



LANCASHIRE ENVIRONMENTAL FUND
Annual Report 2021

The Fund was established in 1998 as a not-for-profit organisation to support community and environmental projects within Lancashire with grants generated by the Landfill Communities Fund. Funds are provided by SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd.

The Fund is an equal partnership between SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd, Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Community Futures. Representatives from each organisation serve on the Fund's Board and Application Assessment Group to ensure that the best projects throughout the county, which provide environmental, community and social benefits, are supported.






Landfill Communities Fund (LCF)

Tax on landfilling waste was introduced to allow for a small percentage of the tax to be donated to not-for-profit organisations who achieve environmental and/or social objectives. The LCF is managed by HM Revenue and Customs and is regulated by ENTRUST. To find out more about the Landfill Communities Fund visit www.entrust.org.uk



Community and environmental groups can apply to Lancashire Environmental Fund for awards up to £40,000 from three funding streams –

-  Green Grants (up to £1,000)
-  Small Grants (up to £20,000)
-  Main Grants (up to £40,000)

Projects to date have included improvements to community facilities, general environmental improvements, creation and management of habitats, improvements to parks, gardens, open spaces, play areas, recreational facilities, ponds, canals, rivers and natural biodiversity.

Lancashire Environmental Fund Board

CC Shaun Turner – Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, Lancashire County Council

Andrew Hughes – Regional Director Energy North, SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd

John Drury – Lancashire Wildlife Trust

Frank McGinty – Community Futures

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Photography: Andy Rowett and project contributors.





CC Shaun Turner
Chair of the Fund Board
Lancashire County Council

I've been the Fund's Chair since June 2021 and in that short time it's been great to have provided funding for a huge cross section of projects. This year marks another milestone of £28 Million of funding distributed by the Fund since 1998.

Lancashire County Council has had a long association with the Fund and its other key partners, Community Futures, Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Suez Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd, the donating landfill operator. For 24 years the Fund has been turning 'muck' into grants to support many high-quality schemes.

This year's report reflects on another positive 12 months of grant making and going forward we have increased the amounts of funding available for grant applications to make more of an impact to the county's communities, greenspaces, play facilities and natural environments.

Finally, writing the foreword for the annual report gives me the opportunity to express my thanks to my fellow board members and the Fund staff for their continuing professionalism and commitment to delivering the funding.



Andy Rowett
Fund Manager
Lancashire Environmental Fund

It has been yet another fruitful year at the Fund and we have seen an upturn in number of applications and interest in the Fund as we transitioned out from Covid pandemic restrictions back to some sort of normality.

£1,331,210 has been allocated to new projects in 2022 and we have paid out £1,139,601 to ongoing projects. If you are a number cruncher, stats are a wonderful thing but they never tell the whole story. The real story is all the projects we have been able to help out and the communities they benefit. While we are not one of the 'Big funding players', I like to think that we play our part and our contribution sometimes is the 'oil in the machine' that so often makes a scheme become reality.

Meeting people is a big part of my job, to get a feel for the projects and the passion of the applicants. It is a brave undertaking to seek funding, to realise the aspirations of a group or community and even braver to 'put the spade in the ground' to see the project through to its conclusion. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the dedicated, patient, tenacious people behind all the projects supported.

A great example would be the Friends of Strawberry Valley and their efforts to regenerate Bent Lane Play Area when the whole site was under threat. I pass the play area on my commute most days and it is seldom without a young person using the new equipment. Similarly, Friends of Hurst Grange Park have campaigned for years to develop the former coach house into a visitor hub for the park and it is stunning what has been achieved with the building and sensory garden. It hasn't all been large funded schemes that make a difference; a £1,000 Green Grant awarded to Balderstone Parish Council has transformed the accessibility of a short recreational walk with two new stiles. Whether the schemes have been large or small, they have made a big difference to communities and the environment of the county.

Finally, I am only one part of the Fund and huge thanks go to the Board, the appraisal panel and staff for their continued hard work and commitment they give the Fund.

The Beehive Building Redevelopment, Fleetwood - £30,000

Mens Shed Fleetwood

www.mensshedfleetwood.org.uk



Mens Shed Fleetwood is a mental health support charity established in 2018 whose initial aim was to create a space where men can meet and feel socially included, learn new skills, make friends and find help with housing and benefit advice.

The Beehive building is located in one of the most deprived areas nationally where residents suffer significant health inequalities and GP figures show that the area is one of the ten worst in the country for people being treated for depression. There is also an alarming rate for suicides in Fleetwood.



The LEF Grant has been used to help refurbish the whole building to make it more functional. Members were consulted in the design process and were actively encouraged to become involved and provide some of the labour giving them pride in their achievement and a sense of belonging. There is now a workshop, games and relaxation room, reception and an internet room in addition to numerous other amenities including a large covered outdoor space. The benefits that these improvements have brought cannot be overstated.



Whilst originally set up to help men primarily, the facility is all inclusive and is being used by numerous other organisations. The café is open as a drop in facility for the whole community ensuing there is somewhere where anybody can turn for advice, guidance and support if needed.

Coastal Access and Interpretation, Fylde Sand Dunes Project - £22,900

Lancashire Wildlife Trust

www.lancswt.org.uk



90% of Lancashire's Sand dunes are in the Fylde. Lancashire Wildlife Trust have been working with Fylde and Blackpool Council to improve the dune habitats and encourage visitors to use the dunes in ways that minimize damage.

This project encompassed all of the publicly accessible sand dunes and beach frontage within the Fylde area which were becoming increasingly eroded due to public use. The aim was to create new paths to minimise the disruption and unintentional damage caused by visitors roaming through the dunes.



Eleven new access points have been created and finger posts installed marking the preferred entrance points to the beach from the dunes to minimise disturbance and erosion. Six wooden interpretation boards inform and educate visitors about the project, wildlife which might be seen and the habitat itself. Initial indications are that the project has achieved its aims, with visitors enjoying the new routes and staying on the paths thus reducing erosion of the dunes.



The improvements are being publicised by local businesses to encourage visitors and to promote St Annes and the surrounding area. Positive feedback has been received from the local community and the public in general.

Strawberry Valley Park, Leyland - £30,000

Friends of Strawberry Valley Park



The Friends group was formed in 2018 with the immediate aim of improving the playground on Bent Lane open space, locally known as Strawberry Valley Park.

The Park used to have a junior playground but much of the equipment had reached the end of its useful life and had been removed, leaving an area with just one swing and a ball court. This made the park no longer attractive to families and the local community. The nearest play area was over a mile away.



The project aim was to engage the community in the open space once again by installing a new playground, with equipment for both juniors and teens including some fully accessible equipment. It also boasts a larger swing seat for use by older generations which ties in with the dementia friendly theme across the site. The existing ball court has also been refurbished and made larger.



Improving the physical environment has improved the quality of life for local residents, encouraged volunteering and built bridges between younger and older sections of the community in addition to providing much needed play facilities for the local youngsters.

Bodies in Motion Community Cafe, Brierfield - £13,690

Bodies in Motion (Pendle) Ltd

www.bodiesinmotion.co.uk



Bodies in Motion is a registered charity based in Brierfield, a town with significant socio economic issues. They have worked with some of the most disadvantaged and disenfranchised members of the community, providing tailored employment, training and educational support to improve future career prospects for those furthest from the labour market.

Their community hub promotes the overall health & well-being of the people of Pendle and surrounding areas through structured activities, largely associated with fitness, sport and positive lifestyle choices. The installation of a community café is designed to complement existing facilities and activities following recent renovation work undertaken to extend the capacity of the hub.



The café now provides a range of healthy food and drinks, with many of the ingredients, which are completely organic, coming from their community garden and greenhouse facility, a project also supported by LEF. Healthy dietary choices are encouraged whilst promoting physical and mental wellbeing.



With the co-operation of partners such as Lancashire Probation Services and Inspire, the café also offers work placement, volunteering and mentoring opportunities. There is also the possibility of paid employment for some of the most disadvantaged people in the local community.

Access Improvements to Formby Area, Garstang Millennium Green - £1,000

Garstang Millennium Green Trust

www.garstangmillenniumgreen.org.uk



Amongst its many impressive features, Garstang Millennium Green boasts an extremely popular family area which includes picnic tables and an area for youngsters to explore. The main access to the area from the Green's paved paths was across a very wet and marshy area. Being one of the lowest spots in the area, access often became difficult, if not impossible for wheel chairs and push chairs after heavy rain. This problem is further exacerbated when the Garstang Flood Storage basin is operated which temporarily puts the whole Green under two meters of water, particularly in winter.



LEF provided a Green Grant to pay for the cost of materials needed for the construction of a twenty four meter long timber boardwalk that is fully accessible and has raised the access above the marshy area. Constructing the boardwalk was undertaken by the Trust's dedicated volunteers, keeping costs to a minimum.

The local community and visitors are now able to enjoy quality time with their families in peaceful and beautiful surroundings all year round, regardless of how inclement the weather has been.

New Kissing Gates on Higher Commons Lane, Balderstone - £1,000

Balderstone Parish Council

www.balderstone.org



During the recent pandemic, many of us came to appreciate just how enjoyable walking through the magnificent Lancashire countryside can be, in addition to improving the health and wellbeing benefits for all those who participate. However, whilst the greater numbers of those getting involved was fantastic to see, the increased footfall has caused problems with wear and tear and erosion on many of the county's public footpaths.



One such popular public footpath leads from Higher Commons Lane in Balderstone. The welcome increase in popularity of the route had the unfortunate effect of causing the formation of almost impassable areas of mud around the field entrances and gates along part of the route. Balderstone Parish Council approached the Fund for a Green Grant to be used to enable safe and easy passage for both the local community and walkers. The focus was to replace the existing stiles which had become tired and worn.

The funding provided paid for the installation of two new kissing gates and a walk bridge, all of which are fully accessible. These cover a particularly muddy area enabling a popular circular walk around the village of Mellor Brook to become passable once more with ease. So no more muddy wellies for the ever increasing number of walkers who come to enjoy the fresh air and views in this beautiful part of the county!

Tawd Valley Outdoor Classroom, Skelmersdale - £30,000

Friends of Tawd Valley
www.friendsoftawdvalley.org



©Terry Lake

The Friends of Tawd Valley is a community group run by volunteers who are passionate about the nature and wildlife they have on their doorstep. The aim of the friends group is to promote and improve the use of Tawd Valley Park to support the health and well-being of the local community. The Park itself is 3 kilometers long and there are no similar outdoor spaces in the local area or for miles around.



An extensive public consultation exercise was undertaken to find out what would increase engagement with the park. This identified the need for some form of shelter with toilet facilities to encourage schools, community groups and the general public to make greater use of this fantastic space in Skelmersdale. The project involved the purchase and location of a modular classroom unit within the park, complete with running water, toilets and electricity. It is available for use by any organisation that wishes to visit.



The Friends will be organising a wide variety of events from the classroom, to include wildlife and nature based educational programmes as well as cake and coffee events and much more. It is also available for use by local community groups and organisations as well as schools.

Primrose Lodge Viewing Platform, Clitheroe - £26,800

Ribble Tivers Trust

www.ribbletrust.org.uk



Ribble Rivers Trust and Primrose Community Nature Trust have created a new nature reserve at Primrose Lodge which now functions as a public open space in the heart of Clitheroe. Work undertaken included the de-silting of the lodge and the creation of footpaths throughout the site. The grant from LEF has been used to construct a viewing platform overlooking what was a disused and neglected former mill lodge.



The old wall, which formed the boundary of the site, has been reduced and replaced with a chestnut paling fence and hedge which affords better visibility for passing pedestrians. The elevated viewing platform has been constructed through the installation of piles into the edge of the site, and the creation of a deck using recycled plastic boards. Benches have been installed to allow people to sit, rest and enjoy the bird life and the woodland scenery. Interpretation boards have been erected, giving information about the industrial heritage and ecology of the site.



The viewing platform, wall work, benches and interpretation boards are crucial elements in the overall development of the site and serve to make the lodge attractive and accessible to the local community and visitors from further afield.

Hurst Grange Park Coach House Garden Restoration, Penwortham - £30,000 Friends of Hurst Grange Park www.hurstgrangecoachhouse.wordpress.com



©David Toft

The Friends of Hurst Grange Park are a group of volunteers who work with partners to maintain the park's landscape and wildlife habitats whilst improving the amenities for all visitors. They hold monthly work party days and have a large programme of public events to include Bat Walks, Craft Workshops and Pumpkin Carving. They are also responsible for raising the profile of the park locally.

This project has created an accessible and inclusive dementia friendly wildlife garden with planting specifically targeting wildlife. There is a bug hotel, nesting boxes and a bee garden with seating, cycle parking and paths with different tactile surfaces.



©David Toft

To reflect the history of the coach house a number of sculptures using horseshoes have been installed. Children from the local primary school and volunteers from the Friends of Hurst Grange Park have been involved in all aspects of the design and implementation.



The planned works were extended to include the restoration of a newly discovered well for rain water harvesting with a heritage style hand pump. Large stone gate posts found buried on the site have also been installed. Additionally, there is a large hard surfaced area suitable for hosting a multitude of events.

Funding for projects awarded January 2022 to December 2022



Since 1998 the Fund has received almost £30M in Landfill Communities Funds through the Landfill Tax Credits scheme.

Since the launch of the Green Grants in 2015, there have been 113 successful applications with over £100,000 awarded.

Funding highlights 2022

- 65 projects supported with £1.312M of grants
- 25% of the supported projects totalling £304k have been in areas of the county considered to be deprived, and nine of these are in highly deprived areas
- 29 community buildings projects supported with £433k of grants including twelve focussed on energy efficiency measures
- 10 play areas supported by grants totalling £240k, including three wheeled sports infrastructure projects
- 9 Green Grants awarded, including two tree planting schemes, two play area upgrades and two enabling access improvements

Financial activities for the year ended 31 December 2021

| | 2021 | 2020 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| | £ | £ |
| INCOMING RESOURCES | | |
| Landfill tax credits | 1,287,961 | 1,170,152 |
| Interest received..... | 8,838 | 13,574 |
| Total incoming resources..... | 1,296,799 | 1,183,726 |
| RESOURCES EXPENDED | | |
| Grants (paid and payable) | 1,166,271 | 1,099,243 |
| Grants cancelled..... | (125,624) | (89,657) |
| Entrust levy..... | 35,553 | 27,881 |
| Management and Administration | 71,439 | 70,920 |
| Total resources expended..... | 1,147,639 | 1,108,387 |
| Net incoming / (outgoing) resources..... | 149,160 | 75,339 |
| Surplus at 31 December 2021 | 1,267,260 | 1,118,100 |
| BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021 | | |
| Current Assets | | |
| Debtors | 7,205 | 7,546 |
| Short Term investments | - | - |
| Cash on deposit at bank..... | 2,945,275 | 2,698,234 |
| Total current assets | 2,952,480 | 2,705,780 |
| Creditors: amounts falling due within one year | (1,685,220) | (1,587,680) |
| Net assets (including £150,000 reserve) | 1,267,220 | 1,118,100 |

The above summary of financial activities and balance sheet has been extracted from the audited financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Further information

A copy of the full audited accounts can be obtained from : The Company Secretary, Lancashire Environmental Fund Ltd., PO Box 78, County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ