



Please note: these minutes are in draft form; they will be approved at the next AGM in 2026.

Minutes of Sunart Community Company Board AGM 25th October 2025

Board members attending: J. Jones (Chair), L. Cameron MacGregor (Vice Chair), A. Gainsford (Treasurer), N. Brooks (Secretary), H. Taylor, P. Sharples, N. Mellis, J. Hilder. S. Traynor.

Members attending: Justine Dunn, Rowena Henderson, Alex Lacey and Charlotte Lacey, Jamie Tait, L. Sharples, Jamie Macintyre, Lesley and Simon Willis, Christine and Dave Bowen, Chris Miller Craig, Jackie Miller Craig, Ronnie MacIntyre, Morag Stewart, Robert Dunn, Penny Brooks, Pat Adams, Denise Anderson, Lorna and Ian Michie, Morag Jones, Matt Simpkinson, Pete Madden, Joan Madden, Sheila Wilson.

News correspondent: Andreas Wolff, BBC Alba.

Apologies: Tony Burke, Richard Laybourne, Alyth Black, Kate Forbes, Joan Richards, David and Val Barker, John and Jane Jackson, K and T Burke, Janice Mackinnon.

Proxies received: Alyth Black: proxy S. Traynor. Tony Burke: proxy J. Jones. John and Jane Jackson: proxy J. Jones.

1. Minutes from the previous AGM held on January 25th 2025 were accepted; proposed by A. Gainsford, seconded by L. Cameron.
2. J. Jones, Chair, presented the annual Chair's report. The full text can be found in Appendix 1 below.
3. A. Gainsford, Treasurer, presented a statement of the Sunart Community Company's financial position for the end Financial Year ending March 31st 2024. The full text can be found in Appendix 2 below. It was agreed that the accounts be accepted; proposed by J. Hilder, seconded by D. Anderson.
4. The formal AGM business was followed by two presentations celebrating 20 years of the Sunart Community Company. These were delivered by Ronald MacIntyre and James Hilder. Copies of the two presentations can be found in the document library on the Sunart Community Company website.
5. On behalf of the Board and members of the Sunart Community Company, John Jones thanked the above for their presentations. John Jones also make a brief presentation to James Hilder, who stepped down as a Board Director, thanking him for his commitment, expertise and outstanding contribution to the organisation over many years.
6. The AGM concluded by 19:50 and was followed by a ceilidh celebrating 20 years of the Sunart Community Company.



Appendix 1: Chair's report 2025.

Sunart Community Company AGM 25th October 2025. Report from the Chair, John Jones.

Welcome to you all. This is my first Chair's report. I have looked back at the last several years and was truly amazed at the ground the Community Company has covered in that time. This is the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Community Company and its predecessor. Ronnie is going to talk about the founding and early years and James will give a review of the work and achievements. So I shall look to be brief, if I may.

The Sunart Community Company is both a company limited by guarantee registered with Companies House and a charity registered with OSCR, the Scottish Charity regulator. The directors are also trustees. Alison, our treasurer, on behalf of the Board explored the option for us to change to a SCIO, a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. However, because of the range of "work" and activities that we undertake this was proved not to be an option. I mention this because the Company activity and scope has certainly increased in the last 12 – 18 months. It has been a very busy time for all the directors, the people we employ and for the volunteers who provide the time, energy, expertise and enthusiasm, without which we could not function.

Just to recap for everyone: we have a number of project/ activity or associated groups:

- Oakwood the Craft and tourist shop
- Longrigg Woodland
- Paths group
- Men's Shed and Craft Hub
- Jetty Group,
- The Angling Association
- The Social Group – have organised tonight's ceilidh
- The Strontian Church and Heritage Group. The Church we officially acquired on the 18th July 2025
- And the Sunart Rainforest Project, this is a project that we administer on behalf of all the landowners (including ourselves) on the northern side of Loch Sunart down towards Salen.

The Company employs four people: Becky Drinkwater who deals with administration of SCBF admin, the Longrigg Woodland Project, and our communications including Company inserts in Dtd, social media and the website. Karyn Simpkinson is the Oakwood manager whose work behind the scenes has an important impact, Annie Harper, who has worked very hard to get the Men's Shed /Craft Hub up and running, and Euan Palmer who is the Sunart Rainforest Coordinator. All are part time. We also have Craig Holden who works with us on Longrigg Woodland and Wendy Wilson who does our books and also volunteers in Oakwood. I want to thank them for all their hard work and commitment.

The Company works alongside other organisations in our community, for example: Sunart Community Renewals, Sunart Community Council, Urram and the various landowners along Loch Sunart. Scottish Woodlands are project managing the Longrigg Woodland timber extraction and the harvesting process for us – and the work on Longrigg Road forest access started this week!

I want to thank everyone who volunteers on our many projects; those people who work quietly in the background keeping things tidy, helping us sort our electricity, water, phone email and website, the volunteers on the burger stalls, the annual auction and various social and fund raising activities. Also, my thanks and appreciation to all my fellow director/ trustees for bringing their breadth of knowledge and



experience, and for their dedication, commitment and hard work. And, if I may single them out, to Laura our vice Chair, Nick our secretary and Alison our treasurer. I also want to thank Rowena Henderson for the energy and enthusiasm she brought and James Hilder both of whom who are leaving the Board this year. James has been a director, for over 10 years, and has been committed to developing and building our community company. His specialist knowledge and vast experience is second to none and has enabled this community company to grow and develop. I should like to express my very personal thanks.

I encourage all in our community to join and become a member of the community company. There are no fees. By becoming a member, it allows us as a community, to demonstrate commitment, which provides extra leverage with the various funding bodies, in obtaining the funds for our community projects and activities. For example, we have received funding from the Scottish Land Fund, Sunart Community Benefit Fund, and the Sunart Community Council.

Finally. In reading through previous minutes, I am struck by something John Tyldesley, who was our chair for a number of years, said:

"We are a Community Company, and without Community support there would not be a Company and our vision for the future would never happen. Thankfully, with your help, we are in an excellent position to continue moving forward and growing, to ensure that Sunart is a 'great place to live [and] work and [for people to come and] visit by 'all working together and building a strong community for the future.'

For me personally, it is also about providing a legacy, for members of the community younger than me, for grandchildren and for future generations.

Thank you.

There were no comments or questions from the floor following the Chair's report.



Appendix 2: Treasurer's report 2025

Sunart Community Company AGM 25th October 2025. Report from the Treasurer, Alison Gainsford.

Good evening, ladies gentlemen and children. I would like to present a brief overview of the company's accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The full accounts are some 40 pages long as the detail required by both Companies House and the Charities Commissioners require this. You will be pleased to hear I do not intend to go through all 40 pages, but to present the highlights of the year and the main financial changes that have happened over the 12 months to end of March 2025. I have provided a copy of the income and expenditure account and the balance sheet for information tonight and the full accounts will be available on our website in due course.

The financial highlights for the year are as follows:

On Income and Expenditure, the main highlights are:

The Purchase of Longrigg Woodland

The biggest single grant received in the year was for Longrigg Woodland and this was from the Scottish Land Fund and totaled £211,494, out of a grant allocation of £241,782. The purchase transaction took place on 4th August 2024 so the funds did not stay in our account for any length of time!! There remains a balance of £3,816 in capital and £26,472 in revenue to be claimed - the revenue grant is to help with the management of the woodland and both must be claimed by 31 March 2026.

The Purchase of Polloch Store

We purchased the FLS Polloch Store via a grant of £2,500 from the Sunart Community Benefit Fund and will use further funds to undertake repairs etc. This will become an offshoot of the Men's Shed.

Foundation Scotland Investment

We invested a further £25,000 with Foundation Scotland, bringing the total investment with them to £50,000. These funds are invested in ethical investments which although not providing us with significant returns, are in line with our constitution.

Strontian Church

We continued to work with the Dualchas Sunart Heritage Group and successfully applied to the Scottish Land Fund for funds towards the purchase the Church. This grant totaled £49,550 for the capital purchase and £11,638 for revenue costs. As you will all be aware we finally managed to purchase the church in July 2025.

Oakwood Tourism and Crafts

The turnover for Oakwood rose from £48K in 2024 to £54K in 2025 and provides an outlet for 29 local craft producers, whilst generating an income for Oakwood to cover running costs, with any surplus helping to cover the general overheads of the company.

Sunart Community Benefit Fund

The company continued to manage the funds allocated from Sunart Community Renewables through the Sunart Community Benefit Fund. Sunart Community Renewable allocated £75,000 in the year. This enabled us to allocate £9,300 to various external bodies including:

- Sunart Brass
- Ardnamurchan Mod
- Urram Childcare research



and £32,300 to projects being managed through the company. These included:

- Men's shed/Craft hub staffing and renovation costs.
- Polloch Store acquisition
- Church of Scotland pre-purchase costs

A full list is included in the full accounts. The balance of the funding is available for applications and further funds were allocated in April 2025 and the next round of funding is in November.

The final financial outcome for the company for the year was a surplus on all funds:

£2,311 on unrestricted funds – these are funds which the company directors can decide to allocate to any project without any constraints.

£230,189 on restricted funds – these are funds, the use of which have limitations imposed by donors, meaning they can only be spent on specific purposes. Eg Longrigg grant from SLF can only be spent on Longrigg.

£27,198 on designated funds. These are unrestricted funds that charity trustees have voluntarily set aside for a particular purpose, but the trustees can change this designation at any time. Eg the trustees could reallocate funds from the Men's shed to the paths work.

So now we come on to the Balance sheet

Balance Sheet

The main items to note on the balance sheet are as follows:

Increase in Fixed assets of £208,140 – mainly relating to the Longrigg and Polloch store purchases and after charging depreciation on all owned assets as in previous years

Investment increase of £25,000 – a further £25,000 was invested with Foundation Scotland

Cash balance – Sunart Community Renewables transferred £65,000 to SCBF/SCC at the end of March.

Funds of the charity have risen by £259,698 in the year to £539,916. As members you therefore have a company which has assets of over half a million pounds which is a remarkable achievement. As John previously stated there are more significant projects in the pipeline which will continue to develop over the coming years and to increase the net worth of the organisation.

From a personal perspective, I only joined the company in September of 2024 and until then although I knew about it, I was not really aware of what it did in detail. I can honestly say that I have really enjoyed becoming involved with the company and the variety of projects being undertaken. So, if like me you want to find out more about it, become a member, a volunteer or apply to be a director. I am sure you will enjoy the experience.

Can I propose that we approve the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025?

It was agreed that the accounts be accepted; proposed by J. Hilder, seconded by D. Anderson.