

The Highland Council
Nairn and Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee
18 March 2015

Agenda Item	8.
Report No	NBS 06/15

Landfill Communities Fund

Report by Director of Community Services

Summary

This report invites Members to approve an application to the Highland Council Landfill Communities Fund.

1. Background

- 1.1 Landfill Operators, including The Highland Council, pay a tax to the Government on every ton of waste that they dispose of in a landfill site. The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) allows the landfill operator to offset 5.1% of their landfill tax liability and gives a 90% tax credit against their donations to organisations who deliver Environmental Objectives, and are registered with ENTRUST, the Government regulator for the LCF.
- 1.2 The Highland Council removes the need to register with ENTRUST by employing E B Scotland a 'Distributive Environmental Body'. This means that E B Scotland register the projects in the Council's name and undertake all regulatory and administrative responsibilities.
- 1.3 The Highland Council, as a Landfill Operator, distributes its Landfill Communities Fund to local biodiversity conservation projects with a maximum contribution of £10,000 to any one project annually, subject to approval by the appropriate Area Committee as agreed by Members when they considered report COM /03/14 to the Community Services Committee on 15 May 2014.

2. Application for Consideration

- 2.1 Members are invited to approve the following application to the Highland Council Landfill Communities Fund. The details of the project are set out in **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 **Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Green Gym**
TCV Green Gym transforms people's quality of life and wellbeing whilst also improving the local environment for the community. Participants take part in a three to four hour weekly programme of practical outdoor activity, such as planting trees, building footpaths and creating community gardens.

3. Project Costs and Recommendations for Allocation of Funding

The table below details the total project cost, the amount requested, and the proposed allocation

APPLICATIONS	TOTAL PROJECT COST	AMOUNT REQUESTED	RECOMMENDED ALLOCATION
Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Green Gym	£11,200	10,000	10,000
TOTAL			£10,000

4. Implications

- 4.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report.
- 4.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 4.3 There are no equality implications arising from this report.
- 4.4 There are no climate/Carbon Clever implications arising from this report.
- 4.5 There are no risk implications arising from this report.
- 4.6 There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report
- 4.7 There are no Rural implications arising from this report.

Recommendation

Members are invited to approve the application.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 20 February 2015

Author: Neil Downie

Background Papers: **Appendix A**

Appendix

Name of Project: Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Green Gym®

Applicant: TCV Scotland

Background: TCV's purpose is to "Work together with people and communities to transform their health, prospects and outdoors places for the long term." This is our leading goal in the Strategic Business Plan 2013-16, with Green Gym identified as the core activity that will help us achieve our purpose.

TCV Green Gym transforms people's quality of life and wellbeing whilst also improving the local environment for the community. Participants take part in a three to four hour weekly programme of practical outdoor activity, such as planting trees, building footpaths and creating community gardens. A social prescription model is used, where medical and mental health organisations refer people to the programme, which can be tailored to meet specific health and social objectives for participants. People can also self-refer and all participants are regarded as volunteers making an important contribution to their community and green spaces.

Evaluation work undertaken by TCV and partner agencies shows that:

- 100% of participants, surveyed across the UK agree that taking part in the Green Gym has benefited their mental health, boosting self-esteem and confidence through learning new skills and completing new tasks
- Volunteering has a greater effect on the most deprived who show the most change as a result of their experience, including a significant positive change in the way they engage with their community
- Projects which involve residents in improving local green spaces have been shown to result in greater social and community cohesion, and an increased feeling of safety in the community
- Working out in green spaces is a great way to relieve stress and can help to combat depression

By joining the Green Gym participants will become more active physically and develop new social skills and connections. This will help them to make positive decisions about their own health and wellbeing. People will connect with nature and other people, and through these connections, become better equipped to cope with mental health and other issues. People will be part of intergenerational groups helping to overcome social isolation and exclusion, boosting confidence for all generations, as well as improving self esteem by providing a regular sense of achievement. People will learn new skills while undertaking practical conservation

activities within their local green spaces increasing their potential to find work. All of this contributes to enhance personal resilience of the local community.

Project Description: A monthly programme of activity will be produced and widely distributed, as a promotional tool, to ensure any new volunteers are able to join in. Green Gym activities will focus on the Grantown-on-Spey area and include the following key activities:

- **Scrub clearance & path improvement works at Roche Moutonnee, Dulnain Bridge, near Grantown-on-Spey** - Scrub clearance, path improvement works and ongoing general clean up activity around these spectacular glaciated rock features.
- **Invasive species removal at Kylintra Meadow, near Grantown-on-Spey** - Removal of non native invasive species such as Snowberry.
- **Grant Park Pond enhancement, Grantown-on-Spey** - Deepen and enhance pond in mown area to increase biodiversity.
- **Path maintenance at Beachen Woods, Grantown-on-Spey** - Paths need cutting back of vegetation and some other path works within this mixed woodland near the centre of town.
- **Invasive Species Removal & various path works at Anagach Woods, near Grantown-on-Spey** - Path works, removal of invasive non-native species and other works at this unique pine forest on the doorstep of Grantown-on-Spey.
- **Invasive species removal on River Nairn and at Kingsteps Quarry, Nairn** - Uprooting and safely disposing of, primarily, Himalayan Balsam at these 2 locations.

Key Costs:

£1200: Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Green Gym® Development – 2 days @ £300 (office based – Munloch - research and promotion) and 2 days @ £300 (In situ partner referral Green Gym taster /Information days – Nairn and Grantown-on-Spey areas)

£9600: 32 weekly sessions @ £300/session. This cost includes provision of Green Gym trained TCV staff member, instruction, crewbus/transport, tools and comprehensive insurance. Some additional TCV led preparatory and development activity will also take place, at no additional charge, to facilitate a quick and effective commencement of this project.

£400: Publicity allowance to cover the design and production of project publicity leaflets.

Total Project Cost: £11,200
Amount Requested from LCF: £10,000

Timescales: project will take place between 1st April 2015 and 31st March 2016.

Benefits provided:

The proposed outcomes of the Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Green Gym programme will include:

- Provision of a range of environmental learning activities across the project area
- Providing opportunities to engage more people in a healthier lifestyle, increasing fitness and confidence as well as reported improvements in mental wellbeing and reduced feelings of isolation
- Increased levels of physical activity amongst participants who are not meeting the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) recommendations for physical activity, who are obese and/or have physical or mental health problems. Enable participants to meet the CMO's guidelines for physical activity, and to sustain their activity at this level.
- Ensure the participating communities feel sufficiently informed and empowered to continue working in a sustainable structure and format
- Strengthen partnerships through making local connections with other local community, environmental, health and educational establishments (statutory and 3rd Sector)
- An improved environment will provide a safer, more attractive and pleasant place to live as well as enhancing accessibility and biodiversity in across key sites.
- The participating community members will have benefited from the health improvements environmental volunteering can bring and will be inspired to continue growing and improving their community.
- Delivery of a range of practical conservation outcomes in line with local Greenspace/Neighbourhood/Biodiversity strategy targets.

Other Funding sources:

TCV Scotland will source the additional funding from Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).