



Annual Report 2012-13

Introduction: The main theme of 2012 was the final effort to win the funding package for the construction of the Atlantic Islands centre, a story given in more detail below.

Publications: The walk leaflets are still selling steadily through the shop. Several hundred copies of the Luing map, which is given free to visitors on the ferry, have now been distributed. Luing History Group publications continue to sell steadily. It is worth recording that more than 200 copies of the Kilchattan Kirkyard book have now been sold on a global basis – from Canada to New Zealand and places in between! The Memories of 1945 book is still selling copies as well, eight years on from the event that it marked.

Atlantic Islands Centre Project: We attended a meeting in February 2012 at Big Lottery's offices in Glasgow at which the requirements for a Stage 1 application were finalised, and soon afterwards we heard that this had been successful. But we were given only 3 weeks to submit Stage 2 - most projects take up to 6 months for this stage! Stage 2 was submitted in mid-March, and this would not have been possible without extensive support from a consultant/adviser funded by Big Lottery (BL). This outstanding level of support continued on a personal basis after the submission to help us respond to the detailed queries raised by BL assessors in the weeks that followed, and to complete the Heritage Lottery and ERDF applications. The Board invited Annie Tunnicliffe to become Financial Adviser to the Board on a voluntary basis, a role she accepted, and the ongoing progress of our funding applications has been greatly helped by her knowledge and expertise about funding systems.

The application to Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to cover the heritage aspects of the project was not successful; HLF do not have the scale of funds available for capital projects that BL have, and we have been advised to return to HLF to apply for a smaller amount of grant funding for the fit-out stage of the heritage gallery.

The ERDF grant application as part of Argyll & Bute Council's Community Planning Partnership (CPP) bid came under what is called Priority 3, essentially about economic and community matters, and included several other projects in Argyll and Bute, with this project being one of the largest in the package. Stage 1 of this submission was largely a repetition of what was submitted for the CPP. Work on Stage 2 through March to meet a deadline of 30 March 2012 was extensively supported by the European Team at Argyll & Bute Council, to whom we also owe a large debt of gratitude. However the assessment by the Scottish Government's ERDF team recommended in July that we should reconfigure the application to come under Priority 2, focused on tourism and heritage. So a second round of work for Stage 2 ensued, which led to the final award of an ERDF grant of £360,391 in February 2013.

An application to the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) to enable the building to be constructed to the highest standards of energy efficiency and to progress carbon reduction across the whole island community was approved in September 2012 for £72,256, mainly for what is termed 'green-plating' of the building. The funds available are much more limited than the big funders, and the criteria not easy to match. However, we were helped by consultants Community Links Scotland, funded by West Highland Housing Association, who are strong supporters of the project.

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Registered Office: c/o Luing Stores, Cullipool, Isle of Luing, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4TX

The Big Lottery grant contains funding for a part-time Project Manager to act on behalf of the Trust during the construction of the Centre, especially taking on the financial management and working with the professional team of architect, quantity surveyor and engineer to ensure the quality delivery of the building. Highlands and Islands Enterprise then offered to fund the post jointly to include parallel development of the functioning of the building once open, with all the activities and community involvement that we are committed to delivering, thus making this a full-time post for 19 months. This post was widely advertised with a lengthy application period to attract as good a field as possible and a very strong field of applicants resulted. Each of the seven short-listed applicants was interviewed in a very carefully prepared lengthy interview, and the board was delighted to approve the appointment of an exceptional candidate, Andrew Pinkerton, an experienced architect from Ayrshire, who already knows Luig and in recent years has voluntarily led the construction of Dunlop Village Hall and the refurbishment of Dunlop Parish Church. He takes up his post formally at the beginning of April 2013.

A bridging loan facility with Social Investment Scotland is now in place to cover the gap between the payment of invoices to the contractor and the repayment of claims to the Trust by the funders, a gap that may vary from one to several months according to the funder. The contract for the project will be put out to tender under European rules with the help of Argyll & Bute Council's Procurement Team. Separate bank accounts have been opened to handle the financial management of the construction.

The Bòrd na Gàidhlig grant of £15,000 for Gaelic signage and interpretation in the Centre remains in place, and will be used later in 2013 to enable the History Group to produce bilingual interpretation panels for the heritage gallery and bilingual films and interpretation for the Atlantic Islands exhibition space, as well as general signage elsewhere in the Centre and outside.

Applications to smaller funders for grants towards fit-out and other ancillary aspects of the Centre will be made in the near future. In particular an Expression of Interest was made to the Argyll & Bute and South Ayrshire Fisheries Local Action Group who are distributing funding to fishing communities on the west coast in relation to potential moorings for visiting yachts off Cullipool. The project has to demonstrate how it will help to diversify the activities of such communities. We have now been invited to submit a full application, one of only nine successful bids at this stage, and this will be developed in conjunction with the Luig Moorings Association, to be submitted in May 2013.

A Centre Planning Group has been established to help to plan a wide range of activities in the Centre. Their work will begin in earnest in April 2013. Potential Centre users who wrote letters of support will be contacted.

Governance: the changes to the Trust Rules requested by Big Lottery were put into effect at an Extraordinary General Meeting in June. The Memorandum and Articles will be reviewed for us by the Trust solicitors once we are past the busy construction phase. It is nearly ten years since the original 'Mem & Arts' were written for the newly formed Trust, and it is now time to check that they are still a relevant set of statements. The Trust trading company has lain dormant since the Trust was formed, but 2013 will probably be the last year of dormancy.

External relations: the Trust is an Associate Member of Museums Galleries Scotland, which is about to change its governance so that it works directly with Scottish Government to oversee the whole area of museums and similar institutions in Scotland. As a result it looks likely that there will no longer be a subscription required for membership in the future.

A meeting between Historic Scotland, the Council's planning Department and the Trust established that a possible community-based small-scale slate working operation at Cullipool would be looked on favourably by the planners. There have been no further developments since then, but this is an aspect that we hope the Project Development Manager will be able to take forward.

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The Scottish Islands Federation, of which the Trust is a member, hosted the European Small Islands Federation Annual meeting on Mull in September, followed by an open conference in Craignure Village Hall on the theme of Green Islands. As a result, the Federation is signing up to a major project across thirteen island group, from the Greek islands to the Hebrides, with funding from Intelligent Energy Europe, to develop Island Sustainable Energy Action Plans to meet or exceed EU sustainability targets by 2020.

The Trust was represented at the Development Trusts Association - Scotland 2012 conference held in Cumbernauld in late September 2012.

The regional director of VisitScotland and Councillor Glen-Lee met Trust directors on Luing in March 2013 and expressed support for the Atlantic Islands Centre and its potential to become a showcase for the Argyll Islands.

Island Activities: the Trust organised a successful Midsummer concert as a fundraiser towards the Centre.

Sub-groups: the three sub-groups – Luing History Group, Luing Playing Field Committee and Luing First Responders – are all thriving. The History Group annual exhibition in August 2012 was on the topic of Luing and the Surrounding Seas, especially focussing on fishing. Other groups are welcome to approach the Trust to achieve the benefits of being part of a charitable organisation.

Website: the Trust website, hosted by Differentia West Coast, has now been migrated to new software, as the old software was no longer being supported by its owners. As a result our website has a fresher look to it, and is much easier to keep up to date. As a result it was used as the main channel for applications for the Project Development Manager post.

The Trust Board: Following the 2012 AGM the directors are: Norrie Bissell, Nigel Dyckhoff, Alastair Fleming, Pete Hooper, Eoghann MacLachlan and John Robertson. At the time of the AGM Nigel Dyckhoff had indicated his desire to step down, but no resignation letter was actually received, and Nigel has indicated his wish to continue his 3 year term as a director. There were no changes to the officers during the year.

*The directors of the Isle of Luing Community Trust
March 2013*