

# Our Year In Review

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**April 2023**



**Localrecovery**



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## Foreword



Local Recovery launched its operations in February 2022 as a new non-profit, non-partisan campaigning

force, promoting the important role of UK-wide investment in Scotland.

Our campaign started at a turbulent time. In the same month the last remaining Covid-19 restrictions were withdrawn, with people increasingly looking towards not just recovery but “building back better” – improving the foundations of their communities and creating a more sustainable future.

The broad shoulders of the United Kingdom enabled Scotland to benefit from unprecedented support through the UK furlough programme, business grants and loans – directly helping people and communities. Local Recovery, at its core, was about ensuring that this process could continue and that the benefits of UK investment were clearly visible in communities across Scotland, aligning with people’s local priorities.

We have travelled a long way in a very short time, hitting major milestones and growing beyond our most optimistic expectations. Meanwhile, hundreds of millions of pounds of spending have flowed into visible projects across the length and breadth of Scotland – providing a real and tangible demonstration of the importance of UK spending.

This review will chart that growth and expansion, as well as looking forward with a continued drive to expand and embed our campaign as an enduring and significant part of civic Scotland. Equally we recognise that none of this would have been possible without the generosity of our donors and supporters, the work of our ambassadors and advisers and the fantastic team that has been built – our thanks go out to each of you.

**David Gardiner**  
*Campaign Director,  
Local Recovery*



## Our Year

-  Operating in **all 32 local authorities** across Scotland.
-  A network of **over 7,000 active supporters** built from scratch.
-  Levelling Up Funds of **£177 million committed** in Round 2.
-  Round 1 funding of **£172 million for local communities**.
-  **166 supporter emails** to MPs.
-  **605 supporter emails** to local councils.

## Our Campaign

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Local Recovery is a new, non-political grassroots campaign that supports community groups across Scotland and, in doing so, is helping to reframe the public debate.

Local Recovery is dedicated to amplifying the voices of Scotland's local communities, ensuring they are heard in the halls of Holyrood and Westminster. We believe that local communities are best equipped to identify their own priorities, whether that be improving failing schools, addressing road issues, or tackling other challenges specific to their area.

By working closely with local organisations and people, we help to establish effective community groups that advocate for the solutions they want and support. These groups are essential in promoting the needs of their communities and ensuring that both the Scottish and UK governments invest in the real priorities of our towns, villages, and neighbourhoods.

Since its inception, Local Recovery has rapidly expanded its presence across Scotland. We are proud to have established branches in all 32 Scottish local authorities, demonstrating our commitment to

supporting local communities throughout the country.

However, our ambition does not stop there - we plan to have a presence in every Scottish village, town, and city as soon as possible, solidifying our position as the voice of Scotland's communities. By building a strong network of supporter branches, we aim to create a powerful collective force that can drive change at both the local and national levels.

Our primary goal is to ensure that local communities have a say in the decisions that affect them. By empowering these communities and providing them with the tools and resources they need to advocate for their priorities, we can help shape a better future for all of Scotland.

As Local Recovery continues to grow and evolve, we remain steadfast in our commitment to representing the interests of Scotland's communities. By working together, we can make sure that the concerns of local communities are not only heard but also addressed by the Scottish and UK governments, leading to lasting, positive change.



## Our Story

What became Local Recovery started in early 2021. Its origins can be traced to a small group of people who came together to ask a simple question: *how best could Scotland recover from the Covid-19 pandemic?*

It wasn't enough to return to where we had been – people wanted to build on stronger foundations. But how to achieve that? It was clear to our group that local communities should be at the heart of the recovery.

With the UK Government making clear that, for the first time in over 20 years, substantial new direct investments were going to be made in Scotland, the time had come for a new organisation to ensure that local people were at the heart of decision-making over how their public money should be spent.

As a consequence, over the summer of 2021, Local Recovery undertook extensive qualitative and quantitative research across Scotland. We aimed to make a powerful assessment of public attitudes towards Scotland's constitutional future, understand how local politics were perceived – and how people wanted to see their communities improve and benefit.

Through polling and focus-group evidence, it became clear that an agenda of empowering local communities and securing investment for local projects was extremely popular across political and social divides. Moreover, people wanted to see central government working with their communities to deliver that change, with UK-wide direct spending – cooperating directly with individuals, groups, and local authorities – being a popular means to achieve these goals.

Working alongside our external consultants, who bring an enormous range of relevant experiences and perspectives, our initial roll-out in eight local authority areas began in February 2022.

We were astounded by the overwhelmingly positive response from people across these eight regions. Within just a few months, the campaign's membership skyrocketed beyond 1,000 members and reached the remarkable milestone of 5,000 members a full six months ahead of schedule. The enthusiasm and support for Local Recovery's mission were undeniable, and by the end of 2022, the campaign had successfully expanded its reach to all 32 Scottish local authority areas.



With a range of new UK Government led funding streams such as the Levelling Up Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund, we were able to engage directly with significant supporter bases and communities. Local Recovery quickly found a role in helping communities understand what funds are available; helping local and central governments understand what people's priorities really are – and where their funds can make the biggest possible impact.

We remain, as at the start, a strictly non-political grassroots campaign which

supports community groups across Scotland. Our work remains firmly outside the political debate, but our efforts are already helping to reframe the public debate in Scotland.

In just one year we have gone from an idea around a coffee table to a Scotland-wide campaign. We take immense pride in our achievements thus far and remain steadfast in our commitment to fostering a brighter future for Scotland.





# Our Supporters

Local Recovery is a movement – a campaign to bring people together and to give them a voice about what changes they want to see in their local community.

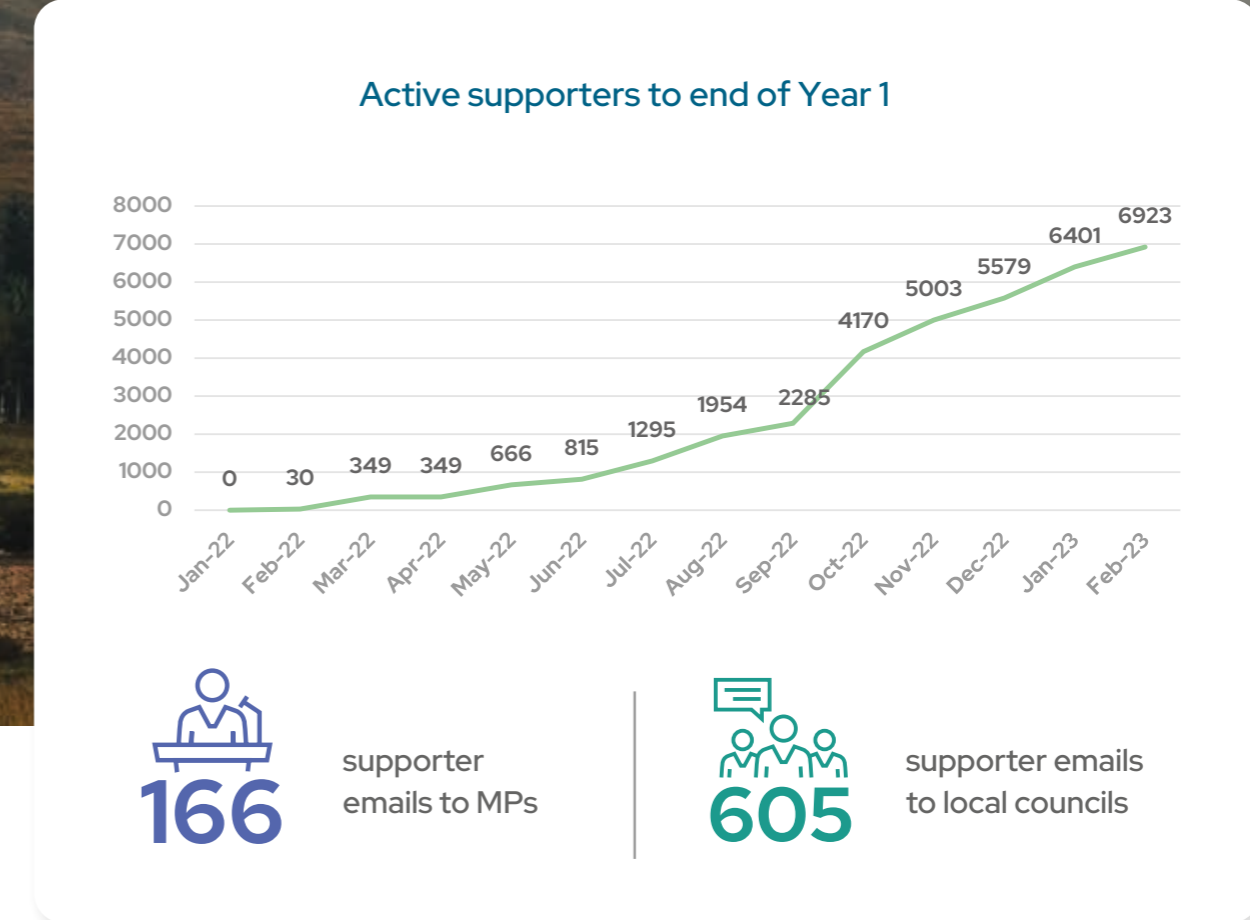
To that end, building a large and engaged grassroots supporter base has been central to Local Recovery’s objectives. With a phased roll-out strategy, we achieved steady initial growth in our first-phase trial areas, building up to a national reach towards the end of 2022.

We are so pleased that, to date, our call for a new mass-membership organisation has gone down very well. Across Scotland’s 32

local authorities, we have seen hundreds of people sign up, get involved and drive forward our project.

At the end of February 2023, our registered supporter base stood at 6,923. To put that in perspective, this is higher than the membership of the Scottish Liberal Democrats and nearly ten percent of the governing Scottish National Party’s membership – and our numbers continue to grow, surpassing 7,000 shortly after the end of the month.

We are very happy to reach this situation in just one year. It also far exceeds the



**166** supporter emails to MPs

**605** supporter emails to local councils

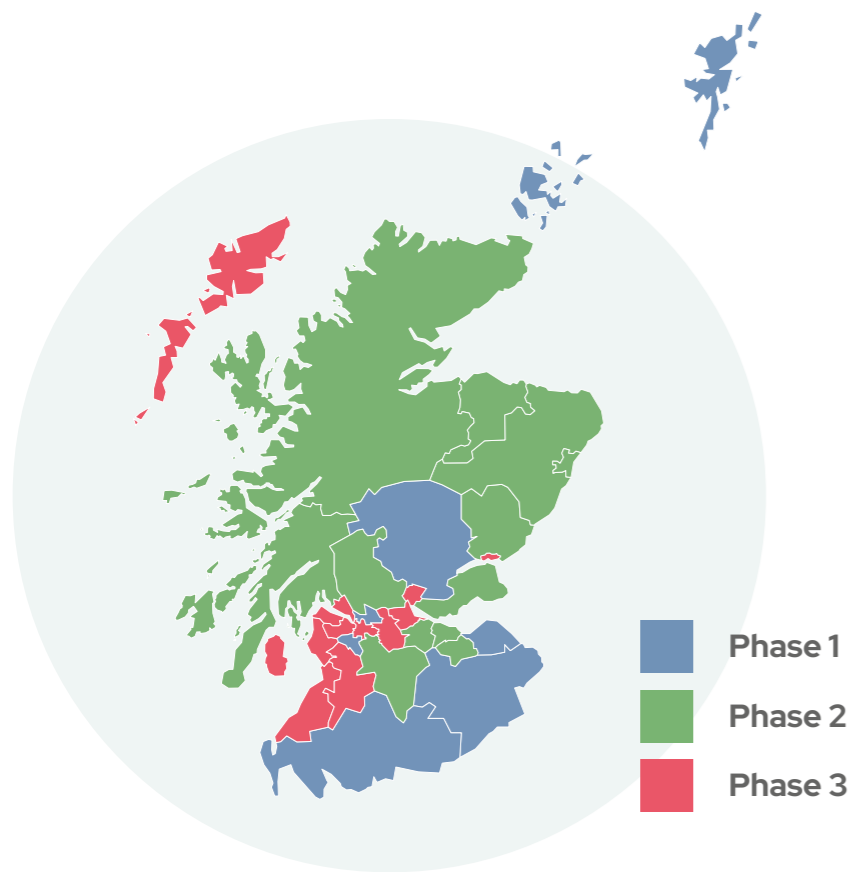
campaign’s initial target of reaching 5,000 supporters by early summer 2023 – a milestone achieved six months early in November last year. Our recruitment process has seen each supporter sign-up to the campaign and be provided with regular information about the organisation’s aims, our campaigning activity – as well as the successes in securing UK-wide funding in their areas.

Maintaining the quality of engagement and support activity has also been an important metric for judging our expansion. We don’t want people to just sign-up and that’s it – we want to create a real community. We

are immensely proud of the outstanding engagement rate exhibited by our members, which has surpassed that of most political and commercial campaigns.

The enthusiasm and dedication of these thousands of supporters have translated into hundreds of emails sent to councillors, MSPs, and MPs, reflecting the deep commitment of our members to Local Recovery’s mission. This high level of engagement not only highlights the passion of our supporters but also underscores the significance of our cause and the widespread desire for positive change within our communities.





## Supporter Recruitment

In February 2022, Local Recovery started its journey and initiated a phased roll-out of supporter recruitment, targeting our message and resources by local authority area.

Initially focused on a selection of primarily rural areas (Phase 1), this allowed us to test our approach and, through an iterative process, better understand the response of our target audience. We learned lessons, talked to local people and local authorities. We improved our communications and activities in response to feedback.

Two further phases of recruitment roll-out were undertaken before reaching the key milestone in December 2022 of coverage in each council area – from Dumfries and Galloway to the Shetland Islands.

We continue to listen to our supporters as we now deepen our roots in all of the local authorities. From the local authority to the community council, our intention is to become a presence in every village, town and community. We may be in all 32 council areas, but our work is only just beginning!

Phase One	Phase Two	Phase Three
Dumfries & Galloway: 396	<b>Phase 2a</b>	<b>Phase 3a</b>
East Lothian: 345	Aberdeenshire: 264   Moray: 179	Inverclyde: 372   Renfrewshire: 124
Scottish Borders: 268	Aberdeen City: 204   Angus: 148	Dundee: 280   West Dunbartonshire: 116
Perth & Kinross: 236	<b>Phase 2b</b>	<b>Phase 3b</b>
East Dunbartonshire: 186	Fife: 342   West Lothian: 156	North Lanarkshire: 379   South Lanarkshire: 150
East Renfrewshire: 162	Edinburgh: 293   Midlothian: 129	Falkirk: 144   Clackmannanshire: 95
Orkney Islands: 103	<b>Phase 2c</b>	<b>Phase 3c</b>
Shetland Islands: 105	Stirling: 207   Argyll & Bute: 140	South Ayrshire: 262   Glasgow: 143
	Inverness & Nairn: 116   Other Highland: 195	North Ayrshire: 207   Western Isles: 133
	South Ayrshire: 154	
<b>Total active supporters: 1,901</b>	<b>Total active supporters: 2,527</b>	<b>Total active supporters: 2,360</b>

\* A small number of supporters signed up via alternative application routes are not allocated in this table.





## Supporter Mobilisation

In addition to sharing our successes, our supporters have been mobilised to actively campaign with key local and national decision-makers on the issues that matter to them. This has prompted hundreds of contacts with local councils, Members of Parliament and others to drive forward support and backing for UK investment locally.

Particular use has been made of supporter mobilisation in encouraging local authority applications to UK funding streams – and

engaging local politicians to support high-quality applications in their constituencies and regions.

In Year 2, this will be a significant part of our campaigning strategy: encouraging engagement with supported projects while also advocating for cross-party support in investment. We will now aim to achieve more grassroots activity, with people moving more to physical, well-organised and targeted campaigning for the things that are important to their communities.





## Our Successes

With Local Recovery's support, the UK Government has committed over £2.2 billion of direct investment in Scotland through a range of new funding streams, combining major national infrastructure projects with small-scale match funding for community interventions.



### Levelling Up Fund

In January 2023, successful bidders for Round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund were announced, with £177 million of investment in Scotland declared, covering ten of Scotland's 32 local authority areas. Some of the work, backed by Local Recovery's supporter network, is outlined below.

<p><b>Cockenzie power station redevelopment, East Lothian</b></p> <p>Remediation of land at a former coal fired power station to provide for future, green regeneration of a vital waterfront site.</p>	<p><b>£11.3m</b></p>
<p><b>Fair Isle ferry, Shetland</b></p> <p>Guaranteeing the future of the lifeline Fair Isle ferry service, enhancing economic opportunities on one of Britain's most remote communities.</p>	<p><b>£26.8m</b></p>
<p><b>Cultural Tides, Aberdeenshire</b></p> <p>Utilising the disused Arbutnot House in Peterhead as a new museum, library and cultural hub, while expanding the Macduff marine aquarium.</p>	<p><b>£20.0m</b></p>
<p><b>Forthside redevelopment, Stirling</b></p> <p>Regeneration of former Ministry of Defence land in the city centre to provide a connected new district and support the creation of 1,000 new jobs.</p>	<p><b>£19.1m</b></p>
<p><b>Green transport hub, Dundee</b></p> <p>Creating a sustainable transport hub in the heart of the city, with 350 EV charging points, carshare schemes and e-bike hire – with new walking and cycling routes.</p>	<p><b>£14.4m</b></p>

<p><b>Greenock Waterfront, Inverclyde</b></p> <p>Major road re-routing work to reconnect the town centre to its waterfront, with land opened up based around public and green space.</p>	<p><b>£19.4m</b></p>
<p><b>Cultural Kilmarnock, East Ayrshire</b></p> <p>Refurbishment of the over 160 year old Palace Theatre and Grand Hall as a new cultural centre for the region with improved landscaping and active travel links.</p>	<p><b>£20.0m</b></p>
<p><b>Reactivating Galloway, Dumfries &amp; Galloway</b></p> <p>Investing in new outdoor and cultural centres, making use of redundant land and buildings in Stranraer and Dalbeattie.</p>	<p><b>£17.7m</b></p>
<p><b>River Leven Regeneration, Fife</b></p> <p>Improving visitor access to the River Leven with new walking and cycling routes, with investment in Glenrothes's Riverside Park, bringing benefits to the town.</p>	<p><b>£19.4m</b></p>
<p><b>Cumbernauld's town vision, North Lanarkshire</b></p> <p>Demolition and regeneration work in Cumbernauld's unloved town centre, supporting new education, employment and residential opportunities in the town.</p>	<p><b>£9.2m</b></p>

In the March 2023 budget, the UK Government confirmed that another £1,000,000,000 would be spent as part of the third levelling up round. Local Recovery will be active in making sure that Scotland receives its fair share of this spending and to make sure that it goes to where it will do the most good.





## Community Ownership Fund

The Community Ownership Fund has held two rounds with locally supported projects. Local Recovery has been active in encouraging and promoting the fund, seeking out new opportunities for investment.

The Community Ownership Fund provides financial support to communities, offering grants of up to £250,000 for eligible projects, with a potential increase of up to £1 million in exceptional cases. It aims to help communities take ownership of assets and amenities at risk of closure, ensuring their continued availability for local residents. It focuses on promoting community-led projects that contribute to the sustainable development of local areas, ultimately improving the quality of life for residents.

Examples of initiatives that can benefit include local sports clubs aiming to acquire and manage sports facilities, including football pitches, tennis courts, or swimming pools, to preserve opportunities for physical activity and recreation within the community.

Likewise, residents focused on preserving and maintaining local heritage sites, such as historic buildings or monuments, for the benefit of future generations and to promote local tourism can apply. Thanks to help from this fund, communities have been able to regenerate town halls, create vital new community spaces - and even Britain's most remote pub in Knoydart has been brought into the ownership of the local community.

### UK Direct Investment Funds in Scotland

- Levelling Up Fund
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund (including interim Community Renewal Fund)
- Community Ownership Fund
- City Region and Regional Growth Deals
- Strength in Places Fund
- Green Freeports
- Multi-sport Grassroots Facilities funding

## UK Shared Prosperity Fund

We have been closely monitoring the roll-out of the Shared Prosperity Fund and its short-term predecessor, the Community Renewal Fund. This support replaces former EU development funds across the UK but with greater scope for local leadership. Again, Local Recovery has been active in making sure that the needs of Scotland's local communities are foremost in the UK Government's minds.

So far, we have seen SPF funding used in a variety of different ways to promote a range of projects in our communities. The UK Government has worked with the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities to inform the most appropriate mix of interventions for Scotland, focusing on investments that promote skills development, employment, innovation, economic growth, and community well-being.

By targeting these critical areas, the fund is poised to have a lasting impact on the social and economic fabric of communities

throughout the country, addressing regional disparities and fostering resilience.

## City Deals

Collaborative city region and regional growth deals, a joint project between the UK and Scottish governments alongside local partners, have been rolled-out to cover every area in Scotland.

Driven by hundreds of millions of pounds of public funding, with the intention to leverage significant private investment, these deals are at the heart of growing Scotland's diverse regional economies. They demonstrate what can be achieved by Scotland's two governments working together.

Local Recovery is focused on ensuring that city region and regional growth deals have an enduring legacy in communities and reach all corners of Scotland, playing to their unique economic strengths and creating new opportunities.



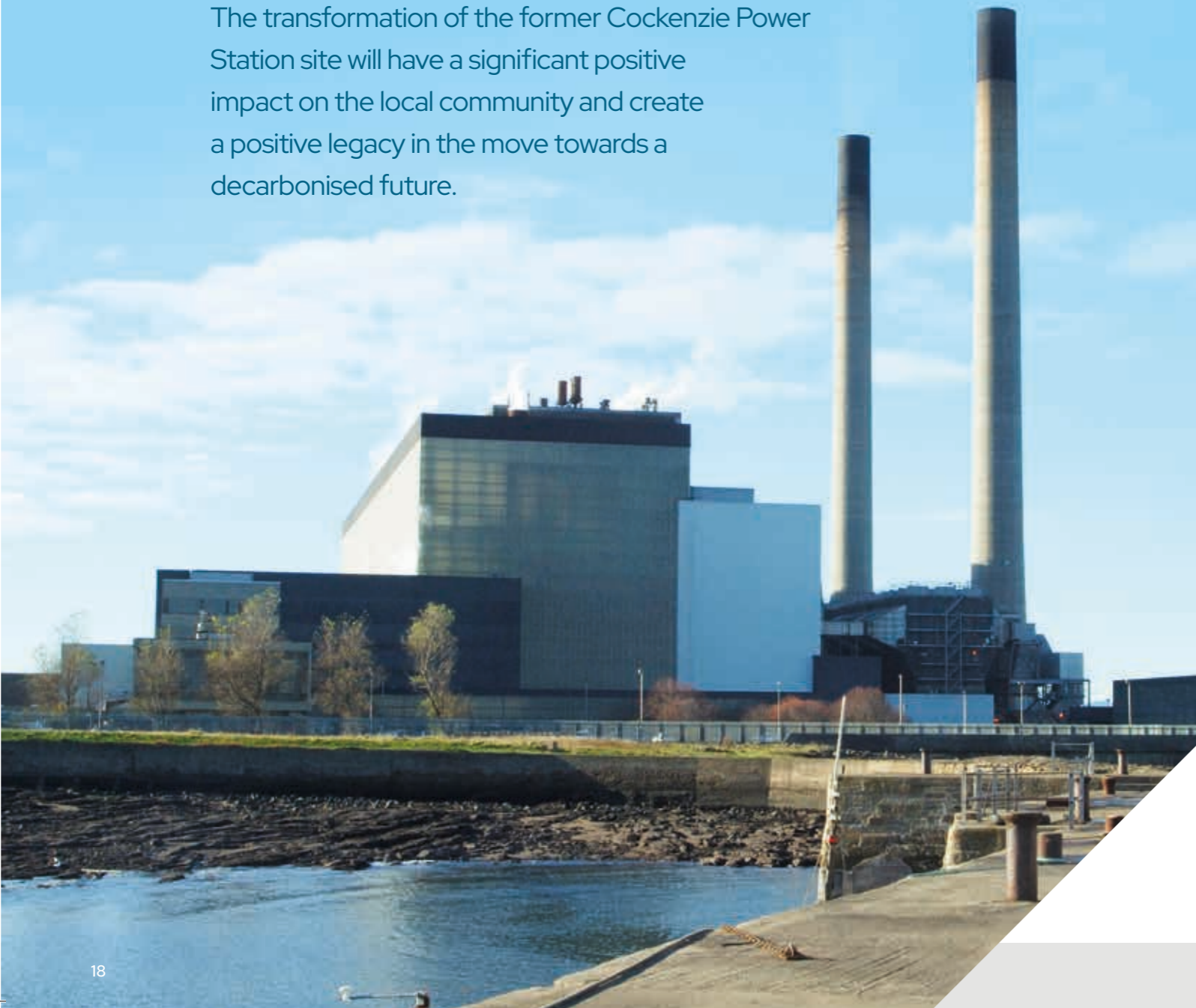
**DETAILED CASE STUDY:**

# East Lothian



Local Recovery recently played a crucial role in securing funding for the remediation and preparation of the former Cockenzie Power Station site in East Lothian. By engaging with the local community and effectively communicating the potential benefits of the project, Local Recovery helped secure an investment of £11,267,841 from the UK Government as part of the Levelling Up Fund.

The transformation of the former Cockenzie Power Station site will have a significant positive impact on the local community and create a positive legacy in the move towards a decarbonised future.



**According to East Lothian Council, the key benefits include:**



**Site regeneration:**

The project will remediate the site of the former power station, transforming it into an area suitable for new developments and opportunities.



**Economic development:**

The preparation of the site will facilitate new investments, creating new jobs and boosting the local economy.



**Environmental improvements:**

The project will address environmental challenges and reduce the risk of contamination, ensuring a cleaner, safer environment for the community.



**Infrastructure improvements:**

The project includes improvements to local infrastructure, including transport links and utilities, further enhancing the site's appeal to potential investors and developers.

By focusing on a local issue and effectively communicating its potential benefits, Local Recovery was successful in galvanising support for the project, ultimately resulting in a substantial, multi-million pound investment from the UK Government.



## Our Team



**Garreth Wood**  
Ambassador



**Puneet Gupta**  
**OBE**  
Ambassador & treasurer



**Mairi Scott**  
Ambassador



**Katherine Sangster**  
Ambassador



**David Kerr**  
**CBE**  
Ambassador



**Robert Kilgour**  
Ambassador

Local Recovery's current advisory board of six ambassadors has been drawn from a wide range of backgrounds, bringing a wealth of expertise and experience.

These ambassadors not only act as spokespeople for the campaign, but also play a crucial role in guiding its trajectory and ensuring that a wide range of perspectives are considered when making decisions. They have been vital in establishing Local Recovery and also in the continuing work and engagement that we have undertaken throughout the last year. They have become the guiding figures who have steered our campaign during our first year and have become the voice of our efforts in Scotland.

We are very proud that our six ambassadors come from diverse backgrounds, including business, the NHS, and charity sectors.

By drawing on their unique experiences and insights, these ambassadors contribute significantly to the campaign's ability to resonate with different sections of society

and address the varying needs and priorities of the communities we serve. Through their involvement, Local Recovery has become a more inclusive, comprehensive, and impactful campaign that has been able to drive positive change and to empower local communities across Scotland.

Entering Year 2, we have a key objective of expanding our ambassador network to provide additional geographical coverage as well as broadening the vital expertise and skillsets that each has brought to our organisation.

In addition to our dedicated ambassadors, Local Recovery is supported by a small but highly committed team of three full-time employees. These individuals work tirelessly behind the scenes to keep the campaign running smoothly and efficiently. Their diverse skillsets and expertise enable them to manage day-to-day operations, engage with stakeholders, coordinate with our ambassadors, and ensure the timely execution of our initiatives.

## Our Second Year

As an organisation, the end of Local Recovery's first year of operations has been a point of reflection and setting ambitious goals for our second year.

As we look back on our first year, we take immense pride in the accomplishments and progress Local Recovery has made in such a short space of time. The support we have garnered and the positive impact we have had on communities across Scotland is inspiring. However, we recognise that there is still much more work to be done, and we are eager to take our efforts to even greater heights in our second year.

Our ambition is to further expand our reach, deepen our impact, and foster even stronger connections with local communities, ensuring that their voices are heard and their needs are met. We are committed to pushing the boundaries of what we can achieve, driven by our unwavering dedication to empowering Scotland's local communities and championing their priorities.

In particular, we want to see the following achieved in our second year:

- Recruit over 10,000 members by the end of 2023
- Build relations with local media outlets across all 32 local authorities
- Expand on our engagement with

Scotland's community councils in all 32 local authorities

- Help to secure another £100,000,000 of funding for Scotland's communities

As a grassroots campaign with plans to be active in every community in Scotland, Local Recovery will need to raise at least £1.2 million over the course of the next twelve months in order to support local groups in all 32 council areas and undertake the appropriate level of active campaigning.

To date, thanks to the kind efforts of many supporters, we have managed to raise the funds that have allowed us to undertake this vital work. We will continue to work to secure financial support from individuals who agree with our vision and who wish to help Scotland's local communities find their voice.





## We want to hear from you!

Local Recovery deeply values our link with local communities, supporters, stakeholders, backers and volunteers – and recognises that their input and engagement is essential to the success and growth of our campaign. We are eager to hear from our supporters about what we can do differently, any new ideas for campaigns and any other thoughts they might have about our approach and activities.

We firmly believe that by listening and incorporating feedback, we can create a more impactful and responsive campaign that addresses the diverse needs and priorities of communities across Scotland.

**Please note that, in line with all responsible community driven organisations, we have rigorous policies in place to guard against conflicts of interest at any level**

Whether by proposing new initiatives or by offering constructive feedback on existing projects, we would very much like to hear from you and have your active participation in shaping the future of Local Recovery.

**So if you have any thoughts, ideas, or suggestions that you would like to share with Local Recovery, please feel free to email our Campaign Director at david.gardiner@local-recovery.com.**

By opening up this line of communication, we aim to foster a collaborative and dynamic environment that allows our campaign to continually evolve and grow in response to the needs and aspirations of our supporters and the communities we work with.

## Make a donation

Local Recovery relies on the generous support of donors to ensure we can continue to deliver this brighter future for communities in Scotland. If you would like to consider making a donation, please get in touch.

### What your support can do in 2023

**£5,000:** Ten days of paid social media advertising which will help us recruit approximately 150 supporters.

**£10,000:** 20 days of paid social media advertising which will help us recruit approximately 300 supporters.

**£20,000:** One month of paid social media advertising which will help us recruit approximately 600 supporters.

**£50,000:** Cover Local Recovery’s operational costs for four weeks. This will allow us to fund our work to engage with Local Recovery supporters and our stakeholders to deliver a brighter future for local communities.

### Pledge your support

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment method:  Cheque  Bank transfer

Please send the above details to Local Recovery, 166 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1QS or email [info@local-recovery.com](mailto:info@local-recovery.com) and our staff will be in touch shortly.





**Headquarters**

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[www.local-recovery.com](http://www.local-recovery.com)

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