

**CHAIR'S BULLETIN
AUGUST 2015**

Dear Member

Welcome to your August Chair's Bulletin and I hope you have enjoyed your summer. We at the Trust have been very busy and I have detailed below our news and some of the events and changes that have occurred.

Following receipt of the first of the substantial payments from SSE, the Trust is pleased to be able to support our community even more and is taking every step possible to ensure this benefit is distributed to the community, by supporting as many individuals and groups as possible through our grant system. The Board is now also looking to ensure the future of the Trust and the community long-term by starting to investigate possible investment strategies so that our children and our children's children will still have a Trust to look to for support in the future.

Project Co-ordinator

The great news is that Steven Watson has now joined the Trust and is starting to have an impact. Steven has already met with some local groups and charities and has begun getting to know them and assisting them with ideas and projects. It is still early days so he hasn't had chance to meet all the groups yet, but if you're interested in meeting Steven to discuss plans, please contact the Trust.

The Village Hall Committee has kindly offered Steven use of the Hall as a meeting place to enable him to meet members of the community. The Trust is most grateful to the Committee for their kind offer. Steven will be able to hold regular drop in sessions at the Hall so that anyone from the community, whether a group representative or someone thinking about making a grant application but isn't sure how to proceed, can go along to the Hall and have a chat. There may also be a Director present to assist with answering other queries. Keep an eye on notice boards, public places or on the Trust's website and dates for these sessions will be published as soon as possible.

Grants

I am pleased to say that the number of applications for grants to the Trust seems to be increasing. The Trust of course would encourage anyone in the community to apply and there are various types of grants available, e.g. energy saving grants to improve the efficiency of your home or student grants for those in further or higher education. Constituted groups can also apply for larger sums so if you're thinking of buying new equipment, providing new facilities, improving the facilities you've got, organising educational trips or even just looking at your yearly running costs, why not see if the Trust can help? That's what it's there for.

The deadline for grant submissions to the December meeting is 21 October 2015 so you've still got plenty of time. Information, as always, is available on the Trust's website or you can speak to any of the Directors, the Trust Administrator or Steven Watson, our Project Co-ordinator. The Trust can't help if you don't apply.

In an attempt to encourage more grant applications, the Board has decided to consider grants on a more frequent basis. Rather than quarterly meetings, next year the Board will consider applications on a bi-monthly basis. Therefore, following December's grant meeting, the next grant meeting will be February 2016, then April, June, August, October and December.

Be aware however that there will still be a 6 week assessment process, so please don't submit an application on say, 15 January 2016 and expect to have it considered in February – it will go to April's meeting. This 6 week period gives us time for administrative checks, for directors to fully consider all the grant's supporting documentation and time to speak with both the applicant and the referee. Please do

remember that directors are all unpaid volunteers, many of whom also work full time, and therefore we need this time to be able to give applications full and due consideration. We hope however that by increasing the number of opportunities to apply, this will encourage more groups and individuals to submit applications to the Trust. Also, don't forget that constituted groups may now submit two grant applications a year.

Apprenticeships

Are you looking for an apprenticeship? Are you a small business owner considering taking on an apprentice but aren't sure whether you can afford it?

You may not be aware that the Trust is a member of an apprenticeship scheme, in partnership with Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston Community Company and the Glengarry Trust, which supports local businesses to fund apprenticeships. The Trust has set aside a specific budget for apprentices within our area. Ideally the placement would be with a business within Stratherrick & Foyers, however, if that's not possible say for example because there is not a particular type of business located here, the Trust will consider funding an apprenticeship based elsewhere, but the apprentice would have to live in the area.

Further information about the apprenticeship scheme is available on our website or if you would like to speak to somebody, please contact the Trust. One deadline has just passed, but if you are interested, please do speak to us. One of our most important objectives is to promote employment in our area.

Projector

Finally, just to advise that the Trust recently purchased a projector for use during meetings. It is also available for other groups to use if they wish. If you would like to use the projector, please contact me.

Thank you for your continuing support for the Trust and please do contact us to let us have your comments. We appreciate feedback from the community and if you have any questions or, even better, would like to be involved with the Trust, please do contact us.



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