

Press Release

Monday 1st August 2016

## SCOTLAND THE BREAD SHARES OFFER EXTENDED UNTIL END OF AUGUST

Social business raising £30k through community shares programme



# SCOTLAND THE **BREAD**

Home-grown bread for a healthy future



*Image: Andrew Whitley with community bakers from High Rise in Glasgow*

Scotland the Bread (STB) is a collaborative project to establish a Scottish flour and bread supply that is healthy, equitable, locally-controlled and sustainable. The idea is simple: to grow nutritious wheat and bake it properly close to home.

STB requires a shares investment of £30,000 by the end of August 2016, primarily to ramp up a programme of wheat breeding and research, improve nutritional standards and help more communities to make real bread for themselves.

Andrew Whitley, one of seven directors on STB's founding board and owner of Bread Matters, is widely regarded as a leading authority on traditional bread making. At his organic agroforestry small-holding at Macbiehill near Peebles, he is growing more than forty trial plots of wheat, spelt, emmer, oats, rye and barley from seeds sourced from seed-banks around the globe including the Vavilov Institute in St Petersburg, NordGen in Sweden and the John Innes Centre in Norwich.

Andrew said: *"We want to make things better – from the ground up. We are committed to developing the most nutrient-dense and digestible grains and bread possible, within the context and constraints of a changing climate. This innovative social business is setting a whole new agenda for cereal research and public health."*

Trial plots have been grown on other organic farms and on a small scale in public spaces in Glasgow and Edinburgh. The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh has planted some of the project's Swedish brown wheat in its Demonstration Garden.

Dr Max Coleman, Science Communicator at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh said: *"Throughout the history of crop breeding there has been a strong focus on yield and resilience. Projects like Scotland the Bread are showing that we must protect and re-examine old crop varieties, and the wild relatives of crop plants, for their potential to improve the taste and nutritional quality of our food."*

Scotland The Bread's research has begun with historic Scottish long-strawed wheat varieties such as Rouge d'Ecosse and Hunter's, as well as selected Nordic landraces and evolutionary mixtures with a high degree of genetic diversity.

In initial testing at the James Hutton Institute, most of the samples were shown to have above-average nutrient content. Now more funding is required to test, and then release for sale, the current crop of more than ten tonnes of 19th-century Scottish wheats that have already been harvested.

Andrew Whitley continued: *"Ground-breaking independent research doesn't come cheap. We will use the cutting-edge expertise of Scottish molecular scientists to tell us exactly how nutritious our innovative grain varieties are. It's this that will make Scotland the Bread unique as every bag of grain or flour we certify will carry an analysis of what is in it and how this differs from what is generally available. And we aim to raise our standards as time goes on, so Scottish flour and bread will continue to get better and better."*

The primary incentive for investors is the social return that comes from advancing this innovative work. So far STB has raised more than £20,000, which means it is now eligible for a matched loan and grant, each of £20,000, via the Just Growth programme.

Just Growth manager Clare Horrell said: *“Scotland the Bread is one of six initiatives we are working with this year. With our partners the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Co-operative and Community Finance we are providing a mix of loan and grant funding to projects that are re-thinking the way we produce food. Scotland the Bread is exactly the sort of project we are delighted to support.”*

The share offer is supported by Community Shares Scotland, whose programme manager Kelly McIntyre said: *“This is a landmark community share offer. We are impressed at the level of interest and steady investment shown so far. It is testament to the enthusiasm of the Scotland the Bread team. We hope it will inspire many other community enterprises throughout Scotland to pursue their unique projects.”*

STB is also trialling a radically new way of producing wholemeal flour using [innovative milling technology](#) that will localise flour production while conserving nutrients that are wastefully discarded in conventional systems.

By supplying this flour, as well as providing training and support, to community and small bakeries across Scotland, STB will make nutritious bread much more widely available. Successful, in-demand products will underpin the growth of skilled jobs, short supply chains and local economic activity.

A community-supported baking course was created by Andrew Whitley and Veronica Burke at Bread Matters in 2008. It combines technical baking skills with some of the commercial and financial know-how needed to operate a successful community enterprise. These courses, advice and mentoring services are integral to the project.

Scotland the Bread board member Dr Clare Fennell commented: *“We’re hugely encouraged by the support we’ve had for our share offer so far. Now we can get on with skilling-up community bakers and letting bread take its rightful place on the table as a nourishing staple food, enjoyed by everyone and contributing to our wellbeing and economy.”*

To buy shares visit: [www.scotlandthebread.org/product/buy-shares/](http://www.scotlandthebread.org/product/buy-shares/)  
Minimum investment is £100, maximum is £3,000.

**ENDS**

## NOTES TO EDITORS

View the shares brochure PDF [here](#).

**Scotland the Bread** - [www.scotlandthebread.org](http://www.scotlandthebread.org) Twitter: [@ScotlandBread](https://twitter.com/ScotlandBread)

- Scotland The Bread began in 2012 as a project within [Bread Matters](#). It brings together plant breeders, farmers, millers, bakers, nutritionists and citizens with the common purpose of producing nutritious grain, milling it close to home and using it to make wholesome, slowly-fermented bread that everyone can enjoy.
- Working with scientists in leading institutions, the founders began to research heritage Scottish and Nordic wheats to find nutrient-rich varieties that do well in local conditions.
- At the same time, they started to stimulate a market for the improved grains by building capacity in community-scale, artisan bread making.
- Bread For Good Community Benefit Society was formed in April 2016 to bring the project into community ownership and increase the scale of its activities for the common good. Trading under the name 'Scotland The Bread', this innovative social business is setting a whole new agenda for cereal research and public health.

### Just Growth

- Just Growth is an innovative funding programme designed to encourage the growth of community based food and farming projects.
- Run by the Real Farming Trust through its [Funding Enlightened Agriculture \(FEA\) Network](#), its aim is to support social enterprises that are producing food in an environmentally and socially just way; hence *Just Growth*.
- STB is one of six agro-ecological businesses to benefit from a blended funding pot made up of a grant provided by the [Esmée Fairbairn Foundation](#) and a loan provided by [Co-operative and Community Finance](#). Both are contingent on the remaining third being raised through community finance such as a community share offer.
- A key feature of the programme is to encourage community ownership. The organisations that Just Growth is supporting are owned and run by their community or have strong co-operative principles embedded in their structure.
- For information visit: <http://www.feainetwork.org/our-projects/just-growth>  
Twitter: [@JustGrowthFund](https://twitter.com/JustGrowthFund)

## Community Shares Scotland

- [Community Shares Scotland](#) is a national organisation based in Edinburgh. Its aim is to grow the community business market and help people to progress their own community share offers. It is run by Kelly McIntyre, Programme Manager and Morven Campbell, Programme Officer. Launched in May 2014, this three-year programme involves awareness raising and training, an information service and direct support to communities and groups interested in launching a community share offer.
- **Community Shares Scotland** is funded by the Big Lottery Fund Scotland and Carnegie UK Trust. It is delivered by Development Trust Association (DTA) Scotland in partnership with the Plunkett Foundation, the Community Shares Unit (a joint project run by Locality and Co-operatives UK) and Rocket Science.
- **For further community shares information contact Kelly McIntyre:**  
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- For information visit: [www.communitysharesscotland.org.uk](http://www.communitysharesscotland.org.uk)  
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