

Five residents win bid to buy Scottish island

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The five tenants on the Isle of Ulva feared their way of life might be coming to an end after their island was put on the market

Residents on a remote Scottish island of pristine beaches, lush hills and craggy coastlines celebrated on Friday after reaching an agreement to buy their home, fending off bids from tycoons.

The five tenants on the Isle of Ulva feared their way of life might be coming to an end after their island was put on the market after decades of ownership by an aristocratic family.

But the North West Mull Community Woodland Company (NWMCWC), a group comprised of people living in the [local area](#), succeeded in delaying the sale of the land under a new Scottish law, giving them time to raise the cash.

The group promised to "bring about social and economic development of Ulva for the benefit of the community now and for future generations, with a key objective being repopulation of the island".

"To say we are extremely grateful to all our supporters and to the various funding agencies, organisations and individuals would be an understatement," said NWMCWC chair Colin Morrison.

"We cannot thank everyone enough, not just for the financial support, but also the encouragement we've been given throughout the process."

The island's "laird" Jamie Howard put it up for sale for £4.25 million (4.77 million euros, \$5.60 million), offering prospective buyers the opportunity to own "one of the finest private [islands](#) in northern Europe".

Soon after, tycoons began flying in for viewings, raising concerns among residents that they might be removed from the island.

But the tenants managed to delay the sale, and on Friday announced they had agreed to buy the island.

"After a long and complex process, a Community Right to Buy was granted over the bulk of the estate at a price set by an independent

valuation ordered by the Scottish Government," said a statement from the group.

"However, in order to purchase the entire estate; lock, stock and barrel, negotiations have continued to the point reached today when we can announce final agreement between the parties."

The asking price was met thanks to a government grant and contributions from more than 500 individuals.

Ulva is an idyllic location with views of Ben More mountain and the spectacular Eas Fors Waterfall on the neighbouring island of Mull.

But empty cottages, an abandoned church and the disused Ulva Hostel nearby are falling into disrepair.

One of the island's most famous sons is Lachlan Macquarie, a high-profile colonial governor in Australia in the 19th century.

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