Ceangail Celebrates Social Enterprise Day with Record Success and Big Plans for the Future

Friday 22 November, 2024

Ceangail, one of Stirling's most active social enterprises, is celebrating Social Enterprise Day on 21st November, by sharing highlights from a successful year and announcing exciting plans for 2024. Best known for organising the Stirling Highland Games, Ceangail uses funds from the event, along with grants and public donations, to support vocational training for young adults aged 16 and up.

"*Social Enterprise Day celebrates Scotland's place as a global leader in the sector and recognises the important role of social enterprises in growing a fairer, greener and more inclusive economy. Ceangail supports growth in the local economy and provides wider benefits for the whole community. With such impressive achievements so far, I look forward to seeing what Ceangail will achieve in the future*." Said Employment and Investment Minister Tom Arthur.

Since taking on the Stirling Highland Games in 2014, Ceangail has made a significant impact to many sectors including its social mission.

"This year has been a fantastic success for Ceangail, with record attendance and significant economic impact for Stirling. We're incredibly proud to celebrate Social Enterprise Day with our community and share our vision for a new, permanent home for the Stirling Highland Games. Our mission to inspire and support young people is at the heart of what we do, and the new Burgh Meadows Sports Ground will help create a lasting legacy for future generations." said Matt McGrandles, Executive Director of Ceangail CIC.

Social Enterprise Day gives them an opportunity to celebrate what they've achieved to date:

- £368,153 investment in projects, from sponsorship, grants and fundraising
- 40,398 visitors to The Games over the years, with attendance rising annually to reach over 6,500 in 2024.
- £3,933,533 economic impact, generating income for the Stirling economy
- 162 young people trained with skills to help them find employment
- 494 volunteers, supporting the Highland Games through CPD

"We at Community Enterprise and Social Enterprise Scotland have been aware of the work of Stirling highland Games and Ceangail's for some years. It is an impressive example of not only innovative place based enterprise, but tenacity in the light of challenging times. It is a model of public facing enterprise that can be replicated across Scotland", said Douglas Westwater, CEO, Community Enterprise

The Games are held at Stirling Sports Village, on what is locally named as the games field, which offers amazing panoramic views of the National Wallace Monument, Cambuskenneth Abbey, and Stirling Castle. Ceangail is committed to ensuring the games go from strength to strength and is now planning for a permanent home with better facilities.

Ceangail is looking to take on the Borrowmeadow Farmstead land, currently unutilised brownfield land owned by Stirling Council, as the ideal site for the social enterprise to grow and expand its delivery. The proposed Burgh Meadows development includes the Burgh Meadows Sports Ground, a versatile space designed for events such as the Stirling Highland Games and broader sporting activities and community events, with a maximum capacity of 10,000 visitors.

"The Stirling Highland Games is a highlight of the annual events calendar, bringing enjoyment to locals and visitors alike and providing a boost to the local economy. It's a true example of social enterprise in action, helping fund Ceangail's invaluable work supporting young people. Their plans for a community-owned events space, will ensure a bright future for both Ceangail and the Stirling Highland Games." said Jim Bennett, social enterprise specialist and consultant.

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Ceangail's ambitious 10-year plan outlines the development in stages:

1. **Stage 1**: Starting with a Community Asset Transfer from Stirling Council to establish the sports ground.

2. **Stage 2**: Building a community pavilion with facilities for sports on the ground floor and spaces for community activities and vocational training on the upper floor.

3. **Stage 3**: Restoring the historic Laird's House, transforming it into the **Burgh Meadow Heritage Centre** to include a heritage wall on the ground floor.

This proposed community wealth building development will boost sports, culture, and heritage in Stirling. It would ensure the future of the Stirling Highland Games, whose current site suffers from lack of investment for a safe sports field with drainage, access and facilities improvements required to meet future growth.

"The training was way different to what I was expecting. I liked that we were included in all the discussions about the essential skills needed by employers, which made me feel comfortable talking in the group. The event [Stirling Highland Games] was much larger than I thought, and everyone was very busy, but this practical experience and working with the group was way better than others we have been part of." said Craig, a 17-year-old school leaver.

Ceangail is seeking support from local businesses and the community, to help bring these ambitious plans to life. They encourage anyone interested in contributing to their social mission or to hear more about the Burgh Meadows vision to email office@ceangail.org or visit www.burghmeadows.scot. You can also simply buy a ticket to the 2025 Stirling Highland Games event at www.stirlinghighlandgames.com which boosts its social profits, allowing it to deliver more future vocational training opportunities for young people.

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About Cengail:

Ceangail CIC is a social enterprise based in Stirling, Scotland, dedicated to helping young people gain hands-on experience in tourism through vocational training. They believe this approach provides better engagement and meaningful opportunities, connecting communities through impactful projects.

W: www.ceangail.org and www.burghmeadows.scot and www.stirlinghighlandgames.com

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