

*Creating a Better place to Live, Work and Visit*

## Annual Report April 2015 – March 2016

### Directors

**Brian McDonald – Chair**

**Marc Hindley – Vice-chair** (until February 2016)

**Heather Shaw – Finance Director** (until June 2015)

**Liz Egan – Finance Director** (from June 2015 to March 2016)

**Bea Jefferson (co-opted Nov 2015) – Finance Director** (from March 2016)

**Tina Coffey – Company Secretary**

**Kresanna Aigner –** (until November 2015)

**Peter Airey**

**Lorna Creswell**

**Shona Ferguson –** (until September 2015)

**Panny Laing –** (until March 2016)

**Terry Monaghan**

**James MacKessack-Leitch**

### Staff

**Frances Powell – Local Development Officer**

**Debbie Herron – Local Development Officer**

**Samantha Fraser – Administrator**

*The Forres Area Community Trust Board of Directors and Staff Members would like to take this opportunity to thank our members, volunteers and partner organisations for their help and support over the last year, and particularly our funders;*

*Highlands and Islands Enterprise*

*Forres Area Forum – Moray Towns Partnership Fund*

*CARES Fund*

*Moray Council Integrated Care Fund*

*Scottish Government Digital Challenge Fund*

## Development of FACT

*FACT has a Growth Plan for 2013 – 2018 based on the views of local people and a Business Plan to 2020 with identified project work underway. As a result of FACT's work with others we hope that the Forres area will become a better place to live, work and visit. We aim to build the resources and reputation of FACT to gain the trust and respect of local people and to work with Forres individuals and groups for the benefit of the entire local community. Progress in this area includes;*



- The **FACT** office moving out of shared premises into Leask Road as the sole occupant
- **575c visitors and meetings** recorded at the **FACT** office
- The establishment of new **community services**: meeting space, free public internet use, equipment hire, and printing facilities which contribute to **income generation**
- Membership growth from 176 to **219**
- **2 FACT Newsletters** circulated and the establishment and circulation of **4 E-Bulletins**
- A **regular feature** of **FACT** news in a local community magazine
- **FACT** news reaching **more local people** via social media with almost **700 followers**
- **8 featured news stories** via local print press and an online community news website
- **FACT** continuing to work with the **Development Trust Association Scotland** gaining **Full Membership** and attendance at the annual conference
- **Strengthening links** with other local development trusts and Moray Council through networking events
- **FACT** hosting a successful fundraising **coffee morning** generating £574.07
- **FACT** having a promotion stand at the World Orienteering Championship
- **Supporting 19 local organisations** in their work, including Findhorn River Trust, HISEZ, and Findhorn Village Conservation Company
- **FACT** being represented at the Forres Area Forum **joint information event**

## Renewable Energy Projects

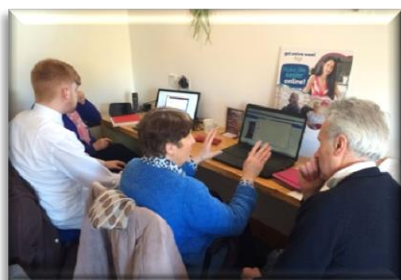
*FACT will generate income through enterprise activity, ownership of assets, and eventually community ownership of a renewable energy scheme. Income generated will be invested in line with the Growth Plan. Progress in this area includes;*

- Renewable energy projects continuing to be researched for possible **income generation** for **FACT** and Forres area communities
- **Wind and Solar options investigated** but significant reductions by the Government in available tariffs means the financial benefits are now much less attractive to communities
- **FACT securing a grant** from the Community & Renewable Energy Scheme and **supported** by Local Energy Scotland to negotiate a **potential partnership in a local windfarm**. **FACT** concluded that investment at an affordable rate was not available on terms that would make this partnership financially viable
- **FACT** discussing the future **Community Benefit fund from the windfarm** and assisting the developer with plans for the distribution of these funds for the benefit of communities in the Forres area
- Discussions continue to take place with Network Rail and others to consider potential suitable sites for a **Solar Energy initiative**

## Forres Online – Digital Project

With the input of partners, **FACT** will develop an accessible training space with internet connectivity and digital equipment available to help local people improve their online skills. **FACT** will recruit, train and support skilled volunteer tutors to deliver a programme of intergeneration skills exchange and learning. Progress in this area includes;

- **FACT** developing a **partnership** with *ReBoot* and *Living it Up* to launch **Forres Online** in August 2015
- The purchase of **laptop and tablet equipment** for public use
- Holding 3 drop in slots weekly totalling over **90 sessions** since launch where members of the public can receive assistance with online and digital questions for free
- **3 information talks** presented in partnership with *Silvercity Surfers* attracting over **50 attendees** in total
- The recruitment of **6 volunteers** including two from Forres Academy 6<sup>th</sup> Year
- Over **150 attendees** in total being recorded since the project started
- **FACT** continuing to be a **Moray Welfare Access Point**
- The development of a working relationship with the local **Job Centre assisting job seekers** with online applications and word processing to write CV's
- **FACT** continuing to support the administration and update of ForresWeb.net
- **FACT** becoming a nationally **registered UK Online Centre**



## Town Centre Renewal

**FACT** will work with others to develop a new shared plan for Forres town centre, by stimulating local trade, supporting events and encouraging more people to shop in Forres for quality goods and services. Progress in this area includes;

- **FACT** continuing to produce and circulate Seasonal **Shop Local posters** in Forres town centre, showing public support and encouragement to shop in Forres
- Assisting the Town Centre Working Group to re-establish the **Forres Business Association**
- **FACT** supporting the Moray Council **Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme**
- **FACT** assisting to organise **Forres Toun Mercat**
- Contributing to the **Glasgow School of Art research** about online tourist ideas for the town centre resulting in a publication of possible projects
- Supporting **Culture Day Forres** through in kind contributions of resources and hall space



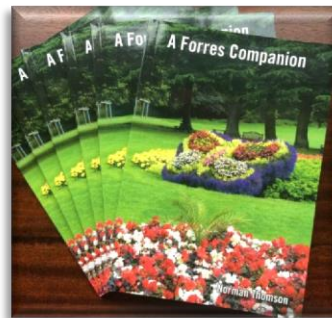
## Youth Work

**FACT** will, with others, develop activities and support for local young people using new ways to engage and encourage them. Progress in this area includes;

- **FACT** supporting the development of **Ignite: Moray Youth Arts Hub**
- **FACT** carrying out a survey to gather public opinion about the possibility of a Skate Park being built in Forres for the use by younger generations. The survey generated over 200 responses
- Hosting a **Youth Market Place** in Forres House Community Centre to promote activities to younger people as part of Culture Day Forres
- Assisting in a **steering group** process to help develop a mental health app for young people with NHS Grampian and Glasgow School of Arts

## Community Tourism Initiative

**FACT** will assist collaboration between local tourism businesses and groups, improve marketing of the Forres area and provide training in new approaches to tourism. Progress in this area includes;



- **FACT** developing the **Community Tourism Initiative Group** in partnership with **Moray Speyside Tourism** and progressing the **50 for 50 Project** culminating in the design and printing of 35k leaflets promoting Forres
- The continuation of support to promote the **World Host** training programme and development towards Forres achieving World Host Destination Status
- **FACT** developing a **working relationship with the Forres Theme Day Committee** and assisting with administration including **promotion** of the event on social media to help draw in visitors
- **FACT** securing funding from the Forres Area Forum to publish a local guide book called the **Forres Companion** which promotes the local area

## Well Being and Healthy Living

**FACT** will support the development of facilities which enhance mental, social and physical wellbeing through new services and activities. Progress in this area includes;

- **FACT** securing funding from The Change Fund to write and publish a **Directory of Services for People 50+ in the Forres Area** enabling people to have easy access to information about useful local services
- **Supporting the Youth & Families Outreach Project** run by St Leonard's Church by providing desk space and administrative support
- Promoting walking in the area through the distribution of free Health Walk Books
- **FACT** supporting the development of Forres becoming a *Walker's are Welcome* town
- Attending Glasgow School of Art **consultation** sessions about **diabetes management**
- **FACT** securing partial funding to employ an **Older Persons Worker** for Forres and applying for match funding to enable the project to commence