



PRESS RELEASE from Leadhills Community Company Ltd. 27 April 2023

Community-Owned Project in Leadhills

A significant community-owned project in Leadhills village has taken a step forward. In March the Leadhills Community Company Ltd. agreed terms for purchasing land from the Leadhills Estate. A public facilities block will be built in the centre of the village, alongside additional parking. The conservation village of Leadhills is a popular destination for summer walkers, cyclists, anglers and bird watchers. Set in the Lowther Hills, Leadhills is home to Scotland's highest golf course and has significant historical interest. The lead miners of the village pioneered Britain's first workers' subscription library in 1741; the Leadhills Miners' Library is now a popular museum.

The community-owned project will be self-supporting, with income from three prestige holiday pods on the site employing local people. The public facility will include showers for wild campers and walkers of the Southern Upland Way, and a laundry. The mission of the Community Company is to act for and on behalf of the residents of Leadhills for the realisation of projects that bring enduring benefits and enhance community life. "This is a landmark development project for the village, by the community," said Community Company Chair, John Ralph. "Leadhills was a pioneering community in the past. Now a new generation is taking initiative."

Village residents have been calling for replacement public facilities for years, since the old council conveniences closed. The community company are working with Scottish Land Fund for purchase of the site and are in discussion with other funding sources for the building phase. "We have hundreds of visitors in the village every summer, in all weathers, but there are no facilities for them to use so the local landscape, enjoyed by so many, suffers the consequences," said Mr Ralph. "Our final plans will be guided in consultation with our village residents who will become the owners."

Lord Hopetoun, speaking on behalf of Leadhills Estate, said "I am delighted that we are able to support the community again with this initiative. It will provide necessary facilities for the many visitors who enjoy coming to this beautiful place, and will enhance village life as well as giving opportunities for employment and some revenue generation. I look forward to seeing the community company progress this project."

"We have been working steadily through two pandemics of infection and inflation," said Mr Ralph. "A fresh spring is coming to Leadhills through this much needed project."