



CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER

December 2016



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Fàilte

Fàilte chridheil do litir-naidheachd na Nollaige seo bho Urras na Pàirce. Tha bliadhna air a dhol seachad a-nise bhon cheannaich sinn Oighreachd

na Pàirce às leth na coimhearsnachd agus bu toigh leinn ur cumail fiosraichte air na th' air a bhith a' tachairt bhon uair sin agus na th' anns na planaichean aig an Urras san àm ri teachd. Bu toigh leinn cuideachd taing a thoirt dhuibh airson na taice agaibh agus tha sinn gur brosnachadh faighinn an sàs.

Mar a tha 2016 a' tighinn gu ceann, bidh sinn a' cuimhneachadh chàirdean is charaidean nach eil còmhla rinn tuilleadh. Bha sinne aig Urras na Pàirce, mar a bha a h-uile duine anns a' choimhearsnachd againn, brònach nuair a thàinig an naidheachd mu bhàs dithis air an robh sinn eòlach agus measail. Tha ar co-fhaireachdainn le teaghlachan Boy is Maureen. Bithear gan ionndrainn gu mòr.

Tha sinn airson taing a thoirt don luchd-stiùiridh a thàinig roimhinn airson an cuid obrach is dithchill, agus gu sònraichte do dh' Iain Randall, Dònaidh MacDhòmhnail agus Maretta Caimbeul a leig an dreuchd dhiubh na bu tràithe dhen bhliadhna.

Tha an t-Urras a-nise fo stiùireadh chunntasan le Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd is nan Eilean (I.G.E). Chì sinn sin mar ghluasad math tarbhach air adhart a bheir buaidh mhòr air piseach sgìre.

'S e na leanas fodha geàrr-chunntas de na h-ìomairtean air a bheil sinn a' toirt sùil-gheur an-dràsta. Ma tha sibh airson tuilleadh fiosrachaidh fhaighinn air gin de na pròiseactan againn, bhitheamaid gu math toilichte cluinntinn bhuaibh. Gheibheir lethbhreac dhen Phlana-Ghnothaich Ro-Innleachdail air an làraich-linn no anns an oifis againn.

Nollaig Chrìdheil agus Bliadhna Mhath Ùr dhuibh uile.

As leth Aonghais MhicDhùghail

Welcome

A very warm welcome to this Pairc Trust Christmas Newsletter. It has been one year since we purchased the Pairc Estate on behalf of the community, and we would like to keep you updated on what we have been doing since the purchase, and what the Trust's plans are for the future. We would also like to thank you for your support and encourage you to get involved with the Trust.

As 2016 draws to an end we remember friends and family who are sadly no longer with us. We at Pairc Trust were, like everyone in our community, shocked and saddened by the recent sudden loss of Boy and Maureen and we extend our deepest condolences to their families. They will be greatly missed.

We would also like to thank previous Directors of the Trust for all their hard work and determination, and we would like to say a special thank you to John Randall, Donnie Macdonald and Maretta Campbell who all resigned earlier this year.

The Trust is now Account Managed by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (H.I.E.). We see this as a positive move forward, as they are committed to supporting communities which can make a strong impact on the success of a region. H.I.E. will provide us with advice and support us as we deliver projects with the aim of generating growth in the area.

The areas we are focusing on are summarised below. If you would like more information about any of our projects, please get in touch. You can find a copy of our Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 on our website or in our office.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

Angus McDowall - Chair

Walkways

We have received £8000 from Tesco Bags of Help towards improving the Steimreway to Orinsay walkway and we would like to thank everyone who voted for us. We are working with the Orinsay Village Development Association on this project and aim to begin the improvements early in the New Year.



We will also look into improving the Cromore circular walk in the near future and will do this in partnership with local people.

Crofting

Unfortunately, we have been unable to issue the crofting rents this year, for reasons outwith our control. We would like to thank you for your patience while we resolve this matter and hope to issue these in the New Year. We apologise for the delay.

Anderson Macarthur solicitors have been acting as Factors of the Estate since the purchase. All the Estate administration will be dealt with in-house from the 1st of January 2017, and your first point of contact will be Sandra Pozorski in the Pairc Trust Office. All crofting related matters will be addressed internally, promptly and discreetly. The Pairc Trust will retain legal advisors for all necessary legal advice and assistance, where required.

When we purchased the Estate one of the first actions of the Crofting Working Group was to assist Shieldinish and Seaforth Head crofters to secure a very much enhanced offer for the resumption of part of their grazings for the construction of a new road to the proposed Eishken Estate windfarm. Pairc Trust has now also secured a very substantial award for the benefit of the Pairc Community, should the windfarm be constructed.

We expect to advertise two vacant crofts for rent in the New Year.

There are currently two crofts for sale on the Estate: 27 Gravir (through Anderson Macarthur) and 17 Lemreway (through Derek Mackenzie).

Details of these crofts can be found on the solicitors' websites:

<http://www.hebridean-estate-agency.co.uk> and <http://www.derekmackenzie.com>

Renewable Energy



The Trust has secured funding from Local Energy Scotland to carry out a feasibility study, which will investigate whether we can provide low carbon energy to local business Hebridean Sea Salt.

We will also look into the possibility of other renewable projects which would enable us to provide cheaper energy throughout the estate with a virtual aggregating system.

If the interconnector cable across the Minch goes ahead, we will be in a position where we can export energy to the mainland. If this happens we will investigate the possibility of a pumped storage energy system for the Estate.

Resource Centre, Kershader

This building is owned by the Comhairle and is surplus to their requirements. We are looking into the possibility of purchasing the building on behalf of the community. We would continue to provide the Playgroup space, and offices for Muaitheabhal Community Wind Farm and Pairc Trust. We would also look into the possibility of renting out other spaces in order to cover the running costs of the building.

We will only purchase the property if we can do so in agreement with these other users. If we were to purchase the building, we would continue to provide a meeting room for community groups. We would also provide an office which could be used by members of the community who need access to the internet and a computer.

Gaelic

If you've been reading this and can't make head nor tail of the bits in Gaelic, well this might be the very thing for you. The Trust is very keen to support Gaelic in the community and as a first step we are looking into the possibility of providing Gaelic lessons locally, and we are investigating funding options so that the classes can be subsidised and affordable. If you are interested in learning or improving your Gaelic, please get in touch as soon as possible.

Housing Needs Report

We have completed a Housing Needs Report of the Estate and copies can be obtained from our office, or on our website.

We employed Al Reed over the Summer months as a Housing Needs Support Officer and we would like to thank him for his hard work. Al can be seen here with D.J. Matheson, who was one of the Housing Needs Survey Prize Draw winners.

The Trust is thankful to all members of the community who contributed to the study.

Iain Watson, Housing Services Manager for the Comhairle, has said: *'We are very pleased to be presented with the findings of Pairc Trust's Housing Needs Report. The information gathered from the Pairc community will be very useful in assisting the Comhairle develop its next Local Housing Strategy. This community's support for Affordable Housing is very obvious from the Report and we look forward to working with Pairc Trust in the coming years to look at new housing opportunities.'*

The Report indicates that the local community is very supportive of a small development of affordable housing in the Estate, either to rent or to buy.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our funders Muaitheabhal Community Wind Farm Trust.



We have submitted a bid into the Council to purchase the Care Unit in Gravir, and we should know by the end of the year if we have been successful. If we are, we will renovate it as quickly as possible and provide a family home at affordable rent. We will also ensure it is energy efficient and cheap to heat.

We are also looking into the possibility of purchasing the Doctor's House in Gravir and we are keen to provide accommodation which is suitable for people who may need single level, adapted properties.

We will also consider the possibility of selling serviced plots of land.

We firmly believe that additional and affordable housing in the Pairc Estate is one of the most important keys to reversing population decline, encouraging a more balanced age structure, and achieving the community's social and economic goals for the area.



Get Involved

If you would like to get involved with any of these projects we would love to hear from you. We are looking for more people to join our working groups, and we are grateful to the members of the community who have already joined. We have set up groups for: Housing; Crofting; Renewable Energy and Tourism.

You can become a member of Pairc Trust for £1, and membership forms are on our website and in our office. Once you are a member you can become a Director of the Trust, by putting your name forward prior to our next Annual General Meeting.

Who's Who in Pairc Trust

We have two members of staff, Jen Ellis our Development Manager and Sandra Pozorski our Administrator who are based in the Resource Centre, Kershader.



Sandra lives in Keose and is a keen walker. She has recently enjoyed exploring the North Harris walkways. Sandra was married in Stornoway on 21st June and we thoroughly enjoyed celebrating this occasion with her.

Jen lives in Stornoway and enjoys spending time with her young children. She recently purchased a beautiful Labrador puppy from Lemreway who has quickly become part of the family. Pictured here is Jen at her sister Jane's wedding in Tuscany with her youngest daughter Joni.



Jen and Sandra have settled into their new roles with the Trust and look forward to developing our projects in the New Year.

Directors

We currently have seven Directors, and we now have an agreement in place with Co-Chomunn na Pairc (the Pairc Community Co-operative), which owns and operates the Ravenspoint Centre on behalf of the community to have a mutual seat on both Boards. We see this as a vital partnership, as we share common goals, which are to regenerate the Estate and bring more facilities, services and visitors to the area.

Our Directors will be busy in the New Year, leading Working Groups which will take forward the different projects. The Directors continue to meet regularly and the minutes of these meetings are on our website.

Angus McDowall (Chair) - Renewables Working Group and Crofting Working Group

Steve Mortimore (Vice Chair) - Tourism Working Group

Ken Kennedy (Treasurer) - Tourism Working Group

Jim McLaughlin - Renewables Working Group and Crofting Working Group

Alan Wilson - Housing Working Group

Tim Hollis - Tourism Working Group

John Murdo Matheson - Crofting Working Group

You are very welcome to visit us at our office in the Resource Centre, Kershader. Alternatively, we are happy to visit you if that is easier. Please note that the Pairc Trust Office will be closed for Christmas from Thursday 22nd December and will re-open on Wednesday 4th January 2017.