

South Ayrshire Council

REGENERATION CAPITAL GRANT FUND (RCGF)

Submitting Your Expression of Interest (EOI)

The deadline for completed application forms is **5pm on Thursday 23rd July 2026**.

To complete the following EOI form you must meet the following eligibility criteria:

Eligible Projects

You **must** be able to demonstrate that your project:

- meets the fund aims/objectives (page 2 of guidance), including alignment to a shared vision/plan for the relevant local place
- has been costed with an advanced funding package in place
- can spend or commit any funding by end March 2028

Your project must be at RIBA stage 4. Do not include projects that are still at feasibility stage.

Organisation Name	GoGirvan Community Led Regeneration
Project Title	Girvan Town House Regeneration Project
Lead Contact	Cath Maguire
Position in Organisation	Development Officer
Full Postal Address including Postcode	25 Knockcushan Street, Girvan, KA26 9AG
Project Start Date	Quarter 1 2029
Project Completion Date	Quarter 4 2029

Has this project been submitted to previous call of RCGF or the Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme (VDLIP)? No

Previous refs/call: N/A

e.g. RCGF-22-INSERT or

VDLIP-

01-INSERT or N/A

1. Total Project Costs

	2027/28
Total RCGF Grant Requested	1,500,000
Total Match Funding (costs funded by other sources)	£607,538
Overall Total Project Costs	2,107,538

2. Match Funding - Please detail any sources of funding other than RCGF

	2027/28
National Lottery Heritage Fund	£250,000
William Grant Foundation	£119,592
Carrick Futures	£100,000
Girvan's Story Project	£87,946
Kilgallioch Wind Farm	£50,000
Total	£607,538

(The Total amount should be the same as the Total Match Funding amount in Table 1 above)

Project Proposal Summary

- Please complete the **full** Project Proposal Summary below.
- Maximum 3 Page – minimum font size 12.
- You may delete the prompts from each text box.

1. Full project proposal summary

1.1 WHAT WILL THE PROJECT DELIVER

Physical Capital Project: Tied to an ongoing Community Asset Transfer from South Ayrshire Council, this community led capital project will fully refurbish, reconfigure, and future proof the historic, Category B listed Town House, turning it into a vibrant, multi-use community, enterprise, and visitor asset.

Project Location: The Town House, Knockcushan Street, Girvan, KA26 9AG. Located in the Girvan Conservation Area, the building occupies a strategic position overlooking the mouth of the River Girvan, bridging the beach and Girvan Harbour with the town's commercial core. It acts as the final piece of the puzzle, tying together adjacent civic assets including the Community Garden immediately behind and the library to the right.

Physical Deliverables: The project will transform the historic Girvan Town House into a multi-use community asset spanning 608 square metres across three floors, delivered at a total capital cost of £2,107,538 (based on McLeod + Aitken QS Cost Plan Rev 03, blending refurbishment at £3,207 per square metre with new extension works):

Building Accessibility & Layout: Reconfigures two main entrances to improve visitor flow, opens up a formal reception area, builds a 26 square metre extension, and installs a passenger lift (£241,116 total extension and lift cost) serving the Ground and First floors to ensure full accessibility across primary public and enterprise spaces.

Ground Floor: Relocates and expands the volunteer led Tourist Information Point into a high visibility Visitor and Heritage Centre, an expanded gift shop showcasing local makers, and a commercial bistro and event space opening onto Knockcushan Garden.

First Floor: Reconfigured to provide four offices in total, modernising existing facilities for anchor tenant Stepping Stones for Families (occupying two offices) and creating two new affordable offices for local businesses, alongside an expanded flexible community space, a dedicated kitchen, and a new accessible WC.

Dormer Attic: Refurbishes top floor space into two dedicated creative studios for local artists and makers.

Building Envelope & Services Renewal: Delivers comprehensive M&E replacement (£509,250), structural floor repairs, roof and masonry maintenance, accessible entrance ramps (£36,000), 10 percent contingency (£156,095), and BCIS inflation allowance to 2029 (£168,681).

Operational Outcomes and Services: The redevelopment project will transition the Town House to a fully self-sustaining financial model, generating sufficient commercial revenue to cover all running costs and subsidise community use. Commercial income will be driven by converting the ground floor Court Room into a Bistro and event venue, filling a key local gap for high quality dining, family celebrations, and private functions, alongside rental income from four first floor offices and two attic creative studios. This model directly supports the volunteer led Tourist Information Point and heritage centre, upgraded facilities for long term tenant Stepping Stones for Families, and community space. Operationally, the project will directly employ 1.5 FTE posts (1 Full-Time Manager and 1 Part-Time Cleaner/Caretaker). Additionally, the commercial venue, creative studios, and flexible office/hotdesking infrastructure provide capacity for 6–8 indirect FTE roles at any one time, extending reach to 12+ individual local freelancers and sole traders on a rotating basis.

1.2 PLACE BASED APPROACH

Strategic Alignment: Aligned with South Ayrshire Council's Girvan Place Plan, this anchor project restores a prominent landmark to improve local buildings and public spaces, empower community groups, and boost the tourism economy. Positioned to bridge seafront amenities with the town's commercial core, it directly supports the Girvan Heritage Regeneration Scheme (reserve list for Girvan's Story Project, funded by NLHF and HES) and the Girvan Conservation Area Management Plan.

Transformational Impact: Capitalising on the momentum of the recent Girvan Bandstand RCGF award, full physical refurbishment and reconfiguration will turn an under equipped, closed-door

landmark into an accessible community, enterprise, and visitor destination. Combined with targeted energy efficiency retrofits, the project secures long term operational viability while driving cross town footfall and economic resilience.

Partnership Working and Match Investment: Built on robust community consultation, professional cost plans, a comprehensive business plan, and completed RIBA Stage 1 and 2 architectural designs (funded by the Scottish Land Fund and the Architectural Heritage Fund), we are building on our close, existing relationships with Stepping Stones for Families and the volunteer led Tourist Information Point to align the building's design with their needs, ensuring the space is fully utilised to serve the community.

Economic and Community Outcomes: The project delivers directly on the Scottish Government's Community Wealth Building model by anchoring economic resilience within Girvan:

Productive Use of Land and Property: Transforming an underutilised South Ayrshire Council civic asset into a vibrant, community owned asset and visitor destination.

Local Wealth Retention: Relocating the shop to a prominent front elevation converts a seasonal service (2,500 visitors) into a year-round showcase capturing 5,000 to 6,000+ local shoppers and visitors annually. Building on baseline trading where April to September 2025 sales reached £4,920 across 23 local makers, this increased footfall and year-round exposure is conservatively projected to increase craft sales to £11,000 to £15,000+ annually. Converting this footfall into direct local craft sales retains financial multipliers directly within Girvan's economy.

Supporting Local Enterprise and Job Creation: Providing four offices and two creative studios directly targets local enterprise needs. Community survey feedback highlighted demand for workspaces, while immediate occupancy is secured as two offices are already taken by an existing third-sector tenant. The top-floor studios link directly to the ground-floor shop, giving local makers affordable workspace alongside a year-round retail outlet. Operationally, the project will directly employ a full-time Manager and a Cleaner, while providing the vital infrastructure for local start-ups and independent makers to build and sustain further community-led employment.

Community Led Tourism: Relocating and expanding the volunteer led Tourist Information Point into a dedicated Visitor and Heritage Centre on Knockcushan Street maximises RCGF's investment by converting passersby into engaged visitors. Building on the 2,500 tourists welcomed last season, this prime, high visibility frontage will lower entry barriers to increase visits and dwell time. The Centre will serve as a vital welcoming hub supporting Girvan's Coach Friendly Town status, a GoGirvan project projected to inject over £500,000 in local economic impact into Girvan's high street businesses across its first three years. This gives volunteers an optimal platform to showcase local history and direct coach parties and tourists to independent businesses and nearby cultural sites like the McKechnie Institute. (see attached Coach Town report).

Town Centre Regeneration and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods: Consolidates family support, crisis care, enterprise, and indoor civic event space under one roof in a central, walkable location.

Tackling Disadvantage: Commercial income from the rear bistro and workspaces cross subsidises free and low-cost community use. Upgraded premises safeguard anchor tenant Stepping Stones for Families, while full passenger lift access removes physical barriers for health compromised residents, directly responding to community priorities to improve the town centre (65%), strengthen social cohesion (59%), and reduce isolation (57%).

Contribution to Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2045: By choosing a sustainable retrofit, we are saving this listed historic building from incremental deterioration and locking in the carbon already embodied within its structure. Instead of letting the Town House slowly decline, this project upgrades the building to make it highly energy efficient and fit for the future. The planned works will cut operational emissions by improving insulation, carefully refurbishing and draught proofing the historic timber sash windows, and replacing the old heating system with efficient, low carbon technology.

Crucially, we will take advantage of the flat roof layout to install a substantial solar panel array. Because the panels will be hidden from street view, we can generate a significant amount of our own clean electricity without compromising the building's historic character.

To further minimise our environmental impact, we are specifying robust, high-quality materials that do not require frequent maintenance or cyclical replacement. We will use local and regional suppliers wherever possible, which significantly reduces transport emissions while ensuring our

capital investment stays within the local economy. Smart energy controls and LED lighting will be used throughout.

1.3 WHY THE PROJECT SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN

Market Failure and Investment Rationale: Our financial modelling demonstrates that significant capital restoration costs and conservation constraints offer insufficient commercial margins to attract private developers. RCGF grant funding directly addresses this market failure, unlocking an at-risk heritage asset for long term community ownership and social impact.

Evidence of Need: Serving Girvan and South Carrick (population 10,257), all 16 local SIMD data zones fall within Scotland's 50% most deprived, with three Glendoune data zones sitting in the absolute 10% most deprived nationwide. Structural challenges include 49.5% economic inactivity (versus 39.1% national average), 28.7% long term health conditions (versus 21.7%), a 30% town centre commercial vacancy rate, and the recent food pantry closure impacting 300 vulnerable families. The project integrates crisis care, low-cost enterprise space, and commercial revenue generation to sustain vital services where market provision has failed.

Community Engagement and Support: The 2026 Town House Community Asset Transfer survey revealed that 52% rarely visit the building due to low awareness and its closed door policy. Conducted specifically to inform the future of the Town House, the consultation established a clear 65% mandate for a Community Asset Transfer to GoGirvan, backing specific uses: Heritage and visitor space (71%), Health and wellbeing (61%), Affordable meeting space (52%), Event space hire (36%), and Co-working and enterprise space (27%), demonstrating clear community backing to integrate dedicated support for micro businesses, freelancers, and local entrepreneurs into the revitalised building. Stakeholder engagement confirmed direct interest in long term office lets, including prospective community tenants such as Harbour Ayrshire alongside local micro businesses and artists seeking dedicated workspace.

Project costs and deliverability

Total capital costs are £2,107,538.00 (verified by McLeod + Aitken, July 2026), incorporating inflation to Q2 2029 construction mid-point (Q1 2029 site start) and a 10% design risk/contingency. The requested £1,500,000 RCGF grant directly funds core works: fabric stabilisation, internal and external repairs, lift installation, and reconfiguration.

Match Funding, Additional Investment, and VAT Strategy: To secure the £607,538 match funding gap, GoGirvan is targeting a mix of local and national funders, alongside investigating a manageable social loan or mortgage serviced via trading revenues. A specialist tax assessment during technical planning will maximise eligible VAT reclaims.

Long Term Sustainability: Trading revenues (bistro rent, office and studio lettings, event hire) generate unrestricted income, ensuring long term operational viability without ongoing revenue subsidies. RCGF is the sole fund capable of delivering this scale of capital transformation; without it, this strategic asset will continue to deteriorate, forfeiting a once in a generation opportunity for inclusive town centre growth.

Delivery: a full pre construction development programme has been developed by INCH which sets out each RIBA stage which will enable delivery of signed construction contract in line with the RCGF requirements, (at this stage scheduled for 20/09/2028 with all consents planned to be in place by 27/06/2028)