

Report to	Policy & Resources Committee
Date	15 July 2021
By	Funding Coordinator
Title of Report (Note)	Annual review of the Sustainable Communities Fund

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:

1) Receive and note the year-end position of the Sustainable Communities Fund

1. Summary and Background

- 1.1 The Sustainable Communities Fund (SCF) is a rolling fund established to provide grants to community and voluntary groups, social enterprise organisations and businesses for 'not for profit' projects.
- 1.2 At its meeting on the 16 October 2018 the National Park Authority agreed to transfer the Sustainable Communities Fund along with its remaining balance to South Downs National Park Trust, on the basis it could raise a match of at least equal value. To ensure proper scrutiny and well informed decision making an advisory panel, chaired by an SDNPA Member, advises on bids for funding between £2,000 - £10,000.
- 1.3 The Trust's fundraising was successful and January 2020 the Trust invested £331,390 with Quilters Cheviot. This investment is overseen by the Trust investment panel which includes the Trust's treasurer.
- 1.4 The aim of structuring the fund like this is that a portion of the return from the endowment is used to run the annual grants programme whilst the remainder is reinvested so that the endowment can grow and, in time, offer more funding than would have been possible through the Authority alone. Both the Authority and the Trust are recognised as founding patrons of the fund in perpetuity.
- 1.5 This report provides an overview of the [Sustainable Communities Fund](#) for the year. .
- 1.6 The Sustainable Communities Fund's application rounds have been closed and postponed in March 2020 in parallel with the lockdown. Project development and support has continued in anticipation for when the lockdowns is lifted and community projects of this nature can commence. An extraordinary panel meeting was held in December 2020 and a subsequent small grant round was held in January to respond to applications that were made just before the UK entered lockdown.

2. Value of the Endowment

- 2.1 In 2021 the Trust invested a further £40,000 in the endowment, from their unrestricted funds. This, alongside the return achieved by the fund, has resulted in a current value of £412,938 (as off 21/06/2021)
- 2.2 No revenue has been drawn down from the endowment to date as the Trust elected to take its current year SCF commitment from unrestricted funds, not the investment return. This was so as not to sell investments at a point where value their value may be subdued.

3. 2021 Grant Giving

- 3.1 The SCF has committed £33,339 to 9 new sustainable community projects across the National Park. The projects are listed with a brief description in Appendix I along with a map showing the 20-21 allocations and second map showing all allocations throughout the life of the fund.
- 3.2 The Sustainable Communities Fund currently receives an annual budget of £35,000 made up of contributions from a £25k contribution from the SDNPA and £10k from the Trust. Due lockdown pausing grant giving, there was underspend of £20,252 for 19-20. This means that the grant panel allocated £33,339 from a budget of £55,252 leaving it with a carry forward of £21,913 in grant funds.

4. Other Implications

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	No
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	Implications of this report in itself do not raise an issue of value for money. However the projects that the organisation has funded are assessed for value for money when they are approved. Where appropriate, this is part of the project approval reports received by this Committee. Projects are evaluated individually for value for money when they finish. This is reported regularly to the Policy and Resources Committee.
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	No
Has due regard been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	Yes – as the subject matter of the report is an update on projects and funding no specific issues arise. Equalities issues are considered as part of the development of a project.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	No
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	No
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	No
Are there any Sustainability implications based on the 5 principles set out in the SDNPA Sustainability Strategy: 1. Living within environmental limits 2. Ensuring a strong healthy and just society 3. Achieving a sustainable economy 4. Promoting good governance 5. Using sound science responsibly	No – not directly although as part of the process for developing projects and when they are approved sustainability issues are included as part of the process.

5. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

5.1 There are no significant risks associated with the subject matter of this report. All projects funded from the Strategic Fund have their own risk registers, which are monitored regularly.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
The return on the endowment investments could reduce due to changes to the economy	Possible	Major	The investment is a medium risk portfolio and is reviewed regularly by the Trust's investment committee, which includes investment professionals.
Reputational risk if we are unable to provide cash match funding for some of our larger projects	Possible	Moderate	Work to generate income for the South Downs National Park and also potentially for the SDNPA. A robust monitoring and project approval system and regular reporting to this Committee on projects and the budget available

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Appendices
1. SCF Dashboard
2. SCF Grants Map

SDNPA Consultees
Chief Executive; Director of Countryside Policy and Management;
Director of Planning; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer; Legal
Services, Business Service Manager, Governance and Support Services
Manager, Operational Management Team

External Consultees
None

Background Documents



I. Sustainable Communities Fund 2020-2021 Grant Allocations

I.1 Telscombe Interpretation - Telscombe, East Sussex - £3,000 grant towards the total project cost of £6,000

3 Information/educational boards – oak/hadwood lectern style stands with brief description of what a visitor might see – including wildlife, flora, the views and perhaps a bit of history of the village.

I.2 Bees and Seas – Shoreham and Lancing, West Sussex - £7,500 towards a total cost of £19,995

Bees & Seas will connect and support pollinators, parks, people and partners to enhance the ecological network between the sea and the South Downs and re-vision an abandoned park area.

I.3 Tide Mills- A Living History – worth - £6,000 towards a total project cost of £231,100

“Tide Mills – A Living History” is a community led, multi-disciplined artistic heritage project celebrating the rich history of Tide Mill’s legacy and the biodiversity now thriving within it.

I.4 Purchase of a Magnetometer for Geophysical Survey – Liss Archaeology - £5,000 towards a total project cost of £13,702

The purchase of a magnetometer to be able to carry out community, non-invasive geophysical surveys identifying buried heritage and archaeology. Offering training, increasing volunteer numbers and diversity, sustaining community archaeology.

I.5 Liss Men’s Shed Base and Workshop – Liss, Hampshire - £5,000 towards a total project cost of £24,700

Renovation and refurbishment of current groundsman/garage/storage building to create a hub for Liss Men’s Shed activities, a workshop and a social area.

I.6 Butt’s Brow, Eastbourne Borough Council - £1,800 towards a total project cost of £21,050

Exploration and archaeological excavation of the Neolithic monument at Butt’s Brow to interpret and explore the cultural heritage of the area with the wider public.

I.7 Fulking Ram Pump, Fulking, East Sussex - £1,039 towards a total project cost of £2,078

To install an information board at the Ram Pump site in Fulking for visitors to understand the history and origins of the pump.

I.8 Dark Night Skies, CPRE Sussex - £2,000 towards a total project cost of £4,000

CPRE Sussex’s Dark Skies project will encourage Sussex residents, including school children, to understand and enjoy the Dark Skies across the National Park and beyond.

I.9 The Living Coast Undersea Experience Education Programme, East Sussex - £2,000 towards a total project cost of £13,500

To refine and develop The Living Coast Undersea Experience’s (TLCUE) educational programme in schools to teach young people about Beachy Head West Marine Conservation Zone.

Sustainable Communities Fund All Grants Map



