

Project Newsletter - Nov. 2017



Fully Operational

Sliabh Bawn Wind Farm is now fully operational and Sliabh Bawn Power would like to acknowledge the role of our neighbouring residents, businesses and local interest groups, which we have engaged with from the very outset of this project. We would not have been able to successfully reach this stage without the understanding and support of local residents and the local business community.

The Sliabh Bawn Wind Farm team has always been committed to keeping local residents, community groups and businesses updated on progress and we will continue to do so during operations.

Please be assured that our Community Liaison team are always available to listen and respond to any potential queries you may have.

THANK YOU - SLIABH BAWN WIND FARM TEAM

Community Celebrates Official Opening of the Sliabh Bawn Recreational Facilities

Over 500 attend community & family fun day

Over 500 members of the local community gathered at Sliabh Bawn on Saturday 2nd of September for the official opening of the Sliabh Bawn recreational facilities. The new amenities include a trim trail for fitness, an equestrian trail, looped walks, a raised viewing platform and a new picnic area. The amenities were developed as part of the Sliabh Bawn Wind Farm and represent a €500K investment by Sliabh Bawn Power.

To celebrate the opening of the amenities Sliabh Bawn Power hosted a family day for all the community. Activities kicked off with a 5k fun run and 10K run along the new trails. Other activities included a Teddy Bears Picnic which was very popular with younger visitors, and a bus trip to the summit viewing point.

Joint partners of the Sliabh Bawn project, Coillte and Bord na Móna, have a long history of developing tracks and trails and know that thoughtful and well-designed amenities can turn a forest into a playground for people of all ages and abilities. At Sliabh Bawn we wanted to create a space that allowed people of all ages to walk or run, trails that can take you on a journey through a forest and across a mountain, a place to explore the local history or follow ancient customs, a place for fitness and wellness and somewhere to rest and take in the breath-taking mountain views. Mostly we wanted to create amenities which put the community at the heart of Sliabh Bawn.

We want to thank the community for their engagement throughout the development of these amenities which were constructed as part of the Sliabh Bawn Wind Farm. Community groups, associations, elected representatives and many individuals made representations and shared ideas that allowed us to create something truly special. We genuinely hope that these amenities become a real resource to the community while offering an opportunity for integration with local tourism initiatives and play a role in this thriving community.



L-R: Officially launching the recreation amenities at Sliabh Bawn were Mark Foley, Coillte; Eugene Cummins, Roscommon Chief Executive; John Reilly, Bord na Móna.

Sliabh Bawn Community Benefit Fund Review

The Sliabh Bawn Community Benefit Fund first opened to applications from community groups in September 2015. Following feedback from the local community, SECAD Partnership CLG conducted a review of the fund in 2017 to improve impact for the local community.

The main aims of the review were to:

- Identify with the local community what changes should be made to make the fund more accessible to community groups in the area
- Examine how to increase the impact of the fund in the Sliabh Bawn area.

Community Consultation

Community consultation was paramount to the review process. As such, SECAD invited all households in close proximity to Sliabh Bawn to two local meetings.

The resounding feedback was the need to ensure that the communities closest to the wind farm, would benefit most from the fund. It was also clear that improved communication and transparency were important issues from a community perspective. It was also acknowledged that local groups in the area could benefit from intensive mentoring support in order to maximize the potential of the Sliabh Bawn Community Benefit Fund.



Recommendations

The broad recommendations from this review are summarised below. Changes to the fund will be phased over a number of years in order to ensure effective implementation.

1. Revised Fund Guidelines

- **Introduction of new Micro Funding Programme**

- A new Micro Funding Programme will be available, to allow the fund to become more accessible to small local groups, with limited experience of the funding application process.

- **Updating of Eligible Costs/Eligible Projects**

- Subsidy for new salaried positions that form part of the project will be considered for support up to a maximum value of 5% of project budget.
- Festivals and events will also be welcome to apply to the fund.

2. Immediate Changes (2017 –2018)

- In order to improve transparency Sliabh Bawn Power DAC publish the beneficiary names and grant amounts at the end of each year on its website.
- A comprehensive capacity building and mentoring programme will be made available to all groups in the Sliabh Bawn area. Local planning and project design will form a key part of this programme.

3. Medium Term Changes (2018 – 2020)

- A key recommendation includes support for the expansion of the evaluation panel to include representative members of the Community.
- A local project assessment panel will be established between March and July 2018 using a facilitated process run by SECAD. It is envisaged that applications to the fund from 2019 onwards will be evaluated by local community representatives, in conjunction with Sliabh Bawn Power DAC, and with the support of SECAD.



Sliabh Bawn Community Fund 2017

Coillte and Bord na Móna are committed to the development of sustainable energy in Ireland. Both have a fundamental role in meeting Ireland's 2020 target of achieving 40% of its electricity consumption from renewable sources. We believe in working together to enhance energy security for all. As such, the communities in which we locate wind farms should be able to experience the benefit of green energy and of the wind farm in the locality. What is the Sliabh Bawn Wind Farm Community Fund?

A Community Fund totalling €87,000 (index linked) will be available each year over the 25 year lifetime of the wind farm to benefit local community projects and will be made up of the Community Donations, Micro Funding, Main Funding and Festivals & Event Support Programmes.

Who will benefit?

The Sliabh Bawn Community Benefit Fund will prioritise projects and initiatives (see application criteria) that will benefit the area surrounding Sliabh Bawn Mountain. Priority will be given to projects that bring socio-economic benefit to the area including strategic projects. The Fund can be used as matching finance for other grants.

Who can apply?

The fund is available to community and voluntary groups, Not for Profit groups and organisations with charitable status. A key criteria is that the fund should be used to benefit the local community as a whole. A maximum of one application can be submitted from each group / organisation per annum.

NB. CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS:

Wednesday, 31st January 2018 @ 5pm

****Priority will be given to fund projects and initiatives that support and benefit the area surrounding Sliabh Bawn mountain****





What do we fund? Application Criteria:

Recreation	Your project delivers community-based sport and recreation activities.
Health and Wellbeing	Your project delivers a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the local area.
Culture & Heritage	Your project increases cultural awareness and preserves the local heritage.
Environmental Sustainability	Your project enhances the local, natural and built environment for the community. Community energy efficiency schemes are also eligible.
Tourism	Your project develops new, and strengthens existing tourism initiatives, which make a contribution to the local economy.

How the Community Fund Works?

1	<p>Tell Us About Your Project:</p> <p>Complete the online application form which you can find at www.sliabhbawnwindfarm.ie to tell us about your community project. Remember to include all the documents necessary to complete your project, including quotes, group constitution and bank statements.</p>
2	<p>Community Donations:</p> <p>We invite proposals for a local organisation to submit an umbrella application to support small local, community events and activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant must have a legal structure and demonstrate good governance • The applicant will nominate a group of smaller events of a charitable nature which will occur over the following 12 month period, and apply for support of up to €200 per event to a max allocation of €2000 • Suitable for informal community events or fundraising activities
3	<p>Micro Funding Programme</p> <p>The Main Funding Programme is open to applications for projects, which address a specific need for the people and communities living in proximity to Sliabh Bawn.</p> <p>To facilitate improved access to the fund for small local groups, a simplified application process is available. Key criteria are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located within 2km of Sliabh Bawn Mountain • Project value of €1,000 or less • We will support projects with training and mentoring to maximise the project's potential / "get the best out of it". Projects involving construction, renovation etc. must apply to the Main Funding Programme for support. • Groups may also apply for funding on a multi annual basis, please explain the rationale for multi annual funding in your project description.
4	<p>Main Funding Programme</p> <p>The Main Funding Programme is open to applications for projects, which address a specific need for the people and communities living in proximity to Sliabh Bawn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No upper limit on project value, although applicants are advised to consider multi annual funding for larger projects • Projects which positively impact on the communities living close to Sliabh Bawn will be prioritised
5	<p>Festivals and Events Support Programme</p> <p>This multi annual support programme will provide up to 50% of running costs or €4,000 per annum for 5 years, whichever is the lesser. A maximum of 3 projects will be selected following a competitive selection process. Applicants must include the following in their application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence the festival / event has been in operation for 3 years or more • A 5 year festival development plan • Festival accounts for the previous year, which have been independently verified by a Chartered Accountant • An outline of how the proposed festival / event supports and impacts on the communities in Sliabh Bawn
6	<p>Project Evaluation:</p> <p>SECAD will facilitate the review and evaluation of all applications – remember the Fund will prioritise projects and initiatives that support and benefit the area surrounding Sliabh Bawn mountain.</p>
7	<p>Funding Awards:</p> <p>All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in Spring 2018.</p>



Who will administer the fund?

SECAD has been appointed to act as a grant making organisation overseeing the management, administration, and delivery of the Community Fund on behalf of Sliabh Bawn Power DAC. Sliabh Bawn Power DAC welcome and encourage funding proposals from local community groups, and SECAD will provide necessary support to the projects throughout the application process.

The Sliabh Bawn Community Fund is for the benefit of the community and is unable to fund:

- Applications from individuals
- Applications that promote religious or political activities
- Statutory organisations or the direct replacement of statutory funding
- Applications for funding to cover the cost of;
 - trips abroad;
 - retrospective funding;
 - activities which do not directly benefit the local community and are not deemed as 'charitable'.

Timeline:

- The **CLOSING DATE** for receipt of applications is **Wednesday, 31st January 2018 @ 5pm**
- All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by post in **Spring 2018**.
- Successful groups will be expected to complete project activities within seven months from date of approval. For capital projects and/or long-term strategic projects an extension on the completion date can be agreed.

For more information:

You can find out more about the Sliabh Bawn Community Fund by contacting SECAD Ltd.

Tel: **(021) 461 3432**

Email: sliabhbawn@secad.ie or visit our project website www.sliabhbawnwindfarm.ie





Hi, my name is Tom Costello and I have worked as a Forest Manager with Coillte for the past 36 years. I am now the Community Liaison Officer on Sliabh Bawn Wind Farm, working in conjunction with Sliabh Bawn Power and the local community. I look forward to meeting people in the surrounding area and I am available to assist with any queries that may arise in relation to the wind farm.

Capacity Support:

As part of our commitment to supporting local community groups, a series of application workshops will be organised in the coming weeks. The aim of these workshops is to support groups and organisations in the Sliabh Bawn area who wish to learn more about making an application to the Community Benefit Fund. The workshops will provide guidance for applicants who wish to submit projects to the 2017 fund, or in future years. The content will focus on outlining the Community Benefit Fund, its purpose, eligibility criteria etc. and exploring the stages of developing a Community Project for the Community Benefit Fund.

Future Plans

As part of our ongoing commitment to support the Government's 2020 renewable targets and Ireland's decarbonisation agenda we are assessing the possibility of including battery storage technology within the existing compound of Sliabh Bawn 110kv Substation. New technologies such as battery storage facilities are required by the System Operators (EirGrid) to give them greater flexibility when operating the electricity grid with increased levels of renewable energies. While the inclusion of a battery storage facility may technically be possible within the confines of the existing substation compound, the realisation of such a project would require planning consent from the relevant planning authority.



Contacting the Wind Farm

The project team are fully committed to maintaining regular contact with its neighbours. The main portal for project updates going forward will be the project website.

Please contact us with any observations or enquiries:-

Lo-call: 1890 92 78 36 (Mon - Fri)

Email: sliabh.bawn@coillte.ie

Web: www.sliahbawnwindfarm.ie

Write: Sliabh Bawn Power DAC, C/O Coillte,
Dublin Road, Newtownmountkenny,
Co. Wicklow, A63 DN25