

Funding boost to subsidise school visits to Burns' farm

SHARON LIPTROTT

Dumfriesshire's historic Ellisland Farm has been awarded funding to subsidise school visits.

The Robert Burns Ellisland Trust, which runs the property and land where the bard wrote Auld Lang Syne, has been given £3,000 from national agency, Museums Galleries Scotland.

Part of the Museums' Recovery Fund to combat long term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the grant will help subsidise the entrance costs of schools wanting to bring their pupils to see Ellisland, which has changed little since the poet built it in 1788.

The school visit scheme is part of a £17,000 grant from MGS and is the latest funding success for the Robert Burns Ellisland Trust which took over running the site in 2020.

They recently received funds from The

Hollywood Trust to support jobs in 2022-23 and commission a masterplan for the site, which is also supported by the Architectural Heritage Fund in Scotland.

That will be used to engage with the public to create a community and learning resource and first class heritage attraction which can support itself commercially.

The subsidy means that schools which apply will have the entrance fee of £2.50 per pupil and £5 per accompanying adult met. All schools are eligible and the grant is not means tested.

However, they need to apply to the scheme and the funds are allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Welcoming the cash boost, Joan McAlpine, the trust's business development manager, told the Standard that as a charity it has no ongoing government funding and depends on entrance fees, donations, memberships and grants to keep going.



Historic site Ellisland, where Burns wrote Auld Lang Syne and Tam O'Shanter. Inset, Joan McAlpine, the trust's business development manager

She said: "Unlike council and government museums, we need to charge for entry and for some schools that might be prohibitive. So for 2022-23 more pupils will now get to enjoy this incredibly important site - which was

entirely created by Burns himself and is categorised as exceptionally significant. "We are very grateful to Museums Galleries Scotland for supporting our scheme."

As well as seeing where Burns lived

and worked, both as a farmer and a poet, pupils can explore the outdoor space such as the orchard and paths where he wrote Tam o' Shanter and To A Wounded Hare. The farm also has an extensive collection of machinery spanning two centuries, including dairy and domestic equipment.

Joan said: "We work with schools to deliver the kind of experience they want. For example, Shawhead Primary, who visited before we got this funding, explored the outdoors as well as the buildings. It was great to see the pupils running around completing the worksheets and writing their own poems under the trees in the orchard."

To apply, schools need to fill in an online form at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1mD0q_mZaX7IbdiAR6yopFD75_mWpKSbBp6-vMC8Nig/edit?usp=sharing or contact the trust via email at info@ellislandfarm.co.uk, or call 01387 740426.



Council co-leaders The SNP's Stephen Thompson and Labour's Linda Dorward

Key council positions decided

MARC MCLEAN

Sixteen senior councillors out of the 43 elected to the Dumfries and Galloway authority have been chosen to play key roles in decision-making for the region.

The council's rainbow coalition, which includes Labour, SNP, Lib Dems and independents, recently appointed the select group to senior positions which also carry a bump up in salary.

The basic annual pay for councillors in Scotland is £19,571, however 14 in Dumfries and Galloway will receive £24,466 as either chairman or vice-chairman of council committees, and as provost.

Meanwhile, council co-leaders Stephen Thompson (SNP) and Linda Dorward (Labour) have opted to split what would otherwise have been £39,148 for leader and £29,361 for deputy leader. Instead, they'll each receive £34,254.

The senior appointments are: Archie Dryburgh, Labour - chairman of communities committee, John

Campbell, SNP - vice chairman; Katie Hagmann, SNP - head of economy and resources committee; Sean Marshall, Labour - vice chairman; Richard Brodie, Lib Dems - chairman of education; George Jamieson, SNP - vice chairman; Carolyne Wilson, Labour - chairman of finance; Dougie Campbell, independent - vice chairman; Andy Ferguson, SNP - chairman of social work; Iain Howie, independent - vice chairman; Gail Macgregor, Conservatives - chairman of audit, risk and scrutiny committee; Jim Dempster, independent - chair of planning; Emma Jordan, Labour - vice chairman.

Tracey Little, SNP, who was provost last term, will continue in the role.

Meanwhile, Councillor Gail Macgregor, leader of the Conservative group, has this week announced the appointment of opposition portfolio leads. The Conservative team will mirror the senior roles of the SNP/Labour/Lib Dems/Independent administration.

Gail Macgregor said "The Dumfries and Galloway Conservatives have brought a fresh team to the council and

this new opposition team is proof of that. It is a blend of experience and new talent who are ready and raring to go.

"My team brings vision and expertise with portfolio leads drawing on the experience of returning councillors whilst being supported in a co role by our amazing first time councillors.

"They will do the job that people in Dumfries and Galloway want to see from us - holding the administration to account, putting forward positive policy alternatives and ensuring that, through strong opposition, we get better services."

The Conservatives opposition group has appointed 11 out of 15 councillors to key positions. They are: Mrs Macgregor - leader; Malcolm Johnstone - deputy leader; Pauline Drysdale - chief whip; Ian Blake - secretary/business manager; Ian Blake and Maureen Johnstone - communities; David Inglis and John Denerley - economy and resources; Jackie McCammon and Chrissie Hill - education; Pauline Drysdale and Lynne Davis - social work; Ivor Hyslop - finance, procurement and budget.

r.e.think energy

Cloud Hill Wind Farm Public Exhibitions

BayWa r.e. UK Ltd. is hosting public exhibitions for the proposed Cloud Hill Wind Farm ahead of submitting a planning application. The exhibition will provide an opportunity to meet the project team, ask any questions, and share your feedback.

Wednesday, 22nd June 2022: 4 pm to 8 pm.

The Cabin, Main Street, Kirkcubright DG4 6LU

Thursday, 23rd June 2022: 4 pm to 8 pm.

Sanquhar Town Hall, Church Road, Sanquhar DG4 6DF

For more information on Cloud Hill Wind Farm, the project or the upcoming public exhibition, visit:

www.baywa-re.co.uk/en/wind/cloud-hill-windfarm



Or email: cloudhillwindfarm@baywa-re.co.uk

Or write to: Cloud Hill Farm,
3/1 58 Waterloo Street, Glasgow G2 7DA

Please note: Comments made to BayWa r.e. are not representations to the Scottish Government or Dumfries and Galloway Council. However, following submission of the planning application, there will be the opportunity to submit formal representations to the determining authority.

District news

Members of Dumfries Rotary Club gathered last Friday for the club's important Annual Assembly over lunch at the Cairndale Hotel.

This is a Rotary International requirement and is the time designated in the year when the incoming leadership and club officers outline their plans for coming Rotary year.

Rotary International's worldwide theme for Rotary is 'Service above Self' and current President, John Glover, suggested that the recurrent theme for this year's assembly would be 'service' for what shaped up to be a full meeting.

This idea was reflected in a number of events which had taken place during the past week. President John joined with representatives of Annan and Lockerbie Rotary clubs to help judge the annual Lockerbie Gala Week shop window competition, an example of how Lockerbie Rotary Club by sponsoring the competition identifies closely with its community.

By sponsoring these type of community events Rotary clubs all over the country give incredible service to their communities.

Echoing this theme, members of Dumfries Rotary were invited to the Aberlour Trust base at North West Dumfries during National Volunteers Week in recognition of their volunteering contributions to a number of the Trust's projects including the Lincluden Abbey Orchard project, Ukrainian refugee initiatives and a special warm clothing for winter appeal.

Words of appreciation for Dumfries Rotary Club's support were expressed by the national Aberlour Chief Executive and Rotary members responded by expressing their ongoing commitment to continuing that support in the future.

To further emphasise the recurrent theme of service, President John presented Rotary Long Service Awards to members David Campbell, Alasdair Miller, Douglas Dawson, John Henderson and Mike Henderson.

The certificates presented



Presentation President John Glover with President Elect Eileen Robertson, DG nominee Brenda Waugh, and Paul Harris Fellow, Maureen McKerrow

Another year of service lies ahead for club

were for a range from 25 years to 45 years – a remarkable demonstration of members' commitment to serving the club and community.

In addition, the club was delighted to present a Paul Harris Fellowship to its first ever Lady President Maureen McKerrow in recognition to her tremendous dedication to serving Rotary, club and community of many years.

Named For Rotary International's founder Paul Harris, a 'Fellowship' award acknowledges an individual's service above and beyond what would normally be expected.

After lunch, President Elect Eileen Robertson outlined to members her vision for the club post

Centenary Year.

She called on the incoming conveners to share their aspirations across such service categories as Youth Services, Membership, Speakers Programme, Environmental and community based activities, Rotakids clubs in schools and International areas of service and need with particular emphasis on building the fellowship aspects of club activities.

Eileen's plans and those of her conveners were well endorsed by the members – looking forward with anticipation to the year ahead.

Observing proceedings on behalf of Rotary International District 1020,

District Governor Nominee Brenda Waugh of the Annan Rotary Club spoke warmly of the extensive range of club activities and achievements and commended the club going forward in the future working together with neighbouring clubs in the South West.

She commended to the club the wealth of experience, knowledge and support available from the District office bearers.

In thanking both Eileen and Brenda for their contributions to the assembly, the President closed the meeting with the final toast to Rotary International and Annan Rotary Club.



Long service President John Glover with three of the Long service awards winners John Henderson, David Campbell, and Alasdair Miller and Paul Harris Fellow Maureen McKerrow. Douglas Dawson and Mike Henderson were unable appear in the photo.

BayWa r.e.

r.e.think energy

Cloud Hill Wind Farm Public Exhibitions

BayWa r.e. UK Ltd. is hosting public exhibitions for the proposed Cloud Hill Wind Farm ahead of submitting a planning application. The exhibition will provide an opportunity to meet the project team, ask any questions, and share your feedback.

Wednesday, 22nd June 2022: 4 pm to 8 pm.
The Cabin, Main Street, Kirkconnel DG4 6LU

Thursday, 23rd June 2022: 4 pm to 8 pm.
Sanquhar Town Hall, Church Road, Sanquhar DG4 6DF

For more information on Cloud Hill Wind Farm, the project or the upcoming public exhibition, visit:

www.baywa-re.co.uk/en/wind/cloud-hill-windfarm



Or email: cloudhillwindfarm@baywa-re.co.uk

Or write to: Cloud Hill Farm,
3/1 58 Waterloo Street, Glasgow G2 7DA

Please note: Comments made to BayWa r.e. are not representations to the Scottish Government or Dumfries and Galloway Council. However, following submission of the planning application, there will be the opportunity to submit formal representations to the determining authority.

Good luck message Dumfries teenager Stevie-Jo Kirkpatrick



Cancer survivor Stevie-Jo right behind cyclists

JACKIE GRANT

A teenage cancer survivor from Dumfries has sent a message of support to cyclists riding through the region on an epic 600-mile challenge for the charity which helped her on the road to recovery.

Stevie-Jo Kirkpatrick, 17, has been following the progress of a team of nine riders tackling the gruelling Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust's Largs to Cowes Brighter Futures Cycle Challenge from the west coast of Scotland to the Isle of Wight, with the aim of completing a route between the charity's bases over eight days.

They completed the first leg of the challenge by cycling to Castle Douglas where they stayed overnight.

After being diagnosed in 2014, Stevie-Jo had leukaemia twice and also meningitis as a result of a rare bacterial infection, with treatment over the following eight years making it extremely difficult to attend school or make friends during her primary years and as a teenager.

Her experiences with the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust have since helped to support her recovery and regain her confidence. Stevie-Jo has just completed her Highers at Wallace Hall Academy. She now hopes to go to college with the aim of then going on to university to become a paediatric cancer nurse and volunteers at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary alongside her studies.

Looking forward to sailing with the



On the road The Largs to Cowes riders heading through Dumfries after setting out from Castle Douglas. Picture courtesy of Simon Townsend

Trust for a third time from Largs next month, Stevie-Jo said: "When I went on my first trip I didn't expect we'd be doing quite as much as we did with all the sailing."

"We had a chance to helm the yacht and everyone takes a turn doing different things. It was really good making friends and meeting all the other young people on board and sharing our experiences. I felt much more confident coming out of the week because after my treatment I kind of closed up a little bit and shied away from things so it brought me back out of my shell a bit."

"I'm wishing good luck to all the riders who are taking part in the Largs to Cowes cycle challenge because it

will help other young people like me to benefit from the work of the Trust."

Her proud mum Annemarie added: "Going away with the Trust enabled Stevie-Jo to make friends who she still keeps in touch with and it was really beneficial for her to have that social aspect of taking part in the trips after missing so much schooling. It made such a difference. She was quite shy and reserved before she went away on her first trip and they had so much fun, she came back full of confidence, she was like a different person."

To support the team and read more about how their fundraising efforts will impact young people living through and beyond cancer visit: <https://largs-to-cowes.blackbaud-sites.com/>.

Town welcomes Queen's Baton Relay ahead of the Commonwealth Games

Dumfries will host the Queen's Baton Relay for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games tomorrow.

It will be the last of the five-day Scotland leg and it is hoped the public will turn out to see the special-created baton at both the Crichton and Dumfries Sports Club.

The baton carries a message from The Queen ready for the opening ceremony of the Games which run from July 28 to August 8.

In Dumfries it will be carried by baton-bearers Team Scotland's para lawn bowls player Rosemary Lenton, Team Scotland cyclist Jenny Holl and Team GB Para-cyclists Fin Graham and Sophie Uhin from 2pm to 3.30pm at the Crichton - where onlookers will also



On the way The Queen's Baton Relay for Birmingham 2022 is coming to Dumfries. Picture courtesy of Birmingham 2022

be able to try out cycling.

After that it's off to Dumfries Sports Club at Nunholm where the relay will stop off from 4pm until 6pm. The club will also be running taster sessions for hockey, cricket, squash and

athletics - all sports which are part of the Commonwealth Games and which also have clubs based at Nunholm.

Everyone of any ability is welcome to go along to give the sports a try for free and there will also be plenty of opportunities to have pictures with the baton.

The 16th relay began in October last year and has been undertaking an epic journey around the Commonwealth ever since to visit all 72 nations and territories over 269 days.

Paul Bush, chair of Commonwealth Games Scotland, said: "It is fantastic to have the Baton in Scotland."

"Its arrival signifies an exciting moment in the lead up to the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham."

BayWa r.e.

r.e.think energy

Cloud Hill Wind Farm Public Exhibitions

BayWa r.e. UK Ltd. is hosting public exhibitions for the proposed Cloud Hill Wind Farm ahead of submitting a planning application. The exhibition will provide an opportunity to meet the project team, ask any questions, and share your feedback.

Wednesday, 22nd June 2022: 4 pm to 8 pm.

The Cabin, Main Street, Kirkcubright DG4 6LU

Thursday, 23rd June 2022: 4 pm to 8 pm.

Sanquhar Town Hall, Church Road, Sanquhar DG4 6DF

For more information on Cloud Hill Wind Farm, the project or the upcoming public exhibition, visit:

www.baywa-re.co.uk/en/wind/cloud-hill-windfarm



Or email: cloudhillwindfarm@baywa-re.co.uk

Or write to: Cloud Hill Farm, 3/1 58 Waterloo Street, Glasgow G2 7DA

Please note: Comments made to BayWa r.e. are not representations to the Scottish Government or Dumfries and Galloway Council. However, following submission of the planning application, there will be the opportunity to submit formal representations to the determining authority.

GF1 buy old Penman site for expansion plan

The former Penman Engineering site at Lochabriggs in Dumfries has been sold to GF1 Investments for an undisclosed sum.

Existing accommodation on the 14-acre site – which was originally constructed as part of a wider WWII airbase and subsequently operated as a manufacturing factory – is split between two detached former aircraft hangers, both of which have been extended to provide a total of 130,000 sq.ft.

The directors of GF1 Investments said: "We are delighted with the acquisition of the former Penman Engineering site. This now means that GF1, as part of their portfolio, own all 10 aircraft hangers in Dumfries, totalling circa 600,000 sq.ft. of excellent quality warehousing.

"The company intends to commence an expansion and refurbishment programme straightaway for both buildings and, in the meantime, is in a position to offer handling, internal and external storage to commercial organisations."

Acting on behalf of SLA Property Company, Shepherd Chartered Surveyors secured the sale.

Fraser Carson, associate in Shepherd's Dumfries office, said: "We are proud to have been instructed with assisting in the disposal of such a noteworthy site, which demonstrated its versatility through high levels of interest from various sectors across the country and will be a great addition to GF1 Investments' property portfolio."



Aerial view The former Penman Engineering site at Lochabriggs in Dumfries has been sold to GF1 Investments for an undisclosed sum

Roadworks on A701

Work on the A701 at various locations between Dumfries and Beattock starts on Monday for three weeks.

It will mean overnight closures from 7pm to 6am at Nethermill on Monday and Tuesday to repair 1,300 metres of carriageway.

Then, the same at Lochabriggs to Amisfield from Wednesday until Sunday, March 19, with 2,000 metres of the carriageway to be resurfaced between Glenellon in Lochabriggs and Kirk Bank in Amisfield.

Amey, on behalf of Transport Scotland as part of the Network Management Contract for the South-West Trunk Road Unit, will then switch to Kirkland with overnight closures on March 20 and 21. Repairs will then take place north and south of St Anne's Bridge from March 22 until March 24.

All diversions will be signed and access for emergency service vehicles will be maintained throughout.



Walkout Teachers formed a picket line at Dumfries Academy on Tuesday morning

Progress made at teacher talks

STEPHEN TEMLETT

Talks described as "useful" have been held between Scotland's largest teachers' union and the Scottish Government this week.

The update came after teachers walked out of classrooms in Dumfries and Galloway on Tuesday and Wednesday this week with more strike dates announced by the Educational Institute of Scotland.

EIS general secretary Andrea Bradley told BBC Reporting Scotland that "both sides are committed to doing what we can to work towards a resolution" after Tuesday's meeting.

A further 20 days of rolling strike action across Scotland have been announced by the EIS, which is seeking a 10 per cent pay rise – a demand the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) says is unaffordable.

If action goes ahead Dumfries and Galloway primary schools will close on Wednesday, March 29, all schools

on Thursday, March 30 and secondary schools on Friday, March 31.

In addition, planned strike action in the ward of Mid Galloway and Wigtown West councillor Katie Hagmann, who is resources spokeswoman for COSLA, will still go ahead on Tuesday.

All parties showed their willingness to look for compromise Shirley-Anne Somerville Education secretary

EIS general secretary, Andrea Bradley, said: "EIS members remain absolutely resolute in their determination to secure a fair pay settlement from the Scottish

Government and COSLA.

"This two-day national strike action is a further clear signal that Scotland's teachers are not prepared to accept the deep real-terms pay cut that is being offered to them.

"I want to thank you very much for what you're doing and continue to do, to contribute to our Pay Attention campaign. You have stood strong and united in your strike action and in your picket."

Education Secretary Shirley-Anne Somerville said: "I am pleased to say that progress was made at discussions between the Scottish government, local government and EIS colleagues. All parties showed their willingness to look for compromise.

"It would be for Cosla, as the employers, to make any revised offer and the Scottish government stands ready to support them to do that.

"I hope an offer can be made this week so this dispute can be resolved without further disruption to children and young people's education."

BayWa r.e.

r.e.think energy

Cloud Hill Wind Farm Public Exhibitions

BayWa r.e. UK Ltd. is hosting public exhibitions for the proposed Cloud Hill Wind Farm ahead of submitting a planning application. The exhibition will provide an opportunity to meet the project team, ask any questions, and share your feedback.

Exhibition 1: Wednesday 15th March 2023, 4pm to 8pm. Miners Memorial Hall, Kirkconnel, DG4 6PH

Exhibition 2: Thursday 16th March 2023, 4pm to 8pm. Sanquhar Town Hall, Church Road, Sanquhar DG4 6DF

For more information on Cloud Hill Wind Farm, the project or the upcoming public exhibition, visit:

www.baywa-re.co.uk/en/wind/cloud-hill-windfarm



Or email: cloudhillwindfarm@baywa-re.co.uk

Or write to: Cloud Hill Farm, 3/1 58 Waterloo Street, Glasgow G2 7DA

Please note: Comments made to BayWa r.e. are not representations to the Scottish Government or Dumfries and Galloway Council. However, following submission of the planning application, there will be the opportunity to submit formal representations to the determining authority.

District news



Novel boost Dumfries Morrisons' community champion Myra Smith with some of the books gifted to Laurieknove Primary School for World Book Day

Gift opens a new chapter for library

SHARON LIPTROTT

Morrisons supermarket in Dumfries came up with a novel approach to World Book Day.

The celebration of literature and reading saw the store's community champion, Myra Smith, donate new books to Laurieknove Primary School for the children to restock their library.

The books came from the Morrisons

Foundation which partnered with the National Literacy Trust to donate 5,500 books across the UK to help inspire and nurture a love of reading for more than 100,000 primary school children.

Myra said: "I'm delighted that through the partnership between the Morrisons Foundation and the National Literacy Trust we're able to provide these wonderful books for pupils at Laurieknove Primary School in Dumfries."

"It's great to be able to help encourage children to read with their friends, families and teachers and I hope that they enjoy reading the books for many years to come."

In addition to helping pupils with their literacy skills, the donated books have been specifically chosen to cover topics that are relevant for the development of a child's mental health, their emotional wellbeing and social inclusion.

Salmon fishing season starts

The 2023 salmon fishing season got underway at the weekend. Sandy Dunlop piped the anglers up at the Blackwood Estate near Auldgirth for the traditional opening ceremony.

Thomas Florey from the Nith District Salmon Fishery Board blessed the river with whisky.

There was a demonstration of casting by Roddy Styles before anglers were given the chance to fish the estate water for the day.

The event brings the river community together to celebrate the start of the season.

Everyone involved in Scottish fisheries are aware of the pressures that salmon stocks currently face and fishers are doing their best for conservation of stocks by returning all salmon captured.

Nith District Salmon Fishery Board and Nith Catchment Fishery



Cheers! Thomas Florey blesses the Nith

Trust are conducting research and initiatives to ensure they fully understand any issues that salmon face within the freshwater environment.

They are working with their partners, Atlantic Salmon Trust, to research the marine phase of salmon migration in a bid to better understand any issues encountered at sea.

Blackwood Estate kindly offered their beat free of charge for the opening day.



On the march A piper leads the way to the River Nith

Town in MoT fail top 10

Dumfries drivers have made the top 10 of motorists who fail their MoT tests.

A national survey revealed the region has one of the worst records in the UK.

National Scrap Car analysed data from June 2021 until June 2022 to show Dumfries and Galloway had a 33.2 per cent failure rate.

But the worst place was a Welsh town called Llandrindod Wells in Powys with around 48 per cent of flops and the lowest rate of passes in the UK.

In second place came Scotland's fourth-largest city, Dundee, with an MoT failure rate of 38.7 per cent while the coastal town of Kirkcaldy recorded 36.4 per cent.

Five Scottish venues were included in

the top 10 with Perth in fifth slot on 35.8 per cent of failures and Falkirk next with 33.9 per cent.

Details of the survey also included which manufacturers performed the worst when it came to their cars passing.

Renault was crowned the overall worst car manufacturer for a pass with a failure rate of 37 per cent ahead of the iconic British manufacturer Mini with an overall failure rate of 30.2 per cent despite only having five models in its range.

In third place came Vauxhall, another British car manufacturer, with a 28 per cent failure rate.

Small reasons for flopping included not having any warning light on the dashboard to failing to fill screen wash.

THIS IS YOUR PAPER..

It's easy to get your news and pictures into print

Send your stories to dgnews@s-un.co.uk

Send your pictures to dgnews@s-un.co.uk

BayWa r.e.

r.e.think energy

Cloud Hill Wind Farm Public Exhibitions

BayWa r.e. UK Ltd. is hosting public exhibitions for the proposed Cloud Hill Wind Farm ahead of submitting a planning application. The exhibition will provide an opportunity to meet the project team, ask any questions, and share your feedback.

Exhibition 1: Wednesday 15th March 2023, 4pm to 8pm. Miners Memorial Hall, Kirkconnel, DG4 6PH

Exhibition 2: Thursday 16th March 2023, 4pm to 8pm. Sanquhar Town Hall, Church Road, Sanquhar DG4 6DF

For more information on Cloud Hill Wind Farm, the project or the upcoming public exhibition, visit:

www.baywa-re.co.uk/en/wind/cloud-hill-windfarm



Or email: cloudhillwindfarm@baywa-re.co.uk

Or write to: Cloud Hill Farm, 3/1 58 Waterloo Street, Glasgow G2 7DA

Please note: Comments made to BayWa r.e. are not representations to the Scottish Government or Dumfries and Galloway Council. However, following submission of the planning application, there will be the opportunity to submit formal representations to the determining authority.



Exciting new start Members of the community, the construction team, architect John Murray and the project team celebrate the start of work at the old school. Picture: Laura Sparrow

Community hub work under way

LORNA THOMSON

Renovation work is under way to turn a former Dumfriesshire school into a unique community hub, entrepreneurial centre and venue for arts and entertainment.

The Old School Thornhill, which is expected to open early next year, will significantly increase office provision in the village.

And the main hall will be used as a communal workspace for freelancers during the day and in the evenings it will become a venue for theatre and music performances and cinema screenings.

There will be a community kitchen, a space for lifelong learning, a room for exercise, a meeting space and a room dedicated to and managed by pupils from the nearby Wallace Hall Academy.

Funding and valuable expertise for the project have been received from the South of Scotland Enterprise and Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Councillor Katie Hagmann, a member of the local authority's economy and resources committee, said: "It's great to see work starting on what is a really exciting project and a great example of a local development and targeted council funding which will bring people together and provide a hub for the local rural community."

And communities committee member Sean Marshall added: "Our council has worked with this forward-thinking group to combine efforts to bring investment and to regenerate and repurpose the old school for the benefit of local people, to enable them to make their own decisions on what is needed for their local community."

The old school was previously Wallace Hall Primary from 1904 to 2010 when it was replaced with a new build.

The initial idea for the redevelopment



Update The team from Broatch Construction giving a progress report. Picture by Laura Sparrow

of the school came from a group of parents in 2016.

The small collective set about to find a pragmatic way to transform the derelict building into an innovative, design-led, community space.

The project is being managed by Samuel Sparrow and David Smith, who have worked with the board of trustees since 2019 to raise funding.

Foundation Scotland has also supported the project through the Clyde and ANCBC Windfarm Funds.

David Booth, chairman of ANCBC, said: "We are delighted to be supporting the Old School Thornhill project, this is doing exactly what it says on our 'tin' by supporting communities to the overall benefit of a wide range of participants."

"More especially in the re-use of an existing community asset, and in supporting inward investment into the community. A fantastic project, we offer our best wishes for the construction phase followed by the facility's wide variety of usage."

The Holyrood Trust, the

Architectural Heritage Fund and the local community have supported the project from the very beginning.

Karen Ward Boyd, from the trust, said: "The project has demonstrated a high level of ambition from the start and will provide the local communities with a high quality venue that will respond to local needs."

Professor Russel Griggs, chairman of South of Scotland Enterprise, said: "This project will transform the old school into a creative community enterprise hub, offering new opportunities for business start-up, growth and collaboration in the local creative sector."

"We hear regularly about the lack of small commercial and industrial spaces across the south which makes this development all the more welcome."

OST has worked closely with Moniaive based architect John Murray and, at the end of 2022, Lockerbie-based Broatch construction were appointed as the main contractors working with Armstrong Joinery from Cample.

BayWa r.e.

r.e.think energy

Cloud Hill Wind Farm Public Exhibitions

BayWa r.e. UK Ltd. is hosting public exhibitions for the proposed Cloud Hill Wind Farm ahead of submitting a planning application. The exhibition will provide an opportunity to meet the project team, ask any questions, and share your feedback.

Exhibition 1: Wednesday 15th March 2023, 4pm to 8pm.
Miners Memorial Hall, Kirkconnel, DG4 6PH

Exhibition 2: Thursday 16th March 2023, 4pm to 8pm.
Sanquhar Town Hall, Church Road, Sanquhar DG4 6DF

For more information on Cloud Hill Wind Farm, the project or the upcoming public exhibition, visit:

www.baywa-re.co.uk/en/wind/cloud-hill-windfarm



Or email: cloudhillwindfarm@baywa-re.co.uk

Or write to: Cloud Hill Farm,
3/158 Waterloo Street, Glasgow G2 7DA

Please note: Comments made to BayWa r.e. are not representations to the Scottish Government or Dumfries and Galloway Council. However, following submission of the planning application, there will be the opportunity to submit formal representations to the determining authority.