

GLEN URQUHART CARE PROJECT NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2018



Welcome to our late summer newsletter, in which we will bring you up to date with events, following an extremely challenging time for us all at the Centre. We are pleased to have some positive messages for our members!

Centre Manager. As our users and regular visitors will be well aware, Paula moved on from her role as Centre manager in June. We would like to take this opportunity to thank her again for her huge commitment and contribution to the Centre during her years with us. We hope she had a great holiday following her departure!

We are really pleased to be able to tell you that Paula's successor has been appointed. It's with great pleasure that we welcome Pam Poston as our new Centre General Manager. Pam will be joining us from 30th July, and she will look forward to meeting all our service users, and as many of our visitors and friends as possible in the next few months.

Home Care: It was with huge regret that we had to give up being a Home Care Provider this year. However, in the time available to us, we were unable to reach agreement with the NHS over funding. More importantly, our constant struggle to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of Home Care workers meant that all of the team that we did have were under enormous physical and mental pressure in trying to ensure that our service requirements could be met. After a lot of work looking into any possible solutions to the issues, our Centre Manager, Paula, and the Board concluded that we simply would not be in a position – either financially or in relation to our duty of care to our staff - to continue providing this service in the current climate. We were very grateful for the support of Councillor Davidson, which allowed us to look into some alternative models for homecare. The possibility of the Care Centre operating SDS based homecare remains an option we would like to explore in the coming year. Meanwhile, we are now working hard to ensure that the Centre goes forward strongly with its Day Care service.

What's been happening?

New car! Our regular users, (and our drivers) were delighted that we were able to replace the old car earlier this year. Feedback on the new model has been very positive!

New lights: We have been successful in securing a grant of £5,000 from M&S fund the replacement of the old, and increasingly unsuitable, lighting throughout most of the public area of the centre. The replacement LED lighting will be considerably more energy efficient and effective.

Volunteers needed. There are always plenty of odd jobs requiring attention at the Centre, and at the moment we would like to get some of the exterior garden jobs done. If you have the skills and could spare a few hours to assist with sanding, painting and staining of woodwork, or general gardening tasks, please do contact the centre and let us know.

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New Housing Project

Since 2016, when GCP bought land adjacent to the Glenurquhart Centre, using funds obtained from the Scottish Land Fund, we have been pursuing our aim to build 12 houses for elderly or vulnerable members of our community, which will be available for rent.

After a very busy year, undertaking preparatory ground excavations and, more crucially, working to get the necessary funding into place, we are thrilled to report that – at last – work on the construction of the houses is due to commence. We hope to have the houses ready for occupation in late spring next year.

The housing will be allocated using the agreed policy, and we will begin the process of agreeing allocation later this year, so that all those who are to be offered housing will have plenty of notice.

It has been necessary for us to take on loan commitments in order to finalise the funding, and to help try and minimise this commitment, we have put out an appeal to the community for donations towards the project. The 'Just Giving' arrangement is expected to be finalised and in place soon, but meanwhile, cheques or direct payments into the Development account can be accepted. We are really encouraged by, and grateful for, the level of donations so far committed – over £4,500 – and can only reiterate that ***the more we manage to raise in this way, the less we will have to borrow*** in order to see this project to fruition. The project is such an exciting step forward for both GCP and our wider community, and we are all looking forward to seeing the houses completed and occupied.

Membership

GCP now has a membership of around 160, but there is plenty of scope for growth. Membership is free and members will incur no financial liability. Please help us to spread the word by letting your friends and neighbours know about the Association. Membership forms can be obtained from Neil MacInnes, the Glenurquhart Centre office, or the GCP page on www.glenurquhartcentre.org.uk/gcp-members/gcp-membership/

We are also keen to recruit a few new Board members. If you think you have the kind of skills and experience that would suit this role, please do get in touch with us. We would be particularly pleased to hear from people with

a care background, or who have experience of being a carer for a family member or friend.

And finally

.....Congratulations – and a huge 'well done!' - to Eileen, Claudia and Eilidh who braved the scorching conditions earlier this summer and completed the gruelling challenge of walking the Corrieyairack Pass from Laggan to Fort Augustus, in aid of the Centre funds. This involved around 25 miles of walking, including plenty of uphill, in the kind of weather conditions that we are not really used to! The team raised over £400 for the Centre, which will probably be used to provide plants and equipment for the garden.