

**Extract from letter dated 1 July 2007 from the Duke of Rothesay to the former First Minister**

I am extremely grateful to you for your offer to help with the Business in the Community/Scottish Business in the Community proposals for a Climate Change seminar which, I understand, is being proposed for late October/early November. My office will, I am sure, keep your staff informed as the event takes shape.

While writing, I also wanted to express my heartfelt thanks to you, in particular, for enabling the Scottish Executive's donation of £5million towards the purchase of Dumfries House to take place. As you are no doubt aware, this project has had a difficult and frustrating history, but I was determined to bring together a consortium in order to ensure that this vital part of Scotland's heritage and history was not only saved for the nation, but that it may now become a focal point for the regeneration of the South West of Scotland. I could not be more grateful to you for your help in all of this and wondered whether you might be able to join me when I visit the House with Johnny Bute on 13th July?

**Extract from letter dated 11 July 2007 from the former First Minister to the Duke of Rothesay**

I am keen to provide Scottish Business in the Community with all possible assistance with the proposed Climate Change seminar in the autumn and look forward to receiving more information about the event in due course.

And finally, I am delighted that we were able to assist with your excellent initiative to save Dumfries House and its contents for the Scottish nation and look forward to touring the house with you on 13 July.

**Extracts from letter dated 16 November 2007 from the former First Minister's private secretary to the Deputy Private Secretary to the Duke of Rothesay**

Thank you for your letter of 5 October. We have been in touch more recently about the various items of action following the First Minister's discussions with His Royal Highness.

**Agriculture and Environment**

I understand that a meeting with Richard Lochhead and Michael Russell is planned for January in Ballater.



2. Remaining with Mey Selections, I thought you would be interested to know that the brand is now far down the route of measuring the carbon footprints of two of its product lines. However, it is clear that the process of carbon footprinting and the adoption of sustainable food and drink supply procedures could be accelerated if suitable experts could be appointed who were charged with advising/encouraging low carbon systems in farm and food production. At the moment Mey Selections has to telephone London!



3. I didn't have a chance to raise the issue of Kinloch Castle – on the Isle of Rum – with you, but as you know my Regeneration Trust has been working with Scottish Natural Heritage (the owners) for the past four years to find an acceptable, imaginative solution to the problem of this remarkable house which has bedevilled S.N.H for so long. Having worked tirelessly to bring all the parties together and to achieve consensus on the way forward, this effort has come to nought. However, S.N.H. has recently sought authority from the Scottish Government for surplus receipts from asset disposals to be converted to a grant in favour of the Kinloch Castle Trust (circa £2 million). Apparently, the Scottish Government Finance Department officials have not ruled this out, but have stated it could not happen until the Autumn Budget Review. If it were at all possible, my Regeneration Trust is most keen to have the opportunity to meet Mike Russell to discuss the way forward...

4. Glen O' Dee Sanatorium, Banchory

We briefly discussed this, however I did not have a chance to explain that a speedy decision is urgently needed due to the rapidly deteriorating condition of the building and the need to undertake urgent repairs. My Trust is a partner in a consortium of three building preservation trusts which has a viable scheme for the re-use of the building and the consortium would be willing to enter into a back-to-back agreement with Aberdeenshire Council should a Compulsory Purchase Order prove necessary.

Thank you again for your kind attendance – and your very kind words – at the built environment conference, as well as at Dumfries House. Your presence was greatly appreciated...



## **Extracts from letter dated 4 July 2008 from the former First Minister to the Duke of Rothesay**

Thank you for your letter of 7<sup>th</sup> June. It was indeed a pity that our discussion was curtailed when we last met. The need to make the evening vote is an unfortunate consequence of a minority administration! I would like to respond in detail to the points raised by your Royal Highness, and will consider each in turn.

### **Low carbon systems**

There are undoubtedly benefits in having advisors and experts to encourage and guide low carbon systems in food production. We are working on improving the methodological basis for estimating and reporting agricultural emissions. Improved estimation procedures will also help in "carbon proofing" policies and in monitoring emissions in relation to targets likely to be set for the sector.

There are several sources of advice in Scotland on carbon footprinting to which I would direct Mey Selections. The Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) ([www.sac.ac.uk](http://www.sac.ac.uk); The Scottish Agricultural College, King's Buildings, West Mains Road, Edinburgh EH9 3JG; Tel: 0131 535 4000) has developed a tool for use on farms and food businesses. They are also active in giving advice about climate change generally. In addition, The Carbon Trust have a Scottish office in East Kilbride ([www.carbontrust.co.uk](http://www.carbontrust.co.uk); The Carbon Trust in Scotland, The Technology Centre, Scottish Enterprise Technology Park, East Kilbride, G75 0QF; Tel: 01355 581810; Email: [scotlandoffice@carbontrust.co.uk](mailto:scotlandoffice@carbontrust.co.uk)) which can provide advice on carbon footprinting. And our scientists and researchers at institutes across the country are working to transfer the knowledge they are developing to farmers and processors. The private sector is also active in Scotland with the development of the CPlan carbon calculator ([www.cplan.org.uk](http://www.cplan.org.uk)), a web-based carbon footprint calculator developed by a farming family in Lanarkshire. It can be used by farmers and land managers to quickly and easily enter the data for the land they manage and obtain an estimate of the greenhouse gas emissions for their business.

### **Kinloch Castle**

I share the keenness of your Royal Highness to make progress in securing a sustainable future for Kinloch Castle, not least because I am sure this would have a significant positive impact on the development of a thriving community on the Isle of Rum, an initiative which Michael Russell is taking forward on behalf of the Scottish Government.

The overall level of public funding which would need to be found for any of the current schemes for restoration of the Castle is, of course, very considerable and pressures elsewhere on the Scottish Government's Budget consequent to a tight spending review make it highly unlikely that we will be able to allocate any funds to the Castle restoration during this financial year. We will however be keeping the situation under review in case the position eases sufficiently to enable us to do so.

I am grateful for the support that your Regeneration Trust continues to provide in finding a solution for the future of Kinloch Castle. I was pleased to hear that the Trust was represented by Maria Perks at the meeting which Michael Russell chaired on the Isle of Rum on 6 June. While that meeting was mainly concerned with reviewing the progress being made towards development of a sustainable community on the island, it also provided an opportunity for a report on the Castle since its future and the Community's development are clearly closely linked. I am sure Michael would be happy to have a further meeting with members of the Regeneration Trust, particularly if this included discussion on alternative ways of raising the funds needed to enable the restoration of the Castle.



**Glen O'Dee Sanatorium, Banchory**

As work carried out by the Prince's Regeneration Trust and others recognises, Glen O'Dee is of special architectural and historic significance and this is recognised by its listing at category A. I know that the Prince's Regeneration Trust and the National Trust for Scotland believe that the building could be adapted to allow a viable new use.

The possibility of re-using the building in this way was a key factor in our decision to call-in the application for listed building consent. A parallel planning application will be called in at the same time. Allow me to explain the process for assessing these applications: the case for planning and listed building consent will be initially be assessed by a Reporter from the Scottish Government's Planning and Environmental Appeals unit, with the final decision then taken by Stewart Stevenson, my Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change. It has not yet been decided whether this process will take the form of a full public local inquiry or whether it will be determined by written submissions but I am certain that the Prince's Trust and the National Trust for Scotland's contribution to this process alongside Historic Scotland will be most valuable. The final decision will then rest with Scottish Ministers.

It was, as ever, a pleasure to meet your Royal Highness at Holyrood Palace and I do hope the information I have provided is helpful.



I hope

you won't mind my sending you this brief note in advance, together with the enclosed copy of the architectural historian, Andrew Wright's, "Caithness Redundant Buildings Inventory" report, commissioned and published last week by my North Highland Initiative. You may have been aware of some encouraging press coverage of the launch of the Inventory, a project which I understand has not been attempted before on this scale. Effectively, Andrew Wright's study identifies the quite stunning potential that exists to bring back to life over a thousand redundant but classically and, in my opinion, splendidly built Caithness dwellings, mills and farm buildings which just might, given the right approach and support, offer the chance for farmers and other owners to rent out restored houses and cottages for tourist potential and, indeed, as housing for local people as part of "heritage-led" regeneration.

This is one of the fundamental elements in the equation that I envisaged in establishing the Initiative in the first place – that we create a virtuous circle by first of all identifying a small number of exemplar-style projects, developing the necessary traditional building skills (which has happened at the North Highland College in Thurso through changing the building skills apprentice training courses), increasing revenues to owners by renting out restored houses to visitors and thereby increasing the attractiveness of the whole area. In addition, we "tick the sustainability and embodied energy boxes" by not wasting valuable assets.

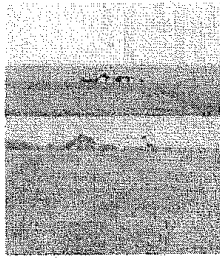
That is the vision behind this leg of the N.H.I. and, in the knowledge that I hear you may be addressing a meeting of the Caithness Regeneration Partnership on 29<sup>th</sup> September, perhaps there



might be a brief opportunity to meet representatives of my Initiative who would be able to tell you a little more of what we are trying to achieve?

If you feel there is any merit in all this, perhaps we could have a word about it at Birkhall?





## North Highland Initiative

### Cover Note to Caithness Redundant Buildings Inventory

The vernacular and historic buildings of Caithness are a unique but diminishing resource, surviving precariously. On behalf of the North Highlands Initiative an inventory of redundant and vernacular buildings in the old parishes of Caithness was carried out by Andrew Wright in the summer of 2007. The survey documented and photographed 1350 sites. Whilst not comprehensive the results provide an authoritative and statistically significant baseline level of knowledge against which future surveys can be compared. The Inventory is being digitised and will be available on disc.

The Report which accompanies the Inventory provides a detailed background, including the formative social and economic influences, to the building traditions in Caithness and identifies those features which are unique to the area. The Report also identifies the many structures at risk, discusses the underlying threats to the remaining built heritage, including the lack of formal recognition of its value, and makes recommendations as to how the alarming rate of decay might be halted. An abridged version of the full report is available.

The principal conclusions are:

- The vernacular heritage in Caithness is unique, is a diminishing resource, and is currently at considerable risk;
- A distinctive vernacular tradition has been crafted in Caithness through the use of flagstone, creating a strong sense of local identity;
- Some of the building types found in Caithness are unique to the area, for example: the distinctive places of worship erected for the Free Church in the 1840s and later for the United Free Church and the rich legacy of farm buildings;
- The merit of the vernacular heritage of Caithness has not always been recognised in the past, not least by its omission from heritage protection legislation; nor have fiscal policies and the application of planning guidelines assisted the regeneration of redundant buildings.

The Report makes fifty recommendations which cover six distinct areas:

- Dissemination of the Inventory and the Report to raise awareness of the richness of Caithness's Built Heritage, its precariousness and the value associated with its regeneration;
- Agreement to the Recommendations with appropriate national, regional and local interests and the establishment of priorities;
- Establishing a Programme with objectives, priorities, timescales and budgets together with the appointment of suitable staff;
- Developing an infrastructure to support the Programme including the establishment of a Centre for Conservation Excellence;





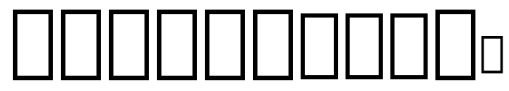
- Funding: developing long term relationships with funding organisations and developing funding streams from regeneration;
- Stakeholder Management: involve local, regional and national groups with an interest and expertise in the regeneration of vernacular and historic buildings in the programme and the work of the Centre for Excellence.

July 2008

**Extract from reply of 5 September 2008 to the above letter from the former First Minister to the Duke of Rothesay**

Thank you for your recent letter enclosing a copy of the "Caithness Redundant Buildings Inventory" as commissioned and published by your North Highland Initiative.

I read this with interest and would be very pleased to meet with representatives of your North Highland Initiative to hear more about its work. My office will be in touch with Robert Gray to fix a suitable slot available around my address to the Caithness Regeneration Partnership on 29<sup>th</sup> September.



**Extract from letter dated 15 June 2009 from the Duke of Rothesay to the former First Minister**

You will not be surprised to know that there are a number of issues which I would very much like to discuss with you when we meet but, in the meantime, I wondered if I might mention the whole issue of the work carried out by the Soil Association Scotland and, in particular, the development of sustainable food supply chains? I have been told that this issue of public procurement has recently been examined by your colleague, the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment. However, perhaps somewhat inevitably, the Soil Association Scotland is finding it very difficult to pursue its "Food for Life" programme because of the current funding climate. As you may know, the "Food for Life" programme promotes procurement of food that is freshly prepared, bought locally, has high animal welfare standards and meets your Government's criteria for sustainable public procurement. The benefits to education, to local economies, to animal welfare and to the environment have all proved to be significant. It is being implemented to varying degrees in several local authorities in Scotland, and also in the private sector including, for example, by Celtic Football Club.

As Patron of the Soil Association, I was delighted recently to present a series of awards, in the form of the "Food for Life" Catering Mark, to various catering establishments. I was particularly pleased that both East Ayrshire Council and Celtic Football Club earned the top category Gold award.

If I may say so, it is enormously encouraging that East Ayrshire, one of Scotland's smaller Councils, is leading nationally in sustainable public procurement and is able to demonstrate a steadfast commitment to "Food for Life." In this regard, you may know that I have maintained an interest in East Ayrshire's "Food for Life" project over the last few years. Its success is significant, delivering enhanced value in social, economic and environmental terms, with over forty schools benefitting communities through their contracts with local producers and farmers. Equally, it is clear that there is a great deal of work to be developed in this area across the public sector that cannot be undertaken by Government alone.

I am told by Hugh Raven, Director of the Soil Association Scotland, that the Scottish Government is providing support for "Food for Life" through the Scottish Rural Development Programme, in a contract focussed on developing supply chains. What is also apparently urgently needed is support for the procurement authorities - most especially local authorities and their education departments, but also potentially hospitals, prisons and other public sector bodies - to change their procurement and catering practice towards fresh, local and organic ingredients. There



simply is no substitute to having expert advice available to caterers hoping to make their way in this respect - and no organization has done more to provide this in Scotland than the Soil Association.

The Scottish Government has frequently expressed its approval of this approach, and I wondered if it might be possible to investigate whether there could be some form of support to assist the Soil Association in avoiding having to cut back their capacity for this initiative at precisely the moment that your Government looks set to give. it the very strongest of endorsements?

Looking to the future, I believe the proposals being developed to establish a Food Academy at Dumfries House have the potential to provide a centre of excellence for the promotion of sustainable food strategies, for all of Scotland and beyond .



Extract from letter dated 3 August 2009 from the Duke of Rothesay to the former First Minister

I did just want to thank you very much for your recent letter, and for letting me know how enthusiastic you are about the possibility of a waste-to-energy facility adjacent to the Dumfries House Estate.

Extract from letter dated 14 October 2009 from the former First Minister to the Duke of Rothesay

In terms of wider work to promote the interests of Ayrshire, Mike Russell, the Minister for Culture, External Affairs and the Constitution recently met Sir Michael Peat at Dumfries House on 22 September to discuss developing a 'food academy' and a building and craft skills centre at Dumfries House. A business case is being developed and I am sure that the initiative will help contribute to the wider regeneration work which East Ayrshire Council is leading and your continued support around this initiative is very much recognised.

Extracts from letter dated 17 June 2010 from the Duke of Rothesay to the former First Minister

In the meantime, I did just want to mention a few points which we didn't have time to discuss the other day. However, before I do, I should like to thank you very much indeed for all your generous efforts to help arrange a Royal Race Day in Scotland, with various of my Charities as the beneficiaries. It seems to me that the idea of a different venue each year is very much worth pursuing and, as we discussed, perhaps the most obvious starting point would be to have a race at Ayr in support of the Dumfries House Trust? Mark Leishman tells me that, following your meeting in January, you are also very kindly giving thought to a number of other initiatives which might help to tackle the financial burden represented by Dumfries House and I just wanted to reiterate how enormously grateful I am for your help in all these matters – particularly when I know how much else you have to deal with...



In terms of the built environment and heritage-led regeneration, I was appalled, as I mentioned, to discover that Paton's Mill in Johnstone had burnt down, just as my Trust was due to hold discussions with representatives of Renfrewshire Council. This is, tragically, all too familiar a pattern and, given the potential for sites such as Paton's Mill to generate employment, local wealth creation and supporting apprenticeships and skills development, I would be most grateful if you felt that there were ways in which this whole issue could be tackled with renewed vigour through the appropriate agencies and individuals. I know that representatives from my Trust would be only too glad to brief your colleagues as necessary, particularly where your own Government's objectives and those of the Trust appear to be aligned, for example in rural regeneration and skills development.

Finally, I just wanted to mention that my North Highland Initiative, which is now being chaired by David Whiteford, is about to embark on a "visioning" workshop with my Foundation for the Built Environment, and with Jim Mackinnon and his colleagues from the planning department. This will take place most likely in early August and sits very much within the context of tidal and wave power development in the Pentland Firth. In view of the renewable energy opportunities, I did just wonder whether it would be worthwhile to consider the development of a "socio-economic fund" which could, for example, be operated by Highland Council, similar to that which relates to the oil and gas sector for Orkney and Shetland? As we have discussed in the past, the potential for the food, tourism and built environment sectors, all linked by common themes of sustainability in Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, is enormous and, if you thought that such an idea had merit, I wondered whether we might be able to discuss it further when we meet at Birkhall in the early Autumn?



**Extract from letter dated July 2010 from the former First Minister to the Duke of Rothesay**

I strongly agree on the need to ensure that the development of our vast renewable energy resource is supported by an outstanding built environment and a responsive approach to planning. Your raising the issue of creating a socio-economic fund to tap into the benefit generated by the renewables sector is very timely. This is a matter that we are currently considering in some detail. You will already be aware of my views on the way in which we failed to create a long-term and meaningful legacy for Scotland and for local communities in the development of the oil and gas sector although indeed, as you refer, Shetland did manage to secure just such a long-term legacy.

We are currently exploring options to ensure that the same mistake is not repeated in the development of the renewables sector and in the development of our immense marine renewable energy potential. Of course, the role of the Crown Estate in this area is crucial. I hope to be able to bring forward some proposals in this area later in the summer and I would warmly welcome a discussion of this subject when we meet at Birkhall

