



NEWS RELEASE

Rt Hon Charles Kennedy MP

Ross, Skye & Lochaber

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Date: 13/11/12

KENNEDY – APPLECROSS TRUST MUST PUT APPLECROSS FIRST

West Highland MP Charles Kennedy has written to the Applecross Trust to express his concern, following the rejection of over one hundred land reformers' applications to become Trust members.

The Applecross Trust is owned by six members, none of whom live in or near Applecross. The Trust owns 61,600 acres of the peninsula.

In his letter, Charles Kennedy MP wrote:

“Many of those applying (including myself) have only the best interests of Applecross and its people in mind, and a greater (and geographically closer) connection to the peninsula than many of the trustees.

“It is an absolute that the wishes and best interests of the people of Applecross must be paramount in this matter. I believe that the interests of local communities are best served by locals having a say in the management and running of their area. That is a fundamentally liberal principle, and one to which I have always held.

“I am glad that the Trust has consulted the local community throughout this matter, but I would ask more specifically exactly what measures have been taken in this consultation, and how extensive those measures have been.”

The campaign to open up the Trust has been led by noted Land Reformer Andy Wightman, author of *Who Owns Scotland?*

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Mr Kennedy's letter appears in full below:

Dear Mr MacLellan,

Thank you for your letter regarding my application for membership of the Applecross Trust.

I am disappointed that you have chosen to reject these applications so rapidly – and by inference in total? Many of those applying (including myself) have only the best interests of Applecross and its people in mind, and a greater (and geographically closer) connection to the peninsula than many of the trustees.

It is an absolute that the wishes and best interests of the people of Applecross must be paramount in this matter. I believe that the interests of local communities are best served by locals having a say in the management and running of their area. That is a fundamentally liberal principle, and one to which I have always held.

I am glad that the Trust has consulted the local community throughout this matter, but I would ask more specifically exactly what measures have been taken in this consultation, and how extensive those measures have been.

I await your reply with interest.

Meantime, with best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Kennedy