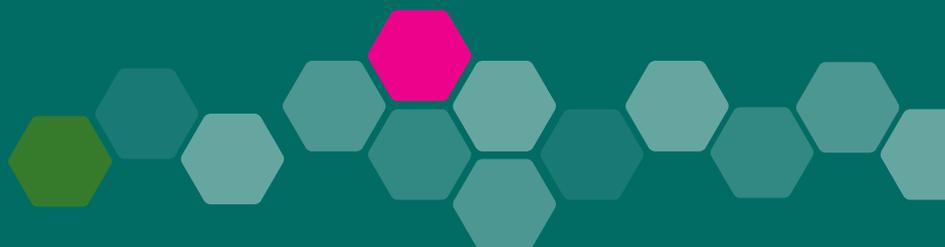


Review of the Climate Challenge Fund



AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND MARINE

Review of the Climate Challenge Fund

**Dr Alex Hilliam, Stuart Moir, Lauren Scott,
Tessa Clark and Ian Smith**

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Glossary

The list below describes all acronyms used in this document

CARES	Community and Renewable Energy Scheme
CASP	Community Action Support Programme
CCF	Climate Challenge Fund
CCF3	Climate Challenge Fund (3rd phase)
CEMVO	Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations
CO2	Carbon Dioxide
DECC	Department for Energy and Climate Change
DO	Development Officer
EST	Energy Saving Trust
GPS	Global Positioning System
HES	Home Energy Scotland
JCCF	Junior Climate Challenge Fund
KSB	Keep Scotland Beautiful
LCITP	Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme
RAG	Research Advisory Group
SCVO	Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
SCCAN	Scottish Communities Climate Action Network

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) is a Scottish Government scheme that supports communities to take action on climate change. Projects funded by the CCF are community-led and focus on fostering behaviours that reduce carbon emissions. The CCF is administered by Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB), which provides support to grant applicants and grant recipients.

1.2 This report presents the results of a review of the CCF and was undertaken by Changeworks on behalf of the Scottish Government. The review focused specifically on the third phase of the CCF (CCF3) which has run since 2012. CCF3 included a 'refresh' approach aimed at *broadening* access to the CCF, *deepening* projects to embed more profound change and *exploring* new approaches.

1.3 Specific research aims were to review:

- How CCF3 has delivered on its 'refresh' themes?; and:
- How can the CCF, or any successor scheme, best enable communities to contribute to the Scottish Government's climate change objectives and targets?

1.4 The review was carried out using the following research methods:

- Review of KSB's CCF projects database, to enable profiling of CCF projects.
- Review of the results of an online survey of 170 CCF groups (administered and analysed by the Scottish Government).
- Semi-structured interviews with 20 stakeholders (half of whom were internal to the Scottish Government and half external).
- Focus groups with the CCF and Junior CCF (JCCF) grants panels.
- Case study research with 24 CCF groups.

Refresh themes

1.5 The 'refresh' of the CCF has been a success in many areas. The *broaden* theme activities (aimed at increasing access to CCF funding) have indeed increased access from new, disadvantaged and hard-to-reach groups, with the development grants and the work with minority ethnic groups particularly successful. In total 292 CCF3 projects (and 96 development grants) were funded. Of these, 197 projects and 85 development grants were from groups new to the fund. Over one quarter of all project awards (27%) went to deprived communities (among the 30% most deprived in Scotland), 17% to JCCF projects and 7% to minority ethnic communities. The development grants have enabled groups, particularly those new to CCF and from minority ethnic groups (34% of development grants went to minority ethnic groups), to assess demand for full project applications and access funding to purchase equipment to set up projects. The JCCF and the focus on youth projects was also positively received, but also identified as an area for improvement in any future scheme, with potential scope to explore more effective ways to include young people..

1.6 The *deepen* theme (aimed at embedding more profound changes) has been positively received, with 106 groups (including 95 full project awards and 11 development grants) being previous applicants to the CCF. This demonstrates success in encouraging groups to reapply for funding, but restrictions on continuing to undertake the same activity with the same community were a problem for some groups. The Community Action Support Programme (CASP) was well-received, with feedback on training programme and networking activity typically encouraging. There were however many calls to increase this activity, bringing it closer to more rural groups; and to increase, and more effectively target, support. There was also a suggestion that the Ideas Bank, which was intended to increase the CCF's impact, could be enhanced and better explained and understood. There was little take-up of this element of the scheme with only 8 projects funded.

1.7 The *explore* theme (aimed at researching and testing new areas of activity) was the least effective of the refresh themes in terms of the number of projects delivered. Five per cent of CCF3 projects (21) were deemed to have an element of adaptation in their project work; 12% (47) included ideas that were deemed innovative, and 10% (37) included some revenue-raising. However innovation and adaptation projects were acknowledged as being particularly challenging for community groups to deliver, and there were suggestions that more support was needed for groups to develop such ideas.

1.8 Where appropriate to the type of project, there is limited evidence that a small number of groups have been successful at revenue-raising activities. However this seems to be the exception and many project types do not lend themselves to generating this type of income. That said, there is evidence from the CCF project survey that just under half of CCF projects had been able to supplement their CCF grant with funding secured from elsewhere (via grants and other income).

Impacts of the fund

1.9 It is clear that CCF3 has many strengths and successful elements. The CCF and its community basis have demonstrated an ability to empower communities to support climate change-related activities. There is a wide range of factors driving project ideas, and these are typically very 'bottom-up' and community-driven. The CCF is seen as flexible and adaptable and therefore meets these needs well. There is also evidence of the CCF pulling projects towards climate change (through its criteria) as well as supporting those already working on the topic.

1.10 The CCF requires projects to achieve measurable carbon savings in order to help them think through the logic of how they are addressing climate change and to demonstrate the change they have achieved. Carbon targets were shown to impact on projects both positively and negatively: adding elements to some projects to increase potential carbon savings, but restricting activities for others where it was felt that measurement of changes was difficult. Calculating carbon savings was perceived as a challenging, complex and confusing process by many groups and, as a result, recording progress against, and meeting, targets became a significant concern for groups and required substantial efforts to undertake. There was some

concern that this was acting as a barrier to progressive activity within community groups as too much focus was being placed on this element.

1.11 The achievements and successes of projects were also identified as being much more than simply recorded carbon savings. Behavioural and attitudinal changes; community education relevant to climate change; skills and employability; community cohesion; health and wellbeing and social enterprise developments were identified by research participants as *key* achievements of projects, in some cases over and above that of any carbon savings.

Need for greater support and targeting

1.12 The CASP programme of support and training, along with KSB's Development Officers (DOs), played a positive role in supporting projects. However research participants identified a need for more, and more targeted, support for groups and projects, to ensure that they are learning and building from the experience of previous projects and have the best chance of achieving success. There would also be some benefit in significantly enhancing the provision of templates or best practice guidance for a range of project elements including: community engagement, audience targeting and understanding; volunteer and staff management; project and group management and administration; data collection; and best practice in project delivery (by type of project). In addition, enhanced local networks, locally-based DOs and bringing training closer to remote groups were all requested by research participants as elements that could assist in delivery and sharing of knowledge.

A successor fund

1.13 Evidence in this review suggests that there are opportunities to build links between the CCF as it now stands and the other key policy areas delivering on climate change targets to generate an effective successor fund. Communities can and are acting as local agents for change. In some ways co-ordinating any successor fund more closely with climate change policies, targeting low carbon behaviours identified as priorities by the Government, or areas of focus for current emissions targets that touch communities, would give the scheme *and* communities a clearer purpose. There is clear evidence that CCF has already shaped applications in its current form (through encouraging projects to include behaviour change and additional carbon-saving activities than groups initially considered). This success could be extended to more strategically meet the aims of Government, whilst retaining community ownership and direction.

1.14 Given the range of benefits identified, any successor scheme will need to consider what its core purpose, or purposes, are and, from this, develop the scheme and criteria. Clarifying the role, purpose and use of carbon savings calculated by projects should be a key area of attention in the development of any successor scheme. This is an extremely challenging element for many groups and one that many groups are mistaken about the purpose of (i.e. some perceive that the CO₂ savings calculated are directly contributing to the calculations of Scotland's emissions). There is therefore an opportunity to make this process, and

the project reporting processes in general, more worthwhile both for those completing these tasks and for the fund as a whole.

1.15 In terms of the key elements that could be retained in any successor scheme, the research findings suggest that the focus on disadvantaged groups should be retained, and that there should be an option for innovation, but not to the exclusion of all alternatives. There could be scope for groups to continue to deliver similar projects without the need for innovation, should a clear need or demand be presented.

1.16 Co-funding and revenue-raising approaches were supported, but it was felt that these should be an option rather than a requirement of any successor fund. It was not felt that loans were appropriate for CCF-type projects due to the limited assets of community groups and the limited ability for many CCF-type projects to generate income.

1.17 This review demonstrates that the CCF is succeeding in supporting communities to address climate change. Communities want to engage in climate change, are willing to develop their projects towards this agenda, and projects make a difference on many levels. Any successor fund can further enhance and enable communities to take a key role in tackling climate change through closer alignment to Scottish Government policy areas and activities, whilst retaining the scope for communities to develop their own projects.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) is a Scottish Government scheme that supports communities to take action on climate change. The CCF recognises the significant contribution communities can make to achieving Scotland's climate change targets and the transition to a low carbon society. Projects funded by the CCF are community-led and focus on reducing carbon emissions and achieving positive behaviour change.

2.2 This report presents the results of a review of the CCF and was undertaken by Changeworks on behalf of the Scottish Government. It focuses specifically on the third phase of the CCF (CCF3), which has run since 2012.

Programme background

2.3 The CCF has run since 2008, with funding currently committed until March 2016. Over the course of the entire CCF scheme (2008-16), 550 groups have been awarded over £66million to deliver 730 discrete projects.

2.4 The CCF offers awards of up to £150,000 per annum per project, with groups eligible to apply for further funding for a new project. The CCF fully funds projects, meaning that there is no requirement on applicants to seek funding from other sources in order to be awarded funding. All applications must be from community groups and meet the following three criteria to receive funding:

- **Community-led.** Both the community group and the project itself must be community-led.
- **Carbon reductions.** The project must lead to a measurable reduction in carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent in the community, improve carbon literacy and/or help communities cope with the impacts of climate change (adaptation projects).
- **Sustainable legacy.** The project is expected to demonstrate a sustainable legacy through physical, behavioural, awareness or social change in the community.

2.5 The CCF has been administered by Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB) since its inception. Projects are allocated a Development Officer (DO) who provides support during the development of applications and the implementation of projects, including the processing of grants claims and receiving progress reports, as well as reviewing applications prior to grants panel meetings. An Independent Grants Panel and Junior Climate Challenge Fund (JCCF) Youth Panel make recommendations to the Scottish Government on whether to approve applications or not. Scottish Government make the final decisions regarding which applicants receive CCF awards. A key element of the CCF administration is delivering the Community Action Support Programme (CASP), which develops the capacity of community groups (not just those with CCF funding) wishing to tackle climate change by providing workshops, peer-to-peer networking opportunities and other resources.

2.6 CCF has funded a range of projects addressing one or more topics such as food, waste, transport and energy. Some projects have funded 'hard' measures in community building refurbishment (e.g. insulation), whilst others have focused on encouraging householders to take up similar 'hard' measures and/or adopt sustainable behaviours, for example, in relation to saving energy or active travel. Many have included elements of awareness-raising, information provision and engagement.

2.7 In 2010-11 an external review of the CCF was undertaken by Brook Lyndhurst¹. This led to a 'CCF Refresh' in November 2012, which introduced three 'refresh' themes:

- **Broadening** the reach of the CCF
 - Engaging with the 'most disadvantaged' or 'hard-to-reach' communities.
 - Making the CCF accessible to groups whose locus of activity is in other (non-environmental) areas.
 - Targeting the engagement of young people in climate change action, through the newly introduced JCCF.
- **Deepening** the impact of the CCF
 - Supporting projects to make and embed more profound changes, using mature CCF groups to enrich and add value to the CCF overall, and to support newer smaller groups.
- **Exploring** new ideas
 - Researching and testing new areas of CCF activity, including piloting adaptation projects and supporting innovative carbon-reducing ideas.
 - Supporting appropriate projects to raise revenue from their activity and move from grant dependency to a sustainable funding position.

2.8 The *broaden* theme included the introduction of 'development grants' for disadvantaged and hard-to-reach groups to prepare stronger CCF applications (or assess the need for a CCF application). The development grant was for up to £750 and enabled actions that included community consultations, events or support for the development of the application.

2.9 In 2012, the Ideas Bank² was also introduced to support the deepen theme and help extend the reach and increase the impact of the CCF. It sought the submission of 'templates' of eligible projects which community groups could use to prepare an application to the CCF. The templates were to be developed by public bodies, national charities, community groups and other organisations with experience relevant to the CCF themes. These bodies could then be paid by new applicants to the CCF to provide support and resources (up to a maximum of 49% of the overall project budget). As such the Ideas Bank was designed to enable

¹ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/352709/0118663.pdf>

² <http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainability-climate-change/climate-challenge-fund/how-to-apply/ideas-bank/>

more strategic projects to be led by community groups (in partnership with other organisations). It could also, in theory, act to provide groups with ongoing funding to share ideas and best practice, should an experienced community group develop their own 'template' which was in turn taken up and by another group.

2.10 For CCF3, 388 awards (including 96 development grants and 292 full CCF projects) were made, of which 282 (73%) were from groups new to the CCF³.

Table 2.1 CCF3 Awards

CCF3 Award Type	New Applicants	Previous Applicants	Total
Full project awards	197	95	292
Development grants	85	11	96
Total	282	106	388

2.11 It is important to note that the three refresh themes were broad aims and did not have any specific targets allocated to them, nor were they part of any assessment criteria, although there was some monitoring of progress against these aims during CCF3.

Research aims and objectives

2.12 The aim of this research was to undertake a review of the Climate Challenge Fund. The research objectives were to review:

- How has CCF3 delivered on its refresh themes?
- How can the CCF, or any successor scheme, best enable communities to contribute to the Scottish Government's climate change objectives and targets?

2.13 The review was tasked to consider these objectives within a context of the CCF's contribution to other government objectives such as community empowerment and addressing inequalities⁴.

Research questions

2.14 The research sought to address the research objectives by answering the following research questions. The scope of research on the future of the programme was to explore the implications of the questions and options, rather than to make recommendations as to how the CCF should proceed or develop in the future.

³ Source: Keep Scotland Beautiful CCF Project Database

⁴ See the Scottish Government's Programme for Government, <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/09/7685>

How has CCF3 delivered on its refresh themes?

Broaden:

- *How far has CCF3 succeeded in increasing access to CCF funding by target groups, including groups in disadvantaged areas, minority ethnic communities, and young people through the JCCF?*
- *What role have development grants played in increasing access to CCF funding?*

Deepen:

- *What role has CASP played in supporting projects, including peer learning (projects learning from each other and transferring knowledge)?*
- *What role has the Ideas Bank played in terms of project applications and supporting community groups?*

Explore:

- *How successful has the adaptation strand of the CCF3 explore theme been?*
- *To what extent has innovation been encouraged (and is there evidence of take-up of other innovative but as yet unproven carbon reduction ideas)?*
- *As projects have been permitted to generate income since the start of CCF3, how successful have projects been at generating their own income?*

Legacy:

- *To what extent have CCF groups continued their existence beyond initial CCF funding?*

Funding and partnerships:

- *To what extent have CCF3 projects received funding and/or income from different funding sources? What are these different sources? Is there any pattern by disadvantage or equality group?*
- *What role has CCF and other funding and partnerships worked to encourage and sustain these groups?*
- *How does the CCF fit with and/or complement other Scottish Government funding streams currently available to communities including Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES)⁵, the People and Communities Fund, and the Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme (LCITP)?*
- *To what extent do CCF3 projects work with complementary national and/or local initiatives and/or wider partnerships and organisations?*

How can the CCF, or any successor scheme, best enable communities to contribute to the Scottish Government's climate change objectives and targets?

⁵ Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES) – see <http://www.localenergyscotland.org/communities/generating-your-own-electricity/financial-support/>

Specific options for reshaping the CCF:

- *Should the CCF (or any successor scheme) be more focused in terms of the range of projects funded (e.g. Should the CCF continue to fund the full range of projects, including keeping its explore focus on innovation? Should the requirement that existing community groups can (only) receive new funding for doing the same work with a different community, or different work with the same community, be changed?)*
- *Should the CCF (or any successor scheme) have a stronger focus on funding groups from disadvantaged areas (in line with the Programme for Government) and/or other disadvantaged or equalities groups (e.g. young people and JCCF, minority ethnic groups)?*
- *Should the CCF (or any successor scheme) have a greater emphasis on co-funding of projects, except those initial projects coming forward from disadvantaged areas and other disadvantaged or equalities groups?*
- *Should the CCF (or any successor scheme) include an element of loan funding (for example along the lines of the CARES model)?*
- *Should, and how could development grants be strengthened going forward?*
- *Should, and how could income-generating potential be strengthened going forward?*

Partnerships and policy links:

- *How would working with complementary national and/or local initiatives (e.g. national energy efficiency programmes) and wider partnerships/organisations at a local level fit with any future option for co-funding?*
- *How else can CCF groups support local and/or national priorities?*

Project support:

- *How else can support to projects, particularly new projects, be improved during design, delivery and reporting stage?*

3. Methods

Overview

3.1 The review was carried out using the following research methods:

- a. Review of KSB's CCF projects database, to enable profiling of CCF project characteristics such as topic focus, locations and refresh themes.
- b. Review of the results of an online survey with CCF2 and predominantly CCF3 groups (administered by the Scottish Government).
- c. Stakeholder interviews (20 stakeholders through 18 interviews).
- d. Focus groups with the CCF and JCCF panels.
- e. Case study research with 24 CCF groups.

3.2 Aside from the survey (b), all research was conducted between May and July 2015. Results from all methods were analysed and integrated and have been presented by theme in each section of this report.

CCF projects database

3.3 KSB hold a database of all CCF projects with details including funding amount, group type, project type, refresh themes and location. This was analysed by the Scottish Government to profile CCF projects. Results were reviewed by Changeworks and key findings have been included in this report where relevant.

CCF Projects Survey

3.4 The Scottish Government designed and administered a survey of community groups who had received CCF3 funding (referred to in this report as the CCF Projects Survey). The online survey sought to obtain further information about projects such as key achievements, partnership working and co-funding. Perspectives on some aspects of CCF were also explored, such as level and type of support received by groups.

3.5 The survey was distributed to CCF3 groups in March 2015. 170 group responses were received. The Scottish Government undertook an initial analysis of this data which was provided to Changeworks. Key findings have been included in this report where relevant, and in some cases findings from this survey complement and triangulate findings from the case study research. The data was also merged with the CCF projects database for the purpose of selecting case studies for further research (see below).

Stakeholder interviews

3.6 Eighteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with stakeholders (two interviews were paired interviews, giving a total of 20 stakeholders). The interviews aimed to explore stakeholder perspectives of the CCF including successes and challenges of CCF3, and the pros and cons of future options for the CCF or any successor scheme. It should be noted that the internal Scottish Government interviewees had varying levels of knowledge, experience and interaction with the CCF.

3.7 Half of the interviewees were Scottish Government staff representing various policy areas related to the CCF programme, such as food, waste, energy and community programmes. The other stakeholders comprised members of the CCF panel, representatives of community organisations (such as the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) and Development Trust Association) and relevant environmental organisations such as the Energy Saving Trust (EST). The list of stakeholders was proposed by the Scottish Government and agreed by the Research Advisory Group (RAG) and Changeworks. This list is presented in Appendix A.

3.8 Interviews were conducted using a topic guide agreed with the RAG; this can be found in Appendix B. Interviews lasted between 30 and 120 minutes and were conducted over the phone or face-to-face.

Focus groups

3.9 Two focus groups were conducted; one with the members of the CCF grants panel and one with the JCCF grants panel. These followed a topic guide presented in Appendix B. The focus groups, as with the stakeholder interviews, explored stakeholder perspectives on CCF3 and options for any future or successor scheme.

Case study research

3.10 Case study research was undertaken with 24 CCF3 projects with the aim of obtaining more in-depth information about projects such as activities, outcomes, challenges and successes. It also aimed to explore the perspectives of the community group representatives (and a smaller number of beneficiaries) regarding the CCF and views on any future scheme.

3.11 The 24 case studies represent a range of CCF3 projects; for example, different sizes of projects, project topics and geographical location. The methodology used to select these case studies from a total of 169 completed CCF3 projects⁶ is outlined in Appendix A. Details of the case studies are also provided in Tables A1 and A2 in Appendix A.

3.12 Ten case studies were treated as 'depth' and 14 as 'light touch'. The approach taken was:

- For **light touch** case studies:
 - Reviewing the project's final report⁷
 - One semi-structured interview with a key representative of the community group.
- For **depth** case studies, the same approach was taken with the addition of a further two to six interviews with other project stakeholders; e.g. community group members, volunteers and project beneficiaries. These stakeholders were identified by the initial interviewee in consultation with the research team.

3.13 Overall, 60 interviews were conducted: 24 initial interviews with a community group representative and 36 further interviews for depth case studies. Overall, 24 end of project reports were reviewed.

3.14 All interviews were semi-structured using topic guides provided in Appendix B. The interviews lasted between 60 and 135 minutes. Initial interviews were

⁶ Only completed projects were involved in this aspect of the research because live projects would not have a final report, final results or learnings.

⁷ This is submitted to KSB at the end of the project and details, for example, project activity, results, challenges. These were passed to Changeworks by KSB.

conducted over the telephone, and where possible additional interviews for depth case studies were carried out face-to-face during a site visit (otherwise over the telephone).

4. Background to projects

4.1 This section of the report describes data collected from case study community group respondents and end of project reports on the background and development of their CCF3-funded projects. It also reviews groups' overall perceptions and understanding of the scheme criteria. Perspectives from stakeholders and insights from the CCF database are also included where relevant.

CCF3 Project Development

Developing Ideas and Applying to the CCF

4.2 Data from the CCF project survey shows that almost all responding organisations were established and active before obtaining CCF funding, with 96% of groups (from 170 responses) already in existence and only 4% (7 organisations that responded to the survey) indicating that they were set up to apply for CCF funding.

4.3 The data collected from case study project reports and respondent interviews highlighted that there was no one typical starting point for a CCF3-funded community group. Groups were made aware of the CCF via a variety of routes. In many cases the fund was identified by staff or was already known to groups. In some cases groups were prompted to apply to the fund by other organisations or networks (e.g. EST, Scottish Outdoor Education), whilst others identified the fund via consultants employed to look for funding sources (e.g. for a community building refurbishment).

4.4 Many case study groups were inspired to seek additional funding from the CCF to continue with previous work on climate change. Continuing groups were typically seeking funding to support an existing group or take a project forward, and others were looking to expand similar or related work. In other cases, project ideas came from a range of sources and drivers. This included specific requests from their community for services (e.g. from schools for educational support or requests from the public, such as local need for cycling support and maintenance services) and requests or ideas from other groups or organisations in the community. Although some groups had tackling climate change as a core organisational driver, for other groups this was significantly less important (e.g. for some groups looking to refurbish a community building or develop assets such as green spaces, the key aim was to gain funding for infrastructure, not to deliver the climate change activities). However, it is clear that the CCF funding requirements and DO support and advice pulled some groups towards engaging with their communities on climate change, and that this engagement would not have happened without them applying to the CCF:

“the money was there, they knew the environment was a ‘hot issue’ and already had some raised beds... Ultimately they wanted to get the space used, not for the environment” [CS15 R1]

4.5 Other applicants indicated that they received advice and guidance from other sources beyond the DOs, including the EST; volunteers in the community; universities; other CCF groups and from CCF development grants.

The Application Form and Process

4.6 Overall, there were mixed views on the application process. For some, it was straightforward and many felt the guidance was clear. Despite the application form being lengthy, many felt completing it was a good process to go through in advance of undertaking the project: *“because of its detailed nature you end up with a very clear structured plan, which helps project implementation”* [CS12].

4.7 For others, the scale and detail of the application was more complex, challenging, or *“daunting”*, particularly for those with limited time or experience of similar processes: *“And there’s a lot of paperwork... because I’ve already got a full-time job... I do feel as if there’s far too much paperwork attached to it”* [CS23].

4.8 Particular challenges reported by applicants that indicated concerns included the complexities of the carbon calculations and some lack of clarity over which building measures would or would not be funded (for building projects). However the key challenge was related to the detail and length, which prompted one respondent (from a larger, established group) to comment that that they felt that this could mean that smaller or volunteer groups would struggle with such an application.

4.9 Other groups reported difficulties caused by changes in DO during the application process, which resulted in perceptions of differing advice and recommendations for the application, which in turn resulted in multiple changes and an extended application process.

Meeting the CCF Criteria: Community, Carbon and Legacy

4.10 The core CCF eligibility criteria of ‘Community’, ‘Carbon’ and ‘Legacy’ were typically (but not universally) understood by those who were part of the application process. As a result, there were few significant difficulties reported in terms of completing the application (it is however important to note that only successful applicants were interviewed in this research and those with significant difficulties may not have been successful). Those respondents that had not written applications were less aware of the criteria, but were able to consider and discuss them as evident in the practice of the project.

4.11 Many felt that the criteria provided projects with a clear, straightforward purpose and aims, and that they matched up with the values of their organisation. The challenge for many was converting these criteria into effective practice:

“Criteria are reasonable to meet in the application – but meeting them in reality is more challenging” [CS13].

Community

4.12 For some respondents the term ‘community’ was felt to be a little subjective and one respondent was surprised that local businesses were not felt to be a ‘community organisation’ (for the purposes of the CCF awards). Other respondents felt that schools-based projects were sufficiently part of the community to be defined as community bodies, although the CCF encouraged projects to operate beyond the school setting. Although defining the community was initially daunting for some, those who had worked within their community for some time found it easy to interpret and others, once they had been through the community consultation necessary in the preparation of the application (to demonstrate demand), were able to interpret it successfully. There was some evidence that those who had received a development grant found it beneficial in shaping their understanding of the community and its needs. Others used established processes and links to other local groups, current projects and community surveys to establish community need.

4.13 A small number of respondents expressed concern in relation to the ability for a community to drive a project forward by itself, and identified a need for paid or very committed staff to manage community needs and demands to shape an effective project.

Carbon

4.14 Although key to the aims of the CCF, the ‘carbon’ element of the criteria was the one that presented the most mixed views from respondents. The need to calculate carbon savings and set targets was a very positive element for some, (typically these respondents were technically-minded or had experts as members of their group). For these respondents, carbon was a relatively easy element to understand and the need to set targets was positively viewed. However, others found this process challenging and difficult and some felt uncertain about these targets. The setting and measuring of carbon targets is discussed further in chapter 8.

Legacy

4.15 Legacy was reported by many group respondents as perhaps the easiest of the three criteria to interpret and understand. There were multiple interpretations of this criterion (reflecting the different types of projects funded). Some saw this as a requirement for the project or group to ultimately move away from grant funding to financial sustainability. For others, this was about the establishment of a low carbon physical legacy in the community (such as an insulated community building that would deliver direct carbon savings or a growing space that could facilitate lower carbon food). Other groups mentioned that their legacy was the establishment of sustained low carbon behaviour changes in their community. Indeed, some respondents indicated that the legacy element made groups consider a behaviour change side to their project.

4.16 These multiple interpretations meant that some respondents felt that ‘legacy’ was too subjective: *“We should meet it but in which form?”* [CS10]. Others indicated that they wanted more examples of best practice in order to ensure that they were developing the *right* legacy. Linked to the discussion on meeting carbon targets above, one respondent felt that *“the application should have focus on fewer activities to create a longer legacy”* [CS19].

Summary: Background to Projects

4.17 This section has highlighted that there were a wide range of factors driving project ideas, and that these were typically very bottom-up. The CCF was seen as flexible and adaptable and therefore met these needs well. However, the requirements were, for some, too open to interpretation.

4.18 Although projects were driven by the interests and needs of communities, there was evidence of the CCF pulling projects towards climate change (through its criteria) as well as by supporting those already working on the topic (most case study groups were active in climate change-related activities before applying).

4.19 Although challenging for some, the length, content and detail of the application process and form seem appropriate. However, DO support and consistency were identified as key to supporting groups to apply. To maximise impact in any future scheme, the findings suggest that some groups (e.g. those with limited experience of applying for grants, new to carbon calculations or lacking technical skills) may need more support and structure to enable them to develop the best possible applications in terms of these criteria.

5. The Refresh Themes

5.1 The refresh themes were introduced in November 2012 to enhance the achievements of the CCF via broadening reach and inclusion, deepening the impact of projects and exploring and testing new ideas for CCF projects. As stated in 2.11 above, these themes were broad aims without specific criteria or monitoring allocated to them. As a result, this made measuring effectiveness difficult in some cases. The impact of these themes is explored in this chapter.

Overall awareness

5.2 The refresh approach was not explicit in the CCF3 application process or assessment. It is perhaps therefore not surprising that the awareness of the refresh themes and their detail was mixed across case study respondents. Most groups contacted were not aware of the refresh themes, although some were aware of aspects of the themes, but not necessarily the ‘labels’ associated with the CCF refresh. However, case study respondents were broadly supportive of the approach during discussion. Stakeholders who were aware of the themes were typically positive about them and their impact; although many were not aware and many had very limited knowledge of the CCF in general and, as a result, were unable to comment in detail.

Broaden

5.3 The *broaden* theme set out to increase access to the CCF by encouraging groups from disadvantaged areas, minority ethnic communities and young people to apply to the fund. This was facilitated through a range of activities including the development of the JCCF, with applications assessed by a youth-led panel (supported by Young Scot⁸); offering specific support to minority ethnic communities via a programme supported by the Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (CEMVO) Scotland⁹; and through the introduction of development grants (for disadvantaged and hard-to-reach groups) of up to £750 to support the development of full grant applications.

5.4 The *broaden* theme in particular was felt by both case study respondents and stakeholders to have been a very positive and effective change to the CCF. Stakeholders with awareness of the detail of the projects highlighted that CCF3 produced a wider range of projects than previous rounds and that the projects had become more than just focused on geographical communities and shifted to include minority ethnic groups; wider geographies; sports clubs; young people and other groups. The additional resources devoted to this element during the CCF3 period (i.e. Young Scot and CEMVO Scotland support) was felt, by those who were aware of this work, to be very successful and important. Data from the CCF database reinforces this and indicates that 73% (282) of the CCF3 and development grant projects came from groups new to the CCF, with 89% of the 96 development grant applicants from new groups. Table 5.1 below shows that over one quarter of all project awards (27%) went to deprived communities (among the 30% most deprived in Scotland), 17% to JCCF projects and 7% to minority ethnic communities, and that many of these came from new applicants.

Table 5.1 *Broaden* CCF Awards (KSB database)

	New Applicants	Previous Applicants	Total (No.)	Total (%)
Project Awards (292)				
Deprived communities	47	33	80	27%
JCCF projects	28	21	49	17%
Minority ethnic communities	23	4	27	9%
Disabled groups	8	1	9	3%
Older people	7	2	9	3%
Development Grants (96)				
Deprived communities	35	7	42	44%
JCCF projects	15	3	18	19%
Minority ethnic communities	33	0	33	34%
Disabled groups	1	0	1	1%
Older people	1	0	1	1%

⁸ Young Scot is the national youth information and citizenship charity. They provide young people, aged 11 - 26, with a mixture of information, ideas and incentives to help them become confident, informed and active citizens. www.youngscot.org

⁹ CEMVO Scotland are a national intermediary organisation and strategic partner of the Scottish Government Equality Unit whose aim is to build the capacity and sustainability of the ethnic minority voluntary sector and its communities.

5.5 The establishment of the JCCF, and the encouragement for projects to pay attention to and include youth involvement, were viewed positively. The need for support for youth-led projects, or for youth engagement to be a specific element of wider CCF projects, may have encouraged a greater engagement with the fund by young people.

5.6 However youth involvement was also identified as an area for improvement. This, in particular, related to the extent to which young people were able to participate in the CCF. There was a perception by some respondents that the emphasis on youth leadership for JCCF applications acted to restrict their likelihood to be involved due to the responsibilities and organisational challenges of applying for and running a CCF-type project. As one stakeholder commented: *"...it hasn't brought in genuine projects led by young people... We [need] to find a way to articulate the fact that young people had needed to be supported"* [SH01]. One case study group (based in a school) indicated they sought to be a JCCF group (having received a 'junior' development grant), but that, given their situation, the project had to be led by adults. The project therefore ended up as a standard CCF project, despite significant involvement by young people and a desire to be part of the JCCF. Indeed, the respondent highlighted that the application had gone through a number of iterations, including consideration of both funds. In addition, the JCCF panel felt that the label 'Junior' may have acted to generate a perception that the CCF was for school-age young people only, and as a result discouraged younger adults from applying or seeing this fund as for them.

5.7 Ninety-six development grants were awarded to groups as part of CCF3. Although few of the groups that were contacted in the research had received a development grant, for those that had, and for the stakeholders that were aware of the grants, they were viewed positively. As shown in Table 4.1 above, 44% of these grants went to deprived communities (among the 30% most deprived in Scotland) and 34% to minority ethnic groups, highlighting success in accessing these communities via this route. However, the number of minority ethnic groups obtaining full grants is lower (9% of all projects).

5.8 Groups found development grants useful in terms of establishing the needs of their community, gauging reactions to ideas and exploring ways to expand a previous project. Other groups also indicated that they used the funding to carry out energy audits, feasibility studies and to buy equipment. As a result, the grants were viewed as a positive way for groups to explore if the CCF was the right funding route for them before embarking on a full project and have clearly acted to increase access to CCF funding. As one stakeholder described, the grants were viewed as effective in broadening the reach of the fund and were: *"particularly important for community organisations, it's a development journey they have to go through, it's not usually 'here's an idea I want to go and do it'"* [SH05].

Deepen

5.9 The *deepen* theme set out to support projects to make and embed more profound changes, encourage mature CCF groups to enrich and add value to the CCF overall, and to support newer smaller groups.

5.10 Table 5.2 below shows that 106 (including 95 full project awards and 11 development grants) of all CCF3-funded groups were from organisations previously funded by the CCF.

Table 5.2 CCF Awards (KSB database)

CCF3 Award Type	New Applicants	Previous Applicants	Total
Full project awards	197	95	292
Development grants	85	11	96
Total	282	106	388

5.11 Many respondents felt this theme encouraged existing CCF groups to take projects to the next level and to ensure that the skills within groups could be retained and further work undertaken in communities: *“they’ve built up all this experience within all the people that are engaged in it... This allows them to use that...Not just to continue what they’re doing, but also to widen their impact”* [SH17].

5.12 The CCF grant conditions meant that groups could not reapply for funding for the same or a similar project in the same location. This resulted in groups being forced to ‘reframe’, change or ‘deepen’ what they were currently doing (potentially successfully) to gain further funding from the CCF, rather than making more changes within their current target community on the same theme.

5.13 The CASP programme to develop the capacity of communities was viewed positively and has supported projects to learn and share knowledge in a variety of ways, although the feedback from groups would suggest that this element could be enhanced in a future scheme. There was some, if not universal, evidence of groups sharing resources and tools with each other. In addition, respondents to the CCF Projects Survey also highlighted the positive impact of the training programme and events with 52% respondents commenting on these as the most useful types of support [Q15, base=163]. Case study respondents also identified that networking events provided good opportunities for knowledge-sharing with other CCF groups, connections to other (non-CCF-funded) groups, and helped project groups to see the ‘bigger picture’ with regard to their contributions towards climate change. However there were also calls from some groups for an increase in this type of activity.

5.14 It was also clear that, for many, access to training courses was an issue due to the timing of training (e.g. sessions not being provided early enough for groups to use this information in their projects). Location of training was also an issue for more remote groups, with a desire for more online or remotely-based sessions. Key issues where groups would have liked more training related to best practice

guidance or toolkits, evaluation and measurement, identifying project outcomes and carbon calculations.

5.15 The Ideas Bank was also introduced to help extend the reach and increase the impact of the CCF. The Ideas Bank operated through the use of 'template' project ideas, developed by partner organisations, from which groups could develop and deliver projects whilst also providing funding for partner organisations to allow them to work with community groups. Awareness of the Ideas Bank was low across case study respondents, reflecting the low take up of Ideas Bank projects. Based on data from KSB only 8 were funded during the CCF3 period.

5.16 Of the groups that were aware, many felt that it wasn't useful to them as the ideas did not match their needs. For most stakeholders that understood the aims of the Ideas Bank, it was felt to be a good approach in principle but they were unsure whether this was born out in practice. It was felt by some that this approach was not as effective as it could be at driving projects and engaging communities; as one stakeholder commented: *"if somebody has got a good idea, we want that good idea to be happening everywhere that fits"* [SH01].

5.17 Concerns from stakeholders related to lack of awareness of the Ideas Bank in general across community groups and confusion about its aims and delivery. For some respondents, the Ideas Bank was about sharing best practice and ideas between groups, which, although an element of the Ideas Bank, was not its core aim. In line with this potential misconception, one stakeholder suggested that the Ideas Bank was perhaps not working in line with their perception of the spirit of the CCF, as groups and the scheme should be sharing ideas, not *"selling"* ideas to other projects.

Explore

5.18 The *explore* theme of the CCF refresh related to researching and testing new areas of CCF activity, including piloting adaptation projects, supporting innovative carbon-reducing ideas and supporting appropriate projects to raise revenue and move away from grant dependency.

5.19 *Explore* was felt by many respondents to be the most challenging refresh theme to deliver, and was the least effective in terms of number of projects that could be described as including these elements (although these types of projects could be described as the most challenging for community groups to achieve). Based on a retrospective assessment undertaken by KSB staff, 5% of CCF3 projects (21) were deemed to have an element of adaptation in their project work; 12% (47) included ideas that were deemed innovative, and 10% (37) included some revenue-raising. There is therefore evidence that this theme had some success in addressing these issues, although these figures do not in themselves show how successful these projects were in tackling them.

Innovation and adaptation

5.20 The issue of innovation, and what constitutes an innovative project, was explored with community groups and stakeholders, particularly in the light of the CCF's current approach to only fund a group once to deliver the same project in the same area. For some, innovation was an extremely important element of the fund, and a number of case studies thought of their projects as innovative both in project design and in terms of how they responded and changed their projects in response to the needs of their community: *"we were not afraid to think about new ideas and follow up in response to people's needs"* [CS12].

5.21 However, for others, innovation was seen as unnecessary and not constructive in terms of delivering on the aims of the CCF, particularly in relation to projects that were offering well-established services, such as energy advice. This perspective is evidenced by the following two quotes: *"People are desperate to make things innovative and new and exciting and different. What's wrong with good old fashioned advice and support?"* [CS19 Int2.1]; *"Innovation is not a word that springs to mind on this type of project; energy advice is more 'nuts and bolts'"* [CS08 Int1].

5.22 Stakeholders also had mixed perspectives on innovation, with some seeing it as positive and others suggesting that a fund such as the CCF should look at supporting and evolving from what works, rather than putting too much emphasis on innovation.

5.23 The focus on CCF groups delivering adaptation projects was felt to have realised few projects and had limited success. One stakeholder commented that this area has been slow to develop, and one other commented that the CCF should not fund projects in this area and should focus on carbon emission reductions rather than adaptation.

5.24 That said, it was highlighted that if innovation and adaptation were to be encouraged as part of a future CCF, more support in the form of links to other organisations (e.g. academia and other groups), along with examples of innovative or adaptation work that could be delivered by communities, were essential to inspire and support groups to develop projects.

Revenue-raising

5.25 There was limited evidence of significant revenue-raising amongst case study groups. However one group did indicate that its CCF-funded project had become self-sustaining once the grant had finished. It is important to note that most groups highlighted the low potential for income generation for their projects and for many activity types currently funded by the CCF (e.g. charging for energy or transport advice).

5.26 Despite this limited evidence of revenue-raising, it is interesting to note that in response to a question asking if their organisation obtained funding or income from other sources to supplement the CCF grant for their most recent (CCF) project,

45% (65 of the 143 CCF3 groups responding to this question) indicated that this was the case (CCF Project Survey, Q9). This compares to 56% of the CCF2 projects (15 out of 27 CCF2 projects responding to this question). While there is a disparity in base size, the findings suggest that the proportions of projects receiving additional funding are similar since the CCF refresh.

5.27 However, the sources of these funds show some marked differences that suggest that the CCF refresh had some impact on income type, with increases in the proportion of projects receiving income from donations (7% of CCF2 projects vs. 31% of CCF3 projects), other Scottish Government funding (7% CCF2 vs. 26% CCF3) and trading (7% CCF2 vs. 22% CCF3). Full results are described in table 5.3 below.

Table 5.3 Sources of supplementary funding for CCF-funded projects

	No. Groups		% of Groups	
	CCF2	CCF3	CCF2	CCF3
Other grant or trust funding	9	42	60%	65%
Fund-raising activities	5	26	33%	40%
In-kind contributions from your organisation (e.g. room space / office equipment / admin costs not funded by CCF)	9	21	60%	32%
Donations	1	20	7%	31%
Other Scottish Government funding	1	17	7%	26%
Trading - e.g. selling goods (e.g. food produce) or services (e.g. consultancy)	1	14	7%	22%
Other (Total)	1	10	7%	15%
Renting / hiring out space	1	7	7%	11%
Subscriptions	1	5	7%	8%
Private sector		4	0%	6%
TOTAL	15	65		

CCF Project Survey Q10: From which of the following sources did your organisation obtain funding or income to supplement the CCF grant for that project? Base =80

5.28 These findings highlight some success in introducing revenue-raising activities as part of CCF3, although the majority of the sources outlined in table 4.2 could be described as grants and additional income, rather than revenue-raising per se. There was evidence of similar (non-revenue) funding, such as other grants, from the case study interviews.

Summary: The refresh themes

5.29 The refresh themes appear to have been broadly, but not wholly, successful. The *broaden* theme has been particularly successful in accessing new, disadvantaged or hard-to-reach groups, and the development grants have been well-received, with a good uptake from disadvantaged groups. The JCCF and the focus on youth projects has been positively received, but also identified as an area for improvement in a future scheme. 73% (282) of the CCF3 projects and development grants came from groups new to the CCF, with 89% of the 96 development grant applicants from new groups.

5.30 The *deepen* theme was described as encouraging existing CCF groups to take projects to the next level and has been very positively received, although restrictions on continuing to undertake the same activity with the same community were a problem for some groups. The CASP programme was well-received, with training programme and networking activity feedback typically encouraging, although there were many calls to increase this activity, bring it closer to more rural groups and to increase, and more effectively target, support. There was also a suggestion that the Ideas Bank could be enhanced and better explained and understood. There was little take-up of this element of the scheme.

5.31 The *explore* theme was the least effective of the refresh themes in terms of number of projects delivered, but was acknowledged by many to be the most challenging. True innovation and adaptation projects were limited in number and there were suggestions that more support was needed for groups to develop such ideas. There were also few revenue-raising projects, but there is evidence to suggest that there is some diversification of funding sources across projects, with roughly half of CCF projects receiving income from elsewhere to supplement their CCF project.

6. Project Delivery: Challenges and changes

6.1 This section of the report describes the key challenges that case study groups identified in the running of their projects and the actions they would do differently if running their project again. This is described to highlight the potential areas for support that any future CCF or successor scheme may need to consider. As these factors are covered elsewhere, this section does not include comments from respondents on the carbon calculations, CCF support and the CCF itself.

Biggest challenges

Communicating and engaging with community and stakeholders

6.2 Some projects experienced problems applying the services developed in previous CCF projects to new communities. These problems included establishing a reputation and earning the trust of community members, engaging with new local authorities and their agencies, and understanding where service overlaps and/or synergies existed with other community groups and charitable organisations.

6.3 Moreover, existing communication issues persisted, such as difficulty in encouraging the uptake of energy efficiency measures and behaviour change through climate change messaging (explaining potential fuel cost savings was more effective). Indeed, one interviewee noted that "*the carbon thing does not work with young people ... it is no way to engage*" [CS01 P1]. The selection of appropriate modes of communication (e.g. leaflets, drop-in sessions and social media) was important.

6.4 It was noted that there was noticeably less interest among community members in project interventions designed to reduce domestic heating fuel bills

when the weather was mild. It was also noted that fixed term times and busy teaching schedules presented challenges when attempting to involve teachers and schoolchildren (and, indirectly, their parents) in project activities. Perceptions of what is 'cool' (particularly in relation to cycling) were a barrier to engaging with children of secondary school age.

Staffing and volunteering issues

6.5 Many projects reported issues with staff and volunteer retention – “*it’s generally known that working with volunteers is difficult, providing training, and building a relationship*” [CS19 P1]. Other projects found staff recruitment and management challenging and high staff turnover was identified as an issue in at least one project. Particular staff and volunteer issues included insufficient time for proper recruitment, role definition difficulties, skills deficits and training requirements, and maintaining enthusiasm where volunteers were drawn from outwith the immediate community. One interviewee noted: “*It’s difficult to keep people [volunteers] on board; to get them to stay involved for a three year period.*” [CS03 P1]. One project saw employing staff as a solution to the challenges of managing large numbers of volunteers that could only offer small amounts of time.

Engaging with professional services

6.6 Groups that sought to refurbish community buildings for energy efficiency and improved utility often struggled to understand the demands and requirements of the construction procurement process. This was made more challenging where the building in question had listed historic status: “*...getting planning permission ... with us being a listed building, what was required by the Council to get the permission to go ahead with changing windows and things. That was a side of things that we could have had big delays*” [CS09 P1].

6.7 However, in the case of one project, this barrier was alleviated through utilising the skills and professional experience of a community member employed as an architect.

Data collection

6.8 Energy efficiency data collection and interpretation emerged as a particular problem for some groups. Volunteers were reported to be reluctant or unable (due to accessibility constraints) to collect data from the energy meters or energy monitors of targeted community members. For example, on one project the operation of energy monitoring hardware by homeowners was found to be difficult, leading to user apathy: “[Energy] monitors, that was difficult. Well, we haven’t really been able to measure that ... we’d set ourselves a target ... 20 households trying to reduce 10% of their energy. We haven’t been able to show that we’ve been able to do that” [CS09 P1].

6.9 Furthermore, relating changes in energy consumption resulting from the installation of energy efficiency measures and/or behaviour change to actual CO2 reductions based on energy meter readings (which could not be disaggregated)

was challenging or impossible. In addition to this, those working on transport projects also found behaviour change monitoring challenging as it was difficult for projects to gather travel behaviour data (via travel diaries) after providing advice and services.

Project administration/ management

6.10 Many project groups had limited experience of project management (which had to be developed during project delivery and was often described as a steep learning curve) and the practical demands of executing a project (e.g. home office, IT setup and maintenance, developing promotional materials). A belief was expressed by a stakeholder that *“running an energy project is quite challenging ... a pain”* [SH14] due to the challenges of training, staff management and the need to consider personal safety of advisors.

Doing things differently?

6.11 Case study respondents were also asked to indicate if there was anything that they would do differently if they were to run the project again.

6.12 A small number of respondents (each from different project teams) remarked that they would not have done anything differently on their projects and were very satisfied with how their projects had progressed. One stated *“I wouldn’t change anything”* [CS11]. Another stated *“I can’t see any weaknesses ... [we] didn’t have any problems at all”* [CS42]. However there were many comments about changes that would be made. These are described in the following sections.

Planning

6.13 Many respondents stated that they would revisit how they had planned their projects if the occasion arose to do them again. Gaining a better understanding of interest levels in the project among members of the target audience, establishing stronger relationships with potential project partners (including businesses and local authorities) earlier in the project process, and allowing more time to develop the project application and implement the project (generally, one year was viewed as an insufficient duration to effect change) all emerged as significant themes. Also, greater attention would be given to the definition of project scope: *“If I was to go back and change the application, I would probably say that we needed more of a target audience and I would have probably said schools and businesses would have been the way to go”* [CS07 P2].

Implementation

6.14 In terms of project implementation, most groups reported that they would have done at least one project task differently, generally focused on making them more accessible and engaging to encourage low-carbon behaviours. Two groups, each undertaking an energy advice project, concluded that retaining multiple volunteers who were only committed to a few hours work per week was not as effective as employing a smaller number of paid staff: *“We would not deliver [the*

project] *with volunteers ... but if we had used the funding we received ... to have staff delivering the service we would have been more effective I think*" [CS06 P1].

6.15 Indeed, other groups also mentioned that they would seek to employ more staff in a variety of functions (e.g. project management, book-keeping).

Monitoring and evaluation

6.16 Consideration of project scope is closely linked to the monitoring and evaluation of project outputs and outcomes. Improvements to data gathering processes were raised including standardising paperwork requirements, conducting audits at more appropriate intervals (sensitive to community restrictions), and involving community members to a greater degree in data gathering process definition and execution. For example one group suggested that: *"... the school catering staff should be kept more in the loop regards audit arrangements and feedback which currently goes through the teaching staff"* [CS03 R].

6.17 Also, it was noted that project outputs and outcomes should be more clearly defined or more focused to make it easier to measure from the beginning. In addition, some respondents indicated that they would be more specific and realistic (particularly with regard to setting CO₂ reduction targets) while others stated in hindsight that they had not been ambitious enough.

Relationship with KSB and support

6.18 Many projects felt that they should have been more proactive and sought more support and clarification from the CCF team at KSB. This related in particular to CO₂ reduction targets and methodologies, clarification over implications if missed, taking greater advantage of training and to have pushed for more support in general.

Summary: Project Delivery: Challenges and changes

6.19 Although many groups undertook their projects successfully, there were key themes arising in terms of the possible support that any successor fund may need to consider to ensure that projects have the best chance of achieving success. In particular this relates to enhanced training and support on:

- Community engagement, audience targeting and understanding
- Volunteer (and staff) management
- Project and group management and administration
- Data collection, monitoring and evaluation
- Best practice in project delivery (by type)

6.20 There is clear scope to share more 'best practice' and guidance in relation to all these elements in any future programme. The CCF in its current form is very much focused on enabling communities to develop their own solutions, however it would appear that some more guidance and support in relation to these areas may

be beneficial, including for example 'toolboxes' in relation to, for example, project types, resources and monitoring plans that can be adapted by groups.

6.21 In addition there is also scope for a future scheme to foster more effective partnerships and collaborations to meet wider Scottish Government aims. This would help to ensure a more sustainable legacy as well as identify potential follow-on, community-led projects in other related areas (this is discussed in further depth in chapter 10).

7. Project achievements and legacy

7.1 This section of the report describes data on the impacts of the CCF projects in terms of their perceptions of their greatest achievements, legacies and other wider benefits, which were all explored with groups.

Key achievements

7.2 Groups' impressions of their greatest achievements were diverse but fell within a range of key themes. These are described as follows.

Community Education and Learning

7.3 The education of community members leading to behaviour change emerged as a key achievement of many project groups, particularly where projects focused on local food production and reducing food waste. In the case of one community food-growing project this awareness led to a reduction in site vandalism, anecdotally due to self-policing by community members. Elsewhere, knowledge of energy usage, appliances and behaviours (leading, in some cases, to a greater awareness of climate change) and the provision of professional energy assessment qualifications to students were highlighted as key accomplishments. These findings were echoed in the CCF Projects Survey [Q19], where nearly 20% of question respondents mentioned that engaging with children and young people was important. Moreover, 9% of respondents stated that raising awareness of climate change was a main achievement. More generally, many projects instilled a belief among participants, and particularly with children, that they had sufficient personal agency to make a meaningful difference in relation to influencing the behaviour of adults.

7.4 Some projects identified that they were able to influence other (non-CCF project) organisations through promotion of their activities. For example, one school-based project reported that other schools and businesses in the local area had shown an interest in composting. Another project highlighted how the activities of a school-based restaurant serving locally-grown food acted as a vehicle for engagement, promoting the benefits of locally-grown food to the extended local community and partners. It was also mentioned that refurbished community buildings provided access to new or improved activities and services (e.g. medical, pharmacy, nursery care) for communities.

Carbon reduction

7.5 Some project participants regarded meeting or exceeding CO2 reduction targets (e.g. via increased active travel) as the greatest achievement of their respective projects. However, in many cases carbon reductions were often induced by incentivising community members to reduce costs rather than address climate change: *“Getting them to save money was a good approach – more than climate change or carbon footprint approach”* [CS03 P1]; *“The ‘what’s in it for me’ question has to be answered. People do want to hear about the environmental story but it’s not the motivating factor”* [CS05 P1].

7.6 Respondents to the CCF Projects Survey stated that greater awareness of low carbon and climate change behaviours leading to engagement and normalisation (4.2%) and demonstrable benefits (13.1%) were significant achievements [Q19].

7.7 Many commented on long-term behaviour change and the carbon savings arising. Although it was not typically described as the groups’ key achievement, it was acknowledged by many respondents that this process takes time beyond the scope of a typical CCF project. That said, respondents commented that this was and could be, achieved through, for example, curriculum-linked educational activities in schools, awareness-raising and ‘changing mind-sets’ within their communities. This issue is discussed further in chapter 8.

Measuring change

7.8 Despite the challenges of this process for many groups, some groups talked of their success in measuring change. Depending on project aims and desired outcomes, evidence emerged of the use of pedometers (to measure walking distances), energy monitors (to record domestic electricity consumption), active travel materials (e.g. journey planners, cycling maps), and, in one case, the Global Positioning System (GPS) software application Strava (to track cycle journey distances). One project team reported sharing a bespoke spreadsheet for calculating CO2 reductions with another group, thus avoiding duplication of effort and encouraging further information exchange between teams.

Health and Wellbeing

7.9 For many groups, key accomplishments tended to be expressed in ‘softer’ terms, including increasing the quality of life of community members: *“...lots of good feeling in the community and togetherness and people supporting each other”* [CS09 P1]. Reducing stress (and potentially winter deaths) by taking positive action to reduce fuel bills and debt were also perceived as benefits by energy projects. Also noted were mental health benefits for community members (leading to personal development) and establishing relationships. Physical health benefits, resulting from physical exercise (specifically cycling and food-growing activities), were also mentioned by some groups. Improved physical and mental health benefits emerged as main achievements from 1.2% and 8% of CCF Projects Survey respondents respectively [Q19]. It is important to note that there was a

perception from some that such 'soft' benefits were difficult to report and were not of interest to the CCF.

Achievements (by project type)

7.10 Where projects were concerned with food-growing, significant achievements included increasing the number of community members growing their own food, and educating project participants (especially schoolchildren) about the relationship between food-growing, food consumption and healthy eating, composting and food waste. Where key project achievements concerning waste were highlighted, these tended to be associated with food waste (e.g. eliminating food waste and food packaging waste in schools). Increasing bike use (particularly among school children), organising cycling events, the attainment of cycle riding and bike maintenance qualifications by community members, and the creation of a community cycling hub were stated as significant achievements among transport projects.

7.11 The provision of robust energy efficiency advice sensitive to the requirements of community members, which allowed many community members to reduce their energy costs, emerged as a key project achievement in energy projects. Where projects were mostly concerned with renovating a community building, in each case the building itself (and the activities and services it could support) was judged to be the most important accomplishment.

Feedback from the Fund

7.12 Some funded groups felt that project success was judged by the CCF, and highlighted the positive feedback from KSB on their final reports (in terms of progress and achieving planned carbon savings) as their key achievement. Major successes tended to be expressed by project teams in terms of community impacts (e.g. improved quality of life, health and wellbeing benefits, community pride) rather than CO₂ reductions.

Other wider benefits

7.13 Other community benefits noted by project participants were wide-ranging and included the use of local suppliers and, in one case, increased support for a renewable energy project which the CCF project in part enabled.

Key legacies

7.14 For some groups, their key achievement related to a legacy, rather than a direct project output. These, along with other legacies identified in the research, are outlined as follows.

Capacity-building and community development

7.15 A significant achievement highlighted by many groups was in enhancing community capacity, through imparting skills (e.g. food-growing, bike maintenance)

to allow for enduring behaviour change. The range and depth of engagement with community members (including hard-to-reach and ethnic minority community members) was also highlighted by many projects as a key achievement. For example, energy advice projects took time to understand the circumstances and broader wellbeing needs of elderly householders in order to provide the most appropriate information and recommendations.

7.16 Projects interacting with schoolchildren variously conducted class visits, arranged for students to attend internal/external events, produced teaching resources, contributed towards Eco-Schools objectives, and promoted behaviour change through demonstrating composting and the benefits of walking to/from school. Moreover, there was evidence of schoolchildren being encouraged to develop their own networks, taking newly-acquired knowledge home to influence the behaviour of their parents and developing collaborative working relationships with children from other (non-CCF project) schools.

7.17 Others mentioned the creation and improvement of physical assets (e.g. buildings, gardening space, orchards, bike workshops and cafés) which led to a sense of ownership by the community. Indeed, one community group noted that their building-focused project had “*reached out in ways that we hadn’t anticipated*” [CS09 P3]. The CCF Project Survey also indicated that 14.3% of respondents thought that providing useable community facilities was a wider benefit.

7.18 It was, however, recognised by some groups that delivering project outcomes did not always result in greater community cohesion, whether this was intended or otherwise. Strengthened community relationships were found to be generally dependent on the nature of the project, and were more evident where project volunteers were drawn from the locale and/or projects were linked to ‘hard’ community assets (such as a growing space or a building). Community cohesion was enabled by project activities and events, demonstrable through, for example, friendlier and more open social atmospheres and less vandalism, and was identified as a significant factor in making future applications easier to compile. CCF Projects Survey respondents (13.1%) also highlighted community cohesion and resilience as a wider benefit [Q19].

Volunteers and staff development

7.19 The effort invested in projects by volunteers (also stated as important by 7.1% of respondents in the CCF Projects Survey [Q19]) and their “*appetite for learning*” [CS08 P] and development was similarly recognised. Activities leading to unemployed project volunteers becoming more confident and more able to find, or finding, employment was also viewed as important and a significant project achievement. Building long-term capacity within the community, leading to further knowledge exchange, community awareness and enhanced employment opportunities, was also identified as a key legacy by many groups.

7.20 Although not always mentioned as a key achievement, many projects provided opportunities for part-time employment both within and beyond the duration (and scope) of the project. Skills development for community members

emerged as an important wider benefit among 10.7% of respondents in the CCF Projects Survey [Q19].

Sustaining groups or projects

7.21 The CCF Projects Survey highlighted that almost all groups are still active and involved in activities to reduce climate change (see table 6.1 below). Other case study groups mentioned maintaining activities after projects had been completed as key achievements or legacies. These included food-growing and composting, cycling, energy monitoring, recycling/upcycling and involvement in Eco-Schools groups.

Table 7.1 Continued status of CCF3-funded groups

Status of CCF3-Funded Group	No.	%
Still active	138	97%
Closed down	0	0%
Other	5	3%
Still involved in activities to tackle climate change/ reduce carbon	141	99%
No longer involved in activities to tackle climate change/ reduce carbon	2	1%

CCF Project Survey Q6; Q7: What is the current status of your organisation? Is your organisation still involved in activities which are intended to reduce carbon emissions (CO₂e) and help tackle climate change?
Base =143 (CCF3 Projects only)

7.22 The continuation of a project beyond the funding period to become self-sustaining or, at least, a project team being in a better position to deliver comparable projects in the future, were described as key successes by some groups. One community group made an ongoing commitment to take local action on climate change by signing Scotland's Climate Change Pledge for Communities.

7.23 Although not explicitly described by respondents as their key achievement or legacy, many identified the experience of building on their CCF project to inform future projects or applications as significant. This included using their experience to apply for new funding, providing project information to support other groups and realising the transfer of staff to new or related projects. Some evidence also emerged that new project groups were spawned from existing project groups, addressing similar and different issues. Consultation with communities as part of the CCF application process, and certain project-specific activities (e.g. surveys of domestic energy consumption behaviours), enabled increased knowledge of community needs to be established and refined. A small number of groups also mentioned that their CCF project had enhanced or developed their organisational structure, process and services. In one case this had enabled their project to become self-funding.

7.24 However, it was also recognised that continuity barriers existed, such as the suitability of some project types to generate income, skills deficits within project teams, and use of short-term project staff (as opposed to embedded community members). This was felt to limit the potential of groups to 'step-up' and tackle projects and activities from other funds or agencies (e.g. community renewables).

Partnerships and networks

7.25 The development of partnerships and networks between groups and with other wider organisations was identified throughout the research.

7.26 The CCF Projects Survey identified that 92% of CCF3-funded organisations had generated collaborations with other organisations, networks or initiatives as part of their project (see table 7.2 below). Of these, the most frequently cited as collaborators for CCF3 projects were: local authority (64%), Home Energy Scotland (HES) (45%), Scottish Communities Climate Action Network (SCCAN) (24%) and Resource Efficient Scotland (18%). Of the 45% of respondents who indicated that they had forged collaborations with 'other' groups, one third of these were locally-based such as other community groups, church groups and schools.

Table 7.2 Collaborators of CCF3-funded projects

Organisation	No.	%
Local Authority	91	64%
Home Energy Scotland	64	45%
Scottish Communities Climate Action Network	35	24%
Resource Efficient Scotland	26	18%
Transition Network / Towns	21	15%
Development Trust Association Scotland	18	13%
Local Energy Scotland	14	10%
Other	65	45%
None	12	8%
TOTAL (CCF3 projects only)	143	

CCF Project Survey Q17: Thinking about your most recent CCF project, which other organisations / networks / initiatives has it collaborated with, if any? Base =143 (CCF3 Projects only)

7.27 Many case study groups identified that change at community level required the creation of partnerships with multiple local stakeholders such as schools, businesses, housing associations and local authorities. Although this was often challenging, this was a key success for some groups. The case studies also highlighted evidence of the projects fostering the development of a range of enduring partnerships beyond the CCF project with many agencies (e.g. local authorities, community network groups such as SCCAN, HES) post-funding. In addition, successful peer-to-peer networks, which were felt to enable learning to be shared across CCF groups, were viewed positively. Some case study respondents felt that the CCF should act as a catalyst to create these relationships to a greater extent than was currently the case.

Key Achievements and Legacy: Summary

7.28 This section has demonstrated that, community, carbon and legacy are all present in the achievements of the CCF projects reviewed in this study. Projects are delivering multiple benefits and, whilst carbon saving and behaviour change are present, they are neither always prominent nor perceived as the key achievement by many groups.

7.29 The CCF is supporting a range of outcomes including volunteer and skills development, community capacity-building and health and wellbeing and is producing a legacy in terms of future work, projects and group links. All of this is sitting alongside, and perceived by some groups as more important than, the carbon-saving aims and legacies of their CCF project.

8. Delivering Carbon Savings and Changing Behaviours

8.1 Central to the aims of the CCF were achieving measurable carbon savings and fostering behaviour change amongst the target community. These aims and challenges are discussed in this section. Please note that the in-depth case studies, described in Appendix C go into more detail on these issues at the individual project level. This section draws together the key lessons and insights from across the projects.

Carbon Calculations: Context

8.2 The CCF is focused on delivering behaviour change and, as a result, emissions reductions at a local level as part of the wider Scottish Government approach to tackling climate change. Hence the CCF asks projects to collect data on carbon emissions baselines and reductions over time for two key purposes: a) to help groups think through the logic of how they are addressing climate change; and b) to focus projects on the link between their activities and outcomes.

Setting targets

8.3 The CCF provided guidance to groups applying for, and awarded, funding to help them estimate their projects' CO₂ emissions baselines, set targets to reduce emissions and measure performance. Guidance used by case study projects included the CCF's Low Carbon Route Maps¹⁰ and worked examples provided in CCF/ CASP training workshops, along with information from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), EST and HES¹¹. Some projects used expertise built from previous applications to the CCF or gained help from other CCF-funded groups. Although helpful to many, some mentioned that they found the route maps confusing, "[we] *trawled through them to get figures you could use*" [CS01], or not broad enough (i.e. insufficient examples were present that could be applied to particular activities).

8.4 Some groups mentioned that the KSB DOs were heavily involved in shaping their applications towards activities that were more focused on behaviour change

¹⁰ Low Carbon Route Maps were provided by KSB to assist groups in estimating and measuring emissions savings in order to set targets and review performance.

¹¹ Department of Energy and Climate Change (www.decc.gov.uk), Energy Saving Trust (www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) and Home Energy Scotland (<http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/home-energy-scotland>)

and reducing CO₂ emissions (and would therefore better address the CCF criteria). This involved changing, adding or altering activities and topics to their projects. For many this was felt to be a positive process, prompting groups to “*explore the softer side*” of carbon reduction [CS24], or to “*encourage the inclusion of other factors such as a workshop [with the community]*” [CS23 Int2] in applications. However, for a small number of others this influence was perceived to have had a negative effect, with applicants feeling they were being forced to be too ambitious with their applications: “*We kept adding things on. And that’s why we’ve got these six outcomes. Which I feel is a bit much*” [CS23]. It was also suggested by one group that DOs advised some projects to grow food in order to amass comparatively easy-to-achieve CO₂ savings.

8.5 Conversely, the difficulties of setting targets and potential challenges of measuring changes had the effect of restricting proposed activities for some groups: “[we] *made a conscious decision in application to stick to gardening [not transport] because we would not know how to work out CO₂ reduction estimates*” [CS12]. Other projects experienced similar difficulties, with one respondent struggling in an (ultimately rejected) application to account for the CO₂ savings that could result from behaviour changes arising from a series of radio broadcasts.

8.6 The challenge of gathering baseline data was acknowledged by some groups, with one project reporting that not enough baseline data was gathered in the first instance, leading to accounting problems later in the execution of the project. Some project teams noted that CO₂ reductions associated with food production were difficult to baseline, with one group indicating that they found it difficult to find carbon figures for food (to set the baseline) and another suggesting that savings achieved were underestimated (as calculations could not fully take into account all carbon associated with food-growing, e.g. sufficient food miles, fertilizer, transport emissions). Similarly, carbon savings associated with travel projects were also perceived as being difficult to quantify (both to baseline and to measure).

8.7 In one case, estimated CO₂ reductions went beyond simply accounting for ‘operational’ carbon savings (i.e. those occurring directly from project activities), with ‘embodied’ CO₂ (including production and shipping carbon emissions associated with products and materials) forming part of the group’s CO₂ reduction targets (as they felt this was necessary). This (and the concerns in the previous paragraph) highlights the difficulties and potential ambiguities that groups may have had in defining the scope of their targets and in how detailed the calculations needed to be. DOs were reported as encouraging community groups to use whichever data sources they deemed to be appropriate to their projects (with assumptions explained). The Low Carbon Route Maps highlight that there is “no one best way” to complete applications as each project and group are different, and asks groups to “think about any extra emission sources” when they plan their work. Although this flexible guidance is helpful in one sense, it led some respondents to become concerned and confused about the process.

8.8 Reviewing and (potentially) incorporating multiple sources of data into baselines was noted to be a difficult and time-consuming exercise. Others

commented that this involved considerable data estimations and guesswork (highlighting the need for baselines), thus making targets inaccurate and difficult to meet, as well as, according to one respondent, “*an impossible task*” [CS03 P2]. Another noted that “*most would find it difficult to engage with this level of complexity*” [CS18].

8.9 It should be acknowledged that one respondent with previous CCF project carbon accounting experience perceived that the carbon reduction calculation methodology and guidance applicable to the CCF3 funding period was an improvement over that provided previously.

8.10 In a few cases there was evidence that applicants felt pressure to set higher savings targets in their applications than they necessarily felt comfortable with achieving. This was related both to a need to submit a strong application (particularly as the application process became more competitive), but also to a belief that groups needed to commit to achieving a certain level of carbon saving based on the scale of funding requested.

Recording savings

8.11 For the purpose of grant applications, when projects were at the planning stage, the CCF’s Low Carbon Route Maps indicated that potential carbon savings could be estimated using secondary data (e.g. typical amounts of energy used by a household for space heating, anticipated numbers of households making changes). However the Route Maps also indicated that “*all these pieces of information should be checked or updated with better information once the project is implemented*”¹² (for example through the collection of primary data via a survey of participants).

8.12 In line with the concerns expressed in relation to setting targets, it emerged that many community groups had substantial difficulty determining CO2 reductions associated with project activities, although this challenge tended to diminish somewhat with experience of performing the calculations over the course of their projects. Some groups identified innovative practice in relation to calculating savings, with one project reporting that secondary school pupils in a third year mathematics class were performing the CO2 saving calculations under the direction and supervision of teaching staff. Some projects also created bespoke spreadsheets to facilitate carbon accounting calculations, with one project successfully sharing its spreadsheet with other community groups.

8.13 Data gathering to verify carbon reduction targets was described as difficult for some, especially in relation to domestic energy consumption where there was homeowner suspicion or apathy (even where encouraged by face-to-face contact or free energy efficiency gifts, such as remote-controlled wireless sockets). Also, access constraints and energy monitoring technology presented barriers. It was noted that obtaining energy consumption data from fuel bills reduced the risk of

¹² <http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/media/43515/ccf-low-carbon-route-map-energy-2011.pdf>, p.10

double-counting from changed behaviours and installed energy efficiency measures.

8.14 One group realised that they were using incorrect carbon calculations when sending metal to landfill appeared to save more CO₂ than recycling it. Working with their DO, they were able to work out where they had gone wrong and obtain good carbon savings estimates for their calculations. Echoing these types of challenges, others commented that more information on, and greater standardisation of, carbon accounting methods and data by CCF would have been helpful.

8.15 Some community groups were markedly anxious about meeting CO₂ reduction targets. Advice from DOs (e.g. guidance about what emissions to include or exclude) seemed to allay such fears. However relationships with DOs varied and many groups experienced changes to their DO throughout their projects' lifetime, meaning that some groups were not able to gain certainty on this process as quickly as they would have liked.

8.16 Some case study projects found it difficult to meet their CO₂ reduction targets. Reasons provided for this included errors in interpretation of data to create baselines and the overestimation of achievable targets (with groups reflecting that greater realism was required at the application stage).

8.17 Many case study projects felt that the advice or approach on calculating carbon savings had changed during the course of their CCF3 projects (although KSB have indicated to the research team that there was in fact no change in advice over the course of the CCF3 period) For some groups this resulted in significant efforts being expended on recalculations and was a point of considerable annoyance for the project teams affected. For example one group highlighted the requirement, towards the end of its project, to change their data collection methods and collect additional primary data. These findings suggest that more clarity or emphasis in highlighting the process that groups were required to undertake once their project was 'live' may have been beneficial (i.e. the extent to which groups had to generate primary data and what type of information *had* to be replaced with primary data; see also the discussion in 8.11 above).

Overall Impressions

8.18 The reliability and utility of CO₂ reduction estimates generally was questioned by some groups, in particular by those who were aware that the carbon saving figures identified were not used in the calculations for the Scottish Government's progress against targets. Indeed many were not aware of this, with some groups assuming that the figures were used directly in the emission

calculations¹³. Others were unclear about how the detailed carbon savings identified and reported to the CCF were used.

8.19 Moreover, it was mentioned by some that projects risked becoming meaningless if their primary focus was on realising CO2 reductions rather than achieving behaviour change and community benefit, especially on short duration projects. Interestingly in one case, a group was explicitly told by its DO that less focus should be given to CO2 reduction targets than to meeting community targets. It is of course important to note that some groups saw achieving CO2 reductions as a project success.

Stakeholder perspectives

8.20 Diverse views emerged from stakeholders regarding the utility of community group carbon reduction estimates. It was suggested that removing the CO2 measurements (which in some contexts, such as food-growing projects, were viewed as of limited use) would make funding more accessible, and that the narrow measurement of carbon penalised projects and inhibited long-term sustainability. An opposite proposition was to focus on supporting projects to become embedded in their communities to foster long-term behaviour change. Moreover, one respondent felt the real value of the CCF scheme was in encouraging new ways of thinking and other 'softer' benefits (such as community empowerment) rather than carbon legacy. As such, the merit of the carbon evaluation requirement (and the efforts taken to undertake calculations) was queried.

8.21 However, measurement was seen as a means to continue to raise awareness of CO2 emissions and climate change within communities. This was despite difficulties in comparing carbon reduction figures between projects and actual CO2 savings often being very much less than estimated savings.

Behaviours

8.22 This section describes key insights arising from the case studies into facilitating and encouraging behaviour change amongst community audiences.

Audience Targeting and Messaging

8.23 It was clear that for many case study projects there was very little specific targeting in terms of the audiences for their project. Many projects had not considered particular audience segments at project outset and were targeting their projects at any possible participant: "[we were targeting] *anybody and everybody – but [it] changed throughout experience of project...to those that could change*"

¹³ The Scottish Government uses the Scottish Greenhouse Gas Inventory to monitor its emissions reduction targets on an annual basis. This Inventory is compiled in line with international guidance from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and is reported by source sector (such as energy supply) and by greenhouse gas category (such as carbon dioxide). (See information at the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory http://naei.defra.gov.uk/reports/reports?report_id=810). Given the relative scale of CCF projects within the wide range of factors that influence emissions in the Inventory, it is unlikely that the *specific* contribution from CCF activity could be identified.

[CS02 Int2.2]. There were however some projects that were designed with a specific audience (e.g. those that were based around schools, particular ethnic groups, small geographic communities, housing association tenants). However, even within these more targeted projects, groups typically did not take a strategic approach to developing engagement routes to different audiences, for example by identifying the best communications channel to reach these audiences, or tailoring messages at project outset. There was however, significant evidence of groups learning as their projects developed, through focusing in on particular target audiences or groups (e.g. schools or businesses) or realising the impact of new communications channels (such as social media). Many indicated that having this learning at project outset could have assisted their project delivery.

8.24 Most groups found that their target audiences typically did not want to engage on climate change and that other elements of their projects had more 'traction', as the following quotes describe: *"Some people are keen on their own individual footprint and will make lifestyle changes to reduce it – but they are few and far between."* [CS05 Int 1.2]; *"[the] most important thing is climate change – but this is not the most important thing within the community – if we talked about climate change to start with it would not start an easy conversation. Usually start with bills and then link back to climate change – highlighting that it is beneficial for their pockets but also for the environment"* [CS10 Int1].

8.25 Despite the lack of strategic audience-targeting at project outset, many groups developed their messaging throughout their projects to more effectively engage and meet the needs and drivers of their audiences. Examples of this included, energy-saving projects focusing on bill-saving, energy-saving or the environment depending on the type of client engaged, or the following food waste project shifting the focus onto community (rather than individual) benefits and success: *"Some people aren't that interested in putting their food waste in a caddy but when they hear collectively what [the area] has achieved they get a sense of pride"* [CS05 Int 1.2].

8.26 Other groups began to shift their efforts onto particular institutions or 'gatekeepers' for engagement, such as working through schools or seeking to work with businesses to access, and maintain contact with, groups of potential participants to both engage and monitor in the longer term.

Measuring Behaviour Change

8.27 Measurement of behaviour change was a very real challenge for many groups. Reporting and data collection of changes to individuals' behaviour was explored through a variety of routes across different project types, including the use of questionnaires and surveys, waste audits, travel surveys, use of online cycling recording software to track travel behaviour and energy questionnaires. Where these were undertaken, for many groups, the level of responses received was typically lower than had been hoped for, resulting in many groups being less confident than they had hoped to be in their results: *"[we] weren't privy to some of*

the changes made [this was] very frustrating as we can't record it as a project success" [CS03 Int2.2, B4].

8.28 For others, development of the processes to record 'before' and 'after' behaviour, or to understand specifically what behavioural outcomes they could achieve, was commenced too late in the process. This was initially less of a focus for some than getting the project delivery aspects underway. Indeed one respondent commented that they attended training on this towards the end of their project, when they felt it was too late.

8.29 That said, there was some clear evidence of good practice and adaptive thinking from groups in terms of ways to measure change. For example, one energy advice project developed their interventions with recipients to ensure that baseline energy data was gathered directly from bills, or requested from suppliers, during the first contact with their recipient. This was followed up with further monitoring via meters and energy monitors. Other projects sought to work with other organisations (such as schools or other groups) to encourage and organise the collection and return of information on changes made (e.g. through reminding and encouraging their members to undertake surveys). There was also evidence of groups using incentives such as competitions or prize draws on surveys to encourage feedback on behaviour changes.

8.30 Alongside these challenges there was also an acknowledgement by many case study respondents that behaviour change is a long-term process and, as a result measurement, is difficult: *"one single thing doesn't change behaviour overnight it is the community changing gradually over time"* [CS13 Int1 B3]. In line with this, many felt that their projects were contributing to change over time, rather than delivering instant change: *"Behaviour change can't be achieved in such a short period of time"* [CS19 Int1.2 B3].

Summary: Carbon calculations and behaviour change

8.31 Calculating carbon savings was perceived as a challenging, complex and confusing process for many groups and, as a result, setting, recording progress against and meeting targets became a significant concern and required substantial efforts to undertake. There was also some concern that this was acting as a barrier to progressive activity within community groups as too much focus was being placed on this element.

8.32 The inclusion of carbon targets in applications was shown to impact on projects both positively and negatively: adding elements to some projects to increase potential carbon savings, but restricting activities for other groups where it was felt that measurement of changes would be difficult. There was a lack of clarity over the purpose for which the carbon calculations were undertaken, with some groups mistakenly assuming that the figures are directly used by the Scottish Government in their calculations of performance against climate change targets, and others unsure of the purpose of the calculations and how they are used.

8.33 These findings would suggest that clarity over the purpose and the routes used for projects to set carbon emissions savings targets, and measure progress against them, would be of benefit to any future fund. Consideration should also be given to the extent to which this element should be focused on, given the efforts required and difficulties faced by groups to deliver on carbon reporting.

8.34 In terms of delivering behaviour change to their audiences, there was limited evidence of groups undertaking audience targeting and tailoring at project outset, and there may be scope for any successor fund to support and encourage this through provision of resources, guides and training. Measurement of behaviour change was a real challenge and this, along with insufficient consideration of behavioural *outcomes* at project outset, made this process difficult.

8.35 These findings highlight the scope for additional support and enhanced sharing of best practice in any future or successor scheme, to prevent projects repeating the mistakes of other projects in terms of planning, monitoring and delivery.

9. Perceptions of CCF3

9.1 This section describes stakeholder and case study perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the CCF, and in particular CCF3, and reviews their perceptions on which elements to keep and which to change in any successor scheme. It is important to note that the research found different views on the same issues presented in this chapter. However given the case study nature of this research, it is not possible to quantify the balance of opinion on each issue. As a result the issues presented here, particularly in relation to weaknesses and elements that need to be changed, are not presented in any ranking order. However all were identified in the research and should be considered in the development of any future scheme.

Strengths of CCF

Enabling and empowering

9.2 The CCF was typically commended by groups for enabling “*an interesting and good combination*” [CS08 P1] of projects to take place that otherwise would not have found funding and was recognised as supporting a wide variety of community groups. Many respondents (both case study and stakeholder) acknowledged that not many funders are so diverse in the aims and types of projects funded and in their support to raise awareness of climate change. A typical view was: “*CCF is a fantastic fund and there definitely should be more of it – with a few modifications*” [CS10]

9.3 Through encouraging a bottom-up or grassroots approach the scheme was felt to foster independence of thought and action, helping communities (including rural communities) meet their aspirations.

Finance and funding

9.4 It was commented on that the 3-year funding duration fostered stability and growth and allowed time to build trust with both CCF DOs and with the community projects (although not all projects took the opportunity of a 3-year project). The option for repeat funding of project teams (although for different projects) was commented on as providing continuity, potentially leading to the creation of lasting change.

9.5 The duration, amount, timing (e.g. payment of invoices on sight) and allocation of funds provided (e.g. paying for wages, not just materials) were regarded as CCF strengths by some case study respondents. Particular additional strengths cited included CCF's willingness to reallocate/re-profile individual budgets where overspend or, more frequently, underspend had occurred. There was general approval of the CCF refresh's removal of the restriction that forbade projects to make an income, as this was seen as an inhibitor to projects becoming sustainable.

Application & administration / Development Officers

9.6 Many project teams reported positive interactions with 'CCF' (i.e. the DOs and CASP programme) when applying for funding and/or administering their funded projects. This finding was echoed by the CCF Projects Survey where 66% of respondents indicated that they found the DO support among the most useful elements [Q15, base=163]. In particular, many case study respondents commented that DOs were noted for being supportive during the application process, generally knowledgeable when approached for guidance during project execution (despite each having a wide portfolio of projects), and readily able to offer feedback on monthly (and in some cases, final) reports. One respondent noted that they "*were very nice and helpful and reassuring*" [CS09 P2] while another stated that "*CCF were very helpful all the way along*" [CS09 P1]. However it was clear that positive feedback was not universal (see also the section on weaknesses below).

9.7 The CCF website was identified as a good initial source of information, also highlighted by the CCF Projects Survey (although additional online resources and guidance were suggested) [Q15]. Reporting requirements, although gruelling to some, were recognised as enforcing good discipline among project teams and for facilitating the compilation of the final project report.

Training & networking

9.8 Training provided by CCF to project groups was widely acknowledged as a strength of the scheme. Also, networking events were praised for providing opportunities for knowledge sharing with other CCF groups, connections to other (non-CCF-funded) groups and in helping groups to identify their contributions towards mitigating climate change. Respondents to the CCF Projects Survey indicated that networking, sharing mutual experiences and best practice with other projects, peer-to-peer networks and the CCF Gathering were also important. Signposting to, and receiving help from, other organisations was also valued.

Stakeholder perspectives

9.9 Strengths of the CCF were also noted by stakeholders. Many commented that the CCF was established, trusted and beneficial, with funding provided for diverse and “significant and substantial” projects. The CCF3 refresh themes were also commented on as positive, in particular through gaining access to hard-to-reach groups (especially those involving young people and minority ethnic communities). That the CCF now allowed projects to generate income was also viewed as a strength. As the CCF was latterly oversubscribed, it was also felt by some that this strengthened the quality of projects, as the CCF and JCCF panels could then prioritise better quality projects.

9.10 The ability of the CCF to engage communities and normalise community conversations about CO2 was commented on by some stakeholders (although this was not as strongly felt by case study groups themselves). Significant value was felt to come from the realisation of tangible assets (such as neighbourhood gardens) and community activities to facilitate these discussions acted to support changes in behaviour and thinking. For some this was as, if not more, important than the CO2 savings achieved.

Weaknesses of CCF

Carbon accounting

9.11 As discussed elsewhere in this report (see chapter 8), the carbon accounting requirements of the scheme were criticised by many case study groups. Carbon reduction calculations were found to be difficult, with many requesting more, or clearer, guidance and clarity over how targets were used to assess applications. Some requested explicit direction and standardisation from CCF. More broadly, a concern was expressed that the scheme focused on carbon reductions at the expense of changing behaviours. “[there is a] *danger that you become target driven which is not necessarily going to bring about long-term behaviour change*” [CS13].

Start-up and continuation funding

9.12 A lack of continuity funding and excessive project administration requirements were seen as discouraging community groups from undertaking future projects. Some respondents to the CCF Projects Survey would like to have seen a greater emphasis on providing ‘seed corn’ funding, bridging/buffer funding and revenue funding (although other respondents stated that they had received this type of support) [Q16].

Financial processes

9.13 Although viewed as a strength for some, the CCF claim process was found to be problematic by others. Issues such as re-profiling after every claim, late payments, funding based on claims leading to cash flow problems, and quibbling over “*trivial claim amounts*” were criticised. This led to negative perceptions for

some: *“there was almost a feeling of distrust ... [you were] assessed within an inch of your life”* [CS06 P1].

Application & Administration / Development Officers

9.14 Again while many viewed this as a strength of the CCF, some community groups felt the delivery of the administration and support from the CCF was a weakness. The project application process was felt to be too complex, particularly for 1-year projects. One interviewee stated that the *“application process is still a nightmare ... don’t know how some groups get through it”* [CS18]. The need for clear and consistent guidance on applications and reapplications and on the criteria for new funding applications was highlighted by CCF Projects Survey respondents [Q16]. Some stakeholders also indicated that the application (including carbon accounting) was challenging, especially for JCCF projects, and that generally, administrative or financial requirements are *“burdensome and disproportionate”* [SH10].

9.15 Many groups reported a long delay between submitting a funding application and being informed of the assessment panel’s decision, which limited time to prepare for project start. In particular, one project team noted that getting a DO to champion its funding application to gain funding was the key factor: *“I know that the decision-making panel don’t get to see the whole application, just the executive summary. The rest of the application is only seen by the grant officer and so your relationship with the grant officer is very important”* [CS05 P1].

9.16 Reporting requirements were perceived as difficult (detracting from the delivery of core project activity and disincentivising future funding applications) and in need of standardisation for similar project types. Prompt notification of reporting and monitoring formats was raised as important by respondents to the CCF Projects Survey [Q16].

9.17 Changes of DOs caused continuity problems associated with bringing DOs up to speed and the different approaches they adopted. DOs were perceived by many case study respondents to have too many projects to manage (and thus not able to visit or engage with groups with sufficient regularity), reactive (rather than proactive) in giving advice, and inexperienced where projects were very specialist or highly complex (e.g. education). It was suggested that local DOs would be helpful; *“It doesn’t sit well with me that the project officers and everyone are all based in Stirling”* [CS05 P2]. Others commented on the fact that the level of experience of their DO was a factor in the level of support offered: *“A lot depends on how much time, knowledge and experience your grant officer [sic] has – we were fortunate with [a DO] who had worked with previous groups”* [CS05 P1].

Training & networking

9.18 It was stated that CCF training courses focusing on the application process and on delivering outcomes had been delivered too late to be useful to some project groups. Moreover, there was an impression that less training was available under CCF3 than in previous funding rounds, and that the training that was offered

tended to be delivered in the Central Belt (which was an attendance barrier for remote Highland community groups). The need for local, timely training (with more training content available online) was also emphasised by respondents to the CCF Projects Survey. Moreover, additional training topics were suggested in the CCF Projects Survey including project management, output/outcome measurement, and marketing and communications [Q16]. It was put forward that CCF should improve networking opportunities for community groups to allow these groups to help themselves through sharing knowledge and resources (and potentially reducing the support requirements of DOs). Some groups mentioned the CCF gathering (an annual conference held for CCF groups) as a particularly positive networking opportunity, although others felt that some content was not wholly relevant to them or their project.

Stakeholder perspectives

9.19 Weaknesses of the CCF scheme noted by stakeholders typically focused on more strategic perspectives of the CCF. The lack of focus on an 'exit strategy' for projects was described as "*wasteful*" [SH10] by one stakeholder and was felt to hinder dissemination of project learnings.

9.20 Others felt that the focus on partnerships could be improved, for example, improving relationships with HES to improve collaboration on energy projects (and to ensure that there was no duplication of services) and opportunities to contribute towards projects such as Eco-Schools.

9.21 The indirect relationship with national CO2 targets was also identified as a possible weakness. As one respondent described, funding should focus on community development, capacity-building and cultural change (as these were the key strengths): "*if your main aim is reducing carbon then this [CCF] is not the way to do it*" [SH17]

Elements of the Fund to Keep and Change

9.22 This section of the report describes both case study respondent and stakeholder perspectives on the elements of the current CCF that are felt to be important to keep and those that require change. Perspectives differed between the two respondent groups; case study respondents tended to focus more on operational issues and stakeholders more on strategic issues. As a result these are presented separately.

9.23 The discussion focuses on many issues that are commented on, both as things to be kept, but that also require some form of change or enhancement. This suggests that the broad structure of the CCF is supported, but that the delivery of particular elements could be enhanced. Elements are not presented in any order of importance.

Keep: Community Group Perspectives

9.24 The key elements that community group respondents tended to focus on as things to keep in any future CCF or successor scheme were as follows:

- The focus on community groups
- Reporting
- Support
- Development Officers
- Funding approach
- Measuring of CO₂ and carbon calculations

9.25 Groups felt that it was important for any future fund to continue to empower a broad range of grassroots communities to develop their own 'bottom-up' solutions to their needs – *“it’s a pretty unique set of projects that can be created ... [that have] an immensely positive impact”* [CS08 P].

9.26 Although opinion was divided amongst groups about the reporting requirements for the CCF, some groups felt that both monthly and final reports should be retained in a future fund as they serve as a celebration of project successes and guard against groups becoming complacent. They were also felt by some to provide evidence of, and a basis from which to evolve, ideas and projects.

9.27 The DOs and their ability to provide information and guidance, one-to-one support and project visits to keep projects on track were felt to be essential. In addition to this, other support such as workshops, networking, especially local networks, application support, training days relating to overall Scottish Government aims and the knowledge bank of existing projects were all felt to be important and required in any future scheme: *“I personally enjoyed the more technical refresher courses regarding climate change, such as those that deal with the 'why, how and how to speak about it to others' scenario”* [CS15 R].

9.28 The 100% funding of projects was also supported along with the ability to allow expenditure on a range of costs including salaries, capital costs and overheads.

9.29 Finally the measuring of CO₂ and carbon calculations, was for some, still important to retain, despite many projects' focus on achieving community outcomes. It is important to acknowledge that others felt quite strongly that this element required change (see below).

Keep: Stakeholder Perspectives

9.30 The key elements that stakeholder respondents tended to focus on as things to keep in any future CCF or successor scheme were as follows:

- Community-led projects
- General administration and parameters of the CCF, including the refresh themes

- Climate change and behaviour change as a focus
- Sharing best practice

9.31 Much like the case study respondents, stakeholders wanted any future fund to continue to be community-led and to support communities to develop their own project ideas: *“The community-led focus is absolutely critical. I think that has to stay, otherwise there’s no point in this”* [SH17].

9.32 The general administration of the CCF, both in terms of the existing CCF processes and structure and the levels of DO support, were identified as elements to retain. In addition the strategic parameters, such as allowing projects to generate incomes (and to move towards becoming social enterprises and self-sustaining), continuing to fund the creation and development of community assets to facilitate capacity-building, and continuing the focus on the refresh themes were also identified as elements to retain.

9.33 Climate change and behaviour change as a focus were also important to stakeholders, along with establishing a sustainable legacy and making carbon reductions: *“CCF probably needs to make sure that it keeps its unique selling point in terms of being about carbon and being about climate ... running it around the co-benefits and social inclusion and health benefits ... that’s all really, really solid stuff. But I think keeping it rooted in carbon [is important]”* [SH01].

9.34 Finally, sharing best practice between groups and showcasing successes were also viewed as particularly important by stakeholders: *“Some of the peer-based support activities, I think, including the conference, [are] really important ... you get people to share and spread ideas”* [SH17].

Change: Community group perspectives

9.35 The key elements that community group respondents focused on as things to change in any future fund were as follows:

- Development Officers
- Support, workshops and networking
- Carbon measurement
- Application process
- Reporting

9.36 As described above, this list echoes elements that groups and stakeholders want to keep, suggesting enhancement rather than change. Suggested changes therefore focus on how these things could be offered. For example, the focus on change in the DO support related to an increase in the number and consistency of experienced DOs offering support; smoother transitions when changing DOs, and more proactive support to provide updates on changes. There were also some calls for regional DOs to be in place to enhance group access to this knowledge (typically from more rural groups).

9.37 Case study respondents wanted to see more peer-to-peer support, evidence of best practice and the promotion of final reports, along with the establishment of a more effective support network for project groups to facilitate the sharing of other groups' processes, methods and forms rather than 'reinventing the wheel'. In addition groups wanted enhanced (and more local) workshops and networking events, and the provision of training on marketing, promotion and evaluation. *"They're a carbon-saving organisation and they make you travel to the central belt all the time"* [CS17].

9.38 Related to the need for more support, a desire to streamline and simplify carbon measurement and calculations was requested (as described in chapter 8). This related to more information, templates, best practice examples and support for target setting and recording changes and how this information is used, both at application stage (for assessment) and at end of project. Others wanted less focus on CO2 reductions in general and more on community benefits.

9.39 Despite the support for the reporting described above, others felt the reporting too onerous and wanted less repetitive reporting, clearer guidance and to confirm the need for such detailed reporting. Indeed some were concerned about how and if the data is being used by the CCF. Others wanted simpler budget administration, an end to the requirement to spend the entire allocated budget before the year end and increased speed in the claims process.

Change: Stakeholder Perspectives

9.40 The key elements that stakeholder respondents focused on as things to change in any future CCF or successor scheme were as follows:

- Establishing better links across Scottish Government policy areas, targets and legislation
- Reducing focus on CO2 reduction
- Enhanced support
- Longer-term funding options
- Increasing focus on hard-to-reach audiences:

9.41 There were a number of comments from stakeholders that highlighted a need and desire for a future fund to be more closely aligned to, and to better support, wider climate change-related policy objectives. As one stakeholder commented: *"[the CCF] does need to be more firmly embedded in the broader, kind of, what else is going on with ... the Scottish Government ..., [the] world of targets and legislation and so ... we need to find a way to make a bridge between those two things"* [SH01]. This issue is discussed further in chapter 10.

9.42 In order to facilitate enhanced delivery and focus more on engagement, others suggested reducing (but not removing) the focus on CO2 reduction. This was felt to be important as many of the benefits of CCF projects go beyond simply carbon savings, and given the misunderstanding about the relationship between CCF data and the Scottish Government's climate change targets (see footnote 13).

9.43 Similar to the case studies, stakeholders acknowledged the need for greater support in particular to provide direction to groups based on what has worked well and delivered value in past projects. In addition it was also felt by some that there should be more focus on publicising final reports and lessons: “*The more people that you have working together, coming forward on a joint, collective vision, would be better*” [SH12].

9.44 Other stakeholders focused on the need for longer-term projects (i.e. greater than three years) to embed behaviour change (although for some the three year funding period was felt to be enough). There were also calls to enhance and clarify the way the scheme engaged with younger people and to build from the current success in this area.

Summary: Perceptions of CCF3

9.45 It is clear that CCF3 has many strengths and successful elements. In general the CCF and its approach is strongly supported, particularly, its community basis and ability to empower communities to support climate change-related activities.

9.46 The views of CCF groups and stakeholders highlight that there is a need for more support and specific guidance for groups and projects to ensure that they are learning and building from the experience of previous projects. There would also be some benefits in providing more templates or best practice guidance for a range of project elements

9.47 The focus on carbon-saving and its purpose for CCF projects needs to be reviewed. The high importance of carbon means that it is used as one tool to assess the merits of projects at panel stage, but the research suggests that other ways to measure success for a community-based climate change project may need to be developed, alongside carbon.

9.48 There may also be scope to assess the extent to which the projects are supporting other Scottish Government policies and local activities.

10. Future options

10.1 During interviews all respondents were presented with a range of specific (but not mutually exclusive) options for reshaping a future CCF (or any successor scheme). The Scottish Government wished to explore these to inform consideration of how any future scheme could best contribute towards tackling climate change.

Specific options for reshaping the CCF

Focus on innovation

10.2 The current CCF has had a focus on encouraging innovation. As described previously, respondents (both at case study level and wider stakeholder level) had

mixed views on the need for the CCF to continually deliver innovation within projects. There was support for a future fund to encourage new ways to tackle climate change, but equally there was also significant support for continuing to deliver activities that have been proven to work well (if a continuing demand for such activities can be evidenced). A summary of the pros and cons of maintaining a focus on innovation were identified in the research and are summarised in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1: Pros and cons of including a focus on innovation in a future scheme

Pros	Cons
Produces a project tailored to meet the needs of the community	There is room for innovation but not at the expense of projects which are working and could continue to make a positive impact in their area
Climate change is a new challenge; our way of functioning needs to be challenged and requires innovative approaches	Carbon reduction targets stifle innovation, as projects have to focus on achieving measurable carbon savings rather than exploring innovative approaches that may be more difficult to measure
Changing technology, perceptions and attitudes requires innovation	Innovation is a barrier for smaller groups with limited experience and an increase in focus on innovation could restrict the types of applicant applying
	Can detract from the process of behaviour change
	Groups could become focused on tweaking or reframing projects to obtain funding to continue their work, rather than truly innovating

10.3 It is important to note that it was clear that there were varying interpretations of ‘innovation’, from adopting a successful group’s project idea in a new community, to delivering something radically different, new and untested. To deliver the latter it may be that wider support and links to experts (such as academia and other organisations) may be required. However it was acknowledged by one stakeholder that currently *“there are probably half a dozen standard things that most CCF groups do”* [SH05], and to delivery truly innovative projects is extremely challenging, and potentially intimidating, for groups who may be unsure of the extent to which they will be effective in their project or able to measure changes.

10.4 On balance, it was typically felt that there should be space for innovation, but not to the exclusion of delivering projects that have been proven to be effective and for which a demand is evident. Benefits identified for continuing to fund projects included: operational efficiencies (e.g. no need to re-orientate delivery, retrain staff or develop new objectives); the likelihood of greater impact and CO2 reduction as groups will have learnt from experience; and the ability for groups to apply for shorter (e.g. 1 year) funding to test and develop ideas before committing to a larger project (which may be intimidating for smaller groups).

10.5 Overall a balanced approach was considered appropriate and that continuation funding should be possible, but strictly assessed on a project by project basis. This should take into account factors such as: detailed evidence of levels of ongoing community need (acknowledging that some project types may be likely to achieve diminishing returns if continuing to deliver the same output); robust

evidence of impacts achieved; potential for revenue-generation and self-sustainability (if possible); and the length of previous funding (i.e. for shorter projects only). Discussions in relation to this type of assessment highlighted that a future fund may require two tiers of funding, with the criteria for continuation funding being more demanding (e.g. providing more detail on demand/community need) than that for 'new project' funding.

Focus on disadvantaged groups

10.6 As described elsewhere in this report, there was extensive support for a focus on disadvantaged groups to continue in any future fund. This was both as a result of the perceptions of success of this element of CCF3, and also of a need to ensure that any future fund is delivering across all elements of Scottish society. The focus was also deemed important as it encourages groups to target potential recipients from disadvantaged areas and to broaden their reach.

10.7 However, many respondents acknowledged the need to offer more proactive and in-depth support to develop projects from disadvantaged areas, acknowledging that ideas and groups in these may need to be 'harvested' and fostered to be successful and that capacity and resource may be limited.

10.8 In addition to this, given the focus on carbon saving of the CCF, it was acknowledged by many respondents that those in disadvantaged areas are likely to be those with the lowest carbon footprint. Subsequently, if communities are to be best supported to reduce carbon emissions, focusing on disadvantaged areas may not yield the greatest impact. That said, many groups have used CCF projects to alleviate fuel poverty, and the benefits of this to disadvantaged groups should be considered.

Co-funding

10.9 Respondents were asked to explore the pros and cons of including a requirement to obtain co-funding in any successor fund in the future (i.e. groups would not be 100% funded by CCF and would have to seek supplementary funding from elsewhere. Co-funding is a common requirement in other public and voluntary sector funding streams). This approach was typically not supported by groups and stakeholders, as one of the key strengths of the current fund was perceived as the option to fully fund projects. As a result of this, groups often avoided having to spend considerable resource securing multiple funds, matching differing funding scheme requirements and reporting and evaluating in different ways to different funders.

10.10 When considering the case study projects that were the focus of this review, almost exclusively they did not apply for co-funding for their *specific* projects, although there was significant evidence of other funding sources identified in the CCF Projects Survey (see table 5.3) and in the case study discussions. The exceptions (i.e. those that had co-funding) were for additional grants for building refurbishment or other equipment such as gardening tools. Although co-funding was encouraged in CCF3, it was acknowledged by groups that took part in this

review as a difficult process to coordinate (especially for smaller organisations). Particular challenges identified by respondents included: issues with cash flow due to managing differing fund processing requirements for each funder; dealing with single contractor invoices across multiple funders; definitions of ‘community’ differing between funders; and general complexities arising.

10.11 Some stakeholders were realistic of the current funding climate and the need to ensure that funding schemes could support as many projects as possible. They therefore understood the reasons for considering a potential co-funding requirement. Other pros and cons of including co-funding are described in Table 10.2.

Table 10.2: Pros and cons of including a requirement for co-funding in a future CCF (or similar fund)

Pros	Cons
CCF would be able to fund more projects	Could result in ‘good projects’ not proceeding if additional funding cannot be found
Groups would not be reliant on one funding source	Harder for smaller organisations (in particular disadvantaged groups) due to increased administration
Brings in different partners, support networks, and could develop local ‘consortia’ or links	Risk of prioritising better-funded, better-staffed organisations with the resource to apply to multiple funds over ‘better’ projects
May encourage groups to develop more innovative projects	

Loans and revenue-generation

10.12 The possible inclusion of a CCF loan funding element, and the related issue of revenue-generation in order to repay any loans, were also explored with respondents. Few CCF groups that participated in the research had any experience of loans or revenue-raising activities; indeed, many mentioned that income generation, the opportunity for which was introduced as part of the refresh *explore* theme, was previously prevented in the CCF.

10.13 Some groups expressed significant concerns about the prospect of moving away from a free service for their community (funded via CCF) to generating money from services they delivered, and felt that this may be a significant barrier to taking projects forward with their target audience. Others highlighted the low potential for income generation for many projects and for many activity types currently funded by the CCF. Some also mentioned that they felt it was contrary to the values of the CCF to generate income, and that its inclusion would move the focus away from carbon and community towards income. Other concerns related to the challenges of relying on volunteers to deliver a paid-for service; the added pressure on groups that the requirement to generate funding would cause; and the additional skillsets required to manage an income-generating organisation.

10.14 However for one group, becoming self-sustaining was very much their aim and they were positive about moving forward towards income generation. Others (in particular some stakeholders) felt that income generation was a positive and

could encourage groups to establish as a social enterprise and to operate sustainably (in financial terms).

10.15 Given this context, loan funding was not felt to be appropriate for a future CCF or any successor scheme by almost all respondents. The key challenges to a loan funding approach related to concerns about leaving a community in debt, related personal risks of taking out loans on behalf of a community, the lack of assets available to most groups to secure a loan and implications of defaults on a community. One respondent remarked, on the inclusion of loans: *“I think loans would frighten a lot of people, or a lot of communities, off”* [CS17]. A summary of the pros and cons of loan funding is presented in table 10.3.

Table 10.3: Pros and cons of including loan element in a future CCF (or similar fund)

Pros	Cons
Help groups to establish as a social enterprise as a legacy of the project	Concerns from groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to generate revenue; • Implications of defaults • Leaving community in debt • Personal risk
Good if projects are able to generate income, e.g. renewables, shop, paid for service (but not an option for most)	Focus would fall on revenue-generation as opposed to the aims of CCF
Gets group on a positive business footing	Many unlikely to have assets to secure loan
	Change ethos and aims of CCF

Longer-term funding

10.16 The issue of longer-term funding emerged as a theme from the research. The majority of community groups would prefer the option of longer-term funding (i.e. greater than three years) for their projects. From an organisational perspective this was felt to give greater continuity for the staff and the community along with more time to enable business plans to be formed and give the organisation direction. Many respondents acknowledged the length of time needed for behaviour change and felt that longer projects would allow more time for building relationships and establishing trust within the community, embedding project delivery, planning advertising and integrating messaging and collecting data on lasting changes. As one stakeholder described: *“...are you better funding ten projects for a longer period, and more deeply, rather than spreading the funding very, very widely”* [SH16 R1].

10.17 However, for some case study and stakeholder respondents three years was felt to be sufficient. Shorter projects were felt to be more focused and manageable and others suggested that it should not be the role of the CCF to provide ongoing financial support to groups.

10.18 Discussions on funding length and duration raised the issue of considering a ‘two-tier’ fund in a future CCF, for example a ‘standard’ fund for longer term projects and a ‘quick response’ fund for shorter more focused ideas. Others also

commented that this could allow groups to apply for further funding if groups realised that their project could have a greater impact than previously thought.

Enhanced policy and programme links

10.19 Stakeholder respondents were asked to explore how CCF groups could support local or national priorities and how any future fund could complement national or local initiatives (e.g. national energy efficiency programmes) and wider partnerships.

10.20 Discussions with stakeholders (both internal and external to the Scottish Government) highlighted that there was no overall picture or 'map' of all agencies which fund communities in Scotland. In addition, awareness of the CCF was varied (and typically low) amongst the Government stakeholders contacted as part of this research. As such, detailed awareness of possible links between CCF project delivery and wider agency delivery was limited.

10.21 That said, there was a clear perception that there were opportunities for the CCF to support wider policy objectives (for example directly supporting the national retrofit programmes for energy efficiency, or supporting local authority programmes to foster recycling by directly engaging with communities). However, the lower levels of awareness of the CCF by Government stakeholders highlight that the fund is not seen as a strategic delivery partner for some of these policy areas at a local level. Despite this, discussions with stakeholders (both internal and external to the Scottish Government) highlighted that there is a role for bottom-up, community-based activities to support the uptake of climate change-related policy area activities and behaviours, including, for example:

- Encouraging participation in active travel or low carbon travel initiatives such as car clubs, walking and cycling routes and cycle hire schemes
- Supporting and encouraging householders to participate in the national energy efficiency programmes and to undertake energy efficiency retrofit activities in general
- Supporting associated behaviour change activities and agencies (such as HES) to foster energy efficiency in the home
- Promoting and increasing participation in local authority recycling schemes
- Building capacity in community groups to participate in larger sustainability projects such as community energy and local energy systems
- Promoting and developing the use of green spaces and local growing

10.22 The fund in its current form is not explicitly linked to wider Scottish Government policies or initiatives, although it clearly supports these at a local level, and there are clear links from the project theme areas promoted by the fund (i.e. community-owned buildings; energy efficiency; food; transport; waste; innovation; adaptation and resilience). Despite these indirect links, many respondents felt that there is scope for better integration and for policy areas or government departments and agencies to more proactively engage with the CCF (and vice versa). It was however acknowledged by one stakeholder that Government has a responsibility to

direct funding to organisations best-placed to deliver these outcomes (which may not necessarily be community groups) and that this should be taken into account when considering a future fund.

10.23 In addition there were some suggestions that national organisations, both in terms of climate change-related activities and community-focused organisations, could proactively foster partnerships with CCF and related groups. In particular this should focus on developing or fostering follow-on activities to stimulate and engage groups in the longer term.

Summary: Future of CCF

10.24 In terms of the key elements that could be retained in a successor scheme, the research findings suggest that an option for innovation and the focus on disadvantaged groups should be retained, but not to the exclusion of all alternatives. It was felt that there should be scope for groups to continue to deliver similar projects without the need for innovation, should a clear need or demand be presented.

10.25 Co-funding and revenue-raising approaches were supported, but it was felt that these should be an option rather than a requirement of a successor fund. It was not felt that loans were appropriate for CCF-type projects due to the limited assets of community groups and the limited ability for many CCF-type projects to generate income.

10.26 There was also a need identified to tailor any successor scheme more explicitly to link with other Scottish Government policy areas, targets and initiatives.

11. Discussions and conclusions

11.1 This review sought to address two key aims: how has CCF3 delivered on its refresh themes; and how can the CCF, or any successor scheme, best enable communities to contribute to the Scottish Government's climate change themes and targets? This section summarises the research and discusses key issues to be included in a successor scheme.

Refresh themes

11.2 It is clear that the refresh of the CCF has been a success in many ways. The *broaden* theme has increased access to the fund from disadvantaged groups, with the development grants and the work with minority ethnic groups particularly successful. In total 292 CCF3 projects (and 96 development grants) were funded. Of these, over two-thirds of projects and almost nine-tenths of development grants were from groups new to the fund. In addition, over two-fifths of development grants came from deprived communities (among the 30% most deprived in Scotland) and over a third from minority ethnic groups. The development grants have enabled groups, particularly those new to CCF and from harder to reach groups, to assess demand for full project applications and access funding to purchase equipment to

set up projects. The JCCF and the focus on youth projects was also positively received, but also identified as an area for improvement in a future scheme. There may be scope to explore more effective ways to include young people in a future fund or to engage them in different ways. For example, this could specifically seek to include adult-led youth projects or make engagement with young people a 'desired element' of all funding applications where appropriate.

11.3 The *deepen* theme was described as encouraging existing CCF groups to take projects to the next level and has been very positively received, with 106 groups (including 95 full project awards and 11 development grants) being previous applicants to the CCF. These significant numbers of successful repeat applicants demonstrate success in encouraging groups to reapply, but restrictions on continuing to undertake the same activity with the same community were a problem for some groups. The CASP programme was well-received, with feedback on training programme and networking activity typically encouraging, although there were many calls to increase this activity, bringing it closer to more rural groups, and to increase and more effectively target support. There was also a suggestion that the Ideas Bank could be enhanced and better explained and understood. There was little take-up of this element of the scheme with only 8 projects funded.

11.4 The *explore* theme was the least effective of the refresh themes in terms of the number of projects delivered. Five per cent of CCF3 projects (21) were deemed to have an element of adaptation in their project work; 12% (47) included ideas that were deemed innovative, and 10% (37) included some revenue-raising. However innovation and adaptation projects were acknowledged as being particularly challenging for community groups to deliver, and there were suggestions that more support was needed for groups to develop such ideas.

11.5 Many groups have been able to supplement their CCF grant with funding from other sources, with just under half securing funds from elsewhere (e.g. via grants and other income). These sources included: other grant or trust funding; fund-raising activities; in-kind contributions; donations; and other Scottish Government funding. In addition, where appropriate to the type of project, there is evidence that a small number of case study projects have been successful at revenue-raising activities. However this seems to be the exception and many project types do not lend themselves to generating this type of income. Almost all groups have continued their existence beyond initial CCF funding.

Support

11.6 The CASP programme of support and training, along with the DOs, has played a very positive role in supporting projects. In particular, case study respondents highlighted this support during applications, guidance for project execution and feedback. There was some, if not universal, evidence of groups sharing resources and tools with each other.

11.7 However it is clear that for many, access to training courses was limited and there is a clear need for enhanced information on, for example, best practice guidance or toolkits (to prevent groups starting from scratch); support with

evaluation and measurement; clarity and standardisation of guidance; and assistance with recording and identifying project outcomes and carbon calculations. In addition, enhanced local networks, locally-based DOs to enhance the relationships between DOs and groups and bringing training closer to remote groups would assist in delivery and sharing of knowledge.

11.8 Although there have been mixed views from those contacted in the research, it is clear that for some (but not all) groups, the reporting requirements are onerous and the feedback to projects is often limited.

Successes and achievements

11.9 The review has also highlighted that the achievements and successes of projects are much more than simply recorded carbon savings. Behavioural and attitudinal changes; education; skills and employability; community cohesion; health and wellbeing and social enterprise developments are all referenced in this report as *key achievements* as perceived by projects. These are significant and important, yet many of these are beyond the core aims of the fund.

Successor fund

11.10 Central to the development of any successor fund will be considering and defining clearly what any future CCF will be seeking to achieve. At present the CCF is very 'bottom-up' and supports communities to develop projects in their own way. The CCF is not prescriptive in what type of projects should be undertaken (beyond the 'community, carbon, legacy' criteria) and on how these should be delivered. As a result, communities have been able to develop their own success stories as well as make their own mistakes. The scheme has delivered on a significant range of benefits beyond simply changing behaviours and saving carbon. This is an approach that has been positively received by many and has been highlighted in this research as one of the CCF's key strengths.

11.11 However, this flexibility and bottom-up approach has also meant that a number of groups have been expending significant efforts only to 'reinvent the wheel'; and others have been reflecting on a need to have access to more best practice and tools through their project's lifespan to enhance their project. This results in a situation where projects, and therefore the fund, is not maximising its impact. It is clear that there are opportunities to enhance this process and potentially provide toolkits and templates for particular types of projects so that communities can both innovate and replicate, building upon and evolving from what has worked elsewhere.

11.12 Evidence in this review also suggests that there are clear opportunities to build better links between the CCF as it now stands and the other key policy areas delivering on climate change targets. Communities can and are acting as local agents for change. Better co-ordination of any successor fund with climate change policies, targeting low carbon behaviours identified as priorities by the Scottish Government, or supporting areas of focus for current emissions targets that touch communities, would give the scheme and communities a clear purpose towards

helping Scottish Government policy goals. There is clear evidence that CCF has already shaped applications toward low carbon activities in its current form. This success could be extended to more strategically meet the aims of Government, whilst retaining community ownership, direction and scope for locally-based innovation.

11.13 In addition, the role, purpose and use of carbon savings calculated by projects should be an area of attention in the development of any successor scheme. This is an extremely challenging element for many groups and one that many groups are mistaken about the purpose of. There is therefore an opportunity to make this process, and the project reporting processes in general, more worthwhile both for those completing these tasks and for the fund as a whole. Feedback is welcomed by participants and there is a need to make any successor scheme more circular by sharing and thus growing its worth in building and empowering communities.

Successor fund parameters

11.14 How any potential successor fund is targeted and operationalised will follow from achieving clarity on its aims. That said, the research suggests that there could be scope to include both innovation and continuation projects, subject to there being demonstrable demand. Similarly the research has highlighted the importance of ongoing funding support for groups from disadvantaged areas and disadvantaged or equalities groups in any successor fund. This will require additional resources to foster projects from these areas, and may not maximise carbon savings as the most disadvantaged are likely to have the smallest carbon footprint. This again raises the question of what the key aim of any successor fund should be.

11.15 The research suggests that having a greater emphasis on the co-funding of projects could act to increase barriers and may restrict the ability of community groups to deliver projects. That said, there is evidence of groups accessing other funding to support delivery. Complementary national and or local initiatives would need to be co-ordinated with any successor to maintain the fund's accessibility. Given the nature of many projects delivered thus far by the CCF, including elements of loan funding and having a strong focus on income generation would seem to be unlikely to be successful except in certain circumstances and for certain project types.

11.16 There was little evidence of projects moving from CCF to apply to other funds such as CARES or the LCITP, although the need to make stronger links between such programmes to build capacity was acknowledged. Similarly there is scope for any successor fund, *at a strategic level*, to work more closely and foster links with complementary national and local initiatives as well as wider partnerships and organisations. There is strong evidence of groups working collaboratively across many types of organisations, suggesting there is scope and desire for groups to do so.

Concluding note

11.17 This review demonstrates that the CCF is succeeding in supporting communities to address climate change. Communities want to engage in climate change, are willing to develop their projects towards this agenda and these projects make a difference on many levels. If lessons can be learned, any successor fund can further enhance and enable communities to take a key role in the change that needs to happen to meet Scotland's climate change challenges. Communities want to take action and their key role in fostering behavioural change at a local level is acknowledged by wider stakeholders. However this needs to be balanced with the necessary checks, boundaries and drivers of Scottish Government policy needs, and funding requirements and availability. The opportunity is there to listen and join up Government and communities more effectively to co-produce the emerging low carbon future.



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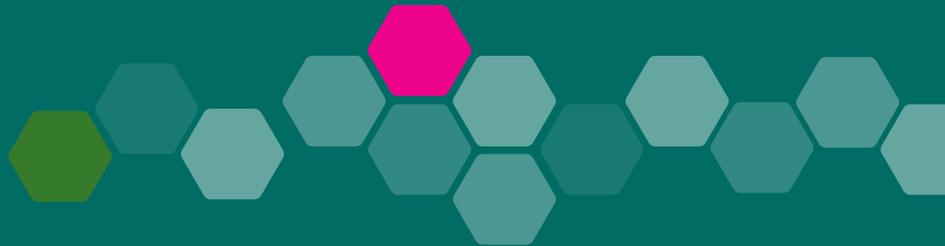
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