

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS NEWSLETTER

September 2023 Issue Number: 45

OUR
COMMUNITY
HUBS



HOW CAN YOU
GET FUNDING

A WALK IN
THE PASS/T



and... ever fancied Line
Dancing?



Work on the Community Action Plan and the Place Plan now means we have a wealth of information about the direction the community wants to go. This is useful, as the last thing we want to do is open a facility that will not be used! But what are benefits for us beyond the activities within them?

Promoting Accessibility

Those visiting our buildings will be able to do so with relative ease. This applies to physical accessibility whereby improvements have been put in place to make it much easier for those with varying needs to enter and move around the building. For example, at Wildside we improved the walkways and have ramps out of fire exits based on your feedback.



The Wildside Centre



Errogie Church



Foyers Bay Slipway

Reducing disadvantage and exclusion

Many of the activities offered within our buildings are geared towards reducing social isolation and offering support to people who are facing disadvantage in its many forms such as living alone, living in poverty, suffering from physical or mental ill-health, disabilities, being a lone parent or having a care responsibility. For people who are unable to travel this would isolate them from key social and recreational activities and our 20 minute communities policy ensures that a building will be nearby for you to use and engage with.

Promoting Inclusive Communities and Employment

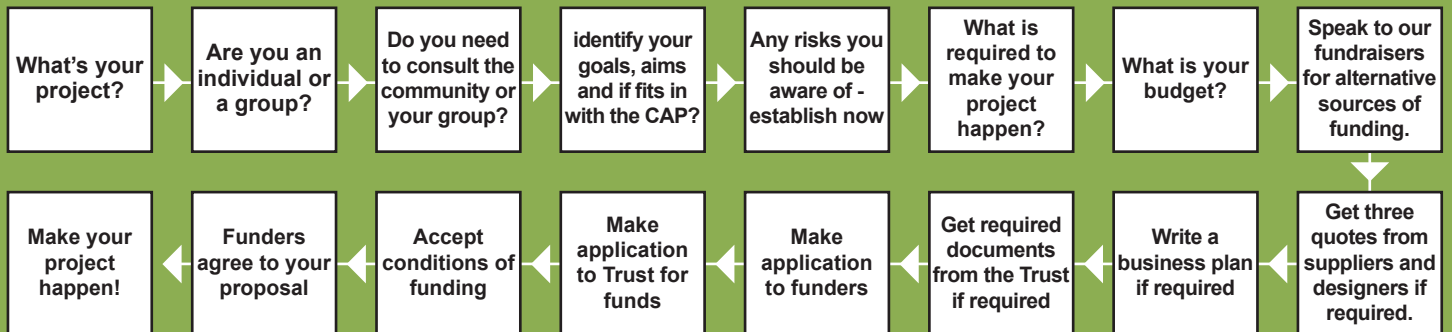
Community ownership of SFCT will safeguard the facilities and services as well as help to create new amenities which are in demand. It will also create new jobs, trainee and volunteering opportunities. Our community buildings will be the hub for community activity and it encourages people to work together with a shared purpose. It will empower the community to take control of the facilities and the services that they need and develop them to meet local demand. It enables those who are most isolated to increase their social involvement, and the intention is to expand this by implementing a bottom up programme of social and leisure activities.

Shared projects led by the community will help to build a stronger sense of local identity, pride, confidence, achievement

and belonging. Once completed this will be an example of what can be achieved when the community works together. The projects will provide multiple opportunities for people to get involved in their community. These changes will enable people to improve their confidence and self-esteem, as well as long-term health, and therefore leave them better placed to take advantage of other opportunities open to them.



Volunteer Thank you event at The Wildside Centre last year.



HOW TO MAKE YOUR PROJECT HAPPEN

The Trust is here to support making your project happen. We prefer projects to be volunteer led but we can support you if help is required and/or give examples of work by the Trust or other groups to help you.

For guidance on the grant programme please contact Steven Watson, Community Liaison Officer, at clo@sfctrust.org.uk – he will help you every step of the way, help with the application process and supply you with all contacts listed below.

For help with alternative sources of funding and small business plan advice our fundraisers will help you.

For help with your larger Business Plan our CEO will help you.

For help with suppliers and designers our Community Liaison Officer can provide you with details of local contractors.

For any governance documents that may be required our Administration Officer can help you.

For help with Project Planning our Project Officer or CAP Project Officer will help you.

For help in promoting your consultation process or promoting your project our Marketing and PR Team will support you.

HOW YOU CAN GET FUNDING

These tools funded by the Trust over the last few years - The Community Action Plan, Place Plan, evidence of need (such as a survey of your members), individual Development Plans/Business Plans (if your group is big enough to require one), your group's financial records over a period of time and your great idea – are all great anchor stones for attracting funding for any group across Stratherrick and Foyers. We have created a flow chart to show how this information can help you, your group and when to make an application for funding to meet our expectations.

Some funders may ask for more info, some less, but it all provides evidence of need, tells your story to the funding assessors and when all the stars align can lead to a successful conclusion.

If you are new to the area or feel you are an old hand then Steven Watson, our Community Liaison Officer, and our Fundraisers Sarah Byrne and Sharon Ferguson, can use your invaluable knowledge and skills and help your group apply for funding from the Trust or external funders if you wish us to. We welcome you all to make our community an even better place to live and work. I am heartened by how many groups we have

helped over the last year and how we have employed local businesses to achieve some of that work.

We are now offering this staff expertise to our own Trust Board so they can evidence need for projects they are involved in too (they always did, we are just improving the mechanisms now we have the CAP to work with). It can be a bit overwhelming and scary, but we will help the best we can. We used these tools to get external funding for our new Marketing and PR Team (Jillian Barclay and Calum Martin) and our CAP Officer (Robbie Burn). I understand the Strengthening Communities funder will come and speak direct to our Board and speak to the new staff members in the near future. A good relationship with your funder is important and we welcome this.

TSI Highland shared this advice this week – “Apart from whether you spent their money in full or have to return unspent funds, funders are generally seeking three key pieces of information:

- Outputs – e.g. how many people did you help?
- Outcomes – e.g. how did you change lives?
- Impact – how did the community benefit and what did you learn?

For more top tips on measuring success, go to Funding Information | HTSI main (highlandtsi.org.uk).

WHAT GELS IT TOGETHER?

A great Admin Team. We are losing Laura and looking for a new Admin Officer. This is a key role because Laura also evaluates all our student grants, keeps us right with grants for other groups, makes sure our AGM and IT systems are tightly run and supports the Board Meetings. She has also been leading on updating all our policies and ways we communicate with each group directly.

A great Finance Team. We've just split the role of Finance to a Bookkeeper (Susan Low) and Finance Officer (Fiona Mustarde) because the volume of transactions we deal with has increased and the responsibilities we have to our funders / budget monitoring which needs dedicated support from a Finance Officer. Believe me without Sharon working for the Community Council and our then Finance Officer Marie being in place to work on projects such as the Foyers toilets and Errogie Church (alongside all the other CAP Projects) it would have been very difficult for the community volunteers on the Community Council and the Trust Board to manage.

Of course most groups will not have this support but Admin and Finance is key. As your Trust has grown over the years, we seek external funding to meet the community's aspirations and as projects become even more complex we have found this a challenge for volunteers to do. So as you grow we say keep your eye on it and ensure there is consistency and continuity there.

Along the way we may all make mistakes. You may not achieve everything you want to do (Covid and Cost of Living Crisis don't help). We are all learning and on the whole we are achieving some great things and fighting above our weight for a community of 800+ people. At the very least ask us for advice if stuck and if we don't have the answer we may know someone who does.

Later this year we will do a presentation on this support for all groups. All together and with a positive attitude we can harness and improve great community spirit and make things (continue) to happen.

OTHER WAYS WE CAN HELP

Prior to making your application our new CAP Officer can help gather the information you may need (three quotes from suppliers etc.) if your group doesn't have the time or capacity to do so. We don't want to take away from the volunteering ethic, so we prefer if you did but if time isn't on your side then we are there to help.

This information means our Fundraisers can make applications on your behalf with all the information they need too (they have been doing both over the last year, which isn't ideal, so this extra support is useful for them too).

In the end you have to sign the funding document and be confident you can make your idea happen. The CAP Officer, Project Officer (Caroline Tucker) and Facilities Officer (Matthew Rhodes) can help support that too. As an example, one volunteer is very busy during the summer so doesn't have the time to arrange work that needs to be done, which may take four months or so. However, our staff can step in and make it happen within a shorter time frame.

Our Marketing, Communications and PR Team can then tell your story to the community and wider public via our website, social media, newsletters, magazines and media outlets. This will help other communities learn from what we do.

I HOPE...

...you find that useful.

PS Peter Leyden looks after the toilets at Foyers (thanks Peter) and we are looking for another cleaner, primarily for Wildside. If you are interested please send me a CV and covering letter to tony-ceo@sfcstrust.org.uk



SOUTH LOCH NESS HERITAGE GROUP

For a belated summer event the Heritage Group on Saturday 30th September will take "A WALK IN THE PASS/T".

Starting at Errogie Corner at 10am we will walk down the Pass of Inverfarigaig arriving at the shores of Loch Ness at approx. 1pm.

This 4.5km guided walk will look at the Geology, History, Archaeology/Past Industry, Mythology and General Anecdotes about the area.

This event coincides and will feature as part of the Highland Archaeology Festival 2023. If you intend to go, please contact Bob Main on 01456486317 for further information and to book a place on the walk. This is to enable us to assess numbers attending and to arrange logistics.

FANCY LINE DANCING?

Line dancing is a fun form of gentle exercise for both the mind and the body. For 3 weeks in September, we will be holding Beginners Line Dancing classes.



Class Dates are:- September 7th, 14th & 21st

Classes will be held weekly at the Wildside Centre in Whitebridge on Thursday evenings from 7pm -10pm.

Classes will be free of charge and will cover basic steps & dances.

Why not pop along, even for an hour?

If there proves to be enough interest in Line Dancing, we can look at continuing beyond September.

So dig out those cowboy hats and mosey on down. Even better, bring your friends.

If you are interested in joining us, or you would like further information, contact Lyn Woods on 01456 486786

CONGRATULATIONS TO BCC



A few weeks ago we read in their newsletter that Boleskine Community Care have got funding for their Community Service Co-ordinator from the Royal Countryside Fund. Congratulations and we wish Olivia Grant, who has accepted the role, the best of luck. As established groups like BCC become less reliant on community funds distributed through the Trust the more we can support other groups and volunteers to meet the many outcomes you identified in your Community Action Plan.

JOIN THE TRUST

If you would like to become a member of the Trust then please go to.

<https://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/join-the-trust/>

MANY THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS

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

