

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS

COMMUNITY TRUST LTD.



Chairperson's email bulletin
January 2014

Hello Members

Happy new year to you all and I hope 2015 turns out to be a pivotal year for your Community Trust. There is much on the agenda and I hope you are enjoying the process of watching your Trust continue to develop its ideas and plans for the future. Our Grants system continues apace as ever and at last night's meeting, we ratified approximately £9,000 of new grants for various groups and individuals in the area. Full details of the awards will shortly be available on our website as usual.

Proposed Project Co-ordinator

With very positive feedback from a variety of community bodies so far, things are looking good for your Trust possibly to employ a Project Co-ordinator to help community groups make their ambitious plans a reality. No final decision has been made yet as we are still gathering the wider community's thoughts. You will hopefully by now have received our Questionnaire which has gone out to all households in the community. Please do take time to fill it in and post it back in the stamped addressed envelope enclosed. The Questionnaire has cost money and time to prepare and, as Chair of your Trust, I would strongly urge you please to take the time to respond and to give us your views. As members of the Trust, your views are essential in ensuring that we, your Directors, are acting in accordance with your wishes. In addition to the Questionnaire, we have set up a Drop-in session between 3pm and 7pm on Wednesday 11th February at the Stratherrick Village Hall in Gorthleck. Again, please do come along and take the opportunity to ask questions and air your views, thank you.

Grant system

Directors have now worked through a full cycle of the newly established Grant application and assessment system. We are happy with both the manner and the nature of the decisions we have made during this quarter but we have also decided that there is room for improvement. We have therefore set up a 'continuous improvement' sub-group to ensure that our assessment methodology.....well.....continues to improve.

Money available for grants.....don't be shy.....apply!

We have more money available for all types of grants and especially so for the Group grants. Please do keep your applications coming in and don't be shy in applying for funding for any projects you may have in mind. If you have an idea that you know is going to cost a good bit of money to implement and you are not sure about how to make an application then please do give any of the Directors or the Trust Administrator a call for an initial informal chat. As part of our responsibilities in managing the Grant system, we are keen also to help you maximise your chances of securing funds by helping you create a really good application.

Please do call us at any time if you want some help. The next closing date for applications would be 24th April so plenty of time for completion of an application.

Apprenticeship Scheme

With regret, I must inform you that Jake, who started his Gamekeeping apprenticeship a few months ago, has decided to move on and to cancel his study course. This is a great shame, of course, but it is always possible that such a thing can happen. We are working with the Fort Augustus Community Company (who administer the scheme) and with the employer to see if there is anything else either party could have done to help Jake make a different decision and we will tweak the process accordingly if applicable.

Finance

Control of the Trust's finances, I am happy to say, is now rock solid. The Financial Control document, ratified some months ago, has already come into its own in helping us make decisions on how best to manage the comings and goings of income and expenditure. In addition, our new budget and cashflow system is providing Directors with a clear steer on spend against budget and we are thus able to make properly informed decisions on anything from the nature of grant spending to date to making possible large investments in salaries and/or builds etc. in the future. Your Financial Director and the Chair remain responsible to the rest of the Board for the quality of this financial management.

Encouraging new Members

In the 'Project Co-ordinator' Questionnaire pack you will also find a membership application form. We have taken the opportunity to include this to provide everyone in the community with the opportunity to become members of the Trust and thus play a part in the voting of Directors and changes in Articles etc. As Members yourselves, please do encourage anyone you know to join up, thank you.

And finally.....a new Chair.

Ed and his family have already moved back into Inverness and, because of other charitable commitments, Ed will be stepping down as Chair at the beginning of May. In our February meeting we will vote on a new Chair and he or she will then work closely with Ed to ensure a seamless handover of responsibilities.

That's it from me. Thank you for your continuing support of your Community Trust.

Kind regards

Ed



Ed Ley-Wilson

Chair

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