

URRAS OIGHREACHD GHABHSAINN AGM
held on 1 November 2022 AT 7.30 PM, at UOG Business Centre and
online via zoom.

Directors Present: Agnes Rennie (Chair), Carola Bell, Johanna Furey, Agnes Macdonald, Donald Macsween.

Present: Ronnie MacRae.

Agnes Rennie opened the meeting and welcomed all who have joined both in person, and those joining via Zoom. She provided an overview of the evening's format and the general housekeeping procedures.

Directors' Nomination Forms: 2

Forms of Proxy: 0

Members present: 28 in person, 7 online

1. Apologies for Absence

No formal apologies.

2. Minutes of AGM 30 November 2021 and Matters Arising

The minutes of the 2021 AGM were approved by DG and seconded by DSMcL.

3. Chairperson's Report

Welcome to you all and to our new building for those who are visiting it for the first time, and welcome to new members. It's been a busy year, but a very different challenge from the last two years of Covid challenges. In this foreword I'll touch on one or two highlights.

After nearly 3 years without a permanent base, it has been wonderful to see the team back together in the new building and we were delighted to be joined by Kate Forbes MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy, for the official opening.

It's been a joy to see the Urras programme of activities grow through the year. It was also good to see visitors using the facilities at the new visitor bays at Tom na Bà. Crofting regulation and administration is at

the heart of the work of the Urras, and it has been pleasing to see folk visit the office. This work is wide ranging and includes individualcroft matters as well as common grazing's land. I also want to mention here the extensive re-building of Rathad a Chidhe in Port of Ness. This was mostly paid for by the Urras who were able to secure sufficient funds to ensure the re-build work was completed for the benefit of regular users. We were also particularly pleased to re-open the Community Investment fund and we are already receiving applications from community groups.

Page 11 of the annual report gives a detailed account of staff who have either left or newly joined the team. We give a warm welcome to new staff and wish departing staff the best of luck for the future. I want to mention especially Lisa Maclean who has left the post of manager after nearly 11 years. We wish Lisa well, and I am also very pleased to welcome Jemma Macvicar who now joins us as our new manager. We now look forward to a bright future with a resilient staff team, a committed Board and the support of the community. With that, I would like to thank the staff for their continued commitment. I would like to thank fellow Board members who continue to support staff and for their enthusiasm.

Thank you to all of you for attending tonight's meeting.

4. Report on the Director's Report and Audited Financial Statements for the period ended 30 September 2021.

- 4.1 Calum MacDonald, CIB Services was unavailable, therefore Carola Bell, board member spoke to the report and the continuing development of the Trust. Looking first of all at Page 1, of the Statement of Financial Activities, the total income for the year was £287,257. This was lower than in previous years as there were no Gift Aid payments from the Baile an Truiseil Wind Energy Project to the Trust in the financial year. This was due to the failure of the subsea cable in October 2020 resulting in no generation until the cable was replaced in August 2021. The income is therefore made up of rentals and income from grants. The Trust had sustained a loss of £104,013. This was due to the reduction in income combined with the costs of the establishment of the new working space. The Trust had reserves of £2.7m.

- 4.2 Net assets are £2,724,335 compared to £2,828,348 for 2020. The balance sheet is on Page 2 of the accounts. The fixed Assets increased from the previous year with the addition of the new building and the Current Assets show the considerable amount of cash held by the Trust for future developments.
- 4.3 Audit Report – Carola reported that the auditors had reviewed compliance with legislation and financial procedures and had given the Trust a clean audit report for the year. She thanked Calum MacDonald and CIB Services for their support throughout the year.
- 4.4 Questions were invited on this statement.

5. Level of Membership Fee for 2020/21

It was proposed that the fee remain at £1, and this was agreed by all present.

6. Appointment of Auditors

It was proposed that, as the result of changes to the audit process and the requirement to change auditor after 10 years, Calum is now no longer allowed to represent UOG. Therefore it was proposed Mann Judd Gordon be new auditor. This was agreed with all present. Agnes Rennie thanked Calum for his service.

7. Election of Directors

Two directors are required to resign as part of the usual rotation (Johann Furey and Agnes MacDonald) - both submitted nomination papers and were renominated.

This concluded the formal business of the AGM.

Opening the second part of the meeting, Neil Mackinnon, Development Manager, began by summarising the financial performance for 2021/22, reflecting a strong recovery from previous setbacks. He highlighted the grant awards offered through the re-launched Community Investment Fund which totalled £33,084, involving seven community organisations of which five were based within the Estate area.

Afterward, Christine Amos, Operations Manager, gave a round-up of the projects carried out by Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn staff throughout the year focussing on the 4 strategic priorities – **Care & Wellbeing, Tourism, Crofting & Land Use and Exceptional Place**. She continued by highlighting a range of projects as part of this including: **Sunnd, JMT Transition Programme, Tourism App, Heritage Trail, Butt of Lewis Lighthouse, Species Management, Gunnera Management, Hebridean Garden, Dùthchas, Plòigh**. Christine highlighted the extensive repair work to reinstate the access road to Port of Ness Harbour, as well as the future opportunities of projects and the Community Investment Fund.

Agnes Rennie, Chairperson, then introduced Ronnie MacRae as guest speaker.

Ronnie is Chief Executive of the Communities Housing Trust (CHT), a registered charity and social enterprise focused on building sustainable rural communities across central and northern Scotland. CHT is the leading organisation for delivering community-led housing in Scotland. CHT has earned a reputation for providing essential affordable housing and accompanying amenities such as shops, services and schools, which are all key to the sustainable social and economic wealth and wellbeing of communities.