

## Applecross Community Company - Applecross Forum Update 23-09-2019

### 1. Applecross Community Land Use Plan (Plan It Applecross)

The Applecross Community Land Use Plan has now been published and you can find a copy on the ACC website or in the Community Hall. We would like to thank all those who have been involved in the community engagement process, led by PAS. This plan has been developed by ACC and The Applecross Trust, and is a community plan to be shared and delivered by all members of the Applecross Community.

This autumn The Highland Council will submit the plan to the Ross and Cromarty Committee so that it may be endorsed as at least “a material planning consideration for development management purposes”. Once this has been completed the plan could be sent to the Scottish Government where endorsement will be sought for the Plan’s adoption as Statutory Supplementary Guidance, thus giving it equal status to the Local Development Plan (WestPlan). This may warrant further discussion at the Forum or Community Council.

### 2. Affordable Housing Project

Following on from the Plan It Applecross Project, discussions were held in June with The Applecross Trust and The Highland Council to agree on potential sites which could be developed for affordable housing. Three sites were identified – Front of the hydro field, Clachan and Smiddy wood.

In September ACC submitted a funding application to the Scottish Land Fund (SLF) for £31,648 to undertake a feasibility study of the three sites. A response from the SLF funding is expected mid-October. If funding is successful, we aim to undertake the feasibility studies later this year.

A feasibility study will allow ACC to get as much information as possible about the assets and gain expert advice on which site is the most suitable and whether to proceed with the project. Any decision of land purchase would then be put to an ACC Members vote at an AGM or EGM.

### 3. Camusterrach Housing Project

ACC held an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) on Thursday 29th August and two Special Resolutions were passed by members’ vote for the purchase of the surgery land from the NHS Highlands and a loan of £60,000 from Apple Juice for the housing project.

ACC has been awarded £11,900 from the Scottish Land Fund to purchase the land adjacent to Applecross Surgery. Land acquisition is still in progress and we anticipate purchasing the land in the next few weeks.

ACC have engaged the Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust (HSCHT) to manage the project development on behalf of ACC. HSCHT have extensive experience in rural, affordable housing developments.

The project will go to Tender Stage next month and we anticipate awarding the Design and Build contract in December 2019.

### 4. Appleseed Allotments

At our recent EGM on Thursday 29th August a Special Resolution was passed by members’ vote for lease of land behind the hydro station for Appleseed Allotments. ACC have now signed this lease.



This month ACC applied for Climate Challenge Fund Stage 1 for the development of the allotments. ACC are actively looking for other funding opportunities for this project.

Further update to be provided by the Appleseed Allotments Group.

#### 5. Community Woodlands

In September ACC submitted a funding application to the Scottish Land Fund (SLF) for £9993.80 to undertake a feasibility study of Torgarve Woods. A response from the SLF funding is expected mid-October. If funding is successful, we aim to undertake the feasibility studies later this year.

Further update to be provided by the Community Woodlands Group.

#### 6. Shore Street Car Park – Community Asset Transfer

In June ACC submitted a Community Asset Transfer request to The Highland Council for the Car Park on Shore Street. Following concerns from the community, ACC asked for the application to be put on hold in July.

ACC have since discussed the project with the community at our EGM (29th August) and at the Community Council meeting (10th September), and have decided to put this project on hold for 6 months. Before progressing this any further, ACC will undertake a community-wide survey to ascertain the views and concerns of the wider community.

#### 7. Community E-bikes Project

ACC have been awarded £16,706 from Cycling Scotland and Energy Saving Trust for the purchase of 10 electric bikes for community use. The project aims to promote cycling in the community by increasing access to bikes and opportunities to cycle. Also included are maintenance training and engagement activities to encourage the uptake of cycling.

The e-bikes have been purchased from Volt Bikes and are to be delivered to Applecross 15<sup>th</sup> October. The bikes are all unisex and hybrid style. Thanks to the Applecross Community Hall who are arranging storage space for the bikes.

Further details will follow on how to sign up to use an e-bike. ACC are actively looking for volunteers to get involved in this project. If you are interested, please get in touch with Ros or an ACC board director.

#### 8. ACC Strategic Plan

Over the past two years, ACC have been developing a Strategic Plan for 2020-25. The Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) have guided ACC throughout this process. ACC undertook a Community Survey in 2018, the results were then analysed by SCDC and this provided us with a strong data base to develop our plan from. SCDC then led strategic workshops for the ACC board to work through community identified ideas and develop ACC's priority projects.

The Strategic Plan will be launched on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm at the Applecross Community Hall. Please come along to hear all about it. Following the launch event, we will be holding a 2-week consultation period where we welcome the community comments.

#### 9. Local Development Officer





ACC are currently recruiting for a second part-time Local Development Officer. Applications closed 7th September 2019.

#### 10. EV Charger possibilities for Applecross?

The Highland Council and Local Energy Scotland visited Applecross in September to chat about Electric Vehicle (EV) Chargers. The Highland Council even came in their electric car! The Highland Council are interested in installing EV chargers along the NC 500.

Initial discussions were about possible locations and power sources. Could we power an EV charger from green energy from the hydro station?



*promoting sustainable development in Applecross*