



URRAS AN TAOBH SEAR

STAFFIN COMMUNITY TRUST

2023 AGM: Annual Report

Staffin Harbour

It has been a productive 12 months for the harbour. Staffin Community Trust (SCT) would not have got this far without the efforts of its volunteer-led harbour steering group who have put a lot of their own time and work into moving things forward on a variety of fronts.

Since 2020 SCT has been working to deliver major improvements to the current Staffin Slipway by developing a new and improved community-owned and managed harbour with improved amenities and on and off-shore facilities.

The slipway is already a working facility supporting employment but users are hamstrung by the fact it is tidal and lacks shelter and a depth of water meaning boats landing can be challenging.

The new Staffin Harbour will include a new breakwater and increased shelter for a range of vessels including local fishing, aquaculture boats and visiting pleasure/tourism crafts. It will also deliver an upgraded slipway, secure boat



SSE staff on site at Garafad during the electricity line installation.

storage, pontoons and boat sheds / business units to support and create existing and new jobs / start-up businesses. Access to the harbour area will always be open to the community, alongside commercial users and visitors.

In 2023, SCT made encouraging progress on a number of fronts, including:

- Edinbane firm Craik & MacRae completed the 1-5km-long trench to lay the new electricity supply to the harbour, from Columba 1400 across the Garafad common grazing
- SCT awarded a £300,000 contract for blasting and extraction of rock to the appointed contractor G.F Job Ltd at Lealt which got underway in November 2023, with support from the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF)
- A Stage 2 Scottish Land Fund (SLF) grant of £116,000 was awarded to SCT in April so the purchase of harbour and adjacent land from the Scottish Ministers and The Highland Council can proceed
- SCT ran a pilot season of boat tours from the slipway for the 2023 season
- Secured a £135,000 grant from Marine Scotland Fund (MSF) in December 2023 so that a new hardstanding area can be built at the harbour this spring providing space for vessels to be lifted ashore for storage and maintenance, space for fuel supply on site and boat sheds for harbour users' marine equipment.
- Secured Community Regeneration Fund grants supporting the detailed design work and archaeological analysis of the road works investigations was awarded by Scottish Government, and administered by Highland Council.
- Appointed Lachie Gillies as the very first Staffin Harbour Manager who started work on January 29 2024 and will be based in a new temporary office from early February

SCT is hoping to announce further construction works at the harbour later this year and community events, once the purchase is finally approved.

SCT is also focusing on meeting the various planning conditions, completing the Detailed Design and securing the rest of the capital funding required so it can go out to tender as soon as possible for the main construction contract.

It has secured more than £2.7 million from various funding sources to date.

SCT would like to thank its funders including the MSF,

RCGF and SLF for their support and confidence in the project and for the support and advice from the grant officers in dealing with queries and processing grant claims for the works. The various contractors including Craik & MacRae, G.F Job and Eyre Plant Hire, have been



New Staffin Harbour Manager Lachie Gillies.

first rate, with project manager Malcolm Henry driving the development forward supported by onshore designer Jock Gordon and Doanld Armstrong, of our marine engineers Wallace Stone. Everybody on the steering group has contributed including Charlie Elder, Ally Corrigal, Donnie MacDonald, Ally Young, Alex MacInnes, Calum MacDonald, Ally MacDonald, Euan MacArthur and Donald MacDonald.

Organic Sea Harvest (OSH) provides excellent practical support to the project and SCT is grateful to the backing from the Columba 1400 Centre and Garafad township for the electricity connection work, as well as from the SGRPID factor Ewen MacPherson and Highland Council staff and councilors in Skye.

We are very much the sum of our parts and the Staffin community's willingness and support in 2023 is hugely appreciated and never underestimated by SCT. Your contribution and help in 2024 will be needed further as we start further construction works, support our new manager and take on ownership of the harbour area.

Taighean a' Chaiseil & Tobair na Slainte

SCT was delighted at the official opening of Tobair na Slàinte, our new health centre in March 2023. It was opened by retired district nurse Isobel MacDonald with former colleagues including Joan MacPherson and Lesley MacDonald also in attendance, along with the current nurses serving Staffin and Skye.



The NHS Highland chairman Boyd Robertson and chief executive Pam Dudek, were at the event along with representatives from SCT, Staffin Community Council, Highland Council, Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association and the building contractor James MacQueens.

SCT thanked the Stenscholl township and the estate owners, SGRPID, for supporting the sale of the site and highlighted that the Nurse's Cottage was built by the Staffin Nursing Association six years prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, and 15 years before the creation of the NHS. The new centre cost £250,000 and is an integral part of the new Taighean a' Chaiseil development including six family homes and two business premises tenanted by OSH

A weekly GP clinic, on Thursday mornings, is held at Tobair na Slàinte and the building has been used for podiatry clinics and NHS staff to



work out of. SCT is keen for the centre to be used for other health and well-being services or groups during the week. If any other health related organisation or practitioner is looking to book the centre, please email nhsh.Portreehospitaladmin@nhs.scot. A cleaner was recently appointed by NHS Highland which tenants the building from SCT and he is doing an excellent job.

Organic Sea Harvest's contractors are working on the internal-fit out of the two business units it rents and the plasterboard is now being installed. SCT is looking forward to the company's staff being based at the development.

SCT carried out tree planting in the communal landscape areas last summer to provide shelter and improve the general amenity for residents, and have planted a range of native species. The Woodland Trust and I Dig Trees supplied native saplings including hazel, dog rose, silver birch, green beech, alder, oak and rowan. This is in addition to the native tree area planted in 2022 to the west of the development.

SCT is now progressing the purchase of the Nurse Cottage from NHS Highland with a view to progressing an affordable housing development at the site. It will be consulting with the community about the building in 2024 and would encourage everybody to complete the online survey about the project.

Druim nan Linntean – the Skye Ecomuseum

Sùil na Bràthan (Crofters' Monument)

*Sgoil Stafainn
pupils with Hector
Nicolson and Angus
Murray.*

A long-held ambition – which was suggested at one of the first Staffin Community Trust meetings way back in 1994 - was to properly



commemorate the Land Agitations of the late 1800s in Staffin.

The build is nearing completion with drystone work to be completed over the next four weeks. Concrete castings that will replicate the quernstone quarry at Valtos are currently well underway with final castings to be poured in the coming fortnight. These will be brought in on a lorry from near Kyle of Lochalsh and installed at Kilt Rock.



New graphic panels that will tell the story of land agitation in the wider community are also currently being printed in Glasgow and will be installed soon.

An opening event is being arranged for late April and an exact date will be confirmed with the community shortly.

Fèis na Fairge

THE resurrected Staffin Angling Competition returned for the first time in four years in July. Around 30 children attended Hebridean Whale Trail activities led by Caroline Wills who provided entertainment and games on the types of whales and dolphins which can be seen around in our waters. Choppy conditions at sea restricted fishing to the three boats that were large enough to handle the swell. The big winners of the day were the Gillies family from Glasphein with two of the four prizes on offer for the biggest catch and junior prize.

Trotternish Boat Tours were also busy throughout the day with locals getting the chance to see the coast of Staffin from the sea. Grateful thanks to the many volunteers, in particular Sonia Gill and Charlie Elder, who supported the annual event, as well as our kind sponsors, the Staffin Campsite, which provided the trophies.



Lios Chill Mhàrtainn (Church of Scotland Garden)

Plans advanced for the proposed community garden by the Church of Scotland. Shrubs have been planted by the entrance to the church and an order has been placed for fruit trees to create a mini orchard. In September Portree High School pupils planted the discounted apples trees that are being provided by Skye Shrubs. Landscape gardener James Sutton, Brogaig, will assist with costing up the design worked on by Natalie MacLeod, Stenscholl, and look at alternative options including the potential for areas of the garden to be used as allotments. James recently designed and worked on a similar community garden in Edinbane.

<https://www.facebook.com/druimnanlinntean>

<https://www.instagram.com/druimnanlinntean/>

Taobh Sear 2034 / Staffin 2034

A range of fresh ideas and suggestions which could improve the Staffin community over the next 10 years were made by local residents at the Taobh Sear 2034 event

A six-hour drop-in public exhibition and consultation event at Staffin Hall attracted 30 people through the doors on November 17.

Among the attendees were Skye Highland councillors Calum Munro and John Finlayson, and Phil McCaherty, Highlands and Islands Enterprise's Portree-based development manager.

The exhibition looked at the origins of why Staffin established what is understood to be the very first community trust in Skye way back in 1994, the work achieved by the volunteer-led organisation in that time and the last decade, while looking forward to the next 10 years. A large map of Staffin also allowed people to pinpoint exactly where they think improvements could be made or suggest potential future projects to support the community.

Thanks to Staffin Hall, the Columba 1400 Centre and Hungry Gull for supporting the event.

There is still time for Staffin residents and businesses to make their views heard, with the deadline for completing an online survey by 5pm on Monday February 12.

SCT is encouraging people to spend a short time completing the online survey, which can also be made available in hardcopy form: <https://docs.google.com/forms/...>

If you have any specific questions or require additional information about SCT projects please get in touch with either Hugh Ross, Angus Murray or Lachie Gillies. Telephone number is 01470 562 464 or simply visit us in person at the SCT office within the Church of Scotland from 7.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.