



BURCOTE WIND  
RENEWABLES

# Investing in Scotland and Supporting Communities

## Community Engagement Manifesto



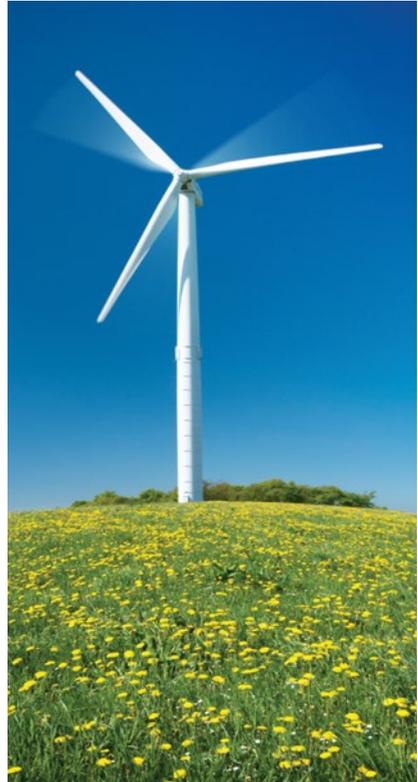
# About Burcote Wind

**Burcote Wind are a progressive renewable energy company, with a strong focus on helping to create economically and socially sustainable communities as a result of our projects.**

This does not only mean being more environmentally friendly, but also ensuring that our investment is used for the long-term benefit of communities.

We work with communities to help them decide what their own priorities might be to take advantage of this investment. This includes benefits associated with the construction of a wind farm as well as the longer term benefits derived from the community benefit funds associated with the operation of our projects.

The circumstances and priorities are different in each community. We empower communities to take a long-term view and to invest at least 80% of community benefit funds in long-term socio-economic goals such as economic growth, environmental benefits, social good, skills and enterprise to deliver a lasting legacy as well as short term benefits.



## **Burcote Wind Projects Will:**

- Invest a total of over £1bn in Scotland
- Add £143m of Gross Value Added (GVA) to the Scottish Economy
- Contribute nearly £120m in Business Rates
- Provide nearly £100m to local communities
- Displace over one million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year

# Community engagement

**Community engagement is hard-wired into Burcote Wind's approach to our projects. For us, community engagement has to be thorough and a two-way process to be meaningful and effective.**

Community Engagement is a through-life process of working with local groups and residents as a valued part of the community during pre-planning, application, consenting strategy, construction and operation of the wind farm.

We start community engagement right from the very outset of a project – typically when we seek a scoping opinion from the Local Authority or Scottish Ministers about a site or submit a planning application for a temporary anemometer or “met” mast to measure wind speeds.

We believe it's right to start as early as possible, to give us sufficient time to present our plans to the community and adapt them in light of feedback, instead of simply showcasing a finalised layout.

**||** *Community Engagement is at the heart of Burcote Wind's approach, we work with communities as early as possible to shape the design of our projects. ||*

We use a range of techniques to ensure that everyone in the community has a chance to input to our proposals. These include:

- Residents' questionnaires
- Presentations to Community Councils, ward councillors and planning authority officials.
- Public exhibitions to outline the plans and collect detailed written feedback.
- Dedicated project websites for each wind farm site, regularly updated with information
- Community newsletters
- Press releases and advertisements in local media.
- Information to key stakeholders such as local MSPs, MPs, Councillors, Community Councils, businesses and civic groups, schools and others
- Face-to-face meetings with near neighbours to the project

We compile a detailed Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) report which is submitted with the application for consent.

This outlines how we conduct our engagement with the community, details the feedback received and demonstrates what changes were made to the application in light of this.



*“Burcote firmly believe that open and honest dialogue from the outset, along with a focus on ensuring the community benefit fund be used to provide jobs and skills to grow the economy, have shown local people that we are a responsible and community-spirited company. ”*

## Our approach to community benefit

**Burcote Wind are a responsible and progressive wind farm developer. We work with local communities to shape the community benefit fund to meet their socio-economic needs. This approach has been held up as a “gold standard” for the industry.**

**Burcote Wind works with Community Councils, Schools and Colleges, local Skills Providers, Businesses, local politicians and others.**

**For all of our projects, Burcote Wind set up Community Liaison Groups to discuss possible priorities for community benefit from an early stage.**

Contributing **£5,000 per MW**, we believe that Community Benefit Funds should be used to deliver long-term, socioeconomic goals that will benefit the local area during the operation of the wind farm and beyond through legacy funds.

### **Socio-Economic Priorities**

Working with communities, we have identified five key areas where the Community Benefit Fund could be effectively targeted towards meeting

defined local priorities in order to secure long-term benefits for local people:

- Economic Sustainability
- Education, Skills and Enterprise
- Social Wellbeing and welfare
- Environment & Energy
- Ad Hoc Projects

We further propose that residual funding each year is placed into an endowment to ensure the fund has an **impact beyond the lifetime of the wind farm.**

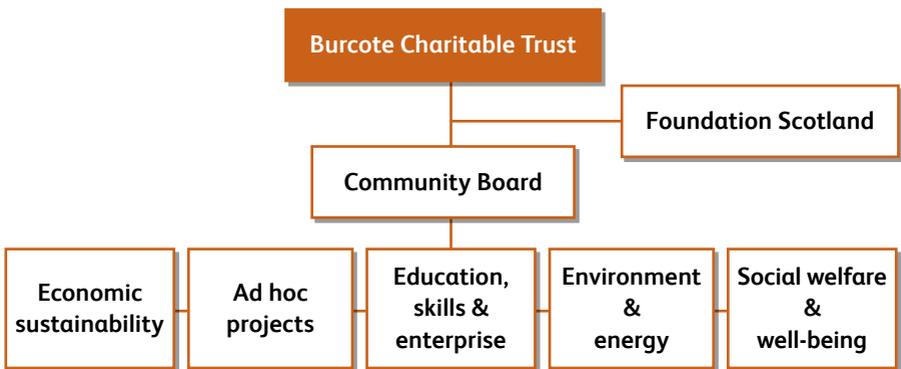


## A Well-Managed Fund

Burcote Wind's role is to ensure that the funds have as strong an impact as possible and are well-managed. To that end, we have agreed a Memorandum of Understanding with "Foundation Scotland"<sup>1</sup> to **provide governance and administration** for a charitable trust that will manage all of our Community Benefit Funds. Foundation Scotland's role is to ensure that communities produce robust 3-5 year business plans, in keeping with

the aims of the charitable trust, and to provide external audits of funds to ensure compliance with necessary regulations. However, decisions about **fund allocation are entirely at the discretion of the local board of trustees.**

This strong and on-going support for local communities will help ensure funds associated with our wind farms are spent effectively and targeted at **tackling long-term socio-economic issues** within local areas.



1 – Foundation Scotland were formerly known as Scottish Community Foundation – [www.foundationscotland.org.uk](http://www.foundationscotland.org.uk)

# Economic sustainability

**Burcote Wind would like to see community benefit funds used for infrastructure and other projects that make communities more economically sustainable and successful in the future. This could also mean generating new industries for an area.**

## Supporting local business

We are also keen to help put in place the necessary **infrastructure** to support the creation of new small businesses.

### Economic support might include:

- Community buy-out and refurbishment of property given over at low or no cost to new local businesses.
- Small Business Grants to encourage employment.
- Part-funded apprenticeship places.

Burcote Wind is also keen to ensure that it is local companies and supply chains that benefit from our projects, wherever possible.

To that end, we have signed a **Memorandum of Understanding with Wind Towers (Scotland) Ltd on Kintyre** promising to offer them the chance to supply all turbine towers for Burcote Wind's Projects.

## Transport

For example, communities have proposed using funds from our wind farms to **improve local access** which could attract jobs or visitors to the area.

As a number of our projects are in rural areas where there is often limited **public transport**, communities have proposed new bus routes to help local people travel to work and make it easier for young people to get to school or colleges.

This kind of infrastructure investment is intended to make towns and villages more attractive for further investment.

## Tourism

Investment in **tourism facilities** can increase the income of local shops and businesses. This can be as basic as setting up a website to provide information for visitors or more complex, longer-term projects such as developing a new visitor centre or attraction.

Communities have also suggested using local land to develop new attractions such as mountain biking, surfing, supporting archaeological interest and improving countryside access.

## 21st Century infrastructure

The community benefit fund could also enable longer term infrastructure projects to be supported such as providing improved **fibre-optic broadband**, which could be community owned, or improving digital radio signals. The fund can also be used to provide incubator facilities for small businesses.



*“ Burcote Wind’s philosophy is to focus on supporting Scottish economic growth and to direct as much of our capital and operating expenditure as possible through Scottish companies in order to create jobs in Scotland. ”*



*“ We believe that with a focus on growing local skills, improving education and fostering enterprise, communities can benefit in the long-term from our developments. ”*

## Education, skills and enterprise

**Burcote Wind believe there should be a clear route for young people to complete school and go on to find long-term employment opportunities.**

### Schools

Local communities will be able to add value to primary and secondary education by providing **computing equipment for schools or subsidising after school classes or sport activities.**

The community could also provide life-skills for all ages of young people such as **interview techniques.**

### Skills

We are working extensively with colleges to bring vocational training opportunities closer to local people.

In addition to engineering and wind turbine maintenance, we have encouraged **training in hospitality, tourism, IT skills** and other areas to help people secure jobs and to develop a local skills base that will attract new employers.

In addition, suggestions generated from our community consultation have included ideas for how our community benefit funds could provide sustainable skills for the future. These have included:

- **Outreach centres** and ring-fenced places at college.
- **Bursaries** to cover living expenses for local students.
- **Night class** provision to allow people of all ages to develop new skills.

**In Kirkconnel and Kelloholm, residents have suggested that colleges be engaged to set up an outreach centre to train local people and give them the skills to be involved directly in the wind farm as well as providing skills to fill other jobs needed in the Nithsdale area.**



## Environment and energy

**The primary environmental benefits of windpower are to cut carbon emissions, reduce reliance on fossil fuels and improve energy security. Wind development can also enable wider environmental and habitat improvements.**

We estimate that, if consented, our projects would **displace around 1,103,372 tonnes of carbon emissions a year** and provide enough clean energy to **power over half a million homes.**

Burcote Wind also understand that there are public concerns about some aspects of wind farms and their impact on the wider environment. To alleviate these, we continually examine ways to optimise site lay-outs to maximise electricity generation whilst **minimising adverse effects.**

In addition, we are constantly in discussions with manufacturers and on the lookout for **new technology.**

Finally, our community consultation so far has demonstrated the importance to local people of using benefits from our developments to **improve local environments and ecosystems.**

“ *Communities are telling us that they want to use our projects to regenerate local ecosystems and invest in their own renewables.* ”

### **Improving local environments:**

- Developing local forests as conservation areas to provide jobs and environmental benefits.
- Community renewables projects to provide on-going income and further reduce carbon emissions.
- Retro-fitting energy efficiency measures to homes and businesses to further reduce carbon emissions.
- Community programmes to improve environmental awareness in schools.

# Social welfare and wellbeing

**Burcote Wind encourage local communities to use funds from our investment to support and improve local facilities.**

Whilst traditionally this has meant small amounts of money being spent to provide support for community groups or classes, we are keen to also encourage longer-term investment in large scale projects to improve communities, adding value to existing services.

Local people have been very imaginative at producing ideas for projects they want to support. For example, local communities may wish to commit regular sums of money in order to continually **support a community café.**

Equally, communities may want to be able to provide substantial sums of capital support to, for example, **build a day care centre** for older or vulnerable people.

Capital spending could also be used to support **new affordable housing or upgrade sports facilities** in particular areas.

Because of the increase in the price of utilities, we also hope projects that might consider measures for **tackling fuel poverty** will be actively supported in the long-term.

A further suggestion made by communities is the idea of **district heating** which can provide cheaper and more environmentally friendly heating.

The options for improvement are almost limitless but in order to ensure that work is **coordinated with local authorities**, Burcote Wind will assist in

brokering a strong relationship between communities with wind farms and councils so that strategies are joined-up.

Again, Burcote Wind's approach is to help people put the ideas for their local area into action and use the investment from our wind farms to maintain the vibrant local communities they live in, strong economic growth and a strong sense of:

- Social Justice and Wellbeing
- Community Care
- Pride in the local area

The final area where we believe Community Benefit can be best used is in ad hoc projects. We expect this to be small micro-grants to individual community organisations. This might include:

- Rainbow, Brownie, Guide and Scouts groups.
- Youth Clubs
- Beautification of the local area
- Village Hall renovation
- Local Bowling Clubs

“ *Our wind farms have the potential to improve social inclusion, for instance through new local facilities that benefit the entire community.* ”

A high-angle photograph of a worker installing insulation. The worker is wearing a blue hard hat, a blue ribbed sweater, and blue work gloves. They are leaning over a wall, carefully placing a large sheet of yellow, fibrous insulation. The wall is partially covered with white insulation, and the floor is made of concrete. The lighting is bright, highlighting the texture of the insulation and the worker's clothing.

*“ Measures like installing insulation can help to reduce energy bills and tackle the very real problem of fuel poverty. ”*



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## **Mission Statement**

To invest in secure, sustainable energy in a way that benefits the local community, conserves the natural environment and fulfils a moral imperative to combat climate change.

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