

# STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY TRUST LTD



## Chair's bulletin November 2016

Dear Member

Welcome to the last Chair's Bulletin of 2016. The year seems to have passed so incredibly quickly! While I would usually use the Bulletin to give you a snapshot of what the Trust has been up to recently, this month I'm not. There will be a full report on the Trust's actions throughout the year at our AGM on 30 November 2016 so you should come along to that to find out what we've been doing.

This Bulletin I'm going to talk about one thing ... our **AGM** and the need for more community volunteers. Many members already attend local events and support not only the Trust but the other active groups in our area. It is however very often the same faces over and over again, and it doesn't really seem fair that a small minority should be expected to carry on all the work keeping this community cohesive while others sit and do little or nothing! We are a small community so living in an area like ours means that people have to contribute to it to keep it alive and well. Otherwise what's the point of living here?

If you've read your AGM invitation, you'll be aware that one third of the Trust's Board has to step down each year. The Board currently has 1 member director vacancy already and once 3 more directors step down, we will have 4 vacancies. Due to their own circumstances, only 1 of the existing Directors will be re-standing for election so, on the evening of the AGM, there will be 3 vacancies up for grabs on the Board. If those vacancies are not filled by new members nominating themselves, it will mean that there will only be 8 directors keeping the Trust active and that will put more and more time pressure on directors.

The Trust is actively working on 3 fairly major projects, as well as assessing grants every 2 months - that being the case because groups and applicants complained that they didn't get enough opportunities per year to apply for grants - so we increased the number of application opportunities, and directors have to use their time (all of this voluntarily) to assess those applications.

If the community as a whole does less and less, and the number of directors on the Board reduces, there will be only 1 loser and that's our community!

Don't think that if the Trust didn't exist the community would get the money, that's not the case. The money could not be given to the Community Council, it could not be distributed between residents, nor could it be distributed to the groups in our area. No, if the Trust didn't exist to deal with the community benefit funds, the money would have to go back to SSE. It would then go into SSE's Regional Fund and become part of a large pot covering the whole of the Highlands leaving our community groups to fight for whatever funding they could.

You might be reading this and think, so what?! If the Trust didn't exist that wouldn't affect me, I never get anything from the Trust! If that's what you're thinking then you'd probably be wrong! You may well benefit much more than you realise.

If the Trust didn't exist, there'd be:

- No new defibrillators
- No Stratherrick & Foyers News
- No Care Manager or Business Unit for Boleskine Community Care;
- No transport scheme;
- No free Foyers' Fireworks Display;
- No free Children's Christmas party;
- No more funding for children's ski-ing lessons;
- No more funding for children's school theatre trips, music trips, activity trips;
- No more funding for Seniors' Lunch Club;
- No more funding for the Brownies, Guides and Rainbows;
- No more help with Village Hall costs;
- No student grants to help your teenagers with further education costs;
- No energy efficiency grants;
- No more money-saving schemes like the recent Lightbulb Scheme;
- No more hardship grants to help the poorest in our community with essential items.

You might be surprised to learn exactly what the Trust does fund.

... and so (I may be bias) but I say, actually yes, the Trust is incredibly important to our community. You may know someone who says *"I'm not becoming a member of the Trust because I don't agree with windfarms"*, but the Trust has nothing directly to do with windfarms; we have no say in whether a windfarm is permitted or not. What we are here to do is to make sure that the funds that do "roll-down from the hill" are used in the best way possible for the long-term benefit of our community, nothing more.

To those who say *"I can't be a director, I'm too busy, I don't have time!"* I say *"So am I, so are the rest of my fellow directors!"* Many of us work full time, have children and/or still also sit on other committees/groups in our area. It's about making the decision to "make time" to give something back to the community we choose to live in.

To those who say *"I don't have the experience to be a director"*, I say that doesn't matter. Neither did I when I became a director, and now I'm the Chair. If you become a director you will be given training from both myself and Sharon Ferguson, our Vice Chair, on what it means to be a director, what your responsibilities are and all about our grants system. You won't be on your own, so don't let that stop you.

To those who say *"I don't think I should, I haven't lived here long"*, again, so what?! You have chosen to move here to be part of our community and that's what counts. Some may disagree with me on this one, so if you don't think people who have just moved here should be on the Board making the decisions, then it's time to nominate yourself.

If I have offended you reader, I apologise; this Bulletin is not intended to offend, but I feel passionately about this. I and my fellow directors contribute (voluntarily) a great deal of their time for our community and I for one don't want to see the opportunity we've been given with the community benefit funds just slip away through apathy.

So I say to those who have been thinking about putting in a nomination form but haven't got around to it, **JUST DO IT. The deadline for nominations is 16 November 2016.** In case you've lost the form, another copy is attached to this email.

There, I've said my piece ... but I'll leave you with one last thought. We are **Stratherrick and Foyers** Community Trust and yet we don't have a single director from Foyers.

See you at the AGM. Why not come and have your say on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Zoe Iliffe  
Chair  
Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust Ltd

#### **Trust contact details**

**Zoe Iliffe**, Chair  
[zoe-dir@sfctrust.org.uk](mailto:zoe-dir@sfctrust.org.uk)  
07907 747749

**Steven Watson**, Project Co-ordinator  
[pc@sfctrust.org.uk](mailto:pc@sfctrust.org.uk)  
07525 120966

**Laura Walker-Knowles**, Administrator  
[admin@sfctrust.org.uk](mailto:admin@sfctrust.org.uk)  
07464 394276

**Stratherrick & Foyers News**  
[strathnews@sfctrust.org.uk](mailto:strathnews@sfctrust.org.uk)

#### **Community Trust Directors**

Zoe Iliffe, Chair  
Sharon Ferguson, Vice Chair  
Frank Ellam, Finance Director  
SFCC/SFCT Liaison Director (*currently none*)  
Graeme Ambrose  
Peter Faye  
Stewart MacPhearson  
Hugh Nicol  
Gordon McAndie  
Ken Sinclair  
*1 Member Director vacancy*