

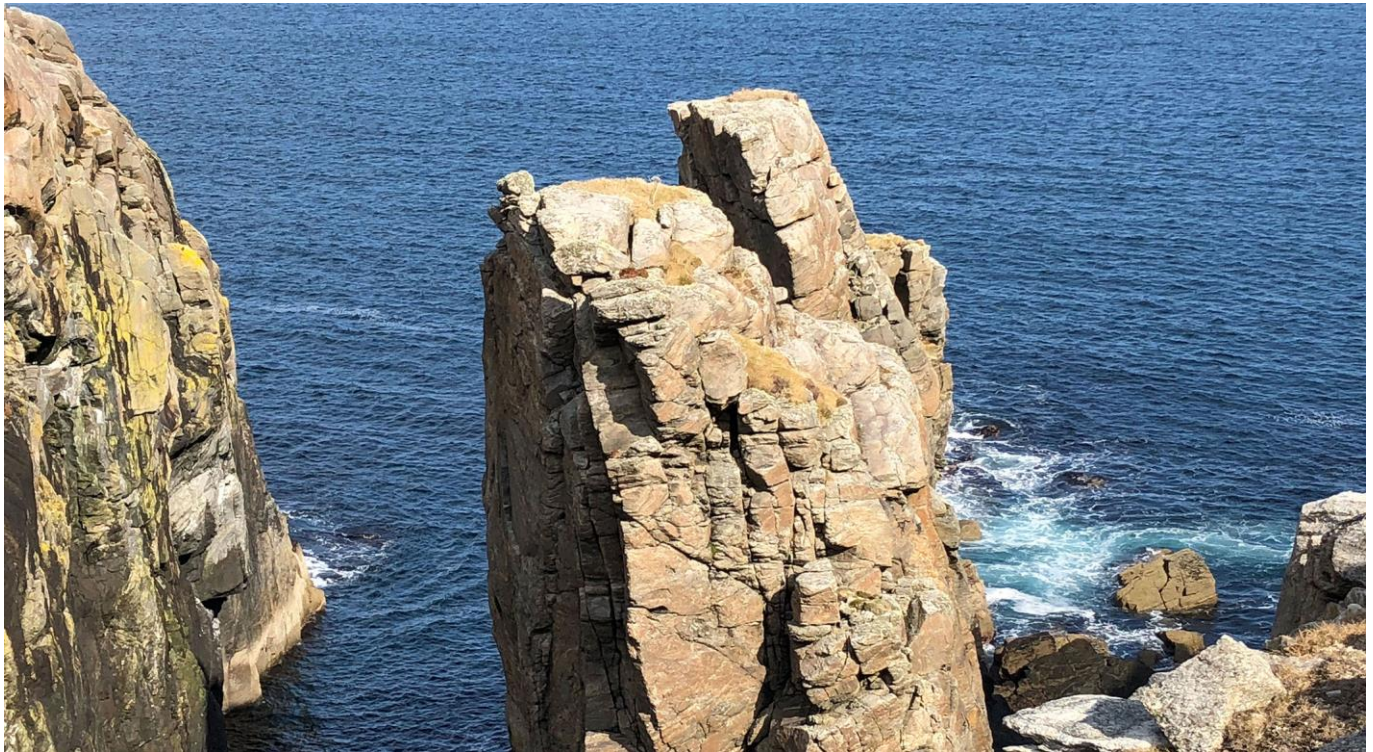
# The Horshader Herald

The Horshader Community Development Trust Newsletter

September 2018



## A few words from the Chair



Hello and welcome to this edition of the newsletter. The last one appeared in mid-June, after the community consultation. That's only six weeks ago but it feels like a lot longer. It's been a challenging summer but the Board now feels that it can begin to focus more on the future.

With this in mind, we have been working recently on building a Trust Development Plan, our strategy for taking the Trust forward and achieving the Trust's mission of helping the Horshader community to become an even more attractive, sustainable and vibrant community to live in. We can only do this with your continuing, vigorous support. Consequently, we intend to open our September Board meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> of that month (yes, we hope to be meeting monthly rather than weekly by then) to all members of the Trust so that we can give you an insight into the initial work of the new Board, present the first draft of the Trust Development Plan and listen to any ideas and issues you wish to bring to the Directors. The meeting will be informal and we'll lay on refreshments and we would love as many members of the Trust and residents of the Horshader community as possible to attend – perhaps you can help to spread the word: 7.30pm, Raebhat House, Monday 17 September 2018. We intend to have a meeting like this every quarter from now on so that all members have direct access to the Board at least four times a year, rather than just once through the formal AGM.

We are also going to share the annual accounts from 2017 at this meeting – why wait until January 2018 by which time the information will be a year out of date? In future years, we would like to be able to share the annual accounts even earlier. So I hope you'll join me and as many of the other Directors as I can muster on the 17<sup>th</sup> September. All the best,

Flora Macleod





The Horshader growing project have had the pleasure of forming a partnership with Shawbost School this year, resulting in both polytunnels at Raebhat house being full of colour, lush greenery and enormous sunflowers, the tallest reaching ten feet in height.

Since April the Shawbost schoolchildren spanning all age groups have transformed the tunnels with their unbridled enthusiasm into an Amazonian wonderland full of vibrant scents, colour and fruit.

They all planted seeds and learned about various plants and the importance of growing their very own fruit and veg. Also, dutifully watering and weeding, ensuring their seedlings were healthy. I noticed an air of competitiveness when it came to measuring the height of their own sunflower seedlings. Many of the tall sunflowers outgrew the tunnel and thanks to Don and the mini bus, with Alan and Jordan keeping them in one piece, we managed to deliver them to a few of the schoolchildren at their homes.

We were kindly invited to the prize giving before the summer holidays and enjoyed it very much. The schoolchildren received certificates, flower seeds and containers to enable them to carry on gardening throughout the holidays and all of us at Horshader are very happy with such a wonderful and meaningful partnership.

A few teachers were soaked in the making of this story and I am sure the children found it awkward to aim the hose correctly and that it was all accidental!!! In the future I will spend a little more time on teaching the complicated task of watering the plants!

#### Building closer ties with the school

The young people of the area are the future of our community. One of the Trust's charitable aims is to further education in all its forms in the Horshader area. Consequently, consciously building a stronger relationship with the local school has been a priority for the new Board. We hope that David Murdo's work

on the growing project is just the start of many things to come. And, as David has already said, it culminated this summer in Don and David being invited to the school prize giving.



This is what Mrs Gunn, the Head Teacher, had to say in a recent letter to Jimina Macleod, one of the Trust Directors. "We are really enjoying the growing project with Horshader and it is lovely to see the children all kitted out in their outdoor gear on Tuesdays. David is excellent with them and we know that a lot is done in between all our visits. The children are developing 'growing vocabulary' and even the youngest ones will tell you about their plants and vegetables and roots! Having transport to take us there and back is a huge bonus and allows us to participate every week. Don is so patient with all the children.

"We hope to build on the work that our school eco committee is undertaking and I can see that there will be opportunities for links to be forged there. The school appreciates the enthusiasm that Horshader has for working with the school and it is an excellent opportunity for us to create partnerships.

"Thanks again for all your support throughout the year."

### Meet the staff

We have two new members of staff since the last newsletter. We asked them to say hello...

Hi, my name is John Craig (on the left of the photo over the page). I come from Falkirk and moved to the Island in 2015 with my wife who is from South Bragar, where we both presently reside.

Before coming to the Island, I was employed by Falkirk Council for 25 years in various training projects for youths and adults, where I was working as a Horticulture Supervisor, Training Supervisor and Project Officer.

I attended Clackmannanshire College to gain an SVQ in Amenity Horticulture, and Hard Landscaping. I also attended Oatridge Agricultural College and gained a HNC in Countryside Management.

At present I maintain a working croft that including sheep, pigs, hens, ducks and various cropping areas.



In my spare time, I have a season pass for the Scottish national rugby team at Murrayfield and have attended the autumn tests, and Six Nations for the last 10 years. I also enjoy visiting other Islands, fishing and cooking.



Hi, I'm Jordan Morrison (on the right in the photo). I've lived in South Shawbost all my life and recently graduated from Lews Castle College UHI with a BSc in Computer Science.

I've always had a strong interest in computing and in my spare time enjoy keeping active.

I'm happy to be working locally for Horshader carrying out a range of administrative, I.T., financial, web and technical support duties.

### Courgettes and other growing things by Fiona Knap

I got a share in the Grinnavat Road community polycrub for the first time this year and was a little slow in planting fruit and vegetables. I'm a first time vegetable grower and decided to start off with some plants first, rather than seeds to gain experience of looking after the plants. As I'm new to growing vegetables, I'm not quite sure of the size plants will grow too or how much space will be needed.

The first picture below is of three courgette plants, one week after planting in mid May. The middle plant didn't survive, which is a blessing given the size of the two surviving plants. I don't know if mulching around the plants with straw helped, but it did help stop the soil drying out in the recent warm weather.

In the past month, I have planted tomatoes, chilli peppers, strawberries, cucumbers, chives, mint, cabbage and lettuce in the polycrub and sown beetroot, peas and French beans in the outside raised bed. The lettuce won't all survive as they are being suffocated by the courgettes. So, I don't think courgettes will be on the list next year.

Either way, it's good to know I'm reducing my carbon footprint slightly with my little growing project, especially as it's only 100 feet from my front door.





And here's a photo of my very first Polycrub pickings.



#### Urras Dualchas Shiaboist – Shawbost Heritage Trust: Update by Di Hesketh

Donna Smith (TIG), who is working on behalf of UDS, submitted the Stage 2 Enquiry application in mid-August and a decision will be made in December 2018. UDS are requesting a grant of £300,00 from HLF and will also be making applications for funding to the Scottish Government Regeneration Fund (SGRF) for £330,000, to the Natural and Cultural Heritage Fund, The Wolfson Foundation, the Robertson Trust and the William Grant Foundation. The total cost of the project is currently 1.4 million. Donna has been doing a fabulous job for us and UDS is very grateful for all the attention to detail in completing this onerous application.

The Heritage Lottery stipulates that the project must involve the local community in activities. With this in mind, Shawbost school pupils will take part in an art project working alongside local artists to produce a booklet about the museum. Watch out for further activities later in the year. And look out for our AGM... coming soon.





Those of you that listen to Radio 4 will perhaps know about a regular broadcast called “From Our Own Correspondent”, hosted by Kate Adie, CBE, DL. The idea is that the host of correspondents deployed by the BBC around the world present a more in-depth perspective on an issue or a person or an area of the world – more than can normally be accommodated in a standard news bulletin. We thought it might be interesting and informative to give Alan Murray, our own Development Officer, the opportunity to share some insights on an intermittent basis. Here’s what he had to say...

The following is a statement I never thought I would make: this year, early summer in Shawbost reminded me of early summer in the south of Japan. Sustained warm, clear and sunny weather for weeks on end.

When I first arrived in Japan six years ago, as someone who grew up with ‘Lewis Grey’ as the usual daily weather forecast, I wanted to take full advantage of every clear, sunny day I got. I would go for my morning run at dawn as the sun rose above the rice paddies and I would try to catch sunset across the Ariake Sea and over the Nagasaki peninsula at the end of each day. But, after a few months this wore off and the constantly

good weather was as common as seeing the rising sun flag, proudly displayed everywhere you turn in Japan. That’s how good the spell of weather we had was. People started to take it for granted and even complain about it. The worst example of it I heard was, “It’s just too bright”. Are you serious? Too bright? You may regret having said that when winter comes, and the days are at their shortest: when blue becomes not the colour of the sky but how you feel inside, the number of hours between dawn and dusk is in the single digits, and the sun becomes like a tea break at a dipping tank – much desired, much deserved...but seldom experienced.

My office looks out towards Beinn Mhòr and, as I write, the mountain is currently experiencing a total whiteout by dense, driving sheets of rain. An entire mountain...gone. That good spell of weather we had, and its “too brightness”, are more than welcome to return anytime as far as I’m concerned.

Unusually long spells of good weather aside, another thing we sometimes tend to take for granted is the Trust’s source of revenue, our whirlybird; the 9MW Enercon turbine sitting on the hill near Loch Raoinnehat. This has not been a good year for our turbine. Since I started this job, our turbine has been operating at either 1/3 of its usual output or completely down. This is not due to the turbine itself, but to a problematic Static Compensator (STATCOM), which has the job of stabilising the fluctuating power load. The STATCOM, built by ABB and owned by Scottish & Southern Electricity (SSE), is housed in one of the grey buildings you see near the turbine. When it’s not doing its job, the turbine’s output must be curtailed to around 1/3 or 315kW, to prevent electrical damage. Despite multiple attempts by ABB and SSE to repair this fault, and after another recent flare up in the STATCOM since it was repaired, it now looks like SSE will have to build a new pole-mounted alternative to our current STATCOM setup. This will require a few more telegraph poles and other works, the details of which I hope to receive soon.

The good news is that the result will hopefully be a far more stable setup but until then, we unfortunately must accept the restriction to 1/3 of operating capacity. Further good news is that we have an insurance policy in place with Bruce Stevenson Renewables. I have already put in a claim for the downtime experienced between May and August and I will put in another claim for the period between the recent unsuccessful repair and the completion of the final proposed works. These insurance claims require

evidence of loss of revenue for the period concerned, a comparison of power yield between this period and the equivalent period for previous years (or similar local turbines) and some other information. I am confident we will receive some compensation for the total loss of revenue we have experienced.

The above highlights how quickly and dramatically the Trust's income stream can be impacted. This income stream is perpetual in theory; we have plenty of wind (and water!). But it will always depend on the integrity of the equipment and network in place. Much like a lot of human achievement on Earth, it is only as good as the underlying infrastructure on which it depends.

In the meantime, during this extended period of turbine curtailment, I agree with recent decisions the Board of Directors have made to prevent further ongoing financial losses to the Trust. I think it is important we continue to direct funds towards partnerships, organisations, projects and initiatives that directly benefit people in the Horshader area. This includes supporting our senior citizens with recreational activities and improved quality of life, continuing with the Shawbost School Gardening Club, Support & Connect (minibus, handyman and grass-cutting), providing bursaries to students in the area and collaborating with other voluntary organisations in the Horshader area, such as the Grazings Committee.

### Grants provided by the Trust in the last 5 months

We thought you'd like to see the list of the grants made by the Trust in recent months:

An Lantair: Iolaire Centenary Commemoration;  
Lewis and Harris Youth Clubs Association (LHYCA), The Scaladale Centre: contribution to the replacement minibus for the Scaladale Centre;  
Sgoil Shiaboist – school trip P5-7 (to Inverness);  
Clann An Latha An De: annual mainland culture trip;  
An Eathar Rowing Club: An Eathar Summer Events 2018;  
Shawbost Gardening Group: community garden & floral displays;  
Bragar Fitness Group: upgrade & expansion 2018;  
Carloway Agricultural Society: Carloway Show programme;  
Carloway Community Association: Carloway Community Newsletter;  
Westside Hebrides Alpha Support Group: 2018 fundraiser for Hebrides Alpha;  
Kathleen Macleod: contribution for a mobility chair for her father Calum;  
Carloway Football Club: contribution to ground maintenance equipment; and  
South Shawbost Common Grazings: Drochaid An Loch / An Docca Ruadh Reinstatement Project.

The Trust also provided bursaries to Robyn Bradley and Seumas Macleod for the new academic year.



## News in brief

In the not-too-distant future, we hope to be able to offer one of the looms to anyone in the community who is interested in becoming a weaver. If you are interested, please contact Alan in the office.

The Trust provided our minibus to the Beach Clean-Up that took place up the coast on 18 August.

The Board has approved the quote provided by Clean Squad for a deep clean of the café kitchen area.

There is still one spare allotment at Dalmore – if you are a member of the Trust or a resident of the Horshader community and you are interested in taking up this allotment, please get in touch with the office at Raebhat House.

A group of people are in the process of reinstating the Community Diary. So, if you have an event that you would like to publicise, get in touch and we'll make sure it gets added.

Remember that a copy of the Board Meeting minutes is posted online at [www.horshader.com](http://www.horshader.com), on the local noticeboards and a paper copy is lodged in the office, generally within a week of the meeting taking place.

## In conclusion...

Don't worry – we don't really intend to call the newsletter The Horshader Herald! We're going to ask the pupils at the Shawbost School to come up with a name. There will, of course, be a dazzling and highly desirable prize for the winning entrant. The new name will be unveiled in the next edition. And remember, 7.30pm, Raebhat House, Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September for the quarterly open Board Meeting.

Thanks for reading and see you next time!

PS If you think 'The Horshader Herald' is a dreadful name for a newsletter, what about this for the name of a newspaper: 'The Tombstone Epitaph' (from Arizona, USA)?