

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS NEWSLETTER

February 2022 Issue Number: 30

ERROGIE CHURCH COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

THURSDAY 10TH &
SATURDAY 12TH FEBRUARY



COMMUNITY
ACTION PLAN:
I CAN HELP
WITH THAT!

WILDSIDE PATH NEARING COMPLETION



and... US Fighter planes
over Stratherrick

CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT

Happy New Year to you all!

Last year we all put a lot of work into producing our Community Action Plan. This year I hope that we can all come together to deliver the actions from it, get involved in some exciting projects and start to see our aspirations become a reality. If you would like to be more involved, please get in touch and tell us which part of the plan you are interested in or have skills in to help things along.

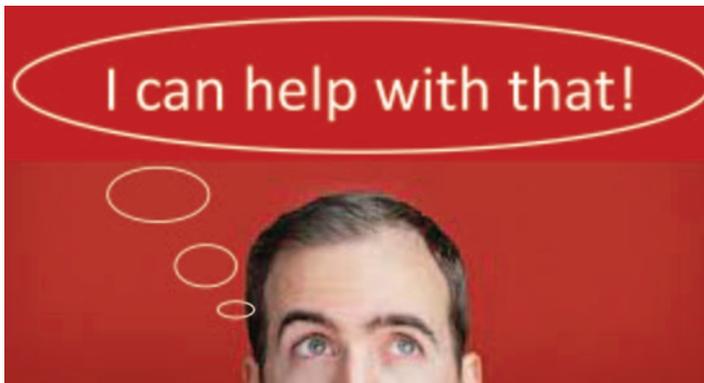
We have welcomed new Directors onto the Board and they are busy getting involved with the different projects we have on the go. It's always great to get a fresh perspective and new voices at our Board meetings, which make for interesting discussions! Please say hello and make our new volunteers feel welcome.

This year is set to become another busy one as projects move forward. Riverside Field and Foyers bay are heading to planning, the Errogie Church group is creating ambitious plans and applying for funding, and Wildside Centre is continuing to develop. We have welcomed our new Facilities Manager Steve, if you see him at Wildside Centre be sure to say hello; and we are looking to expand the staff role at SFCT to create a professional Development Trust who are in a strong position to support the community in what they would like to achieve.



We need your help in delivering the Community Action Plan, so please consider joining one of the action groups and begin to take things forward.

Kirsty Balfour,
Chair, S&FCT



I CAN HELP WITH THAT!

A Community Skills Audit Questionnaire is now available online and is currently gathering information.

There is a great deal of talent, experience and community spirit around Stratherrick and Foyers and members of the local community have been asked to register their skills.

Tony Foster, CEO of Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust explains 'We know that so many people around the district want to become involved with community projects. We need to link the projects we have with local folk who are able and willing to help with specific expertise or for particular jobs.'

Tony added 'If folk know they can become involved, even for a few hours on a specific task then they will have the confidence to come forward and likely join up with others who want to do the same.'

Tony said 'If you can contribute a few hours to do something you are good at, or to a project you have an interest in then please get involved and complete the survey.'

The on-line survey is very simple and is available to complete until Sunday 27th February. You can access the survey at this link here. www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SFCSkillsSurvey

Steven Watson,
Community Liaison Officer, S&FCT



COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN - THE NEXT STEPS

The Community Action Plan has been developed after six months of consultation engaging the community.

The Community Action Plan has focussed on five distinct areas – community life, outdoors and nature, getting about, our homes and organising ourselves. Some of these areas have impacts on others and to make them more logical we have moved some of the outcomes around (see below).

A NEW APPROACH

As a marked difference to how the community has organised itself in the past (using the Trust as a mechanism) we feel these areas should be retained as 'Community Action Groups' involving a Trust Director/s, staff member/s, community group representative, stakeholder groups, skill-based individuals and community volunteers. Many of these have been identified during the CAP Working Groups and Assemblies but if anyone has the skills and time they can contribute to these Action Groups.

PROVIDING RESOURCES

Resources should be directed at the objectives of the CAP and the aim of each Community Action Group is to meet those objectives. Each group will have an annual budget allocation from our funders (in the region of £10,000 in 2021-22 and approx. same a year beyond that). Project Planning Tracker will be used with task tracking tools and updated project reports on the website once a week for members of the community, Action Groups, Stakeholders and Board Members.

STAFF SUPPORT

The Community and the CAP identified staff support as a key requirement to support the work of the community and the volunteers. The Trust has put into place staff who will work across the Action groups to support the CAP outcomes.

They are;

Trust Manager TONY FOSTER – to oversee the organisation and move us forward in an objective and strategic way, engaging with relevant stakeholders and supporting staff and community volunteers.

Community Liaison Officer STEVEN WATSON – to support community groups, business groups and individuals by advising them of best routes for advice and funding. To pro-actively support groups and ensure we promote their impact.

Administration Officer LAURA WALKER KNOWLES – to work with the Board in ensuring audit trail of all decision making, support grant applications, finance and HR, maintain IT network and update our annual timetable of activities to ensure good governance. There are other Administration Officers in other organisations.

Project Co-Ordinator CAROLINE TUCKER – to project manage and advise on timelines, ensuring follow up of suppliers and stakeholders to maintain project timetables. To keep the Board and community informed of progress on all major projects.

Buildings and Facilities Officer STEVE MARSHALL – to ensure our service to the community through our estate and ensure we meet our health and safety and legislative

requirements. To manage sub-contractors and staff to ensure a quality of service throughout our estate.

Finance Officer CARLENE VINCENT – to ensure the financial stability and management of the organisation and report to all our stakeholders the financial position of the Trust. To advise us on the financial stability and viability of other groups and projects who are requested to meet the objectives of the CAP.

To produce an annual budget and ensure we remain on target to meet those budgets on an annual basis and oversee our investment portfolio for sustainability beyond the lifetimes of the windfarm/hydro projects.

Fundraising Manager (TBC) – there must be less reliance on grant funding from windfarm/hydro as the community expectations and legacy projects are developed. The Fundraiser will help raise capacity for the Trust and other groups in a co-ordinated way, using the community needs identified in the CAP as the cornerstone for each application. There is an expectation we hope to raise £4 million in five years for the benefit of the community.

We hope to take further staff on a project-by-project basis, pending funding. Supporting volunteers, communications and administration support are other areas that we could do with staff support for. Staff will not necessarily be managed by the Trust but could be, using the resources at our disposal.

POSTS FUNDED BY THE BOARD

The professional staff funded by community benefit funding that work within organisations such as BCC and SFCC will also support CAP activities outwith their normal duties. As with the Action Groups, organisations such as these will be able to draw on the shared staff services the Trust has put in place to help with their CAP related projects.

COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

The Trust will continue to have a Board with new Advisory Groups to support the Board and the CAP Groups. This will aid community cohesion across projects. These will be; Weekly Communications and Events Group – to co-ordinate marketing, communications, events and to co ordinate feedback on all activities.

Monthly Fundraising Group – to work with all relevant groups on raising funds to meet the objectives of the CAP, avoid duplication of funding applications and to monitor what has been applied for in a coherent and consistent way.

Monthly Finance Meeting – to monitor budgets for each group, recommend any changes to the budgets and co-ordinate local community grant

Weekly Business Meeting – weekly meeting of the Chair, Vice Chair, CEO and Finance Officer when required on all matters related to staffing and overall resources to meet the objectives of the CAP. To benchmark impact, monitor impact and make recommendations to the Board to ensure a robust and responsive organisation

Monthly Business Meeting - as above with SSE and other funders as appropriate.

Business Breakfast – with local businesses to support each other B2B and how we can support them and their business to create employment locally

Monthly Staff Meeting (Internal) – monthly meeting for all staff to deal with operational matters. There will be individual annual appraisals to assess if set objectives for the year are being met, training requirements of staff to meet those objectives if required and agreeing objectives in line with the CAP objectives.

Monthly Staff Meeting (External) – a weekly diary meeting to keep each group informed of activity and identify partnership working if appropriate. Likely to be between SFCT, BCC and CC in first instance

Monthly Community Forum – A hybrid meeting on the first Wednesday of the month to answer any questions from the community, community groups to come along and share what they are doing and to discuss a specific project if feedback is required.

Annual Community Forum – an opportunity once a year to get all stakeholders together and present the progress of the CAP, following a traffic light mechanism. To recommend parking a project if external factors have changed within the community. To come up with solutions to CAP objectives and celebrate success.

Annual AGM – Trust AGM to present the Trust Report and Financial Report of the Trust and answer any question of our members.

Monthly Board Meetings – with ownership of projects being ‘devolved’ the Board will be more strategic and less operational, ensuring the governance of the Trust meets the needs of the community and our funders.

CAP ACTION GROUPS

Each Group will be made up of a key director/s, appropriate Trust staff, community groups, stakeholders, key individuals (skills based) and volunteers to meet as and when (we advise at least once a month). These will be identified in consultation with Nick Wright and his team and a general call out to the community. These are not ‘meetings’ as such but are calls to action in whatever forum is appropriate for that group, individuals’ expertise and their subgroups. They should be action driven, coming to solutions to how to make things happen. Timelines of activity will be developed from each by the Project Co-Ordinator with SMART objectives of Specific Goals (aligning to the CAP) that are Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound. The Wildside Board Room will be provided to you free of charge to meet (extended into other rooms if required) or work from on a daily basis.

CAP Action Groups are responsible to meet the outcomes identified in the Community Action Plan. The first Action Group meetings are likely to be held at the end of February 2022.

WORKING TOGETHER

Those involved in the Action Groups will work together with the Board of Directors to identify resources required and meet a clearly defined set of outcomes, within a budget allocated to them on an annual basis. They will be responsible for ensuring a set of strategic goals, risk assessment, business planning, match funding, project planning and implementation of projects based on the outcomes of the Community Action Plan. Action Groups can call on the central resources of the Trust, as agreed with the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will oversee good use of said resources and will advise on and avoid duplication across the community if identified.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE ACTION GROUPS

Each Action group is accountable to the Board of Directors to ensure outcomes are met and undertaken within the governance structures of the community body (The Trust). Each Action Group will be made up of Directors, Staff, Group Representatives, Volunteers, Professionals with skills in the specific area (if funding allows) and External Community Stakeholders who can facilitate action.

In the first instance we aim for these groups to be introduced by CEO and ‘chaired’ by Nick Wright and his team to ensure active participation by everyone on the action group and to ensure they cover the outcomes of the CAP.

SUB GROUPS OR SMALLER PROJECT TEAMS

At times Action Groups can be made into sub groups or a smaller project team. Sub groups do not necessarily need a Director or Staff Member but must report to the Action Group (via email or meeting) to agree any expenditure of the Group Budget.

ROLE OF THE BOARD OF TRUST DIRECTORS

The role of the Board is to ensure clear objectives are set out by the Action Group and each set of Directors on the Action Group (with staff support) are part of the group to ensure due diligence is being met. However, they also have the responsibility to agree courses of action at Action Group level, based on a set of identified criteria, to allow projects to move forward.

Action Groups are accountable to the Board of Directors who can, at times, reverse decisions if it is felt they are not meeting the objectives in the Community Action Plan or there are significant risks, challenges or change of circumstances that prevent projects moving forward.

COMMUNICATION AND MONITORING

The Board and Community will be fully informed of Action Group activities via the website on a weekly basis and monthly via the magazine/newsletters. The Board will also monitor Teams discussions, Project Plans and financial planning and make recommendations as appropriate. Annually, prior to the Trust AGM, Action Groups will meet and share achievements and report how each project is going in a open Community Forum. A simple traffic light system will be used to advise progress.

EVALUATION AND MEASURING IMPACT

Each project will monitor itself with a simple Traffic Light system – RED if no action, AMBER – if in progress or delayed, Green – If achieved. This will be reported by each group at an Annual Community Forum (as listed above).

BLACK can be used if a project is defunct based on outside factors not known at this time.

Using an annual benchmarking exercise, with support from Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC), we will report back the impact on the CAP, of each Action Group and working together enjoy success or look to solutions to bring projects back on track.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

It is recognised conflict can happen between groups and individuals from time to time. The CEO will undertake an investigation, offer mediation and inform parties of agreed resolutions or recommendations once mediation has taken place. Mediation may be internal (by the CEO) or by an external body.

ACTION GROUP ACTIVITY

Under each Action Group is a summary break down of the Community Action Plans to take forward. More detail for each can be found in the final CAP document.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Retain Post Office and Shop

Local Community Hubs – steer purpose*

- Wildside Centre
- Errogie Club House
- Stratherrick Community Hall
- Inverfarigaig – land & forest classroom
- Foyers Sports & Leisure Facilities
- Torness – field sports club

(What Will Local Education Look Like)

OUTDOORS AND NATURE

Develop Playparks

Develop Community Woodlands

Employ all year Community Ranger Squad

Create employment by Tourism Development

GETTING ABOUT

Community Transport Initiative

Safe Walking and Cycling (To Schools)

Better Roads Maintenance and Signage

Paths and Places

OUR HOMES

Pre School / After School / Nursery Care

Specialist Care

Affordable Zero Carbon Community Homes

**Broadband

Planning and Public Services That Meet Our Needs

ORGANISING OURSELVES

Improve Community Communications

Help People Into Work

Support Volunteering and Volunteer Groups

*LOCAL COMMUNITY HUBS

Managing the development of the properties within the Trust's portfolio that form the network of community hubs will remain the responsibility of the Trust Manager and Board of Directors. Each property will have an accountable director. This approach has been chosen because of the complexities of developing the brief, obtaining planning permission, fund raising, managing the build and then the ongoing management and maintenance. Each property will have a steering group that represents all views of the community and will be chaired by a Board Director.

**BROADBAND

Development of the broadband strategy will be the responsibility of the Trust Manager and Board of Directors. This will be the case until the provision of broadband services are provided by commercial operators and no longer require the financial support of the Trust. Development of the strategy will be driven by Our Homes Action Group.

SUMMARY

The above report offers a simple structure to progress the CAP and the needs of the community. The aim is to engage everyone at all levels, any life stage and with any time commitment you may have on making things happen. If you have a question your first port of call will be the Trust Manager (or designate as projects progress). Contact Tony at tony-ceo@sfctrust.org.uk with any questions. 07734884320

To ensure the Trust and this structure are robust we have asked for external research to ensure we are fit for purpose to help deliver this project. Community Enterprise are taking this project forward during February 2022.

Tony Foster, Trust Manager, Kirsty Balfour, Chair and Gareth Jones, Vice-Chair, S&FCT

AMERICAN FIGHTER PLANE EXERCISES OVER STRATHERRICK

On Thursday 20 January the skies just above Stratherrick were in use as a radar and night flying training flight path for US jet aircraft.

The USA planes are based at RAF Lakenheath, near Ely, in the Suffolk and Norfolk. An official US spokesman told the BBC that the F 15 c Eagle flew over Scotland and avoiding populated areas. Low flying at altitudes are between 500 feet and 1000 feet. The aircraft fly at 500 miles per hour. The return flight path woke people up in Cumbernauld and Blantyre.

Steven Watson,
Community Liaison Officer, S&FCT



F 15 c Eagle aircraft from Lakenheath.

YOUR VISION FOR ERROGIE CHURCH!

With the festive season now behind us, the development of Errogie Church into a community hub is moving fast.

You should have the consultation with the whole community in your diaries. It will be held at The Wildside Centre, Whitebridge, between 5.00pm and 8.30pm on Thursday 10th February and between 11am and 2.30pm on Saturday 12th February.

This will hopefully provide a convenient time for everyone to drop by and give their views on how they would like the building used. The sessions are being run by Simpson & Brown, the architects developing the plans. They are keen to discuss with you three questions:

What events and activities should take place both inside and around the building? E.g., performing, music, quiz nights, book club etc;

What spaces should be provided? E.g. exhibition space, craft room, business centre etc.

How should it look and feel? What is the atmosphere you want to experience as you step through the door.

Fear not! There won't be long technical presentations (in fact you won't see a building design at all!) The Architects are planning a series of fun activities that will give you plenty of opportunity to talk about what you want.

The project's steering committee has developed a broad purpose for the building that will provide a framework for the consultation. They are summarised as follows:

Social hub for the locality: Doorstep facilities for the community to engage together in a range of activities.

Facilities for friends and families to entertain, hold celebrations that mark key events in family life

Reduce the dependency on seasonal tourism employment by providing an incubator for rural craft-based enterprises

Develop the knowledge and skills of the community, educating ourselves on the

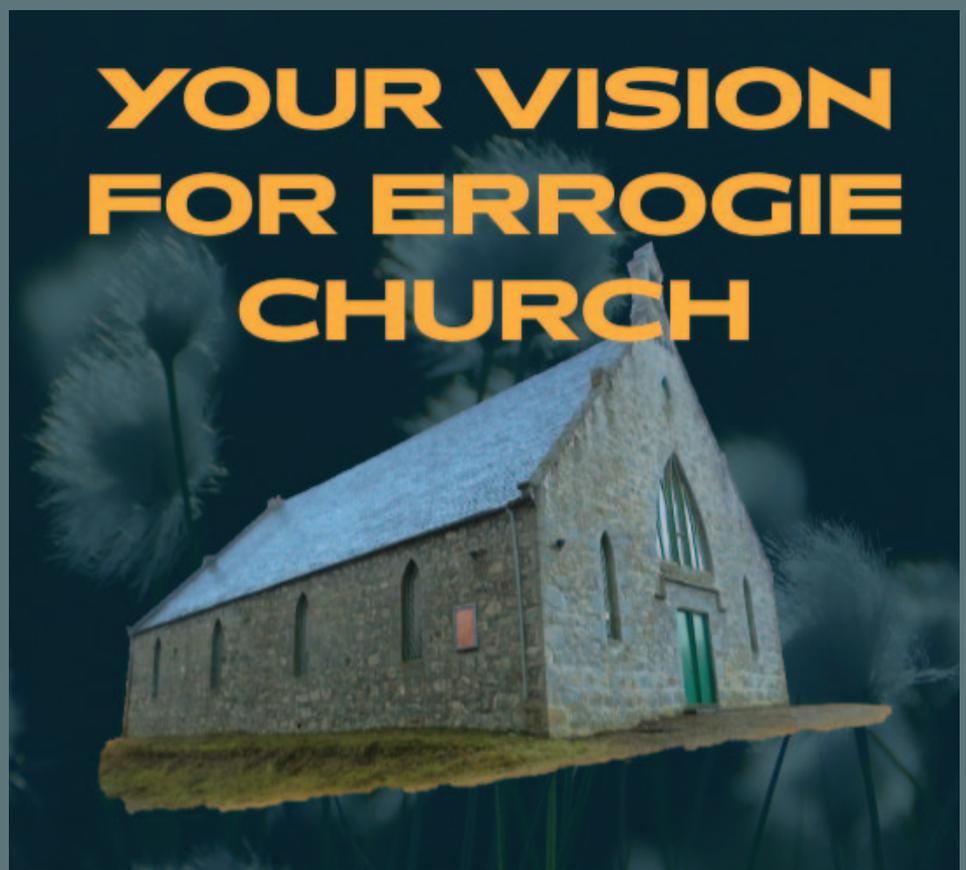
heritage, flora and fauna of the area and the challenges the future will present

We want to discuss the broad purpose of the building and hear what exactly you would like to see and do, what are the facilities that should be provided and how should the place be decorated and furnished.

There will also be the opportunity to talk about the role of all the buildings owned by the community. With Stratherrick Public Hall, Wildside, Riverside, The Hub, The Forest Classroom, we need to decide on the unique purpose of each building and what facilities, for example fitness equipment, should be provided in more than one place.

Meanwhile the plan to make the building wind and watertight is progressing well. The architects have drawn up a list of essential works that will be carried out during the summer months. The focus will be on making good the roof, bell tower, gutters, drains etc. elements that we can fix now and will not be undone when we do the full conversion.

Gareth Jones and Lorraine Lewis, Lead Directors, S&FCT



YOUR VISION FOR ERROGIE CHURCH

Come along to our Community Consultation event at The Wildside Centre!

The event is open to everyone across the whole community, so come along and grab a coffee and tell us about your vision for the future of the Church. The event will be held at The Wildside Centre, Whitebridge, Inverness IV2 6UN on the following dates:

Thursday 10th February 5pm - 8:30pm	Saturday 12th February 11am - 2:30pm
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RIVERSIDE FIELD PROJECT UPDATE

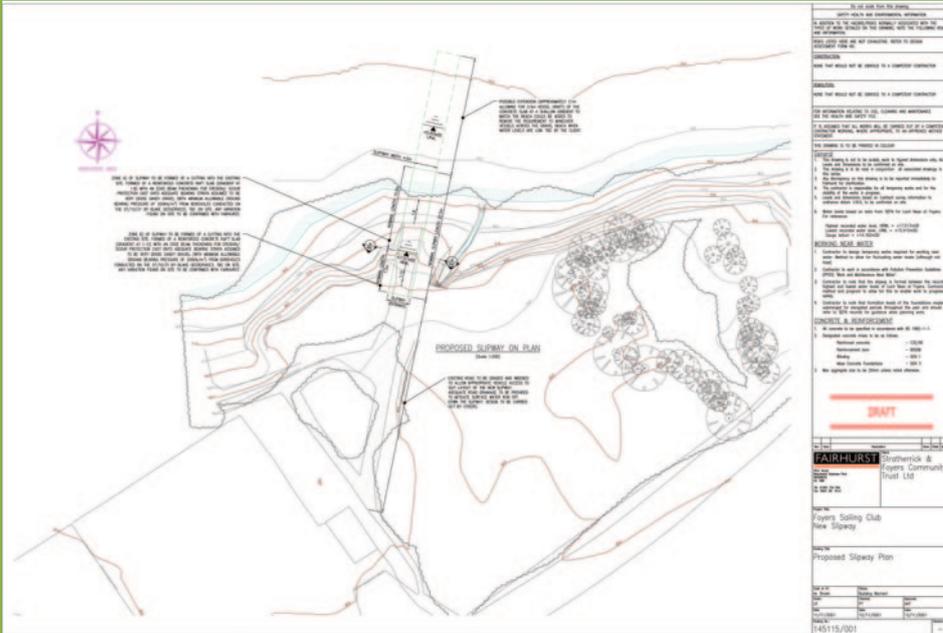
Riverside Field was meant to go to planning in December. The Trust signed off the processing agreement for this to happen.

Following a query to planning we discovered that our planning application had been withdrawn.

The Trust had done everything as asked. We agreed all the relevant changes within the Field. We agreed changes outwith the field, which included two parking spaces. This slight change was consulted on with nearby residents.

The issue had been potential pressure on the bridge and the Trust has agreed to cover a cost for this. This should mean the application will go ahead in February or March.

Tony Foster,
Trust Manager, S&FCT



FOYERS BAY PROJECT UPDATE

Work has been ongoing behind the scenes to prepare a planning application to provide a slipway at Foyers Bay. A draft plan for the slip way has been devised (shown here) and this was discussed with the Steering Group during the last meeting on 20 December 2021.

The group provided several ideas on how the design could be improved which have been taken into account by the designers, Inverness-based

Fairhurst Consulting Engineers. We are consulting with several professionals in this field including calling upon the knowledge of people locally. We wish to extend our thanks to those involved for giving up their time to support the project. Your help has been invaluable and much appreciated!

Once we are confident that the design meets the requirements of the community, we will go back to the Steering Group for sign off and press on as soon as possible with the Planning Application.

Lorraine Lewis,
Lead Director, S&FCT

WILDSIDE PROJECT UPDATE

Work has begun in earnest on the new path around the Wildside centre, and this is due to be completed by the end of January – thank you to Michael and Mark for all of your hard work on this.

Our next Steering Group meeting is scheduled for Thursday 24th February at 7pm and the main points on the agenda are:

1. Marquee
2. Further Landscaping
3. Interior facilities/equipment.

This will be a hybrid meeting, so if you would like to attend or have any ideas

for changes & developments to Wildside and the surrounding area, please contact Kirsty or Catriona by emailing kirsty-dir@sfctrust.org.uk or Catriona-dir@sfctrust.org.uk

Kirsty Balfour,
Lead Director, S&FCT



JOIN THE TRUST

If you would like to become a member of the Trust then please click the link.
<https://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/join-the-trust/>

EVENTS AT THE WILDSIDE CENTRE IN FEBRUARY

Soup to Go!	Every Monday from 12pm
Wildside Baby & Toddler Group	Every Thursday 9:30am - 11:30am
Monthly SFCT Board Meeting	Wednesday 2nd February
Needles & Pins	Tuesdays 8th & 22nd February
Errogie Church Community Consultation	Thursday 10th and Saturday 12th February
Wild Crafts	Saturday 12th February
Spin & Chatter Group	Tuesday 15th February
Closing date for grant applications	21st February 2022

HIRE THE WILDSIDE CENTRE FOR YOUR SPECIAL EVENTS & GROUP MEETINGS

2 EVENT ROOMS

Each can hold up to 84 people, one with kitchen access

1 MEETING/TRAINING ROOM

For up to 29 people



CONTACT admin@sfctrust.org.uk

MANY THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS... AND PHOTOGRAPHER

This newsletter is made possible by community benefit funding from SSE Renewables, Greencoat and Green Highland Allt Luaidhe (228) Limited.

Thanks also to Russell for his fab photos.

