Climate Challenge Fund Case Study: Development of the Polycrub

Grants from the Scottish Government’s Climate Challenge Fund enabled Northmavine Community Development Company, Shetland to design and install a network of weatherproof Polytunnels, meeting community demand to grow local produce. Rebranded as Polycrubs these structures have since been sold across Scotland and internationally.

Who did Northmavine Community Development Company consult before applying for funding from the Climate Challenge Fund (CCF)?

- The local community were surveyed and results indicated:
  - Interest within the community in local food growing
  - Perception that land was unavailable locally
  - Conventional Polytunnels had limited success

What did the CCF grants fund?

1. Community Polytunnel project, part of Powerdown Project. Awarded a CCF grant of £80,695 in 2008:
   - Powerdown project covering local food and energy to help residents reduce carbon emissions and save money.
   - Powerdown Officer identified the most suitable Polytunnel type structure for the Shetland climate.

2. Community Polytunnels Project. Awarded a CCF grant of £41,821 in 2009:
   - 12 community polytunnels, later renamed Polycrubs built in Northmavine. The design included reuse of materials such as redundant salmon cage piping.

Why did carbon emissions decrease?

- More food being grown locally for local consumption.
- The reuse of materials in the design of the structures meant that redundant salmon cage piping was diverted from landfill

Community benefits:

- Access to local space to grow produce and a new network in Northmavine, with an exchange of knowledge, seeds etc between and within polycrubs.
- Intergenerational learning as age range of growers extended from two years to over 80.

Sustainable legacy:

- Polycrubs offered for sale by NCDCs trading subsidiary, nortenergy Ltd who won the Shetland Environmental Award for green credentials displayed.
- Use of polycrubs has expanded over Shetland, from school grounds to private gardens, meaning increased production and consumption of local produce on Shetland.
- Polycrubs exported to other areas of Scotland and internationally.
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise investment in 2018 to further grow the Polycrub business.

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Waste
Lightburn Elderly Association Project (LEAP) has been awarded CCF grants to run the R:evolve Recycle project in Cambuslang and Rutherglen. This intergenerational project has involved the older generation sharing skills to help the community repair, upcycle or swap clothes to reduce the amount of textiles landfilled.

Energy Efficiency
The SCOREscotland Green Futures project has been awarded CCF grants to work with members of black and ethnic minority communities in south west Edinburgh, raising their awareness of climate change and supporting them to take actions to reduce carbon emissions through energy efficiency advice and promotion of lower carbon travel options.

Community Owned Buildings
Edinbane Community Hall Association, Isle of Skye was awarded a CCF grant for the Edinbane Hall Energy Efficiency project and installed new insulation, windows and doors. Further activities included raising the awareness of climate change and action that can be taken to tackle it such as increased energy efficiency and lower carbon travel alternatives.

Food
The Charlie’s Plot CCF projects have been led by young people in Methilhill, Fife to grow and cook their own fruit and vegetables, learn about climate change and to share that information with their community. Methilhill Community Children’s Initiative has been awarded CCF grants to support the young people.

Travel
Fallin Community Enterprises Recyke-a-Bike was awarded CCF funding to run the ‘Cycling into Sustainability’ project which worked with local communities in Stirling, Clackmannanshire and Falkirk to promote cycling as a healthy, lower carbon form of travel and a first choice for local journeys.

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