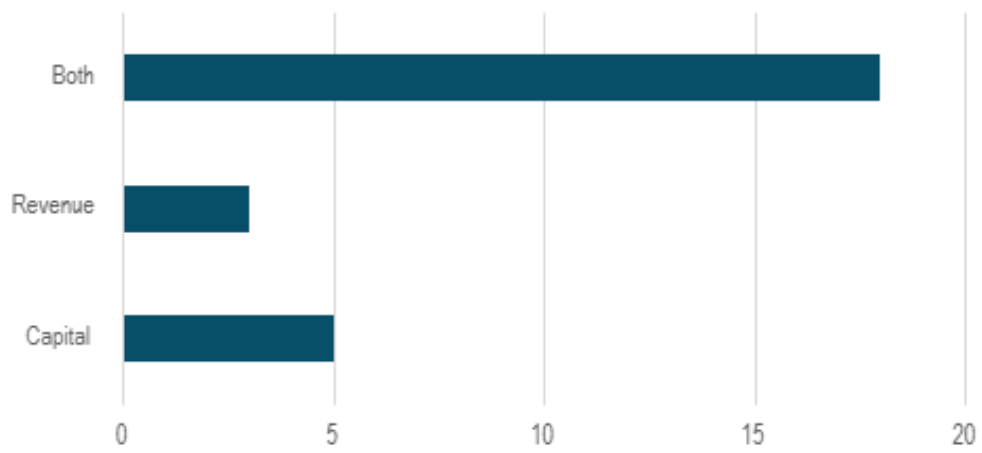
Appendix 1 – Local Area Plans

	Business development / Employment & Skills	Community infrastructure / assets / services	Outdoor spaces & Sustainability	Health & Wellbeing	Cycling & Footpaths	Youth activities	Tourism	Transport	Culture & heritage	Housing	Broadband
Inveraray (CAP)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Dunadd (CAP)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			
Ford (LPP)		X	X						X		
Tarbert & Skipness (CT Plan)	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
West Kintyre (CAP)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X
East Kintyre (LDP)		X	X		X			X			X
Glenorchy & Innishail (CAP)	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
West Loch Fyne (CAP)		X			X	X	X			X	
Lochgilphead (Community research)	X	X	X		X		X	X	X		X
Council Plans (Corporate / Economic Strategy, LOIP)	X	X				X		X		X	
TOTALS	7	9	8	4	8	6	6	7	4	4	5

Appendix 2 – Survey

General

What is your connection to the Kintyre area? (live in the area / work in the area)	
If you live in the area, please provide a Post Code or details of which Community Council area you live in.	
Are you a member of or involved in running any local community organisation(s)? If so, please name the organisation(s).	

Priorities

What do you like most about your community? For example, what is good about living and working in the area? What things most need to be protected for the future?	
What do you think are the challenges for your community in the future? What would make your community a better place to live and work?	
In your view, what are the key community priorities for the area? Please choose a maximum of 3 priorities.	☐ Cycle / Footpaths ☐ Transport ☐ Broadband connectivity ☐ Green Spaces / Nature ☐ Amenities / Local Services, e.g. community shop, community centre activities ☐ Education ☐ Employment and Skills ☐ Heritage and Culture ☐ Community Infrastructure, e.g. village hall redevelopment ☐ Tourist Services ☐ Housing ☐ Health and Wellbeing ☐ Youth Engagement

	☐ Social networks for older people
	☐ Carbon footprint / Climate Change
	☐ Other
If you have selected 'Other', please provide further details of what you believe the key community priorities are.	
Why have you chosen these as your priorities?	

Community Capacity

In your view, does the local area have the relevant organisations to support in progressing community projects? E.g. Community Councils, Community Trusts, local charities.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure Please provide reasons where possible and name any relevant organisations.

Fund Structure

Where do you think Community Benefit Funding should be available? This is defined as the area of benefit.	
How much money do you believe should be available for individual projects? (Please tick as appropriate)	☐ Microgrants (up to £500) ☐ Small scale community projects (up to £10,000) ☐ Medium scale community projects (up to £100,000) ☐ Large scale community projects, e.g. capital redevelopment (up to £500,000)
Please provide reasoning for your answer above.	
How long do you believe community benefit should be available? (Please tick as appropriate)	☐ 1-2 years (aiming to fund large scale projects) ☐ 3-5 years ☐ 6-10 years (funding smaller projects over a longer period)
What types of projects should be prioritised for funding?	☐ Capital projects (e.g. the purchasing or renovation of a community building) ☐ Revenue (e.g. community group staff costs, events and activities)

	☐ Both
Please provide reasoning for your answer above.	

Additional Comments

Please provide any additional comments you may have on the Local Fund, that has not been covered in previous questions.	

Personal Information

Your answers to the following questions will help us understand the view of different groups of people. You do not need to provide any personal details that could identify you if you do not wish. In that case, please select the "Prefer not to say" option, or leave the box blank.

Name	
Email Address	
Which age band are you in?	☐ Under 16 ☐ 16 to 24 ☐ 25 to 34 ☐ 35 to 44 ☐ 45 to 54 ☐ 55 to 64 ☐ 65+ ☐ Prefer not to say
How do you describe your gender?	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other ☐ Prefer not to say
Are you happy for us to contact you again in the future to further discuss your provided answers?	☐ Yes ☐ No