

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Argyll and Bute Investment Plan, August 2022

Your location

To be eligible for funding, you will need to be applying on behalf of a lead authority in one of the [delivery geographies](#).

Select the lead authority

For Scotland and Wal(I)nny

distribution statistics 2018 show that Argyll and Bute is in the bottom third of local authority areas with the lowest gross weekly incomes, whilst the cost of transport and distribution of food means that the cost of living is also much higher in rural areas of Scotland like Argyll and Bute. A Scottish Government (2021) report estimates that the minimum cost of living in remote rural Scotland is between 15% and 30% higher than urban parts of the UK.

In addition being remote and rural, fuel poverty is a significant issue facing Argyll and Bute, the most recent Scottish House Condition Survey 2020 suggesting that 43% of residents are living in fuel poverty, 4% more than the national average. The Atlantic Islands House Condition Survey suggests that in some areas 63% of local residents are in fuel poverty.

Fuel Poverty is defined as “if (a person), to heat their home to a satisfactory standard, needs to spend more than 10% of their household income on fuel then they are in fuel poverty”.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a relative measure of deprivation across 6,976 small areas (called data zones). The SIMD ranks all data zones in Scotland according to levels of deprivation relative to one another.

13 of Argyll and Bute’s 125 data zones fall within the 15% most deprived data zones in Scotland. These data zones are all located in our biggest towns of Rothesay, Dunoon, Campbeltown, Helensburgh and Oban.

Patterns of deprivation vary by domain, there are seven domains in total including income, employment and geographic access to services. A particular contrast can be seen between levels of access deprivation, which affects most of rural Argyll and Bute and levels of deprivation across other SIMD domains, wherein the towns are seen to exhibit higher levels of multiple deprivation relating to income and employment.

Although Argyll and Bute has few areas with high levels of multiple deprivation, other instances of deprivation will occur outside these areas, especially in rural areas where populations are more heterogeneous, meaning small pockets of poverty sit outwith the main towns very close to areas of affluence.

This all forms part of a major challenge for Argyll and Bute to minimise poverty by maximising incomes providing well paid jobs and cheap affordable housing amongst other key targets.

Places

The majority of our population live in towns or smaller settlements and therefore our places and any resulting improvement to them is critical to the quality of life and health and wellbeing of our communities who live and work in them as well as providing more attractive places for those visiting or looking to invest. There is a real need in many of our towns and settlements for funding to support ‘small-scale projects’: projects enacted on the local level of a town, settlement or a neighbourhood and aimed at enhancing the quality of the place and quality of life, the health and wellbeing of our communities including the social and cultural life of local residents as well as improving the place for those living, working, visiting and investing.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY THAT YOU INTEND TO SUPPORT?

(If yes) Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

Tourism

The tourism industry is resilient and there is an appetite to build back better in terms of both the visitor economy and quality of visitor offering; and to focus on an improved tourism product increasingly responsive to communities and sensitive to the outstanding environment.

Not all tourism and hospitality businesses have suffered. Some have made innovative and long-lasting changes to their business model. Some have seen an increase in visitors by ensuring their visitor offer is aligned to market needs; safety assurance, flexibility of booking conditions, improvements enabled through pandemic grants. Scottish Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM) data for Argyll and Bute in the first half of 2021 suggests significant build-back with economic impact more than doubling from £41.95m in 2020 to £94.83m in 2021 - a remarkable recovery rate of 126.1%. (Source: ABC STEAM DATA 2019 comparison to Q1&2 2021).

Predictions at the time of the 2022 Visitor Economy Recovery and Growth Strategy development suggest a 3-6 year worldwide full tourism recovery period. Sustained marketing and product development is necessary to underpin confidence in travel and position Argyll and Bute as a safe, sustainable and enjoyable destination. There is both appetite and need to take the pent-up travel demand and encourage locals and visitors to enjoy Argyll and Bute and improve direct spend in the area. There are opportunities to support businesses to create new visitor facing products and to use marketing activity to encourage visitors to come to the destination, stay longer and spend money in the local economies.

Community Development

To build on the momentum of time and dedication given by community groups and partner organisations to come together and address concerns with the climate emergency. To date, and over a period of more than a year, the group has worked together and produced a business case for feasibility study on climate change. They have also produced a webpage ([Community Planning Partnership - Climate Change \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](https://argyll-bute.gov.uk)) with the work to date in the area; which enabled the identification of gaps and need for a study. There is then opportunity to support community organisations to deliver via funding to community groups to help bring community cohesion, and increase volunteering on climate change matters through community projects and activity.

The council has trialled innovative ways in bringing groups together online during the pandemic and there is opportunity to expand this to develop 'hubs'; both online to provide opportunity to mitigate the remote rural challenges, and within communities by developing community assets fit for purpose. Further to this the Community Learning and Development Partnership (CLD) has 'digital' as a priority in its plan to improve digital skills and access across Argyll and Bute;

a rural setting. [Rural Employment - Policy | Employability in Scotland Youth unemployment in rural areas | JRF](#)

Skills Shortages

The mismatch between unemployed people with limited skills, confidence and a range of barriers, including increasing mental health issues to access skills opportunities available. – [evaluation information from SYP phase 1](#)

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY THAT YOU INTEND TO SUPPORT? (In Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland this should also include challenges relating to Multiply)

(If yes) Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

There are a number of local opportunities that could be capitalised on by the dissemination of UK Shared Prosperity Fund monies across the proposed project interventions:

Strong Partnerships & Referrals of Learners

Regionally and locally there are strong partnerships, with Adult Learners supported as part of Live Argyll's Community Learning and Development partnership. Through our partners, we receive referrals for literacy and numeracy support for adult learners – many of which we are currently unable to engage with due to lack of resources.

Progression for Learners

S7: Funding for the development and promotion of wider campaigns which encourage people to visit and explore local areas.

S8: Funding for impactful volunteering and/or social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places.

S9: Investment in capacity building, resilience (including climate change resilience) and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups.

S10: Community measures to reduce the cost of living, including through measures to improve energy efficiency, and combat fuel poverty and climate change.

S12: Investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities.

S13: Support for linking communities together and with employment opportunities with a focus on decarbonisation.

DO YOU PLAN TO USE ANY INTERVENTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE LIST?

State the name of each of these additional interventions and a brief description of each of these

No

Explain how each intervention meets the Communities and Place investment priority. Give

5. **Extension of Flexible Food Fund** providing short term grants to people struggling with the cost of living crisis, advice and skills support and referral to partners. Argyll and Bute Council is working with third sector organisations, Bute Advice Centre and the Argyll, Lomond and the Islands energy advice group (ALlenergy) to provide short-term grant funding to people who are struggling due to the cost of living crisis and increased fuel costs based on the minimum income standard with a rural uplift. Customers are offered a second grant payment if they engage with the advice services available such as benefits maximisation, budgeting skills, money and debt advice. In addition a referral is made to ALlEnergy and fuel debt relief, fuel poverty advice, behavioural change, the purchase of white goods and the provision of fuel vouchers can all be arranged. Argyll and Bute wide. (S10)
6. **Community Hubs** to increase digital capacity and skills in communities, alongside community asset improvements. Development of hubs which support community organisations and volunteers to come together to share best practice, ideas and increase capacity and resilience. Argyll and Bute wide. (S12)
7. **Pre-loved School Uniform project**, supporting an eco-friendly re-used school uniform bank. Argyll and Bute wide. (S13)

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity? All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes

No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

Argyll and Bute Council must ensure that any subsidies

Number of new businesses created	
Improved perception of markets	
Increased business sustainability	
Increased number of businesses supported	
Increased amount of investment	
Improved perception of attractions	
Number of businesses introducing new products to the firm	
Number of organisations engaged in new knowledge transfer activity	
Number of premises with improved digital connectivity	
Number of businesses adopting new to the firm technologies or processes	
Number of new to market products	
Number of R&D active businesses	
Increased number of innovation active SMEs	
Number of businesses adopting new or improved products or services	
Increased number of innovation plans developed	
Number of early stage firms which increase their revenue following support	
Number of businesses engaged in new markets	
Number of businesses engaged in new markets	
Number of businesses increasing their export capability	
Increased amount of low or zero carbon energy infrastructure installed	
Number of businesses with improved productivity	
Increased number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies	
Increased number of properties better protected from flooding and coastal erosion	
None of the above	

SELECT THE INTERVENTIONS YOU INTEND TO USE WHICH MEET THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY. YOU CAN SELECT AS MANY AS YOU LIKE.

Intervention

A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.

S14: Funding for the development and promotion (both trade and consumer) of the visitor economy, such as local attractions, trails, tours and tourism products more generally.

S15: SME development grants and support, aligned with local and regional sectoral priorities and growth potential. This could include, providing tailored expert advice, matched grants and leadership training to enable manufacturing SMEs to adopt industrial digital technology solutions including AI artificial intelligence; robotics and autonomous systems; additive manufacturing; industrial internet of things; virtual reality; data analytics. The support is proven to leverage high levels of private investment into technologies that drive growth, productivity, efficiency and resilience in manufacturing.

S16: Research and development grants supporting the development of innovative products and services, with a particular focus on low carbon goods and environmental services, and climate resilience. This could include investment to support the diffusion of innovation knowledge and activities. Support the commercialisation of ideas, encouraging collaboration and accelerating the path to market so that more ideas translate into industrial and commercial practices.

S22: Support for growing the local social economy, including community businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises.

S26: Business support measures to drive employment growth, particularly in areas of higher unemployment.

S29: Support for new and existing businesses and start-ups aligned with local, regional and Scottish policy.



Number of people gaining a qualification or completing a course following support	
Number of people gaining qualifications, licences, and skills	
Number of economically active individuals engaged in mainstream skills education, and training.	
Number of people engaged in life skills support following interventions	
Number of people with proficiency in pre-employment and interpersonal skills (relationship, organisational and anger-management, interviewing, CV and job application writing)	
Multiply only - Increased number of adults achieving maths qualifications up to, and including, Level 2.	
Multiply only - Increased number of adults participating in maths qualifications and courses up to, and including, Level 2.	
None of the above	

SELECT THE INTERVENTIONS YOU INTEND TO USE WHICH MEET THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY. YOU CAN SELECT AS MANY AS YOU LIKE.

Intervention

A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.

S31: Employment support for economically inactive people: intensive and wrap-around one-to-one support to move people closer towards mainstream provision and employment., supplemented by additional and/or specialist life and basic skills (digital, English, maths (Multiply) and ESOL) support where there are local provision gaps.

S33: Activities such as enrichment and volunteering to improve opportunities and promote wellbeing.

S35: Support for employability programmes and advice including alignment with the No One Left Behind agenda, Fair Start Scotland and Scottish employability pipeline. This could include tailored support to help people in employment, who are not supported by mainstream provision to address barriers to accessing education and training courses.

DO YOU PLAN TO USE ANY INTERVENTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS LIST?

State the name of each of these additional interventions and a brief description of each of these

No

Explain how each intervention meets the People and Skills investment priority. Give evidence where possible, including why it is value money and the outcomes you want to deliver.

N/A

Do you consider that any of these interventions may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the intervention's planned activity?

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

SCOTLAND, WALES & NORTHERN IRELAND ONLY

HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Yes No

Describe the projects, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.

1. **Pre-Employability Support Programme.** Initial assessment, action planning and support, with individually tailored keyworker support for those furthest from the labour market. Argyll and Bute wide. (S31)
2. **Adult Literacy and Numeracy Programme.** Cohesive locally tailored support for those furthest from the labour market providing access to literacy and numeracy skills, with pathways into employability support and mentoring. Argyll and Bute wide. (S31)
3. **Expansion of the Wider Achievement Programme** for all secondary schools, providing support to assist vulnerable school leavers into employment via skills-based volunteering as part of an enhanced curriculum. Argyll and Bute wide. (S33)
4. **Pre-Employability Support Programme Work Placements,** providing individually tailored paid work placements. Argyll and Bute wide. (S33)
5. **Positive Destinations Programme,** providing support for young people leaving care with no positive destination, those with a learning disability, those leaving the criminal justice system, support to boost confidence for those who have been economically inactive and support for those who require assistance in determining suitable employment or training pathways. Argyll and Bute wide. (S33)
6. **Pre-Employability Support Programme Training,** providing access to funded training courses. Argyll and Bute wide. (S35)
7. **Supported Employment Experience in the Third Sector.** Intermediate Labour Market support for those not in employment, offering a waged employment experience, training, and support to participant and third sector employer. Argyll and Bute wide. (S35)

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

Argyll and Bute Council must ensure that any subsidies (includes grants, loans at below market rate, loan guarantees at below market rate, tax breaks/relief or allowing a company to use publicly owned office space rent free) awarded to economic actors (anyone who puts goods or services on a market and could include a public body or a charity if they are acting commercially) comply with the UK's international obligations. These include World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules and trade agreements such as the EU-UK Trade and Co-operation Agreement (EU-UK TCA).

A Subsidy Risk Assessment was undertaken for interventions included in the Argyll and Bute UKSPF Investment Plan when support from the council might potentially be subject to these international agreements on controlling public subsidies.

With regard to the relevant projects outlined in the Argyll and Bute UKSPF Investment Plan, the following questions have been posed:

- 1) Is the support given by a public authority?

- 2) Is the recipient of support an economic actor (i.e. placing goods or services on the market)?
- 3) Does the support provide a financial or in-kind benefit to the recipient which is not otherwise available on commercial/market terms?
- 4) Could the support affect international trade?

If the answer to all of the above questions was 'Yes', then the support is a subsidy.

If the answer to any of the above was 'No', then the support is not a subsidy. No further action is required and the recipient will be advised that this award is not a subsidy as per the UK's international obligations.

Approach to delivery and governance

In this section, we will ask you about:

- Structures you have in place to support delivery
- Support you have from stakeholders and the local community
- How you've engaged with MPs as part of your investment plan
- Opportunities you have identified to work with other places

Places need to show how MPs that cover the lead local authority have been engaged on the investment plan and whether they support it. More detail on the role of MPs can be found here.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT		
Have you engaged with any of the following as part of your investment plan? Select all that apply.		
Public sector organisations	Private sector organisations	Civil society organisations
Describe how you have engaged with any of these organisations. Give examples where possible.		
A Partnership Group was established that was made up of members of the current Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership and expanded to include other stakeholders. Information on the allocation also communicated to the Argyll Economic Resilience Forum (private sector organisations).		
Summarise the governance structures you have in place, including how any advisory panels or associated partnership groups are made up		
The Final Argyll and Bute UKSPF Investment Plan was considered at the Argyll and Bute Council Policy and Resources Committee on 11 th August 2019. /P /MCID 34-BDC q72.85 158.4 450.57 162.9 reV		

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PROJECT SELECTION

Are you intending to select projects in any way other than by competition for funding?

Yes

No

Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?

All other local authorities across Scotland in terms of standard approaches and governance issues with regard to the Scottish Government's No One Left Behind employability agenda and how this complements and aligns the UKSPF Investment Plan interventions, in particular S35.

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the Communities and Place interventions you have select?	
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Yes	No
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How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for Communities and Place interventions?		
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Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
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Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?

Strong capacity

Some capacity

Limited capacity

Describe what further support would help addre

UKSPF Expenditure Profile spreadsheet
UKSPF Indicative Deliverables spreadsheet

Your investment plan submission will be considered incomplete without the required documents.

Have you completed and uploaded the two spreadsheets to the SharePoint folder as requested?

- Yes
- No

SUMMARY OF PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

For easy reference, **Table A1** presents a summary of the projects and programmes for inclusion in the Argyll and Bute UKSPF Investment Plan.

Table A1: Summary of Argyll and Bute UKSPF Investment Plan Projects / Programmes

the visitor economy, such as local attractions, trails, tours and tourism products more generally.	improved digital infrastructure for data monitoring, evaluation & visitor book ability	
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Supporting Local Businesses (continued)		
Predefined Intervention	Project	Allocation (exc. admin)
S15: SME development grants and support, aligned with local and regional sectoral priorities and growth potential. This could include, providing tailored expert advice, matched grants and leadership training to enable manufacturing SMEs to adopt industrial digital technology solutions including AI artificial intelligence; robotics and autonomous systems; additive manufacturing; industrial internet of things; virtual reality; data analytics. The support is proven to leverage high levels of private investment into technologies that drive growth, productivity, efficiency and resilience in manufacturing.	Scientific Robotics Academy	£299,900
S16: Research and development grants supporting the development of innovative products and services, with a particular focus on low carbon goods and environmental services, and climate resilience. This could include investment to support the diffusion of innovation knowledge and activities. Support the commercialisation of ideas, encouraging collaboration and accelerating the path to market so that more ideas translate into industrial and commercial practices.	Innovation Support Service providing expert advice and capability reviews to help SMEs create innovation plans	£100,000
S22: Support for growing the local social economy, including community businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises.	Graduate Apprenticeship Opportunities in the Third Sector	£71,154
S26: Business support measures to drive employment growth, particularly in areas of higher unemployment.	Graduate Placement Programme providing graduate placement grants covering staff,	£180,000

S35: Support for employability programmes and advice including alignment with the No One Left Behind agenda, Fair Start Scotland and Scottish employability pipeline. This could include tailored support to help people in employment, who are not supported by mainstream provision to address barriers to accessing education and training courses.	Pre-Employability Support Programme Training	£97,765
	Supported Employment Experience in the Third Sector	£336,850
Sub-total allocation for People and Skills		£1,265,238
Overall Allocation (exc. admin)		£3,570,304

The above projects/programmes in **Table A1** will involve a mixture of delivery models (again predefined by the UK Government) as follows:

- In-house provision;
- Procurement of service provision;
- Grants to public or private organisations; or
- Commissioning third party organisations.

At present the majority of the Multiply budget will be subject to a procurement process.