

Helping to power the future

Community and Regional Funds - Northern Ireland
Annual Review 2016/17



Contents



Foreword 01



Introduction to SSE Airtricity's Community and Regional funds 03



Voices from the community 04



Bright futures: The SSE Airtricity Scholarship 06



Going green: Energy efficiency 08



Generating activity: Sports and recreation 10



Power for good: Community Services 11



How to apply 12



Breakdown of funding 2016/17 13

Foreword

At SSE Airtricity we believe in making a positive difference. That's why as well as promoting green energy generation, we want the communities where we locate our wind farms to benefit too.

Since 2008, our business has been building and operating wind farms in Northern Ireland: providing clean, renewable energy; investing in local jobs and businesses; supporting community projects; and funding further education. Over the years it has become clear that a large part of our success is down to the relationships we have built and grown in the communities close to our projects.

We strongly believe in playing our part by contributing to the social, environmental and economic well-being of communities surrounding all of our wind farms. Since 2008, SSE Airtricity has supported over 520 community led projects and granted 76 scholarships, with funding of over £1.4m. One of the most important aspects of developing and operating wind farms is working with the local people to deliver real benefits for their communities which we do through our funding programme. Our funds have grown in numbers, status and impact, with SSE Airtricity providing grants for important and valuable projects near our wind developments in Northern Ireland: the 73.6MW Slieve Kirk Wind Park and the 14MW Bessy Bell Wind Farm.

The funds aim to support, energise and help invigorate these communities. From rain water harvesting to energy efficient football pitch lighting, the provision of 'meals on wheels' for elderly individuals and the funding of scholarships, SSE Airtricity granted over £290,000 in 2016/17 to help support more than 80 different projects in Northern Ireland. The case studies in this report show the difference those excellent projects and initiatives have made to these local communities.

Our commitment is to support the people who live near our wind farms and to make sure the communities are able to maximise the opportunities the funds offer. We hope this report will help show that commitment as well as provide inspiration to other local communities and groups seeking to develop new projects.

We look forward to seeing more valuable community projects being supported in 2017/18 and beyond.



Mark Ennis CBE
SSE Ireland Chairman



Stephen Wheeler
SSE Ireland Managing Director



Introduction to SSE Airtricity's Community and Regional Funds

SSE Airtricity is Northern Ireland's largest provider of wind power. The SSE Airtricity Community Fund provides voluntary community funding to support energy efficiency and sustainability projects for community groups near SSE Airtricity's Bessy Bell Wind Farm and Slieve Kirk Wind Park. The SSE Airtricity Slieve Kirk Wind Park Regional Fund provides funding for further education scholarships.

£290,232

granted in 2016/17

£1,406,682

granted since 2008

All communities within a 12 mile radius of the wind farms are eligible to apply for the funds, however priority is given to community groups located within a three mile vicinity. The fund is paid out annually, starting one year after the wind farm starts producing electricity. By providing this funding, SSE Airtricity seeks to enable local regeneration through community-led economic, social and environmental development.

In 2016/17, the SSE Airtricity Community Fund awarded over £290,000 to community groups and supported over 80 projects in Northern Ireland. By the end of March 2017, SSE Airtricity had awarded over £1.4m across Northern

Ireland and supported a total of 524 community projects. The SSE Airtricity Slieve Kirk Wind Park Regional Fund provides scholarship funding towards third level education fees for students attending Ulster University and South West College. Although priority is given to students who live close to Slieve Kirk Wind Park, it is targeted at students from Co. Derry-Londonderry and Co. Tyrone. The SSE Airtricity Scholarship began in 2014 and has granted over £260,000 to help 76 students finance further study within its first two years of operation.

For all new wind farms in Northern Ireland operational since November

2013, SSE Airtricity pays £5,000 per MW installed capacity.

The SSE Airtricity Community Fund is only paid for wind farms wholly owned by SSE Airtricity. SSE Airtricity manages two further wind farms in Northern Ireland, Bin Mountain and Tappaghan, on behalf of Greencoat Capital. These wind farms are not included in this review.

Examples of projects funded

- Insulation and double glazing for schools, soccer clubs and community halls
- Energy efficient pitch lighting for sports clubs and sports halls
- Composters for community projects
- Replacement of windows and doors
- Installation of solar lighting
- Rainwater harvesting systems
- Installation of an energy efficient electric heating solution
- 'Meals on wheels' and transport services for local senior citizens
- Support for environmental education days for school children

SSE Airtricity's community funds are awarded in line with SSE's financial reporting year. This report covers grants made in financial year 2016/17 which runs from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017. No grants made after 31 March 2017 are included within this report.

Voices from the community

Investing in community assets, facilities and people helps support community cohesion, rural regeneration and overall well-being. The success of projects supported by SSE Airtricity relies on the dedication of local community members who volunteer their time to work with SSE Airtricity to make such projects a reality.

82

community projects supported in 2016/17



524

community projects supported since 2008



“Our social farming initiative provides an important service for adults with additional needs, allowing them to take part in farming and gardening activities which helps them to build essential social skills and self-esteem. The new roof insulation has made a huge difference to the level of heating and warmth in our social farm work shop and also helped to lower our energy bills.”

Annie Mullan
Owner and Manager, Butterlope Farm

Providing opportunities for everyone

Butterlope Farm in Plumbridge, County Tyrone, was awarded funds from Slieve Kirk Wind Park towards the purchase of roof insulation for its social farming initiative.

St Matthew’s GAA Club

Received funds from Slieve Kirk Wind Park Community Fund

St Matthew’s GAA Club has provided a meeting place for the local community in Limavady to pursue a number of different sports including football, bowls, camogie and dancing. Community funding in 2016/17 was provided to the club by SSE Airtricity for the second year in a row, to build a new fence around the club grounds, helping to ensure the safety of both players and supporters alike.

“About 800 people use our facilities every week; it is the heart and soul of the community. Over the past few years, SSE Airtricity’s funding has made such a positive impact to our club. The money received this year has made it possible for our outdoor activities to continue while helping to keep our younger members safe.”

Eunan Rafferty
Chariman, St Matthew’s GAA Club



Connecting with the community



“I’m fortunate to have a job that allows me to meet so many passionate and interesting people. The best part is definitely getting out from behind the desk to award the funds to new successful groups, and meeting community leaders who make projects a reality. It is lovely to see the final result when I come back to the area the following year and hear what impact it has made to those living there. Over so many years, I’ve really got to know the people in the communities and it’s obvious what the funds mean to them.”

Anne Reynolds
SSE Airtricity Community Development Officer



“Given where I live and work, I get the chance to speak to the local people surrounding our wind farms on a weekly basis – so I see first-hand just how much SSE Airtricity’s funding has helped their communities. It still not only surprises me, but genuinely makes me proud when I see and hear the impact our community funds are having. However big or small – whether it’s in sports clubs, primary schools or scholarships for university – it all really does make a difference.”

Emmet Lagan
SSE Onshore Wind Site Operator

“Photographing the annual SSE Airtricity Community Fund presentations for Bessy Bell Wind Farm is always one of my favourite jobs of the year. I get to meet new and existing local groups in Tyrone and hear about the great work they’re doing to benefit their communities. The money always goes towards such worthy causes and the local groups are represented by those who work tirelessly for the good of those around them. You can see the importance of the funds to them. It really is such a happy occasion and a total pleasure to be a part of.”

Raymond Humphreys
Photographer for the Bessy Bell Community Fund award event



Bright futures

The SSE Airtricity Scholarship

SSE Airtricity set up its scholarship programme to acknowledge the importance of education in the lives of young people and their families, whilst recognising the substantial financial commitment involved.

The SSE Airtricity Scholarship was established in 2014 to promote learning and skills development in the local community around Slieve Kirk Wind Park – Northern Ireland’s largest wind generation site. Around £80,000 is allocated from the Slieve Kirk Regional Fund each year to provide students with 50% of their tuition fees for the duration of their course. The scholarship is targeted at full- and part-time students from the counties of Derry-Londonderry and Tyrone attending either Ulster University or South West College.

In 2016/17, 20 students received scholarships to enrol in a wide range of Foundation, Bachelor and Master Degree level courses, such as Wind Turbine

Engineering and Civil and Environmental Engineering. The scholarship focuses on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects in a bid to help fulfil employment demands in these fields in Northern Ireland.

Providing scholarships assists students to gain the qualifications required to build strong careers. This means increased skills, wages and tax revenues – benefitting not just their home communities, but Northern Ireland as a whole. These flow-on effects of further education ensure a lasting impact from SSE Airtricity’s funds for those directly supported and their communities, now and throughout the lifetime of the wind farm.

20 students

granted 50% of university and college fees in 2016/17

£80,000

annual scholarship fund



Darren Toner lives close to Slieve Kirk Wind Park and received the SSE Airtricity Scholarship for a Bachelor’s Degree in Engineering (Hons), specialising in Clean Technology.

“The support from SSE Airtricity has been great and has already made such a difference to my time at university. Most importantly, it has allowed me to really focus on my studies. But on top of that, the prestige associated with receiving a competitive scholarship from SSE Airtricity will really help me progress professionally too, from helping get an internship to applying for a job once I complete my course.”

Darren Toner
Scholarship recipient at Ulster University



Photo: Vicky Boden, SSE Airtricity, and Seona McCracken, scholarship recipient at Ulster University

Going green

Energy efficiency

SSE Airtricity encourages applications for energy efficiency measures as a way to help communities benefit from the funds over the longer term. By granting funds to upgrade community facilities, the initial investment goes further to reduce both financial and environmental costs.

This year many applications were received for improving the energy efficiency performance of sporting facilities and community buildings. As the impact of these measures on energy bills materialise, community groups receive a lasting benefit which allows them to spend more money on what really matters. Funding has gone towards projects like the replacement of old doors and windows and the installation of double glazing, insulation, energy efficient lighting and heating.

Although energy efficiency projects continued to be the focus for community grant funding in 2016/17, with approximately 56% of the total funding granted for this category of project, other environmentally-focussed community initiatives also received funding. These included 45 separate projects, including the installation of solar lighting and rainwater harvesting systems, ecological activities and education days at schools, and the upgrade of nature walkways.

£159,500

granted for energy efficiency projects in 2016/17

Two Castles Boxing Club

Received funds from the Bessy Bell Community Fund

The Two Castles Boxing Club plays a vital role in the lives of many young people who live in Newtownstewart by providing accessible sports resources and training. Over the past couple of years, the SSE Airtricity Community Fund has awarded grants for structural and energy efficiency projects within the club, including attic and roof insulation repairs. The reparation of a badly damaged leaking roof was the final stage in upgrading the club's facilities, and in 2015/16 Two Castles received the required funding from the Bessy Bell Community Fund. Now in 2016/17, the project is complete and shows how the Community Fund can pave the way for real transformational change for local facilities. This means the young boxers can train in a safe and warm environment and that energy bills have been substantially reduced as heat no longer escapes from the building. Ultimately, these improvements help ensure the existence and longevity of the club and its services for many years to come.



Two Castles Boxing Club during roof repair and attic insulation



“The Two Castles Boxing Club continues to go from strength to strength - we perform better than any boxing club of comparable size across the whole island. The part SSE Airtricity has played in this success cannot be underestimated, as without our modern facilities we would not be attracting new members, and indeed could not train them properly in the facilities we had.”

John Gallagher
Chairman, Two Castles Boxing Club

Generating activity

Sports and recreation

Investment in sports and recreation activities continued to be a popular theme with local communities applying for the community funds throughout 2016/17. SSE Airtricity works alongside local groups to provide necessary funding and guidance where possible to help keep clubs running and benefit as many people as possible.

There was a wide variety of sports and recreation applications, from significant facility renovations to smaller requests to upgrade community sports halls and outdoor pitches. Successful projects had a strong focus on maximising the impact of investments received, aiming to increase sports inclusion by enabling facilities to stay open throughout the year, encouraging new participation and increasing access for those with additional needs.

£73,685

granted to sports clubs
in 2016/17

Helping transform services

Creevedonnell Cricket Club, Co. Derry-Londonderry, received funding from SSE Airtricity's Slieve Kirk Wind Park to refurbish their pavilion through a number of energy efficiency upgrades including insulation, double-glazed windows and, most recently, a new fence.



“Without SSE Airtricity, we simply wouldn't have been able to afford to upgrade our premises and facilities to this extent. As well as allowing us to cut our energy costs, it has transformed our pavilion into a local hub that can now be used during the off-season and right through the year.”

Brian Dougherty MBE
Secretary, Creevedonnell Cricket Club

Power for good

Community services

At the core of a healthy and thriving community are the robust relationships between individuals and the community groups built and maintained by active community members. Wide benefits including community cohesion and well-being are gained from strong community assets, facilities and services.

Recognising this, SSE Airtricity has supported a range of community groups beyond funding energy efficiency projects. A key theme for funding in 2016/17 was supporting the most vulnerable in the community. Projects focused on enhancement of community care services for the elderly through providing 'meals on wheels' services and supporting younger members of the local community with a range of indoor and outdoor activities.

£11,685

granted for social and safety
projects in 2016/17



Pushkins Trust Youth Programme

Received funds from the Bessy Bell Community Fund

In 2016/17 the Pushkin Trust received funding from the SSE Airtricity Community Fund to support a series of 'Baronscourt Day' events in Newtownstewart, Co. Tyrone, for school children. In total, 34 schools and approximately 1,100 children and teachers took part. Baronscourt Days allow students to work and build friendships with children from different backgrounds. At each event two or more schools are mixed together to participate in workshops. These include environmental guided walks, creative art and writing classes, and music, dance and drama sessions. Feedback from teachers said the events were a stimulating and enriching experience for the children, and a unique opportunity to gain new experiences.

How to apply

The application process for the SSE Airtricity Community Fund is simple. Firstly find out which wind farm is in your vicinity and make sure you meet the criteria listed below:

- Your group is a Not-for-Profit organisation
- You are requesting funding to benefit a community initiative, not an individual (although individuals may apply on behalf of a community project)
- Your community is situated within a 12 mile radius of the wind farm. Priority is given to projects within a 3 mile radius

Next check the opening and closing dates for relevant SSE Airtricity Community Funds on the SSE Ireland website, www.ireland.sse.com/being-responsible and make sure your project fits in one of the following categories. Please note that SSE Airtricity currently prioritises energy efficiency projects.

- Energy Efficiency: Delivers reduced energy consumption
- Sustainability: Drives community-centred environmental and/or social sustainability interest
- Safety: Improves safety for the community

Lastly fill out the three short application forms listed below, telling SSE Airtricity about your community group and project, and remember to attach quotes for the measure you are applying for. These forms can be found on the SSE Ireland website.

1. Northern Ireland Community Fund Application Form
2. Northern Ireland Contractor Quote Form
3. Northern Ireland Community Fund Declaration Form

Completed application forms should be submitted via email to communityfundireland@sse.com or sent by post to SSE's Community Development Officer, Anne Reynolds, at SSE Airtricity, Millennium House, Belfast, BT2 7AQ.

All Community Fund applications are evaluated on a competitive basis by a scoring panel. Proximity to the wind farm and the number of beneficiaries will be key considerations. All applicants will be informed whether they are successful or unsuccessful. If successful, the team will let you know how much your project will be awarded and will organise a visit to your area to present successful groups with their funding.

If you have any queries regarding these forms or the community fund please contact the team by emailing communityfundireland@sse.com or call Anne Reynolds on 028 903 39 186.

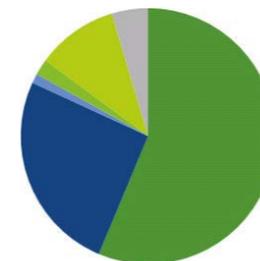
SSE Airtricity Regional Fund

For information on how to apply to the SSE Airtricity Scholarship, please visit www.ireland.sse.com/being-responsible/responsible-community-member/ni-scholarship-fund/.

Breakdown of funding 2016/17



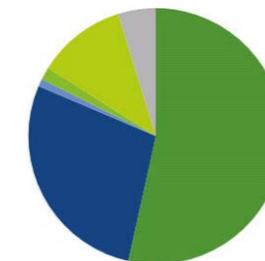
Total funding for Northern Ireland



- Energy efficiency
- Regional Fund
- Sustainability (environmental)
- Sustainability (social)
- Safety
- Other

Slieve Kirk Community and Regional Fund

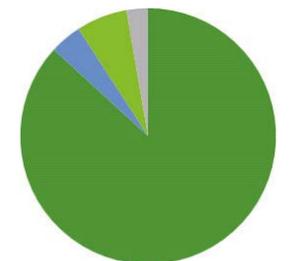
Wind farms: Slieve Kirk, Glenconway 1 and 2



- Energy efficiency
- Regional Fund
- Sustainability (environmental)
- Sustainability (social)
- Safety
- Other

Bessy Bell Community Fund

Wind farms: Bessy Bell 1 and 2



- Energy efficiency
- Sustainability (environmental)
- Sustainability (social)
- Other



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