

Dear Sir / Madam

I am writing to register my objection to the Asset Transfer of Coilhallan Wood.

Firstly I would strenuously deny that there has been sufficient consultations with the community of Callander. Articles in the local magazine only informed as the actions which were being taken to proceed with the transfer but never warned of the downsides or difficulties. This was unlike when the town agreed by ballot to proceed with the Hydro Scheme . The last public meeting was not well attended and I would comment that some kind of postal ballots should have been done. The percentages used for support are one sided.

I am of the opinion that the 70 volunteers may well fall considerably short. For example Callander recently opened a Visitor Centre in a joint project. Volunteers are required to keep this open. At present there is only a core of around 6-10 volunteers. This made me consider an article in the national press regarding the Rhubadoch Wood on Bute.

This article was published in August and whilst reading I could not help but make similarities between Rhubadoch and Coilhallan. The article advised that the forest had now fallen into neglect. There is bitterness and anger in the community with the forest is now locked up with forestry machines lying rusting and decaying. It also advised that the involvement of members/ volunteers had fallen from low to zero. Like Coilhallan they started with 70 volunteers. I also believe that the volunteers would have to be fit and able and if the Directors of CCDT are included in this number their advancing years would mean it would be nigh on impossible for them to carry out any of the tasks which may be connected to a Woodland.

After very many thousands the Bute Forest Ltd was dissolved in November 2018 after losing so much money. Is this what the liabilities we want to leave for future generations. To date the income projections are exaggerated. The benefit to the town of increased tourism is again exaggerated.

Invertrossachs Road is not fit for any more increased traffic. It floods badly with the slightest rainfall and at present cannot cope with Sailing Club, Scouts and Ripple Retreat. There are no toilets at the entrance.

Finally I would be supportive of this if we were to enter into a joint partnership with the Forestry and the National Park. This would mean when government funds are low that hard earned taxpayers funds are being used efficiently. Not for some vanity project and we could all work together for the benefit of all.

May I also mention that on checking some of the support on the website I note there are a good number from non residents of Callander who are enthusiastic mountain bikers. Great that they want to come to Callander but it is not them or their local community who will be left with the liabilities.

Yours sincerely

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