

BUCHANAN COMMUNITY HYDRO SOCIETY COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND 2025

FUND GUIDANCE



THIS GUIDANCE SHOULD BE READ IN FULL BEFORE APPLYING TO THE FUND.
PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION BY 1ST MAY 2025

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WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND?

The Buchanan Hydro Community Benefit Fund has been established as a means of enabling Buchanan Community Hydro Society to financially support communities within its remit area.

Money for the fund comes from financial surpluses from the community owned Buchanan Hydro scheme - a 100kWp run of river hydro scheme located on the Achlais Burn, near Milton of Buchanan on the east side of Loch Lomond. <https://buchananhydro.coop/>

These guidance notes have been produced to assist those seeking grants from the fund and to clarify the governance, administrative and decision-making processes underpinning the fund.

WHO MAKES UP THE COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND DECISION MAKING PANEL?

The Community Benefit Fund Panel will be the member-elected Directors of Buchanan Hydro Community Benefit Society.

WHAT IS BUCHANAN HYDRO COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETY?

Buchanan Hydro Community Benefit Society is a FCA registered Community Benefit Society which was established in 2018 to provide a community led legal structure for the governance of the Buchanan Hydro scheme. This structure ensures that any profits generated by the hydro scheme are applied either to a general reserve for the continuation of the Society or to make payments for social and community purposes within the community served by the Society (see map on page 3)

As per the governing document. the **Objects** of Buchanan Hydro Community Benefit Society is to carry on any business for the benefit of the community by:

- The development, installation, management, operation, generation, transmission and supply of energy from renewable and low carbon energy sources;
- The conservation of energy through advice on energy efficiency including energy efficient products and the supply of energy efficient products;
- The generation of income to provide support to community organisations in the locality of any energy project supported by the society;
- The promotion of awareness of environmental and related issues and support for educational initiatives related to renewable energy;
- Enabling the local and wider community to share in the ownership of, and invest in, renewable and low carbon energy generation and energy efficiency initiatives

HOW ARE THE SOCIETY DIRECTORS ELECTED?

The Society is owned and controlled by its **members** on a fair and equitable basis. Membership of the Society is open to all on the follow basis:

COMMUNITY MEMBER	ANYONE WITHIN THE DEFINED BUCHANAN BOUNDARY
ASSOCIATE MEMBER	ANYONE OUTSIDE THE DEFINED BUCHANAN BOUNDARY

At least 75% of the Society members must be Community Members.

The Society Board of Directors are elected by the Community Members. You must also be a member to be elected to the Board. Director elections take place at the Annual General Meeting on a transparent, one member one vote basis. It is the Society’s aspiration that not less than 75% of the Directors are Community Members. Currently 5 of 7 Directors are Community Members.

One third of Directors shall stand for re-election every year by rotation. The Board of Directors can also coopt Directors onto the Board in the interim period between AGMs – these Directors will be selected for their specific skills or experience and will be required to stand down at the following AGM. Coopted Directors may stand for reelection and be voted back on to the Board by the members.

HOW MUCH MONEY IS IN THE COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND? AND FOR HOW LONG WILL IT BE AVAILABLE?

The total amount of annual awards depends on rainfall and Power Purchase Agreements (electricity sales). In 2023 awards totaling £23,990 were made from the Community Benefit Fund. In 2024, the awards totaled £31,000. The Community Benefit Fund will be available for the lifetime of the hydro scheme which is expected to be 40 years.

WHAT ARE THE KEY DATES?

The Buchanan Hydro Community Benefit Fund will be an annual fund running from March – June as follows:

APPLICATION FORM AND GUIDANCE RELEASED	28 TH FEBRUARY
INFORMATION MEETING / Q&A	11 TH MARCH 2025 7PM BUCHANAN MEMORIAL HALL
APPLICATIONS OPEN	1 ST MARCH 2025
APPLICATION DEADLINE	1 ST MAY 2025
APPLICATION DECISIONS DUE	1 ST JUNE 2025
MONEY RELEASED	16 TH – 30 TH JUNE

WHAT IS THE MAX AND MIN AWARD?

MINIMUM AWARD	£200
MAXIMUM AWARD (UNCONSTITUTED GROUPS)	£1,000
MAXIMUM AWARD* (CONSTITUTED GROUPS)	£7,500

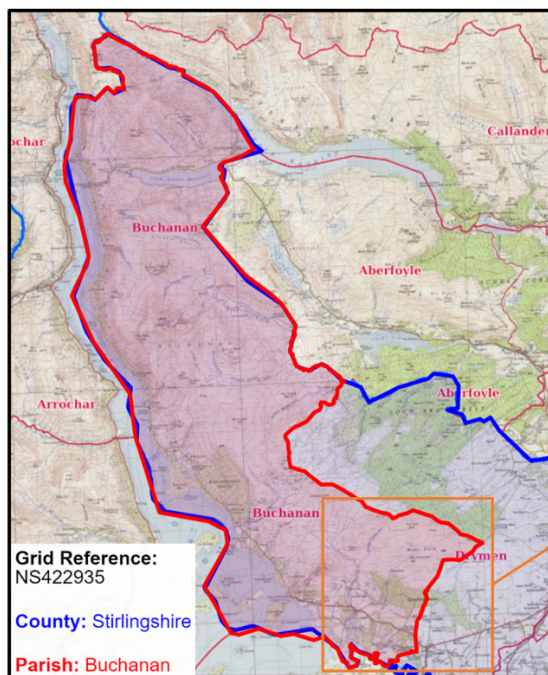
*We accept grant applications for up to £7,500 however we caution that where applications score similarly with a similar community benefit, smaller grant applications from different groups may be prioritised over one large application from one group to ensure as many beneficiaries as possible.

The BCHS Board reserves the right to assess multiple applications from the same applicant as one application. The BCHS also reserves the right to approve part-funding for an application. Part-funding will only be awarded following consultation and agreement with the applicant(s).

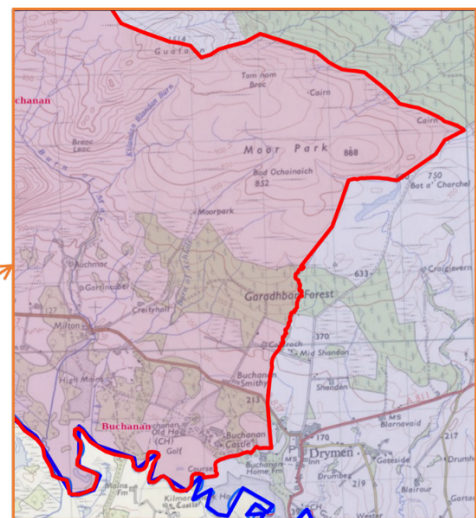
The Buchanan Hydro Community Benefit Society Board also have the discretion to make ad hoc awards of up to £200 for up to 5 causes in the course of the year. This is dependent on panel availability to assess applications and enough reserves carried over to cover the award.

WHAT IS THE GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARY FOR APPLICATIONS?

The geographic area of benefit covered is the Parish of Buchanan, from Rowardennan in the North, including Balmaha, the Milton of Buchanan, Buchanan Smithy and the Buchanan Castle Estate. The southern parish boundary is the Duke's Burn just to the west of Drymen.



Data source: National Library of Scotland



Note – While it may not be possible to achieve an even geographic spread of awards in each annual cycle, the Panel commit to reviewing this on a 3-year cycle to prioritise under-represented areas within the eligible area where needed.

WHAT PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES WILL THE BUCHANAN COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND SUPPORT?

This is not an exhaustive list but the types of activities anticipated which could benefit from the fund include:

- Local transport infrastructure and services e.g., roads & paths

- Local health and care services e.g., defibs & elderly
- Maintenance and upgrading of community assets
- Community resilience and well-being projects
- Biodiversity, environment and climate change initiatives
- Vulnerable residents and less abled visitors
- Employment and training support
- Youth work
- Digital inclusion

WHAT WILL NOT BE FUNDED?

Projects with the following characteristics will not be funded:

- Projects of no benefit to the local area and not addressing any of the themes listed above
- Projects that the state/local authority has a legal obligation to provide
- Improvements to land that is not open to the general public.
- Projects promoting party political or single religious events
- Deficit or retrospective funding (i.e. For activities that have already taken place).
- Private sector business.
- Vat that can be recovered by an applicant
- The purchase of alcohol
- Projects that cannot be completed within 2 years
- Individual benefit and private gain *

*except in exceptional circumstances – for example one off energy support payments / student support / accessibility equipment

WHAT CRITERIA MUST BE DEMONSTRATED?

Groups and organisations applying to the fund must:

- Be situated/the beneficiaries situated in the area outlined above.
- Have a constitution or set of rules setting out the organisation's aims and objectives (see additional notes for un-constituted groups)
- Have a management committee/trustee board or equivalent of at least three members
- Hold a bank or building society account in the name of the organisation (with at least two signatories) (see additional notes below for un-constituted groups)
- Be able to spend the grant within the specified timescale - 24 months from letter of offer.

Assessment of applications will be based on the following key criteria:

CRITERIA		Weighting
CLEAR OUTCOMES	Has the applicant clearly outlined what is going to be achieved as a result of the project/proposal?	10
COMMUNITY BENEFIT	Has the applicant demonstrated there is ongoing benefit for the community?	10
SHOWS EVIDENCE OF NEED	Has the applicant demonstrated evidence of clear community need for the project/proposal?	5
PROVIDES VALUE FOR MONEY	Does the project/proposal demonstrate clear value for money?	5
AVOIDS DUPLICATION OF SERVICES	Has the applicant demonstrated there shall be no duplication of services?	5
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	Is the project supported by committed and resourceful individuals who are engaged with the wider community.	5
Total Points		40

Additional Notes

- For grant applications over £500 the Panel will use a scoring process whereby applications will be scored out of 40 based on the weighting/points outlined above.
- For items over £500 please attach 1 competitive quote or estimate to this application form. For items over £1,000 please attach 2 competitive quotes or estimates to this application form.
- For grant applications of less than £500, a minuted Panel discussion will take place
- Un-constituted groups without a business bank account may apply if they are sponsored by another non-profit group who can receive the grant on their behalf. Or alternatively successful un-constituted groups can spend the money and retrospectively submit receipts/invoice for payment.
- Un-constituted groups can only apply for grants up to £1,000
- Projects awarded funding will be required to report back at or prior to the subsequent Society AGM
- The Society may require projects receiving funding to provide receipted evidence of actual spend – projects should therefore maintain records of their spend for (7) years in case this is requested

WHAT HAPPENS ONCE A DECISION HAS BEEN MADE?

All offers or refusal letters will be sent within a week of the Community Benefit Fund (CBF) Panel meeting. Offer letters will include any conditions imposed by the Panel. The grant offer must be formally accepted before payments can be made. You should not commit any money before you have received your offer letter and accepted the grant conditions.

GRANT RECEIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

- All applicants must report back to the CBF panel on completion of the project (within 2 years of grant award).
- Should you need to request a change of use for any funding you must submit your request in writing before committing or re-directing any funds.
- Should the project be discontinued, BCHS should be notified, giving reasons for discontinuing the project, any remaining funding must be returned for re-distribution to other projects
- Any **online or** press references with regards to the project should refer to the funding source.
- If applicable, suitable photographs should be provided to allow BCHS to promote the positive work that the fund has enabled.

WHAT DO I NEED TO SEND WITH MY APPLICATION?

- A copy of your organisation's governing document. For example, a set of rules, a constitution or memorandum and articles of association. If you are a small un-constituted group please provide a simple outline of your group's aims and objectives, demonstrating your link to the community.
- A copy of your organisation's most recent accounts or annual budget/cash flow forecast if your organisation is less than a year old. This is not required for small un-constituted organisations applying for less than £500.
- A copy of relevant policies related to your application – for example child protection, vulnerable adults, disclosure scotland certificate.

CONTACT AND SUBMISSION DETAILS

For an application form or if you have any questions, please contact the Buchanan Community Hydro Society Community Benefit Fund by writing to bchs.community@gmail.com