



Dun Law
Extension
Community
Benefit Trust

Project:

Applicant:

Date of application(s):

Amount granted:

Oxton Community Shop

Oxton Community Development Ltd

February & September 2018

February 2018 - £6000.00

September 2018 - £5800.00

CASE STUDY 1 – OXTON COMMUNITY SHOP

Background

After the closure of the family-run village business in 2018 and planned conversion of the premises for residential use, the small community in the Scottish Borders village of Oxton was left without any shop, impacting on a large number of residents in the area. There was strong local support for establishing a new shop and, with the help of the Plunkett Foundation, the community established a community benefit society – Oxton Community Development Ltd. After a temporary move to an existing Portakabin behind the village hall, the group was given three-year planning permission to operate, and a licence to occupy from the landowner, a shop from a rented new Portakabin on the main street adjacent to the village hall.

With support from the SSE Trust (Toddleburn) (£5807.00) and the Dun Law Trust (£6000.00) the new shop opened on 1st April 2018. After some teething problems, the society developed a robust business plan and was successful in securing additional funding from the SSE Trust (Toddleburn) (£4944.00) towards premises cost and a further £5800.00 from the Dun Law Trust in September 2018. The second Dun Law grant supported the costs of a new point-of-sale/stock management system, additional shop equipment and an assistant. The original Oxton Dun Law Windfarm also supported the shop with grants of £1000.00 in February 2018 to cover pre-incorporation costs, £1842.00 in October 2018 to cover the costs of buying a new display fridge, freezer and counter, and a further £2200.00 in July 2019 to purchase an air conditioning system.

Today, the shop is thriving, offering a fantastic mix of daily essentials such as newspapers, milk and bread as well as high-end local produce, including preserves, cheeses and organically-farmed meat. The shop has a part-time manager and assistant and a team of volunteers helping out. The business plan is back on track and all profits are put back into the shop. In the meantime, the Oxton Community Shop continues to meet the needs of hundreds of people in the Oxton area as well as the many cyclists, tourists and passers-by.

Challenges

- Opening and operating a bank account in the early stages
- Generating enough revenue to make the project sustainable at the beginning
- Learning on the go - more complex than envisaged.

Lessons

- Buy-in from local authority is absolutely essential
- Create realistic business plan and cash-flow projection as early as possible
- Set up committee with clear sense of direction, roles and responsibilities.



Original Portakabin shop	Oxton Community shop interior	Oxton Community Development Chairman Francois du Plessis outside shop, May 2019
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