**Benefits of the proposal 4.2**

Please set out the benefits that you consider will arise if the request is agreed to. This section should explain how the project will benefit your community, and others. Please refer to the guidance on how the relevant authority will consider the benefits of a request.

**To Members of the Organisation –**

We aim:

* To offer a safe, welcoming, and nurturing environment to children and young people to enable them to build confidence, social skills, lifelong skills, and independence.
* To promote qualities such as fairness, respect, honesty, pride and positive relationships between Children and Young People through outdoor activity and expressive arts
* To allow Children and Young People to learn skills to equip them for the future world of work, to be resourceful and able to use their initiative.
* To allow Children and Young People to feel a sense of pride and achievement in all they do and to be an essential part of their local community by participating in local events and taking opportunities to help local organisations.
* To enable Young People the opportunity to work towards and achieve segments of awards such as the Duke of Edinburgh and Saltire Awards.
* To enable adult volunteers to use and develop their existing skills to support the running of the organisation.

In our organisation, we cover a wide range of activities across our two groups for example:

Theatre Group
In our theatre group we cover a full range of activities.

* Drama, Dance, Singing
* Confidence building, Games
* Video workshops (making trailers, short movie clips)
* Backstage, Lights, Sound, Make-up, Script/Improv, Prop Making/ Set Design
* Go on theatre trips (pantos, professional productions)
* Take part in fundraisers/ working with community

Outdoor & Adventure Group
In our Outdoor & Adventure Group we cover a range of activities-

* Survival Skills (fire lighting, building shelters, first aid, cooking etc)
* Going on outdoor trips (local woods, hiking, local beaches, and rivers etc)
* Going on social trips (laser quest, cinema, bowling etc)
* Teambuilding activities
* Games- indoors and outdoors
* Take part in fundraisers/ working with community

**Supporting Facility for Parents/Guardians**

We know that some parents will have to travel to drop off and collect their children from their sessions and we understand that this can be problematic and costly. Once we have built our headquarters, we will offer the use of our meeting room to parents/guardians where they can catch up on work using our internet facilities or relax in the warmth rather than waiting in the car.

**To the Community –**

 **Community Programme**

1. **Breakfast Club**

A Breakfast Club would be open Monday-Friday 7.30am-8.30am. The premises will be easily accessible for all those who live in Lockerbie and the surrounding area and we can offer a healthy, nutritious meal to children on their way to school. We are aiming to have this paid for through funding and donations from shops to help reduce food waste. We understand the importance of children arriving at school having had a healthy breakfast and the impact it has on their ability to concentrate and be ready to learn. We want to provide an equitable source which would address poverty and deprivation allowing children and young people a level stance on which to learn and achieve.

1. **Get Together**

Get Together is the second potential part of the programme. Once a week, after the Breakfast Club, the hall would be open from 9.30am-11.30am for anyone who wants to use it. We would set out tables, chairs, tea, coffee, and biscuits and invite any groups to come and socialise within our property. Newspapers, magazines, and games (scrabble/dominoes etc.) would be available and all we would ask for in return is a donation to help cover the costs of drinks etc. The aim of this is to provide a warm, welcoming space for all those who wish to socialise together. We hope that this will help reduce loneliness and social isolation in the town and will help build confidence for groups such as the elderly to get out and about just as they used to. This would only run on weekdays as, there are often farmers markets and charity coffee mornings at the weekends, and we do not want to take any customers away from those events.

1. **Food for Thought**

Food for Thought would be a collection of household products/food that will be available to all those who need them. For any families/individuals who are needing assistance, we hope that we can create a welcoming environment where these individuals can come into our base, during designated hours, and take whatever stock they need, free of charge. Food for Thought will also include feminine hygiene products to help combat period poverty. We do not want any families in the area, whether members of the organisation or not, to have to go without household essentials in their home. We hope that this component of the Community Programme will make small aspects of lives in the community easier for those struggling.

1. **Community Recreation**

We hope that this component of the Community Programme will make small aspects of lives in the community easier for those struggling. We aim to work closely with the local community to ensure the services that we provide always are appropriate and relevant to the public’s interest.

Initially, we believe a dog walking path - that leads to a dog exercise paddock - and a small biking ‘adventure’ area - containing ramps and jumps - would be beneficial to the local community as spaces to do these activities are limited in the town and this would be a unique facility. We would also like to build a play park which we will call the nature park and will include a wheelchair swing so everyone can enjoy the facilities. Furthermore, we will add a nature trail with sensory equipment and bug hotels on the site which will allow children and their families to enhance their outdoor learning experience..

If plans go ahead as we hope, during the planning stages of construction, the community will be consulted on recreation use of the land/building and any ideas will be considered and their feasibility reviewed before being implemented.

Points 1-3 will not be launched until a headquarters has been built as we require a hall and kitchen facilities. As we do not want to charge for these services, it would not be viable to run these services out of a hired hall.

**Activity Centre**

We understand that a project of this size can take many months and years of planning and fundraising so, once we have received ownership of the land, we will acquire some temporary accommodation.

Another use of the site would be to build a small Activity Centre. This Activity Centre will initially be a portacabin, renovated to look aesthetically pleasing, consisting of a small hall, basic kitchen facilities, toilets, and outdoor seating. During the day, this will be open to the community for uses such as cover from poor weather and a picnic stop when out walking with family.

As the site lies on a large grass area almost completely secluded from the main road, this will enable families with young children, dog walkers and the local school and day-care classes a safe and convenient space to learn, develop and grow.

We have concluded that by building the Activity Centre that was planned for the final stages of this project first, we can begin to provide services to the local community whilst accommodating our organisation temporarily.

We are hoping to host free afternoon drop-in sessions between four and six times a year for the community. This will allow the members of the community, of all ages, to come and try out some of our activities, for example, fire lighting, slackline, and archery. In early 2024, we will be sending some of our volunteers to become qualified instructors in archery which will allow us to offer this activity to our members, local schools, and the community at these drop-in sessions. This may also encourage young people to join up and adults to volunteer which will bring new skills to the organisation.

At the end of the day, after being used by the community, this activity centre will be able to provide temporary accommodation for our organisation to run our sessions in. Currently, this facility would fulfil this use to our newly formed organisation as due to the pandemic and the lockdowns, we have not been able to reach our short-term goals. As laid out in our Five-Year Strategy Plan, we aim to increase our member numbers and services that we can provide to the community. Therefore, after building the Activity Centre, it will be necessary to build our final phase of the project – The RH Youth Organisation Headquarters.

As the organisation grows, we will require evermore activity, storage, and office space as well as larger kitchen and toilet facilities that cannot be offered in the Activity Centre. We will be expanding the services that we can provide both to our members and to the local community through our sessions and our Community Programme. This will require a larger space and variety of equipment which we currently have no way of storing. A car park and garage for vehicle and trailer storage will also be required in our larger premises that the Activity Centre cannot accommodate.

Once the construction of the headquarters is complete, the organisation will move all of its sessions and most of the Community Programme into the new building. This will leave the Activity Centre to become more community orientated as a space to be used for seating, toilets/baby changing and cover from poor weather for anyone who is using any other facilities in the Community Recreation part of our Community Programme. We also plan to use this facility in the future to conduct activities such as archery with the local schools and other community groups.

**Beneficiaries**

Adults who volunteer with the RH Youth Organisation will gain experience and skills. Some of these opportunities included –

* Helping to deliver an accessible, exciting and balanced session plan making sure there is a focus on the needs, interests and abilities of the children and young people, allowing for their input.
* Following policy and procedures of the RHYO to ensure the safe delivery of the programme to the children and young people, including completing detailed risk assessments for activities planned.
* Establishing and building positive relationships and rapport with the children and young people you work with by creating a calm, nurturing and stimulating environment whilst getting to know them as individuals.
* Encourage and support children and young people to achieve the varied awards available for their group, especially the Chief Executive Award.
* Work alongside other adult volunteers (Team Leaders, Assistant Team Leaders, Young Team Leaders, Executive Team and Board) to allow continuity across sessions and to plan activities and events for all sessions/groups.
* Help plan and be a part of outdoor nights away opportunities for the young people following policy and procedure.
* Becoming an active participant in fundraising efforts for the RHYO.
* Establishing and maintaining positive relationships with parents/guardians.

We aim to allow children and Young People to feel a sense of pride and achievement in all they do and to be an essential part of our local community by participating in local events and taking opportunities to help out. We will be prominent part of for example Gala, Remembrance Day and Christmas festivities. In addition to this, we will be an active part of the community by offering help to local projects for example litter picking, gardening, and supporting other community projects (rotary club, old school project, nature reserve projects) We will be actively making contact with members of the community to offer support where we can for example local churches, local residential homes.

The local community will be offered a range of services from the RH Youth Organisation through our Community Programme in particular. This programme, outlined in Section 2: Services – To the Community, will benefit the children and young people (both within and out with the organisation), families who are facing financial difficulties and individuals who are lonely and isolated. We will offer our hall at a reduced rate to local groups and charities as well as an area for community recreation. We will also open the Activity Centre to the local community who can benefit through the activities we can provide and through our free drop-in sessions.