



SCOTTISH
PROCUREMENT
ALLIANCE



2017 - 2022

**CELEBRATING
FIVE YEARS
OF THE SPA
COMMUNITY
BENEFIT FUND**

5 YEAR IMPACT REPORT

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SPA Committee Partners Past and Present

SPA has a Committee made up of housing and public sector organisations who advise SPA on upcoming sector needs, provide direction with regards to upcoming priorities and provide valuable feedback about services. The below organisations have all been part of the Committee between 2016 and 2022. An effort was made to include organisations of very different types and sizes; from local authorities to small housing co-operatives. The Committee also provides an effective route to deliver the Community Benefit Fund.



We are delighted to present the inaugural SPA Community Benefit Fund Social Value Report, showcasing the remarkable success of the SPA Community Benefit Fund over the past five years. This report is a testament to the unwavering commitment of local authorities, housing associations, and the wider community in driving positive change and creating lasting social value.

In 2016, when SPA was established, our vision was clear: the aim was to provide our partners with a compliant route to market, providing best value for the public pound and to ensure that Scottish communities would benefit from significant public investment whilst supporting Scottish Government initiatives.

To achieve this, we not only promoted the integration of community benefits within our frameworks and any subsequent Call Offs but in collaboration with our Committee Partners initiated our Community Benefit Fund to reinvest in these communities.

The journey has not just been about numbers; it has been a testament to the power of vision, dedication and community-centric activities.

The projects supported have underlined the potential within every community, strengthening our belief in the positive change that collaborative efforts can bring.

As we continue this journey, we are reminded that our work is not all about procurement projects; it is about investing in communities and building futures where people can thrive.

The Fund's impact has surpassed our expectations, and its success has spurred the establishment of Community Benefit Funds within other regional business units of the LHC Procurement Group.

Lesley Anderson
Regional Director

CELEBRATING THE POWER OF COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY IMPACT AT SPA

SPA recognises the enormous amount of public money being spent through procurement and, as well as promoting the use of community benefits and social value in procurement, they decided to use business surplus to invest more.

The SPA Community Benefit Fund was launched in 2017 and is made up of SPA business surpluses. As a non-profit organisation, SPA is committed to investing in the communities it serves and playing its part in improving lives.

Bringing such a broad range of organisations together to collaborate has led to excellent insight into the world of public sector and housing procurement. This collaborative approach was applied to the design of the Community Benefit. We held a consultancy exercise with each Committee Partner to find what their priorities and aspirations were for the fund.

Due to the diverse make up of the Committee, we had to consider the needs of Scotland's largest local authorities, housing associations operating across Scotland and community led housing co-operatives. Again, collaboration resulted in a great outcome and we agreed to encompass the main pillars of social value and community benefit themes named in the Procurement (Scotland) Act 2014.



Journey to Date

The Community Benefit Fund was an instant hit when it launched in 2017 and has continued to make maximum impact in communities across Scotland.

2017-18

- £130K awarded
- 13 projects
- 4,424 beneficiaries



2019-20

£130K awarded
15 projects
4,938 beneficiaries

2018-19

£130K awarded
13 projects
772 beneficiaries

2020-21

£130K awarded
16 projects
4,597 beneficiaries

2021-22

£120K awarded
13 projects
2,359 beneficiaries



At the heart of the SPA Community Benefit Fund is the belief that vibrant and resilient communities are built through collaboration and inclusion.

All our Committee Partners had an interest in evidencing the social impact of the projects in receipt of a grant award. With stiff competition for all charitable funds, everyone wanted to ensure that projects had effective monitoring in place, which would allow us to identify which projects generated the most social value or made the most significant positive impact on participants.

It is well known that the collection of reliable data allows for effective future decision making. We provided all projects with monitoring tools, which we developed over the years to incorporate formal social value reporting.

Lintel Trust worked with SPA to design the funding offer and identified the following themes



Community Projects & Environmental



Social Inclusion



Digital Participation & Inclusion



Financial Inclusion

Community Benefit Eligibility Themes

The identified themes have allowed for a vast range of innovative projects to be supported and, with all outcomes being reported back to the Committee, many ideas have been both sparked and shared.

Of course, most projects supported do not fit neatly into only one theme. For example, a digital participation project might promote social inclusion by bringing people together to learn how to use digital methods to stay in touch with friends and family. It promotes financial inclusion through access to cost saving options and employability as most jobs are advertised online.



What did the SPA Community Benefit Fund achieve between 2017-22?

A total of 70 projects have been funded in the five year period, and each has been offered help accessing match funding, to great success.

Funding has been awarded to small projects like youth groups, children's activity groups, older people's craft and social inclusion projects, intergenerational activities and projects improving shared outdoor areas to benefit those living there.

We have contributed to large projects such as Wheatley Group's range of employability initiatives helping prepare people of all ages for work and South Lanarkshire's Gypsy Traveller social and digital inclusion project.

We were agile enough to make funding available for crisis support during Covid lockdowns and we were happy for funds to be repurposed to address the most pressing needs.



£650k

SPA Community Benefit Fund awarded between 2017-22

£1.2m

Including match funding, the total amount invested in communities

£3.9m

Additional social value generated for the projects suitable for monitoring

19,408

Total number of beneficiaries



The partnership between Lintel Trust and SPA has been a resounding success, culminating in Lintel Trust joining SPA in 2021.

We look forward to building on the relationship and helping SPA in achieving more great outcomes for our communities

Kyle Neary, Chair, Lintel Trust

What is Social Value?

Social value is a way to quantify and assess how different interventions impact on people's wellbeing. In some cases, a monetary value can be attributed to the outcomes of interventions. Social value measures all the positive benefits your work brings to individuals and communities.

The SPA and LHC Procurement Group mission is 'We improve lives and places through: the impact of our products and services and the social value generated through our community benefit funding and activities.'

Why does it matter?

The spending of public money has historically been driven by cost and timeframes; the two main benchmarks considered in procurement.

Thanks to UK wide procurement reform, those procuring public goods and services, (including local government authorities, housing associations, the NHS and Emergency Services), are now able to make value-based procurement decisions that result in social, environmental and economic outcomes supporting local economies and ensuring best value.

The importance of monitoring and accurate reporting

Any report is entirely dependant on the accuracy of the monitoring data and feedback received. Overclaiming results is worse than not monitoring at all – 'social washing' is now being publicly called out in the same way that 'greenwashing' is.

The key to successful social value reporting is to think about the difference you want to make before you start planning any interventions. You should have identified a need prior to starting any project and identify the best way to deliver your intervention to that community.

SPA Community Benefit Fund Impact

It would be impossible to capture all the achievements of our funded projects in one report. We would need a book! Instead, we have pulled together some of the non-monetary achievements to demonstrate the number of people benefiting from a variety of outcomes.

864

Number of children accessing free holiday playschemes

594

Number of isolated people making connections

4,892

Number of people accessing digital housing services

120

Number of people given portable Wi-Fi during lockdown

197

Number of people in supported apprenticeships

26

Number of rural communities receiving weekly foodbank deliveries

229

Children accessing free books

419

Number of people accessing digital participation sessions

75

Multicultural families welcomed into new homes

37

Received employability training

200

People benefiting from community centre upgrades

332

People able to access advice services

298

Given access to mental health support

651

People receiving energy advice

10

Urban food banks supported

20

Young people/ children involved in growing projects

2

Number of community gardens supported

1,688

Activity packs delivered during lockdown

328

Number of hot meals delivered during lockdown

332

People able to access advice services



55

Number of homeless households receiving digital equipment and internet access



17

Accessing specialist mental health support and maintaining tenancies



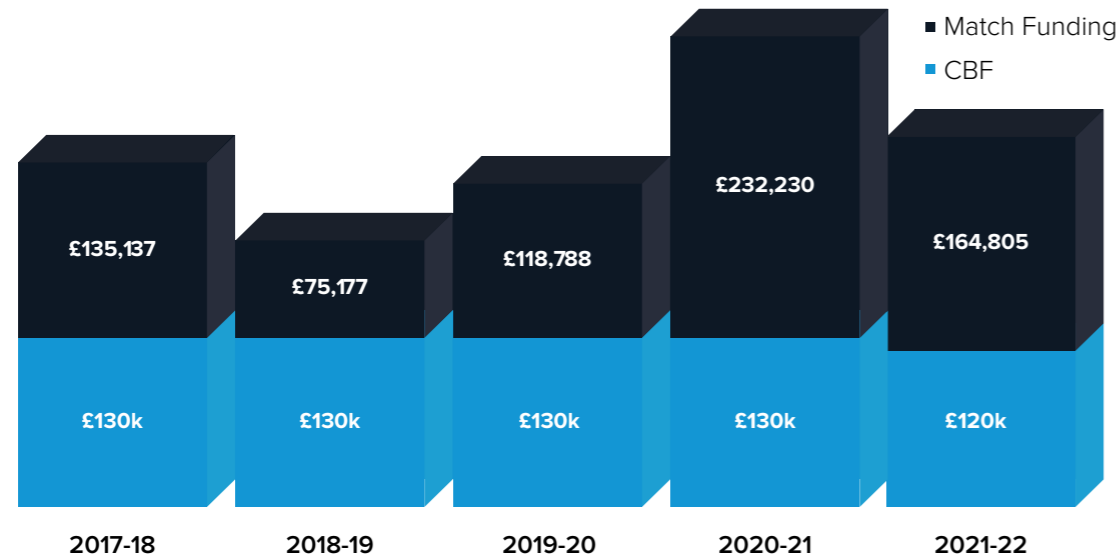
11,615

Number of 'holiday hunger' meals delivered in South Ayrshire

Making Our Funding Go Further

During the first year of delivery, we achieved match funding of over £135k, slightly more than was paid out by the fund.

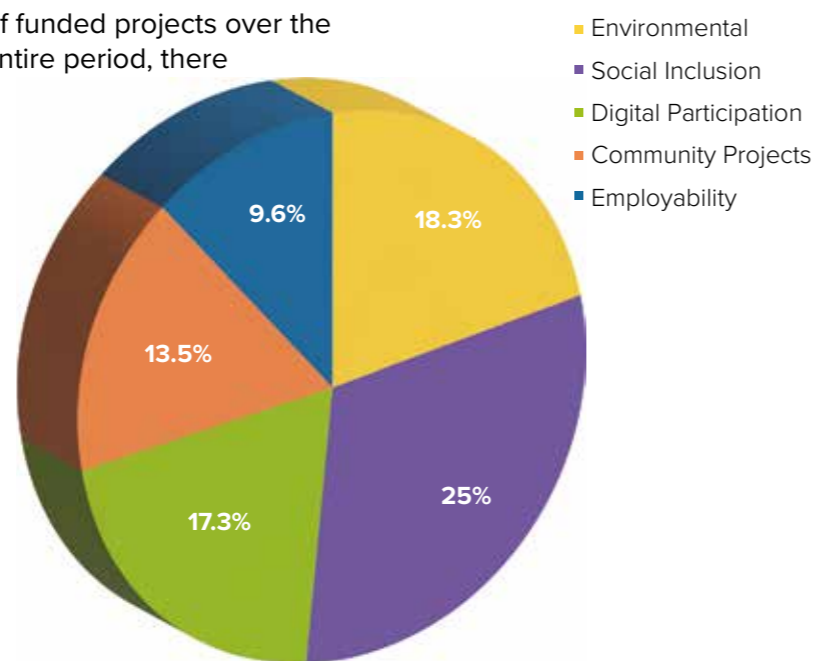
The second year did not generate as much match funding but was still well over target. In the following years, projects have consistently overachieved the match funding targets – showing dedication of our executive members and their nominated projects to making the funding go as far as possible.



Was there a pattern?

We did notice a change in themes of funded projects over the five-year period but looking at the entire period, there was a good split between the different themes.

When Covid 19 and the lockdowns hit us in 2020, many planned projects were unable to be delivered. At this point, funding was repurposed to address the crisis. As always, our most deprived communities were hit the hardest, lost the most people to Covid and have subsequently struggled to regain some kind of normality. Housing associations, local authorities and community groups really proved their worth and delivered food parcels, medical prescriptions, fuel vouchers, activity packs, daily check ins on vulnerable residents and numerous other essential services.



What Did We Measure?

We knew that it was important to measure both quantitative and qualitative outputs and outcomes.

The metrics we chose to adopt to monitor funded projects were wellbeing metrics, focused on looking at the difference made to the lives of people involved in and with the projects.

We chose to use metrics familiar to the housing associations and local authorities on the SPA Committee. HACT (Housing Associations Charitable Trust) created the Social Value Bank 10 years ago to help social housing providers evidence improvements to wellbeing and health, identify savings to the state and to further improve services by identifying what works and what does not.

The projects were very different, and there was not always a relevant metric to apply. In those cases, we asked people to record outputs and collect feedback from participants in an appropriate way. In some cases, it was felt that the questions were too invasive and could prove an additional barrier to accessing support.



I get up looking forward to the day – I like the routine and structure

Changing Lives



The Rainbow Voices training was as useful as I had never really thought about the different media channels I could utilise without having to be an expert. Having trainers that had experience in those fields too was really inspiring.”

Rainbow Voices



GlasGrow Community Garden Project

Hawthorn Housing Co-operative

Hawthorn Housing Co-operative have a great community garden, and they have encouraged engagement for young people throughout. They run regular ‘Growing, Playing and Learning’ sessions for local children. The children designed the garden layout and adult helpers assist with the heavy work.

Team SPA spent a volunteer day at the garden in 2022 and helped tidy up and lay an accessible path.

CASE STUDY

TACKLING HOLIDAY HUNGER IN SOUTH AYRSHIRE

South Ayrshire Council used their funding allocation to address a problem, then build on learning to improve and adapt the service during this 5-year period.

Holiday hunger is a topic that hit the headlines in 2020 when famous Manchester footballer, Marcus Rashford, who grew up in poverty himself, launched a campaign in England addressing holiday hunger during lockdown.

Back in 2017, South Ayrshire Council partnered with Voluntary Action South Ayrshire and piloted a six-week Holiday Hunger scheme based in Ayr. The aim was to provide a nutritious meal to those that would normally have a free school meal, combined with summer holiday activities to prevent stigma. Local groups and young people volunteered to provide football training, arts and crafts and teamwork activities. SPA funding provided the food.

It was a huge success, with over 450 children and young people benefitting from the scheme during the pilot. They expanded the service to other main school holidays and delivered it in the most deprived poverty pockets. This included a bus which delivered lunches to 4 different areas in North Ayr and food bags for young people attending the youth centre.

Between 2017 and 2019, evidence from this project led Scottish Government to introduce Holiday Hunger funding to areas in the top 5% SIMD areas in Scotland. In 2020, when everything was shut down, the project was adapted to provide food boxes delivered in key collection points ensuring families most in need received them. When the world opened up again, they adapted again to re-establish relationships once Covid-19 restrictions were lifted, using Scottish Government funding to arrange trips for families to reconnect together after a long period of lockdowns.



Results

11,615 meals delivered to children living in poverty, solid evidence for Scottish Government to fund holiday hunger projects

Increase in volunteering and community cohesion, collaboration with local groups and businesses, families feeling supported, improved mental and physical health for attendees and volunteers



This funding has enabled us to establish a process to distribute holiday meals which has become well known and accessible within local communities. It has allowed us to pilot different ways of working in each area, which has enabled us to respond more effectively to local need

Lorraine McKenzie, Thriving Communities, South Ayrshire Council



CASE STUDY

SUPPORTING DIGITAL SKILLS IN PAISLEY



Paisley Housing Association has around 1,200 properties in five areas across Paisley. They surveyed their residents in 2018 and found that although 584 of them are dependant on benefits, 677 responded that they had no digital access.

As the world, including Universal Credit, moved to online services, this left people more isolated than before. Almost every job requires basic digital understanding and job applications are largely online.

Click Zone was a collaboration between Paisley Housing Association and Digital Inclusion Renfrewshire aiming to build skills and confidence by increasing digital skills in the community.

Results

128 people accessed digital participation support

40 people accessed support through drop in sessions

88 people benefitted from organised sessions focussed on a specific area

Learning was used to plan Phase 2 of the project

SPA funding provided hardware like desktops, laptops, iPads and android tablets, printers, iPhones and android phones, modem and a smart tv for the project.

Members of PHA staff were trained as Digital Champions through the SCVO programme and set up topical sessions addressing employment opportunities and benefits. Evening drop-in sessions provided guidance in:

- price comparison websites
- energy switching
- staying safe online
- social inclusion through social networking
- accessing health and wellbeing apps for people with long term disabilities and conditions



SPA funding has meant Paisley HA were able to extend digital access and crisis support for our residents moving from homelessness, giving them a good start in their tenancies

Alan Graham, Senior Projects Officer, Paisley Housing Association

Examples of Our Funded Projects



Community Projects & Environmental

Flowering Hawthorn
Bee Friendly
Car Club, Craft Café and Community Arts
Holiday Hunger
Welcome to Hawthorn
Community Hub First Aid Training
SPACE Project (youth)
Tackling Holiday Hunger
Environmental Roots
Blair in Bloom Community Garden



Social Inclusion

Shared Apprenticeship Scheme
Changing Lives
Paid employment for 2 young residents completing an employability programme with Linstone
Modern apprenticeship hosting
Environmental Roots
Jobs Kingdom Live
The Workshop, Aberfeldy
Westbank Employability Project
Employability Personal Development Programme



Financial Inclusion

Community Heating - Energy Advice Service
Gas Infill Project tenant support
Shared Apprenticeship Emergency Fund
#c200 (vouchers gifted to young people leaving care and starting tenancies)
Eradicating Poverty in Angus – Focus on Arbroath
Scottish Borders Food Hub
CAP Debt Advice and Befriending Service
Inverclyde Covid 19 Support Group
Emergency Foodbank Support
Paisley Advice Team
South Ayrshire Food Pantry
Hospice Hearty Meals, St Andrew's Hospice
Logan Day Centre Kitchen and Dignified Food Support



Digital Projects & Inclusion

Resettlement Passport
Rainbow Voices
iStay tenancy videos
Digital Skills
Digital Annual Report
Equal Voices
Switching on Digital Services
Clickzone
Gypsy Traveller Community Hub
Court Connectivity
Bringing IT Home
Switched On Paisley
Perth Autism Support
Let's Get Digital East Ayrshire
Simplicity in Connectivity
Connected Courts



Conclusion

Through successful delivery of the fund, and provision of support with accessing match funding, we have been able to address key societal challenges such as social isolation, food and fuel poverty, digital participation, environmental issues, and financial inclusion.

One of the most remarkable aspects of this initiative is the way it has fostered collaboration between local authorities, housing associations, and community organisations. By working together and pooling information and resources, we have maximized the impact of every pound invested.

Through this forward-thinking initiative, numerous community projects have been brought to life, transforming the lives of individuals and the fabric of neighbourhoods. From supporting local youth clubs and community centres to funding innovative digital inclusion programs, the SPA Community Benefit Fund has been instrumental in fostering connectivity and empowerment during a very challenging few years.

We are delighted to share some of the highlights of the previous 5 years and look forward to making even more social impact in the next 5 years ahead of us.

Memberships and Relevant Experience

Lintel Trust are members of Social Value UK, the national network for social value in the UK, part of Social Value International, the global social value movement. Social Value UK is the professional body for Social Value and SROI Practitioners.

Lintel Trust is part of the Social Value UK 'Contract for Change' working group. Lintel Trust has worked with and is part of the service improvement working group at IMPACT to monitor funded projects since April 2022.



The development and subsequent achievements of the SPA Community Benefit Fund is something I am incredibly proud of. Utilising procurement savings to benefit local communities was a driving force behind SPA and our collaborative approach has enabled us to positively impact people throughout Scotland.

We are committed to driving positive impact from our activities, ensuring that social value sits at the heart of what we do at LHC Procurement Group. SPA have set a high bar for our other regional businesses to reach.

Clive Feeney, Group Managing Director, LHC Procurement Group



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Brochure Edition 2023/11 V1.0

