

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED



Chair's bulletin February 2018

Dear Member

Welcome to the Chair's bulletin for February 2018. I hope this message finds you all well and looking forward to longer (and hopefully warmer!) days ahead.

As you will probably know, Zoe Iliffe stepped down as Chair at our last AGM and your Directors chose myself, Peter Faye, as the new Chair. Zoe will be a hard act to follow and gave several years' sterling service in the role, achieving much and moving the Trust forward in an important part of its evolution and financial growth. I am sure I speak for all the Members, Staff and Directors in offering her huge thanks for all her efforts.

And so to business! You will be aware that the Trust is now reaching one of the most important milestones since its formation, as the Stronelairg Wind Farm is under construction and the hugely significant financial benefits it will bring our community loom large. The final figures are yet to be confirmed, but it is likely to double our income for the coming twenty-five years!

Because of the significance of these funds, it is important that we, as a Community, demonstrate that we have the abilities to utilise them for all our benefit over the long term. It is also important that we show our desire to control how those funds are spent and that decisions are taken locally. We have a tremendous relationship with all our funders, but don't forget, their contributions are voluntary and they are not obliged to hand over the money! Our AGM was well attended and a very positive mood was evident, but if you know someone who isn't a member, I would ask you to encourage them to join – an increasing membership is a clear demonstration of local support and involvement.

The big question is – what do we do with all this money? Well, the answers must come from all of us within this community. The Trust has produced a document called "We can do it with Stronelairg and SSE". It is on our website at:

<http://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/We-can-do-it-with-Stronelairg-and-SSE-PJFpic-banner-i.pdf>

I would urge you to look at it and comment – or even better, add your ideas to the mix! I was recently very privileged to be invited to a presentation by our Girl Guides, where they demonstrated their ideas for projects in an extremely thoughtful and skilled manner. They had obviously spent much time, thought and effort and it struck me that we can all learn something from them. They were thinking of long term, sustainable, beneficial projects and my thanks to them not just for their ideas, but for their positive attitude and approach. Let's all follow their lead!

The next edition of the Stratherrick and Foyers News will be with you shortly and I hope it provides you with enjoyment and relevant information. I don't intend to provide any "spoilers", but would suggest that if you wish to raise a subject, or an idea, or a possible project, why not drop the Editor a line? We are always keen to promote local input – after all, it is our local publication and a great way to spread the word. You may not know that "The News" made the final three of "Community Newspaper of the Year" at this year's Highland Press Awards. Congratulations to the team that put it all together.

The previous Chair was in the habit of updating us all on the projects the Trust is currently involved with and I see no reason not to continue that, so here's the latest news.

BROADBAND

It would be fair to say that everyone has been surprised by the sheer scale of local demand for our Broadband scheme. Our appointed installer (Cromarty Firth Wireless Networks) has taken on several new staff to try and keep up, and whilst we are aware that it is taking some time to reach everyone who has requested the service, those who have been connected are delighted. We have been careful to roll out the service in a controlled manner, making sure it functions properly and reliably, which appears to be the case, and CFWN are now looking at expanding the network so the service will be available to more in the community. Details of this next phase will be available shortly and we will publish them as soon as we can. It will be worth the wait and my thanks for your patience. If you have any questions please see contact details at the bottom of this bulletin.

FOYERS BAY

We finally managed to conclude the legal documentation and I hope you will be delighted to hear that we, as a Community, are now the lease-holder of the land adjacent to Foyers Bay for at least the next twenty-five years. Plans are now advancing rapidly to turn what is a rather neglected area in to a first-class leisure facility for the whole community to enjoy. At last there will be a decent place to launch and store boats (of all shapes and sizes) and for everyone to enjoy some form of activity on or next to the loch, in a safe secure environment. As plans are finalised, we will publish them and look forward to your comments.

RIVERSIDE FIELD

Plans are now being finalised to create a safe, permanent access to the field and it is hoped this will be installed within the next few months. Once this is achieved we intend to formulate a number of suggestions, ideas and proposals for the field for the Community's consideration. If there is any particular facility you would like to see down there, let us know.

ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR BOLESKINE COMMUNITY CARE

As I write, we are about to complete the acquisition of the buildings and surrounding land that have become the home of BCC at Lower Foyers. This will permit BCC to expand and provide even more services to our Community. They are a splendid organisation and I am delighted we as a Trust and Community are in the fortunate position to be able to support their fantastic work. Once legal formalities are complete we intend to give the units a general facelift and then we can work together to shape them in to a facility fit for BCC's operations.

GRANTS

Please take the time to look at the range of grants the Trust is able to make. There have been some very positive changes recently, and our Grants Team have been giving the system an "overhaul" so that the various forms remain relevant and as straightforward as we are permitted to make them. I have heard of a couple of new exciting applications that are likely to come forward, so keep your eye on the website and Notice Boards (hope you all like the new ones, by the way!). Something I have noticed is that the majority of our applicants for "Groups Grants" are ladies. They really put the "male fraternity" to shame - so come on lads, let's hear your ideas!

Well I think you have probably either fallen asleep or wandered off to make a cup of tea by now, so that's enough for from me. Many thanks for your continued support and don't hesitate to get in touch with any comments or suggestions you may have – if you don't tell us, how will we know?

With best wishes,

Peter J Faye
Chair
Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust Ltd

Trust contact details

Peter Faye, Chair
peter-dir@sfctrust.org.uk
07907 747749

Steven Watson, Project Co-ordinator
pc@sfctrust.org.uk
07525 120966

Laura Walker-Knowles, Administrator
admin@sfctrust.org.uk
07464 394276

Stratherrick & Foyers News
strathnews@sfctrust.org.uk

Community Trust Directors

Peter Faye, Chair
Sharon Ferguson, Vice Chair
Frank Ellam, Finance Director
Jim Cameron, Liaison Director
Zoe Iliffe
Stewart MacPhearson
Hugh Nicol
Ken Sinclair
Garry Page
Julie Murphy
Caroline Mortimore