CLLD (Community Led Local Development) Third Sector Fund (Climate Hub)
Nairn Coastal Dune Resilience Project Phase 1
PROJECT BRIEFING SHEET

Context

NICE (Nairn Improvement Community Enterprise) was formed in 2010 as a company limited by guarantee, registered local charity and independent member led community development trust, to facilitate the regeneration of Nairn Town Centre and surrounding areas of Nairnshire.
In 2024 after a year of public consultation across Nairnshire supported by local community councils and business groups, Highland Council local development planning team and independent charity Planning Aid Scotland **Our Nairnshire Local Place Plan** was published
Since then NICE has begun to facilitate collaborative community led delivery of key actions set out in the Local Place Plan to manage, conserve and develop local land and buildings
'Sustainable Future' is one of 5 priorities for action identified by local communities, along with **Jobs and Business, Getting Around, Town and Village Centres, and Green Spaces and Leisure.**

Why is the Dune Resilience Project Needed?

The risks presented to Nairn Common Good lands from both riverside and coastal flooding and coastal erosion were highlighted throughout Local Place Plan community consultations. Dune resilience is a key part of protecting Nairn's natural coastal assets and ecosystems, which underpin the local tourist industry and quality of life for all Nairnshire residents.
We are therefore mandated to take action to protect the Links, and key amenities such as Team Hamish Splashpad, local businesses, and recreation areas for community use by undertaking the marram grass planting project.
The Highland Council commissioned Dynamic Adaptive Pathways report outlines a need for action at the most vulnerable sections of the dune system on Nairn's central beach (referred to in the Council report as Nairn West Beach) by planting marram grass, and removing scrub from some of the more established dune towards the Sundancer restaurant/Harbour area. Support of Nairn's Common Good Officer, Local Elected Members, Community Councils, Nairn BID and the Community Planning Partnership has already been secured for the project, with Council permission to undertake this work.
This is very much a pilot project, trialling the approaches in scrub clearance, marram re-establishment and managing access. If successful, the project may be rolled out to cover further parts of the Central Beach dune system in due course.

The Project

- NICE will use CLLD grant funding to employ a project coordinator for 20 days work between July and December to oversee the dune resilience project activity from planning, coordination and community liaison, to delivery, record keeping and reporting.
- The coordinator will work closely with local organisations including Highlands & Islands Climate Hub, Green Hive, Nairn BID, Butterfly Conservation, RSPB and community councils
- The project will involve removal of scrub and invasive species to enhance the environment for marram grass to thrive, and will transplant marram grass to grow the depth and strength of the dune system to improve coastal resilience. The marram planting element of the project is a trial project looking at two options. One option is to purchase ready-grown marram plants and the other is to transplant more mature marram plants from a nearby

location. The success of each option will need to be closely monitored over time.

- A fence barrier will be erected around the planted marram grass to ensure the newly planted grass establishes itself without human footfall.
- The project coordinator will work with community volunteers, project partners and interest groups across a number of sessions to achieve project outcomes and communicate, educate and raise awareness with volunteers, the wider local community and visitors of why dune resilience is necessary.
- Local training will be conducted on planting marram grass and specialists will be required to advise on areas to plant. This will be (in part) supported by Highland Council Flood Team.

Project Aims

1. Improved dune resilience as a natural barrier to high tides and storm surges
2. Reduce coastal erosion along Nairn Central Beach (from the groyne behind Strathnairn Café to the Sanddancer restaurant)
3. Removal of scrub and invasive species and restoring of dune habitat for the Small Blue Butterfly, a rare species on the UK 'Species on the Edge' list.
4. A collaborative community project, engaging volunteers and community councils and other local interest groups in collective action.

How will project impacts be measured?

- A 'Coastal Snap point' will be installed for the community to take photos of the planted area and see the development of the marram grass planted section. A timelapse of development can be produced to show the project outcomes.
- Regular, volunteer-led, coastal erosion walks will be coordinated to monitor erosion at the coastal face of the dunes and monitor impact of large storms.
- The volume of scrub removed from the dune system will be measured and species found catalogued.
- There will be ongoing work to monitor invasive species and volunteers will remove any species found in the planted area.
- The number of volunteers involved in the project will be recorded as well as the number of sessions which take place to establish the project.
- The mobilisation of the community to engage with volunteering will be reported along with demographics on age ranges and gender balance.

Project Funding

Total project budget is £11275 (to be spend between July and end December 2025)

This comprises - £2000 from Highland Council, £500 from Nairn BID and £8775 from Highland Climate Hub CLLD grant. This will cover

20 days Project Coordinator @ £120 per day -	£2400
2 days Specialist Consultant planting advice @£1000 per day -	£2000
Hire of tree surgeons and bulldozer to remove scrub	£1000
Marram Grass plants x 500 @ 0.75	£375
Cheshunt Fencing panels 100 x £50	£5000
Information Boards to educate public	£500
TOTAL	**£11275**

How will this project build a more resilient community?(CLLD target priority)

Building dune resilience will improve the capacity of the dune system to cope with the larger and more frequently occurring storms and high tides which Nairnshire is seeing as a result of climate change. By enhancing the resilience of the natural barrier of our dunes, we can protect the local assets of the town(both land and buildings) on Nairn Common Good land, such as the Team Hamish Splashpad, local businesses and homes in Fishertown and protect the future of the Links as a recreational amenity for the whole town, and wider community of Nairnshire and beyond.