

ICH DRAFT STAGE 2 SLF APPLICATION

Summary

Insh Community Holdings, constituted in 1999, was reconstituted in February 2020 as a SCIO (SC049955) to apply for ownership of the 6.6ha site they currently lease from Forestry and Land Scotland (F&LS).

Vision : Small area – Greater positive impact

As set out in their constitution and agreed in 2020, ICH have the following objectives for the site they would like to purchase:

- Continue the site work they have been undertaking for the past 20 years;
- The environmental protection and improvement of the Community's natural habitat, in particular the grazings and woodland;
- Education about the history and management of local landscapes and habitats;
- Citizenship, civic responsibility and community development through voluntary activity and recreation.

ICH have been operating successfully on the site for 20 years. Ownership will open up further funding opportunities previously unavailable due to the lease arrangements. Ownership tends to precipitate greater community involvement as residents consider they have a greater stake in land close to where they live and that many people use on a daily basis. The site is relatively small, and costs are manageable. ICH have a clear structure and purpose. They have a significant majority support from within the Insh community. ICH have a 20-year track record of sound management at the site and volunteers have invested to equivalent of around £200,000 worth of time, energy, skills, and knowledge in managing and maintaining the site for community benefit.

9. What are the challenges faced by your community?

Insh is a small community in the heart of the Cairngorms National Park with an economy focused on tourism and outdoor leisure. It forms a rural community with needs including enhanced, but low-key community facilities that promote wellbeing and togetherness, protecting the nature, character and setting of the village are important to residents. Need extends to development such as structure for outdoor community gatherings and connections which complements the role of Insh as a focus for visitors (national cycle and walking routes pass through the village), but in ways where residents have a meaningful say in future management and direction. Additionally, housing for young people is limited, and roads are getting busier.

The current health emergency and wider climate emergency has called into question current economic practice and highlights the need to create new community models, focused on wellbeing and inclusion.

Community need extends to the 'normalisation' of community ownership in a location that is essentially surrounded by three large public, private and NGO landowners.

10. How will community ownership of this asset enable you to respond to these challenges?

Currently ICH lease the site from Forestry and Land Scotland, acting for Scottish Ministers. Whilst acknowledging the benefits gained under current arrangements, in choosing to pursue ownership as their preferred option, ICH consider that ownership will bring greater benefits, flexibility, and resilience to the Insh community whilst still providing wider public benefits.

People

Insh residents and young (and old) people, in particular, are amongst those who may not have access to a vehicle and are less able to access community facilities in settlements such as Kingussie or Aviemore. Community purchase will help overcome disadvantage and promote mental and physical wellbeing by providing safe off-road space for a range of informal outdoor recreational, educational and life skills' activities.

Place

If ICH are successful in acquiring the site, they consider ownership will enable the community to apply long term thinking to the site based around building community resilience, the local culture and heritage, the immediate environment, and the economy where appropriate. Secure community ownership of a tangible asset and ICH charitable status open a much wider range of funding opportunities and sources than is possible under leased status.

Ownership will help maintain the Insh settlement pattern, that has existed for over 200 years, and enhance social cohesion through group ownership of a local community asset. Any uncertainty associated with possible future disposal will also be avoided. Community land in Insh will become a designed part of community planning, development, and regeneration.

ICH recognise that, irrespective of ownership, rights and responsibilities such as those under the Scottish Outdoor Access Code will apply and open, informal, and responsible public use will continue and be encouraged through features like the Speyside Way.

Planet

The site has an intrinsic value for wildlife, but it is also a 'corridor linking Inshriach Forest (part of the Cairngorms Connect area) and the Insh Marshes bringing wildlife into the heart of the community. At a localised scale community ownership of the site could help ecosystems' services such as biodiversity, carbon sequestration by removing CO2 from the atmosphere, soils retaining water and nutrients.

11. Tell us how you know the local community supports this project.

The COVID-19 lockdown prevented site visits and face to face community consultation on community purchase. Based on email contacts generated by ICH a survey questionnaire was sent by email to 68 resident households (North and South sides on Insh, Inveruglas and Insh House) in May 2020. 28 replies to the survey were received out of 72 email addresses (an extra 4 responses were received from tenants or visitors to Insh who were not originally emailed). This equated to a 39% return. No response cannot be taken as support, nor can it be construed as opposition. However, it may indicate passive contentment and an opportunity for renewed or refreshed engagement by ICH.

ICH have been managing the site for over 20 years under a renewable lease and the results clearly show a significant majority are relatively content with purpose and governance. But given the length of time ICH have been operating, it is likely some respondents will have little, if any, knowledge of how the site was managed previously. However, the results also show opportunities for improvements.

Respondents were asked “How important is it that communities have a stronger role in, and control over, their own development?” The average score was 8.9 (on a scale 1 unimportant-10 very important) and this question was answered by 93% of respondents. There is majority enthusiasm for ownership but additional comments relating to motivations behind ownership show three or four individuals who remain unclear on the nature of ‘community goods and services’ that ownership might deliver.

Letters of support were received from the community council, Highland Councillors, constituency MSP, and Kingussie High School. Discussions were undertaken with Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) staff re planning and access issues, F&LS staff – CATS officer, land agent and Regional Director, Highland Council Ward manager and RSPB manager of adjacent land holding.

Part three: What difference will your project make?

12. How will people, communities or organisations benefit from your project?

We call the key changes or differences a project will make ‘outcomes’.

The outcomes of your project must directly help to deliver one or more of the Scottish Land Fund outcomes. Tell us how your project will contribute to the Scottish Land Fund outcomes.

Outcome 1: Our communities will achieve more sustainable economic, environmental and/or social development through ownership of land and buildings.

ICH will achieve more sustainable economic, environmental and/or social development for the people of Insh through ownership of the site because:

1. Delivery is focussed on the needs of people and the community is involved in designing and delivering the services that affect them.
2. Insh’s positive appearance conveys that it is a place where people want to live, work and invest.
3. It would demonstrate that Insh is open to new ideas and new ways of working.
4. Multiple elements of socio-economic benefit for Insh can be brought together on a single accessible site.
5. Community ownership would give residents land title in perpetuity, allowing long term planning and investment.
6. Site acquisition by the community will assist in the development of a skills base around land management.
7. It opens future opportunities as the land could provide a location for affordable housing.
8. It uses resources efficiently, maximises local assets and respects the natural environment.

List up to three indicators you will use to track and measure your progress towards this outcome.

Indicator 1 ICH membership will increase by 10% and volunteer hours by 15%.

Indicator 2 Site use levels will increase (measure by people counter on paths).

Outcome 2: Our communities will have a stronger role in and control over their own development.

How will your project help to meet this Scottish Land Fund outcome?

Insh residents will have a stronger role in and control over their own development on the site because:

1. ICH who would own the site, is an open, democratic community run body and most Insh residents are members.
2. People are empowered to improve their site and it would strengthen and make more effective community networks that are in place.
3. It would provide a flexible social and community space for activities and events.
4. It would facilitate full adoption of the Speyside Way LDR.
5. Having a stronger and more influential role in future management of land in their community would allow Insh residents to be more resilient to 'future shocks.' E.g. COVID-19.
6. It allows the community to better conserve local heritage/cultural activities for productive use.

List up to three indicators you will use to track and measure your progress towards this outcome.

Indicator 1 A space/ shelter will be developed for community use.

Indicator 2 Within six months of purchase ICH will have hosted 2 community events on the site.

Outcome 3: Our communities own well managed, financially sustainable land and buildings.

How will your project help to meet this Scottish Land Fund outcome?

Insh residents wish to own well managed, financially sustainable land because:

1. ICH is already experienced in managing and mitigating the liabilities and responsibilities associated with site leasing, but consider ownership of title is required to unlock full potential and make the community more resilient.
2. ICH has the skills and expertise necessary to ensure land is well managed, and financially sustainable.
3. ICH has examined various funding opportunities and notes that many are only available to bodies where assets are fully owned.

List up to three indicators you will use to track and measure your progress towards this outcome.

Indicator 1 ICH will raise matching project funding by the end of year 2 to deliver projects as identified in the business plan.

13. Tell us how you will use the asset to bring about your outcomes?

The Insh community has a population that is significantly older than the Scottish average, little in the way of community facilities and limited housing stock. Site activities which bring the community together and offer opportunities for informal safe recreation can only be positive.

If they are successful in purchasing the site, ICH will use this asset to bring about their outcomes by:

Projects	Approx cost	Yrs 1-2	Yrs 3 -7	Yrs 7-10
Woodland management (chainsaw, felling gear and a winch)	£ 2,500	X	X	X
Native tree planting – plants and guards		X	X	
Firewood processing (splitter) including vat and delivery	£ 2,500			
Grazing management			X	
Path improvement	£ 1,000	X	X	
Path maintenance			X	X
People counter	£ 1,800	X		
Entry point signage	£ 1,000	X		
Boundary fencing repair and new gates	£ 2,000	X		
Dyke repair	£ 1,000	X		
Training Woodland management, chainsaw, dyking, first aid	£ 2,000	X	X	
Wildlife pond	£ 2,000		X	
Wildflower meadow			X	
Community Shelter (estimate)	£ 15,000		X	
Composting toilet	£ 5,000		X	
Orchard	£ 5,000			X
Allotments	£ 5,000			X
Native tree nursery				
Affordable housing 2 x 2 bed starter units	£ 200,000			X?

14. How will you measure and track if your outcomes are being achieved?

Tell us how you will evaluate the success of your project in the short, medium and longer term. Describe the methods you'll use (for example, questionnaires, observation, interviews, keeping records or notes), what information you'll gather and how often you'll gather it.

ICH will measure and track achievement of outcomes by monitoring and reporting on progress.

Monitoring	Use of surveys and counters at entry points will record footfall. Timber and wildlife surveys will assess site condition. Regular communication with members will provide feedback on activity.
Reporting	As part of a robust governance and oversight process ICH will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold open meetings and publish outcomes on their Facebook page and web site; • Hold an annual event – such as a BBQ to provide an opportunity for 'hands on' reporting to members, residents, users and partners; • Regular reports may be submitted to the Community Council for information; • SCIO annual accounts will be available; • Project funding reporting will be on a case by case basis.

Part four: How will you carry out your project?

15. Summary of key activities

Please give an outline of the key activities that will take place leading up to acquisition which are required to enable the purchase to be completed and any that will take place after acquisition as part of your project.

Activities after the land has been purchased may include employing a development worker, running events for the community or training volunteers. These activities should include a start date and expected completion date.

Key activities	Start date	Finish date	Who is responsible for delivering the activity?
ICH secure CAT agreement from F&LS	24/08/2020	tbc	F&LS CAT Panel and final signoff by Chief Officer
Discussions with other funders	Sept/Oct 2020	On going	ICH Trustees
Commission necessary repair work	Spring 2021	Spring 2021	ICH Trustees
Celebratory community event	Spring 2021	Spring 2021	ICH Trustees
Develop site management plans	Spring 2021	On going	ICH Trustees
Begin activity/volunteer programme	Summer 2021	On going	ICH Trustees

16. How much will your project cost and how much would you like from us?

The costs you can ask us for are explained in our guidance notes.

Activity	Total £	Recoverable VAT	Funding from other sources £	Funding requested from SLF £
Capital				
Purchase – assume 95% of £22,000	20,900	No VAT		20,900
Balance – assume 5%		No VAT	1,100	
Conveyancing/legal	2,000			2,000
Revenue				
Initial year 1 insurance (6)	500			500
Site repairs (3)	2,500			2,500
Management equipment (1)	5,000			5,000
Entry point sign (4)	1,000			1,000
People counter (2)	1,800			1,800
Community shelter (5)	5,000		10,000	5,000
TOTAL				38,700

Notes:

1. Woodland management – equipment to assist planned removal of 75m3 of timber and firewood processing, planting (plus guards) 500 native trees.

2. RBBP – RadioBeam Bike and People Counter – battery operated counter plus data logger and software to assess use patterns on the site. Quote – A & P Chambers Ltd, Sonas, Nairnside, Inverness, IV2 5BU.
3. Replacing 100 stock fence, 2/3 new field gates and 50m of drystone dyke
4. Signage – new timber mounted sign with site name, ownership and web address.
5. Contribution to new community shelter and storage 40-50m2 floor space/ covered area – planning, utilities etc.
6. To provide cover on title transfer.

ICH is not VAT registered and any income will be below the VAT threshold.

17. Tell us about any other funding you may need

Complete this table if the total project cost (excluding non-recoverable VAT) is more than the amount you're asking us for. If you still need to raise funds from other sources, you must be able to show that you will be able to do this, and it will not affect your project or cause a delay.

- Use a new row for each funding source.
- Include any contribution you plan to make from your own funds or from general fundraising.
- Include contributions from any partner organisations.

Funding source	Amount you plan to raise (£)	Secured?	If not secured, when do you expect a decision?
CNPA	£15,000 (£1,100 towards the 5% balance, and £10,000 for the community shelter)	Discussions underway	Within a few weeks
If the above is not successful, then applications for funding will be sought from Public grant sources, such as: The Highland Council Ward Discretionary grants; Scottish Landfill Communities Fund; NHS Innovation Fund; or other sources from Local Trusts, NGOs, and donations.			

18. How have you worked out your costs?

Tell us what your costs are based on, for example, valuations, quotes, estimates or what it has cost before.

Be specific about how costs have been calculated and any assumptions you have made (for example, if you have included estimated mileage or expenses you should explain what you based this on).

If you've included any 'in kind' contributions, explain how you've calculated the value of these contributions.

Capital costs

Based on DVS valuation

Revenue Cost

Based on estimates of unit costs and quotes

'In kind' contribution

Many people are contributing 'in kind' to the achievement of approved community purposes on the ICH site. People can be beneficiaries or suppliers of 'in kind' support – sometimes both at different times. The Big Lottery uses a day rate (7 hours) value of £50 unskilled, £150 skilled, £350 specialist. (£50/day roughly equates to minimum wage).

Over 20 years of volunteer work by the community through the ICH and others, and hundreds of volunteer work hours by people in the community have already delivered both major contributions and savings to the public purse. For example 5 people (skilled) on the ICH Board each giving 100 hours per year or 2 hours a week @ £20 per hour equates to £10,000 per year or £200,000 over the 20 years the ICH has existed.

19. How will you manage and deliver your project?

Tell us about:

- The relevant skills and experience of the people running your organisation.
- Any experience your organisation has of managing other projects.
- Any other organisations you will work with to help you deliver the project and the role they will have.

To manage the site and achieve its purposes and deliver benefits to the community, ICH is constituted as a SCIO (SC049955). Membership is open to all in the community as defined by the postcodes PH21 1NT and PH21 1NU. Full and associate membership of IHC stands at 55 as of June 2020. Its membership includes a wide range of relevant skills and knowledge. ICH is not VAT registered.

Core management is by five trustees and various project leaders. ICH Trustee biographies showing their skills, experience, and track record are shown below.

In summary these include:

- Charity governance.
- Woodland management, grazing management, and biodiversity.
- Recreation planning.
- Education.

Trustees are aware of their responsibilities through the OSCR publication Guidance and Good Practice for Charity Trustees.

Trustees are undertaking governance training delivered by Voluntary Action in Badenoch and Strathspey (VABS).

ICH can draw on a great range of experience within the Insh community which includes Solicitors, Teachers, Fire Fighters, Engineers, Farmers, Conservationists, health workers, etc. ICH operates with the support of several project subgroups.

ICH meetings are advertised in advance, open to the public to attend and are held approximately every three months. Minutes are available online and are posted on the notice boards in Insh village.

ICH works with and updates other stakeholders including Kincaig and Vicinity Community Council, Ward 20 Highland Councillors, Ward 1 CNPA Elected Board members and F&LS and CNPA representatives.

Professional Advisors

- ICH have a bank account with Bank of Scotland.
- Membership of Community Woodland Association provides access to specialist advice.
- Legal and financial advisors will be sought as required.

20. Staff posts

How many jobs will be directly created by your project?

None

Are you applying for assistance with the costs of employing staff?

Yes

No

If yes, please complete the details below.

How many staff positions will be paid for with our funding?

Please provide details of each post which will be paid for by our funding.

Job title

Number of posts [Click here to enter text.](#)

Employed by

Reports to [Click here to enter text.](#)

Responsible for Identified key activities.

Role in this project [Click here to enter text.](#)

Any other roles [Click here to enter text.](#)

New or existing role

New or

Existing

Project working hours Click here to enter text.

per week, working just on this project.

Total working hours Click here to enter text.

per week, working both on and outside this project.

Salary Click here to enter text.

per year, excluding National Insurance and pension.

National Insurance Click here to enter text.

per year

Pension Click here to enter text.

per year

Redundancy payment Click here to enter text.

in total

% funded by us Click here to enter text.

%

For additional posts please copy this table and send this to us with your application.

21. Tell us about any volunteers that will work on the project, what their roles will be and how they will be supported.

Please include numbers of, and information about:

- Existing volunteers on your group (including directors/board members).
- New volunteers that will be involved in developing the project.
- New volunteers that will be involved once the acquisition project is completed.

ICH membership is available to all Insh residents over 16 years. Given the challenges of geography and population movement, ICH membership is free and open, to a wider diaspora with Insh connections. ICH currently has 55 members. ICH has used volunteers on the site for the past 20 years, hosting multiple rural skills and volunteer days in areas such as vegetation management and drystone dyking.

Control of ICH remains with the community. The ICH has five volunteer Trustees, all of whom are elected and live in Insh. Existing levels of volunteering are focused around regular meetings/work by

the Trustees and supporters with ad hoc site work on repair and maintenance as required. ICH also works in partnership with other community bodies, Kinraig and Vicinity Community Council and the Highland Council.

If the site is acquired by ICH, it is proposed to expand the existing group of volunteers from the community and partnerships, to a more formal arrangement of volunteer inspection and management of facilities and habitats. Volunteers will be supported with the provision of food and drink for subsistence, and any training if required.

The types of volunteer work to develop, and continue once acquisition is completed, include:

- Administrative and networking tasks by the Trustees;
- Maintenance and repair tasks by individuals;
- Continuation of work parties by community volunteers;
- Rural skills' work by local schools, as part of curriculum activities;
- Opportunities for site build and training projects for colleges and training establishments.

22. How will you promote your project to the widest possible range of people?

Tell us how you plan to let people know about the project you are asking us to fund and how you will make sure that everyone who could benefit from your project will know about it. We are particularly interested in hearing how you will make sure that people from different backgrounds and those facing particular communication barriers will know about your project.

The project will be promoted widely using a range of social media including an ICH website and Facebook page. This will require some work to set up and deliver ongoing maintenance, updating and ensuring cyber security. We have assumed that some volunteer input may be obtained for the initial set-up costs.

To reach the widest possible range of people:

- Details will continue to be posted locally on the village notice board;
- Updates will continue to be provided to the Kinraig and Vicinity Community Council;
- Community groups and schools will be kept updated;
- Colleges and training establishments will be notified about the project;
- Any local magazines and press will run updates periodically;
- Community meetings (COVID-19 permitting) are an option in the future.

The above is a selection of ideas, and it will be an ongoing process to see how best communications about the project reach as many people as possible in the area.

Appendix 1 – Director Profiles

