



DSG(2025)P016

DOUNREAY SOCIO ECONOMIC UPDATE

current as of 15 April 2025

Dounreay Socio Economic Impact Strategy

NRS Dounreay's socio economic impact strategy for Caithness and north Sutherland from 2025/26 to 2027/28 was published in March. The strategy has been developed in consultation with the Dounreay Stakeholder Group, Focus North Partnership, and Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, in addition to a range of internal stakeholders. It has been published on the government website and a copy shared with the meeting notes.

Socio Economic Benefits Realisation

Socio economic benefits and associated indicators have been completed for the Lifetime Plan measurement of:

- Improved Local Wellbeing (workforce and wider community)
- Local Economic Growth and Diversification

The final benefits profiles are being developed and integrated into a new management system, with the intention that they will be reported through the subgroup. An associated Red Amber Green (RAG) rating will be developed and brought to the group.

Grant funding

Dounreay continues to provide pre-application support for socio economic funding. Circa 60% of the FY 2025/2026 budget has already been committed on multi-year projects.

The continued status of socio economic grant funding activities is recorded in Appendix 1, with new projects funded in the previous quarter outlined below:

- FR-000002500 - UpNorth! Community Development Trust – Masterplan Delivery Officer, £36,551.53 (2 years)
- FR-000002524 – Caithness Chamber of Commerce – Destination Strategy and Venture North, £342,000 (3 years)
- FR-000002623 – Noss Primary – SCOPE@Noss, £9,000 (<1 year)
- FR-000002638 – Melness Crofters Estate – Feasibility study for Science and Education Centre, £20,000 (<1 year)
- FR-000002678 – Science 03 – Caithness Science Festival, £8,000 (<1 year)

- FR-000002694 – Caithness Sports Council – Reboot - £10,000 (1 year)
- FR-000002695 – North Highland Initiative – Farm Cluster and Baselining Pilot, £72,186 (1 year)
- FR-000002699 – North Highland Initiative – Community Infrastructure Support Programme, £100,000 (1 year)
- FR-000002696 – Caithness Business Fund – Apprenticeship Programme, £150,000 (£80,000 & £70,000 NDA) (2 year)
- FR-000002698 – Caithness Business Fund – Future Skills Graduate Scheme, £100,000 (2 year)

Preliminary year end socio economic funding spend is £972,305 for FY 2024/2025. The NDA provided additional Dounreay managed funds of £147,312 to the area, outwith direct NDA investment in the Sutherland Spaceport.

Total Dounreay managed socio economic funding for Caithness and north Sutherland in FY 2024/2025 was £1.12M, subject to P12 figures being verified.

Procurement

The following financial figures are for Q4 2024/2025, with the number of companies cumulative for Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4. It should be noted that they do not sum to any total.

- Total Spend £36.4M, including mandatory spend.
- £26M is non mandatory and non-utility.
- £5.1M is with 50 (YTD) companies that are Caithness owned.
- £18.6M is with 18 (YTD) companies with Caithness resource*.
- £23.7M is spent with Caithness owned or resourced suppliers.
- £10.5M is with 412 (YTD) SME suppliers (including Caithness SME).

For end of FY 2024/2025:

- Total Spend £117.7M, including mandatory spend.
- £82.6M is non mandatory and non-utility.
- £15.5M is with companies that are Caithness owned.
- £48.5M is with companies with Caithness resource*.
- £64M is spent with Caithness owned or resourced suppliers.
- £32M is with SME suppliers (including Caithness SME).

*Includes some mandatory spend. (YTD = year to date).

Overall spend with Caithness companies has increased by £5m, from 13% of non-mandatory spend to 19% of non-mandatory spend.

The socio economics team, working with the commercial team, continue to improve how Dounreay sets, assesses, and monitors social value across in scope procurements. Dounreay continues to manage social value commitments from procurement.

Staffing

Recruitment continues to be carefully managed. Dounreay shares full details of all internal and external recruitment with the DSG Business Group to ensure transparency. Updates were provided in February and March of this quarter highlighting recruitment due to retirement, backfill, and re-advertisement.

The 2025 assessment of graduates is now complete with 15 graduates offered positions. Additional NDA graduates will also take up positions in Dounreay as part of their group wide rotations.

STEM

Dounreay committed circa £21,000 of STEM budget funding in 2024/2025. This is an increase on previous years with an apparent post-covid recovery.

Activity in the quarter:

- First Lego League North Highland Tournament held on 12 March. Winners of the tournament, Reay Primary School will now attend the UK Final in Harrogate on 3 May
- Ongoing preparation for the Goblin Car Project. 4 cars will be built at 3 schools; Miller Academy Primary School, Pennyland Primary School and Lybster Primary School. NRS Dounreay engineers and apprentices are supporting the project
- NRS Dounreay supported the recent Caithness Science Festival Family Day by providing a number of activities including drones and SPOT the robotic dog

Visits to Dounreay

- DSG visit and DLT briefing with PFR tour, 17th Feb
- NRS CEO and Chair site visit, 25 – 27 Feb

Magnus Davidson,
NRS Dounreay Socio Economics Manager
17/04/2025

Appendix 1

Rolling status of socio economic grant funding activities

Funded Project	Completion date	Progress	Comments
CNSRP (Focus North) support hub	30/03/2024		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £487,000 Yr 3 (24/25): £154k with a carry over of £26.6k from the previous year. £77k spend to date. A carry over of £103k will be utilised in 2025 for committed spend. Discussion ongoing with NDA for subsequent funding.
Caithness Transport Forum	31/03/2027		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £30K Yr 1 (24/25): £10K £10K paid to date.
Focus North Programme Manager	31/03/2027		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: Up to £124,830k Yr 1 (24/25): Up to £40k £36k paid to date at end of p11
Transport for Tongue	31/03/2025		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £30k Yr 3 (24/25): £10k £30k paid to date
PSO Contract Manager	31/03/2025		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £90k Yr 3 (24/25): £30k £90K paid to date.
STEM activities	N/A		Funding commitment: ongoing Total annual award £25k £21k paid to date
Dounreay Community Fund	N/A		Funding commitment: ongoing Total annual award £35k £35k paid for 2025/26
Wick Development Trust	16/06/2025		Funding commitment: 1 year Total award £125k £125k paid to date
John O'Groats Mill	30/04/2025		Funding commitment: 2 years Total award: £100k Yr 2: £50k £100k paid to date.

Funded Project	Completion date	Progress	Comments
Ormlie Community Association	30/09/2026		Funding commitment: 3 years Total award: £60k Yr 2: £20k £40k paid to date.
Dunbeath and District Centre	31/12/2026		Funding commitment: 3 year Total award: £ 149,630 Yr 2: £24,938 £49,876 paid to date
Rumster Outdoor Centre	31/07/2025		Funding commitment: 1 year Total award: £43,000 Yr 1: £43,000 £43,000 paid to date
Science Skills Academy Newton Room Thurso	01/06/2027		Funding commitment: 3 year Total award: £128,000 Yr 1: £42,666.67 £0 paid to date – Yr1 postponed to June 2025 upon confirmation of funding panel.
North Coast Visitor Centre (Highlife Highland)	31/10/2027		Funding commitment: 3 year Total award £265,000 Yr 1: £48,000 £48k paid to date
Scottish Surfing Championships (Scottish Surfing Federation)	20/04/2025		Funding commitment: <1yr Total award: £10,000 £10k paid to date
Community Plan and Delivery (Thurso Community Development Trust)	30/09/2027		Funding commitment: 3 yr Total award: £200,000 Yr 1: £66,666 £16,666 paid to date
Masterplan Delivery Officer (UpNorth! CDT)	01/03/2027		Funding commitment: 2 yr Total award: £36,551 Yr 1: £18,177 £18,177 paid to date
Destination Strategy and Venture North (CCoC)	31/03/2028		Funding commitment: 3 yr Total award: £342,000 Yr 1: £147,667 £58,500 paid to date
Caithness Science Festival (Science 03)	22/03/2025		Funding commitment: <1 year Total award: £8,000 £8k paid to date
Caithness Sports Council Reboot (CSC)	31/03/2026		Funding commitment: 1 year Total award: £10,000 £10k paid to date
Farm Cluster and Baselineing Pilot (NHI)	31/03/2026		Funding commitment: 1 year Total award: £72,186 £72,186 paid to date

Funded Project	Completion date	Progress	Comments
Community Infrastructure Support Programme (NHI)	31/03/2026		Funding commitment: 1 year Total award: £100,000 £100k paid to date
Apprenticeship Programme (CBF)	31/03/2027		Funding commitment: 2 years Total award: £150,000 Yr 1: £150,000 £150k paid to date
Future Skills Graduate Scheme	31/03/2027		Funding commitment: 2 years Total award: £100,000 Yr 1: £100,000 £100k paid to date