



Annual Report 2014

Introduction: The main theme of 2013 has been progress with the construction of the Atlantic Islands Centre, best illustrated by two photographs.



February 2014



December 2014

Atlantic Islands Centre Project. With delays in Summer 2014 with finalising the choice of roofing slates, the completion date slipped back, further compounded by bad weather conditions as winter closed in. By the end of the year the predicted hand-over date had been put back to Easter 2015, though at the time of writing this has slipped further back to the end of April 2015.

The contract for fit-out was advertised nationally in early 2015 which resulted in a good range of tenders from around the UK. After interviews of several tendering companies, the firm of Leach Colour was awarded the contract. In late March Leach Colour held an open evening in Cullipool Hall to present their ideas to the wider community and receive feedback. During the summer and autumn, work on the interpretation panels involved visits by Leach staff to Luing, and much communication by email and post, to finalise and install in early 2015.

The bridging loan facility with Social Investment Scotland to cover the gap between the payment of invoices to the contractor and the repayment of claims to the Trust by the funders was used twice in March and August 2012, on both occasions for £40,000 for about 5 or 6 weeks only, thus minimising interest costs. The facility will be needed again at the end of the ERDF grant period in Spring 2015. Separate bank accounts are operated to handle the financial management of the construction, keeping such transactions out of the Trust main account.

ERDF visited the project in late August for a compliance check with EU rules for such funding. No issues were raised by the visit.

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The management of the whole project has continued to be ably handled on behalf of the Trust by the Project Development Manager (PDM). Revenue funding from Big Lottery and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) had sufficient capacity to enable the Board to extend the PDM contract for 3 further months until January 2015.

Centre Development Manager: timed to coincide with the end of the PDM contract, the Centre Development Manager post is scheduled to start in February 2015. For this purpose, the post was advertised widely in late Autumn, and a strong and varied field of applicants was received. Interviews were held in late November, and the appointment of Laura McIntyre was confirmed. This post is fully funded by Big Lottery, and as a result Laura will be employed by the Trust, and not the Trading Company. However much of Laura's time will be spent on the operation of the Centre, but will also include meeting the project objectives agreed with the funders which go beyond the operation of the AIC.

Any further employment provided by the AIC operations will be provided by the Trading Company, not the Trust itself. However there will be a need for volunteers to help Laura deliver the wider Trust objectives for the project, for which volunteer training will be need to be provided.

Publications: copies of the Luing map, given free to visitors on the ferry, continue to be distributed, but a more professionally presented version will be produced in future. The walk leaflets and Luing History Group publications continue to sell in small quantities.

Moorings Project: this development in partnership with the Luing Moorings Association to provide a small number of summer moorings for visiting yachts at Cullipool is on track for completion early in 2015.

Governance: the long-dormant Trust trading company was activated in late 2014 in advance of the Centre opening. The Trust solicitors prepared drafts for the Articles of Association for the Trading Company, an intra-group agreement between the Trust and the Trading Company, and a service agreement setting out the services that each party will provide to the other. The Articles of Association were approved by the Trust board, as were the names of four founding directors, including one from the Trust board; the Articles may be seen on the Trust website at www.isleofluing.org . The two remaining documents will be finalised and implemented after discussion between the two boards in 2015.

The registered office for the Trust was changed during the year to the office of the Trust solicitors in Glasgow. However with the opening of the AIC, the registered office is set to be transferred back to Luing to the Centre itself. This will also be the registered office for the Trading Company.

The operations of the café/restaurant, retail and yacht moorings will come under the trading company. However some aspects of this have already been devolved to a Café Working Group of volunteers who have been responsible for researching the fit-out of café, kitchen and retail areas in the AIC.

External relations: the Scottish Islands Federation, of which the Trust is a member, has become part of a major project across thirteen island groups, 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. Luing is one of eight Scottish islands that will participate in this scheme, which is being managed under contract by Community Energy Scotland. Active work began in 2014 to complement the work on carbon reduction on the island which part of our Climate Challenge Fund grant is provided for.

The Trust was represented at the Development Trusts Association – Scotland 2014 conference held in Cumbernauld in early September 2014. Membership of DTAS is becoming increasingly important as the opening

of the Centre will mean the Trust becomes an operational development trust and social enterprise. In particular, DTAS operates a bulk electrical energy purchasing contract for its members, giving substantial savings on electricity costs. The Trust has now joined the scheme.

Active membership of the Argyll and Bute Social Enterprise Network (ABSEN) has now commenced. Relations with VisitScotland and membership of Argyll & the Isles Tourism Cooperative and the Oban and Lorn Tourism Association are also now established. In all these the Trust will be represented by the Trading Company as the relevant social enterprise body. However the Trust established a Marketing working group during the year to develop marketing strategies; this group will now report to the Trading Company rather than the Trust Board.

HIE has continued to support the project, providing a one-day consultation on development of IT resources and internet web presence for the AIC. The project has now passed to a new HIE adviser as it nears the operational stage for the enterprise.

The Trust and the AIC project had a stand at the first Scottish Rural Parliament in early November at the Corran halls in Oban, while the PDM presented a talk on the AIC at one of the sessions.

Island Activities: the Trust again organised an evening with folk singer Sarah McQuaid in November 2014. The planned Writing Day was eventually arranged in early December, but plans for a wider range of events were put on hold until the time of completion of the AIC was clear. A number of events have already been arranged for Summer 2015 by the newly-formed Trust Events group of volunteers.

Mobile phone signal: during the year, the Trust on behalf of the island submitted a competitive bid for inclusion into the Rural Open Sure Signal project to provide Vodafone 3G signals to 100 remote rural communities. The entry was successful, and progress to install the facility on the island will begin in 2015.

Broadband: the Scottish Government-funded Community Broadband Scotland project to provide a wireless high-speed broadband connections to remote communities in Lorn made slow progress during the year, as the scale of the project grew to encompass more communities. The scheme, now called Giga-Plus, is based on Mull, with a project officer now in post. Public contracts for delivery of the scheme were advertised late in the year. The PDM has acted as contact for the Luing community, and the Community Council has organised a review of community demand for the facility. Individuals are able to express an interest in the scheme on-line as well.

Sub-group activities

Luing History Group did not hold an annual exhibition in 2014, instead focusing energies on preparations for the new Gallery in the AIC. However, the group has researched and produced a new publication, Commemoration of The Men on the War Memorial, Isle of Luing for the centenary of the outbreak of World War 1.

Luing First Responders: the group provides 'First Person on the Scene' support to people on Luing who are awaiting paramedics from the Scottish Ambulance (by vehicle or helicopter). On a small island with no resident medical staff and a vehicle ferry only between 0730 and 1800 six days a week, this volunteer standby service is essential outside these hours. An ambulance from Oban can reach Luing in about 40 minutes, calling out the ferry if necessary. Luing Responder volunteers fill this gap, provide basic life support, monitor vital signs, use defibrillators, administer oxygen and use manual suction equipment until the paramedics arrive. Regular training sessions to maintain skills are held once a month. Two responders are on call every night and all day Sunday (when there is no car ferry). The main function of our group - to be on call to provide rapid response

when there is a medical 999 call from the Isle of Luing outside car ferry operating hours - has been achieved for several years now. However our twelve responders reduced to eleven during the year.

After the fund raising success during 2013, the funds started 2014 in a healthy state, augmented by the £456.25 Gift Aid from donations received in 2013. After the failure of one defibrillator in 2013, the group decided to maintain funds to purchase a new one at short notice. Otherwise the basic annual running costs of about £249 (Pager lease and equipment insurance). During the early part of the year, a mobile phone option for call-out was trialled, but the coverage was found not to be as good as the Vodafone pagers. Despite this, the responders have managed to maintain the standard cover throughout the year. Fund raising has never been a difficulty for the first responders and they are supported wholeheartedly by the community of Luing.

Luing Playing Field: the committee continues to be responsible for the maintenance of the playing field and children's playpark, in particular for the annual Sports Day for the school and the island. With members of the Parent Council and other residents, they mark out the track, arrange equipment and ensure refreshments are provided. Expenditure has been minimal in 2014, so fundraising has not been required. However a review of the play park equipment and the playing field may be needed in the coming year, as the Trust insurance policy is extended to cover all aspects of the Trust's operation including these facilities.

Other groups are welcome to approach the Trust to achieve the benefits of being part of a charitable organisation.

Websites: the Trust website, hosted by Differentia West Coast, continues, but a separate website for the AIC is being created in time for the opening of the AIC by Pole Position in Oban.

Financial: the major financial movements during the year were those associated with the construction of the Atlantic Islands Centre, including employment costs. Grant funding from Big Lottery is paid into a separate Big Lottery account, which is normally used to feed the Project account as required, while other grant funding is paid directly into the Projects account. Cash flow has been managed by the minimal use of loan funding from Social Investment Scotland (SIS) with an interest rate of 7% the underlying funds for these loans are provided by the Scottish Government. Construction costs are paid by invoices raised after each 4-weekly valuation by the Quantity Surveyor. In the next financial year we expect to complete the capital expenditure except for the standard 12-month retention, with the remaining funding being used to complete the fit-out of the building and provide revenue funding for the remainder of the grant period (until January 2018).

The funds of the Trust itself, kept separately in the Main account, have shown minor movements in comparison. However over 2014 as a whole, there has been an increase in the account balance, largely due to the focus of the Trust being on progress of AIC, leaving little opportunity for other activities. In general, the Trust needs to keep a healthy balance in this account as a reserve, but will need to increase activities to meet the objects of the Trust, which becomes more feasible when the AIC has been opened, so that the balance does not increase too far beyond the present level.

The Trust Board: Following the 2014 AGM there was no change in the composition of the board of directors: Norrie Bissell, Nigel Dyckhoff, Alastair Fleming, Pete Hooper, Eoghann MacLachlan and John Robertson. Annie Tunnicliffe has continued to provide invaluable help as its business adviser on a voluntary basis, including a professional approach to sifting, selecting and interviewing CDM candidates. There were no changes to the officers during the year.