



News Release

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Could your organisation help Grow Banff @ the Vinery?

After successfully securing nearly a quarter of a million pounds of funding, a proposed community and regeneration project in Banff is looking for a partner organisation to help change local people's lives.

As part of Aberdeenshire Council's wider regeneration efforts in four northern towns, including Banff and Macduff, the project aims to restore the Vinery building at Duff House.

A community consultation was carried out to identify possible uses for the Grade B listed Glass House in Airlie Gardens, currently in a poor state of repair.

It identified the preferred use for a restored building as a "Community garden and Horticultural Skills base" which was closely followed in votes by a Community Kitchen and Café, and it is hoped it could be possible to accommodate both in the site designs.

Following the award of £242,832 last month from the Scottish Government Town Centre Fund to kick start the project, the next step is to appoint an operator to help shape this first stage process.

Aberdeenshire Council is now looking for a visionary organisation to work alongside it and the community to fulfil the potential of the old building and make a real difference to people's lives.

The successful operator will work in partnership with the Council, architects and a community steering group to develop the project further, prior to the submission of further funding applications for the main restoration and delivery of activity later in the year.

The operator is expected to have experience in delivering these types of activities and could be a charity, social enterprise, business or even a collective of different organisations.

However, what they must do is commit to achieving real change in the community by helping people to access jobs and training, feel healthier and happier, and be proud of where they live.

The wider impact of the "Grow Banff @ the Vinery" project is expected to include improvement of the look of this key garden gateway to the town and the opportunity to generate income through products which can be sold to visitors and locals alike.

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Banff and Buchan Area Committee Chair, Andy Kille, said: "I'm pleased we're able to invite organisations to get involved at this early, developmental stage to help ensure we deliver the best possible project for the community.

"Situated at the entrance to Banff's historic town centre, this building is highly visible and has been in a poor state of repair for a number of years, so in addition to the potential community benefits, this project will also contribute to wider regeneration efforts in Banff and Macduff."

Committee vice chair, Michael Roy, added "We're excited to see who will come forward and what ideas they will have for meeting the project objectives.

"Improving opportunities for developing skills and employment are key parts of the regeneration action plans, and I welcome the contribution Grow Banff @ the Vinery will make to that agenda."

In keeping with the community involvement element of the project, a community steering group will be set-up to help with the selection of a suitable operator. A final decision is expected in September.

Anyone interested in this unique opportunity should contact Suzanne Rhind for further information in the first instance, by emailing: suzanne.rhind@aberdeenshie.gov.uk

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