

Strathtay registers Community Right to Buy

The Strathtay Community Company, formed earlier this year by residents of the Perthshire village of Strathtay, today announced that it has successfully registered an interest in land bordering the River Tay under the Land Reform Act 2003. The community now has the right to buy approximately 25 acres of mixed woodland and agricultural land bordering the River Tay, should it ever come on the market.

"We are delighted to hear that Scottish Ministers have registered our community interest in this land" commented Roger Graham, Chairman of the Strathtay Community Company. "This is an important stretch of land within our village that we hope will one day be owned and protected by the community."

The community's aspirations for the land were submitted to Scottish Ministers as part of the application process. These include protecting and strengthening woodland and biodiversity in the area. The land already supports a variety of important wildlife, including protected species such as red squirrels and bats.

The Community Company is also committed to improving residential amenity and would develop a path network which would allow safe passage through the village. Plans also include the possibility of restoring a derelict building adjacent to the Tay as a potential viewing area to watch the canoeing at Grandtully rapids.

The company is currently looking at funding options and seeking further advice on how to manage this land should it ever come on the market and are contacting organisations such as Scottish Wildlife Trust and Community Woodlands Association to seek their input and expertise.

The company has also been set up to advance environmental protection or improvement such as the overdue designation of conservation status for the village. Strathtay and Grandtully were proposed as conservation areas in the 2000 Local Plan. A conservation appraisal exhibition will be held from 24th to 26th June at Grandtully Hall. All members of the community and surrounding area are invited to attend and show their support for conservation status. "As a conservation area there may also be ways we can assist the council to enhance the character and appearance of the village, such as repairing the War Memorial and the Iron Bridge" added Mike Jackson, one of the directors.

The company, which is seeking charitable status, wishes to invite anyone not already a member in the village to join as an ordinary member. The company also invites those living outside the village to support the company by joining as associate members. Forms can be downloaded from the website (www.strathtayvillage.co.uk).

Commenting, John Swinney MSP said:

"I am very pleased at the success of the Strathtay Community Company in its efforts in engaging the local community, both in its efforts to register a community interest in the land and its conservation proposals.

"It can be seen across Scotland that towns and villages reach their full potential when they have effective community organisations, ensuring things actually get done for the local area. In Strathtay we have that and it is excellent news for locals and visitors alike."

Note for Editors

Strathtay Community Company was set up to benefit the community of Strathtay Village following the principles of sustainable development. Community Companies are being encouraged at central and local government as a way of empowering communities by having people work together to make change happen in their community by having more power and influence over what matters to them.

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