



DEMOCRATIC FINANCE SCOTLAND

Transforming community wealth

Democratic Finance Scotland

A programme of support for community led organisations to explore alternative methods of raising finance and funding.

Particularly money that is locally sourced.

Ensuring communities have the
financial control and the **democratic power**
to take **ownership of important community assets**
and run **democratic community led businesses**

Back to Basics!

Community Shares & Crowdfunding – Are they right for your project?

- 1) 10:00 – 10:05am Welcome & introduction
- 2) 10:05 – 10:15am Community Shares
- 3) 10:15-10:25am Crowdfunding
- 4) 10:25 –10:40am - Which is right for your project?
- 5) 10:40 – 10:55am Our support
- 6) 10:55 – 11:10am Action Porty case study
- 7) 11:10 – 11:15 - Questions

What are Community Shares?

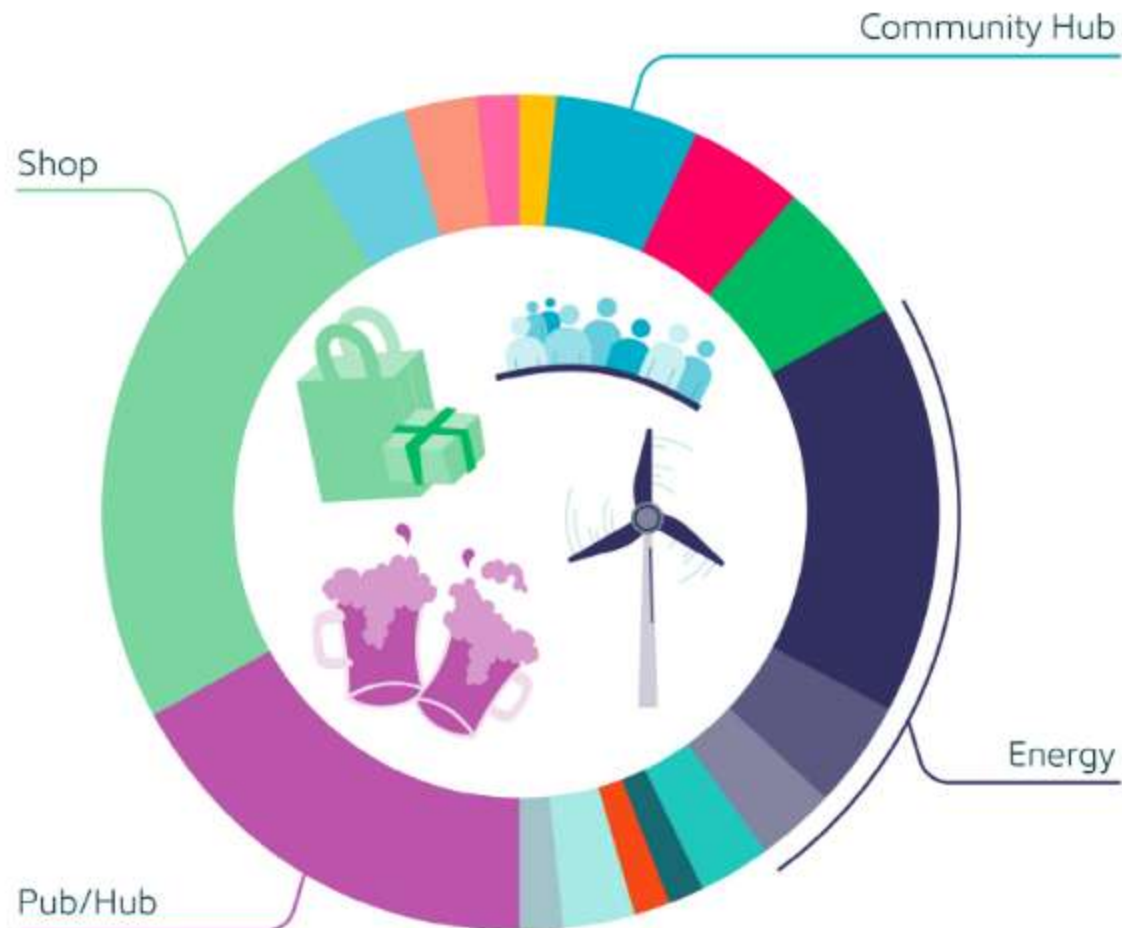
- a way to raise money for **community enterprises that serve a local need**
- a form of crowdfunding with **community ownership** at the heart
- an **investment**, not a donation

Other Considerations

- ✓ Non transferable
- ✓ Withdrawable
- ✓ Interest to shareholders
- ✓ Tax Relief (potentially)
- ✓ Need a Community Benefit Society

Community Shares by Sector

Shown below is a snapshot of community share offers by sector, with the percentage based on the number of offers launched in each sector. The amounts raised are shown in the table.



Sector	Total Value Shares	Count of offers
Brewery	£195,706	1
Community Hub	639,425	4
Distillery	3,841,000	3
Education	618,486	4
Energy (Hydro)	7,521,414	11
Energy (Solar)	4,189,815	3
Energy (Wind)	1,158,650	2
Food and Farming	37,710	2
Heritage	27,400	1
Housing	670,320	1
Museum and Education	97,186	2
Music Venue	5,228	1
Pub/Hub	1,184,769	12
Shop	862,726	17
Sports and Leisure	377,300	3
Tourism	389,000	2
Travel and Transport	16,037	1
Total	21,832,172	70

21,468

CITIZEN
INVESTORS

70

COMMUNITY
SHARE OFFERS
SUPPORTED



**£21.8
MILLION**

RAISED IN
COMMUNITY
SHARES



95%

SURVIVAL
RATE

2024 TURNOVER
OF THESE
SOCIETIES

**£11.8
MILLION**

208

JOBS
CREATED

COMBINED
ASSET VALUE

**£38.9
MILLION**

Four pillars of a successful community share offer

1. **Community Engagement** – responding to community need, the foundation of every community share offer.
2. **Governance** – community shares are uniquely available to Societies: democratic, member led organisations.
3. **Business Planning** – as a form of repayable investment, there must be a trading model and solid business plan.
4. **Share Offer Document and Marketing**– brings it all together in a clear, transparent offer to your community.



The benefits of community shares



Community governance and increased involvement

Democratic – everyone gets equal say regardless of scale of investment

Social cause and community need at the heart

Flexible finance – interest and withdrawals don't have to kick in for 3-5 years

Can attract **further funding** and partnerships

92% of orgs with community shares are still trading

What is Crowdfunding?

- a way to raise **flexible money** for local projects
- **A donation**, not an **investment**
- Alternative to **grant funding** & loans
- Marketing **tool** to build support for your project





Campaigns that raise

**30% of
their goal**

within the first week are
more likely to succeed

+86%

success rate with video

Campaigns featuring a video are
nearly twice as likely to reach their
target. (Source: Crowdfunder)

Key success factors



**Time and
effort**



**Campaign
visibility**



Network size



**Proposal
attractiveness**

Your audience target groups might include:



**Local
population**



**Existing
members**



Diaspora



**Key
stakeholders**

How to estimate your target

**Potential
Donors**

X

**Average
Contribution**

=

**Estimated
Target**



The benefits of crowdfunding



Builds community
engagement

Harnesses
support i.e
volunteers,
advocates etc.

Social cause and
community need
at the heart

Flexible finance
– not as restrictive
as grants

Can attract
further funding
and partnerships

Lend your project
credibility

Rewards

- As part of your campaign, you may wish to offer 'rewards'- incentives to encourage people to donate sums of money.
- Tailor to your project
- Consider your capacity as a group when thinking about offering rewards or not – and of any financial



Suggest a name for the new canal boat!

£5 or more
10 claimed

[More details](#)



4 x canal photo postcards (plus name the new boat!)

£10 or more
12 claimed

[More details](#)



Christmas Craft Cruise (1 ticket)

£13 or more
18 of 32 claimed

[More details](#)

Crowdfunding in action - 2026

- ✓ Brig Inn raised £21,000 in match funding for pub buy-out
- ✓ Colinton Village Enterprise raised £29,635 for capital build
- ✓ Fountainbridge Canalside Trust - £11,000 for new electric barge





**DEMOCRATIC
FINANCE
SCOTLAND**



**Development
Trusts Association
Scotland**
A Thriving Community-led Network

Crowdfunder Guide

Which is right for your project?

Community Shares

- ✓ Community Benefit Society legal structure required
- ✓ Supporting documents needed
- ✓ Membership to manage
- ✓ Likely to raise more money
- ✓ 6-week campaign period
- ✓ Repayable!
- ✓ Financially more complicated ongoing - interest, withdrawals etc

Crowdfunding

- ✓ No particular structure needed
- ✓ Minimal documentation needed
- ✓ No membership to manage
- ✓ Good for raising smaller amounts of money up to £50k
- ✓ 6-week campaign period
- ✓ No ongoing obligations to donors

KEY STAGES OF A CAMPAIGN & OUR SUPPORT



Action Porty – Bellfield's Big Build - 2025

- ✓ £186,750 raised through community shares
 - ✓ Over 1,100 shareholders
 - ✓ Match funded by £450,000 Community Ownership Fund and £250,000 other funds
- Community Benefit Society structure – democratic and community led**



- ✓ £25 minimum residents
- ✓ £50 minimum non-residents
- ✓ investment from local organisations
- ✓ 2% interest and withdrawals from 2029
- ✓ Enterprising business – room and event hire
- ✓ One member one vote
- ✓ Amazing community engagement campaign

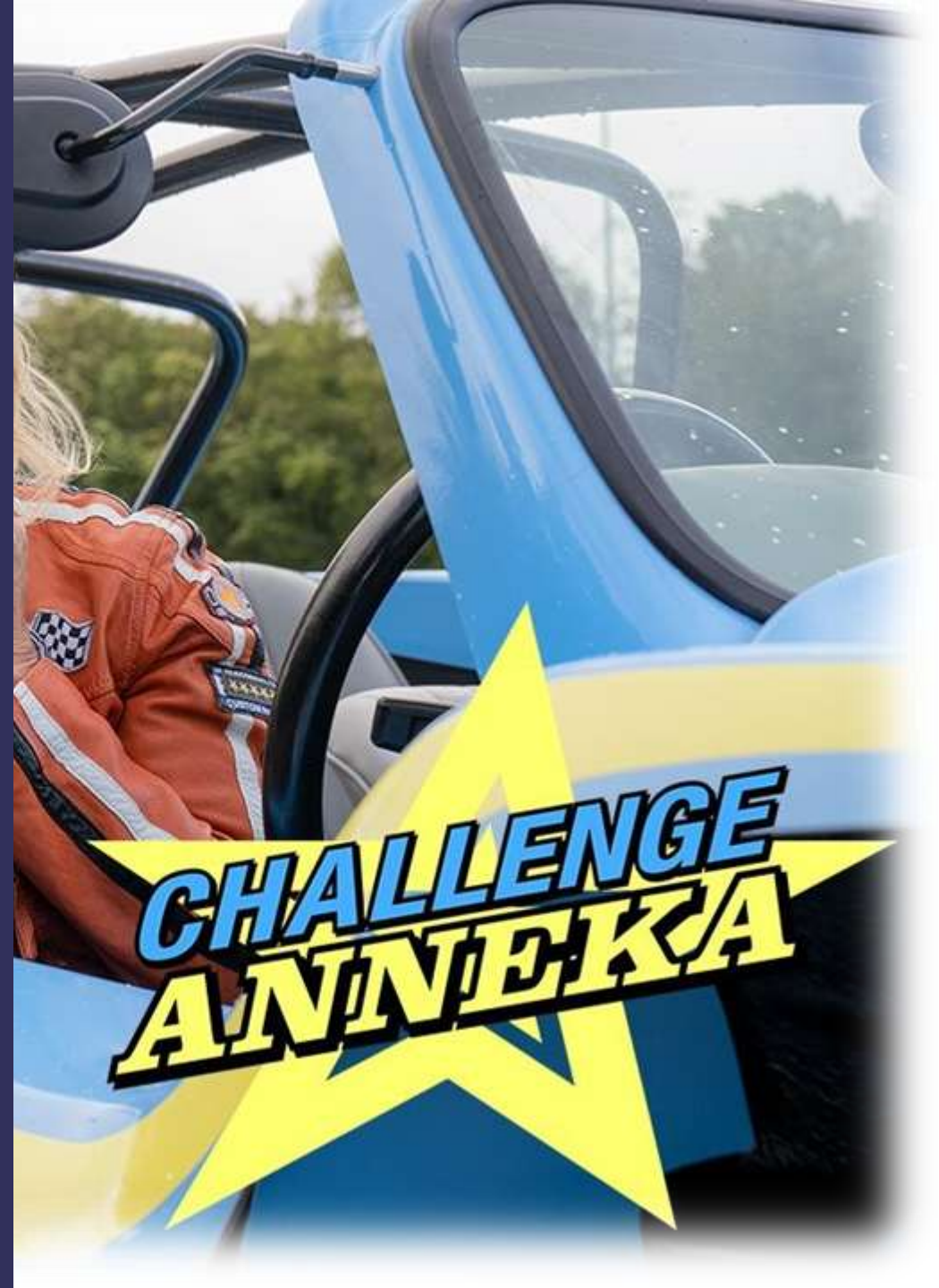
Challenge:

to raise a **minimum of £100,000**
and ideally reach target of £200,000

via a community shares offer
within timeframe of a **1-month** campaign!

Additional challenge:

Prepare for the shares offer and campaign
with only 6 weeks' lead-in time!!!





- 43 volunteers
- 5,000 homes reached
- 2,000 flyers, 2,000 leaflets & 400 share offer docs distributed

BELLFIELD'S
BIG BUILD



**5 SLEEPS
TO GO**



What have we
been up to?



Will we reach
£50k of shares
by the weekend?

Friday Cafe volunteers

Sure
we will!



Don't let the Bellfield's
Big Build Campaign
Bomb!

Could this be dangerous?



found on
Porty beach
last week

Like

Comment

What is a
Share Offer
anyway?



Did you know you can
buy shares as a gift?



**Big thank you to
Cove, Porty High St,
who have invested in
Community Shares!**



**Big thank you to
Art Walk Porty
who have just invested in
Community Shares!**



Bellfield

April 25, 2025 · 🌐

Big thank you to Cove! Our nearby neighbours on Porty High Street who have invested in Community Shares. A lovely shop full of beautiful things, they've also been selling Bellfield mugs for us and sharing our posts. They support the community in other ways too, recently doing a raffle for the Cat & Dog home. Aren't we lucky to have such wonderful and caring small businesses nearby?

Our share shop is open until 30th April:
<https://bellfields-big-build.sumupstore.com/>

#porto... See more
— with cove.

Boost post



43



3



2



Community spaces
like Bellfield play a
truly vital role in the
community – they are
the lighthouses of
dryland, offering safe
spaces, casting out
their beacons of
positivity and
progression.



Thank you Michael!

(Porty Bookshop are doing an exclusive indie edition of Michael's new novel Muckle Flugga, they're taking orders!)









Imagine a place where community spirit thrives.



HELP US REACH OUR TARGET



Bellfield · Follow

LOOK

FINAL WEEK! ... See more





facebook.com/BellfieldPorty



Instagram.com/bellfieldporty

March & April 2025

Thank you!

Get in touch: katie@dtas.org.uk