

Kinlochard  
Community Life Plan 2022

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

We the Community of Kinlochard have come together and produced this Community Life Plan in order to set out:

- Those **Important Things** (see 1.1) we hold in common to be a vital to the lived experience of our Community, and which we aspire to improve and safeguard for future generations.
- Our **Core Principles** (1.2), **Themes** (2.0) and **Guidelines** (3.0) for local development and action over the next 5-10 years, which we have agreed will ensure our Community improves as a vibrant, cohesive, functioning and sustainable Place to live and work.

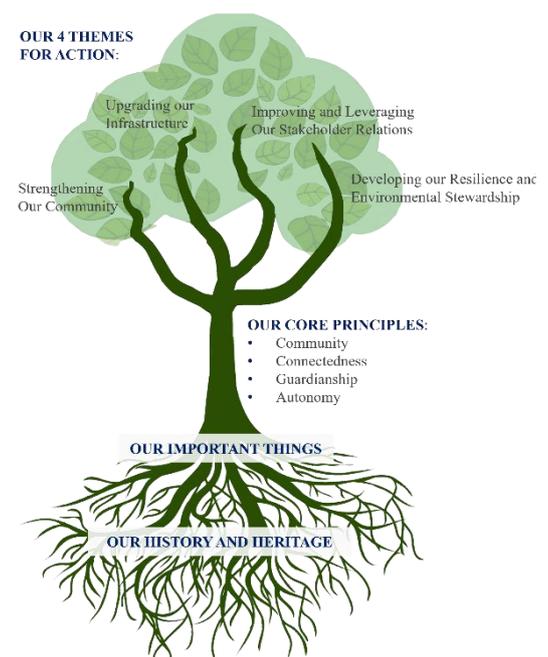
Our Community Life Plan has been created over five consultations and online questionnaires held in Kinlochard Ward between October 2018 and March 2022 (see Appendix A), involving the participation of over half of our (approximate) population of 150, including our youngest residents.

Our Ward has a rich history, with evidence of permanent settlement dating back to the Neolithic Age (see Appendix B). Our local mythology is rich in faerie lore and features at least two monsters. We have a long legacy of being outlaw country, populated variously by the Picts, Covenanters, the Rob Roy gang, and smugglers. However, we have also spent much of the last millennium under the yoke of Dukes and the Scottish feudal system. Arguably, our independence only truly emerged with development of the Community in the 1950s as a base for managing the new Loch Ard Forest, at which time we had a shop, pub, school and bus service.

While these facilities have since gone, the unique spirit and qualities of that independent Community endure to this day. Although we value our tranquility and privacy, we are good neighbours and have a vibrant community life centring on one of Scotland's best Village Halls, owned by and for the Community, including our annual Highland Gathering and Ceilidhs. We all share a deep love for our lochs, forests and hills, our local wildlife, and our dark skies, which we see as an essential part of our Community. Indeed, our surroundings feature some of the Southern Highland's most stunning scenery, including Lochs Ard and Chon, the Loch Ard Forest, the Falls of Ledard and the Black Linn of Blairvaich, the Glasgow Water Scheme's most spectacular Victorian aqueduct, and many iconic views of Ben Lomond.

It is from this history and the Important Things we share that we derive our Principles for this Community Life Plan, which in turn determine those Themes for Action which we believe will help us improve our Place. The metaphor of a tree is one way of thinking about these relationships.

We acknowledge that declining funds and political will to invest in our infrastructure is a challenge we face. At the same time, we recognise that new policies which support community empowerment represent opportunities for us to take greater responsibility for the things we value and care for here. Therefore, we aspire to work as a Community with stakeholders on improving the best of what we have, to become a more resilient, sustainable and attractive Place to live and work. We have a clear collective idea of what can be done and our Community Life Plan expresses our collective wish to



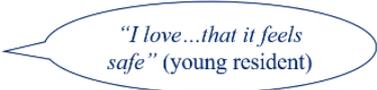
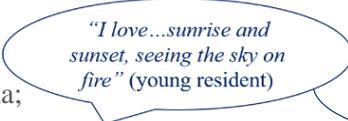
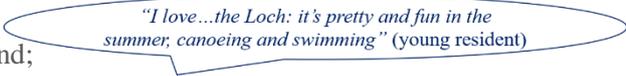
enact this, setting out practical objectives over the next 5-10 years. It represents our will to have greater say and control over the things that affect us and our cherished Community. It also demonstrates our love and care for this Place, which is our home. Our vision and values are clear. Despite the challenges of the COVID pandemic, we are continuing to put things into practice and seeing the changes we wish for come about in our Community.

Our Community Life Plan is broken down into three sections, wherein all things have been agreed by consensus, unless otherwise specified. In the remaining parts of the Introduction, we define those **Important Things** and **4 Core Principles** which provide the foundations of our Community Life Plan. In Section 2 we describe our aspirations for the next 5-10 years, under **4 Themes** for local action and development. In Section 3 we set out some **Guidelines for Local Economic and Housing Development** arising from these aspirations, which we have agreed can help ensure local development aligns with our Community Life Plan. Finally, there follows six **Appendices**, including details of the methodology used to develop the Community Life Plan; a timeline of Local History; two spatial planning maps which specify our preferred Exclusion and Development Zones; the outcomes of the young people's consultation; details on the amendments made to the Life Plan following collective deliberative processes in 2022; and lastly, on why Exclusion Zone B is a 'locally important area' by the Community.

## 1.1 OUR IMPORTANT THINGS

We have agreed by consensus the following **Important Things** which are an essential part of the lived experience of this Place where we work and make our homes, and underpin our health and well-being. As such we aspire to improve and safeguard them for present and future generations.

Our **Important Things** are:

- **Our Unique Community, and its special spirit and qualities** which include:
  - Our true sense of belonging (rare in the modern world);
  - Our good neighbours and friends, who are supportive yet non-intrusive;
  - Our small size;
  - Our safety for all and our family-friendliness; 
  - Our cleanliness;
  - Our feeling of being remote, yet accessible;
  - Our rich local history and heritage, and Loch Ard History Society (see Appendix B);
  - Our play park (young residents);
  - Our Village Hall and Field and related events, the hub of our community life.
  
- **Our Cherished Natural Environment**, an integral part of our Community, including:
  - Our Lochs Ard and Chon;
  - Our forests and hills; 
  - Our wildlife: flora and fauna;
  - Our beautiful views and sense of openness;
  - The open spaces and native woodland in and around our village, which provide; important habitats for cherished and vulnerable non-human residents;
  - Our clean air and water;
  - Our freedom of access to the land; 

*"I love...that it feels safe" (young resident)*

*"I love...sunrise and sunset, seeing the sky on fire" (young resident)*

*"I love... 'adder field' opposite the cottages" (young resident)*

*"I love...the Loch: it's pretty and fun in the summer, canoeing and swimming" (young resident)*

- Our outdoor activities, such as walking, cycling, wild swimming, sailing and fishing, and Loch Ard Sailing Club and Aberfoyle Angling Protection Association.
- **The Tranquility and Dark Skies** which are by general consent agreed to be essential to the experience and wellbeing of our Community.

## 1.2 OUR CORE PRINCIPLES

There follows **Four Core Principles** which provide the foundations of our Community Life Plan, and measures for any kind of related development or community activity:

- **Community:** Does the development or activity complement and/or strengthen the special and unique quality of our Community such as we have described in our Important Things?
- **Connectedness:** Is the development or activity (or are we) increasing and strengthening our bonds with our neighbours, our links with external stakeholders relevant to our Community Life Plan, and to the broader world beyond us, so as to a) improve the integrity which underpins our Community's healthy functioning, and b) increase our capacity to respond to and unite around opportunities and threats?
- **Guardianship:** Is this development or activity (or are we) amply mindful of the fragility and detail of our local natural and historical heritage, and of our responsibility to safeguard this, and the life-giving qualities it provides for posterity?
- **Autonomy:** Do we (or how can we) have a level of influence over this development necessary to ensure to the extent possible that our Community flourishes, and becomes, according to its own essential nature, as articulated in this Community Life Plan?

*"I love...our  
Community feeling"*  
(young resident)

*"I love...that everyone  
knows everyone"*  
(young resident)

*"If I were in charge...I would  
have more animals and  
wildlife"* (young resident)

*"Lack of freedom...would prevent  
Kinlochard becoming the perfect  
village"* (young resident)

## 2. OUR FOUR THEMES FOR ACTION

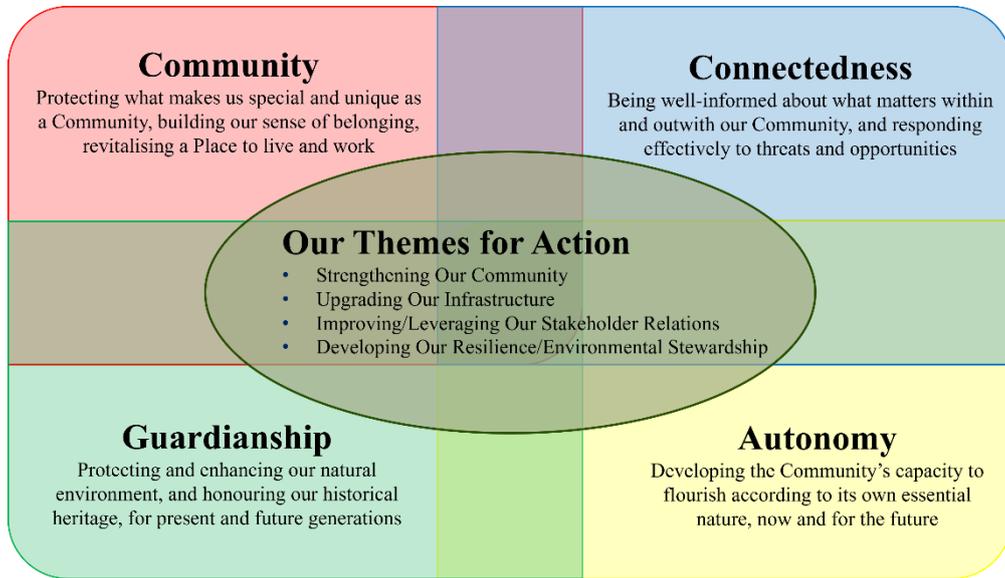
Our **Four Themes for Action** set out in greater detail our aspirations for improving our Community. These are (1) Strengthening our community; (2) Upgrading our infrastructure; (3) Improving and leveraging our stakeholder relations; and (4) Developing our resilience and environmental stewardship.

The graphic overleaf illustrates the relationship between our Core Principles and Themes for Action. It demonstrates how our Principles guide the activities within each Theme and, in turn, how the activities can strengthen and enhance these Principles in our Community.

Our Principles also act as a lens, through which we can better understand the kinds of actions we want to see in our Place. As each Principle also relates to the others, we want to demonstrate how each

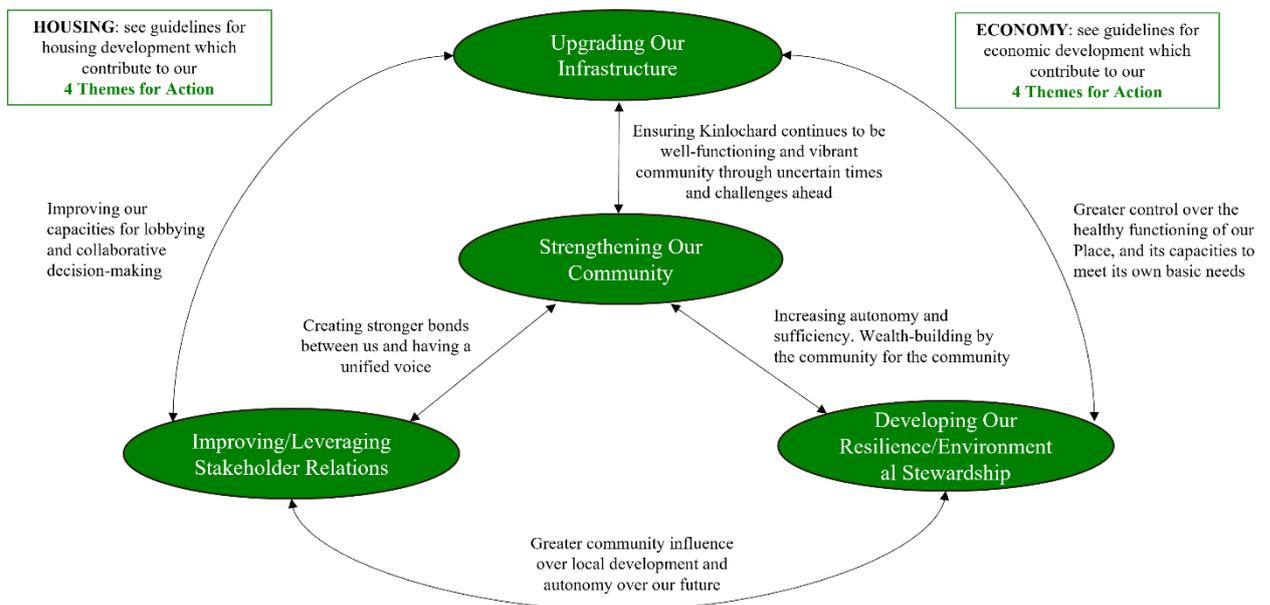
Theme and Principle are intrinsically interdependent. By understanding these relationships and acting in accordance with them, we believe that our Community will grow and prosper in a genuine and sustainable way that is beneficial to all.

We hope that all within our Community and any non-resident will consider our Place in this holistic way, before deciding on or carrying out any activities and developments here.



It is equally true that our Themes are intrinsically related to one another and must not be seen as being distinct.

The diagram below demonstrates how each Theme depends on and has knock-on effects on every other. We ask that anyone with an interest in carrying out any activities with potentially lasting impacts on our Community, familiarise themselves with these relationships. Without an integrated understanding of each Theme and their interrelationships, and interdependencies, we believe the necessary social, economic and environmental regeneration needed here will neither happen effectively nor sustainably.



## 2.1 Strengthening Our Community

Our unique and special Community is our most cherished asset, and one of our foundational Principles. It is the people who have chosen to make this Ward their home and the relationships we have created around the Important Things we share, that makes this the loved Place that it is. We are acutely aware of the fragility of our Important Things and the potential for this fragility to be misunderstood or underestimated by external parties. To address this, we have defined clear guidelines on appropriate and inappropriate development zones and types (see 3.0 Our Guidelines for Economic and Housing Development, and the Appendices), and the infrastructural upgrades we feel are necessary to provide solid foundations (see 2.2 Upgrading Our Infrastructure).

At this time, we hold a strong general presumption against any housing in the Ward until such time as a genuine local need arises. We believe such a need should be underpinned by a sustainable local economy, and both need and economy first require infrastructural upgrades to support them. Without these antecedents and guidelines, we have genuine fears that development could cause irreversible harm to our Community's integrity, sustainability and healthy-functioning. Of positive note, are the broadband improvements in recent years -a top priority from the 2019 Community Life Plan- which have since driven significant, albeit 'hidden', economic development in the Ward by enabling home-run online businesses across the Ward.

As well as defining our aspirations and guidelines for external parties, we recognise the onus is also on us to continue to strengthen our Community from within, to nurture our spirit and Autonomy, and to cater for some of the things we feel we lack. Our cherished Kinlochard Village Hall is recognised by all to be the principal foundation stone and enabler of these aspirations, and our most treasured single community asset. We fully acknowledge our responsibility to help and support their ongoing efforts to bring the community together, and to provide a crucible for sustainable development ideas by the community for the community. A single priority seems insufficient to communicate the fundamental value and contribution the Hall represents to the community, so it is important to articulate our recognition of this upfront, and emphasise the unanimous strength of feeling and consensus behind it.

Towards co-creating a better Place to live and work, we see the importance of creating more opportunities to organise and socialise together, to build and reinforce the bonds which unite our Community. We recognise the need to make space to discuss and agree a unified position on important matters and to develop our plans for community action, so that our Community Life Plan remains a living process. We desire to be better informed about local developments and opportunities and quicker to respond to them, which we believe requires a more effective communication system within the Community, as well as improved links with stakeholders (see 2.3 Improving and Leveraging Stakeholder Relations). We also acknowledge that improvements to our governance structures may be needed, to help coordinate and facilitate Community Life Plan activities, while upholding the Principles.

In this regard, we identify **6 Priority Areas** important to building a better and sustainable Place to live and work over the next 5-10 years, which together will strengthen the fabric of our Community as a whole through collaboration and wiser collective decision-making and action:

**2.1.1 Guidelines for Economic and Housing Development:** in the event that a local need or demand for development should arise, and our infrastructure is sufficient to support and enable it, we have agreed by consent clear guidelines on appropriate and inappropriate development zones and types (see 3.0 Our Guidelines for Economic and Housing Development, and the Appendices), to help ensure the

things we value most are enhanced or unharmed. We also specify the infrastructural upgrades necessary to provide the solid foundations for our Community, our Community Life Plan, and a sustainable independent local economy (see 2.2 Upgrading Our Infrastructure).

**2.1.2 Supporting and working with our Village Hall:** we recognise its inestimable value as the social and economic hub of the community, and the transformative potential this represents for us. We maintain the possibility it might be a venue for ‘pop-up’ developments (shops, pub, markets etc.) which may offer a way to support local entrepreneurs, while providing services we currently lack. Social events such as pub, music or film nights, or other celebrations, continue or were suggested as ways of strengthening community, while potentially raising funds to support our other aspirations and activities.



**2.1.3 Holding regular Community meetings:** we recognise that if our Community Life Plan is to remain an enduring living process which achieves our aspirations, our Community needs to gather more frequently. Ongoing engagements since the initial consultations have enabled us to keep better track of what is happening and how well we are doing, and to adapt our Community Life Plan in response to changing local needs and circumstances. The Community Life Plan consultations have established a precedent for ‘community meetings’ and we can continue to use this format for updates and making decisions on developments and other issues that affect us all. Equally, it is evident that the Community Life Plan requires the weight of the Community to carry it, as it does at this time. Without this, the Community Life Plan will stagnate and fail to bring about those improvements we have articulated as vital to building a better Place to live and work over the next 5-10 years.

**2.1.4 Community Action and Activities:** we see the importance of creating more opportunities to organise and socialise together, to build and reinforce the bonds which unite our Community. Some ideas put forward by residents include:

- **Activities for families and children:**
  - Improving play facilities and park.
  - Family-friendly social events and activities.
  - A local coop providing outdoor nursery care for young children.
- **Economic development for the community, by the community**, including shops, farmers markets or pubs, or schemes to address community energy and food security (see also 2.4).
- **Volunteer action to protect and enhance the environment (see 2.4).**

**2.1.5 Establishing a Communication System:** we continue to recognise the need for and to develop a more effective communication system within our Community, and with other communities, on matters which affect us all. These matters may include planning applications, community news and activities, the policy environment, or development grants. Our goal is to be able to effectively and efficiently disseminate and share information quickly among all residents who want to be better informed and to enable a rapid, effective Community response to emergent opportunities and threats. We also aspire to progress the steps we have taken to have better communication with neighbouring communities, and others further afield such as could help promote information sharing and learning around shared objectives, such as enabling dark sky status, or community right-to-buy, housing or energy schemes.

**2.1.6 Improving Community Governance:** as a community, we shall continue to explore the most effective approaches for developing and facilitating a non-hierarchical system of governance -and which may include the current CLP Working Group and Project Action Groups- such as can ensure cohesive progress of our Community Life Plan, and uphold our Principles. Needs addressed could include ensuring effective communications and open transparent decision-making, coordinating and supporting activities, keeping the Community Life Plan fresh and responsive to changing needs and circumstances, and ensuring the continuing active participation of young residents.

## 2.2 Upgrading Infrastructure

We have a strongly held aspiration for basic improvements to our general infrastructure, sufficient to enable and support a thriving Community, and to the levels presumed by modern life and business. Basic improvements are also required for our roads which suffer from potholes, driving and parking issues which endanger pedestrians, and flooding on the B829 which annually cuts us off from the outside world. With regard to this, we have agreed there is an urgent need at such times, to re-establish an emergency forest route to allow for access to work and essential services. Another priority is our electricity and water infrastructure, which is equally outdated and overburdened. An underutilised local plant may represent opportunities to improve our local sewage system and water environment if sewage is found to be a significant pollutant. We are in unanimous agreement that infrastructural improvements should not be implemented so as to enable or justify new economic or housing developments. This position is underpinned by the genuine concern that without better strengthening our Community as a Place to live and work, inappropriate developments could disrupt and harm irreparably its essential nature and integrity. Moreover, any new development which is not first preceded by infrastructural upgrades may have similar consequences, by putting intolerable pressure on systems which are already unfit-for-purpose. Therefore, our consensus view is that the improvements proposed here should be viewed only as providing the basic foundations our Community needs to function healthily and sustainably, and to fulfil the aspirations of this Community Life Plan. They will better equip us to cater for residents living and working locally, now and in the future. They will also help us develop a sustainable local economy, while making us more accessible and attractive for those young families we will need to revitalise and energise our Community in the years to come.

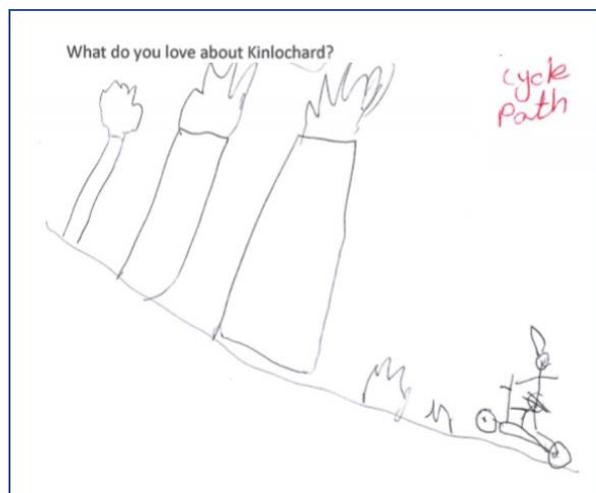
Our **5 Priority Areas** for upgrading infrastructure are:

**2.2.1 Roads and Access:** While we feel strongly our roads should not be widened, there are areas which do require attention, of which the first takes priority:

- **Seek agreement with Forestry and Land Scotland for an emergency access/egress route, along with usage procedures,** for emergency and essential services and responsibilities during periods when the public road is closed.
- **Flooding Issue:** there are several points on the B829 between Kinlochard and Aberfoyle, which can be rendered impassable by flooding after heavy rainfall. Specifically, these are the lochside stretches immediately to the east and west of Altskeith House, and a section between Milton and Aberfoyle.
- **Pot-holes:** we want to see better maintenance of pot-holes on the B829 and the road to Lochard Cottages, which cause vehicle damage, and can be a danger to cyclists and drivers.
- **Move the entrance to the playpark** such that drivers have visibility of children crossing the road to the Village Field (and on account of at least two near misses).
- **Better Community Transport:** Priority reinforced due to unreliability of DRT since loss of Buchanan Cabs and increased frequency of bus cancellations.

**2.2.2 Mobile and Broadband:** While there is a downgrading of the urgency of broadband improvements (now achieved), a new priority was added to lobby for a service provider to take responsibility for the Ledard mast towards improving the local mobile signal.

**2.2.3 Sewage Treatment:** Assessing the levels, sources and mitigation of sewage impacts on loch water quality, potentially through a citizen science project (see 2.4). If sewage is found to be a significant pollutant, evaluate connection with the sewage treatment works beyond Forest Hills to establish whether the impacts of this would constitute a net environmental benefit.



“Cycle Path” (young resident)

**2.2.4 Cycle Trail from Aberfoyle, and Public Footpaths:** some would like to see a better cycle trail developed between Aberfoyle and Kinlochard (*\*one strong objection noted*). This would give visitors the option to take day trips here via the forests and Loch without creating additional road traffic. The new Gravelfoyle project may serve to improve access. Others propose seeking consultation with Forestry and Land Scotland on development and improvement of public footpaths. Particularly, this includes those marked on OS maps but which no longer exist or are impassable (e.g. the one which follows the aqueduct) particularly since recent storms, to link up tracks or provide more interesting walks.

**2.2.5 Electricity and Water Supply:** we would welcome upgrades to our overburdened electricity and water infrastructure, which was designed for a smaller community and has not received any significant improvement for decades (e.g. many still receive their water supply via lead piping). See 2.4 for our aspirations regarding renewable community energy).

### 2.3. Improving and Leveraging Stakeholder Relations

We want to have greater say on the significant issues that affect us and our Ward. We feel that more devolved decision-making for Kinlochard Ward will support it to become a vibrant sustainable Place to live and work. As residents, we have a unique perspective on our Place and Important Things, because they are integral to our day-to-day experiences and constitute an inseparable part of who we are as a Community. As such, we are best placed to assess and ensure that improvements preserve what's essential and best about life in the Ward. We also believe developments may take place that do not align with our Community Life Plan, unless we unite and act as a vigilant Community. Since the original 2019 Life Plan the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a significant increase in visitor numbers to the area. This has put enormous pressures on our Community, both in coping with the realities -litter, excessive cars, antisocial behaviour- and in the possibility of economically-extractive and environmentally-harmful tourist developments seeking to capitalise on these. Many fear such developments represent an irreversible turning point for our resident Community and Life Plan at a critical point in its history, turning us towards becoming yet another tourist village when it is imperative we build our cohesion, commonwealth and resilience from the inside out in preparation for uncertain times ahead (see 2.4). Unlike many other villages in Strathard and the National Park, we have thus far been able to maintain an identity and economy independent of tourism, and a significant majority of residents wish to preserve this to the extent possible. It is the reason why many young people chose to move and make lives and businesses here, and the largely invisible result is a thriving non-extractive local economy which brings huge benefits to the area. As such, in this updated Plan we introduce as an overriding priority the need to coproduce a coherent Visitor Management Strategy for Strathard, which channels visitors to those communities dependent on the tourist industry, and helping them to cater to and capitalise upon the greater numbers. In this, and the other priorities, we see the importance of building better relationships and collaboration with those stakeholders with interests relevant to our Ward or to progressing our Community Life Plan. We also recognise our responsibility to play a greater part in decision-making and lobbying, to further our Community Life Plan and to reflect our Community's position and weight of opinion effectively and democratically. One such position is our desire for policy measures to preserve our treasured dark skies in the Ward, for posterity, which is we see as a win-win in its benefits for residents and visitors alike.

Our **4 Priority Areas** for enabling improving and leveraging our stakeholder relations are:

#### 2.3.1 Developing a Coherent Visitor Management Strategy:

- **Broader Collaboration of the Community with the relevant authorities around an effective response to a radical increase in tourist numbers.** A desire was expressed for the coproduction and agreement of a coherent strategy and action plan around appropriate solutions to visitor pressures. Such conversations are already taking place under the facilitation of some residents, but the need for broader participation and deliberation is recognised following the consultation.
- **Preserving our Quiet Loch:** Actions to prohibit or deter launching or use of any craft with an engine of size, power, noise or speed which is incompatible with the continued safe and peaceful enjoyment of the loch for visitors and swimmers.
- **Strategies for directing visitors to areas of Strathard with a tourist focus and facilities:** Particularly, those which have been developed at Loch Chon since our original Life Plan.
- **Citizen research to better understand and communicate visitor pressures.**

- **Strategies for dealing with antisocial behaviour.** Littering, fires, irresponsible camping, noise, and human excrement. It was suggested that the grassroots community ranger model employed by Milton over the last the two tourist seasons -for the friendly welcoming of visitors and communicating of local ‘rules’- could provide insights.
- **Suitable parking.** Where choice of locations is informed by a broader strategy for channelling visitors to where they are more needed or better catered for, rather than where they park currently, thereby inadvertently feeding the problem we currently face.

**2.3.2 Connecting and collaborating with stakeholders with an interest in the Ward,** around aspects of our Community Life Plan relevant to local planning and development. Particularly, we intend to continue our strong relationship with the Strathard Community Council (SCC) and the Strathard Development Trust (SDT) who are core representatives and enablers of our Community and Community Life Plan. Ways in which we shall achieve this is via ongoing active representation and / or more regular attendance in meetings by residents. We also require structures which make it easier for the whole Community to access planning information, and to establish a common position on issues, for the SCC to represent on our behalf. As a proactive community, we also aspire to form better and closer partnerships with the National Park and Stirling Council, as our local Planning Authorities, and with other local landowners and businesses. In this update, we emphasise the importance of better collaboration with Forestry and Land Scotland and Scottish Water around local emergency access, clearing and development plans, and to encourage a spirit of collaboration around our Community Life Plan.

**2.3.3 Exerting community pressure:** to motivate improvements, ensure these align with our Community Life Plan, and to overcome a lack of will to invest in local infrastructure and services. We recognise a need to come together to engage, lobby or work with our political representatives or bodies on particular issues. Important to this is building relationships with the SCC and the National Park Authority, as well as Stirling Council, our local MPs, MSPs, and Councillors. We need to organise better to ensure the view of our Community is properly represented and communicated, and to work harder for our voice to be heard.

**2.3.4 Promoting and protecting our dark skies:** (*\*one objection noted*) there remains strong agreement that our dark skies are one of our Important Things. Our views of the stars, planets, Milky Way, meteor showers and occasionally, the Northern Lights, grow scarce in the modern age. We therefore, shall continue our work, via our Dark Sky Action Group, to link with other Strathard communities towards promoting our dark skies, and seeking opportunities to formalise conditions such as to preserve our experience of them for present and future generations of residents and visitors.



**Leaflet by the Kinlochard Dark Skies Group 2022**

## 2.4. Developing our Resilience and Environmental Stewardship.

We aspire to greater independence and influence over those decisions which determine the future of our Community, thereby ensuring improvements exemplify and reinforce our Principles and Community Life Plan. The more we can exercise and ensure our Autonomy, the more we feel confident in the future development and sustainability of our Place. This motivates us to continue to develop our existing community assets, and also explore the benefits of bringing others, including local land, under community ownership. We believe the support and opportunities associated with the Place Principle and Scottish Government legislation around Community Empowerment, Planning, and Land Reform, including Community Right-to-Buy schemes, can help us achieve our aims. Such initiatives can help address the lack of control we sometimes feel to protect and enhance the Place we love and make our home. These feelings have been materially reinforced in 2022 by the ever-deepening cost-of-living crisis and the growing evidence of climate change. These will continue to worsen, and are the cause for deep and legitimate concerns about the fragility of our Community, our lack of self-sufficiency regarding the essentials, and the urgent need to bolster our resilience. Such fears are exacerbated by what we perceive to be a decreasing lack of will and public funds to invest in rural communities. Community-owned assets (including land) could turn this around, enabling us to develop in ways which are sustainable and serve the common interest, while protecting our cherished natural environment and providing opportunities for collaboration. This underpins a strong aspiration to have community ownership of land which is important for sustainable development or integral to our Community life and cultural identity, and which we are actively seeking to actualise through Right-to-Buy bids. We will continue to explore the potential for enabling community energy and food projects, to bolster the Community's economy, security and independence, and mitigate the imminent threat of fuel and food poverty arising from the cost-of-living crisis. The acquisition of common land could also offer the flexibility and capacity to lead on Community provision of housing or other sustainable developments, thereby ensuring these align with our Community Life Plan. Community housing models may provide the only route to affordable homes which could enable local young people to stay in the area and get on the property ladder. These initiatives for the Community, by the Community, could not only help us generate income and become more self-sufficient, resilient and sustainable over the next 5-10 years, but increasingly seem fundamental to this. Our achievement in turn will increase our Autonomy over and strengthen our community around certain aspects of our lives and Place.

We have **5 Priority Areas** for developing our community assets;

**2.4.1 Community Right-to-Buy Land or Assets:** The context of the cost-of-living crisis and the climate emergency has reinforced our collective aspiration to explore purchasing important areas of land in the Ward for sustainable development by the Community, for the Community. Since the 2019 Life Plan, our interest in two areas of Land in Exclusion Zones 1 and 2 have been successfully registered with the Scottish Ministers through the Community Right-to-Buy scheme to carry forward the other priorities set out here. Some have suggested potential benefits of community ownership of the Village Field and the Wee Blether as a community enterprise.

**2.4.2 Community Energy and Food Generation:** we may support projects which make sustainable non-harmful use of our plentiful natural resources (e.g. district heat, mini-hydro or wind schemes), while lowering energy costs or providing income for the Community. Schemes would need to be appropriately located and sized to safeguard our Important Things. In 2022, dramatic increases in energy and food prices -a trend which looks permanent and set to worsen- as well as new carbon reduction policies, have caused serious concerns about local energy security and cost of heating, electricity and food. We will continue to progress our exploration of community renewables options

or cooperatives with the Strathard Development Trust and other communities in the area via our Community Energy Action Group.

**2.4.3 Volunteer Action to better understand and restore our Natural and Water Environment** in our updated Plan, this priority is increased in urgency and expanded on account of the increased threat we perceive to our native habitats and loch on account of potential developments, increased visitor numbers and evidence of the effects of climate change, and includes:

- **Citizens Science Research to assess Loch Ard quality and any potential causal factors**, where evidence of deterioration includes several incidences of “Swimmer’s Itch” in 2022.
- **Forest management projects for native and broadleaf tree replanting and reducing water acidification in Loch Ard**, aligning with and acknowledging the commitment Forestry and Land Scotland are showing to working with communities on similar projects, and the emerging evidence on the importance of soil preservation and non-disturbance on climate emissions.
- **Wildlife audits to better understand and care for local biodiversity and habitats**, through progressing the work begun by our Ecology Action Group.
- **Community litter picks**. Of which we have carried out two since the first Life Plan covering the area from Milton to the T-junction to Stronachlachar and Inversnaid, to clear up the significant amount of rubbish left by tourists.
- **Maintenance of local paths, hedges and verges**.

**2.4.4 Medical Services.** The loss of the Aberfoyle surgery and its move to Buchlyvie, means a 35-mile round trip from Kinlochard, which can be onerous for elderly or infirm residents. During periods of heavy flooding or snow, and with the closure of the forest road (see 2.2.2), we have no access and emergency services cannot easily reach Strathard. We note the number of helicopter call outs for the village in recent years, and the possibility of exploring agreement of landing pads within easy reach of the residences. As such, since the 2019 Life Plan, evidence of need and the ever-worsening situation around our access to the medical services upon which a functioning and healthy rural Community depends, means we commit to maintaining a focus on mitigating the risks.

**2.4.5 Community Enterprise and Housing.** In this updated Plan we emphasise our aspiration to provide more opportunities and spaces in Strathard for young people and local entrepreneurs to live and flourish here. Should a genuine local need or demand arise, we recognise our civic responsibility to assist in the provision of social or affordable housing, or live and work units. In such an event, the Community may consider leading on such projects ourselves, rather than leaving it to external developers who may not understand or respect our Important Things and Principles, and whose profit margin requirements may preclude the kind of development we need. Such projects include the ideas “for the community, by the community” put forward for working with our Village Hall, e.g. social events, and pop-up shops or markets etc.

### 3. GUIDELINES FOR ECONOMIC & HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.1 Economic Development

Our criteria for appropriate economic development are listed below. These set out what we see as our community's most important economic development considerations in the area. They are also part of our wish to have greater say in the decisions that relate to local economic development, to ensure our Important Things are protected and improved, and that economic progress aligns with our Principles, and supports and strengthens our Community as a Place to live and work.

##### **Guideline Planning Criteria for appropriate local economic development:**

- **New economic development must be preceded by basic infrastructural upgrades** necessary to support a living and working Community (see 2.2 Upgrading Our Infrastructure).
- **Exclusion zones** for new builds and economic developments (see Appendix C)
  - Around Loch Ard's shores (*\*two strong objections noted*), preserving our 'quiet loch' status, ensuring motor-based watersports don't disturb the tranquility of our Place.
  - Within and around Kinlochard village, unless:
    - It is agreed by consensus to be by the community, for the community.
    - Increases economic value of the Village Hall and/or other community assets.
  - Strong protections for the wild shores of Lochs Chon and Dhu.
- **Economic Development Zones** (see Appendix D):
  - **Aberfoyle:** Agreed by consensus to be the most appropriate and logical hub for local economic/commercial development and regeneration over the next 5-10yrs, given its existing profile, infrastructure and services.
  - **Forest Hills** (north of the road/Lochside Exclusion Zone): Agreed by consensus to be the most appropriate and logical zone for new economic development within the Ward over the next 5-10 years, given the Hotel and other existing developments here.
  - **Loch Ard Forest:** May be appropriate for environmentally-sensitive community energy projects, communications infrastructure, outdoor or educational activities/services, or improved cycle routes or links with Aberfoyle.
  - **Kinlochard Village Hall:** Generally recognised to represent potential opportunities for economic development by the Community, for the Community.
- Makes non-harmful use of outdoor environment.
- Outdoor Education services, such as a Forest School.
- Capitalises on existing tourist traffic, without increasing it.
- Enables young and aging local populations to stay in the area.
- Supports independent local businesses and/or provides stable local employment.
- Improves enabling technology infrastructure.
- Promotes community cohesion and resilience.

#### 3.2 Housing Development

While the Community holds a general local presumption against new housing development at this time, the criteria and conditions for what we feel is appropriate local housing are listed below. These constitute our agreed definition for appropriate or desirable kinds of housing development should a genuine and specific local housing need or demand arise. They articulate how we closely link appropriate housing with protecting, enriching and rejuvenating our special Community. For us,

housing need or demand should be driven by sustainable local economic opportunities, and preceded by the basic infrastructural upgrades necessary to support development. If these prerequisites are not in place, then development will only weaken our existing Community and overburdened infrastructure. Nevertheless, should an identifiable local need or demand arise, we believe it important for our Community to be able to provide social or affordable housing for families or people who meet the desired criteria. In the event of this, we believe there should be a focus first on reutilising or renovating unused local housing stock, and/or on the completion of any dormant-yet-granted housing proposals, before any consideration is given to new-build developments.

### Guideline Planning Criteria for appropriate local housing

- **New development must be preceded by basic infrastructural upgrades** to support a living and working Community (see 2.2 Upgrading Our Infrastructure).
- **Exclusion zones for new builds** (see Appendix C):
  - Around the shores of Loch Ard  
(*one exception was noted which involved the downsizing aspirations of long-term local residents, and located some distance from the shore*).
  - Within and around Kinlochard village.
  - Strong protections for the wild shores of Lochs Chon and Dhu.
- **Zones which may be appropriate for new-builds:** some single dwellings in the Loch Ard Forest such as between Duchray Cottage and Castle or around Stronmacnair; or to the east of the Ward where Aberfoyle is easily accessed for services and employment (see Appendix D).
- Forest dwellings which are unobtrusive, inconspicuous and ‘work with’ their surroundings.
- Housing that supports local families or enables young and older residents to stay in the ward.
- No social-dumping or decanting from other areas, people must genuinely want and choose to live in Kinlochard ward, over and above other areas.
- Residents are able to support themselves, and access the facilities, services or work they need, taking account of the limited range of public services in Kinlochard and the local area.
- Satisfies clearly identified full-time employment need in the immediate area.
- Housing for long-term permanent residents, not short-term/transient residents or staff (*\*one strong objection noted*).
- Should arise from a thorough and transparent local needs analysis arising from these criteria.
- Should be driven by a genuine and specific local need identified by such an analysis, and not by a statistical need, e.g. quotas or waiting lists at a wider regional level.
- Meeting a need must involve first investigating and seeking to utilise existing assets (e.g. empty / holiday homes, restoration of ruins etc.), or dormant housing proposals granted, such as for 24 houses near the Forest Hills Hotel, before embarking on new development.

*“More houses would change the village, and make it crowded, noisy and the roads unsafe for walking and cycling” (young resident)*

### Guideline Planning Conditions

- **Location** must be sensitive to the views of others and the visual character of the community.
- **Number / size of new builds** limited to single dwellings at given location (see Appendix D).
- **Design:**
  - Sensitive to character of existing local buildings.
  - Using local resources / materials (or ‘sweets’: young resident).
  - Sympathetic to the setting and sustainable: works with the environment.
  - No streetlighting or bright outside lights, to preserve dark skies.
- **New Developments cannot restrict current access routes** to the natural environment.

*“If I were in charge...I’d have houses made of sweets” (young resident)*

## APPENDICES

### **Appendix A: Overview of Kinlochard Community Life Plan Process**

The Kinlochard Community Life Plan is the outcome of a resident-led consultation initiated by Strathard Community Council. It has been created over three Village Hall consultations and three online questionnaires held in Kinlochard Ward between October 2018 and January 2019. There followed an action planning meeting in September 2019, and the formation of a number of action groups to take agreed priorities forwards. The COVID-19 pandemic impeded progress and caused changes in local conditions which necessitated a review and update of the Plan. This took place in March 2022, again with the direct participation of a majority of residents in the Ward. The present version is the outcome of all that was discussed and agreed.

The process was designed and facilitated by the Community Chartering Network (CCN), in collaboration with a Workgroup of 10 residents, which was chaired by an Associate Community Councillor and included two young facilitators, aged 17 and 18 years old. Another resident assisted in the design and programming of the online questionnaires.

The process began in August 2018, when the Workgroup was recruited and convened to oversee and support the consultations, and ensure maximum participation. The goal for the Workgroup membership was that it should to the extent possible be representative of the population of the Ward as a whole. Over the course of the consultations, each member took direct responsibility for engaging and communicating with a specific number of residents in a particular geographical area. For the first consultation this entailed knocking on every door in the Ward, to encourage participation in the process, and gain contact details and consent for all related communications.

The first consultation also entailed a parallel **Young People's Consultation**. This was entirely designed, facilitated and analysed by the two young Workgroup members. It featured two components: a consultation at Aberfoyle Primary School involving the Ward's youngest children, and another for secondary schoolers which immediately preceded the first main consultation. The two young facilitators presented their main outcomes at the outset of the consultation, thereby putting the views of the Ward's young people front and centre stage of the Community Life Plan process.

All consultations were followed-up by an outcomes document written by CCN and all participants were invited to amend or object to any part of these written summaries. Online questionnaires for those who could not attend the consultations were created to establish levels of consent for outcomes agreed, and to allow for further contributions and comments for inclusion in the Community Life Plan. Between the consultations and online questionnaires, around 80 residents have directly inputted into the Kinlochard Community Life Plan, representing around 55% of the electoral roll (or around 70% if these attendees are regarded to also represent the other members of their household on the electoral register).

The consultations covered a wide range of issues and subjects relevant to the Ward. They began with a look back over the history and heritage of the Place from the geological past to the present (see Appendix B). This aimed to put into context and shed light on the current conditions and nature of Place in order that residents could reflect on the present and consider the future. The primary focus of the consultations was to give space for us to discuss significant developmental issues and to find consensual points of agreement on what was most important to the life of the Community, which was then used as a basis for articulating shared aspirations for future local development and action. Unless otherwise specified, only what has been consensually agreed by residents has been included in the Community Life Plan document.

We are aware that this Community Life Plan document represents a ‘snap-shot’ of the Community’s aspirations and wishes at its time of creation. The Community Life Plan itself is seen and understood as a process of engagement and activity, rooted in and guided by the aspirations expressed in this document. We have acknowledged to update the Community Life Plan document as and when this becomes necessary and to treat it as part of our process of community-building and Place-making, rather than as an end point in itself.

## Appendix B: Timeline of Our Local History & Heritage

700million years ago

### Prehistory

**700m BC** In the Southern Hemisphere Gondwanaland split to form Iapetus Ocean Upon which sediments from living things gather

**430m BC** Three continents collide (England, Scotland and the Baltics) forming Highland Boundary Fault, pushing up rocks into a colossal mountain range (with 'gold' intrusions).

### Ice Ages

**400,000-5000 yrs BC** - Loch Lomond cutting valleys, cut off Inveruglas from Loch Arklet. Whole area covered except Ben Lomond. Due to isostasy and ice melt, sea reaches to Duchray castle and Loch Lomond is sea loch.

5000yrs BC

### The Three Ages of Early Civilisation

100 yrs BC

### Stone age

**c.3000yrs BC** The sea retreats from Aberfoyle and on the fertile soil grows a forest of giant oaks

### Bronze Age

**c.2000yrs BC** Cup and Ring marked stones – Ledard

### Iron Age

**c.1000yrs BC**  
Lochard Crannogs

0AD

**Romans and Early Mediaeval**

1000 yrs AD

**AD 70-211 Romans**

Romans cut down large swathes of the giant oak forest, which is a hiding place of the Caledonians

**AD211-1000 Picts (the painted people)**

Kingdoms and small farming communities: sheep and pigs, wheat, barley oats and rye, where cattle and horses were a sign of wealth and prestige. Celtic religion. Hunting with dogs and falcons. Tattooed warriors. May have rebuilt crannogs. Possibly in the kingdom of Fortriu

1000yrs AD

**Mediaeval Period**

1500yrs AD

**Normans**

Change of land ownership from clan culture with common land to ownership by the Crown where estates were 'granted' or 'forfeit' by Royal decree to chieftains

**Grahams**

**1362-1425 Murdoch Estate**

Duke Murdoch castle  
DM regent while James was captive and was executed upon his release

**c.14<sup>th</sup>-c16<sup>th</sup>** Large areas of the Caledonian Forest cleared for farming and later for charcoal for iron bloomeries

**1427 Earldom of Menteith (Grahams)**

Hunting forest, while bulls, wolves ,boar, deer

Beginnings of **local iron industry**: bloomery at Stronmacnair / Tinkers Loch)

**1485 Drumlean and Blaivaich**

lands given to Campbells and in 1560 passed to Duke of Argyll by marriage

<b>Grahams</b>		<b>Montrose</b>
<p><b>Feudal crofting system until 1750:</b> tacksman work for the estate who manage poor crofters, living with the animals, farming strips of land (gray oats, bere, flax and pease, small sheep and cattle). Remains of large farmsteads at Gartnerichnich, and tenant farms at Blairvaich, Blairhullicahan, Blairuskinmore). Paid a duty to the Laird and starved in difficult years.</p> <p><b>c.16th Ledard Farm:</b> old barn dates from c17th and farmhouse from the c19th</p>	<p><b>c.17<sup>th</sup>:</b> Covenanters outdoor services (in opposition to English Episcopalian Services)</p> <p><b>1653 &amp; 1654:</b> Battles at the Pass of Aberfoyle, Duchray pushing back Cromwell's army and then losing</p> <p><b>1671-1734: Roy Roy.</b> Evicted by Montrose, aligned with Breadalbane: Rob Roy's cave, Echo Rock, Ledard, Legend of the Kinlochard widow</p> <p><b>1680-1880:</b> Graham's oakwoods (largest in Scotland) become commercially viable and large scale coppicing begins</p>	<p><b>c.18<sup>th</sup> -c19<sup>th</sup>:</b> Smugglers and illegal whiskey stills, Teapot nicknamed for illegal drinking / gambling house</p> <p><b>1750-1850</b> Clearances and move to large sheep farms begins. Aberfoyle parish: population between 1750 – 184 falls by 895 to 549</p> <p><b>1750</b> Corn mills: Chon, Ledard, Bruach Carouin, Miller of Chon tutelage</p>

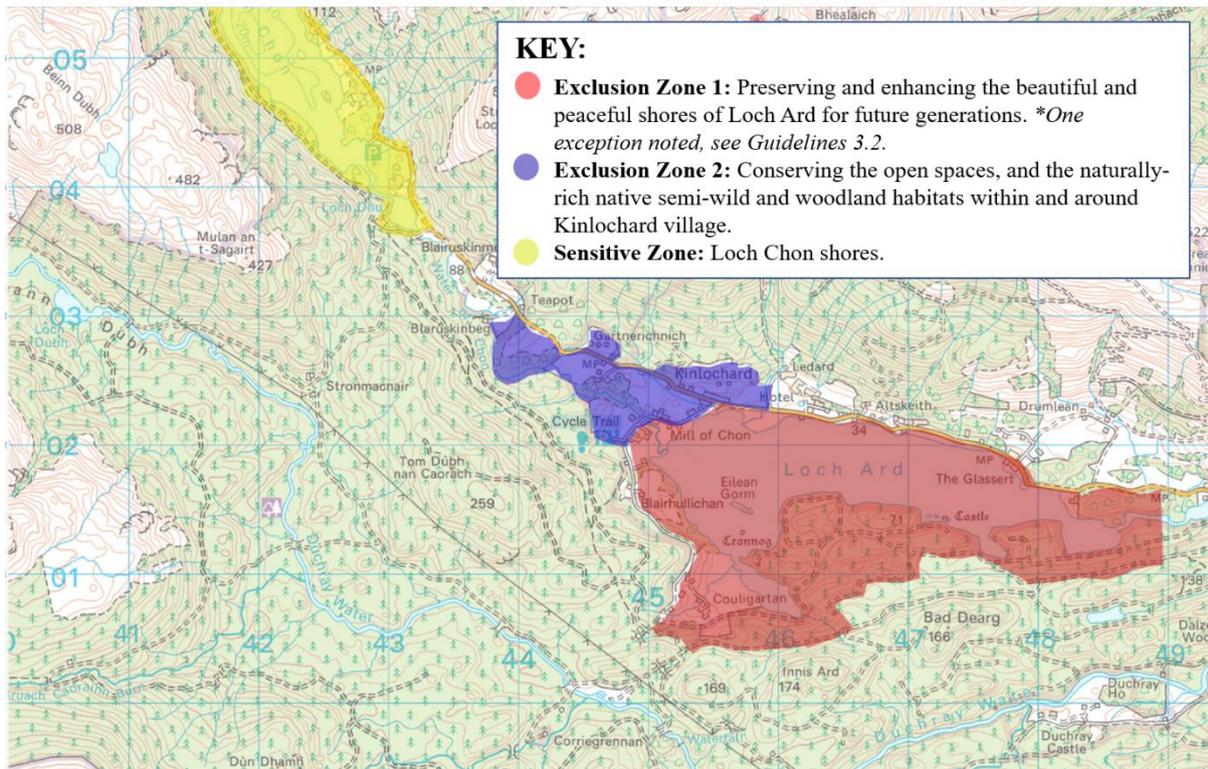
1800

**Industrial / Modern**

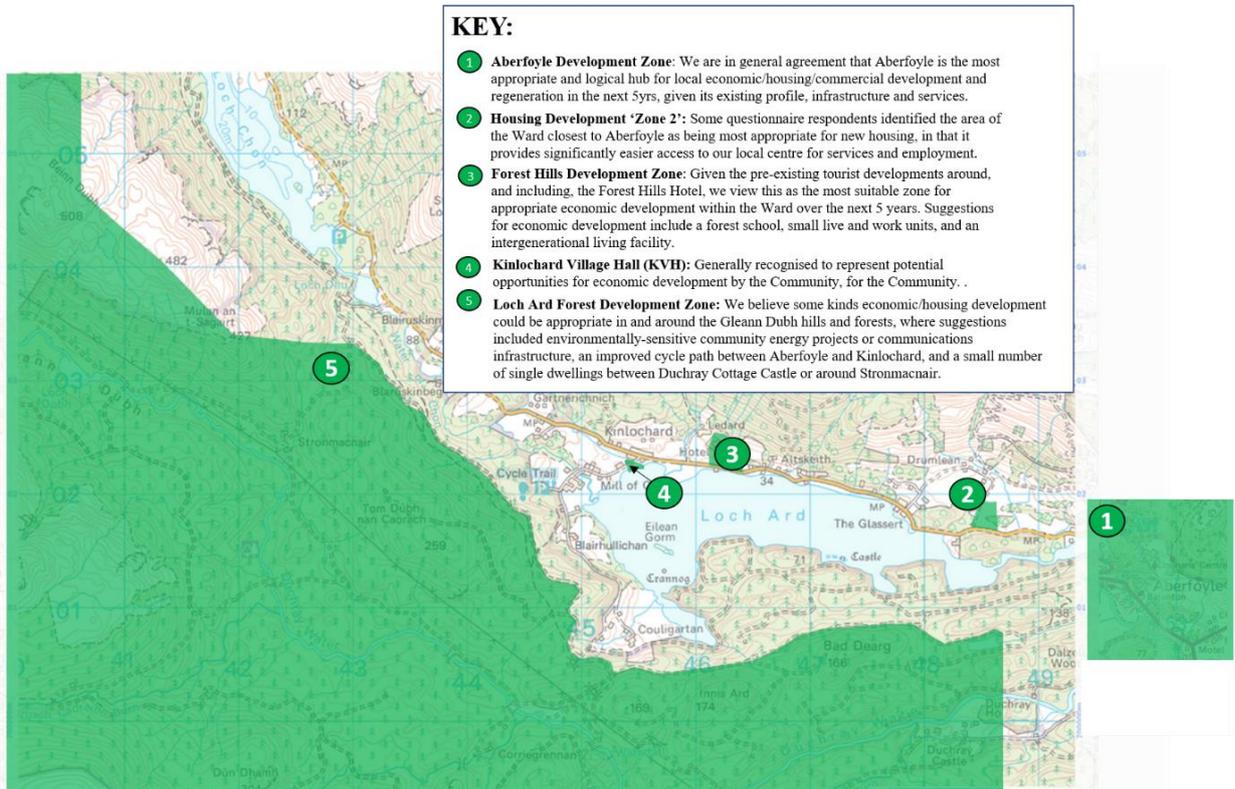
2000

<b>Montrose</b>		<b>Forestry Commission</b>
<p><b>1810;1817:</b> "Lady of the Lake" and "Rob Roy" published by Sir Walter Scott, driving first tourist industry</p> <p><b>1812 description Patrick Graham:</b> on Loch Ard's right is skirted with woods, with the northern and western extremity diversified with meadows, and cornfields and farmhouses</p> <p><b>1850</b> Loch Ard frozen over several winters heavy loads of wood over it</p> <p><b>1856-1859; 1815; 1919:</b> Corporation of Glasgow, Loch Katrine water scheme: aqueducts; milestones, engineer stayed at Tigh na Traigh. Water Board houses. Loch Dhu, Red Crest, Keeper's Cottage, Bellhouse.</p> <p><b>1870-1998:</b> Kinlochard School (average of 16 pupils in 1879)</p>	<p><b>1903:</b> "Dalveigh built, which in 1937 became Forest Hills (initially a big employer)</p> <p><b>1920:</b> Montrose parcelling off land as he goes.</p> <p><b>Movies:</b> 1922- Rob Roy; 1953- Rob Roy (Richard Todd / Blairvaich); 1955 – Geordie; 1959 – the 39 steps Kenneth More (Altskeith)</p> <p><b>World War II:</b> Munitions dump (Nissan open-ended huts to head of Loch Chon and gunboat patrolling Loch Ard, permits to enter.</p> <p><b>1945:</b> Kinlochard only 4 cottages at the junction</p> <p><b>1945+:</b> FS purchase Duchray, Blairhullichan and Frenich to form major part of Loch Ard forest</p> <p><b>1950-5:</b> Forestry Cottages built, junction "halting rural decline"</p> <p><b>1950s:</b> Ms McDonald Grocery, Altskeith 'pub', Village Hall built, non-dependent local economy</p> <p><b>1968:</b> Loch Ard Sailing Club (Shirley Ann Robertson first British woman to win gold medals at consecutive Olympics)</p>	
<p><b>Local Monsters:</b> Loch Chon Kelpie and Loch Tinker Water Bull</p>		

### Appendix C: Exclusion Zones



### Appendix D: Potential Zones for ‘Appropriate’ Development



## Appendix E: Outcomes of the Young People’s Consultation

### Main Themes

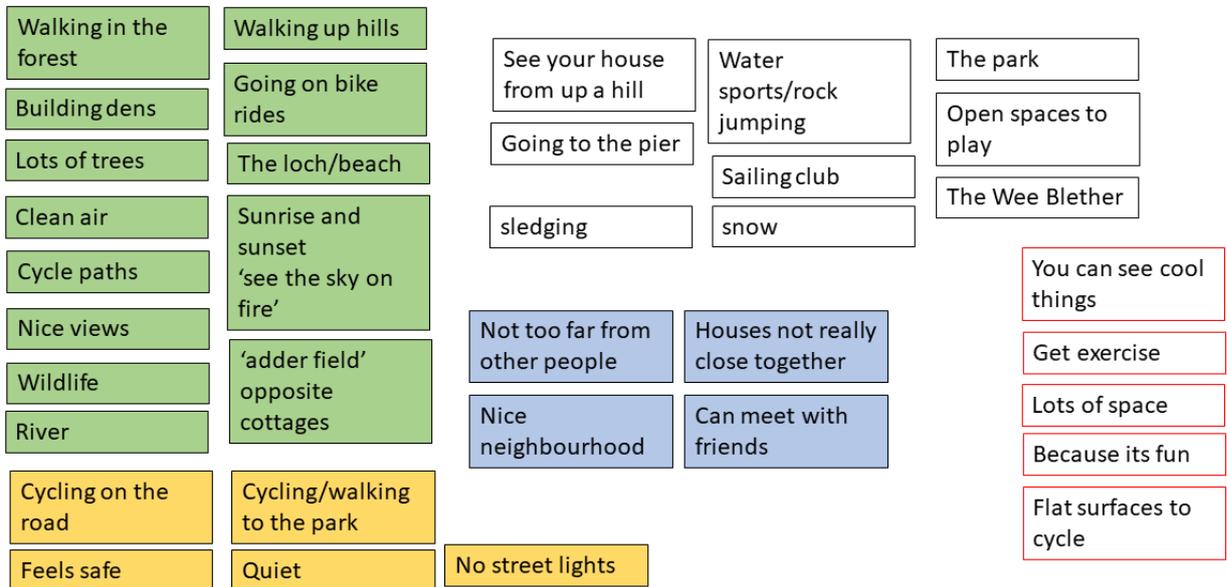
#### Good

- Community / people
- Safety / quiet
- Environment

#### Change

- Park
- Transport

### What do you love about Kinlochard and why

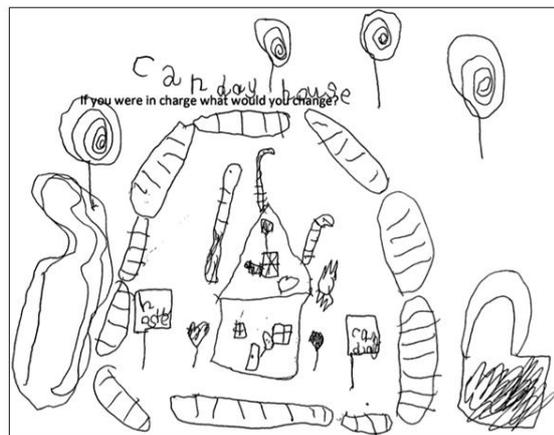
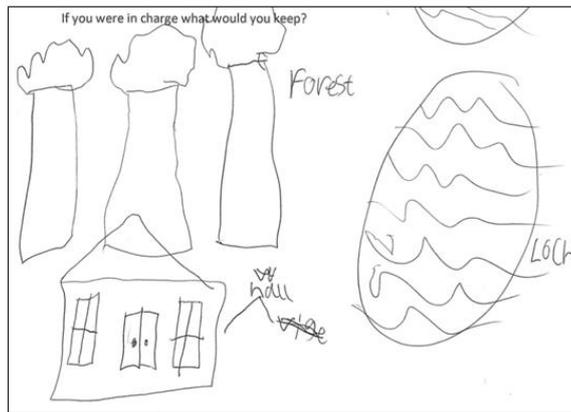
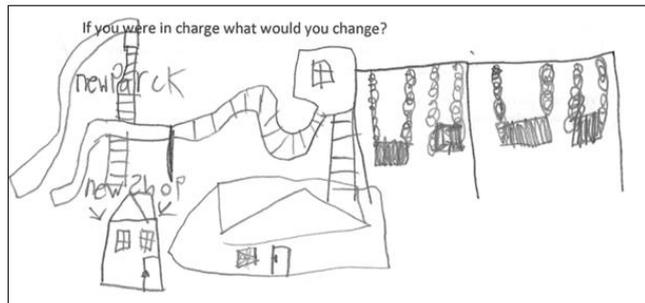


### If you were in charge what would you change



# If you were in charge what would you keep

- The loch - 2
- Trees - 2
- Open space in the village
- Hall
- Sailing club
- Access to the loch
- Forest
- Field opposite hall
- No speed boats on the loch
- Tree house
- The island
- The cafe
- Park



# What do you love about Kinlochard

Walks	The loch – its pretty, fun in the summer, canoeing swimming etc	Countryside	The people/nice people	Number of people in the village
The scenery	Forests	Walking and cycling paths	Community feeling	Everyone knows everyone
Trees	Wildlife	The views	Community events	
loch		Forest walks		
			Quietness	Peacefulness
The cafe	Pier		Dark sky	
Animals	Sailing club – fun to swim, canoe and sail			

# What would make Kinlochard the perfect village

More buses - 2	More forests	Upgrade playpark	Less tourists	Post office
Public transport	Less cutting down trees	Another cafe	Forest hills – access to swimming pool/ gym	Shop
Better parking so less blocking the road				
More community events	More local clubs	Better bin service / public bins		
Community days	More social things – horse racing, burns supper, table tennis	Less litter	Less pollution	

# What could prevent Kinlochard becoming the perfect village

Becoming too populated and touristy	Too many people living here	Pollution	Go country
More people/houses	Being too quiet/ losing balanced community	Cutting down forests	Not enough space / forests
Building near the loch		Litter	Lack of freedom

## Appendix F: KCLP changes following the March 2022 meeting, including amendments (in red) in response to comments and objections from the follow-up questionnaire sent out in April 2022.

### QUESTION 1:

#### CONTINUING THE KINLOCHARD COMMUNITY LIFE PLAN (KCLP)

**Question 1.** Is the KCLP framework –important things, principles and themes– still something we want to take forward as a community?

*It was agreed unanimously to take the KCLP forward, although as a result of the conversation, there is a proposed restructuring of some priorities under Themes, and the changing of the name of one Theme (2.4 from “Developing Our Community Assets” to “Developing our Resilience and Environmental Stewardship):*

### QUESTION 2:

#### IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

**Question 2.** What important changes or new information since 2019 must we consider in assessing our priorities? *It was agreed that the changes had been significant, as follows:*

- Significant increase in tourist numbers and pressures (litter, waste, parking, illegal camping, antisocial behaviour).
- Increasing urgency of climate emergency (flooding and storm impacts, and as a political priority)
- Concerns about imminent and serious impacts of ongoing crises on local energy, heating and food costs / security.
- Increased access restrictions to forest roads and resulting periods of being ‘cut-off’ with genuine concerns about ability to access essential services and employment during (increasing) periods of flooding.
- Changing demographic in the village: more young people and residents working from home.
- Loch Ard: **there are concerns that the water quality is deteriorating on account of noticeable impacts on ecology (algae) and swimmers (itching), and regarding the potential for disturbance of our quiet loch from motorised tourist craft**, due to increased usage for leisure activities and pollution (residential and tourist sewage, forest run-off).
- Declining medical services and noting a number of visits by the air ambulance.
- Loss of Buchanan Cabs and resulting unreliability of DRT, together with increased bus cancellations, causing general concerns about community transport.
- **Concerns about the local extent and practices of tree felling, native tree replanting strategy, and impacts on soil disturbance and biodiversity, in light of the climate emergency and research on carbon impacts.**

### QUESTION 3

#### AMENDMENTS TO THE KCLP PRIORITIES

**Question 3:** What priorities / guidelines need to be added, removed or amended, and why?

#### 2.1 Strengthening Our Community

##### PRIORITIES AND PROPOSED CHANGES:

**2.1.1 Guidelines for Economic and Housing Development:**

**2.1.2 Holding regular Community meetings:** *(progressing).*

**2.1.3 Community Action and Activities:**

- Supporting and working with our Village Hall (previously 2.4.1): *(progressing).*
- Activities for families and children:
  - Improving play facilities and park: *Reinforced as a priority.*
  - Family-friendly social events and activities.
  - A local coop providing outdoor nursery care for young children.

**2.1.4 Establishing a Communication System:** *(progressing well).*

**2.1.5 Improving Community Governance.**

The rationale for moving this priority from 2.4.1 was:

- there was already a degree of repetition across themes 2.1 and 2.4 regarding those priorities related to the KVH
- In the KCLP meeting priorities under 2.4, and related new ones which emerged, were discussed more in terms of “increasing resilience” than “developing our community assets”. This has resulted in an expansion of, and change of name and emphasis for, theme 2.4, which also would seem a consolidation of KVH priorities under 2.1.

It was commented that a single priority seemed insufficient to communicate the huge value and contribution of KVH to the community. This is merely the priority title, however, and the theme overview and priority detail in the full KCLP expands on the KVH’s fundamental importance to the community. This hopefully goes some way to articulating and providing sufficient recognition of this, and the unanimous strength of feeling and consensus behind it.

#### 2.2 Upgrading Our Infrastructure

##### PRIORITIES AND PROPOSED CHANGES:

**2.2.1 Roads and Access:**

- (NEW URGENT PRIORITY) **Seek agreement** with FLS an emergency access/egress route, along with usage procedures, for emergency and essential services and responsibilities during periods when the public road is closed.
- (NEW PRIORITY) **Move the entrance to the playpark** *such that drivers have visibility of children crossing the road to the Village Field (and on account of at least two near misses).*
- **Speed Limits:** *Removed due to objective for speed limits in and around the village achieved.*
- **Better Community Transport:** *Priority reinforced due to unreliability of DRT since loss of Buchanan Cabs, and frequent bus cancellations.*

Acknowledging objections that use of the forest route is not a ‘right’.

**2.2.2 Mobile and Broadband** (previously 2.2.1 urgent priority): *Downgrading urgency of broadband (now achieved), and adding priority of lobbying for service provider to take responsibility for Ledard mast to improve local mobile signal.*

**2.2.3 Sewage Treatment:** *Assessing the levels, sources and mitigation of sewage impacts on loch water quality prior to seeking connection with the sewage treatment works beyond Forest Hills, in case the environmental impacts of the latter prove more harmful than the former.*

Changed as a result of paramount objections

**2.2.4 Cycle Trail from Aberfoyle, and Public Footpaths:** *Seeking removal of storm-fallen trees which are blocking many walks and suggestion that poo bins might be added on popular routes (otherwise progressing). Seeking consultation with FLS on development and improvement of public footpaths.*

Paramount objection recorded on the basis that this may ‘urbanise’ the feel of our community

### 2.3. Improving and Leveraging Stakeholder Relations

#### PRIORITIES AND PROPOSED CHANGES:

##### (NEW PRIORITY) 2.3.1 Developing a Visitor Management Strategy:

- **Broader Participation of the Community around Appropriate Solutions.**
- **Preserving our Quiet Loch:** *Actions to prohibit or deter launching or use of any craft with an engine of size, power, noise or speed which is incompatible with continued safe and peaceful enjoyment of the loch.*
- **Strategies for directing visitors to areas of Strathard with a tourist focus and facilities.**
- **Citizen research to understand and communicate visitor pressures.**
- **Strategies for dealing with antisocial behaviour:** *Littering, fires, irresponsible camping, toilets etc.*
- **Suitable parking.** *(moved from 2.2.2 Roads).*

Comments were made highlighting the ongoing and time-consuming work already on visitor management between some residents and LLTNP and partners, and the resource required for this. It was also emphasised that residents had been given opportunities to participate in shaping this priority via emails and surveys. In short, any suggestion that the community was not being engaged, notified or updated on the matter is unmerited and incorrect.

**2.3.2 Connecting and collaborating with stakeholders with an interest in the Ward** *(progressing well): adding an emphasis on the importance of **better** collaboration with Forestry and Land Scotland and Scottish Water, around local clearing and development plans.*

**2.3.3 Exerting community pressure** *(progressing)*

**2.3.4 Achieving dark sky status** *(progressing well)*

An objection was made on account of the fact that there is ongoing collaboration between residents and Forestry and Land Scotland, and public consultations in relation to all of their plans.

### 2.4. Developing our Resilience and Environmental Stewardship (was “Developing our Community Assets”)

#### PRIORITIES AND PROPOSED CHANGES:

**2.4.1 Community Right-to-Buy Land or Assets:** *(progressing).*

**2.4.2 Community Energy and Food Generation:** *(exploratory work progressing).*

**2.4.3 (NEW) Volunteer Action to understand and restore our Loch and Natural Environment** *(moved from 2.1.3 and enhanced, due to increased threat to native habitats and loch, as the result of potential development, visitor numbers and climate change).*

- (NEW) Citizens Science Research to assess Loch Ard quality **and any potential causal factors** of deterioration.
- (NEW) Forest management projects for native and broadleaf tree replanting and reducing water acidification in Loch Ard, *aligning with and acknowledging the commitment FLS are showing to working with communities on similar projects.*
- **Wildlife audits to better understand and care for local biodiversity and habitats.**
- **Community litter picks.** *(progressing).*
- **Maintenance of local paths, hedges and verges.**

**2.4.4 (previously 2.2.5) Medical Services.** *Add aspiration to agree helicopter landing pads with authorities which provide easy access for residents.*

**2.4.5 Community Enterprise** *(moved from 2.1.3 – Economic Development by the Community, for the Community) and Housing. Adding aspiration to provide more opportunities and spaces in Strathard for young people and local entrepreneurship.*

- (previously 2.1.3) **Economic development for the community, by the community,** including “pop-up” shops, farmers markets or pubs (in partnership with KVH – previously 2.4.1), or community energy/food.

## NEW APPENDIX G

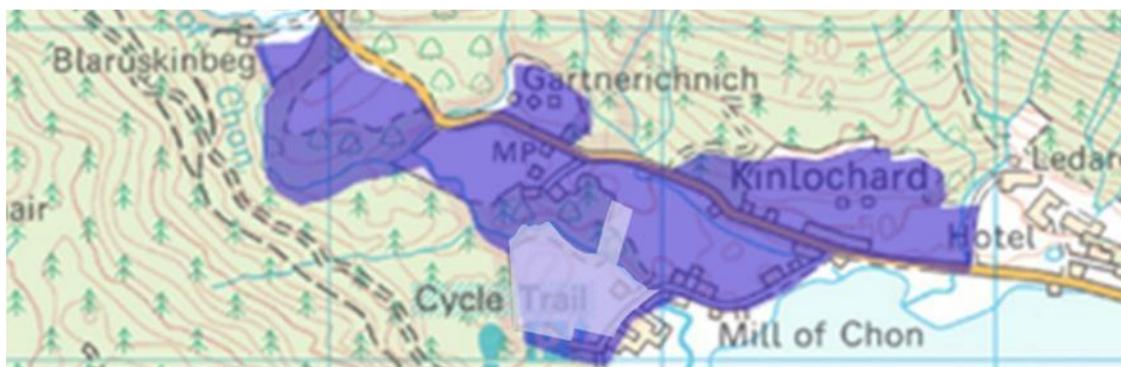
### NEW APPENDIX G

**Providing a fuller description of why the land identified in Exclusion Zone 2 is a “Locally important area” in order to facilitate proper consideration in any decisions affecting it.**

Included on the basis that it was proposed in comments submitted via the follow-up survey, has been recommended by the LL&TTNP, and the proposal to include it in an email to all residents received zero objections.

## Appendix G: Exclusion Zone 2, and why it is a ‘locally important area’.

This Appendix is a response to a request and recommendation by our planning authorities to better articulate why Exclusion / Sensitive Zone 2 should be material consideration in planning decisions on the basis of its importance to the Community. **Zone 2 is highlighted in purple on the map below**, and includes the land -highlighted in grey- for which we have successfully registered an interest in owning via the Scottish Government’s right-to-buy scheme.



Contained within the boundaries are:

- All the remaining naturally-rich semi-wild heath, rough pasture and woodland habitats within and around Kinlochard village and along the banks of the Water of Chon. This is a treasure island of native habitat in an area otherwise dominated by commercial forestry, home to many protected species, and a launchpad for biodiversity and environmental restoration.
- Open spaces (including the above) within and around the Kinlochard Village that are:
  - Agreed to be fundamental to the visual attractiveness, character, views and amenity of the village for residents and visitors, the conservation of which underpins many of our planning conditions and guidelines.
  - And / or vital to our shared aspirations for sustainable development “by the community, for the community”. due to their immediate proximity and accessibility. This includes key priorities related to building wealth and resilience under community leadership, and taking greater responsibility for local environmental stewardship. These priorities underpin our Community Right-to-Buy application and have been strengthened in the updated Life Plan due to the growing urgency of need for a local response to the cost-of-living crisis and climate emergency.

We include **two documents** as evidence of the value Exclusion / Sensitive Zone 2 represents for the community. While these relate mainly to the area highlighted in grey, the value and description of the land to the Community they articulate can reasonably be extended to the rest of the Zone. These are:

1. **“The Field”: A Local Heritage Project** ( [“The Field” Kinlochard](#) ) which captures a diversity of personal perspectives on the land and its inherent value to the experience and amenity of life in the Community.
2. **Scottish Ministers response to our successful Community Right-to-Buy application** which serves to illustrate the importance of the land for local resilience and wealth-building in the tough times ahead, and the degree to which our aspirations align with and find support from those of the Scottish Government.

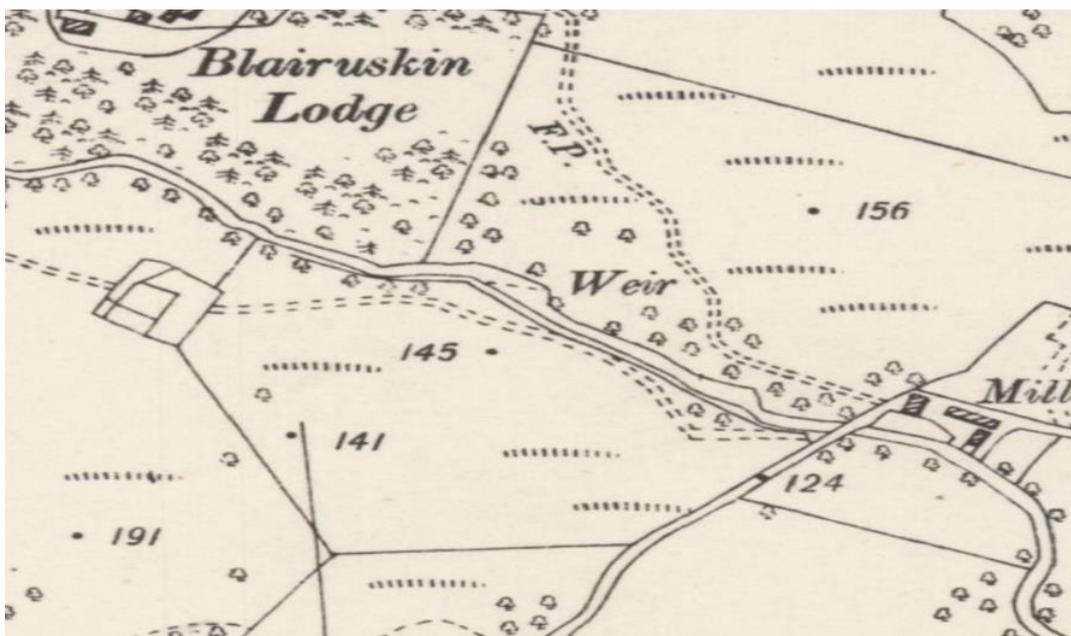
## 1. The Field: A Local Heritage Project

*“The Field” isn’t really a field. It’s doubtful anyone in Kinlochard actually thinks of it as that. It was once “John Anderson’s Field”, before it became “Ron Stewart’s Field” (and the Duke of Montrose’s before both) but the area of land shown in the map below - bordered by the Water of Chon to the North, the yellow (tar) Lochard Cottages road to the East and the lilac Forestry line, South and West - is probably too large, too rough, too varied and too wild to be properly considered a field, whatever the names pencilled on its title.*



OS Online

*It is designated “improved grassland” (James Hutton Institute, Macaulay Grade 5.2 & 5.3 - plenty names there) and has been grazed, and managed, in the past. An old sheep fank (remembered in [Ian MacDonald's Memories of Kinlochard](#)) - and more besides - can be made out beneath the bracken and on late 19th Century maps.*



OS 6 Inch 1888-1913 Series

*Also visible on the ground are the remains of the water supply system for the 24 Forestry Commission Cottages to the East - whose first inhabitants preceded, by quite some time, the arrival of both electricity and mains water to their homes.*

*Although only a small part of the human traffic that “The Field” has known over the years is recorded here, a measure of the longevity of that most fundamental of relationships - between place and people - is suggested through reference to historic usage, artefacts found and oral histories noted; something of its depth too can be grasped in each of the testimonies that follow.*

*Names can be given, changed, disputed, taken or lost like anything else - anonymity alone is timeless, change inevitable - in the best of circumstance what we choose to call a place grows, like maps, from the place itself and the conversation it gives rise to.*

*Perhaps “The Field” awaits its proper name like the folk waited for power and water. In the meantime, it remains just “The Field” - in the same way that ours is just “The Planet”.*

***What would the world be, once bereft***

***Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,***

***O let them be left, wildness and wet;***

***Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.***

*From “Inversnaid” by Gerard Manley Hopkins*

***If you’d like to contribute your memories of “The Field” to this project, they would be very welcome. As would any information on its previous names.***

## *Our Own Way Home*



I have the pleasure of calling Kinlochard my childhood home, and it's now the place where we are bringing up our own children.

I remember well using the field and its woods to play in after school - my two brothers, sister and I all went to Kinlochard Primary School.

My mother used to allow us to make our own way home via the land on either side of the Chon - it was a magical play area for all us kids. It felt as though we were alone on the planet, big and fearless adventurers, when we played. I'm sure that the beady eyes of the village were on us so we were never that alone.

As we grew older the field and woods never lost any importance to us. As teenagers we had a lot of fun mucking

about in the woods and swimming in the river. It was a vital piece of wilderness so close to our village. For those with smaller gardens it has been a really important piece of public space for many years.

And more recently - when my ten year old children were just beginning their walking we used to go up there with a flask of hot chocolate on an "expedition".

Today we still use the field and woods to explore in, and use it as a joined up walk with the forest road above it to make a big walk up to Loch Dhu.

*Simon Miller*

## ***The Heart of Kinlochard***



When I first came to look at my house in Kinlochard, I was blown away by the feeling of raw nature and seclusion. This begins at the very land that is now threatened with development. While most of the lochside land is given up to agriculture and private gardens/business, and the forests to tree farming by Forestry and Land Scotland, the land in question is a rare jewel in unspoilt, undeveloped natural beauty. I defy anyone to stand at the top of the forestry cottages, stare to the hills in the north-west and not feel a deep sense of connection to nature, to Scotland.

In the past 8 years, I've enjoyed the land in many different ways. My daughter, only two years old when we moved to the village, and I often enjoyed hikes across the land to visit the connection that takes us up to the forestry track and beyond. A particularly quiet walk when faced with summer tourism. Our walks have differed over the years, from me carrying her, to adventurous hikes as she got older, to her dragging me up the hill (and inevitably her carrying me in a few years, I hope!). Together we've searched for (and found) snakes, climbed the hill at the back to watch the sunrise in Winter and sledged back down when the snow had fallen.

More recently, in the last couple of years, I have used the clean, clear waters of the Chon to practise cold water swimming for greater control of my mental health, at least five times per week. These are often either started or finished with a chat with other local residents, a catch-up on recent events and going-ons.

For me, the land is more than just a piece of undeveloped real estate, it is the very character of Kinlochard. It is the essence from which Kinlochard draws its raw natural feel, it is the area which people pass through to start their journey into nature, and it sets the very welcome that stands Kinlochard apart from other areas. For this land to be developed would be to remove the heart from Kinlochard and replace it with just another development.

*Mike Bishop*

*This Field*

I have walked this field  
time after time,  
its boundaries: the Chon rotting  
into itself.

I have shot this field  
with a bow - and missed,  
watched adders coil  
around my arrow.

I have flown down it,  
skimming deep snow  
on a borrowed surfboard.

I have collected this field,  
the things which wash up in it:  
black buckets, tadpoles  
and shoes.

I have scoured this field  
for evening sunlight, constellations  
and sanity.

It swore red lines on my shins  
as I charged manically through it  
and lent me questions as I walked.

*Innes Manders*

## *Walking The Secret Garden*

We've been using the area regularly since we first moved here in Feb 2016. It's a safe space for Eve to explore the outdoors. We're always finding new things - be that plants or insects etc. It was always a quiet place away from noise and people which Eve never liked.

We've done everything from bug hunts to fungi and tree identification. We've found the usual insects from beetles to millipedes. Eve loves to watch the birds too and has seen many a robin, her favourite bird.

Eve loves looking for fungi as it's all so different and visual. She also likes leaves and the different shapes and patterns. We're always taking home leaves to identify in our books.

Eve also loves the river. In the summer we have paddled across in bare feet. We've tried to spot fish too. Eve likes looking at how the river changes over time and with rainfall. I suppose that's what comes of having a geography teacher for a mother! Lol.

Eve says "I like walking through the secret garden". That's what we call it. She says she wants to "explore more of the river".

*Sarah & Eve Alderman*



## *A Good, An Important Place*



My first memories up the back are of sledging and snow. It was the snake field in summer, but in winter when we could be surer the adders were resting, we would come with sledges and boogie boards, finding the hills in among the heather to career down - an easier task when all of us were wee (now it's just me). Later, and in warmer days, I took friends up next to the burn, so we could pop in for a swim in the pool higher up. Most recently, I'd trudge through on lockdown walks and short-runs - an easy space to suddenly be above the village, and out of my head, for a wee bit. The field at the back is a good, an important, place.

*Finn Manders*

## **‘LOBB’**

### **The Land of Oak, Birch and Bog Myrtle**

**by Janine Finlay**

*“Does it have a view of nature? And, does it have a wild place we can walk Catty?”*

Taking a cat for a walk may seem low on the list of priorities when buying a house, but it was one of ‘the’ most important factors when we were on the hunt for a home in 2016. I suspect schools, shops and public transport are the things most people look for. However, here in Kinlochard none of the aforementioned exist – what is plentiful though, is nature. Jamie and I moved to Scotland in 2011; living as close to nature as possible was something we both valued deeply and was the motivation behind our move from London.

When we first moved to a rental property in rural Scotland, our cat Catty Kizn (dragged kicking and meowing from the big city of London), discovered the joyful art of running across wide open fields. So, it was essential she could do the same from our forever home. We could not deny her this pleasure, or there most certainly would be trouble. A happy household is one with a contented cat, (or so she would have us believe).



*Figure 1. Beautiful valley with birches and hills in background, and Rex clearly enjoying himself!*

Jamie (his father being a Scot), already knew a lot about Scotland’s wild landscape, a landscape I didn’t encounter until the noughties - on a mountain walking holiday, a work filming trip around the highlands, and during a wedding on the Isle of Gigha. During these visits, I made the exciting discovery that whilst Scotland has many remote and gorgeous wild places, some of them (like Kinlochard) are close enough to civilisation to earn a decent living. This, I would later find out, is a closely guarded secret!

Nature has been an essential part of my life - having grown up in New Zealand where wild camping, wild swimming, and ‘tramping’ (that is, walking in the wilds, often with the unwelcome company of sandflies, a beefed-up version of Scottish midges) were all second nature. Had I not gotten into The New Zealand Broadcasting School, my back up plan was to study forestry at Canterbury University, so it was no surprise I ended up working as a science and nature documentary director living in a place next to a forest. Many people live here for the same reasons – they love nature, and want to live in it, but need to be within commutable distance to work opportunities.

The pocket of land that faces the 24 ex-Forestry Commission cottages in which some of our little community live, seems (and feels) very wild and untamed. It most definitely cannot be called a ‘field’! For the purposes of this piece of life writing, I will call it “The Land of Oak, Birch & Bog Myrtle” or LOBB for short. LOBB has not been used for many years, except by the locals – who know where to seek out the meandering little tracks amongst the bracken and heather, with their dogs, (and cats as the case may be)! It is an endearing place – on the one hand, the low heather and bracken mean you can see up and down the valley for miles if doing the breath-taking circular walk up to the Forestry Labour Road – whilst at the same time, it has lots of hidden spots, little hillocks, knolls, dips and troughs, with various habitats. There are hundreds of intriguing little animal trails, and plants and insects are plentiful – there are even some wild orchids. Various stands of birch and grassy clearings give way to some of the most magnificent oaks in the village.

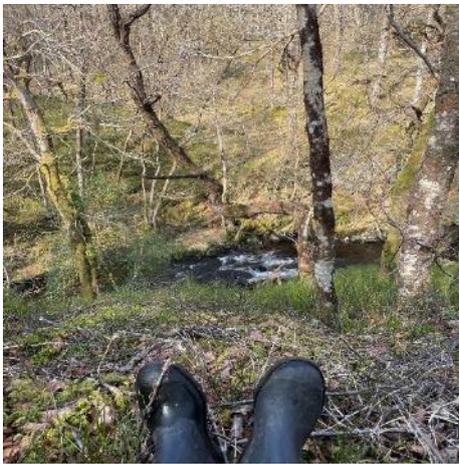


Figure 2 Mediation spot by the river

There’s an extremely peaceful and pretty river on the border of LOBB – a great place to sit and meditate. And there’s absolutely tons of bog myrtle – giving the landscape a rusty red tinge, as if someone has flicked a coat of paint across it – a colour I’ve not really seen in a natural setting before. In fact, my literacy for bog myrtle only began when I moved to Kinlochard. We had never been introduced, but its smell means you cannot miss it when you brush past - it’s intoxicating!

On every walk through LOBB, I rub the little catkins between my fingers, and breathe in the delicious vapours, which I guess you could say are quite citrusy. A good few of my neighbours have informed this particular non-native (well, semi non-native, as my grandfather was a Scot), that bog myrtle repels midges - a welcome ally when the midges outnumber our community in the summer (by the trillions apparently)!<sup>1</sup> Despite being anti-midge, bog myrtle (I found out) remarkably supports almost 70 species of other insects and provides something to chew on for some mammals too,<sup>2</sup> including feral goats, which have been known to roam round here. It is in fact the only bog myrtle I’ve ever come



Figure 3 Bog Myrtle

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.highlandtitles.com/blog/midges/#:~:text=25%25%20of%20Scotland's%20land%20area,peak%20of%20the%20midge%20season>

<sup>2</sup> <https://treesforlife.org.uk/into-the-forest/trees-plants-animals/plants/bog-myrtle/>

across in Scotland (and I have been up to my waist in bog on many a mountain walk) and is the only swathe of it I've seen in and around the village. Environmental organisation 'Trees for Life' report that in the Central Belt and Borders of Scotland, there are only scattered populations of bog myrtle, due to the lack of wet bog.<sup>3</sup> And wet bog in and of itself is an extremely important type of habitat, locking up carbon.



Figure 4 Bog Myrtle

Even though LOBB is a small pocket of land in the big wide world, seemingly insignificant to a passer-by, it is most certainly worth a great deal to many of the residents in our community. When I left the film unit at the World Wildlife Fund, my colleagues gifted me a book called 'Britain and Ireland's Best Wild Places' by Christopher Somerville.<sup>4</sup> What struck me about the book, is that you don't need to travel to Alaska, the Amazon, or Antarctica to 'go wild'. We have wild places too, right here in Britain. They are often small and perhaps overlooked if you consider 'wild' on a grandiose scale.

But they are just as important. And even more so as we lose some of our bigger, more monumental natural habitats, those that support diversity, and natural systems of the Earth, such as the aforementioned Amazon. Of course, Christopher Somerville didn't write about 'LOBB' in his book, but if it was up to our community, I don't doubt it would be worthy of a small mention. Indeed, during the Community Life Plan consultations, our community designated LOBB as one of our special places and a sensitive zone on a map of our village.

As far as community is concerned, I consider the bog myrtle, the birch, the oak, the badgers, the slowworms (which I've witnessed on LOBB with Catty on a sunny day) to be as big a part of the community as 'us' humans. This is perhaps, for some, too animist a view. However, increasingly science and psychology are finding ways to explain this human-nature connection, in disciplines such as Ecopsychology, Goethean science, Shamanic Practice, Forest Bathing, Mindfulness in Nature, Wilderness Therapy, Deep Ecology, Wild Crafting and Foraging (to name just a few). Over the years I have trained in some of these modalities because of my love for nature.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://treesforlife.org.uk/into-the-forest/trees-plants-animals/plants/bog-myrtle/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Britain\\_and\\_Ireland\\_s\\_Best\\_Wild\\_Places.html?id=hw9bYgEACAAJ&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Britain_and_Ireland_s_Best_Wild_Places.html?id=hw9bYgEACAAJ&redir_esc=y)

It is through these practices I have been able to build relationship with an old majestic oak growing on LOBB. It sits within a grassy clearing, its double trunk and branches reaching towards the heavens, but it is curiously hidden from view, due to its position in a secret little hollow in the land. One of my teacher trainers had asked me to find a tree near my home, I could spend time with for a whole year. The rustling sound of my jacket, alerted Catty Kizn to the fact I was going for a walk to find my tree. Rex the dog tagged along too. But it was Catty that led the way – and there it was, in a magical fairy-like clearing, next to a huge old boulder rooted in the landscape, surrounded on all sides by a circle of birch. *Clever Catty!*

The old oak tree has become quite an important part of my life. I visit it on a regular basis for quiet contemplation and meditation, and I suppose a little bit of sanctuary. Throughout the seasons, I've noted the changes in leaf cover, the grass height, the insects living in its bark, and the wide variety of chirping birds. I've also clocked that someone else in the village likes the trees on LOBB as much as me – recently noticing a small bottle of herbs placed inside a hollow within a different oak.



*Figure 5 Catty leading the way*



*Figure 6 Catty discovering the oak*



Figure 7 The magnificent oak!



Figure 8 Waxcaps

I have also recently discovered the myriad of badger tracks across LOBB. At the end of the winter / beginning of spring, it's possible to see their narrow tracks meandering down to the little streams, across grassy ridges, and in and around bordering fence lines. And I've spotted more than just badgers. Last year, I came across a study about waxcaps (a type of mushroom) that grow in grassland habitat.<sup>5</sup> It was only a few days later when I happened across my first ever find of scarlet waxcaps - on LOBB! I am a devoted amateur mushroom forager, but I had never found scarlet waxcaps. According to the environmental charity 'Plantlife' the UK has some of the most important waxcap grasslands in the world ... *"with Wales and Scotland supporting over half of all waxcap fungi in the UK."*

Apparently waxcaps can only grow where there have been no artificial fertilisers, or ploughing, leaving the soil with a higher amount of nutrients.<sup>6</sup> Although more ecological expertise is warranted, 'LOBB' could be a very precious landscape indeed. And, situated next to a commercial forest, LOBB is probably one of the only diverse habitats we have here in the village that supports such a wide

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/habitats/grassland/waxcaps-fungi/waxcapp-survey>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/habitats/grassland/waxcaps-fungi/waxcapp-survey>

variety of life. You can see so much (other-than-monetary) value in the landscape when you spend time in it.

Joanna Macy PhD, the David Attenborough of the Ecopsychology world, (and one of my all-time heroes), believes we need to be looking at our world (landscape and natural places), from the perspective of ‘deep time’ - that is, how we want it to be in seven generations<sup>7</sup>, roughly two centuries from now. This is perhaps a useful way for me to look at LOBB, to consider ... what’s in store for our LOBB in the years to come? Would future generations be happy with a sustainable hydro on the river, providing clean, cost-free energy to the community? A forest garden feeding the neighbourhood? A haven for nature to continue to thrive and be enjoyed by all? A fundament of ecopsychology is a belief that looking after and caring for the outer ‘non-human’ world (species, diversity, landscape, natural systems) also benefits the inner ‘human’ world, in a kind of mutual reciprocity.

There’s also a movement in ecopsychology called ‘The Great Turning’<sup>8</sup> - an essential adventure of our time, to transition away from the narratives of industrial growth to a life sustaining civilisation. And I guess LOBB is as good a place to start as any. LOBB is a living breathing system, who has improved my lived experience - I personally see LOBB as an intrinsic part of this community. I have even heard one person mention LOBB as the ‘character’ of the village. And I dearly hope in many generations to come, the land can be enjoyed and treasured by many more - humans and cats alike!

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<sup>7</sup> <https://workthatreconnects.org/resource/the-seventh-generation/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://workthatreconnects.org/spiral/the-great-turning/>

## ***The Field Over The Back***

'The field over the back' has featured to varying degrees in my life since early 1994 when I moved to Kinlochard. A bit of a treasure really, and all the more as it - and we - face potential changes ahead, both in terms of ownership and possibly literally its nature and function as an informal but important place for several members of our community.

Ownership has often been a factor for me in how at ease I have been in using the field. The tracks were there before me and will hopefully be there well after me. Many generations before me walked and toiled in the field. The holding tank up towards the top has always represented an important viewing point for the Forestry Houses and for Loch Ard.

One of my favourite walks with whichever dog we had at the time, would be a hike up from home at Mill of Chon, up the track by the brick-built barn, up towards the top to the holding tank and then across to the turning circle. Done umpteen times and only off limits if the bracken was too high or a rather assertive owner was in the vicinity. It's just a magical circuit that gives me a bit of everything - including ticks and midges!



Ownership has an impact on my usage and also on how the field has been managed over the years. When we first came here, there wasn't a brick barn. It emerged following the re-build of some 'redundant' farm buildings in front of Mill of Chon by John A. Where the broken-down "stable" is now was the obvious remnants of a quarry from where, our assumption is, the stones that built Mill of Chon (circa 1750) were mined.

When Ron S took on the ownership the issue of its future escalated in our consciousness and the fragility of all that we liked about the field was brought into sharp relief with the cutting down of several substantial oak trees. That was especially distressing.

Being able to take friends and visitors across the field has been a wonderful experience. As the field has been given less attention in the past years it has enjoyed a regeneration. Wildlife is at ease there - as are us humans. It feels like a very settled place, with the wonderful Water of Chon being an important boundary set by nature. What's interesting is that when I am out there I rarely meet anyone - it's a magical, large and open space.

So for me it represents a place of peace, at one with nature and sometimes with myself.

*James Kennedy*

## ***The Field***

We moved to Kinlochard in 1999. Keen on outdoor activities it seemed like an ideal place to live where we could commute to work but be able to walk, cycle, canoe and sail in beautiful surroundings without having to use a car. In our first couple of years here we explored extensively and The Field became a regular route to access the forest tracks as well as our favourite way to wander and explore the Water of Chon.

When our children came along The Field became a favourite walk – it saved us having to walk along the road and, unlike many of the tracks and paths around here, we weren't surrounded by tall conifers.



There are several bits of The Field that have special memories. There's a place in the river with stepping stones and a wee island where we've gone regularly over the years to paddle and guddle. As the girls got older they went with their friends in the village – playing without adult supervision was a real luxury.

The water tank has always been a 'go to' place for me. When we got our first dog I went up there every day and sat on the edge of the water tank admiring the view while Jess ran around sniffing where the deer had lain, bounding over the heather. When life gets too busy or complicated I go up there and sit and always return home a bit lighter. Our latest

dog Fern absolutely loves The Field – the sense of joy she has as she races up and down the hillside can't help but make me smile.

One year when the girls were younger we had a really heavy snowfall and they soon got bored of sledging down the wee grassy hill at the Cottages. We went into The Field and found a steep slope with not too much heather and bracken – it was perfect as it had a natural barrier at the bottom to slow them down – what a brilliant afternoon the village children had. I can remember their joy when one of them flew over the 'safety barrier' at the bottom for the first time and landed in one piece on the other side!

A really hot day one Summer, with some friends in the village, we started a journey at the road bridge over the Chon and walked up the riverbed until we reached a brilliant pool for swimming. We'd taken a picnic but the midges forced us out of the river and on to the hillside in The Field to eat our lunch. Sitting there at the top of the hill, looking down on the village, with our friends, discussing the next stage of our adventure is such a happy memory.

As a family we've always picked brambles. I remember picking them with my Mum and Granny and my children will too. The Field is one of our favourite picking spots – and when the picking is not great there, we go through the field, over the stile and up onto the track where we always find loads.

On a walk in The Field one day we went up to the water tank and cut across the hill to go down towards the car park. Heather, our eldest daughter was about 11 at the time and she ventured on to a mossy, boggy area close to a little stream. Her foot sank in over her wellies and as she pulled her foot out she left her welly in the ground. Her other welly came off as she tried to get out and our dog ran off with it! Heather was stuck in a wet mossy hole with very wet feet and I had to stick my hand in the hole to pull her boot out. We got her out and retrieved her other welly from the dog but there was a water filled hole where she'd been – it's still there now ten years on. This walk is now referred to as *Heather's Hole!*

The field has changed a lot in the last 20 years. It has not been grazed so it's become a really diverse natural habitat. When we're surrounded by coniferous woodland it is so nice to have a place to walk among deciduous trees and heather. It's also a place where you can go to avoid our busy tracks and lochside. It's a special place – treasured by my family for so many reasons.

*Jane Jackson*

## *Our Place*



As you grow older you realise how important belonging is,  
I'm lucky, I've always felt I belonged,  
A strong family, growing up in one house, in one place.  
By the time my parents moved, I belonged somewhere else,  
I had been to new places with new communities to which I connected,  
I always had my parents to return to – connected to them, not the place.  
I love this place – Kinlochard – my home for over 20 years,  
I love my community, I love this PLACE – I belong here,  
And one of my treasured places is The Field.  
A wild place, a beautiful place, a peaceful place,  
A place where I go and look down on our village, our loch, our river and feel so lucky,  
I feel so lucky to belong here.  
My children who we've chosen to bring up here,  
Have a real connection to this place,  
They belong here too.  
The Field is an important part of Our Place,  
We've walked, sledged, guddled, wandered, gazed, paddled, laughed, cried and argued in that field,  
It's important to us, it's part of what we belong to.

*Jane Jackson*

## *A Favourite Patch on The Planet*

The land opposite The Cottages has become one of my favourite patches on the planet.

Over 5-or-so years of leisurely exploration with the cat and the dog, I have come to know most of its nooks and crannies. And there are many! Wee burns and bogs, patches of oak with some big old trees, birch copses, hillocks of tussock grass and heather.

Its wet woodlands and thatches of bog myrtle - which sparkle after a shower and fill the air with their perfume - are locally uncommon and therefore all the more precious.

The section by the Water of Chon is spectacular, with its series of waterfalls and plunge pools set in a steep-sided gorge cloaked in fragrant oakwood filled with bracken and blaeberry.



The high grassy ground near the Cottages' old water tank has stunning vistas of the Loch and the surrounding hills, and provides the best view of my home nestling within all the loveliness. This view also serves to highlight how unique this area is: an island of native habitat within an ocean of commercial forestry. I wonder sometimes if it became some kind of fabled promised land for non-human refugees displaced by the planting, because it is unusually rich in wildlife. I've seen and heard many bird species, including woodpeckers and owls. I've watched deer grazing peacefully on many occasions. On a recent walk there with someone with ecological expertise, she identified the signs of badgers and considered the stretch of river well-suited to water voles and otters, which are sighted locally.

Perhaps most famously, the land is known for its abundant reptile population, such that it was once given the name "Adder Park" by village children. There are old sheets of corrugated iron which, if carefully lifted on spring and summer mornings, reveal a society of slow worms or adders warming

their blood beneath. One time, I discovered an albino slow worm under one. It looked like a visitor from another planet.

It has also been drawn to my attention that the ecology may need a helping hand in places, for example, small patches of dying heather are appearing which may indicate a fungal infection. For me, this is the most important reason why the land should be under the mindful stewardship of the community. If we cannot relearn to see the real world on our doorsteps, and take responsibility for its health - particularly, the spots which provide a launchpad for biodiversity- then we should abandon all hope!

The second reason is the sense of peace the place affords, a peace which still feels like it belongs to the community alone, and which is a glorious relief during the sunny months when our village is inundated and occupied by tourists. It seems extraordinary and wrong to me that this land could still have agricultural designation, it having been upwards of 50 years since it was last grazed. Surely, this length of time should be sufficient to grant a native ecosystem, doing its own thing undisturbed for so long, squatters' rights? Certainly for me, now I am beginning to get to know it, it can only be considered a wild place.

*Jamie McKenzie Hamilton*

## ***Shared Paths To The Peace of Wild Things***



I walk through it most days and notice the changing of the days, weeks, seasons. I see precious and protected plantlife and evidence of wildlife of all sorts, some 'protected', some not. I hear water and birds and wind and trees still and moving. I feel reeds and grasses and heather and mosses around and under my feet and legs. I smell earth and rain and flowers and honey in the pollen and on the bees. I sense the stress of the world falling away as I navigate along shared paths beaten down by the feet of friends and neighbours past and present. I dip deep into the woodland for privacy and peace and quiet... *the peace of wild things where the wood drake lies...* to paraphrase Wendell Berry's beautifully crafted poem.

It is too distressing to think about it not being there or in a vastly different form. Perhaps nature will always win out over the 'need' for development. It has before and I hope it will do so again.

*Gillian Lester*

## *On Solid Ground*

Over the course of the time - since 1998 - that we've been here, there's been a reduction in places to walk in and around the village itself. I miss the lochside fields, as well as the paths taken out by wind-fell.

"The Field" is one of the few areas of (more or less) undeveloped land in Kinlochard where practical access and considerate usage has not been problematised. And it's on our doorstep. In large part because of this, "The Field" has given me far more than Lomond, Venue or just about any of the land around. When I don't have time, inclination or the legs for the Forest or Ledard - or, as is also increasingly the case, they're teeming with visitors - I come here, daunder Chon-side and back by the water-tank or cross the boundary-fence to join the forest road. And return home, usually in better sorts.



It's a surprisingly varied bit of land: open heath, native woodland, bog-marsh and river - a useful reminder of what was more widespread before the Cottages and the trees that the folk that came to live in them planted - and it supports a similarly rich and diverse range of life, including the human.

I, for one, owe it quite a bit:

A trout or two (the bairns' first fishing); hammock-based nature-appreciation; camp-fire cooking on snowed-off school-days; hillock-sledging; river-bed-walking; a Royal Society's

worth of *Splendid Adventure & Marvellous Expedition*; magic-leaf-dancing; world-noticing; just walking; paddling & fluttering; solace, comfort & joy; simply being; a thousand conversations and connections; scratchings of poetry... and all this on top of the blaeberrys, brambles, mushrooms, kindling, xmas-trees and hazel sticks, thank you very much.

Viewed from the old hill-top water-tank the *Strathness* of Strathard makes itself plain: East and West, Ard and Chon, river between. From here the lie of the land offers you the truth of its story - turns out it's also our own. To treasure or trash.

To the South the slopes where adders and slow worms bask - and lizards and the wary keep an open eye. North - the wee gorge, fisherman's path, the dens where village youngsters have played out their futures, the pools and falls where the water has recited their names since time began. Gravel beaches where bottles lie buried from long-forgotten riverside picnics of variously imagined kind. The outline of a building, felt through boot, beneath the bracken. The sheep fank - a sudden outrageous tumult amidst the tranquil. The boggy path main drag to Stronmacnair, Comer and Lomond beyond. The rise opposite the Cottages where, one might speculate, had a deer appeared one day and found itself in the kitchen of every house the next, no one - except perhaps the deer - would have been altogether surprised.

Stories, and sightings: the osprey returning, heron fishing, dipper dipping, the ragged black fox, the pine-marten with the gammy leg, assorted deer, sky-fulls of bats, geese skeins, swallows; all manner of insects and beasties - most beyond my ken. Owl, cuckoo, wood-pecker and grasshopper-warbler making their presence known; otter, badger and squirrel leaving theirs. And that not the half of it.

It's a remarkable wee place, immeasurably valuable, it would make an interesting case-study for thinking about some of the processes associated with partial or "managed" re-wilding. It could probably use a wee bit TLC too.

Above all else "The Field" has given me more than its share of the connections without which life would be meagre fare. Connection, first and foremost with the land itself and the life it supports, and through that with all the human lives - lived, living and yet to be - which have left their mark on it, or will, and which it too has a part in shaping. It helps me feel grounded enough to reach that bit beyond. It's not too much to say that when I'm here - there - I'm in Kinlochard and everywhere, properly a part of this Earth.

*Andy Manders*

## **The Fort**

When we moved into Number 1. in 1998, the only tree opposite was the Big Oak. The barn wasn't there - it was later that John Anderson had the diggers in to clear the area ready for the barn and putting in a septic-tank. When he decided to move into a caravan in the barn, somehow he managed to get the "street-light" power diverted to it.



After we'd moved in, Wilf at Number 2. had given me all the bulbs for the "street-light" across the road from us, announcing that I was younger than him and my steps were longer.

One of the many stories Wilf would tell was about how he and the other guys in the Forestry houses would regularly have to clear the filter at the pump-house on the Chon that supplied their water - especially in the Autumn and Winter with leaves and ice.

When Thomas was young we would have adventures in the field, and picnics sitting on the old water tank (or to him "the fort")... and taking him to feed Kenny's horses up on the little plateau next to the waterfall. There was at that time a stile opposite our house next to the Big Oak - it stopped you getting wet feet on the path next to the barn John built.

*Eddie Wright*

## ***An Oasis***



My name is Colin Kelly; I'm 72 years old and live in Kinlochard.

The countryside to the west of the village is the only area of open countryside which has natural regeneration within Kinlochard. It is a much valued oasis in our immediate countryside otherwise dominated by commercial forestry. This oasis over the years has developed naturally into habitats that have helped increase the biodiversity in the area. It supports adders, slow worms, badgers, water voles, frogs, newts, etc. It is a valuable hunting ground for short-ear owls and the tawny owls hunting the wooded boundary.

The river Chon on the north boundary of this land is frequented by otters. The otters have been filmed along with water voles visiting garden ponds etc surrounding the field.

I regularly walk over this area with my dogs between October and March enjoying the open expanse and views of the surrounding hills. However I do not walk over the area in the spring and summer months to help minimise disturbance to adders and nesting birds.



At night I like star-gazing and listening to owls hooting and screeching. The night sky is beautiful with abundant stars which are visible because we have virtually no light pollution. We also have next to no noise pollution which makes star-gazing a very enjoyable and calming experience.

The LLTNP Mission Statement below could have been written especially for this area and the expectation is that it will remain as an asset to the community for many years to come.

**“LLTNP Mission Statement.**

**Our mission is to protect and enhance Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park. The National Park covers an area of outstanding landscapes, habitats and communities – and it’s our job to protect it, and reduce the impact of visitor and recreational pressures.”**

*Colin Kelly*

## *The Whole of Kinlochard, The Whole of My Life*



I've lived in Kinlochard my whole life (almost 17 years) and my first memory of the field was when I was really little - catching my first fish in the Chon. It was a tiddler that we threw back and I'd love to say that I'm now an avid fisher, but no - I do believe that it was my first and last catch, but it will always be remembered as such.

I can't reminisce of long summer days spent in the field either, because to be honest I avoid it from March to October - the result of an encounter with some of its more slithery inhabitants during an archery practice when I was younger. But I do notice the loss of it in Summer. Last year, I spent more time in Kinlochard than I'd done since my fish-catching days, and I became particularly fond of my daily 'wimpy walk' across the field. I remember with particular sadness the day that the sun broke out in late March and I realised that the field season had ended. I took an apple, sat down by the river, and made my passage across the field and out at the top of the road.

I kept a diligent journal through 2020/21, documenting all the things that might change in the future so I don't forget them. 26.02.21: *"As I write this I'm sitting at the top of the snakey field looking over the loch. It's cold (I was fooled by the sun so came out in a t-shirt) but I'm quite content - I do love Kinlochard when I see it like this."*

You can see the whole of Kinlochard from that mound at the top of the field where I sat (and worried about snakes hibernating underneath) and I watched over it regularly like my own little kingdom.

My whole life (almost 17 years) I've romanticised the idea of having a tree - a tree that I can climb up into and read in for hours on end. And last year, I found it. I only visited it a few times, in the winter months when it was too cold to linger - but it's there nonetheless, my search has ended, and should I ever need it, I would like to think that my tree would be there.

*Catriona Manders*

## **2. Scottish Ministers response to our successful Community Right-to-Buy application**

To illustrate the importance of the land for local resilience and wealth-building in the tough times ahead, and the degree to which our aspirations align with and find support from those of the Scottish Government.

## **Notice under section 37(17) of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 of Scottish Ministers' Decision**

The Scottish Ministers ("Ministers") have received the application by Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd to **register** a community interest in the land on the East side of the road leading from Blairhullichan, Stirling to Kinlochard, Stirling in terms of Part 2 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 ("the Act").

Having considered the information provided Ministers have decided that the interest is to be entered in the Register of Community Interests in Land ("the Register"). Scottish Ministers' decision is effective from **1 April 2022** ("the Decision Date"). This notice states the reasons for that decision.

### **Whether Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd is a community body as defined in section 34 of the Act**

Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd is a Company Limited by Guarantee and its constitution meets the requirements of section 34(1)(a) to (h) of the Act. Section 34(4) of the Act requires Ministers to be satisfied that the main purpose of the body is consistent with furthering the achievement of sustainable development. Ministers are satisfied that such provision is made in Article 4.1 of the community body's governing document.

### **Sustainable Development**

**Section 38(1)(b)** of the Act requires Ministers to be satisfied that the acquisition of the land by the community body is compatible with furthering the achievement of sustainable development. Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd proposals are:

"Our intention is to put in place the following proposals through the same deliberative community-led action that led to their identification and development in the Kinlochard Community Life Plan (see Annex 4).

(1) IMMEDIATE ACTIONS will include:

- (a) developing detailed Business and Delivery Plans for the Land through focussing of the community planning approach of the KCLP;
- (b) establishing an Environment and Habitat Management Plan, through ecological audit, in order to both safe-guard existing beneficial conditions and bring about informed improvements with particular reference to rare and vulnerable species as well as to the management of invasive species;
- (c) the development of suitable areas for community horticultural activity: in particular for food production - currently restricted by the 24 Cottages' small garden spaces, native tree-nursery (seed-collection to planting) and bee-hive and orchard areas;
- (d) the development of an existing barn and surrounding area as a community workshop space offering affordable and accessible opportunities for: hosting learning, including skill-share; a tool-share facility; and use by both recreational and commercial local craft (and other) makers and workers. This facility would seek to nurture economic development whilst itself generating rental income.

(e) accelerating current work to establish the feasibility of developing ground source heat generation and other small-scale renewables;

(f) securing the right of public access to the land, including the improvement of existing paths, and the development of a non-intrusive visitor management strategy, whilst seeking to safe-guard the importance for community amenity the land has - particularly in the lives of village children - as a safe and quiet place largely free from the locally-widespread intrusions of overwhelming visitor pressure and commercial forestry.

(2) MEDIUM-TERM DEVELOPMENTS will include: (a) The ongoing development of informal and life-long (i) rural and (ii) outdoor skills learning opportunities through local knowledge and skill-share (involving both residents and in partnership with local agencies) supporting the potential development of more formal and/or commercial activities.

(3) LONGER-TERM DEVELOPMENT will reflect the land's potential to assist and enable community-defined responses to local housing, energy, visitor management and economic needs"

It is Ministers view that if the project was delivered successfully the development of areas for community horticultural activity could be beneficial to the community in terms of health benefits, helping to reduce social isolation, providing fresh home grown food for the community to eat, and reducing the food miles from growing to plate. There could also be the potential to sell any surplus food grown in the local community which could assist in ensuring the sustainability of the project.

The establishment of an environment and habitat management plan could provide the community with the information they require to support and safeguard the species of flora and fauna currently dependant on the land in question, as well as the management of any invasive species both in the short and longer term. Ministers consider that this could contribute to the environmental sustainability of the land.

The development of an existing large barn and surrounding area as a community workshop space could offer members of the community the opportunity to learn new skills and trade existing skills with one another. Ministers consider the use of this space could potentially have positive social impacts for the local community in bringing members of the community together. It could also assist in reducing social isolation, as well as enabling members of the community to develop new skills and share their already developed skills with others.

Ministers also consider that all people may benefit from gaining skills that they can use. It could also generate income for the community by hosting learning events and the use of the barn by recreational and commercial local craft makers and workers which could help to ensure the economic sustainability of the project by generating rental income.

The acceleration of current work to establish the feasibility of developing ground source heat generation and other small scale renewable, could provide an energy source to assist in the lighting and heating of the workshop space. According to the community body's Community Life Plan investigations are underway to look at the potential for district heat generation for the cluster of 24 cottages and the neighbouring group, which for example, could benefit those in the community experiencing fuel poverty and could also help to

reduce the community's carbon footprint. Ministers consider that this could provide a green source of power for the immediate and surrounding community.

Ministers consider that securing the rights of public access to the land, developing a non-intrusive visitor management plan, including the improvement of existing paths, and the provision of open space for young people to play, could provide health and wellbeing benefits for the community. Improvements to the existing paths could assist in ensuring their sustainability in the longer term.

The medium term development of supporting the potential development of more formal and/or commercial activities could, if successfully delivered, assist in ensuring the sustainability of the project and bring employment opportunities.

The longer term aspirations are to enable community defined responses to local housing, energy, visitor management and economic needs are ambitious and there has not been a need for these identified in the Local Development Plan and, if the land were to become available to the community body, these would require further investigation on how the community body would achieve them. Should the community acquire the land, Ministers consider that the community body is conscious of the need to be flexible to the needs of the community.

The landowner, in their response, did not specifically address any sustainability issues as it is their intention to develop the land themselves

Based on the evidence submitted from the community body and the landowner, and the fact that Kinlochard is not specifically mentioned in the current Local Development Plan Scottish Ministers consider that the proposals could further sustainable development by enabling the community body to utilise the land and building, which will have social, economic and environmental benefits for the community.

Consequently, we are satisfied that the sustainable development criterion in **section 38(1)(b)** of the Act has been met.

### **Registrable Land**

The land is registrable and not 'excluded land' within the meaning of section 33(2) and (2A) of the Act.

### **Connection to the land**

Ministers must be satisfied that one of the options under **section 38(1)(b)(i) to (iv)** regarding the community's connection to the land has been met. In this case, Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd have selected the option under **section 38(1)(b)(ii)** – the land is significantly near to the land with which those members of the community have a connection. Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd states in their answer to question 3.9 of the application form that the community's connection to the land in relation to which this application relates is:

The Land we are reapplying for borders our Community of Kinlochard Cottages to the north and northwest. The land is used on a daily basis by residents year round for dog walking and enjoying the nature, wildlife and the peaceful surroundings. In the summer it is used to reach the river side for wild swimming and the footpath up to the Loch Chon forest track is a popular circular. The land is immediately adjacent to the Community and equally accessible to all, important to our visual landscape and experience of Place, and residents have had open access to it since the Cottages were built. Due to all of these things, we feel a strong connection to the land. As described above, as well as the social and economic potential they offer us, there is rich and vulnerable wildlife in these fields, and we believe and have agreed that native biodiversity is something which requires our mindful proactive stewardship.

For these reasons, the fields constitute part of a broader ecologically-sensitive development zone agreed by consensus in a Local Place Planning process in 2018-2019, called the Kinlochard Community Life Plan (KCLP) (see Annexes 4 and 8). The KCLP is a material consideration in planning decisions within the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, and in the development of the new Strathard Framework to guide development across the whole Community Council area. In the KCLP the fields are a factor agreed by consensus to be essential to the amenity, lived experience, health and wellbeing of the community as a whole, and which we aspire to improve and develop sustainably for present and future generations. In the KCLP they are described specifically as "the open spaces and native woodland in and around our village, which provide important habitats for cherished and vulnerable non-human residents". Additionally, the fields have been discussed in the context of "Developing Community Assets" one of the KCLPs four core themes for community action. Key priorities under this theme included (1) a clear consensus on our desire to explore purchasing other important areas of land for sensitive sustainable development by the Community, for the Community. (2) Community Energy Generation: supporting projects which make sustainable non-harmful use of our plentiful natural resources (e.g. mini-hydro or wind), while lowering energy costs or providing income for the Community; and (3) Community Housing: identifying land where, should a genuine local need or demand arise, we are able to exercise our civic responsibility to assist in the provision of social or affordable housing, or live and work units, where the Community may consider leading on such developments ourselves. These were agreed to be essential to effective future sustainable development of our Community, where feelings were exacerbated by what residents perceived to be a decreasing lack of will and public funds to invest in remote rural communities. Land and assets developed for the Community, by the Community, were viewed as fundamental in helping us generate income and become more self-sufficient and resilient over the next critical 5-10 years. These aspirations have led to (unsuccessful) efforts to explore community buyout of the land with the landowner. They are relevant to a number of new resident action groups which came into being to carry out the KCLP, including those exploring (i) community ownership, (ii) renewable heat generation, and (iii) monitoring and enhancing native habitats and protected species"

It is Ministers view that Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd **has satisfied Ministers** that the land is sufficiently near to land with which those members of the community have a substantial connection given that the land borders the Community of Kinlochard Cottages (FK8 3TW) to the north and northwest. The land is used on regular basis by residents all year round for walking and other outdoor activities. The land is

immediately adjacent to the community and equally accessible to all and residents have had open access to the land since the Cottages were built. Therefore, the criterion in **section 38(1)(b)(ii)** of the Act has been met.

### Community Support

**Section 38(1)(d), section 38(2) and section 38(2A)** of the Act set out the level of support required for registration and the requirements for the validity of that support. Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd indicate that it obtained 41 signatures to a petition list. The earliest signature is dated 14 November 2021, which is within the 6 months before the date on which the application was received by Scottish Ministers as is required under **section 38(2A)** of the Act. Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd indicate that this represents 89% of the 46 residents, entitled to vote at a local government election, who support the application, which exceeds the minimum level of support required in terms of **section 38(2A)** of the Act stated as one tenth or more of the members of the community.

Ministers contacted the Electoral Registration Office(ERO) in Stirling on 9 February 2022 to confirm the total number of eligible voters within the defined community. The Electoral Registration Office advised on 22 February 2022, by email, that the total number of eligible voters, as at 18 January 2022, was 46. On 28 February 2022 the Electoral Registration Office in Stirling verified the petition list against the full Electoral Register. After scrutinising the petition list supplied by Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd, ERO were able to identify 41 names, which equates to 89% of the eligible voters in the community area. Ministers are therefore satisfied that the level of support meets the requirements of **sections 38(1)(d), section 38(2) and section 38(2A)** of the Act.

### Public Interest

**Section 38(1)(e)** of the Act provides that, the Ministers must be satisfied that it is in the public interest to register the application.

In considering the public interest, Ministers have taken into account the following:

- Comments on the application from the landowner and views on these comments by Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd.
- Comments on the social, economic and environmental benefits associated in acquiring the land which were contained in Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd's application and various Annexes and response to the landowner's views.
- The proposed use to which Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd wish to put the land to.

If the project was delivered successfully, the development of areas for community horticultural activity could be beneficial to the community in terms of health benefits both mentally and physically, as gardening has been proven beneficial to the body as well as the mind; It could help to reduce social isolation by bringing interested parties together, providing fresh home grown food for the community to eat could help people to get their recommended 5 a day , and reducing the food miles from growing to plate could help

reduce emissions. There could also be the potential to sell any surplus food grown in the local community.

The establishment of an environment and habitat management plan could provide the community with the information they would need to support and safeguard the species of flora and fauna currently dependant on the land in question as well as the management of any invasive species both in the short and longer term. Ministers consider that this could contribute to the environmental sustainability of the land and encourage the community to be more knowledgeable about the land around them and the life it supports.

The development of an existing large barn and surrounding area as a community workshop space could offer people the opportunity to learn new skills and trade existing skills with one another both in the community and out with it. Ministers consider the use of this space could potentially have positive social impacts for the community in bringing members of the community together, it could also assist in reducing social isolation. Ministers also consider that young people may benefit from learning skills that they can use to gain employment through the projects It could also generate income for the community body by hosting events which could help to ensure the economic sustainability of the project.

The acceleration of current work to establish the feasibility of developing ground source heat generation and other small scale renewables, could provide an energy source to assist in the lighting and heating of the barn and workshop space. According to the community body's Community Life Plan investigations are underway to look at the potential for district heat generation for the cluster of 24 cottages and the neighbouring group, which could benefit those in the community as well as helping to reduce the community's carbon footprint and reliance on fossil fuels, which are more damaging to the environment. Ministers consider that this could provide a green source of power for the immediate and surrounding community.

Ministers consider that securing the rights of public access to the land, developing a non-intrusive visitor management plan, including the improvement of existing paths, and the provision of open space for young people to play, could provide health and wellbeing benefits for the community. Improvements to the existing paths could assist in drawing visitors to the area and which could bring money into the local economy and surrounding areas as well as health benefits for those wishing to enjoy the outdoor space.

The medium term development of supporting the potential development of more formal and/or commercial activities could, if successful, help to boost the local economy and bring employment opportunities to the area.

The longer term aspirations are to enable community defined responses to local housing, energy, visitor management and economic needs are ambitious and, if the land were to become available to the community body, these would require further investigation on how the community body would achieve them. Ministers consider that, should the community body acquire the land, that they have considered that they will need to be flexible to the needs of the community at that point in time.

The community have given thought to the land within their community and their aspirations looking forward in the short, medium and long term. These plans have been included within the development of the Kinlochard Community Life Plan, which the community have been fully involved in and contributed to through consultation, workshops etc. This plan has helped to determine the needs of the community. The registration and possible acquisition of this land will allow the community to secure the land for the community, in order for them to take forward the proposals they have identified.

The community body have also made Ministers aware that there is professional business, project and land management experience within the community of projects. This experience within the community could assist the community body with the implementation of their immediate, medium and longer term aspirations.

The keeping of bees could, if implemented, be good for the eco- system as well as having economic benefits.

The landowner, in their response, has indicated that they have no intentions of selling the land and intend to redevelop the land for mixed commercial and leisure purposes. This they intend to do themselves. The landowner has engaged the services of a planning consultant. They have indicated that on receipt of the application that they have contacted Kinlochard (Cottages) Residents Association Ltd to discuss their proposed redevelopment plans and how the project could be adapted to be sensitive to the stated aims of the community.

Ministers hope that any discussion carried out will be of benefit to both parties and that some form of agreement can be reached which suit all parties concerned.

Ministers have considered the information submitted within the application as well as the landowner's views and the community body's response, and are **satisfied** that the registration of the community interest in land is in the public interest.

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

In reaching their decision under section 38(1) of the Act, Scottish Ministers have had regard to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 1966, subject to any amendments in force in relation to the United Kingdom for the time being, and any reservations, objections or interpretative declarations by the United Kingdom for the time being in force.

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### **Effect of Ministers' Decision**

\*Where a community interest in land is registered or where that interest has been re-registered, the owner of the land and any creditor in a standard security having the right to sell the land, is prohibited from transferring the land, or any part of it, or from taking any action with a view to transferring the land, or any part of it, while the interest is registered in the Register. This is subject to section 40(4) of the Act.