

## **Achnamara Village Hall Committee Update – August 2019**

Here is an update on what the Village Hall Committee have been working on since the last survey was undertaken. There is a lot more detail on what we have been doing and why in the attached document, which we hope you have time to read. As always, please get in touch if you have any queries. We are planning an Open Session in September and a Community Meeting in October – details below.

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**Background: Loss of services in and around Achnamara** – loss of the shop, school and Church and the declining state of the Village Hall caused the Village Hall Committee to ask what can be done to stop us losing more services. How can we make sure that we keep our community thriving?

**Survey 1** found out what people in Achnamara and along the peninsula felt was important: Protecting our beautiful and peaceful environment; Encouraging more young people and families to live here by providing homes and jobs; Buying the land under the Village Hall and maybe more, to develop other projects.

**Securing Funding from Scottish Land Fund** (which helps communities to buy land) to employ consultants to help us to find out more about what projects would work if we bought more Forestry Land, and how to move them forward.

**Survey 2** built on the information from the first survey and showed that having a Village Hall was the most important thing for people. There was also a lot of interest in **buying some Forestry land** and a majority of people supported potentially developing a hydro scheme, new housing and plots and some facilities at the pier.

**Research** All these potential projects have needed a **lot of research** to see whether they would be possible at all – that is what the consultants and Village Hall Committee have been working on over the last year.

**The Business Plan**, which shows what could be done, is nearly ready. **NO decisions have been made yet**. Everyone will have a chance to look at the Business Plan and comment before any decisions are made. There will be an **Open Session** in the Hall to do this during Café Connect on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September 10.30 – 12.30**.

The Business Plan and reasons for buying the land will be on the Achnamara website before the Open Session. Everyone will be invited to attend a **Community Meeting** on **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October at 7.00** in the Village Hall to share their views and ideas. The consensus of that meeting will advise the Committee on how to proceed.

The **next step will be applying to Scottish Land Fund** for money to buy some Forestry land, when we will need to show clearly how we will use it and why it is important for our community.

There's a lot more background information in the attached document (attached in both Word and PDF), so please do take a look.

From the Village Hall Committee.