

Land Fund awards £1.5 million to forestry projects in Mull and Cowal

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Two Argyllshire communities are taking their local woodlands into community ownership, under the latest award from the Scottish Land Fund.

The South West Mull and Iona Development Ltd receives £750,000 to purchase the Tiroran Forest on the west side of the Island of Mull; while Kilfinan Community Forest Company [already reported separately here] also receives £750,000 to bring the remainder of the Upper Acharossan Forest, near Tighnabruaich, into community ownership.

Both purchases will be made under the National Forest Land Scheme.

Scottish Land Fund Committee Chair, John Watt, says: ‘Today’s Scottish Land Fund awards will help to develop the environmental, heritage, recreational and economic potential of two popular community woodlands. I wish South West Mull and Iona Development Ltd and Kilfinan Community Forest Company every success as they go on to own and develop these locally important pieces of land for the benefit of their communities and generations to come.’

South West Mull and Iona Development Ltd will purchase the 792 hectares of Tiroran Forest which they will manage and develop to provide new employment and educational opportunities in the local area.

Colin MacDonald, chairperson of South West Mull and Iona Development, says: ‘We are delighted to receive this support from the Scottish Land Fund, which is a huge milestone in our journey towards becoming community owners of Tiroran Forest. In owning and managing such a large asset, local people will be able to influence and shape its future resulting in an opportunity for real community benefits, including more business and employment opportunities and leisure activities for local people and visitors.’

Kilfinan Community Forest Company already own 127 hectares of the Upper Acharossan Forest, near Tighnabruaich. Today’s £750,000 Scottish Land Fund award will allow them purchase the remainder of the forest which will create more opportunities for its development.

Dr William McAllan, Director, Kilfinan Community Forest Company, says: ‘The Kilfinan Community Forest Company has ambitious plans to strengthen the Kilfinan communities by providing jobs, affordable housing, environmental education and recreation. The Scottish Land Fund award allows us to expand our horizons not just geographically but also to the economic and social benefit of the Kilfinan community.’