

PAIRC NEWSLETTER

PAIRCTRUST.CO.UK



September 2025



Fishermen in Lemreway

The Pairc Estate – September 2025

Read on for information on upcoming events, items of interest, and other opportunities across the Pairc community.

The Pairc Trust are pleased to bring news of Co-Chomunn na Pairc's upcoming Annual General Meeting, a new children's book from the New Lewis and the Islands Book Trust, a historical artefact returned to Pairc, funding for driving lessons from the Pairc Trust, a historical walk around Kershader with the Pairc Historical Society and the Trust, and more.

Top News

**Co-Chomunn na Pairc
AGM**

**Pairc Trust Youth
Enablement Award 2025 –
Driving Lesson Funding
Scheme**

New IBT Children's Book

Submit & Subscribe

If there is anything that you would like to submit to the newsletter, or if you would like to receive a copy digitally via email, please contact info@pairctrust.co.uk

Co-Chomunn na Pairc AGM Scheduled for 7:30pm Thursday 25th September, Ravenspoint



Dear reader,

The following is offered as a brief history of Co-Chomunn na Pairc, hopefully to demonstrate the impact it has had on the community and economy of South Lochs and to demonstrate what the business is capable of going forwards. We regard the Co-Chomunn (and Ravenspoint) as important fixtures in the district, and we'd like to encourage all members of our community to attend our AGM at Ravenspoint on **Thursday 25th September at 7:30pm**. We are especially keen for new volunteer Directors to come forward and join us, and if any of you have ideas on how CCnP & Ravenspoint can be developed in future we heavily encourage you to bring your thoughts and plans to the table.

As many of you know, Co-Chomunn na Pairc was established as a community co-operative in the late 1970s under the auspices of the Highlands & Islands Development Board, now Highlands & Islands Enterprise, and in fact is one of the few of these co-operatives to remain operational. In its original form, the Co-Chomunn explored various avenues of operation, primarily operating as a supplier of agricultural goods but also expanding to include the making and selling of knitwear and the operation of a salmon hatchery. The company began to coalesce into the Co-Chomunn na Pairc we know today in the early 2000s when it was established as a limited company and, very importantly, as a charitable body acting for community benefit. 2009 saw a major development with the establishment of a subsidiary arm, Ravenspoint Trading Ltd., to run the Ravenspoint community shop, and shortly afterwards the addition of an extension to the rear of the building where the cafe now sits. The fuel pump was installed in 2013.

Moving on to the present, today Ravenspoint acts as a community hub for South Lochs, offering a shop & Post Office services (including an outlet for local artists and crafters), 24 hour fuel, a hostel for visitors, home baking & hot drinks, a museum, and a gathering point for the local community. It's safe to say that the original founders of Co-Chomunn na Pairc didn't foresee the place developing as such, but the passing of time demands changes be made and the Board of

Co-Chomunn na Pairc AGM Scheduled for 7pm Thursday 25th September, Ravenspoint



Directors have tried to adapt the business to the changing needs of the community of South Lochs. The Co-Chomunn, and Ravenspoint, have had to learn from both good and bad experiences. The primary lesson from the former is that the community of South Lochs are incredibly generous with their time and skills, without the constant effort and support of volunteers from the local community both entities quite simply couldn't do what they do. From the latter, there is still much to learn: a combination of serious financial difficulty in recent years and the untimely loss in 2024 of Ishbel MacLennan, who among her many other roles in Pairc was also one of the longest serving and most experienced Directors on the Board, has forced changes to the operation of the shop and cafe that could not be avoided. Despite these difficulties, as you will hopefully all see from our AGM report on the company accounts, the business is now back on a sound financial footing with a healthy financial reserve. The Ravenspoint community shop is close to breaking even, which for a small independent shop in a rural community is very good indeed, and the hostel continues to be the engine that drives continued business operations, with a new online booking system leading to a large increase in visitors and a subsequent increase in income. Ravenspoint has been able to take on more staff, mostly from within the district or close by, and provide them with guaranteed minimum hours, and the cafe has been joined by new and enthusiastic volunteers, whose home baking we're sure many of you have enjoyed. The core functionality of Ravenspoint, providing important facilities to the community of South Lochs, endures.

What, then, does the future look like for the Co-Chomunn and Ravenspoint? Upon closer inspection you can see elements in place already: increased product lines are available in the shop, bringing in local butchery items and baked goods; external partnerships are being formed with companies like Piotsa, to enhance the offerings available to the community; the business' online presence has been redesigned and the operation of the hostel modernised; new faces have joined to do their part for the local community. The options to improve and develop are many, and

Co-Chomunn na Pairc AGM Scheduled for 7pm Thursday 25th September, Ravenspoint



feedback from the market survey sent out earlier this year was very clear: residents want to see the shop open longer hours and stocking a variety of fresh produce, meat, baked goods, seafood and other locally-produced sundries; and you want to see the cafe open with full service offering a wider variety of food and drinks. These are achievable goals and would go a long way to ensuring that Ravenspoint will continue to meet the needs of the South Lochs community but the company will need your help to do this. Co-Chomunn na Pairc operates on a purely voluntary basis - Directors are not paid and have, historically and today, devoted considerable amounts of their own time to supporting the various operations of the company. The recovery from the aforementioned period of serious difficulty suffered by both the Co-Chomunn and Ravenspoint was down to the hard work of Directors who made some difficult decisions in order to preserve the greater whole of an important community asset.

Members of the community have the ideas and skills to help maintain and improve Ravenspoint and the Co-Chomunn as a legacy to the community of South Lochs which can develop and change with the needs of its residents. If any of members of the Co-Chomunn have thought of opportunities that could be grasped, aspects of the community that could be represented better, or other avenues of development that could be taken, then please enquire about joining the Board of Directors and lending your assistance to ensuring that the Co-Chomunn and Ravenspoint do right by the people of South Lochs.

Kind regards,

The Board of Directors of Co-Chomunn na Pairc



Deer Management Update

Since the start of the stag season, a total of seven stags have been culled on the Estate as part of our ongoing deer management. The hind season is scheduled to begin on 21st October, running through until 15th February and we expect cull numbers to increase accordingly.

Rather concerningly, a number of stags have been found entangled in electric fencing, old wire and other debris etc. If you are experiencing deer-related issues, please contact the Trust at info@pairctrust.co.uk. This will help ongoing efforts and ensure we are responding to local needs.

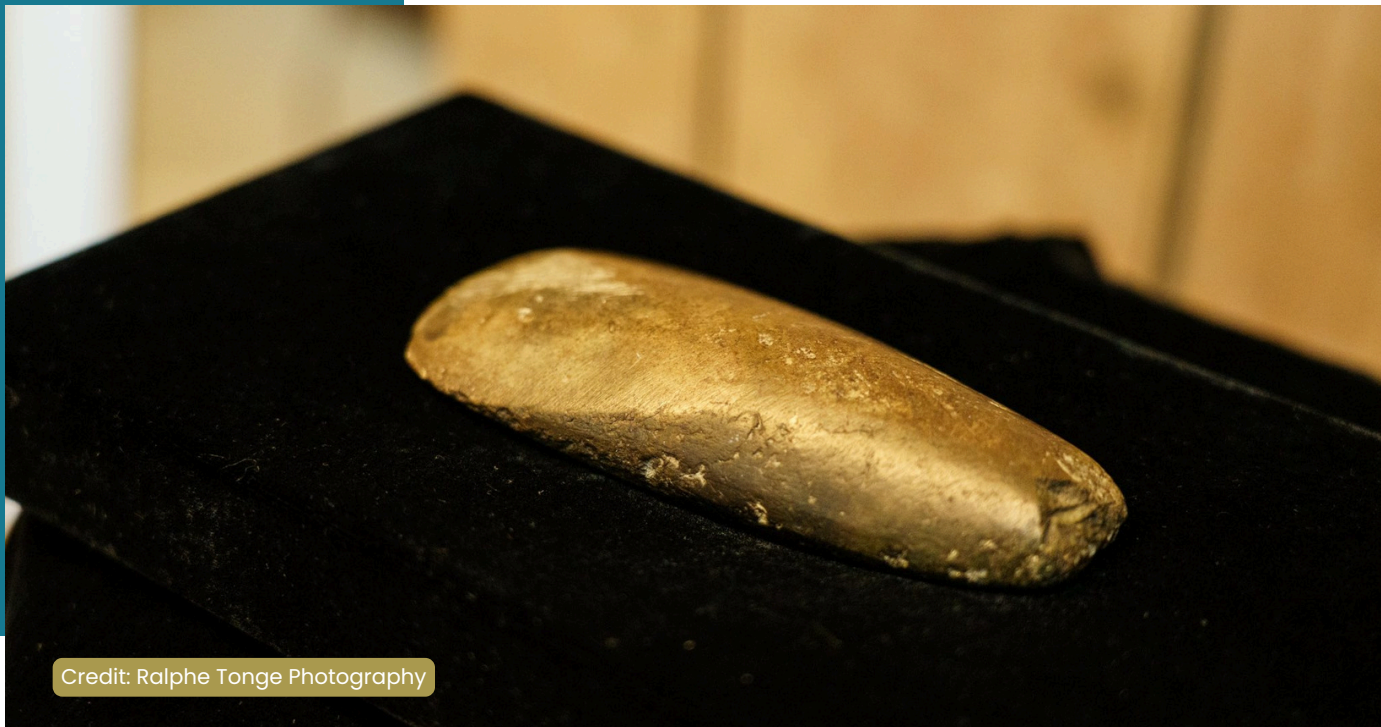
Neolithic Axehead Returned to Pairc

A Neolithic stone axehead, found built into the wall of an old Gravir blackhouse, was returned to Pairc at 11:00am on Tuesday 2nd September and passed into the care of the Pairc Historical Society.

The artefact had been in the possession of Gerald Ponting in Hampshire since 1983. Gerald was given the axehead by Donald Macleod of Cromore who had helped demolish the ruins of an old blackhouse (originally built by his great-grandfather) in order to obtain stone for the reconstruction of the nearby jetty in Gravir. The axehead was found wedged into a wall of the



Credit: Ralphe Tonge Photography



Credit: Ralphe Tonge Photography

house. He was told that ‘the old people had traditions about such axeheads found in the past; building one into a house wall was supposed to bring good luck’.

The Treasure Trove Unit, to which such finds need to be reported, announced that the Crown would not be exercising its rights in this case. In the light of this, Gerald decided to present the axehead to the Ravenspoint Museum in Kershader.

Dr Alison Sheridan, retired former Principal Curator of Early Prehistory at the National Museums of Scotland, has also examined the artefact in consultation with colleagues. The hard volcanic rock from which the axehead was fashioned is not native to Lewis but perhaps a glacial erratic brought by the ice from further north. Its dark colour may reflect smoke staining from the peat fire of the blackhouse, or leaching if the axehead had lain in peat.

Donnie Morrison, chairman of Comunn

Eachdraidh na Pairc, said: ‘We are delighted to add this important and fascinating local find to our museum collection at Ravenspoint. Many thanks to Gerald for this wonderful gesture. We will ensure that the axehead is preserved safely for the pleasure, interest, and education of future visitors as well as the community of Pairc.’

Lochs FC 2025 Season Wrap-Up

Lochs FC brought the season to a close with a match against Point, ending in a hard-fought loss. The result sees the team finish 8th in the Lewis & Harris League with 16 points, with the squad showing tremendous commitment and effort throughout the season.

The U12 team were successful at the



Credit: Lochs FC

Donnie Mata tournament qualifiers on Saturday 13th September, winning two games, drawing two, and losing one. The team will be competing for silverware on Saturday 20th - best of luck to them!

The U16 squad competed for the Rangers Cup final on Friday 12th September. Unfortunately Stornoway Athletic won the day 5-2, but the team put in a great performance and should be proud of their efforts.

Well done to all the squads at Lochs FC, and we wish them the best for the next season!

SCF – Crofting for the Future

The Trust were delighted to host the Scottish Crofting Federation at the Resource Centre on Friday 12th & Saturday 13th September, where they ran a two-day 'Crofting for the Future' training course.

The course was aimed at both new entrant and established crofters, and held a collection of workshops related to



Credit: Croft 17 Lemreway



croft planning, habitat management, croft woodland projects, government support and grants available to crofters, and diversification opportunities available to croft businesses.

The event also saw a tour of croft 17 Lemreway, where Izzy & David gave the attendees a look at their diversified croft business, which incorporates pedigree livestock breeding, agritourism, woodland planting, and arts & crafts alongside more mainstream crofting activities.

The SCF also held their Crofting Roadshow at the Resource Centre on the evening of Thursday 11th September, which saw CEO Donna Smith meeting local crofters to discuss the SCF's work and upcoming changes to crofting legislation

and agricultural payment schemes.

Despite some weather-related challenges, the events were a success and we look forward to working further with the SCF in future.

'THE GREAT AUK'S GREAT ESCAPE' – FACT AND FICTION

Illustrated Talk by Children's Author Louisa MacDougall - 5pm Friday 19th September at 'The New Lewis' Community Pub, Stornoway.

Marking a new partnership between the Islands Book Trust and 'The New Lewis', best-selling author of the popular



Credit: Joceline Hildrey

children's book 'The Great Auk's Great Escape', illustrated by Joceline Hildrey, will talk about the interaction of fact and fiction in publications such as this and the issues this raises.

Her book is based on a historically documented incident involving the capture of one of the last Great Auks off St Kilda in 1821. En route from the Western Isles to Glasgow, destined to be killed and exhibited in an Edinburgh museum, the rare bird mysteriously disappeared near Arran. Despite awards for its recapture in newspapers of the day, the Great Auk was never seen again.

In her fictional story, Louisa invents a story of how the young cabin-boy Finn on the Great Auk's boat befriends 'Auky' and helps it to escape. The book also indulges in 'poetic licence' by including Joceline's wonderful drawing of the iconic Scalpay lighthouse - which was only completed in 1824.

This is an event which will appeal to both children and adults. Copies of the book,

recently reprinted by the Islands Book Trust, will be available for sale.

John Randall of IBT said: *'We are delighted to team up with everyone at 'The New Lewis' for what I hope will be the first of many events. The inclusive ethos of 'The New Lewis' mirrors our own emphasis on bringing together people from different backgrounds to share their own perspectives on island history and culture.'*

Norine MacDonald, proprietrix of 'The New Lewis', said: *'The New Lewis community pub is proud to support the important work of The Islands Book Trust and their efforts to extend appreciation of the history of Scottish islands.'*

Entrance is free with light refreshments provided by 'The New Lewis' to mark the occasion. Children must be accompanied by an adult. For more details, please contact John Randall of IBT at john673randall@btinternet.com or Ronnie Campbell of 'The New Lewis' at ronnie@lewisleodhas.scot

Pairc Community Council Meeting

Pairc Community Council are holding their next meeting on **Tuesday 23rd September** at **7:30pm** at the **Resource Centre, Kershader.**

Members of the public are welcome to attend. To raise a matter with PCC, please contact them via email at: pairccommunitycouncil@gmail.com



SSEN Community Consultation Event

Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks held a community consultation event at the Resource Centre on Thursday 28th August between 3-7pm.

The event was a statutory pre-application consultation on the proposed new Switching Station in Balallan, which will be connected to the consented 150MW Uisenis wind farm at Eishken in order to export electricity to the national grid. The consultation included layout details, digital visualisations, and the environmental & cultural considerations taken by the project team in designing and siting the Switching Station.

The consultation saw a good turnout

from the local community, and SSEN plan to hold another consultation event at the Resource Centre in October.

Additional information is available from Kevin Morrison, SSEN Community Liaison Manager via email at kevin.morrison@sse.com, or by phone on 07586 237814.



Youth Enablement Award

DRIVING LESSON SCHEME



The Pairc Trust are offering support towards the cost of driving lessons. The award is specifically designed to reduce the financial barriers that often prevent individuals from accessing driving instruction. By subsidising the cost of lessons, the initiative supports young people in Pairc in gaining the necessary licences and driving skills aligned with their career or personal development goals.

By enabling access across multiple licence categories (available for standard car lessons, motorbikes, HGV training, and more!) the scheme increases flexibility for applicants.

Up to 3 lessons fully funded!



Applications are now open!

For further information and to apply please visit:
www.pairctrust.co.uk/youth-enablement-award

01851 880728

pairctrust.co.uk

info@pairctrust.co.uk



KERSHADER: A HISTORIC PLACE

WITH THE PAIRC TRUST & PAIRC HISTORICAL SOCIETY



SATURDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER
11:00AM – 3:00PM



RAVENSPPOINT, KERSHADER

WALKING TOUR & BOOKLET LAUNCH

- ✓ HISTORICAL LANDMARKS
- ✓ CULTURAL INSIGHTS
- ✓ FREE, INFORMAL, FAMILY-FOCUSED EVENT
- ✓ HISTORIC PLACE PHOTOGRAPHY: THEN & NOW
- ✓ FOLLOWED BY LUNCH AT RAVENSPPOINT



A BRIEF HISTORY OF KERSHADER

Published by
Pairc Historical Society
Comunn Eachdraidh na Pairc

THIS EVENT IS FREE AND FUNDED WITH THE SUPPORT OF NATURESCOT



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WE ARE
MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT



MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

Sgoil na Pairc

Friday 26th September

10.30am - 12 noon

We hope to see you there!

Saturday 20th September
12.30 - 2.30pm
Light Lunch, Raffle, Baking Table
Admission £5

Fundraising **EVENT**



BALALLAN & DISTRICT RECREATION HALL



KINLOCH CONNECTIONS

TRANSPORT THROUGH THE YEARS



6 SEPTEMBER - 31 OCTOBER

KINLOCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Community Hub, Balallan

AN EXHIBITION EXPLORING THE
EVOLUTION OF TRANSPORT THAT
SERVED THE KINLOCH COMMUNITY

kinlochhistoricalsociety.co.uk/ Scottish Charity Number: SC006858

STAND IN THE **GAP**

General Knowledge

QUIZ NIGHT

Friday **Gravir Church Hall**
26th Sept

Doors open at 7pm

Quiz starts 7:30pm

All Welcome

If you need transport to and from Gravir,
please phone 07979 663 694

JAMES HUTTON INSTITUTE COMMUNITY LANDOWNERSHIP PROJECT – CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT ON COMMUNITY LANDOWNERSHIP?

We are two social scientists working on a project exploring the effects of community landownership in Scotland. The project is led by the James Hutton Institute in collaboration with Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) and is funded by the Scottish Government.

WHAT IS THE PROJECT ABOUT?

Our project aims to understand more about the effects of community landownership over time. We are carrying out the research with four different communities across Scotland, including Pairc. The research will take place over the next 1.5 years and will involve 2-3 visits to the four different places

More about the project:



WHO DO WE WISH TO SPEAK TO?

We wish to speak to people who live within or near to Pairc Estate, have an interest in the Trust's work, or who are staff members or directors of the Trust. We are interested in a wide range of experiences.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

The interviews will take place face-to-face (where possible) in a location that is convenient for you, or online. Each interview will last about an hour and will be recorded. You will be asked to fill in and sign a consent form before the interview.

WHO TO CONTACT?

Annabel
(annabel.pinker@hutton.ac.uk)
or Carey
(carey.doyle@sruc.ac.uk)



Explosive Food Science Workshop

Olivia, P7

Wednesday 20th August 2025 Pairc School went to Sgoil Nan Loch to go to an explosive food science workshop.

P6 and 7 went to Mr Grey's class while P3 went to the first show. After that, P6 and 7s went and sat down and we were welcomed by a nice lady called Wendy Findlay from Techfest.

She was talking about how food is fuel for the body. First, she had a funnel attached to a long tube and the funnel was filled with flour and when she blew oxygen through the tube and she lit the flour on fire and it made a huge flame.

Next, she brought up one of the teachers and they put on an apron that had all the things that are inside your

body, the parts of the digestive system. She brought up three kids who mashed up coffee, banana and a mini chocolate roll all together and put it into a bag to represent the food in the stomach however it looked really weird.

The next step, the food went into the intestines to show this it was squeezed through a pair of tights. The teacher pulled out the intestines on the apron to show how long it was.

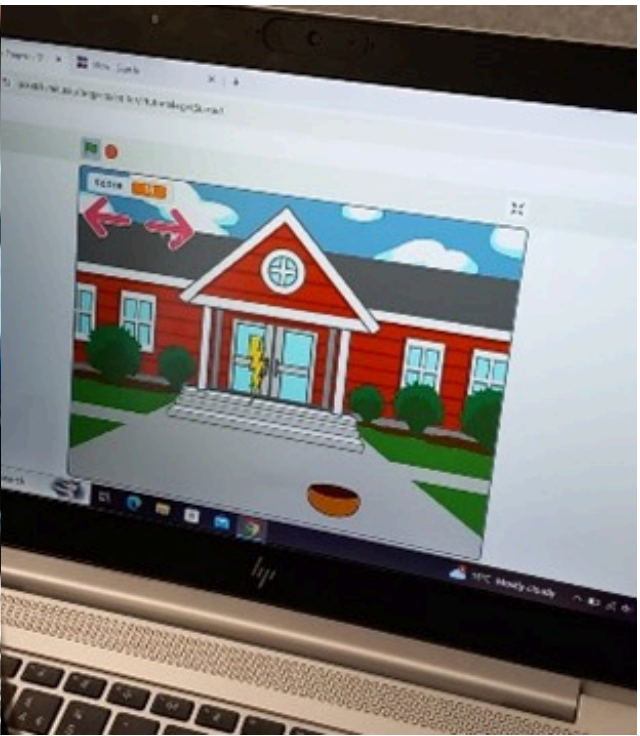
My favourite part was the flour and the fire. We had so much fun.

School – by Horseback!

Pheobe, P3

I came to school on my pony and his name was Geldof.

We trotted up the hill, he stopped at



the cattle grid.

Geldof is black and white and is a Shetland pony.

I took my pony to school on a nice day because I like riding him.

Scratch Coding Workshop

Olivia, P7

We took part in an on-line scratch coding workshop with the Engineering Development Trust on Thursday 4th September. There were two other schools joining the workshop too.

We were making a game where you had to catch the lightning in a bowl.

First, we chose four different sprites two arrows, a bowl and a lightning bolt.

Then, using the costumes tab we made the arrows go left and right when we clicked the different arrows. Then we did

some coding to make the lightning bolt move automatically when the game had started.

After that, we got to chose three backdrops as there were three levels in the game and they were a night city, a forest and a school.

To play the game we clicked the left or right arrows to move the bowl and tried to catch the lightning bolt. However, we did more coding to be able to keep our score and every time we scored ten points the backdrop would change.

Playing the game, we got a score of 110 points and it was so fun! 😊 We did coding for three hours but it felt longer because we had to wait for the other schools to catch up.

All of us had a really fun time making games on scratch!

Pairc & Kinloch Calendar

Wednesday 17th September

- Pairc Social Club lunch, Ravenspoint (1pm)

Friday 19th September

- Kinloch Cafe Warm Hub (12-2pm)
- 'The Great Auk's Great Escape' illustrated talk, The New Lewis, Stornoway (5pm)

Saturday 20th September

- 'Kershader: A Historic Place' booklet launch & walking tour, Ravenspoint (11am-3pm)
- Balallan hall fundraiser (12:30pm-2:30pm)

Monday 22nd September

- Dance Class, Resource Centre (7pm)

Tuesday 23rd September

- Pairc Community Council meeting, Resource Centre (7:30pm)

Thursday 25th September

- Co-Chomunn na Pairc AGM, Ravenspoint (7:30pm)

Friday 26th September

- Macmillan Coffee Morning, Sgoil na Pairc (10:30am-noon)
- Kinloch Cafe Warm Hub (12-2pm)
- Stand in the Gap quiz night, Pairc Free Church (7pm)

Saturday 27th September

- Pairc Social Walk, Location TBC (11am)

Monday 29th September

- Dance Class, Resource Centre (7pm)

What's on in Pairc?



Wednesday 1st October

- **Household waste & glass recycling collection**
- Pairc Social Club lunch, Ravenspoint (1pm)

Friday 3rd October

- Kinloch Cafe Warm Hub (12-2pm)

Saturday 4th October

- Pairc Social Walk, Location TBC (11am)

Monday 6th October

- Dance Class, Resource Centre (7pm)

Wednesday 8th October

- **Organic waste & mixed recycling collection**

Friday 10th October

- Kinloch Cafe Warm Hub (12-2pm)

Saturday 11th October

- Pairc Social Walk, Location TBC (11am)