



Community Asset Transfer Scheme (CATS) for our national forests and land

ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST FORM

Introduction

Please read the relevant parts of the [Community Asset Transfer Scheme](#) (CATS) Guidance before completing this form. You may also wish to refer to the Scottish Government's [Asset Transfer Guidance for Community Bodies](#).

The Request must be submitted in writing, either as a hard copy or by email. Please answer all the questions. You can attach additional information as extra sheets or electronic documents. Please be specific. When answering the questions you do not need to repeat any information you have already given, but simply refer to an earlier answer or attached document.

Please return the completed form and supporting documentation to:

Community Asset Transfer Scheme Team
Forestry and Land Scotland
231 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7AT

E-mail: fls.communities@forestryandland.gov.scot

We will confirm receipt of your Request within 5 working days and you will receive a formal acknowledgement letter within 15 working days to confirm whether your Request is valid or requesting further information. We may also ask you for more information during the assessment and evaluation process.

CATS: ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST FORM

This is an asset transfer request made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

SECTION 1: Information about the community transfer body making the request

1.1 Name of the community transfer body making the asset transfer request

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust Limited

1.2 Community transfer body address

This should be the registered address, if you have one.

The Wildside Centre, Whitebridge, Inverness-shire

Postcode: IV2 6UN

1.3 Contact details

Please provide the name and contact address to which correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request should be sent.

Contact name: Steven Watson

Postal address:

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust Limited

The Wildside Centre, Whitebridge, Inverness-shire,

Postcode: IV2 6UN

Email: clo@sfctrust.org.uk

Telephone: XXXXXXXXXX



We agree that correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request may be sent by email to the email address given above. *(Please tick to indicate agreement)*

You can ask the Forestry and Land Scotland to stop sending correspondence by email, or change the email address, by telling us at any time, as long as 5 working days' notice is given.

1.4 Type of eligible community transfer body

Please select **one** option and mark with an "X" in the relevant box to confirm the type of community transfer body and its official number, if it has one:

- a Company and its company number is SC270423
- or**
- a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and its charity number is _____
- or**
- a Community Benefit Society (BenCom), and its registered number is _____
- or**
- Unincorporated organisation (no number)

Please attach a copy of the community transfer body's constitution, articles of association or registered rules.

- If the organisation is an eligible community transfer body under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 go to **Section 2. (Go to Section 2)**

1.5 If the organisation is **not** an eligible community transfer body under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015:

a) Has the organisation been individually designated as a community transfer body by the Scottish Ministers?

No **Yes**

Please give the title and date of the designation order:

or b) Does the organisation fall within a class of bodies which has been designated as community transfer bodies by the Scottish Ministers?

No **Yes**

If yes what class of bodies does it fall within?

Section 2: Information about the land and rights requested

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.2)

2.1 Please identify the land to which this asset transfer request relates.

You should provide a **grid reference** and attach a **map** clearly showing the boundaries of the land to which this asset transfer request. You should also provide any name by which the land is known, and you may also wish to provide additional description. You can contact your Forestry and Land Scotland [Region](#) office for assistance in providing a copy of the map.

Grid reference: NH5219723738

Area in hectares:

Name and description of the land:

1. The single storey rubblestone building known as 'Farigaig Forest Classroom' including the toilets.
2. Land used as a car park associated with the building and picnic area to the east of the burn.
3. Open land on the River Farigaig side of the public road currently mown and used as a picnic area.
4. Larger area of open land known as Fasnagruig or Fasnagruig Paddock or Achaidhnaneach (horse field), connected to the land around the building by a neck of land being the site of the former shed, still shown on some maps but demolished and removed for more than 20 years.

If your request is for a building, you should provide a street address and the Unique Property Reference Number ([UPRN](#)) if known.

Address: Farigaig Forest Classroom, Pass Road, Inverfarigaig (not on Postal Address File)

UPRN (**if known**):

Section 3: Type of request, payment and conditions

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.4)

3.1 Please tick what type of request is being made:

- for **ownership** (under section 79(2)(a)) – go to **Section 3A**
- for **lease** (under section 79(2)(b)(i)) – go to **Section 3B**
- for other **rights** (section 79(2)(b)(ii)) – go to **Section 3C**

3A – Request for ownership

What price are you prepared to pay for the land requested (see CATS Guidance Section 2.2)?

Proposed price: £45,000

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

3B – Request for lease

a) What is the length of lease you are requesting?

b) How much rent are you prepared to pay? (see CATS Guidance Section 2.2)
Please make clear whether this is per year or per month.

Proposed rent: £ per

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to be included in the lease, or to apply to the request in any other way.

3C – Request for other rights

a) What are the rights you are requesting?

Do you propose to make any payment for these rights?

Yes **No**

If yes, how much are you prepared to pay? Please make clear what period this would cover, for example per week, per month, per day?

Proposed payment: £ per

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

Section 4: Community Proposal

You may wish to refer to relevant sections in supporting documents.

4.1 Please set out the reasons for making the request and how the land or building will be used.

This should explain the objectives of your project, why there is a need for it, any development or changes you plan to make to the land or building, and any activities that will take place there.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust is making an application to purchase the former forest school building and toilet, car park, picnic area and paddock at Inverfarigaig, close to the shores of Loch Ness. The area is all within the current National Forest Estate and ownership of Scottish Ministers.

We are making this asset transfer request because we believe this transfer will unlock benefits to the community locally and also contribute to the national outcomes of increased social and environmental wellbeing.

The land and building have been underused for many years. The whole site does however have great potential. It has specific attributes including its location and manageable size. These make its acquisition and operation by the community, through the community trust a very desirable development.

The proposal has been identified in the community's recent Community Action Plan and Local Place Plan as a priority, reflecting increasing local interest in environmental projects, nature and community development have prompted this asset transfer request.

The building is rectangular, of rubblestone construction under a profile metal roof with a wood clad upper gable and concrete pad. It has just one small window and two doors and is modest in scale and unusual appearance. It is believed to be home to bats. It is already connected to water and electricity services. The site includes a useful off-road car park and is accessible and visible from the public road. It is conveniently situated for the growing settlement of Inverfarigaig and is close to the designated areas of special environmental importance. An additional scheme of houses for the site between the former local forest office and forestry housing has been granted approval for a mix of housing and development is currently underway. The small paddock area is one of the very few areas of unforested ground in the district and is therefore in a much more suitable state for development for growing food or providing fodder.

This request for asset transfer arises directly from the process of our 2020/2021 [Community Action Plan](#) which was a comprehensive exercise involving our whole community over an extended period facilitated by an external firm (Nick wright Planning). Our Community Action Plan has five themes, and two of these, *Outdoors and Nature* and *Community Life* are particularly relevant to this proposal. These arose in the engagement with our residents throughout the Stratherrick and Foyers area.

In our subsequent [Local Place Plan](#) recently submitted to Highland Council, the Inverfarigaig community identified the transfer of this asset and its access, development and sustainable use by the community as a top priority.

This project is a further step following an initial Minute of Understanding between the Inverfarigaig Action Group and Forestry and Land Scotland relating to the Hillhead fields at Inverfarigaig. This initial MOU has progressed to an asset transfer process and relates to recreational land in the immediate vicinity of the former Forestry Commission houses at Hillhead. The land around these houses is especially valuable to the residents because their homes lack the amenity of large gardens and are very compactly located together. The new homes under construction will also have limited garden space.

We need the Inverfarigaig Forest School building to provide a 'home-base' and focus for our community and especially our environmental volunteers. It will also serve as a base to undertake positive actions in our woodlands and Trust sites in our district. It is envisaged as the base for our environmental rangers and as a store and toilet base for work parties. The existing electricity supply and toilet provision is particularly valuable, as is the scope for charging of electric vehicles or small plant which can operate using advanced battery technology. Volunteers will also be able to clean themselves and shelter from foul weather.

We would plan to use the building as an environmental hub, a meeting room, toilets and storage. It would also remain available as a picnic area and retain interpretation and directional signage for the paths and ways around Inverfarigaig and the Spital of Boleskine, which include the increasingly popular South Loch Ness Trail and Trail of the 7 Lochs. The field area would allow sufficient space for the trial growing food or fodder. The existing green beech hedges to the public road are a feature of the site and would be retained and maintained.

4.2 Benefits of the proposal

Please set out the benefits that you consider will arise if the request is agreed to (see CATS Guidance Section 3.2). This section should explain how the project will benefit your community, and others.

Please refer to the guidance on how the relevant authority will consider the benefits of a request.

The main benefit of the asset transfer would be the impetus to increase the use and value of the asset to the local community. By providing a base for the area's environmental activities the Trust believes that environmental wellbeing would be advanced. There is currently very limited access or use of the building and the open area of the paddock has an air of neglect.

We know that residents and visitors are keen to protect and appreciate local woodlands, trails and the flora and fauna of the area. We believe that a benefit of the proposal would be to engage more people in nature and advance social wellbeing. Increased use arising from local ownership and control would also facilitate increased interaction between local residents and visitors who are drawn to Loch Ness and its surroundings.

Whilst Stratherrick and Foyers owns and leases small areas of land and buildings elsewhere in the district but has no public buildings in Inverfarigaig. Our open land at Foyers and land we have leased from SSE have no base. The Inverfarigaig site has piped water and electricity and an existing serviceable building which would be costly to recreate somewhere else. The site and its car park make it ideal for improvement as regards access for people with restricted mobility. Inverfarigaig is also a place served by all Foyers to Inverness buses, so, for example, Foyers residents and travellers from Dores would be able to access the site by public transport.

4.3 Restrictions on use of the land

If there are any restrictions on the use or development of the land, please explain how your project will comply with these. Your Forestry and Land Scotland [Region](#) office can provide assistance in identifying any restrictions and how to comply with them.

Restrictions might include, amongst others, environmental designations such as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), heritage designations such as listed building status, controls on contaminated land or planning restrictions.

The application relates in the main to the small building and area of open land lying to the south west side of the public road. This area has no special designation.

Sitelink / NatureScot The small roadside area currently maintained for a picnic area, on the north east of the public road does fall within the Dun Deardil SSSI, (also known as Inverfarigaig 813). The same area is also designated Special Area of Conservation (Ness Woods 8337) It is not proposed to make any changes in use or management to this detached area to the north east of the public road.

Initially the plan would be to revitalise the building, maintain the car park, provide additional signage and establish the building as the area's environmental hub. The education element will be continued. It is expected to be the base for our Community Environmental and Biodiversity Action Group, litter picks, community volunteers for the maintenance of paths, for the trial growing and meetings. The idea of basing volunteer or other ranger services here to link residents and visitors is also proposed.

4.4 Negative consequences

What negative consequences (if any) may occur if your request is agreed to? How would you propose to minimise these?

You should consider any potential negative consequences for the local economy, environment, or any group of people, and explain how you could reduce these.

The Trust does not envisage any negative consequences arising from ownership and operation of this site as a community environmental hub. The people attracted to volunteer or visit the area will have its protection as a priority. The opportunity to engage with visitors who may be passing through or staying in the area will have a beneficial rather than a negative impact on the local economy. Whilst increased use by local volunteers or rangers could lead to increased occupation of the car park, it is of a good size and visitors should still be able to park safely. The site would also be ideal for a public Electric Vehicle charging point which might further constrain the available spaces at busy times but which would carry an additional benefit.

4.5 Capacity to deliver

Please show how your organisation will be able to manage the project and achieve your objectives.

This could include the skills and experience of members of the organisation, any track record of previous projects, whether you intend to use professional advisers, etc.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust has a proven record of revitalising buildings in recent years and making them into effective and valued community facilities. At the other end of our area, the Wildside Centre has been taken from a state of neglect and dereliction into a much used and quality centre for social activities and childcare. At Errogie, the Trust has acquired on the open market a former derelict church building and made this wind and watertight in advance of a heritage and sporting use.

The asset transfer at Inverfarigaig, albeit on a modest building, would add and complete to the suite of community buildings across our district which can be recovered and used to stimulate the local community life, overcome the health problems of isolation and provide services which people in towns are used to being available through local authorities or other statutory bodies.

Specifically for the Inverfarigaig building and site, the geographical position and the sector focus on environment is really the final piece of community infrastructure to provide the envisioned spread of community buildings comprising the facilities at Whitebridge (The Wildside Centre – childcare, recreational groups and community trust and council meetings and events), at Torness (The Clay Target Club cabin – country sports), Errogie (the former Free Church of Scotland Building – Heritage, indoor sports, youth groups), at Gorthleck, (Stratherrick Public Hall for larger traditional gatherings, lectures, am dram and music / dancing performances on a wooden floor) and at Foyers Field (Outdoor recreation and ball sports, associated with the leased loch shore area. Foyers is our largest settlement and there the Trust also acquired and refurbished two small derelict industrial units for the exclusive use by local healthcare charity Boleskine Community Care. At Inverfarigaig a similar purchase of former open areas around the settlement is ongoing (Forestry and Land Scotland). These areas are already in use for recreation and as the site of a new community growing project where a community ‘polycrub’ has now been erected and is in use to grow food.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust has the current budgeted income from renewable energy generation operators to meet the initial costs of acquisition and upgrade. Some of this income is index-linked which is very beneficial. In addition, Trust investments of these windfarm and hydro community benefit funds provide a base to meet ongoing operational and maintenance costs.

Some investment of community benefit funds in the early years of the agreements with generators is designed to provide a reasonable operating income once the current payments come to an end. This fund is increasing in value and is specifically reserved for ongoing costs once annual income from the generators starts to decline.

The Trust also maintains an equipped and connected staff resource which allows the project to be managed actively and has a facilities officer who would look after this site along with our other community facilities.

All these developments show a positive track record of delivery and the most recent of these, the acquisition and safeguarding of the external fabric of the former Free Church of Scotland building at Errogie has recently been completed. The Trust has also recently delivered, with local partners in the Community Council, a new public toilet building at Foyers, which has been welcomed locally and regionally after the official opening in June 2023.

The Trust has also ongoing agreements with a range of property professionals to ensure the properties it owns are insured, maintained and safe for use by members of the public.

End of Section 4

Section 5: Level and nature of support

5.1 Please provide details of the level and nature of support for the request from your community and, if relevant, from others (see CATS Guidance Section 3.2)

You should describe the community your body represents and include information on the proportion of your community who are involved with the request, how you have engaged with your community beyond the members of your organisation and what their response has been.

You should also show how you have engaged with any other communities that may be affected by your proposals.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust comprises its members. It has existed since July 2004. Membership is open to all. There is no charge to join. Full members are residents and form the vast majority of the members. Junior and Associate membership is also available, however these classes of membership do not confer AGM voting rights. Associate members are generally those not currently resident in the Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council area. The memorandum and Articles of Association were amended last at the AGM in November 2022 to ensure the most-open membership criteria possible.

Our membership at 22 June 2024 comprises

Ordinary Members - 259

Junior Members - 1

Associate Members – 17

During the 19 years of the Trust over 60 local residents have performed the role of a director. Directors are drawn from the membership of the Trust. Directors generally serve their term or join or leave the board due to work commitments, a shift of residence or 'having done their bit'. Directors and office bearers, including the Chair of the Trust, have generally been split around 50% 50% between females and males and no one geographic area of the Trust's beneficial area has been ignored. (1) In addition, these local Trust members who have stood and been elected as Trust Directors have on occasion used their powers to co-opt additional members to the Trust Board. There is no obligation on the Trust to include any person not resident in the district on the Trust Board, so the local people are in charge of all decisions.

The Trust maintains public contact beyond its membership through meetings, a regularly updated website, through its own Facebook page and via the wider Community Facebook pages, on Twitter and through very regular newsletters which are produced on line, and bi-annual news magazines which are printed and delivered to all addresses in the area.

Electors over 18 in 2015 were listed as Foyers 180 and Stratherrick 389 (2). This was for an election for over 18 year old voters. The total was 569. The total electorate since 2015 is expected to have increased as a result of additional residents in new homes and a decrease in vacant homes. A greater number would be appropriate if those over 16 years could be included.

In 2021 the published 'Stratherrick and Foyers Community Action Plan' stated the community comprised 380 households and 820 residents (3). This work was done with all members of the community regardless of whether they were members of the Community Trust or not. Local networks and weekly events (such as the 'Soup to Go') were used to gather as much information from residents of all ages and degrees of electronic communication capability.

The Community Action Plan *Our Community Our Future* was developed over a medium period of intensive community engagement. These included assemblies, Zoom events, specific area and theme working groups and postal engagement. 264 Community Survey responses were logged. This figure represents over 30% of residents. At draft stage a further 120 comments were received, showing that community members were engaged throughout the process and not just in a 'one-off' manner.

The community engagement process by Nick Wright Planning was evaluated against the National Standards for community engagement using the VOICE evaluation. This report is available [here](#). The finalised plan is a strong document on which to base trust projects for the coming years.

As regards Inverfarigaig, the responses were particularly high in relation to the population and number of households there. The Community Action Plan logged 23 responses from Inverfarigaig. This is by far the highest level of participation of any of the six micro communities within Stratherrick and Foyers.

In the Community Action Plan a list of 'Our Future Aspirations' was presented in a hierarchy with 'Protect the Natural environment' at the top of that list. Of the other 12 themes, 'Keep Rural Identity', sustainable communities and Eco Friendly / Carbon Zero all featured prominently. Other relevant topics featured aspiration for Community Woodland and growing projects. 'Outdoors and Nature' also showed the support that was desired to allow volunteer activity to proceed.

Local Place Plan – Inverfarigaig.

Subsequent to the Community Action Plan a detailed Local Place Plan has also been produced. The purpose of this was to document what very local priorities were for our micro-communities including Inverfarigaig. It is envisaged that whilst the Inverfarigaig building will be a focus for community volunteers from across our community, the place will also be the effective meeting place for Inverfarigaig as well. The Place Plan for Inverfarigaig prioritises the acquisition of the former Forest School, Car Park and Paddock for community development and nature conservation. The Local Place Plan for Stratherrick and Foyers has recently been completed and submitted to Highland Council, one of the first communities to do this in Highland.

The proposal has the support of Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council, Inverfarigaig Residents Group and two elected Councillors (Fraser and Balance). See separate pdf of notes of support.

The Trust has made contact with the Community Ownership Support Service delivered by Development Trusts Association Scotland who help these type of Asset Transfer requests.

Section 6: Funding

Please outline how you propose to fund the price or rent you are prepared to pay for the land, and your proposed use of the land

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.5)

You should show your calculations of the costs associated with the transfer of the land or building and your future use of it, including any redevelopment, ongoing maintenance and the costs of your activities. All proposed income and investment should be identified, including volunteering and donations. If you intend to apply for grants or loans you should demonstrate that your proposals are eligible for the relevant scheme, according to the guidance available for applicants.

The Trust has access to funds in its current reserve account to fund the purchase price and associated fees.

Contracts with local renewable energy generating operators guarantee the Trust's income for a period exceeding 10 years and the Trust's investments over the last 10 years will continue to provide an income thereafter. These multiple income strands will allow the Trust to maintain the building and site and to fund the necessary basic services and recurring costs for the building. It is anticipated that the projects which result and use the building, field and carpark will each develop with their own budgets and fund the additional costs of running those projects from sources including Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust.

The current cash resources and investments of the Trust are included in our annual accounts as available on the Trust website and through Companies House.

Signature

Two office-bearers (board members, charity trustees or committee members) of the community transfer body must sign the form. They must provide their full names and home addresses for the purposes of prevention and detection of fraud.

This form and supporting documents will be made available online for any interested person to read and comment on. Personal information will be redacted before the form is made available.

We, the undersigned on behalf of the community transfer body as noted at section 1, make an asset transfer request as specified in this form.

We declare that the information provided in this form and any accompanying documents is accurate to the best of our knowledge.

Please refer to signed pdf of this sheet showing the signatures of the following

1. Name Catriona Fraser
Address [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
Date 21 July 2023
Position Vice Chair SFCT
Signature Catriona Fraser

2. Name Kirsty Balfour
Address [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
Date 2 August 2023
Position Director
Signature K Balfour

Checklist of accompanying documents

To check that nothing is missed, please list any documents which you are submitting to accompany this form.

Section 1 – you **must** attach your organisation’s constitution, articles of association or registered rules

Title of document attached:

[Articles of Association | Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust \(stratherrickcommunity.org.uk\)](https://stratherrickcommunity.org.uk)

Section 2 – any maps, drawings or description of the land requested

Documents attached: Single Slide ‘Expanded Area’ attachment to CATS Request

Section 3 – note of any terms and conditions that are to apply to the request

Documents attached: None

Section 4 – about your proposals, their benefits, any restrictions on the land or potential negative consequences, and your organisation’s capacity to deliver.

Documents attached: Business Plan and .xlsx file attached to request

Section 5 – evidence of community support

Documents attached:

Sent by post under separate cover – Community Action Plan, plus .pdf attachment (Notes of Support 4)

Section 6 – funding

Documents attached: Annual Accounts detailing balances and reserves

[Annual Accounts | Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust \(stratherrickcommunity.org.uk\)](https://stratherrickcommunity.org.uk)

End of Form

CATS request inserted data & Aug 2023 sw01