

September 2022

Dear Forest Land Scotland,

The Gairloch High School Parent Council would like to lend their full support to the project proposed by the Slattadale SCIO (SC051510).

The High School has historical links with Slattadale once renting a forestry bothy for use by pupils for many years. The decision not to renew the lease on the bothy (as no longer fit for purpose) led to a working group of the parent council to look at the bigger picture of how to make the best of what Slattadale offers.

We are in full support of a CATS of a small part of the forest for educational activities, outdoor learning, rural skills, outdoor sports, and adventures for the 3-18 age group. In addition to the benefits for well-being, upskilling, education, and fun that pupils will experience in school time spent in the wild space of Slattadale we plan to increase parent participation and feel the outdoor space at Slattadale offers an exciting opportunity to help this process.

A dedicated space in the forest will provide a destination for families to come together for activities away from screens and technology, a place to connect with each other and nature. Equipped with simple facilities the attraction of the lochside site will be multigenerational recreational space, activities from paddle boarding to path building, picnics, hammock time, conservation, and a base for exploration of the wider area. The 3-18 inclusion is a great way to encourage the wider ASG community to meet, share, and play. As our school-age community shrinks, providing a focal point for families from the wider geographical area is one way to help keep strength in numbers, and connection from an earlier age than just meeting at High School. A bigger pool for friendship not just for pupils but parents and siblings too. This will hopefully lead to a more engaged, stronger parent council for the future.

Even when the plantation trees have been felled, which will change the site beyond recognition we plan to embrace the pockets of native woodland left behind and the lochside location and focus on regeneration and the things we can do to help this, and look forward to the years ahead when native pinewood will reclaim its roots.

Kind regards,

Gairloch High School Parent Council