

2018 AGM MINUTES

Eilean Eisdeal and Easdale Island Trading Company AGM

Held 29th December 2018 at 2.30pm in Easdale Island Community Hall

Directors present: Jan Fraser, Jess Hill, Alan MacFadyen & Lynn Noble

Members present: May McGillivray, Tony Hill, Colin McPherson, Georgia Wolfson, Michelle MacFadyen, Mo & Peter Bullough.

Other attendees: Tony & Britt Doughty-Godchaux, Alan Hunter, Ruth Barratt, Jenny Smith.

Apologies for absence: Iain & Helen McDougall, Robert McDougall, Nigel Chippendale, Jane & John McDonald & Duncan Smallman.

Jan welcomed everyone to the meeting and Jess announced the apologies. Jess asked if she could record the meeting, and there was agreed to.

Minutes of the previous AGM and Matters Arising: The draft minutes from 2017 were proposed by Colin McPherson and seconded by Georgia Wolfson.

There were no matter arising from the minutes.

Chairman's Report: Jan read the Chairman's report in his absence.

Here is the report from the Chair. Thank you all for coming along today, I would like to apologise for my absence (my first and only) from this years AGM. As you will be aware I moved off Easdale part way through the year and Emma and I would like to spend our new year in our new house, especially as it is the last one where it will be just the two of us.

The AGM always seems to creep up and suddenly we are here and it is the end of another year, with each year having its own set of challenges and successes, its own ups and downs.

It has been actually a busy year for Eilean Eisdeal, dominated by the purchase of the Stone Skimming Quarry. The vote that was held at the close of last year was overwhelmingly in favour of purchasing the quarry, which we see as not only being key in keeping our main fund raising event, the World Stone Skimming Championships running, by removing the £1000 charge (to be increased in 2019 to £1200) for using the quarry but also key to the taking ownership of Easdale's industrial and cultural heritage. In August we found out our Scottish Land Fund application had been successful, after several months of working towards a final stage 2 application. Unfortunately, because I had moved by August, people who are opposed to the purchase of the quarry sent in complaints to SLF who then put on hold the grant. Since August we have been working to address these issues, one of which is the number of directors who are resident on the island. I am really pleased that a number of people stepped up and thank Lynn and Alan for coming on board and helping to see through the purchase of the quarry. Working with SLF we were further advised that our Memorandum and Articles needed updating, and those changes have been presented here for your approval. I thank Jess, Jan and Iain for all their help with addressing the questions raised with SLF.

The World Stone Skimming Championships were again very popular and successful, raising over £7000 of funds that go to keeping the hall, musuem and harbour going. Thank you to the WSSC Organising committee, especially Mellon and Keren for leading it but to all who helped out and made the weekend as special as it was. The event continues to attract interest and wonderment from

across the UK and the world and has really helped put Easdale on the map.

The application and almost getting the funding for the quarry was in part due to Easdale's continued participation and active partner within the Lorn Island Partnership, a partnership between the islands of Easdale, Kerrera, Lismore and Luing. The successful award of over £40,000 from the Strengthening Communities Programme has meant we have had use of a development officer, Gill Law. Though applications to the Awards for All for the hall (internet provision, a shutter for the bar and heaters) and an application to a heritage fund to help with protecting and renovating the museum were unsuccessful, there was some success in working with Historic Environment Scotland in getting some preliminary views of how best to approach the protection and restoration of the harbour. We will try and continue that good work next year. Easdale will continue to support the Lorn Islands Partnership as there are some really exciting and good possible cross island projects, where in other circumstances we would be competing for the same funds, we can all benefit from the same application. One such proposal has been enhancing what is on offer for children of all ages and it is something that we are looking at, especially in regards in getting the hall used more.

Talking of the hall, many thanks go to Keren and Des for once again putting together a wonderful Arts Programme and for helping to successfully secure Creative Scotland funding for the year. We thank everyone who has come along and supported all the events that have happened in the hall. The year started with the fab-u-lous Panto, Beauty and the Beast and then just got better. There has been wonderful music from Millar & Spencer, Gary Innes, and from the Antics at the Pre-Skim Bash, we had comedy from the hilarious Jim Smith and excellent theatre with the moving production called Downs with Love. The hall hosted art exhibitions, with a retrospective by Alex, the ever-popular Summer Arts Festival and a joint exhibition called Drift by Ghalia Asaid and Sheila Quillin. Two very important islander occasions were hosted in the hall, Dave Rockley's 80th birthday party (happy birthday Dave!) and possibly the biggest of the year was the beautiful wedding of Mellon and Maggie in May, a really special and fine day, the sun shining on the day and one that no words will ever be enough to describe, definitely the highlight of the year.

Out front of the hall, you will have noticed that the play park has been closed off as it has now become unsafe. Early next year we there will be a group effort to repair it and get it all ready for when it is dry and sunny!

This year marked the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day, and our own Easdale Museum marked the occasion, May and Lynn opening the museum on the 11th with all the exhibits of the time out and a register of all the men from the Easdale area who left to fight and who sadly died, available for people to read. May read out all the names and a beacon lit, as would have happened in the years after WWI. There were war poems read out and it was a moving occasion. Lynn and May, along with Iain and the others who volunteer and work in the museum, have done magnificent work in running and maintaining the museum and it is not surprising that the museum had a good year this year, with an increase in footfall and income. We are hoping that with a successful funding application, the work they really want to see done in helping protect the artefacts and items not just out in the exhibits but away in storage, will be realised.

This year has been relatively quiet in regards to the harbour, though we are hoping that next year we can continue the work that has been started in restoring and protecting it. After last year, we have come to a 10year lease agreement with SeaFari for their use of the harbour. We are grateful for the help Tony has provided in gathering people to help in checking the pontoon fixings. Two yachts, Red Witch and Nameless, which had been sat in the harbour, unused for many years with no harbour dues or any form of contribution given, were finally removed. Initially both yachts were to be taken

by a charity who were willing to refurbish them and would use them as teaching yachts, taking under privileged and disabled children out to give them the opportunity to learn and experience something very different. Nameless was removed from the harbour, before the charity could collect it but they were very grateful for Red Witch and we are delighted that it will be going to a new home as soon as they charity can organise the transport. We are very grateful that Max Leeson, who owned Red Witch was prepared to gift her to such a deserving cause.

We have learned lessons from our past discussions with DTAS Development Trust Association Scotland (who we continue to be a member of) and more recent discussions with the Scottish Land Fund. The discussions also highlighted what we, the board do well, and where we need to improve and over the next year the board will try and address these issues of communication, of inclusiveness, getting more people involved and focusing on making the most of what we already have. We will endeavour to complete the purchase of the Stone Skimming quarry as it is integral in keeping one of the key unique things that makes modern Easdale, the World Stone Skimming Championships.

The work of Eilean Eisdeal goes on, not always glamorous big projects, most of the time just paying bills and undertaking repairs to the hall and museum as needed and we are well aware that more work is required and looking for ways to ensure this happens. I would like to thank Annabel for being our bookkeeper who also helps ensuring everything gets paid or invoices get sent out. Thank you, Lynn for overseeing the bar and working for the different events that go on, Mike Cafferty who oversees the tech for events, and all the other numerous folk who help set up the Hall & help on the bar and door.

A special thanks goes to Margaret Temlett for her kind donations that have helped the museum out this year such as with a new till and the printing of some wonderful leaflets and whose generous donation helped purchase much needed replacement foot goals and nets that will certainly be used for New Year football matches and children of all ages.

Thanks also to Ruth & Marion for organising the rubbish up lift form the Rush & Gush. The balance of their funds have been offered be put towards the wood etc needed to refurbish the Play Park. All attempts to have the work undertaken by local contractors has failed due to conditions on their public liability insurance, which excludes playparks and similar. The only apparent sensible way forward is for the community to undertake this work voluntarily.

I am very grateful to the tireless work of my fellow directors, Jess, Jan and Iain and recently coming on board Lynn and Alan. I appreciate I am not here to thank you all in person, but your help and support over the last couple of years has been of immeasurable help, I know we haven't always agreed but we get there in the end. I thank all of you who volunteer at all the different events from helping on the bar or in the hall, to everyone who volunteers at Stone Skimming. On behalf of the board, thank you. And on behalf of the board, thank you to all the islanders and our members who support us and come support the museum and the hall. Sometimes it is too easy to focus on the negatives, especially from the voices of a loud minority, but the warmth and support we do receive helps get us through, so thank you. As always we need more volunteers, we need people to come and get involved with projects, not necessarily as a director on the board, but getting involved such as happens with the Stone Skimming organising committee. We could really do with this for the museum, for helping out with the hall and harbour and for the other activities that we have planned for the year, such as a group effort to repair the play-park and getting Atlantic Adventure day restarted.

Thank you all for coming out today for this AGM, I am sad (and it is very weird) to be missing this and of course the panto! Before I (in absentia) hand over there are two final items. As I stand down, we

recently had an open meeting to discuss how tourism is and could be managed on the island as well as starting a discussion about the future of the Puffer and the island having a pub and restaurant. What came clear from that is that yes, Eilean Eisdeal does need to change but also that there is a willingness to turn over a new leaf and whatever disagreements that have happened in the past to let them rest there, so that people can come together again in doing what everyone really wants, what's best for Easdale. I really hope this will happen, it was something I tried and failed to manage and I apologise for this. I hope that there will be a willingness for compromise and that if people do not get exactly their own way that hopefully a middle ground can be reached, this has not often been the case. On the plus side, the meetings on the 16th December did show that many folk are looking to try again, and that is very encouraging, and I feel I leave now with some optimism. My very final item is about someone who did so much for Easdale, whose memory is such a part of Easdale, as this year we lost our much loved and respected David Donnison. The hall, the museum a lot of Easdale would not be what it is if it was not for David. He will be sorely missed, especially this time of year, his much loved house party and of course his reading of poetry and accordion performances at the DIY Ceilidh. In the national press his academic and public policy achievements were quite rightly celebrated, on Easdale it is what he brought to the island that I would like us just to remember now.

Thank you and wishing everyone a happy Hogmanay and a successful 2019.

Jan thanked Duncan, in his absence, for everything he had done on behalf of the Board.

Treasurer's Report 2018.

Simmers continued to be our accountants for 2018. The accounts for 1st October 2017 to 30th September 2018 are put forward for your consideration were only received yesterday. Jess read out the summary which was sent with them.

Income last year totalled £50,049 compared to £43,686 this year.

Last year there was Grant funding of £5,227 and £6,213 for the Arts Programme and 4 Greener Lorn Islands, this year the Grant funding was only £1,136 and £1,333 respectively. Last year's Arts Programme grants included accrued income of £1,307, this was never received, since Creative Scotland wouldn't pay as they felt you had received more than expected from door income. This year's income therefore includes a reversal of the £1,307 accrued. The 4 Greener Lorn Islands monies were for a specific project, all the costs were incurred last year, therefore the £1,333 received this year has been released against general reserves as it was to fund "office" costs incurred.

PV Feed Income was received totalling £2,877 this year. No income was received last year as the Solar PV system was not working.

Museum income is down this year, however, the actual income received was £5,378, the figure of £4,128 is because the £1,250 Gift Aid monies accrued in the previous year were not received.

Unfortunately, although a claim was made it was rejected by HMRC because the wrong name was on the claim. The accountants only discovered this when the records were received to prepare the accounts, unfortunately, the claim was out of time by then. Unfortunately, last year also included a reversal of £1,250 for Gift Aid due to a claim not being made in time.

Expenditure last year totalled £72,705 compared to £58,894 this year.

Last year included £6,215 for the 4 Greener Lorn Islands project, a one-off project.

The Arts Programme costs have reduced this year, in line with the income. Had the income accrued at the end of last year been received, the Arts Programme would have made a surplus, however, instead, there is a small deficit of £201.

Harbour costs last year were £3,399 compared to £80 this year. Last year included a large amount repairs and maintenance, new chains etc.

Bar purchases are down this year from £4,970 to £3,121. Last year there was a large adjustment for "old" out of date stock.

Hall running costs are down this year, a refund of the rates paid last year was received this year.

Jess asked if anyone had any questions about the accounts before them – none were raised.

Appoint Accountant:

The members agreed to re-appoint Simmers & Co.

Membs & Arts Resolutions:

Resolutions & ballot forms had been sent out with AGM notification, 6 ballot had been received by email - all in favour.

Jenny made comment that the clause numbers were incorrect, but as everyone seemed happy with the spirit of the changes, hoped it would not be a problem.

Jess explained that the changes were being made after discussions with Scottish Land Fund bringing the Mem & Arts more up to date.

Members present were asked to vote on adopting the resolutions (in the correct place in the M&A)

Jenny made comment that she thought full-time residents should have more of a say than holiday home owners and the previous two-tier membership structure with the 'friends' category could be the way forward as she felt there was undue bias. This was also voiced by May.

Jan said has been discussed many times before, & it was felt that 2nd home owners do contribute to our community & deserve to have a say. Resurrecting the 'friends' would increase the administrative load further and offered it to Jenny, who declined.

Perhaps a revised voting structure, giving more weight to full time residents could be looked at but not in the context of this resolution.

Alan pointed out that the council tax was the same for all property owners, but without the full-time benefit.

Ruth asked in the context of current family connection whether her sons would be eligible to vote – only as members of EE – they would not have been eligible to vote in the Quarry purchase vote for example, which was open to all full & part-time island residents.

Discussions were brought back to the vote for the resolutions in hand at this point following comment by Britt and Tony, that other issues could be raised under AOB.

Jess asked for a show of hands to approve the resolutions and advised non-members that they were not eligible to vote. 9 were in favour and 2 abstained.

Director nominations:

There were two nominations for new directors prior to AGM, Alan MacFadyen & Lynn Noble who fill two of the 5 vacant positions. Jess welcomed others to come forward.

Any other business:

Georgia asked about contributing to a fund for things which her and her sister's children benefit from as a holiday home owner. She was advised that she could donate at any time and it could possibly be put into the 'ringfenced' funds as is the case with the percentage of the Feed in Tariff for things the island children. She would be happy to donate above her membership fee for things particularly for children, if she was made aware, also help if needed. Britt concurred with this comment.

Jess said that contributions did not have to be monetary ones, time from volunteers will hopefully be needed to repair the playpark.

Clarification will be sort from EE insurers about a community renovation of the playpark.

Replacement of it is not an option, as is a notice 'play at your risk'.

Tony made comment that he thought if people were not paid, but deemed competent – then negligence has to be proven.

May suggested seeking advise from Atlantis Leisure on the issue.

There was discussions and suggestions about a less formal setting for meetings between like-minded individuals with or without directors and encouraging the next generation to get involved. And this was to be encouraged by members of the community, but commitment to such events can be a stumbling block.

Jess thanked everyone for attending – with particular thanks to Jan for her 13 years of service to EE.

The meeting closed at 15.30