



**From: The Minister**

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Our ref: CORR 0111 2025  
Date: 26 February 2025

Patsy McGlone MLA  
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Via email: [patsy.mcglone@mla.niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:patsy.mcglone@mla.niassembly.gov.uk)

Dear Patsy,

## **UPDATE ON VILLAGE CATALYST GRANT SCHEME**

At Assembly Question Time on February 10, you asked me **for an update on my Department's £110,000 scheme to explore regeneration projects in 10 rural villages, as announced in a 2023 Press Release. The scheme referred to is the Village Catalyst Grant Scheme.** I promised to write to you outlining its progress.

The department administers the Village Catalyst Grant Scheme (VGCS) in partnership with the Architectural Heritage Fund, DAERA and NIHE. The scheme is a three-stage fund: viability and development grants (funded by the department and issued by the Architectural Heritage Fund) support communities to develop proposals. Ultimately, delivery grants are then provided for site works and are provided by the department from its own funds and from significantly larger funds provided by DAERA. NIHE has also committed to support this, subject to available budgets. Overall, the fund supports communities to take on heritage at risk in villages and provide sustainable uses that tackle rural poverty and social isolation.

I attach a table at Annex A providing an update on each of the projects mentioned in that press release. It reflects the development of a pipeline of projects, one of which is now on-site and many of which are increasingly prepared for their own delivery

phase. You may be glad to learn, in addition, that 15 villages are currently being supported to progress projects through this scheme.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordon Lyons', with a stylized, flowing script.

**Gordon Lyons MLA**  
**Minister for Communities**

## Annex A

Project	Viability Grant award	Development Grant award	Delivery Grant award	
Culmore Fort, Culmore	£8,000	£20,000	£200,000	Project on site due to complete by April 2025
St Patrick's Hall, Fintona	£8,000	£10,000		Expected on site 27/28
Kilmore Cottage, Portadown	£10,000	£20,000		Expected on site 27/28
Cloughey Church	£9,000	£20,000		Expected on site 27/28
National School Bushmills:	£10,000	£20,000		Expected on site 26/27
Mullygruen House, Donaghmore	£7,500			No update available.
Caledon Men's Shed, Caledon	£7,500	£20,000		Expected on site 25/26
Ballinderry War Memorial Hall,		£20,000		Expected on site 25/26
St John's Church, Hilltown		£20,000		Expected on site 27/28
Former Poor Law Hospital, Clogher		£20,000		Expected on site 26/27