

# STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY TRUST LTD



## Chair's bulletin November 2017

Dear Member

Welcome to the last Chair's Bulletin of 2017. The year has passed by incredibly quickly and the Trust has achieved quite a lot in the last 12 months. I will be giving my full Chair's Annual Report at the AGM on 29 November 2017 so you should come along to find out just what's been happening.

You will have all recently received your AGM invitation including a Member Director Nomination Form. You may also be aware that one third (ie. 3) of the Trust's Board must step down each year at our AGM (although they may re-stand). The Board currently has 1 Member Director vacancy and, once 3 more directors step down, we will therefore have 4 vacancies to fill at the AGM.

This year I am one of the Directors who steps down. I do intend to submit a new nomination form to re-stand as a Director, however, I will be stepping down as Chair of the Board at the AGM. This is therefore my last Chair's Bulletin.

The Trust is working on 3 major projects at present as well as assessing grants every 2 months. Directors volunteer their time to progress those projects and assess grant applications. The Trust Board of Directors is made up entirely of volunteers. Many Directors also attend local events and support not only the Trust but other groups in our area. We are a small community so living in an area like ours means people do have to contribute to it to keep the community alive and well. Otherwise what's the point of living here? If residents don't come forward, and the number of directors on the Board reduces, there will be only one loser and that's our community!

I would remind you that, if the Trust didn't exist, the windfarm community benefit monies would not be distributed throughout our community. 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. If the Trust didn't exist, 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. That Regional Fund has limited accessibility and applications are only accepted for major projects. Therefore the smaller grants the Trust approves, such as student grants, funds for educational trips, ski-ing lessons, etc., they would all disappear.

The Trust is therefore 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.

I'm sorry but I'm going to repeat what I said this time last year because it still applies and it's still true, and I hear it said over and over!

*"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.

*"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.

**The deadline for nominations is 15 November 2017.** In case you've lost the form, a copy is circulated with this Bulletin. Copies can also be downloaded from our website or you can contact Steven Watson, our Project Co-ordinator, or Laura Walker-Knowles, our Administrator.

See you at the AGM. Why not come and have your say on the 29th.

Zoe Iliffe  
Chair  
Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust Ltd

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#### **Community Trust Directors**

Zoe Iliffe, Chair  
Sharon Ferguson, Vice Chair  
Frank Ellam, Finance Director  
SFCC/SFCT Liaison Director (*currently vacant*)  
Peter Faye  
Stewart MacPhearson  
Hugh Nicol  
Ken Sinclair  
Garry Page  
Julie Murphy  
*1 Member Director vacancy*