



# CARRADALE COMMUNITY TRUST

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020

To: All members

## Latest news on the village shop

Following on from the failure of our attempts to purchase and renovate Patersons Bakery for reopening as our village shop, CCT Trustees have agreed to prioritise the Post Office as a location for a permanent shop. We are aware that this option was not one presented to the community at the Open Day last year (as this was an existing business) and that there may be differing views as to the merits of this choice. Our detailed reasons follow, but essentially the Post Office venue, besides being a commercially sound choice, is the *only* option that will give our community a permanent shop in the foreseeable future.

- We will shortly lose all of the funding that we have raised for the purchase and refurbishment of Patersons. However, two of the funders, Scottish Land Fund and the National Lottery, have offered to consider a new location for the shop, but *only* if it closely matches our current application and business plan, and *only* if we can complete a new application, business plan and financial projections before the end of the month. The Post Office is the only option: bar Seneval, we do not own any other site, nor do we have planning permission, designs or funds for delivering any of the other options. Crucially, Scottish Land Fund is being discontinued, and some of the other funds will not be available to us for a considerable period of time, if at all.
- Mary and Kenny Semple have agreed to let us explore purchasing the Post Office (with parking spaces), and are allowing an independent valuation, as required by SLF. If we are successful in purchasing the Post Office using SLF funds, we would be able to protect the Post Office into the future and have a ready made site for our permanent shop in the shortest possible time frame, before the start of the next tourist season, with the added benefit that the improved shop would bring to local businesses. The business case for this is strong: at a very small cost to the community (the valuation), we would acquire a Post Office that will earn us income (or could be franchised out), provide an essential service that also brings in footfall to our shop, have sufficient floor space for an enhanced grocery store, coupled with all of the facilities itemised in our successful SLF Business Plan. Similar models are operated successfully at Glenbarr, Furnace and numerous other rural shops in Scotland.

Carradale Community Trust is a registered Scottish charity under number SC024417

To get in touch please email: [carradalect@gmail.com](mailto:carradalect@gmail.com)

As with any location or option, there are drawbacks, and CCT acknowledges these.

- Whilst other areas of East Kintyre will arguably be better served by the Post Office location than they would have been by Patersons, East Carradale residents may nevertheless be disappointed. Though Patersons was the heart of the community for some time, CCT notes that there is no prospect of a shop in East Carradale for the foreseeable future. Moreover, the Temporary Shop location is well used by residents - most of whom drive, rather than walk. Finally, CCT is exploring numerous ways of assisting vulnerable shoppers who might find access to West Kintyre difficult: a delivery service (perhaps in cooperation with Shopper Aide); an enhanced and improved footpath/cycle network; a transportation service; 'satellite' pop-up shops at the Village Hall and/or Harbour; ensuring that the "Hub" concept for social gatherings is retained (Village Hall, Harbour, Well Park or elsewhere as options become available).
- There may also be concerns about the increased responsibility of running the Post Office alongside the Shop. CCT reassures its members that this issue is and will continue to be part of ongoing discussions between the owners, CCT and Temporary Shop volunteers in formulating our long-range business plans.

Finally, CCT would like to reassure everyone that, should we manage to purchase the Post Office, we will be consulting widely with the community about our long range plans and will work hard to address any concerns that you may have.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

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