



Inch Community Association

**Scottish Land Fund Stage 1 Project:
Inch House Community Asset Transfer Feasibility Study**

Adviser Brief and Invitation to Quote



Inch House and Garden

September 2026

SUMMARY

Issued by	Inch Community Association (ICA)
Project	Scottish Land Fund Stage 1: Inch House Community Asset Transfer Feasibility Study
Funder	Scottish Land Fund (delivered by The National Lottery Community Fund in partnership with Highlands and Islands Enterprise)
Budget	£28,000 (inclusive of VAT)
Closing date	Monday 12 October 2026. 3pm.
Contract period	Wed 11 November 2026 – Friday 12 March 2027
Contact	Diarmid Jamieson, ICA. Email: diarmid.jamieson@inchhouse.co.uk

1. Background to Inch House and Inch Community Association

The Inch Community Centre is one of Edinburgh's most dynamic community hubs, serving the local Inch district and extending a warm welcome to those from beyond. Operated by Inch Community Association (ICA) - a fully constituted two-tier SCIO (#SC049401) - we offer a community programme to all residents and regularly develop new programmes and facilities for our rapidly changing local community.

Unusually for a community centre, we are based in the historic Inch House, which dates back to the 16th century and is now a Category A listed building. Refer <https://www.inchhouse.co.uk/> for more information. Given its rich history and heritage, Inch House building is of great significance to our local residents and numerous community groups, as well as its role as an adult learning centre, and hub for many community, arts, cultural, wellbeing and environmental organisations and activities. (<https://www.inchhouse.co.uk/history>)

Inch House is located within Inch Park, within the Liberton/Gilmerton Council ward area. It is a Grade A listed LB28078, and owned by City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), who provide a cleaning and janitorial service, and also essential repairs.

Inch House is in high demand as an events space, from wedding receptions to conferences, cultural events, concerts, birthday parties and indoor bowling. We also host a large programme of CEC Adult Education at Inch House (including history, arts, music and heritage) and ESOL classes. Weekly activities include Polish Scouting, PlayPlus toy library, art classes, martial arts, pilates, Chinese school, art/ecology studio, space for band practice and a community garden.

The ICA aim is to realise the full potential of this extraordinary historical building, to build and sustain the community centre, as well as to create a major local resource and city-wide meeting place, and ensure a long-term sustainable future for Inch House. Our ultimate goal is to see it grow into a strong, vigorous and sustainable community hub for the many people and communities that are located in and around the Inch district (its primary 'area of benefit').

ICA Development Timeline 2019-26

- June 2019 Inch Community Association established
- March 2020 – August 2021:- Inch House closed due to Covid.
- Autumn 2022 Inch Park Masterplan published by CEC
- Feb 2023 Friends of Inch Park established
- March 2023 ICA members vote to consider Community Asset Transfer of the building from Edinburgh Council.
- November 2025 Inch Community Forum held at Inch House, jointly led by the ICA and the Liberton and District Community Council, and informed by a community survey

- March 2026 ICA consults with Inch House stakeholders and applies to Architectural Heritage Fund for funding; grant awarded in July when an initial six month outline feasibility assessment project of Inch House begins (with reporting scheduled for November 2026).
- August 2026 ICA Trustees vote unanimously to support the following proposal: *“The ICA is committed to pursuing the acquisition of Inch House into community ownership through the Community Asset Transfer process, working with the City of Edinburgh Council and other stakeholders to develop a viable and sustainable proposal for its long-term community ownership and management.”*

Inch Community Association ‘charitable purposes’ and community benefits

Focusing principally within the Inch District, these our **‘charitable purposes’** are:

1. Advancement of citizenship and community development (including urban regeneration)
2. Advancement of education through the development and implementation of programmes of community education;
3. Provide/assist in the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure-time occupation; and
4. Fostering a greater awareness of history, arts and architecture

The **Community Benefits** of the ICA activities are primarily focussed on developing:

- History and Heritage
- Arts and Culture
- Health, wellbeing and social care
- Environment, climate change, greenspace and biodiversity
- Youth and children’s work
- Employability, enterprise and community wealth building
- Inclusion and diversity
- Contribution to the regeneration and community cohesion of local communities
- Tackling the impacts of poverty and the cost of living crisis

About Inch House

The Inch House Asset comprises Inch House, the surrounding car parking area, and the adjacent garden to the east of the building. For more information see our website: <https://www.inchhouse.co.uk/about>

Inch House: current ownership and management

- The Inch House building is currently owned by the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) and is managed and maintained by its Estates and Facilities Management Departments.
- ICA are in regular contact with relevant CEC departments, regarding building management, repair and maintenance issues, safety and security, and development plans.
- The building operations are managed by ICA staff and volunteers, alongside CEC janitorial and cleaning staff, with support from CEC area manager Community Empowerment/Place.

Restoring and Developing Inch House

Currently many of the rooms in Inch house remain empty and unused. ICA has been using a combination of its own limited resources and available small capital grants, to make improvements to Inch House, including room refurbishment, flooring improvements and installation of new kitchen equipment.

In May 2026, ICA were awarded a capital grant from the **Architectural Heritage Fund** (AHF) to carry out preliminary work aimed at assessing the long-term future options for Inch House. This grant supports our current project to assess the current condition of Inch House (including any constraints and opportunities) and to consider conservation-led options for the future restoration and development of the building.

Since commencement of this AHF-funded project in June 2026, we have been engaging with the current users of this much-loved community centre (and those who may consider doing so in future) to listen to ideas and suggestions about how we can deliver wider use of Inch House in future.

Supporting us on this current AHF project is a Design Team led by Michael Collins Architects and CSY Architects who have carried out a baseline survey of the building to identify its condition and the repairs and upgrades needed to make Inch House fit for purpose for the future. This includes ideas about utilising the various spaces within the building and the adjacent garden, while also upgrading existing rooms to accommodate more community and external users. We will also take account of suggestions made by the current users of Inch House.

This work will enable us to plan how to bring more of the currently unused rooms and internal spaces into use, and routes to generate much-needed additional income towards the costs of running, maintaining and upgrading Inch House. As part of this AHF project, we will also be looking at ways of reducing its running costs, including improving the house heating and energy system, installation of renewable energy generation, and widening public accessibility to all floors of the building.

We anticipate that a preliminary draft report from this current AHF work will be available during November. This will be made available to the Advisers who are appointed by ICA in November to carry out the SLF-funded project – to inform them about the Inch House building including its current condition, any constraints and the likely staged options planned for its future development (and funding).

2. Scottish Land Fund (SLF) Project Description

SLF ‘Stage 1’ Project Definition and Objectives

The SLF Stage 1 award to ICA (if approved) will fund the preparatory work and evidence base necessary to assess whether a future Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of Inch House would be feasible and beneficial to the community, taking account of the likely costs (capital and operating), the available funding sources and financial support. Our SLF funding application will be submitted by 02 October with a response expected from SLF by mid-November

The scope of work for the advisers required to deliver this project, is designed to generate the evidence, data and options that any subsequent SLF Stage 2 project would require in order to deliver the acquisition and CAT of Inch House into community ownership. Stage 1 scope of work will cover the necessary assessments, feasibility analyses, and business plan creation. *NOTE a detailed commercial valuation of the assets is NOT required at this stage.*

It is intended that this Stage 1 project would be quickly followed by a follow-on application to the SLF for Stage Two funding (as well as to other funders) to meet the substantial costs to the ICA of acquiring, refurbishing, developing and operating Inch House.

SLF ‘Stage 1’ Project Aims (including Adviser Brief and project timescale).

As noted above, the key objective of this SLF Stage 1 project is to prepare for the subsequent delivery stage of the Community Asset Transfer process for Inch House. The SLF requires that the outputs and findings from its approved ‘Stage One’ projects are completed within six months of the funding award date (early November). Therefore the overall timescale for this planned ‘Stage 1’ work is 5 months (mid-November 2026 to mid-March 2027).

The ICA is seeking to appoint advisers to deliver the following tasks and outcomes within the SLF ‘Stage 1’ project:

1. Technical & Financial Assessment

- a) Carry out a technical survey of the site, covering all buildings, structures (e.g. walls) and greenspaces; this should include reference to the heritage, biodiversity, hydrology and soil condition of the site.
- b) Carry out a structural survey of the building.
- c) Outline a series of different design-based scenarios for the buildings and greenspaces, taking into account and building on the community engagement work commenced under the AHF-funded project, and based on the planned funding strategy and business plan
- d) Prepare documentation as required to meet ‘RIBA stage 1’ project development.
- e) Prepare initial costings for development of the site for the different scenarios identified (NB. to include necessary Quantity Surveyor input to costings).

2. Feasibility Assessment and Business Planning

- f) Review the potential options for Inch House taking account of key criteria (incl. the environment, climate change and biodiversity, history and heritage, arts and culture, health, wellbeing and social care, youth and children's work, employability/enterprise and community wealth building, inclusion and accessibility, poverty and the cost of living crisis, and the regeneration and community cohesion of the Inch and surrounding communities). This will include options for how the asset can be best used to achieve these goals, as part of a sustainable business model, including relevant market research.
- g) Develop and appraise deliverable future options / scenarios for CAT of Inch House - to identify the preferred option(s).
- h) Assess the risks associated with community ownership and management of the asset and recommend appropriate mitigation and management measures.
- i) Review funding availability for the proposed project / acquisition and prepare a funding strategy and delivery plan. This should include considerations of the costs of running and managing the asset and opportunities to generate income from the asset.
- j) Prepare an outline business plan covering 2027-30 which incorporates initial revenue costs, capital costs to create the facilities, ongoing revenue and maintenance & repair costs for the project, and an associated risk analysis.

Project Methodology

Applicants should set out the methodology that they will use to deliver the above tasks and outcomes. This must include an outline of the methodology that will be used to gather relevant data, and how it will be evaluated.

The methodology should be flexible enough to include engagement with a wide range of relevant individuals and organisations, and outline how barriers to participation due to inequalities, poverty or protected characteristics that affect individuals and local communities, will be addressed to ensure a diversity of participation.

The planned project timescale is 5 months: work will commence mid-November 2026 and the final report must be completed and submitted by Friday 12 March 2027.

Project Timeline

The anticipated timetable for the study is (subject to confirmation with SLF):

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| • Brief available to applicants | Monday 21 September |
| • Final date for adviser submissions | Monday 12 October 3pm |
| • Interviews including presentations | Monday 19 / Tuesday 20 October |
| • Provisional offer of appointment to advisers | Friday 23 October 2026 |
| • Formal offer of contract to contractors
(on confirmation of funding) | Monday 2 November 2026 |
| • Project Commencement / Induction meeting | Wednesday 11 November 2026 |
| • Submission of interim report | Friday 29 January 2027 |
| • Submission of draft final report | Friday 5 March 2027 tbc |
| • Submission of final report | Friday 12 March 2027 tbc |

NOTE: Details of finalised timescales will be agreed with the selected contractors before the contract is issued. These timescales are provisional and subject to confirmation by SLF of funding approval to ICA. .

Adviser Key Skills and Experience

Advisers should be able to demonstrate relevant knowledge, skills and experience in each of the following areas:

- Local community groups and stakeholders within Edinburgh
- City of Edinburgh Council Estates Team
- Community councils, elected members

Architect and Design Team:

- Working with a Grade A and or Grade B listed building

- Team to include a RIAS conservation advanced accredited architect
- Team to include a RIAS sustainable accredited architect
- Proven experience of delivering conservation and restoration projects
- Proven experience of delivering sustainable design and development projects
- Knowledge of and delivery of projects in the local area, i.e. Inch and surrounding communities
- Experience of supporting a successful community asset transfer / community right to buy project
- Ability of architects / Design Team to engage with a wide range of stakeholders, sharing and responding to design ideas led by the local community and key stakeholders.

Business Development:

- Proven track record in securing funding streams for both capital expenditure and revenue funding, from heritage and capital funders such as Historic Environment Scotland, Heritage Lottery Fund, Architectural Heritage Fund
- Experience of supporting a successful community asset transfer (CAT)
- Knowledge of Inch community and surrounding communities
- Previous experience in community engagement and consultation within Inch and surrounding communities, including communities of interest
- Business planning
- Stakeholder engagement
- Market research and risk analysis
- Community consultation and engagement
- Understanding of what makes a 'connected community'
- Experience in undertaking assessment of organisational capacity to deliver.

Community Organisations:

- Working with community organisations involved in owning and managing assets
- Working with community organisations involved in developments of urban green spaces open to and involving the public, local residents etc.
- Methods of effective communication with volunteers in community organisations and with the wider community
- Knowledge and understanding of the local economy, culture, assets, challenges and heritage of the local area ie Inch District and surrounding communities
- Preparing business plans, funding strategies and delivery plans as outlined above, to be used in support of funding applications
- Experience in design, delivery and evaluation of community engagement and consultation leading to tangible outcomes.

Desirable Adviser Attributes

Any local knowledge that the adviser can bring to the brief is also welcomed, e.g. knowledge of, or previous engagement with, Inch House, Inch Community Association, and/or other Inch House stakeholders and partners within the wider Inch District.

Management and outputs of the contract.

Reporting

The successful applicant will report to the ICA board of trustees throughout the project term on a regular basis (to be agreed with the board); key milestones will be agreed over the timeline of the project.

Project Outputs required are:

1. A feasibility report identifying the preferred CAT options for Inch House and its ongoing management (interim, draft final and final).
2. Report to include a three year outline business plan with detailed costs, risk analysis, funding strategy and risk mitigation plan.
3. Report to include a structural survey with results of technical and accessibility assessments, heritage significance and sustainability requirements, and cost of proposed works.

The commission will be managed by the ICA Project Steering Group, with all outputs outlined above emailed to the designated project contact at Inch House. The required format for the project deliverables will be:

- Draft and final report / business plan will be required, in electronic format.
- A summary of the report / business plan, less than two A4 pages in size, to be provided for the purpose of informing the public and members of the ICA Trustees, Staff and Volunteers.

Remuneration and conditions

- The maximum total budget available for the combined project outputs is: **£28,000 (inclusive of VAT)** with this subject to confirmation of SLF funding award to ICA.
- The work is offered as a fixed-term contract covering the period mid-November 2026 to mid-March 2027.
- The successful candidate(s) will be responsible for their own tax and personal insurance.
- Milestone Payments will be made over the period of the contract, to be agreed prior to the start of the contract, with the final payment made upon completion of all objectives.
- All data gathered during the commission, including the draft and final reports, shall remain the sole property of The Inch Community Association.

Procedures for tendering

If you wish to discuss this opportunity before tendering please contact Diarmid Jamieson at the ICA on the email address below.

The response to this brief must be submitted by email **before Monday 12 October at 3pm** to: diarmid.jamieson@inchhouse.co.uk

Adviser Submissions must include:

- Name, contact details and background of the lead adviser and firm.
- Costs breakdown for conducting this study, including number of days allocated per task, all fees, expenses, charges, meetings, presentations and interviews, including VAT.
- Confirmation that submission covers all aspects of the required scope of works (as set out here).
- A timetable showing the various project milestones including the anticipated dates for the data gathering phase, stakeholder engagement, and submission of the interim, draft and final reports.
- Examples of similar projects / studies undertaken recently.
- Details of the skills and knowledge of the members of the advisers' team.
- The names of contacts from two separate organisations for whom similar studies have been undertaken, one to be within the past two years.

Evaluation of Submissions by ICA

Adviser submissions will be evaluated by the ICA on a quality / price basis (70:30) comprising the following:

(i) Quality (70%)

- a) Understanding of the brief;
- b) Proposed methodology and approach to generating the project deliverables within the required project deadline;
- c) Skills and relevant experience of the project team.

(ii) Price (30%) - based on detailed costs breakdown provided, allocation of adviser days, and value for money.

Award of this Advisers tender by ICA will be based on scoring of submissions against the above criteria.

3. Supporting Information: Scottish Land Fund aims and outcomes

“What we’re looking for”

We’ll prioritise projects that can show a clear and lasting benefit to the wider community. Successful projects will aim to:

- support economic, environmental or social development through land ownership
- give the community more control over its future
- own land and buildings that are well managed and financially sustainable

“We want to fund projects that”:

- Deliver value for money for the Fund and are sustainable in the longer-term.
- Enable communities to manage local land, land assets and buildings well and deliver benefit for the whole community.
- Empower communities to realise the opportunities they see in local land, land assets and buildings to meet local needs.
- Deliver real community involvement and participation in land and building ownership and management.
- Help communities realise the opportunities created by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- Help people live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe

“What do we mean by community?”

When we talk about community, we mean a geographic community, not a community of interest. Organisations which apply to the Scottish Land Fund need to be representative of the community and have a defined boundary. The land or buildings being acquired should be within, or close to, the defined community with a clear link between the opportunities provided by the asset and the identified needs of the community.