



**Item: 4**

**Community Development Fund Sub-committee: 6 February 2025**

**Application 0/5/8/79 – East Mainland Agricultural Society –  
Development of Show Park Pavilion and Surrounding Facilities.**

**Report by Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable  
Regeneration.**

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## **1. Overview**

- 1.1. East Mainland Agricultural Society (EMAS) has applied for funding to the Council's Community Development Fund in respect of improvements to the East Mainland Show Park by installing a show park pavilion, a permanent toilet block, interpretation panels, a wooden bird hide, parking spaces, and picnic benches. The proposed facilities aim to extend the use of the East Mainland Show Park by being used by different community groups throughout the year. The total cost of the project is estimated at £117,750. The grant request is for a contribution of up to 50% or £58,875 from the Community Development Fund.
- 1.2. The current show facilities, which comprise of tents and portable toilets, are becoming increasingly unsustainable and pose accessibility challenges. For example, the portable toilet block is difficult for those with mobility issues to access, and wetter grounds have made its delivery and retrieval problematic. Additionally, catering in tents is vulnerable to wind damage and incur ongoing costs to EMAS and plays a role in reduced attendance. The new pavilion will offer a durable, inclusive space for community events, with convenient and accessible facilities for all attendees.
- 1.3. The project's legacy will ensure that EMAS has the infrastructure to continue to host community events, such as the East Mainland Agriculture Show. The proposed developments will ensure the event is as inclusive as possible, bringing together the farming community and showcasing the high standards of animal husbandry and agricultural produce. The bird hide and interpretation panels will offer an opportunity to educate the public, particularly students from local and neighbouring schools, about the history and biodiversity of the East Mainland.
- 1.4. Further details relating to the application are outlined in sections 4 and 5 below.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Sub-committee:
- i. Agree that a grant of up to 50% of total eligible costs, up to a maximum sum of £58,875, to be met from the Community Development Fund, be offered to East Mainland Agricultural Society towards the construction of a show park pavilion and development of surrounding facilities, subject to:
    - o Confirmation of the subsidy control position to the satisfaction of the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.
    - o Confirmation of the full funding package being secured.
  - ii. Delegate powers to the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, in consultation with the Head of Finance, to authorise, if required, advance payment of the grant, referred to at paragraph 2.1i above, on receipt of invoices, to assist cash flow requirements of the East Mainland Agricultural Society.
  - iii. Delegate powers to the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Governance, to determine whether appropriate security can be put in place and, if so, to conclude an Agreement, on the Council's standard terms and conditions, with the East Mainland Agricultural Society in respect of the funding detailed at paragraphs 2.1i and 2.1ii above.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. East Mainland Agricultural Society (EMAS) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and has been operating since 1897. The Society has approximately 400 members that aim to promote the benefit of agriculture in the East Mainland of Orkney by providing facilities to enable the advancement, greater understanding, and knowledge of agriculture. Since the inception of the Society, EMAS has played a significant role in showcasing the farming culture around the East Mainland.
- 3.2. EMAS organises and runs the annual East Mainland Show which is held at its show park in Toab on the first Saturday of August. The show forms part of the annual calendar of agriculture show events in Orkney. Show Day provides an opportunity for farmers to showcase their finest livestock and produce while competing for various awards. Stalls offering locally produced crafts, food, and other goods support the local economy and contribute to fundraising efforts.

- 3.3. If the proposed facilities are funded, EMAS plans to boost the show park's functionality with sustainable and accessible facilities available all year round. The pavilion will feature wheelchair accessible toilet facilities, as well as nappy changing and feeding areas for babies and young children. It will also provide a secure and weather-proof catering area for the Show Day.
- 3.4. The pavilion's steel frame will be galvanised to prevent corrosion, ensuring long-term durability. This will allow the Society to host events for many years without the ongoing costs associated with replacing plastic tents and renting toilet facilities.
- 3.5. EMAS will produce and display two sets of four A1 sized information boards – one set illustrating the cultural heritage of the Show and how it has evolved since its establishment in 1897; and the other describing the natural heritage of the surrounding area, including the Bay of Suckquoy Local Nature Conservation Site. These will also explain how Orkney's pattern of mixed farming helps to support certain bird species, including some which feed in the Bay.
- 3.6. EMAS will also install a wooden bird hide and two picnic benches in the north east corner of the show park, overlooking the saltmarsh and mudflats of the Bay of Suckquoy. The hide itself will be fully accessible, with a wheelchair-accessible path leading from the parking area to its door. The provision of picnic benches will make the Park an attractive place for people to come and sit whilst visiting and will be available year-round. There are currently no facilities like this in Toab.
- 3.7. The new facilities will provide opportunities for people to learn about and appreciate the area they live in. Staff and pupils at St Andrew's Primary School have submitted letters of support expressing their enthusiasm for the project's implementation. They see the interactive panels and bird hide as valuable educational resources, complemented by the convenient access to the pavilion's facilities. The Society has invited the schoolchildren to assist in developing the wildlife panels.
- 3.8. Development of the Show Park also aims to provide new facilities which will be available for three local groups which contribute towards social, cultural, and sporting aspects of the local community. These are the St Andrews Drama Club, St Andrews Football Club, and the East Mainland Horticultural Club. These groups have provided letters of support detailing their intention to use the proposed facilities, particularly for storage of props and equipment.

3.9. To show commitment to best value, EMAS sourced quotes from two reputable Orkney based suppliers capable of constructing and installing the proposed project. The proposed funding arrangements outlined below are exclusive of VAT, as EMAS is a VAT-registered organisation.

<b>Eligible Costs.</b>	<b>£.</b>	<b>Funding applications.</b>	<b>£.</b>
Construction and installation of pavilion, toilet block, nappy changing facilities	102,803.	OIC Community Development Fund (CDF), 50%.	58,875.
OIC Planning application bird hide	300.	Heritage Lottery Fund, 21.23%.	25,000.
Bird hide and two picnic benches	7,822.	OIC Crown Estate Community Led Development Fund, 16.75%.	19,725.
Design and production of interpretation panels	6,825.	East Mainland Agricultural Society (Own Funds), 10.32%.	12,150.
		Holm Community Council, 0.85%.	1,000.
		Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council, 0.85%.	1,000.
<b>TOTAL.</b>	<b>117,750.</b>	<b>TOTAL.</b>	<b>£117,750.</b>

3.10. EMAS will contribute £12,150 of their own funding towards the cost of erecting the pavilion, with £5,590 held in reserve as a contingency to cover any inflationary cost increases. Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council has pledged £1,000. Holm Community Council has also pledged £1,000. The Society has also applied for £25,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund and should hear a decision in mid-February, and £19,725 from the OIC's Crown Estate Community Led Local Development Fund which should be determined before the end of March 2025.

3.11. Whilst the Society has some funds of its own to contribute towards the project, they have requested an advance payment for cashflow assistance. This is considered to be a reasonable request given the scale of the organisation, and a low risk given the contractual arrangements which will require to be evidenced as part of the claims process.

- 3.12. EMAS will maintain the show park pavilion and surrounding facilities and promote the project and recognition of the project funding through its social media presence and a plaque on the facility.

## **4. Project Appraisal**

- 4.1. The project proposal submitted with the application includes a development statement outlining the goal of improving accessibility for users of the Show Park while creating permanent facilities for community groups to use year-round. The project is designed to benefit a broad age range of people, with a particular focus on the agricultural community in the East Mainland. It aims to promote the area's natural heritage, culture, and standards of animal husbandry.
- 4.2. The Community Development Fund and its predecessor, the Community Development Fund for the New Millennium, have supported a wide range of development projects involving sports and recreation and community facilities.
- 4.3. With regard to EMAS's application for support towards the construction of a show park pavilion and surrounding facilities, the following is an assessment and evaluation against each of the approved assessment and evaluation criteria for the CDF:

### **4.3.1. Evidence of need**

- Agricultural shows are highly valued by the farming community, offering an opportunity to socialise and share experiences. The Society's development plan highlights the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on the agricultural community, particularly the rise in loneliness and depression because of decreased socialisation. Improving the facilities for Show Day will not only ensure the event's long-term sustainability but also help prevent the risk of future cancellations due to weather, providing a much-needed space for connection and support within the community.
- The use of temporary toilet blocks is no longer considered suitable and EMAS believes that installing permanent toilet facilities will improve hygiene standards and provide better virus prevention compared to the current temporary arrangements.
- Agriculture is a key part of our islands' economy, and Show Week is a highlight in Orkney's calendar. The East Mainland Show brings the community together to socialise, learn about animal breeds, and appreciate high standards of breeding and husbandry. Beyond Show Day, the event also serves as an important fundraising opportunity for local community groups.

- EMAS owns some gates and hurdles, but most are shared with Orkney Agricultural Society and transported from their shed in Kirkwall to Toab for the East Mainland Show. After the event, the equipment is dismantled and passed on to the St Margaret's Hope Show. Setting up and dismantling the show takes about four weeks, during which community members come together to work towards a common goal and enjoy each other's company. The improved storage facilities will make this process more efficient by having space to keep the equipment needed for Show Day.
- Public consultation has shown strong local support for the project, with widespread recognition of the East Mainland Show Day as a key event for local groups to raise funds for their activities. In total, EMAS have received 18 letters of support towards this project.

#### **4.3.2. Achievability**

- The construction of a building with permanent toilets has been a long-standing goal for the Society. In 2020, when it became clear that the existing wastewater treatment system needed replacing, the Society decided to incorporate the new building into the planning application. This approach not only avoided the cost of two separate planning fees but also ensured that planning permission was already in place, providing flexibility to move forward quickly should funding opportunities become available.
- The planning application was approved on 30 June 2020 and the Building Warrant was issued on 9 November 2020. In May 2023, the Society secured a grant of £2,571 from Awards for All Scotland to contribute towards the cost of installing the septic tank and soakaway system and this project was completed a few weeks later. This has improved the environmental sustainability of holding events in the Show Park immensely.
- Site excavations, concrete floor installation, and the construction and cladding of the steel-framed structure are expected to take around three weeks, with work planned to begin in early March.
- Work on the pavilion, bird hide and benches should be completed by July 2025 and the interpretation panels by December 2025. However, to allow for any delays, for example, having to wait for contractors to be available, EMAS has estimated that the entire project will take around one year, being fully complete by February/March 2026.
- EMAS is relying on four elements to enable the Society's plans to be achieved:
  - Obtaining funding from the Natural Heritage Lottery.
  - Obtaining funding from the Community Development Fund
  - Obtaining funding from the Crown Estate Community Led Development Fund.

- Obtaining funding from the Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council and Holm Community Council (this has already been pledged).

#### **4.3.3. Sustainability**

- This project is designed to create a legacy by developing permanent infrastructure for Show Day and surrounding facilities for the public to benefit from year-round. As a result of these developments, EMAS feel they will improve the accessibility of the show and improve attendance, particularly with those who feel disadvantaged due to poor facilities.
- The proposed development will improve the toilet facilities, offer shelter during harsh weather to prevent cancellations, and reduce the risk of farmland damage if the lorry cannot set up temporary facilities. Overall, these improvements will ensure more secure, reliable, and sustainable operations for Show Day, and the availability of year-round facilities which can be available to other community uses.

#### **4.3.4. Serving the local public and having lasting benefits**

- Establishing a legacy of lasting benefits and serving residents is a core objective of this project. The proposed project will make events delivered by the EMAS more enjoyable for participants and will increase both the viability and long-term sustainability of the East Mainland Agricultural Show. It will also pave the way for additional events to take place in the show park.
- The information boards displaying the natural heritage and culture of the East Mainland, paired with the bird hide and picnic benches, will provide a welcoming visitor facility in Toab for years to come. The Bay of Suckquoy is already a popular birdwatching site, and the provision of facilities with free parking in this part of the show park will offer a safer and more accessible option than parking at the roadside.
- The development plan provided by EMAS outlines that the pavilion will enable the Society to support three groups that play a key role in the social, cultural, and sporting life of the community. These groups have submitted letters of support, outlining their intention to use the facilities:
  - East Mainland Young Farmers Club which provides young people with opportunities to develop a range of life skills and build their confidence and abilities.
  - St Andrews Drama Club which enables local people to express and display their artistic talents, each winter producing a play for the Orkney Drama Festival.
  - St Andrews Football Club which offers young people opportunities to develop their sporting prowess and participate in the Parish Cup and other local football tournaments.

#### 4.3.5. Opportunities provided or upgraded

- EMAS plans to replace the temporary Show Day facilities with a multifunctional pavilion, accessible toilets and changing facilities. The Society also wishes to repurpose the old show park shed into a bird watching hide. This would open additional opportunities for EMAS and other organisations in terms of organising more events with fundraising potential, while the greater public and school children gain the opportunity to learn about the area's natural environment and heritage. This is demonstrated through the Society receiving 18 letters of support which highlight the enthusiasm from different school staff, pupils, and Mike Gee who runs offers a 'Guide in the Hide' service.

#### 4.3.6. Enriching quality of life

- Upgrading facilities in Orkney that promote social interaction and showcase community heritage can significantly enrich the quality of life for residents in several ways:
  - **Physical Well-being:** Improved facilities will encourage greater participation in physical activities during Show Day, promoting overall health and fitness. By hosting sporting competitions and other events at the Show Park, the pavilion will contribute to better physical health.
  - **Mental Health Benefits:** EMAS acknowledges the mental health benefits of social interaction, highlighting how agricultural shows and events bring the community together, providing a positive outlet for individuals. Socialising with like-minded people boosts self-esteem and helps relieve stress, benefiting both farmers and the wider community.
  - **Community Engagement:** Agricultural shows, competitions, and other events at Show Park offer opportunities for farmers and residents to connect, showcase their work, support one another, and build lasting relationships within the community.
  - **Youth Development:** For young residents, particularly young farmers, improved Show Park facilities provide a structured outlet for their energy. Engaging in agricultural activities from an early age helps build confidence in farming and a deeper understanding of their impact. For school children, interactive educational panels and bird-watching facilities encourage a greater appreciation for their natural environment.
  - **Cultural and Recreational Opportunities:** Upgraded Show Park facilities can host greater shows, as well as other events, adding cultural and recreational opportunities to the community.



- **Talent Development and Recognition:** Agriculture is vital to Orkney's economy, culture, and heritage. The Show recognises the agricultural community's dedication and hard work to the industry and offers a platform to showcase their skills and achievements.
- **Multi-generational Participation:** Show Day brings the agricultural community together, allowing the younger generation to learn from their elders and ensuring the tradition and culture of farming practices in the East Mainland continue for years to come.

#### **4.3.7. Value for money**

- EMAS development plan has addressed value for money considerations and presented the case that the project has strategic value locally. The annual agricultural shows serve as a vital showcase for Orkney's livestock sector, which significantly contributes to the County's food and drink industry. Improving the facilities is expected to yield economic benefits by drawing more attendees to the event, thereby boosting the trade and charity stands that participate each year.
- Show Week is a significant attraction for visitors to Orkney, with many people travelling to Orkney to attend the shows and reconnect with friends and family. The proposed developments will improve the event, making it a more pleasant and inviting day out for visitors. This will help distribute tourism more across the county, benefiting the local tourism industry.
- The steel frame of the Pavilion will be galvanised to guard against corrosion which ensures durability and longevity. This protective measure will allow the Society to host events for many years without incurring the ongoing costs associated with replacing plastic tents and hiring toilet blocks.

#### **4.3.8. Partnership funding**

- EMAS has actively sought match funding from various sources. It has also been active in local fundraising having delivered fundraising events and received donations from the public, the Society has raised £17,740, equal to 10% of the total project cost. Of this amount, £12,150 will go towards the project while the remaining £5,490 will be used as contingency funding.
- Both Holm Community Council and Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council have pledged £1,000 towards the project.
- Applications for funding towards the pavilion from Awards for All Scotland and the Scottish Seafarms Heart of the Community Fund were unsuccessful, as both funders required the project to be further along in its development. An application to The Royal Highland Agricultural Society of Scotland received initial support but was ultimately unsuccessful due to a temporary discontinuation of grant funding.

- EMAS has applied for £25,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund and expects to learn the outcome by mid-February 2025. The Society is confident that the application will be approved as the project aligns with the fund's principles of preserving heritage, protecting the environment, enhancing inclusion, and ensuring organisational sustainability.
- EMAS also applied for £19,725 from the OIC's Crown Estate Community Led Development Fund which should be determined between February and early March 2025.

## 5. Letters of Support

Letters of support in relation to this project have been received from the following groups and individuals:

- East Mainland Young Farmers Club.
- St Andrews Drama Club.
- St Andrews Football Club.
- East Mainland Horticultural Society.
- St Andrews Community Association.
- Holm Community Council.
- Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council.
- St Andrews and Deerness Community Council.
- Orkney Disability Forum/Dial-a-Bus.
- St Andrews SWI.
- Alistair Carmichael MP.
- Liam McArthur MSP.
- National Farmers Union Scotland.
- Orkney Trout Fishing Association.
- St Andrews Primary School.
- St Andrews Primary School Pupil Council.
- Tim Dean, a Community Learning Tutor.
- Mike Gee, who offers a 'Guide in the Hide' service.

### **For Further Information please contact:**

Harvey Crew, Economic Development Officer, extension 3367, email

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## Implications of Report

### 1. Financial:

- In December 2022, a further £1,000,000 was allocated to the Community Development Fund, with £100,000 ring-fenced for Community Councils.
- At present there is sufficient budget within the 2022 Community Development Fund tranche to consider this project. The balance of the CDF fund available is £305,069.
- The option of accessing Community Development Fund grant as an advance payment, in order to assist cash flow, may also be required to ensure the project reaches a satisfactory conclusion.

### 2. Legal:

- Subject to the content of the third bullet point (below) there are no legal constraints to the recommendations in this report being implemented and the relevant powers are contained in section 20 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.
- If grant assistance is to be provided by the Council, a legally binding agreement will require to be entered into between the Council and the recipient setting out the terms on which the funding is being provided.
- Any financial assistance provided by the Council will need to be assessed to determine if the financial assistance proposed meets the definition of a subsidy under section 2 of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 (the 2022 Act). If it is determined that the financial assistance is a subsidy, then it will need to be provided in a manner compliant with the provisions of the 2022 Act.
- In accordance with the Community Development Fund Guidance, if grant assistance is to be provided by the Council and the total project cost exceeds £10,000, then the Community Development Fund Sub-committee will determine whether appropriate security should be taken over any appropriate heritable property improved as a result of the project.

**3. Corporate Governance:** Determination of applications for funding from the Community Development Fund is delegated to the Community Development Fund Sub-committee.

**4. Human Resources:** N/A.

**5. Equalities:** The CDF scheme was EqIA assessed when approved in 2022.

**6. Island Communities Impact:** N/A

**7. Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:

Growing our economy.

Strengthening our communities.

Developing our Infrastructure.

Transforming our Council.

8. **Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
  - Cost of Living.
  - Sustainable Development.
  - Local Equality.
9. **Environmental and Climate Risk:** N/A
10. **Risk:** N/A
11. **Procurement:** N/A
12. **Health and Safety:** N/A
13. **Property and Assets:** This project includes the construction of a pavilion, toilet block, storage facilities, bird hide, interpretation panels, and picnic benches, which will be owned by East Mainland Agricultural Society.
14. **Information Technology:** N/A
15. **Cost of Living:** N/A

#### **List of Background Papers**

- Application from East Mainland Agricultural Society for Community Development Fund assistance dated 06/12/24.
- Community Development Fund Guidance (Ver July2023).