



## To our Kirkcowan Community Council Area Residents

Hello, and welcome to our Autumn Newsletter!

It's been another productive year for KCDT albeit with some frustrations at times, as can be the nature of things. However, progress is being made across various projects in addition to supporting the groups and clubs within our community.

We are still grieving the loss of our dear friend and colleague, Colin Richardson, and it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge his hard work, commitment and advice to the Trust.

The Play Park project is progressing. Unfortunately, contractors 3b were not able to commit to the project, due to resources being deployed in other areas. However, with the support of Community Council Chair, Hazel Matthews, we have moved quickly to engage with Jupiter Play, who have been very helpful in getting our plans moving forward. The first phase will look to replace and enhance the play equipment that is in the park. The planning application for this has been submitted, and as long as there are no issues, we expect to have some work starting soon.

The Educational Grant continues to be available for those who are going into Higher/Further Education. This also includes job-related practical qualifications. We have tweaked the grant conditions to make them a bit more generous and wider reaching. More details and the application form can be found on the KCDT website.

Winter is just around the corner. The Winter Fuel payment is available to all households in the community and simply requires the appropriate form to be completed and submitted.

Exciting news is that, in conjunction with the Autumn Club, we are acquiring a community minibus to enable groups and clubs to travel more cheaply and easily for excursions and visits. We know that transport is often a barrier to getting to events and for social and educational outings. Limited availability of local suppliers of such transport, in addition to the significant cost to hire, has led us to the decision to purchase the minibus. More information on how to utilise this asset soon.

Ongoing thanks to the volunteers who are helping to maintain and manage the Jenna Morra wood. Significant effort has already been put in and an autumn work schedule is ready to start soon. Thanks to Connick's who are leading the work at the wood.

We are delighted to see and hear that the path network is being well used. It enables residents and visitors to enjoy the beautiful countryside of Kirkcowan and to exercise dogs in a safe environment (with no longer a need to walk on the road). We have listened to feedback on the path network and there are a few more improvements coming shortly to increase accessibility for everyone as well as a longer-term plan to keep expanding the network.

In addition to the larger projects, the KCDT continues to support the smaller groups and clubs in the village. This is important to keep the variety of clubs going for the benefit of all in the community who wish to access them. Socially and for good mental and physical health, these clubs can be a lifeline. Our support includes help with hall fees, ice fees or acquisitions of supplies and equipment, to enable these clubs to run on a no- or low-cost basis, making them more accessible for everyone in the community.

I have enjoyed another year as Chair of KCDT, never without its challenges, but it is good to feel that we can help develop the Kirkcowan community and the village environment for the benefit of all who live here. If you have any questions or queries then please look at the website [www.kcdt.uk](http://www.kcdt.uk) or get in touch with Carol at Machars Action: [carol@macharsaction.co.uk](mailto:carol@macharsaction.co.uk).

Charlie McNeill, Chairman, Kirkcowan Community Development Trust

# Kirkcowan Community Development Trust Updates

## Winter Fuel Allowance

Applications are now open for the KCDT Winter Fuel Allowance Scheme. The payments are available to all households within the Kirkcowan Community Council Area. This year's deadline to return completed application forms, which are included with this newsletter, is 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023. Last year, nearly 300 households in Kirkcowan received £200 from the scheme. In these difficult times, we hope that the allowance payment will go some way towards helping Kirkcowan residents to keep warm.

## Exciting changes to Educational Grant Scheme

The Kirkcowan Community Development Trust has changed the way it helps Kirkcowan community residents who wish to undertake educational or practical courses/training, under the Educational Grant Scheme (EGS). Residents can now apply for grants for any number of eligible courses or training, subject to an overall personal maximum of £2,000.

Anyone who has already received funding under the previous EGS, who is part way through or has completed their course or training, is also eligible to apply for further funding for their existing or new course or training. In such cases, previous EGS grants awarded will be taken into account against the overall maximum grant of £2,000.

Full details of the various conditions which apply to this amended EGS are available on the KCDT website: [www.kcdt.uk](http://www.kcdt.uk). Further information is available from Carol at Machars Action on 01988 403450 or [carol@macharsaction.co.uk](mailto:carol@macharsaction.co.uk).

## Jenna Morra Wood

After a summer break, a small group of volunteers are resuming work at Jenna Morra Wood. Work to remove rhododendron bushes has nearly been completed and has made a huge difference in opening up the woodland, but there is a bit more work to do this winter to remove them altogether and ensure that they do not come back. After that, the next focus will be on opening up the route for a new path closer to the river. This will involve cutting some smaller trees and it will be necessary to construct some bridges over the many ditches which dissect the wood.

Meanwhile the plan is to get some felling of larger trees done by professionals and the emphasis will be on removing most of the conifers and any of the younger trees growing too close to the perimeter dyke before they knock it down as they grow. Anyone wishing to join the volunteers just needs to come along on a Saturday morning at 10 am from now until April. If you have your own handsaw that would be useful.

## Membership

Membership of the Trust is open to anyone who lives in the Kirkcowan Community Council Area and is on the

Electoral Roll. By becoming a member, you gain full voting rights at General Meetings and are entitled to stand for election as a director. To become a member, please fill out an application form, which can be found on the KCDT website or by contacting Nicki Chadwick, KCDT Support Officer, on 01988 403450 or [kcdtcontact@gmail.com](mailto:kcdtcontact@gmail.com).

The **Annual General Meeting** of the KCDT will take place at 7 pm in the Kirkcowan Village Hall on Wednesday 1st November 2023. The AGM is open to all members of the KCDT.

## Trust Directors

Andrew Gladstone, Lynne Dalglish, Bill Harkness, Hazel Matthews, Charlie McNeill (Chair), Hazel McWhirter, Martin Marsh (Vice Chair).

## Contact us

Nicki Chadwick, Machars Action, 26, South Main Street, Wigtown, Newton Stewart DG8 9EH, tel. 01988 403450, [kcdtcontact@gmail.com](mailto:kcdtcontact@gmail.com).