



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Finlay Carson MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament for Galloway and West Dumfries

15th October 2018

To whom it may concern

As the Member of Parliament for Galloway and West Dumfries constituency, I write in support of the application made by Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd.

Consultations in the past have evidenced a disconnect between communities and the natural heritage surrounding them. The acquisition of Muirdrochwood Forest by Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd would not only allow for the community of Carsphairn to better appreciate their local environment, but it would also be a driver for regeneration and sustainable economic development – benefiting business, tourism and educational opportunities, therefore the local community.

Carsphairn is a small rural community ideally situated to benefit from the heritage and designations such as the UNESCO Biosphere and Dark Sky Park. Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd must be congratulated for proactively working closely with the Scottish Land Fund since inception. However, like many projects of this nature it is in the early stages of development that funding is most needed.

Supporting this project to achieve its goal will undoubtedly increase footfall to South West Scotland, will secure further employment into this rural location, encouraging wider community engagement and go a long way to delivering stronger foundations for the future.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this application. I cannot commend this project highly enough, and trust that my support for this submission will urge you to give this project the due consideration I think it deserves.

Yours sincerely

Finlay Carson MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for Galloway & West Dumfries

GP Partners

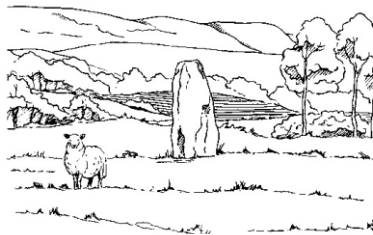
**Dr Bernard Jones
Dr Robert G. Grieve**

GP Assistant

Dr Fiona Graham

Practice Nurse

Mrs Moira Dowden



**Glenkens Medical Practice
High Street
New Galloway
Castle Douglas
DG7 3RN**

Telephone: 01644 420234

Fax: 01644 420493

Email: dumf-uhb.gpadmin.y18235@nhs.net

Monday, 05 November 2018

Dear Sir,

Muirdrochwood Acquisition Project

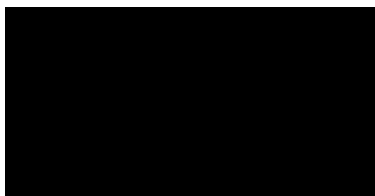
Having reviewed the summary for the above project proposed by Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd, we would fully support the ideas and expectations of the scheme.

The return of outdoor space for use by the community (both local and wider afield) can only be a good thing for both physical and mental benefit. There should be more of this type of initiative within local communities that benefit all.

We fully support this project and hope their bid is successful.

Good luck.

Yours faithfully



**Reg Gill
Practice Manager**



Glenkens Red Squirrel Group

55 Kirkland Street

St. John's Town of Dalry

Castle Douglas

DG7 3UX

Muirdrochwood

To Whom it may Concern

I write on behalf of the Glenkens Red Squirrel Group to register our unanimous support to the proposal of a Community Owned Woodland at Muirdrochwood, Carsphairn, Dumfries and Galloway.

We are in support of the aims of Carsphairn Community Woodlands Ltd. (CCWL) who are pursuing acquisition of the forest to help regenerate the area through their various objectives.

Our aim is the conservation of the endangered red squirrel, which is a species known to currently occupy the forest. We see a definite future for red squirrels in Muirdrochwood should this acquisition take place. Other flora and fauna will also benefit and the proposed outdoor education centre and associated activities fit nicely with our Groups aims.

Job creation at the initial stages and throughout the future would hugely benefit the local community and help it to remain vibrant.

On behalf of the Team at Glenkens Red Squirrels

R. Peace, Treasurer.

Wendy Fenton

Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd.

Carsphairn

01/10/2018

Dear Wendy

Re: Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd. - Muirdrochwood Acquisition Project

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere aspires to develop and support initiatives that “Demonstrate our passion for living in a way the benefits people and nature.” The Muirdrochwood proposals, developed by Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd, are a perfect example of how local people can fulfil this vision by taking control of their local environment, creating new jobs and training opportunities, supporting new social and economic possibilities whilst enhancing and protecting their natural environment.

It’s a really exciting proposal that embraces the core goals of UNESCO Biospheres, from conserving wildlife and habitats, to supporting new learning opportunities and developing and fostering a more sustainable economy and society.

I wish you every success with your venture and hope that the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere can offer further support as it becomes a reality.

Yours Sincerely



Ed Forrest

Coordinator Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere



Wendy Fenton

Carsphairn Community Woodlands



Date: 27th September, 2018

Dear Wendy

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere 'Proud Supporter' Charter

Congratulations! Now that you have signed up to the Charter you can demonstrate that you are a proud supporter of the Biosphere by displaying your enclosed Charter Certificate and Proud Supporter sticker. We believe that the more supporters who sign up to the six principles of the Charter the greater the benefits will be for all of us.

The Biosphere is an area of SW Scotland covering Galloway and Southern Ayrshire in which 'likeminded' communities, businesses and organisations share their responsibilities for helping to safeguard the environment. It is also a place for cooperation and collaboration that shows that a sustainable way of living is not only possible but already happening.

By signing up to the Biosphere Charter, you benefit from:

- A Biosphere Charter Certificate (enclosed)
- A Proud Supporter window sticker (enclosed)
- Information on events, programmes and regular e-newsletters
- An invitation to attend a 'Learning Journey' in the Biosphere where you can find out more about what others are doing

If you are located in the Biosphere area you can also:

- Use the Biosphere Proud Supporter badge on your promotional materials and website
- Have a listing on the Biosphere website hyperlinked to your own website

If you would like further information or guidance on getting involved in the Biosphere please contact marie@gsabiosphere.org.uk. On behalf of the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Partnership, we would like to thank you for becoming a proud supporter of the Biosphere.

Yours sincerely



Joan Mitchell (Chair, Partnership Board)

2nd November 2018

To whom it may concern

Re: Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd. - Muirdrochwood Acquisition Project

I was pleased to meet your group recently to show you around Girvan Land Energy and to learn more about your exciting community project.

It sounds like a great opportunity for Carsphairn and the surrounding area and should bring many benefits to the community and potentially the wider region.

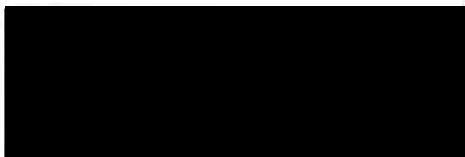
We give our unanimous support to the proposal of a community owned woodland

We are in support of the aims of helping the community to regenerate the area through increasing employment, economic benefits associated with a diverse forestry business, provision of new social amenities and enhancing the natural environment.

Land Energy Girvan Ltd was established in 2011 and has subsequently been expanded to produce 120,000 tonnes of pellets per year 14mw of heat and power through our own Combined heat and power plant, employing 52 people directly. Capturing fibre from Southern and Western Scotland, our pellets go onto heat and power a variety of homes and businesses across the UK. The proposed management of the forest and associated activities would offer a fantastic diversified compliment to the existing forest resource in West Galloway, and under-pin a sustainable supply of fibre for businesses such as ours for the future.

I wish you success in your venture and look forward to working with you in the future

Yours sincerely



Tom Tryon
Fibre Buyer



Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership
5, St Andrew Street
Castle Douglas
Dumfries & Galloway
DG7 1EN
05/10/2018

Steve Cowley
Carsphairn Community Woodlands Ltd
C/O Carsphairn Community Trust

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

<sent by email>

Carsphairn Community Woodland Proposal - Muirdrochwood

Dear Steve

Many thanks for keeping us apprised of progress with your project.

I see a number of benefits to Carsphairn and the wider area from your proposals:

- Increased sense of 'ownership' and engagement with the natural heritage of the area
- Economic benefits from activities on site – from the amenity activities to the ongoing commercial prospects on the site
- Acting as a driver of tourism into the Glenkens and the North of Dumfries & Galloway, showcasing the amazing natural heritage on offer, both for visitors and residents alike.
- Education opportunities, both through activities on the site but also through the involvement of the wider community in the management of a site such as this.
- Health & Wellbeing benefits associated with the use of the site.
- Good connections with a range of other projects being pursued through the Galloway Glens Scheme.

Please therefore take this letter as wholehearted support for your project. I look forward to keeping in touch and please let me know if there is any assistance that we can provide.

With best wishes

[REDACTED]

McNabb Laurie
Galloway Glens Team Leader





Moffat
COMMUNITY WOODLANDS
(SC046567)

Achnacarry
Harthope Place
Moffat
DG10 9HX
11.10.18

Wendy Fenton,
Secretary,
Carsphairn Community Woodland,
Via email

Dear Wendy

It was great to come over to see your project last week, and I have now talked to our other trustees about it. As I said on Friday, you are all very welcome to come over to Moffat to see what we have been doing and to discuss any relevant issues, lessons we have learnt and so on.

We think that your project looks fantastic and that you have a real opportunity to develop something that is both sustainable and of great benefit to your community. Whilst the scale of the proposed buy out is daunting, the opportunities are correspondingly impressive.

We are very pleased to formally offer you our support and will be happy to offer you any help that you may need on your journey.

Yours sincerely,

Jon Haydon
Treasurer



Scottish Land Fund
Iomhaas Fàraim Na H-Alba





Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd <carsphairncw@gmail.com>

Muirdrochwood Acquisition Project

1 message

Peter Norman [REDACTED]

22 October 2018 at 12:27

To: Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd <carsphairncw@gmail.com>

**Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd.
Muirdrochwood Acquisition Project**

Hi Wendy,

Thank-you for keeping me informed of Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd plans to acquire Muirdrochwood.

Working as Biodiversity Officer for Dumfries and Galloway Council for more than 20 years, I have been involved in a number of similar projects across the region, some successful, others not. Management by private forestry companies is usually aimed solely at timber production with social and environmental measures rarely going beyond the statutory requirements; management by Forestry Commission Scotland tends to be more diverse, but given the extent of their landholding and available resources, social and environmental priorities tend to be restricted to certain locations; but community ownership/management is always, without exception, led by highly enthusiastic local groups, with ambitions for their local woodland that stretch well beyond timber production into wider economic activities, recreation, education and environmental enhancement. My involvement to date with Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd has demonstrated that the Muirdrochwood project has a similarly broad range of highly desirable objectives.

Where community acquisition of woodland has struggled elsewhere, it is often because the managing group has not involved the wider community, or has been over optimistic in its plans and has not sought or heeded advice from external sources, including the experience of other community projects. I am therefore pleased that Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd. has already addressed these potential problems, with your recent community open day and your preparation of a comprehensive feasibility study, including a 25 year business plan.

On a personal note, I was delighted to be asked to lead a moth trapping session for the community in Muirdrochwood this summer, and though I am now retired as Biodiversity Officer, I would be happy to assist with similar community events or with more technical biodiversity advice in the future.

If successful, I am sure that community ownership and management of Muirdrochwood would not only bring benefits to the people of Carsphairn and the surrounding area, but would bring a diverse range of enhancements to the wood that would not otherwise be possible under either private or Forestry Commission management.

I wish you every success in your plans.

Regards
Peter Norman

October 31 2018

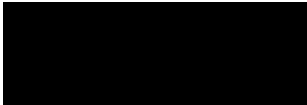
To whom it may concern

Community bid by Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd to buy The Muirdrochwood Plantation

This is a letter to support the community bid by Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd to buy the Muirdrochwood Plantation. I met members of the community woodland group in 2017 whilst undertaking native woodland surveying in the area, and again when giving a talk on wild apples to a local conservation group. In the course of the surveying in the area I received considerable help in locating woodland and trees, and people showed a high level of knowledge about local woodlands and considerable capacity to help.

Based on this experience, and having looked over the outlined plans the community have put forward for management of Muirdrochwood Plantation, I have no reservations in recommending the proposal for the community to acquire and manage the woodland in question. It seems to me that the management regime being proposed achieves a realistic combination of economic, social and conservation objectives that would be a good long term solution for the woodland.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

Dr Richard Worrell

Forestry Consultant, Upper Park ABERFELDY, Perthshire PH15 2EH
01887 840331 Mob: 07341 271904
rick@thinkingtrees.co.uk



Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd <carsphairncw@gmail.com>

RE: Carsphairn Community Woodland Invitation

Chris Rollie <[REDACTED]>

26 September 2018 at 11:56

To: Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd <carsphairncw@gmail.com>

Dear Wendy,

Many thanks for your invitation to the event in Carsphairn in early October, which unfortunately I can't attend.

However, I'd just like to wish you well with your project. The forests around Carsphairn, including Muirdrochwood, are in real need of environmental enhancement through provision of more open space and a more diversified tree species community. For several years now there has been a pair of breeding kites using either Muirdrochwood or the FCS forest across the loch on the 'island'. The kites and regular ospreys around the bridge – fish farm provide excellent opportunities for visitors to enjoy the countryside and I'm sure the community woodland project will be able to sensitively enhance and promote this. Best wishes,

Chris

Chris Rollie
Area Manager

Dumfries & Galloway Office The Old School, Crossmichael, Castle Douglas DG7 3AP
Tel 01556 670 464

rspb.org.uk

Let's give nature a home in Scotland



RSPB Scotland is part of the RSPB, the country's largest nature conservation charity, inspiring everyone to give nature a home. Together with our partners, we protect threatened birds and wildlife so our towns, coast and countryside will teem with life once again. We play a leading role in BirdLife International, a worldwide partnership of nature conservation organisations.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is a registered charity: England and Wales no. 207076, Scotland no. SC037654

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southern uplands partnership
living land, living community

The Southern Uplands Partnership

Studio 1
Hillhead Mill
Kirkgunzeon
Dumfries
DG2 8LA

Dear Wendy

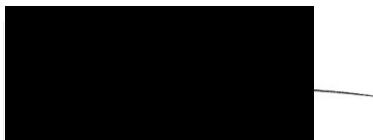
Re Carsphairn Community Woodland Project

Many thanks for sending through details of the Carsphairn Community Woodland project that you are involved in. When SUP was first set up almost 20 years ago it was with a key remit to “Keep people living and working in the Southern Uplands.” Since then many of the initiatives and projects we have focussed on have been about how communities and local businesses can use the natural and cultural assets of their locality to create new local economic opportunities that can lead to local employment.

The proposals developed for the Carsphairn Community Woodland Project are exactly the type of initiative that SUP would like to see happening across Southern Scotland, where local people are empowered to take back control of local assets to benefit their wider community.

I’d like to wish you every success with your future project development and if there is anything that the SUP can do help you take it forward please do ask.

Yours Sincerely



Ed Forrest

Project Manager

Southern Upland Partnership



Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd <carsphairncw@gmail.com>

Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd. - Muirdrochwood Acquisition Project

1 message

Correspondence Secretary <carsphairncc@gmail.com>

5 November 2018 at 22:31

To: carsphairncw@gmail.com

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Carsphairn Community Council wholeheartedly supports the proposed acquisition of Muirdrochwood by Carsphairn Community Woodland Limited as it has the potential to deliver significant benefits to the community in Carsphairn.

Regards,

Anna Clark Kennedy

Correspondence Secretary
Carsphairn Community Council

CCWL

3.10.18

Dear Mrs Fenton,

I am writing to show my support for the Carsphairn Community Woodland Project. After reading the documentation you sent to the school I have no doubt that this will only benefit the community.

I have only worked at the school a short time but in that time the community spirit has been clear. The school is the centre of the community and with rumblings of closure something else will need to take its place. Bringing people to this community will make it vibrant again and I have no doubts that the locals will invite incomers in to the fold with pleasure.

As you mention in your correspondence an outdoor learning centre for all schools would be a great asset. The schools in the Glenkens cluster would benefit from the experiences at this centre as well as benefit from meeting other children that may come to events – a great opportunity to learn new social skills.

I would like to send my apologies again for not being able to attend the information afternoon however I have printed off the invitations and sent them home in the hope that the children are brought by parents.

I look forward to seeing more plans and hope you will keep in touch with us and get us involved as much as you can!

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Erin Welsh

Teacher, Carsphairn Primary (Mon-Wed)

Carsphairn Primary School:

Excerpts from their Letters of Support

I go to school at Carsphairn.

I support your idea of starting a community hub in the woods.

The school love woodland and nature and it would be great to get more opportunities to enjoy it. Thanks for making a tourist attraction and it will be fun to have more friends.

We would like to use it for outdoor learning. If this goes ahead could we climb trees and build tree houses? I would enjoy that.

I hope this goes ahead.

Yours Sincerely,

I think it is a good idea to make the woods fun for everybody. I think the woods would be a good place to learn.

I want more families In Carsphairn to play with and make friends with. Could we make fires in the outdoor learning bit? I would like that!

I hope you get the support you need for this project.

Yours sincerely,

We really enjoyed reading about the Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd on the Carsphairn community website. I am so happy that you and the rest of CCWL are making lots more stuff to encourage more people to come here and help the school and the community.

I love the idea of having more people to talk to and make more friends which will 1- save the school and 2- make Carsphairn even more enjoyable. We will definitely use and love an outdoor centre here in Carsphairn. We will go to it on a lot of school trips and I would love to walk along some nice paths with my family. If this all happens it will be so amazing, we will get so many more families. We can't wait till this happens.

Yours Sincerely

Carsphairn Shop & Tearooms
Carsphairn
Castle Douglas
DG7 3TQ
01644 460568

As Tennants of Carsphairn community owned Shop & Tearoom, we support Carsphairn Community Woodland Company on taking ownership of Muirdrickwood Forest to benefit this community by improving Recreation, Tourism and Employment.

Lindsay Duncan
Paul Smith



Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd <carsphairncw@gmail.com>

Statement of support from Carsphairn Village Shop Ltd

1 message

CVSL <carsphairnvsl@gmail.com>

16 October 2018 at 11:22

To: Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd <carsphairncw@gmail.com>

Hi Wendy,

CVSL discussed your request for support for the community woodland at our meeting last week and I include our reply below:

"CVSL are pleased to be able to support this project as we believe that the potential community regeneration and job opportunities will be of benefit to the local community."

Regards,
Gail

--
Secretary
On behalf of CVSL Board of Directors.