

## **Minutes of Sunart Community Company Board meeting 27<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

Attending: J. Jones (Chair), A. Gainsford (Treasurer), N. Brooks (Secretary), S. Willis, P. Sharples, S. Traynor, H. Taylor.

Apologies: N. Mellis, L. Cameron MacGregor.

1. The minutes from the previous meeting (23-02-26) were accepted: proposed by H. Taylor, seconded by S. Traynor. These have now been added to the web site.

### **Major Project reports:**

1. Dualchas Heritage Centre:
  - The recent open day and exhibition was a big success, with 91 people attending and £64.00 raised in donations.
  - A. Harpur is currently sourcing quotes for the architectural survey, prior to applying for grant funding.
  - The purchase of the graveyard is awaiting finalisation; AG to chase the solicitors.
  - The Smart Meter is now functioning correctly, so that heating costs can now be accurately assessed and charged on to hirers.
  - A possible fault with the smoke alarm has been highlighted. JJ to investigate.
  - It was noted that ST had stepped down as Chair to take up the role of Secretary of Dualchas.
2. Men's Shed/Craft Hub:
  - A request has been received for hire of the Hub by other local organisations. It was agreed that this was a good use of the facility and that normal hire rates should be applied.
  - A problem with leaking pipework has been resolved and new valves are being fitted. The cost was approved by the Board.
3. Oakwood:
  - The new Shop Manager has made excellent progress in her first month in the role.
  - One new producer already has products in the shop and a further five potential producers are currently being reviewed.
  - New volunteers are being trained and a new panel member has joined the Quality Control Panel.
  - Revenues for April increased by 26% over the same period in 2025.
  - There is also the first Young Workforce volunteers starting work in August.
  - A grant from the Sunart Community Benefit Fund has also been awarded to cover refurbishment, equipment and decorating costs.
4. Rainforest Project:
  - Although the initial funding programme has concluded a further grant was made by the Sunart Community Benefit Fund to cover the cost of continuing employment of the Project Officer.
  - The success and management of the project, facilitated through the SCC, is being held up as an exemplar by the first stage funding providers. These needs to be promoted on the SCC web site. NB to action.
  - The Board expressed its thanks to Euan Henderson, James Hilder, Bruce Taylor and Alison Gainsford for ensuring the success of phase one of the project.
5. Longrigg Woodland:
  - An issue over Sunday working has been raised and resolved.
  - The next priority is to complete the access road into the woodland.



- It was noted that increasing fuel costs incurred by the contractors are being passed on and that this may affect the longer term margins that the SCC realises from the project.
6. Future strategy/planning
- NB to discuss dates for initial briefing meeting with R. MacIntyre.
7. Marketing:
- NB to chase progress on the newsletter.
  - Further updates have been made to the Oakwood section of the web site. Extra sections are still to be added.
  - The next video will focus on Longrigg Woodland. SW/JJ to progress. Subsequent videos will be on: Craft Hub, Oakwood, Paths Group, Jetty, fishing and the Rainforest Project.
  - It was agreed that more needed to be done to promote the awards made by the SCBF and that where possible requests for images from funded activities should be pursued more actively. NB to discuss with RD.
8. Finance:
- AG provided a financial update and is currently working on the year end accounts.
  - It was noted that there would be no need for an audit, thereby saving audit fees.
  - Sunart Community Enterprise Ltd is now registered for VAT. Oakwood accounts have been amalgamated into those for SCEL, allowing VAT to be reclaimed on operational expenses.
9. AOB:
- L. Cameron MacGregor has asked it would be possible to step back from her SCC duties until 2027. The Board unanimously agreed that LCM was an important part of the team and the operation of the SCC benefitted from her skills and knowledge. It was therefore agreed to approve her application, with the request that if required she be available to provide ideas or feedback on ongoing projects.
  - Agricultural Show:
    - It was concluded that there would be insufficient volunteers available to operate the burger stall this year.
    - The decision was therefore taken to have a small exhibition space to promote the activities of the SCC. This would be positioned alongside that for Dualchas.
    - It was noted that the decision was taken with reluctance, as it would mean both a loss of income for the SCC and a break with tradition.
  - Insurance renewal: the renewal premium has been quoted by the existing insurers as £2,418. NB to source alternative quotes.

The next Board meeting will be on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026.

