

Polar explorer's climate challenge



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Minister launches £10m community funding as record-breaking Scot backs campaign

The first Scot to conquer the South Pole solo and unsupported is backing Scotland's fight against climate change.

Luke Robertson from Edinburgh made history earlier this year for his record breaking solo expedition to the South Pole. Now back on home soil he's joining up with Scotland's Climate Change Minister Aileen McLeod to encourage more Scots to make greener lifestyle choices, as she launches almost £10 million of funding to support Scottish communities undertaking their own climate challenge.

116 community-led projects have won a share of the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund, announced to coincide with a Scottish Government campaign with the message 'Saving the world isn't just for the movies'.

Dr McLeod said: "Communities across Scotland are rising to the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge with plans to improve their environment and drive down carbon emissions. Today the Scottish Government is backing those plans with almost £10 million to make them happen. The projects aren't perhaps quite as challenging as a solo trek to the South Pole, but they will make a real difference in the fight to tackle climate change!

"Saving the world isn't just for the movies or even real-life action heroes like Luke, whose solo trek to the South Pole is a tremendous achievement and an inspiration to us all. Individual, greener lifestyle choices – such as washing

clothes at a lower temperature or leaving the car at home and walking shorter journeys – are simple to make, and can make a difference when repeated on a large scale.

“Climate change affects us all, and we must all do what we can limit its impact. Scotland is on track to exceed our world-leading 2020 target for a 42 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and our high ambition approach has been described as ‘exemplary’ by Christiana Figueres, the head of the UN climate body, during her recent visit to Scotland.”

Luke’s epic journey across the Antarctic landscape and training trips to Norway and Greenland had a profound effect on the 31-year-old, who saw just how important it is for everyone to play a part in protecting the environment for future generations.

He said: “I love Scotland and am delighted to help with this campaign to help protect it from the threat of climate change. It is great to see so many community projects getting involved in climate action too. By simply leaving the car at home and walking shorter journeys you can take the first step to making a real difference.

“I’m passionate about making an effort to live a greener lifestyle, from recycling household goods and avoiding food waste to walking to work or taking public transport.

“Reaching the South Pole was a life-changing experience and one I’ll never forget. Spending time in such a dramatic and untouched landscape, witnessing giant icebergs and huge glaciers first hand, made me feel even more attached to the environment and concerned for its future.”

The Climate Challenge Fund is managed by Keep Scotland Beautiful on behalf of the Scottish Government. Derek Robertson, Chief Executive at Keep Scotland Beautiful, said:

“We are delighted that the Scottish Government made funding

available for the Climate Challenge Fund this year. The incredible interest in this latest round of funding demonstrates the willingness of communities across Scotland to tackle climate change at a grassroots level. We were very pleased to have been able to support so many community-led organisations through the application process.

“Congratulations must go to those awarded Climate Challenge Fund grants and we look forward to supporting them as they implement their projects. This support is part of our work to make Scotland clean, green and more sustainable.”

Luke Robertson’s journey to the South Pole was in aid of fundraising for charity Marie Curie. It took him 39 days to complete taking 1.6 million steps and burning almost 400k calories in minus 38 degree temperatures. For more information on Luke’s challenge visit: <http://www.duesouth2015.com>

Submitted by [Jen Ward](#)

