

NHS Shetland Endowment Committee

13 October 2020

Media Release

Endowment Committee Welcomes MRI Donations



Shetland Health Board Endowment Fund trustees welcomed £300,000 of donations for the MRI Scanner Appeal at its bi-monthly meeting last week, taking the money raised over the £1.65 million appeal target set at the campaign's outset.

These include the already committed £200,000 from the Shetland Community Benefit Fund (SCBF); as well as an additional £50,000 from SSE Renewables; and a further £50,000 from local wind energy business, Shetland Aerogenerators Ltd (SAL).

The Shetland Charitable Trust has promised £500,000 towards the capital purchase of the MRI. This, alongside a remarkable drive in fundraising by the Shetland community over the past two years, and the three new donations means the end is now in sight.

Lincoln Carroll, Chair of the Endowment Fund said, "Trustees were very pleased to receive these donations. After the Charitable Trust's pledge, we moved into the procurement phase of the project, researching potential suppliers and looking to establish final costs and supply timescale. The new donations mean the appeal can confidently fund the staff and the training required to embed the scanner as a key piece of diagnostic equipment at the Gilbert Bain Hospital."

The £200,000 donation from SCBF follows agreement by Viking Energy to give SCBF an advance on future annual community benefit payments from the Viking Wind Farm.

Chris Bunyan, Chair of SCBF said, "Our decision to support the appeal is based on what this will mean for the health of people in Shetland and the stress and costs of travelling to Aberdeen for a scan.

"Covid-19 restrictions have meant a great reduction and delay in fundraising for the scanner and that is why SCBF directors wanted to support the appeal. This also illustrates the potential for our communities from community benefit funds in the future."

Aaron Priest, from SSE Renewables said, "Including local sub-contractors there are over 50 locally based staff currently working on the Viking Wind Farm, a number which will continue to grow, and we know how important the MRI Scanner Appeal is to them, their families and the wider community. Locating a scanner at the Gilbert Bain Hospital to bring quicker access to diagnostic tests and reduce unnecessary patient travel, stress and inconvenience is a perfect example of how we want to support people throughout Shetland."

Angus Ward, Director of Shetland Aerogenerators Ltd, said that the company, founded by the Ward and Thomson families, had "recognised the healthcare access challenges emerging locally as a result of the global pandemic and felt that a big push to get the appeal over the line from Shetland's developing renewable energy industry and the community benefit funds which come from these developments would provide an excellent boost to a campaign that has been running for more than two years".

As well as the associated installation costs, the money will be used for revenue funding for the MRI Scanner, which means it will cover the cost of staff and training once the equipment is in place at the Gilbert Bain Hospital.

Derek Hart, MRI Scanner Appeal Fundraising Manager, said that everyone who had worked on the appeal was delighted and extremely grateful for the three new donations. They were most timely in light of the interruption to community fundraising as a result of the intervention of Covid-19. Many planned activities have been 'lost' during the spring and summer months, perhaps in excess of £200,000 of potential income.

"Hundreds of community events and individual fundraising efforts over more than two years have made the scanner a reality, and we want to thank everyone who has been involved in that effort. However, until the final costs of the project are established, fundraising will continue."

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