



Title of Report:	Correspondence Report
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	21 June 2022
For Decision or For Information	For Information

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Healthy Engaged Communities. Climate change and our Environments
Outcome	
Lead Officer	Director of Leisure and Development

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	n/a
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	n/a
Code	n/a
Staffing Costs	n/a

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present Correspondence for Members consideration.

2.0 The following are listed:

2.1 Correspondence from Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. (Received 17 June 2022)

Correspondence has been received from the RSPB requesting a letter of support for their application to the Levelling Up fund for volunteer accommodation on Rathlin Island.

Correspondence attached.

3.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that Members consider the correspondence.



Dear Mr Jackson,

I am writing to request a letter of support for our application to the Levelling Up Fund for volunteer accommodation on Rathlin Island. The project is named **Rathlin: Building for the Future**.

The RSPB has a large presence on the island, with both land holdings and the Seabird Centre at the West Lighthouse. The Seabird Centre is an important eco-attraction that sees approximately 20,000 visitors a year and helps sustain wider island businesses, such as local food and transport providers. The RSPB also undertakes vital conservation work on the island, through our reserve management and larger scale projects, such as the LIFE RAFT eradication project, which is currently underway. The project is led by RSPBNI in partnership with Rathlin Development and Community Association (RDCA); Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs; and Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT).

We want to underpin our work on the island through the construction of volunteer accommodation for 8 persons and a small office accommodation on RSPB land within Church Bay. These facilities will greatly increase the attractiveness of Rathlin as a destination for volunteers, while also providing for year-round opportunities, bringing more people to the island during off-peak periods.

We have liaised with the RDCA and the CCGHT to develop potential opportunities and it is our vision that these new facilities will provide for different volunteering opportunities to protect the wider heritage of this unique location, as well as meeting pressing island needs in agreement with the RDCA. The application deadline for the Fund is the first week of July, but we would greatly appreciate a letter to indicate your organisation's support, ideally before the end of June.

RSPB Northern Ireland
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The RSPB is part of BirdLife International, a Partnership of conservation organisations working to give nature a home around the world.



Suggested text:

We are supportive of the RSPB bid to the Levelling Up Fund for the Rathlin Building for the Future Project. This investment would help address longstanding issues in relation to accommodation and facilities on the island and would bring wider benefits to Rathlin, in particular tackling seasonality issues and sustainable tourism; whilst further securing protection for the unique heritage of the island.

With this much needed investment, we will cement and enhance the role of volunteering on Rathlin into the future and we expect this to be a catalyst for further opportunities and deeper partnership working on the island and beyond.

If you need further details: please contact me directly: [REDACTED] [@rspb.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@rspb.org.uk)

Best wishes,



Kevin Quinn

Head of Business Support | RSPB NI

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Patron: Her Majesty the Queen **Chairman of Council:** Kevin Cox **President:** Miranda Krestovnikoff **Chairman, Committee for Northern Ireland:** Judith Annett **Director, RSPB Northern Ireland:** Joanne Sherwood The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is a registered charity: England and Wales no. 207076, Scotland no. SC037654 Registered address: The Lodge, Potton Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL