

## SUMMARY OF SHETLAND CLV 2023-24

The proposed activity in Shetland's Community Led Vision (CLV) document and Shetland's Community Led Local Development (CLLD) funding allocation for projects will build on learning and insight gained through involvement and evaluations of driving forward CLLD projects in financial year 2022/23 as well as the outputs of Shetland's involvement in the previous Rural Communities Test of Change projects.

Building on Shetland's CLV for the previous programme, and prior conversations on climate change, we understand that our communities have a key role in the transition to becoming a climate resilient and low carbon place to live and work - and in transforming the economy to deliver net zero.

It is apparent that there is already knowledge and awareness on climate change across Shetland and this provides a solid platform for further engagement and CLLD activity on climate action, including with young people. However, our communities are also acutely aware of levels of fuel poverty and the cost of living in Shetland, with concerns regularly expressed about the costs of increased electrification potentially negatively impacting on low income families/households, particularly in the context of the escalating cost of living crisis.

The higher costs of living in Shetland, which can be up to 60% more expensive than the UK average, means that around half our households already do not earn enough to live well. Our communities are clearly concerned about any unintended consequences arising from the move away from fossil fuels.

The focus of Shetland's CLLD activity will continue to support the delivery of projects that are in line with Scottish Government Priorities to help families and services through the cost of living crises (including eradicating child poverty) but also those which stimulate community-led action in relation to addressing the Climate Emergency - recognising that our communities have a key role to play in transforming the economy to deliver net zero.

The Shetland CLV shares that of the Shetland Partnership Plan in that we want:

*'Shetland to be a place where everyone is able to thrive; living well in strong, resilient communities; and where people and communities are able to plan and deliver solutions to future challenges'*

The Shetland Partnership's Priorities are:

**Place** – Shetland is an attractive place to live, work, study and invest

**Participation** – People participate and influence decisions or services and use of resources

**People** – Individuals and families thrive and reach their full potential

**Money** – All households can afford to have a good standard of living

The LAG will be focused on project delivery, supporting activities that will contribute positively to local people and local priorities and helping rural communities to thrive through community-led initiatives. The LAG will be responsible for ensuring that all activities and funding decisions are good value for money, have measurable impacts and are inclusive and of course, community led.

We know through ongoing community engagement that fuel poverty and the cost of living crises are key concerns. However, it is also evident that there is an impressive array of community led activity in relation to recycling, sharing schemes and community food growing taking place throughout Shetland - projects which reduce Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions but can also help address the high costs of living.

Whilst it is acknowledged that these small scale projects won't necessarily turn the dial on overall carbon emissions or rates of poverty on their own, they clearly have wider benefits for communities in relation to recreational space, more active lifestyles, community participation and encouraging healthier eating and overall wellbeing. As well as these co-benefits, they can also provide an invaluable entry point for further discussions on net zero, with communities being taken on a journey to consider further actions that might be needed to radically reduce GHG emissions in their areas.

With 60% of emissions reductions to meet net zero targets needs to come from societal change, we recognise that our communities therefore have a key role to play as part of that wider public engagement strategy and in the creation of sustainable communities.

However, as we are continuing to face the ever-escalating cost of living crises, it is also vital that we continue to empower communities to further tackle poverty, inequality and rural disadvantage with the local assets, services, and projects that they can develop and run. In doing so, we recognise that additional capacity building support may be required.

Shetland will use its CLLD allocation to stimulate activity in Shetland's communities and drive further community action on climate change and tackling the high cost of living impacts, with a particular interest in community led projects that can:

- Help alleviate pressures caused by the high cost of living (especially projects that will have a lasting legacy)
- Help rebuild community capacity to drive forward community led development, including (re)mobilising volunteers
- Enhance the sustainability of community led rural services and facilities through developing activity which increases income or reduces overheads
- Increase localisation by reducing the need to travel, including the concept of 'living well locally'
- Support further community food growing, food larders, community fridges and minimising food waste
- Increase recycling, upcycling and reduce waste
- Grow the circular economy
- Support the growth of community led ecotourism projects and initiatives
- Support research/learning into reducing carbon emissions locally and/or knowledge transfer
- Incentivise learning/training to increase carbon literacy and climate solutions in our communities
- Support nature based solutions to addressing climate change
- Demonstrate effective and meaningful cooperation along which result in new ideas and methods being introduced
- Demonstrate a clear potential legacy beyond the life of the CLLD programme

The Shetland LAG shares the Scottish Government's vision to create a wellbeing economy where the local economic system places the wellbeing of current and future generations at its core.

We do not wish to duplicate funding available elsewhere, but Shetland's CLLD funding allocation could also potentially provide essential match funding for organisations accessing other support focused on reducing carbon emissions or addressing impacts caused by the high cost of living.

The funding allocation is limited and so the projects prioritised for support will be those that can demonstrate longevity beyond the life of the 2023/24 programme, which contribute to addressing the high cost of living (and associated poverty) and those reducing GHG emissions and the creation and development of sustainable services.

Accordingly, our main focus for activity will aim to support sustainable projects which can be reflected within the following Scottish Government priority areas of:

- Helping families and services through the cost of living crises, including helping to address the drivers of child poverty;
- Transforming the economy to deliver net zero and;
- Creating sustainable public services