

CALLANDER VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE: Developments

Here are two VIC developments.

1 Virtual VIC website

In advance of the planning of a potential reopening in spring 2021, with a professional part-time manager and, hopefully, an ever-expanding group of volunteer staff, a Virtual VIC website has been set up, containing focussed and clearly presented information:

www.visitcallander.uk

2 Potential move to 55 Main Street INTERIM NEWS!

The current VIC premises, leased from the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park (LLTNP), are not ideal, as there is no certainty over the lease in the longer term.

A new opportunity

With the former RBS building at 55 Main Street, opposite the current VIC premises, on the market, the VIC Board (Callander Community Centre Ltd) viewed this as an ideal location.

The Callander Community Development Trust (CCDT) directors agreed and CCDT put in an offer for the building, which was accepted at the beginning of October, subject to survey, agreement of missives and legal contracts. 55 Main Street will host the VIC on the ground floor and CCDT, with ideas from the wider community, will decide what to do with the upper floors.

Frank Park, CCDT Chair says: "55 Main Street is a major statement by Callander Community Development Trust for the future of Callander. This investment secures a home for our Visitor Information Centre, staffed by our amazing team of volunteers, who assist our visitors with a wealth of local knowledge and a welcoming smile. The upstairs offers an opportunity for development as residential, holiday let, education, community or business space and we will be consulting with our community and local businesses to decide the best option."

Any questions?

See the Q and A list below, or contact us with any of your own.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (November 2020)

Who will be paying for the purchase?

Callander Community Development Trust (CCDT) with funds from the Hydro Company.

Will this place a demand on the public purse?

No, CCDT's principal income comes from its Hydro Company. This has generated more money than anticipated due to some wet years. CCDT have been paying down the Bank Loans, so they decided it was the right time to invest in property to increase and diversify their asset base.

What will happen to Hydro Awards Fund grants now?

The Hydro Fund grants will be available as usual. There will be no reduction in number or value.

Who decided to do this?

CCDT and CCC Ltd. (with board members from the Sir Walter Scott Steamship Company, CCDT and Callander Community Council.).

Why wasn't there a public consultation?

The sudden short notice opportunity and the need for commercial confidentiality. However, we are now engaging in full public information, including with our sister organisations in the community.

Why does CCDT need this building?

Location, availability and suitability for the VIC, with office/shop space for present and future needs. The purchase provides long term security for its development.

What is going to happen to the upper floors?

There will be a number of options under review; residential, holiday let, office let, or business & community use. This will be a secondary priority and subject to a developed business case. Accessibility issues will also be addressed.

Is the VIC going to sell things? Does it have to make a profit?

Yes, it had already acquired some stock for sale this year and that will be carried forward and supplemented to suit demand.

The priority for the VIC will be to cover its costs. Any excess of income over expenditure will be re-invested in the project and be used to build reserves for lean years.

Where is the business plan?

The VIC (CCC Ltd.) had developed a business plan for the current year that includes covering the cost of leased premises as in 2019. This will now be developed for 2021 and the new premises. This will be a CCC Ltd. Business Plan in conjunction with CCDT as landlord.

Who owns CCC Ltd.?

CCC Ltd. is a wholly owned subsidiary of CCDT with a board including members of CCDT, CCC and the Sir Walter Scott Steamship Trust (SWSST).

Who is going to work there? Will they be paid?

Our VIC volunteers, drawn from across the community, as in the first year. Paula Gardiner will be working there as the VIC's professional part-time manager.

Any more questions?: Contact us!