



Knocknagael: a Green Hub for our Community

www.knocknagael.org.uk

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Newsletter 2026/2

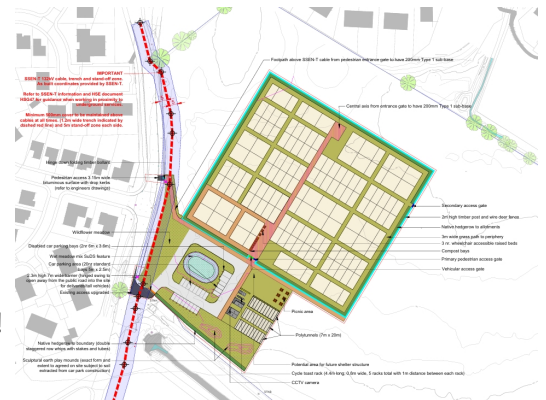
The Smiddy Field is in Community Ownership, so what happens now?

As we shared in our last newsletter, we were successful in our planning application for change of use for the Smiddy Field from agricultural land to a Green Hub with allotments. Full details of the application, and the approval can be viewed [here](#) on the Highland Council's Planning website.

So, we own the Smiddy Field, and we have planning approval to create the necessary infrastructure. All we need now is the money to make it happen!

We are delighted to report that we have recently been successful in bidding for funding from the Highland Council through its Community Regeneration Fund. This will let us commence work in the months ahead on the necessary infrastructure for the project, including access routes, car park and drainage schemes. More funding will be required to complete the planned development of the allotments and associated infrastructure, and we have several bids for funding from a variety of funders pending consideration. All available digits are firmly crossed!

In addition, we have been successful in a bid from the Nature Restoration Fund to plant a flower-rich grass meadow. As well as taking forward planting the wild flower meadow, we plan to cut back the gorse round the perimeter, improve the fencing round the Field, and provide appropriate signage. You may see some activity related to this soon.



From Membership Subscription to Voluntary Donation

As reported in our last newsletter, a decision was made at our AGM in January to move from a membership subscription model to a donation model, not least because Gift Aid can be claimed from a donation (but not a subscription), adding 25% to the value of a donation by UK taxpayers. This change has now been implemented, and we are most grateful to the members that have already donated. If you meant to donate, but it has slipped your mind, here is the link: <https://checkout.justgiving.com/c150u6avqd>.

Or if you prefer a QR code, it is opposite



Dates for your Diary

- 1. Simon Fraser Memorial Lecture 22nd April, 18.00 — 21.30, Inverness Town House. Details overleaf.**
- 2. Visit to 'The Field' Dunkeld Saturday 23rd May. Details overleaf.**

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Knocknagael Green Hub

Simon Fraser Memorial Lecture 2026

As part of this event, which will explore the issues, challenges and opportunities facing community landowners over the next five years, our Chair, Maria de la Torre will share lessons from Knocknagael's recent, difficult but ultimately successful Asset Transfer of the Smiddy Field. She will invite participants to reimagine how asset transfer processes could work better for communities.

Date: 22 April 2026, 18.00—20.30

Venue: Inverness Town House

Register here: [2026 Simon Fraser Memorial Lecture – Community Land Scotland](#)



Knocknagael Celebratory Ceilidh

We had a very enjoyable evening on Friday 20th Feb at the Botanic Gardens, celebrating the acquisition of the Smiddy Field a month previously, and dancing to the music of Blackrock Ceilidh. A great venue and a wonderful band.

Very many thanks are due both to the Botanics' staff and to Blackrock

And we raised approximately £400 for the charity coffers!



Steve Rowan

Steve has tendered his resignation as a Director/ Trustee of Knocknagael Ltd. He has been a key member of our team since its inception and we will greatly miss his contribution, his strategic awareness and his drive.



Our Chair, Maria de la Torre said:

'Steve has been with us at the critical times and has pushed us when it would have been easy to waver, helping us to get over the line. We understand that he has other projects that need his support but we will miss him very much!'

Day trip to Dunkeld Saturday 23rd May

A learning exchange visit to 'The Field' in Dunkeld has been arranged. This is an inspirational community growing project, with which we have been in touch for some years, and one which we can learn much from.

We have funding for a limited number of members to attend.

The funding will cover public transport to and from Dunkeld, most likely by train and a host fee. At the moment it is anticipated that we will provide our own lunches. It is likely that we will leave Inverness around 8 a.m. and return by around 5pm. Further details will emerge in due course.

If you would like to be part of this visit, let us know by contacting Ged at grow@knocknagael.org.uk by April 30th.