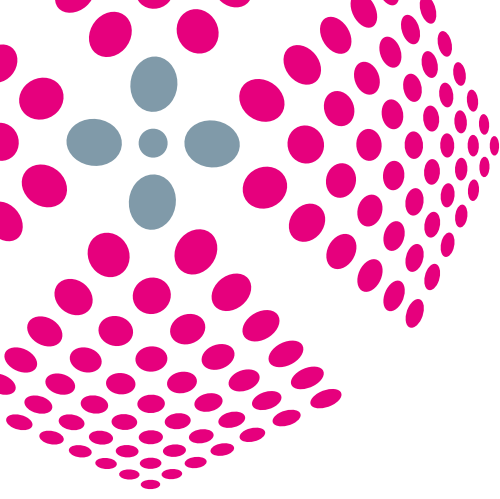


Scotland Funders' Forum



Beneath the radar:
Investing in small local organisations



Beneath the radar



The Scotland Funders' Forum is a gathering of funders in Scotland, including statutory bodies and independent grant making trusts, who are committed to best practice in funding the voluntary and community sector and to maximising the impact of funding for the benefit of Scotland. We come together to share information, to identify and address areas of common interest and to share best practice and learning.

We believe that small voluntary and community groups are a vital part of the fabric of local communities, play a key role in helping to uncover, understand and address local need and crucially, help to unlock and connect local people. These small local groups are often of the people, by the people and for the people. They tend to operate with few paid staff, little financial security, and are often the most likely to struggle in contributing in the dialogue about the priorities for future local investment.

We are concerned about the uncertain future facing these groups in the current funding environment and the communities they support. We think their voices, direct experience and ability to mobilise local involvement are all critical in meeting the challenges ahead.

Much attention of late has been focused on the risk to mainstream services of reducing public sector budgets, and the demand to deliver better services with less. We support the voices within the third sector and beyond, who have identified an urgent need for all partners to sit down and plan jointly how to deliver improved local services within their areas, balancing expenditure effectively between existing needs and preventative work.

As funders, we want to be able to play our part in improving the lives of people and communities in need, by investing in these small local groups.

We have the opportunity to work with the Improvement Service, local government and others to raise awareness of the particular contribution being made by small local groups in building improved social cohesion, enhancing the quality of life of people, and empowering local people to drive the regeneration of their communities.

continued overleaf...



The following stories introduce and celebrate the valuable and diverse work being undertaken by our small local groups up and down Scotland every day. They highlight not only challenges, but also how enterprising many have been in adapting to growing demand and reducing core income. It is clear in their stories that their capacity is not without limit.

While the pressures on the voluntary sector have been building for a long time, we want to highlight that if we allow these small local groups to fail, we lose existing service provision for some vulnerable people and families.

We will, also, lose the goodwill, the commitment, the local structures with which we can work, and the knowledge and experience of those currently active in their local communities – the very assets on which we can build future success.

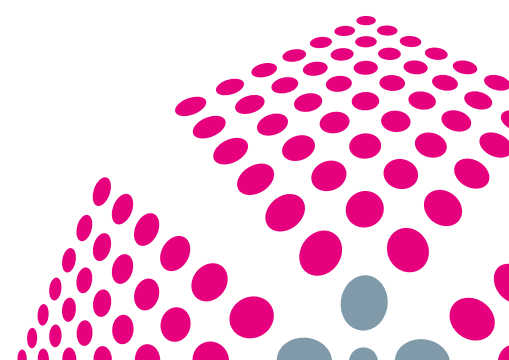
We will continue to monitor the impact of funding changes and challenges on the local, regional and national organisations we and others fund and share with partners what we learn from our dialogue.

We invite you to work with us in protecting investment in these small local groups during these challenging times.

We invite all who share our view, that these small local groups should be celebrated, valued and supported, to join us.

Mary E Craig OBE

Convenor, Scotland Funders' Forum



Starter Packs - Inverclyde

“It is about more than just providing basic household essentials. You are giving people a new start”

*June Glancy,
project co-ordinator,
Starter Packs*

Starter Packs Inverclyde is a simple, effective project, which provides people who are moving from homelessness to a tenancy with many of the practical basics they need to begin life in their new home. Last year the organisation supplied packs to 231 homes. This included 84 families and 137 children.

The charity started in 2002 and is run by a voluntary management committee and one part-time co-ordinator, June Glancy. June and her volunteers are tenacious in their efforts. By running their own fundraising events and applying for corporate donations, the organisation is now able to provide nearly 80% new goods.

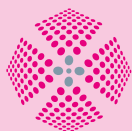
“We’ve seen that by treating people with respect - not giving a single man a flowery pink duvet, making sure everyone has a new kettle and some tea-bags, simple things like that - there has been a huge knock-on effect and tenancies are more likely to be sustained”, explains June.

However, while June and her volunteers are trying to provide more stable futures for others, the long-term prospects for Starter Packs are more precarious. Demand is growing but the ability to secure core funding is getting harder.



“With one salaried role paid by 3 separate one year grants, we are always on a knife edge and can only plan year to year. This year we have the added worry that our offices, which are donated, are up for demolition.”

But June is undaunted. With the help of a local volunteer, she is exploring using social media such as Facebook and Twitter to help increase her fundraising reach.



“We are concerned about the uncertain future facing these groups in the current funding environment and the communities they support.”

Guth Airson Iarrtasan Nis (GAIN) - Isle of Lewis

“Our most important outcome is building resilience in children”

Dr Gail Cunningham

Volunteer Development Officer, GAIN

GAIN (Gaelic for ‘A Voice for the Needs of Ness’) is a multi-award winning grassroots voluntary organization that was set up by a group of mothers who had no local play park for their children. Established in 1998, the original vision was “to enhance play and leisure facilities and encourage environmental awareness”. Since then, they have worked to transform a 4-acre derelict site into an outstanding resource for the whole community, in a very remote part of the country.

The park is fully accessible and features play structures and nature trails, as well as art installations designed and produced by local young people to reflect Norse and Celtic history. Many of these young people also act as volunteers in the running of the park.

It is a great success story but Dr Gail Cunningham, former chair and now part-time Volunteer Development officer for GAIN, is feeling very low. The group has been resourceful but it has always been difficult to get revenue funding, and now it is almost impossible.

“At our last AGM we had to explore the possibility that if the current funding issues continue, we may have to fold this year”, she says.

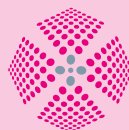
Dr Cunningham is a dynamic woman who is a part-time GP and a mother. Alongside her role as the volunteer development officer for GAIN she is also active in other local community groups. She is like many of the other members of GAIN who provide over 600 voluntary hours a year. Their capacity is stretched and the



current climate is making things increasingly difficult for longer established organisations to secure funding. Revenue funding for salaries is a particular issue.

“We are not hopeful of getting further funding are now having to consider other alternatives e.g. social enterprise or exploring the possibility of a wind turbine. This is probably beyond the current committee and would require a whole new group to look at income streams.”

But she is adamant that the park is not just a “nice to have” or “icing on the cake”. “It provides a building block for the community and it would be tragedy to lose this wonderful facility”.



“We celebrate the valuable and diverse work being undertaken by our small local groups up and down Scotland every day.”

Pink Ladies - Midlothian

“For many local women, Pink Ladies is a lifeline”

**Sheila Peaston,
Co-ordinator, Pink Ladies**

In 2006 Shelia Peaston and Maria Martin identified that there was no support for females over 50 who were struggling to cope with the demands of life. These two inspiring women then took the initiative to form Pink Ladies, a voluntary organisation working with women experiencing stress, anxiety or depression.

The initial success of the project has been impressive. One woman who previously attended a course has gone on to train as a teacher’s assistant. Another lady who had been struggling with alcohol abuse issues is now in a position to be supporting people with autism.

Originally for women over 50, the confidence building courses and support are now available for all ages. Many of the women are referred either by their GP or by their local authority and might have mental health problems or a history of substance abuse.

Pink Ladies has hit on a unique formula of providing professional help but also having a local and personal approach.

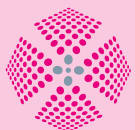
Sheila Peaston says: “We have feedback saying that people can smile again thanks to our courses, that they can walk down the street

again and say hello. These don’t sound like major things, but to the person involved, it is massive”.

But despite the success of the project, Shelia and Maria are very worried that they will have to close their doors this summer as they have no future funding at the moment.

“We have a waiting list of over 55 women and although feedback from the local referring agencies, who identify the programme as a much needed resource, has been overwhelmingly positive, much valuable time is spent looking for and trying to secure funding. Our co-ordinators are paid as sessional workers, per course, and we have no full time paid staff. Lack of funding is making planning for the future extremely difficult.”

“We have various funding applications in just now and are waiting to hear back. If we don’t get the funding, our future is questionable, but we are determined to keep trying and won’t go down without a fight.”



“If we allow these small local groups to fail, we lose existing service provision for some vulnerable people and families.”

St Andrew's Family Support Project – Dundee

"I like the things we can do together with our kids"

Young parent and project user

With the highest level of teenage pregnancies in Europe and over six thousand single families in the area, the need for a service to support young mothers and their children is vital in Dundee.

While several projects have now been established, the St Andrew's Family Support Project really stands out for its joined up partnership approach.

The organisation was started in 2005 to help young parents (under 21) to develop positive interactions with their children. Originally it provided a playgroup two hours a week, with some support if needed. Today, the organisation is run by one full-time and three part-time staff. With the help of 22 volunteers they provide healthy lunches, playgroup sessions, and an antenatal group, as well as childcare and personal development support for young mothers who want to access training, educations or employment.

It is a testament to the success of the groups that many attendees come back to say hello and also to help. For mothers aged 22 and over, there is even a new group started by one volunteer mum.

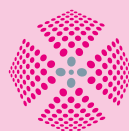
Kathryn Miller is the project leader: "We are delighted that the project is becoming much better known in the community. It has really



helped with fundraising and we have even started attracting a new group of younger volunteers who are students."

But even a project like this is currently struggling with funding issues. "We are lucky to have recently secured some core funding but we still have to find funding for a project worker after Christmas and recently found that we now have to find an additional sum of money to cover rent", says Kathryn. "It is difficult to find money to cover existing work, even when it is being successful, as funders are focusing on putting money into new projects".

The Trustees are currently pursuing different avenues of funding. If these are unsuccessful, the service offered by the project will reduce.



"We believe that small voluntary and community groups are a vital part of the fabric of local communities."

Glenboig Neighbourhood House - North Lanarkshire

“Since we started eleven years ago we feel we have made a major contribution to rebuilding community spirit in Glenboig”

*Teresa Aitken,
Glenboig Neighbourhood House
development manager*

Glenboig Neighbourhood House is located in the former mining village of Glenboig in North Lanarkshire and provides services for the whole community.

With 100 volunteers, 3 full time and 2 part time staff, they supply adult education, youth work, a carers support group, community café, crèche, reminiscence group, citizen advice surgeries, a fruit and veg initiative and there is even a pipe band and a pigeon club.

The Neighbourhood House has been particularly successful bringing together the traditional mining community and the residents of the new homes that have sprung up in the area. Their partnership approach led by local people has also been instrumental in helping to attract funding for the new Village Park. They have even more ambitious plans for the future.

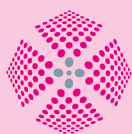
Glenboig Neighbourhood House development manager Teresa Aitken said: “ We currently operate from two former police offices but our dream is to have our own custom-built Life

Centre which will be totally inclusive and cater for all ages and activities in Glenboig and to set up a community transport scheme to reduce isolation and give people access to jobs and learning opportunities.

While funding for her post ends at the end of March, Teresa remains confident about the future of the organisation.

“We are delivering what a national organisation would deliver at a fraction of the price and we are embedded in the community so we know what the community want.”

Although funding for key posts have not yet been confirmed, they remain positive about the future. The ambition of achieving a purpose built Life Centre is one step closer with planning permission granted and site investigations complete.



“If we allow these small groups to fail we will lose the goodwill, the commitment, the local structures with which we can work, and the knowledge and experience of those currently active in their local communities – the very assets on which we can build future success.”



Curam Centre – Anderston, Glasgow

“It is so important that something like this exists. If it closed, there would be nothing in this area”

**Irene Hendry,
Curam Centre lunch club
co-ordinator**



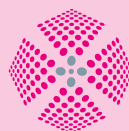
For the past fourteen years, Irene Hendry has been running a lunch club every Wednesday in Anderston Kelvingrove Church, Glasgow. Catering to around 50 older people every week, Irene and three other helpers provide a hot meal and entertainment such as Bingo or crafts.

Some weeks, at the request of their clients, they just provide teas and coffees and time for a chat. They have also recently started running a “tuck shop” with home-baking which has proven to be very popular. But as Irene explains, it is much more than just a hot lunch.

“Many of our clients are on their own, and for some of them the lunchclub might be the only social contact they will have all week.

We had one lady who visited no-one, not even her family, but came to the centre every Wednesday until she died”.

The Curam Centre originally planned to provide services 5 days a week but only managed to secure funding for a lunch club on Wednesdays. They are however grateful to have their funding secured from Glasgow City Council this year. Irene is philosophical about the situation, saying “There is so much more you could do, but you do the best you can”.



“Small local groups are often of the people, by the people and for the people.”

Fife Arabic Society - Fife

“The majority of our services are delivered by tireless volunteers who do excellent work with very limited resources”

**Adnan Miyasar,
co-ordinator of Fife
Arabic Society**

When Fife Arabic Society (FAS) was founded in 2000, its function was mainly social, providing cultural events and gatherings. Now, the community has grown and its needs are more complex. And the Society has responded by expanding its range of activities.

Last year for example, FAS ran Arabic classes at a local high school; hosted a range of sporting and cultural activities to bring young people from different backgrounds together; responded to Scottish Government policies and consultations; developed a women’s sports programme to allow Arab women to associate with women from other backgrounds in a social setting; provided translation and interpreting services for people accessing health, education, and legal services; and ran a variety of training programmes to help members of the community find and sustain employment. They also continued to hold their annual barbeques and gatherings during Ramadan as well as running a successful men’s football team.

All of this was achieved by a group of dedicated volunteers as there is no core funding for paid staff. Relying on volunteers obviously has its problems. “We are not always as active or as effective as we would like due to lack of time and skills”, explains Adnan Miyasar, co-ordinator of Fife Arabic Society. “Larger charities have dedicated fundraisers and accountants, we have to rely on goodwill.”

It is always difficult to secure core funding and in the present climate almost impossible. Adnan is keen for a dedicated core funding scheme to be available for small local grassroots organisations. “Local groups have the strong links with the community and provide valuable services but we need help to raise our standards, particularly with writing grant applications which are getting more complicated”.

Despite the issues with funding, Adnan is excited about the future and says that FAS is now in final stages of negotiations to take over the lease/ ownership of a property, which has the potential to be developed as a community centre.



How members of the Scotland Funders' Forum are supporting Scotland's small local groups



Creative Scotland invests £500,000 a year in the Awards for All programme which is

administered by BIG Lottery Fund Scotland. The Awards for All programme offers awards of up to £10,000 for projects, projects and capital and capital.



The Angus Council Community Grant Scheme supports community and voluntary groups across Angus with grants of up to £5,000

towards projects in the fields of community, arts, heritage, sport or the environment. Similar schemes operate in many other local authority areas in Scotland.



BBC Children In Need's Small Grants scheme is designed to help

community groups with funding for work with children and young people. They are committed to continually improve the scheme as they know small amounts of money make a positive difference.



Comic Relief's Local Communities Programme

(delivered through the Community Foundation Network) awards small grants (up to £10,000 a year) to improve the lives of people who are excluded or disadvantaged through low income, rural or social isolation, age, disabilities, race, sexuality or gender.

The Scottish Community Foundation



distributes funds on behalf of companies, individuals and charitable trusts to support a wide range of community groups

throughout Scotland. Applications for small grants can be made at any time.



The Volunteer Action Fund's Community Chest grant

programme aims to increase the capacity and resilience of community led organisations to achieve their aims and to increase their impact. This is achieved through small grants of up to £1,000, workshops, advice and support and multi topic website.

How members of the Scotland Funders' Forum are supporting Scotland's small local groups *continued...*



The Lloyds TSB Foundation for

Scotland supports charities working with disadvantaged members of the community and operating with an income of less than £25,000 who can apply for up to £2,500 for use towards running costs, equipment or services.



Youthlink Scotland's CashBack for Communities Fund

provides for events and activities, that are diversionary in nature for young people aged 10 -19 years, in areas of deprivation or where there is need that offer learning and development opportunities, using a youth work process.

AWARDS FOR ALL SCOTLAND The Big Lottery Fund Scotland's Awards for All programme

offers grants of between £500 and £10,000 to communities across Scotland to enable people to take part in community activities and supports projects which promote education, the environment and health in the local community.



FiSCAF – Faiths in Scotland Community Action Fund

works with small local faith groups, building hope by providing grants and support in the struggle against poverty in Scotland's most fragile urban and rural communities. It gives grants of up to £500 for training and development for local people; and grants of up to £5000 for organisation/project work.



People's Postcode Trust

provides funding for small grants of between £500 and £10,000 across the UK, with the aim of making a positive difference in local communities.

For more information on the Scotland Funders' Forum and each of the funders above please visit our website – www.scotlandfundersforum.org.uk



'It has been a real inspiration to have an opportunity to talk to some of these people and it has reminded me that when individuals are driven by passion and need, this stimulates innovation. Most of our public services emerged as a consequence of individual response to a need. As a country, we are in uncharted territory and we need the type of blue sky thinking that these small organisations bring to looking at local issues. Sadly, I don't know how many of them will survive.'

Morag Pavich

Biography

Morag is a Senior Communications professional with extensive global advocacy experience within the philanthropic, public and private sectors. The former Head of Communications for the Carnegie UK Trust, Morag took a learning break in 2010 to examine not for profit leadership, strategic communications and new philanthropy at Stanford University Business School in California. Prior to this she held the roles of Deputy Head of Community Affairs for Barclays plc in London and Director Media Relations for Hobsbawm Macaulay Communications. She has also worked as an independent consultant for the Scottish Government, Young Enterprise and Glasgow City Council. In her free time she is an active fundraiser for local charities and sits on the Scottish advisory committee for BBC Children in Need.

