

# Tomintoul Community Engagement Session

## Communities of Tomintoul and Glenlivet

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011

**Time:** 7pm

**Venue:** Richmond Memorial Hall, Tomintoul

### **Potential Opportunities for Regeneration.**

Attendees at the meeting voted on the 14 opportunities identified by the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Regeneration project 2011. Below are the top four that were discussed in more detail.

### **Opportunity 7 - Hotels/Old School End uses for redundant Assets:**

Acquisition and re-instatement of the Gordon Hotel and work to source a suitable operator. Work to explore potential uses/investors for the Richmond Hotel. Acquisition of the school by the company (see No 6) and development as a space for e.g. cluster of creative enterprises, workspace, education and training, IT and leisure facility.

### **Obstacles to this happening**

- Cost/Money
- Capability and leadership within the Community.
- Ownership of the building needs to be clarity.
- Poor estate agent
- Hotels have a bad reputation in the recent past- need to develop a better marketing strategy.
- Suppliers to the hotels an issue
- Buildings are deteriorating (need to be preserved) – stop any more damage happening.

### **Actions Needed**

- Trustees taking a more active role – surveys as buildings are dangerous – need to make them wind and water tight in the short term.
- Proactive approach for the marketing brochure (community input) – show potential of hotel to potential investors
- Need a development officer to move this forward
- Help the legal process
- Can Moray Council do a compulsory purchase order on the building?
- A Development Trust could be formed to take some of this forward.  
Question asked why the Gordon had been chosen to be developed as opposed to the Richmond: Richmond has a history with fishing visitors (tourism) – However The Gordon might be more manageable to concentrate on first – some preference in the room to renovate the Richmond – both hotels should be treated equally – both need a facelift as they are in the heart of the village – more internal damage in The Richmond Hotel.
- The Richmond is bigger (could cater for bus tours?)
- Both hotels are crucial to the look of the village.
- Both hotels were viable in the past
- Need to attract coaches – not just having them passing through

- Area very rural – high costs in fuel, make it difficult for visitors to come to the area.
- Need to look to attach bus services to the hotels
- Need people to spend money locally
- Marketing and strong website most important thing for the whole area, Tomintoul/Glenlivet a hub lots of great places to visit within an hour's drive
- Core visitors (skiers/fishers) still come but don't stay
- Cannot market something that is not here
- Renovation of hotels is very expensive (375k) lots of competition throughout Scotland for investment in rural hotels
- Need to understand the market again – market has shifted (mountain bikers, skiers etc) Travelodge style  
*Travelodge looking for sites (not interested)*
- Market moving from hotels to self-catering
- If there was a community buy out would there be money available?
- Going to be difficult need to stay positive
- We need to know what resources are available to make this happen?(from public and private sector)

#### **Opportunity 1 - Rural Hub (HIE Account Managed Community):**

To develop Tomintoul as a rural service centre or “hub” by working with Highlands and Islands Enterprise to become an “Account Managed Community” This could provide for a local development officer, resources expertise and funding to take forward a range of projects.

- Short term post or long-term? Issues with keeping the post beyond 3 years ( would HIE would employ manager)
- Need to keep HIE on board for a longer term – key to delivering outcomes
- Person needs to have experience and the skills to support the delivery of the opportunities
- Needs to be a 2-way street – needs someone to have fortitude (work closely with the trustees they need support)
- Need to set up a steering group to set up a Development Trust– get a good set of numbers
- Develop trust in Ballater; Gordon Riddler to come and speak to the community.
- Area for trust to be chosen by the community. DTA great resource

#### **Opportunity 6 - Community Social Enterprise Company-Acquire the School:**

Creation of a community social enterprise company to enable the community to acquire and develop the old school (would require a development officer-see No 1)

- Needs a lot of work done on it, becoming derelict – how do we get funds? – looking at business units gym etc need rent to cover running costs (revenue)
- Got a lot of potential
- Key word is enterprise – commercial viability – needs to make money
- Could the Park use it for offices? Police & ambulance considered but declined. Potential Caravan site usage?
- Need solid business place before assets transfer from the Moray Council
- Do we need a building? could we demolish it – (allotments/Park etc)

- Keep part of it? – phased development – multiple uses – cheap accommodation – café etc?
- Need to create/jobs could become a secondary school that serves the area need to create core jobs (that attract families) to develop the village's infrastructure
- Lots of the other things on the opportunities list could be placed in the school; crafts/telecommunications
- Need to be careful tonight we have discussed two/three very big projects – should we focus on one?
- Down to the funding – communities' relationship to the Crown Estate – opportunity for community (as a Development Trust) to work with the Crown Estate

### **Opportunity 10 - Youth Build:**

National project providing construction training for young people whilst delivering local projects e.g. building refurbishments.

- Do the learners get paid? Will they have a qualification at the end of the process?
- Project could focus to the school building as part of the project – careful as there is a slump in the construction industry.
- Anything that can improve the skill set of young people in the area is a good thing – need develop skills for jobs that exist in the community
- Culture of exodus of young people influx of older people – young people often want to come back but can't because there are no employment opportunities
- School building could be a place for skills transfer between young people and older people
- Need more information about 'youth build'
- Ask young people what they want !

### **Best of the rest**

- Transport – roamer bus service
- Transport as a whole is an issue – no petrol station – and they are never open.

### **General closing comments**

Regeneration – spokes of a wheel – what are we trying to do?

What is the big picture? What groups are we targeting?

Huge range of people beyond the area that offer accommodation

Not about the geographical area – needs to be more cohesive – about young people/visitors/etc groups that cut across all the main issues we have discussed tonight – different markets.