

# Tomintoul & Glenlivet Opportunities Paper

## List of Main Opportunities

		Part 1-Introduction & Context to Paper	
	All	Tranform Tomintoul –Outcomes Sought	Tomintoul/Glen
	Who	Part 2 –The Opportunities	Where
1	HIE	Rural Hub- HIE Account Managed Community	Tomintoul
2	Home Workers	Tomintoul Telecommunity	Tomintoul/Glen
3	Crafts/Arts	Connecting the Glen- <i>The Community of Crafts</i>	Glen
4	Walkers	Tomintoul Low Level Walking Centre	Tomintoul
5	Glen Visitors	Glen Visitor & Heritage Centre	Tomintoul
6	Community	Develop the Social Economy-Acquire the School	Tomintoul
7	Community	End Uses for Redundant Assets	Tomintoul
8	SMEs/Micros	Creative Cluster	Tomintoul
9	Community	Remote Rural Learning Centre	Tomintoul/Glen
10	Glen	Glen Youthbuild	Tomintoul/Glen
11	Crown Estate	Partnering & Learning with Crown Estate	Tomintoul/Glen
12	Crown Estate	Sustainable Land Management-Glenlivet Estate	Tomintoul/Glen
13	Glen/Business	Why Renewable Energy?	Tomintoul/Glen
14	Glen	Cittaslow –Slow Food & Drink	Tomintoul/Glen
15	Glen	Best of the Rest	Tomintoul/Glen

# Summary

## **Introduction-Transform Tomintoul**

Outcomes sought from the project

The means to recovery and the framework for change-people, policy, proposals

What people want –the key findings from the Main Issues Report

What Local Service Providers think Tomintoul & Glenlivet need

The basis for recovery

## **1. Opportunity: Rural Hub-HIE Account Managed Community**

This makes the case for Tomintoul and Glenlivet being supported by Highlands & Islands Enterprise as a '*managed community* aided by a development officer. It has to be *selected* for this status. If successful it can provide a gateway to support, resources, expertise, and some funding. The case made here is that T&G are experiencing '*structural decline*' –*closure of hotels, loss of shops, and a degree of isolation* that affects their economic chances and eventually their social cohesion. There are a number of examples of HIE account managed communities in the North of Scotland and T&G share many of their economic characteristics. Historically Tomintoul was a service centre for the Glen but is far less so now. Glenlivet and other settlements look elsewhere for shopping, social diversion, services. Becoming an account managed community will help Tomintoul to once more become a 'Rural Hub'

## **2. Opportunity: Tomintoul Telecommunity**

Rural communities are increasingly reliant on home working and therefore also on high quality Broadband connectivity. For remoter settlements these can be vital. With limited employment opportunities locally working from home for an employer or starting an enterprise at home can transform the economic circumstances of households. About 20-25% of economically active people in the Glen work from home in either of these ways. Many are self employed. The home is increasingly the engine driver of the rural economy. Working in this way creates enterprise, employment, reduces carbon footprint, enables flexible family arrangements, 'connects' people and businesses and builds community capital. There is an opportunity at T&G to create an *association* of homeworkers and to promote Tomintoul as one of the Highlands first Telecommunities. It will bring attention, resources, investment and further opportunities. And its core strength is people acting economically as a '*community*' to do business with. The proposal also fits with the increasing use of technology to meet the healthcare needs of older people –through Telecare and E Care.

## **3. Opportunity: The Community of Crafts**

This is a simple idea that aims to encourage the growth of a craft-based '*cottage industry*' in the Glen, linking people working from home with a strategy to increase visitor numbers and encourage spending in the rural hinterland bound by the B9136 and B9008 'loop'. Key aims are to promote traditional and contemporary '*home crafts*' –including food and drink ; promote '*authenticity*'; develop a new visitor trail; create a '*craft community*' which will promote social interaction and *devolve economic opportunity* into the areas outlying the two main settlements. There are ideas here also for exhibitions, festivals and for acquiring or demonstrating craft skills for the first time. We hope it will in due course encourage a couple of cafes and B & Bs to spring up along the way.

## **4. Opportunity: Tomintoul Low Level Walking Centre**

This too is very simple –it is precisely at it sounds. Tomintoul is a favourite and growing focus for 'low level' walking and now attracts a following. It has a spur to the Speyside Way and a plethora of excellent way marked walks close by. The village was recently awarded '*Walkers are Welcome*' status and has established a 5 day Walkers Festival which provides a good base for a further growth and for diversification into other

activities. It already embraces music and could contribute a spark to the village's moribund evening economy. There is a strong Northern European trade locally and indications that Lake District walkers are arriving looking for somewhere less congested. The opportunity envisages developing and promoting Tomintoul as *the* low level centre. It will need resources and a more proactive and dedicated effort to build on what is a robust base before it is attracted by better infrastructure elsewhere. *It lacks two key assets* –a reception/visitor centre for walkers and sufficient good quality flexible accommodation, typically B & B, which enables people to move on after 2-3 nights. The challenge is to put these in place and build the 'offer'

### **5. Glen Visitor & Heritage Centre**

This sets out the case for a dedicated Visitor & Heritage Centre as a primary asset lacking at Tomintoul. It is intended to consolidate *not replace* the Museum & Information Centre. This does a decent job but Tomintoul needs a *step change* in its approach to attracting and holding visitors. We also set out an opportunity here for Tomintoul to collate, articulate and exploit its history and heritage - including the development of a heritage trail. It requires a new outlook that treats the village as a 'conservation area' *regardless* of official designation. The proposal examines how estate-based visitor centres are marketed and what other goods and services may be required to attract, retain and encourage visitors to spend money here.

### **6. Opportunity: Develop the Social Economy-Acquire the School**

This opportunity is focused squarely on the creation of a community social enterprise company to acquire and develop the school. It examines how a social enterprise can be created and whose assistance is required. It underscores the need for the community itself to bring forward skills, champions, leadership. In particular it focuses on the designation of the school as a 'community site' and explores how a Tomintoul social enterprise might access Moray Council's Community Asset Transfer Strategy. The end uses for the school are examined in Opportunity 7.

### **7. Opportunity: End Uses for Redundant Assets.**

This opportunity focuses on potential end uses for the 2 hotels and school and weighs their merits and demerits. It concludes that the *overriding objective* of the Tomintoul community at this time must be the *reinstatement of The Gordon Hotel* as a mid range family hotel of circa 20-22 beds and crucially the reanimation of its bars, restaurant and 200 person function room. *It suggests high level intervention to resolve the future of this building* as the cornerstone of Tomintoul's economy and revival. For The Richmond Arms it describes a range of potential uses-including hotel –but examines ideas for treating the building as a series of small retail concessions and notably as a Centre for Genealogy. This is an indoor visitor attraction that plays to the growth of ancestral tourism, education breaks, schools etc. The school itself is explored as a *Futures Centre* providing space for a creative cluster, workspace, education and training, IT and as a showcase for the overarching theme of *Transform* Tomintoul. It is also assessed as a potential indoor leisure facility for community and visitors.

### **8. Opportunity: Creative Cluster**

This develops the theme above in more detail and explores why creatives might wish to locate at somewhere like Tomintoul. The school is the focal point here for the development of a low cost 'hot house campus' intended to attract creative and knowledge based micros and SMEs. Essentially it would be a rural 'incubator' for young enterprises run by young designers. A by product is to attract young people who will put Tomintoul on the map and also spark an evening buzz.

### **9. Opportunity: Remote Rural Learning Network**

Access to education, training and IT skills are crucial to the Glen's sustainability. Responses to the community consultations highlighted what people consider to be a limited rural Further and Higher Education service that

either failed to meet their needs and aspirations or which was denied them because of their remoteness. ‘*No car, no education*’ was one notable refrain. There are calls for local training to anticipate mechanisation of traditional farm industry and for high level IT and computer based learning. This prompted us to contact Moray College UHI and to explore with them the idea of some form of network of resources, learning media and course engagement dedicated to the specific needs of remoter rural settlements. *This is work in progress.*

#### **10. Opportunity: Glen Youthbuild**

Youthbuild is a UK wide charity with projects in Scotland that put together the needs of young people with construction training, opportunities to gain qualifications and the delivery of small works projects that build community capital. It is a model well suited to Tomintoul and the Glen. We see this as a strong candidate for the creation of a social enterprise and see opportunities for a local Rural Youthbuild project to provide employment, training, inclusion and undertake a number of the small works programmes we describe in other Opportunities here –ie *the school, conservation and landscaping work, care and repair, building refurbishments*. Youthbuilders are mentored and led by 2-3 older skilled workers and are linked to a local college –in this case it would be Moray College UHI –for day release towards a formal qualification. There is a *Park-wide opportunity* here if the Tomintoul pilot succeeds.

#### **11. Opportunity: Partnering and Learning with the Crown Estate**

Tomintoul has a world class partner on its doorstep and the Crown Estate has a willing test bed for new enterprise in the village. There is a view in the community that the Estate’s interests and those of the village could intersect more and this needs exploring. The particular Opportunity we focus on is the role of the Estate as a mentor, enabler and a transferer of skills and expertise to people seeking to establish new enterprise. The Estate could play a valuable role in Opportunities such as Youthbuild (providing work); Visitor & Heritage Centre (providing expertise, materials, promotion); The Walking Centre (by facilitating a camp site and caravan park). The Estate has skills in grant applications, management, governance, budgeting, PR –all resources a community social enterprise would be fortunate to draw on.

#### **12. Opportunity: Sustainable Land Management**

This examines a series of land based opportunities –some connected directly with the Crown Estate –intended to use the land responsibly but efficiently as an ‘economic driver’. The opportunities include: woodland carbon sequestration; land capability for carbon capture; farm carbon management; woodfuel and a Tomintoul biomass scheme; natural flood management; farm support programmes; and community representation in farm management.

#### **13. Opportunity: Why Renewable Energy?**

This opportunity explores the case for and options locally to develop renewable energy and the benefits this would bring to the local community and village economy. It looks at programmes, policies and tariffs. The opportunities it identifies include wind power, hydro power, solar power, renewable heat, development options and energy efficiency. It concludes that the natural resources and built environment of the Tomintoul and Glenlivet area may provide *significant potential for renewable energy generation and energy efficiency* measures at both a domestic and commercial scale.

#### **14. Opportunity: Cittaslow: Slow Food & Drink**

This opportunity is about food and drink and quality of life. It explores how the ‘slow food movement’ has taken hold in Scotland and how some communities are making a virtue and a visitor base out of a slower pace of life characterised by quality of food, drink, environment, air, services, hospitality. It plays to a number of Highland strengths including authenticity. A central aim is to elevate the food offer of a community and build its reputation and visitor base through high quality food outlets, restaurant and pub food and development of a local supply chain. This is complemented by an unhurried lifestyle and by opportunities and facilities for good

conversation and a memorable experience. VisitScotland has remarked on the increasing number of visitors to Scotland for whom the 'experience' is the most important consideration.

### **15. Opportunities: Best of the Rest**

In this final section we bring together a raft of ideas and opportunities drawn from the community, agencies, interest groups, service providers and some of our own. These are 'scored' for their likelihood of success. They include self build housing; rural shop support; use of the school as a centre for the arts; care farming; camping & caravanning; business tourism; a roamer bus service; festivals; archaeology tourism; golf ; corporate safaris; *the development of a low carbon protocol for everything that Tomintoul does from now on*; to twinning with a Chinese town to attract visits from the growing UK Chinese tourism market.

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