

## Highlights

Largest employer in Whithorn, providing 16 full time positions. Focus on training, upskilling and building capacity in the community for young people with barriers to employment

Use sustainable building techniques and blend with new technologies to reduce the environmental impact of existing traditional buildings

Trained over 45 individuals from the local high school in traditional skills including lime pointing and dry stone dyking

Business lives by the mantra ‘the greenest house is the one already built’



# Building Futures Galloway Ltd

Building Futures Galloway is a youth employability training programme, offering in-work training in heritage construction skills to young people with barriers to employment. The business involves the refurbishment of historic buildings, using appropriate materials including lime, local timber and recycled stone, and use of compatible retrofit materials and techniques.

The organisation works across several partnerships, including with the Whithorn Trust, Edinburgh University and Historic Environment Scotland to further develop their model of skills development for the rural green economy. They balance culture and tradition by using sustainable building techniques, blended with new and sustainable technologies, to reduce the environmental impact of existing traditional buildings. They live by the mantra of ‘the greenest house is the one already built’; weaving in climate adaptation, mitigation and biodiversity to every renovation they work on.

### Category description:

A just transition is about delivering our social, economic and climate goals across all sectors of the economy to build a better, more resilient, and more equal Scotland.

Building Futures Galloway are the largest employer in Whithorn, providing 16 full time positions. Their focus on training, upskilling, and building capacity in the local community, as well as potentially more widely in Scotland, generates immediate economic benefits and wealth creation. They have trained over 45 individuals from the local high school in skills such as lime pointing and dry stane dyking. Within their first three years of operation, the organisation has seen four individuals move onto careers and further education which may not have happened without the support of the Building Futures Galloway programme.

The business has restored four buildings within the community, with a further two currently in restoration, including the Old Town Hall, which was built in 1814. This building had no insulation, by using traditional lime render the property is now able to be insulated whilst still maintaining breathability. The building will be heated by an Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP). These combined measures will reduce the energy consumption of the property by 59% and save over 8000kg CO<sub>2</sub>e.

Building Futures Galloway's activities have helped to deliver economic resilience and address rural depopulation; not only by creating a skilled workforce but through engagement with schools, further education, and adults with learning difficulties. They estimate their economic benefit through year-round retention of the workforce to be nearly £316,000 per year for 14 youth employees. There are further associated economic savings through use of new, low carbon technologies to heat the refurbished building. In one building with an ASHP, the savings are £335 per year, compared with traditional oil heating.



Diversity and inclusion are key to the ethos of the organisation. The workforce includes individuals who have additional needs, with support to enable them to develop skills in the community. Their new boat building workshop has one station fitted to ensure it is suitable for wheelchair users. They have provided sessions for the most vulnerable children from Aberour Trust and they provide special needs woodworking.

The business works hard to ensure that people in areas of multiple deprivation have homes and community spaces with adequate insulation and building maintenance, directly supporting the community to adapt to climate change.

Quote from the company:

***“Building Futures Galloway is delighted that their work with young people looking for sustainable Green Jobs within heritage construction has been recognised with a VIBES award.***

***The alignment of the traditional skills we teach - masonry and traditional joinery - with the need to address climate change is increasingly recognised and our charity matches this national need with the pressing local need for young people, without positive destinations, in a remote rural area. Receiving recognition for this work in rural Galloway is a special tribute to the young people involved.”***