



# Annual General Meeting

25<sup>th</sup> January 2021,

7pm via Zoom

Present:

Cameron Anson (Chairperson), Stewart MacDougall (Vice Chair), Brik Halcrow (Company Secretary), Tony Jeffree (Director), Martin Putsey (Director), Julie Ward (Director) David Greenhalgh (Director) Alison McKenzie (Director) Neil Harvey (Director), John Clare (Director), Terry Ward, Jenny Wright, Alasdair Satchel, Tracy Mayo, Janna Greenhalgh, Sandy Brunton, Jane Brunton, Sue Hawkes, Nigel Burgess, Neil Harvey, Rutger Emmelkamp, Miek Zwamborn, Jon Lloyd, Wendy Lloyd, Colin Morrison, Rachel Wardle, Hannah Fisher, Gill Morley, Monica Haddock, Sister Pamela, Renatus Derbidge, Emily Wilkins, Anne Baxter, Dot Stewart, Terry Hegarty, Finlay MacDonald, Jane Griffiths, Robert Cameron, Martin Granger, Marilyn Granger, Charley Streather, Lynn Kitching, Adam Kitching, Chris Langthorne, 1 anonymous caller

Staff: Morven Gibson, Celia Compton, Saskia Davidson, Philip Yelder

Apologies: None

## 1. Chairpersons Welcome

Cameron Anson welcomed everyone to the meeting. He acknowledged the impact that Covid-19 has had on the community. The local response to Covid has marked that our island is resilient and resourceful. The staff have had to adapt of a new way of working from home alongside responding to the new challenges of the pandemic and with the increased childcare and home-schooling responsibilities.

CA gave a summary of SWMID'S activities during the 2019 to 2020 financial year:

**Bendoran** – We were delighted to conclude the purchase of Bendoran in October 2019 on behalf of the community with thanks to funding awarded from the Scottish Land Fund. We have plans to develop our community owned seaweed farm, lease of part of the site for a locally run water sports social enterprise and, in the future, provide facilities such as moorings.



**Tiroran Community Forest** – Due to the lengthy and challenging process of approving our long-term forest management plan, the year 2019 -2020 was not a good year for timber and haulage.

However, there were a lot of positives:

- Increasing the biodiversity of Tiroran with 7,000 native broadleaves planted in April and May 2019 within a fenced protected area;
- Collaboration with Woodland Tribe to create a natural playground in 2019;
- Collaboration with local weaver, Alex James, to create willow sculptures representing historic figures to be placed at Knockroy.
- Progress, although slow, on developing Woodland Croft masterplan with our planning consultant Richard Heggie, Jamie MacIntyre of the Woodland Crofts partnership and members of our woodland croft sub-group.

**Columba Centre** – South West Mull Makers continues to occupy the Columba Centre and had a very successful year. We also saw the Ross of Mull Community Gym open with lots of users every day.

**Staffing** – During the period 2019-2020 we employed 5 members of staff.

## 2. Minutes of 2019 AGM

Charley Streather proposed that the minutes be accepted, Stewart MacDougall seconded the motion. The minutes were duly accepted.

## 3. Year 2019/2020 Finance Report and presentation of 2019/2020 approved Management Accounts

Brik Halcrow, Company Secretary, reported on the 2019-2020 Management Accounts.

During the year 2019/2020 the turnover of SWMID was £75,164. Due to the delayed forest management plan, timber sales were very low - only £1,892. However, we are very grateful to Tilhill forestry for their offer of an advanced payment to tide us over and keep a positive cashflow.

Grant income this year amounted to £59,850. This comprised grants from Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), Scotgrad and The Scottish Land Fund. Also, several smaller grants to cover project costs.



2019-2020 was a difficult year financially and highlighted the need for SWMID to develop different income streams.

Covid-19 and lockdown impacted on our financial situation and we started 2020-2021 in an uncomfortable position. However, thanks to support from the Scottish Government's Third Sector Resilience Fund, further revenue funding from the Scottish Land Fund and finally some timber income, our position improved.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise committed to 50% fund the General Manager's post for a further two years.

Going forward we are focused on getting the seaweed farm in operation with the expectation that this will help to cover core costs as well as exploring other income streams for the forest.

The 2019/20 accounts were accepted by the Board at our December Board meeting.

#### 4. Election of Directors

In line with the requirements of our Articles of Association, one third of our Directors step down at each AGM. They can be re-elected if they decide to stand again. This year, Alison McKenzie, Tony Jeffree, David Greenhalgh and Martin Putsey stepped down. Unfortunately, Tony and Alison will not be standing again and were thanked for their contribution.

Brik Halcrow proposed, and Stewart MacDougall seconded that David Greenhalgh and Martin Putsey be re-elected to the Board.

Two new Directors, Anne Baxter and Hannah Fisher, have stepped up to join the Board. Stewart MacDougall proposed, and John Clare seconded that Anne and Hannah join the Board.

#### 5. Our 2020 and beyond

Morven Gibson (General Manager) gave a quick update on our current projects.

**Bendoran** – We recently found out that we had successfully secured a grant of £99,948 from the Islands Green Recovery Fund to cover the first steps in redeveloping the site, including creating space for car-parking and demolishing the ruined building. At the time of the meeting we were waiting to hear from Argyll and Bute Planning Department and Building Standards before commencing with the work.



**Aird Fada Seaweed Farm** – We were successful in being awarded £68,539 from the European and Maritime Fisheries fund to cover the installation of the marine infrastructure to go with the seaweed farm. We are looking at other funds to make up the small funding gap we have for capital costs.

We submitted a marine license application to Marine Scotland last summer after consultation with local fisherman. The license application has been through all the necessary checks with Marine Scotland and, at the time of the meeting, was live for public consultation. Once we have the license, we will go back to the Crown Estate to issue us with a full lease of the sea site.

### **Community Garden with Philip Yelder**

Located in the grounds of the Ross of Mull Historical Centre, the community garden has made some great progress in the past few months. The aims of the garden are to grow as much food as possible, grow trees for planting in the forest, improve people's wellbeing, reduce social isolation and to have a space that welcomes all ages of the community with a variety of activities on offer. We received several small grants to kickstart the project, alongside an active steering group and volunteers. Next steps include raising funds for a poly tunnel for the site and securing funding for a part-time garden worker.

## **6. Owing our Future with Alasdair Satchel**

Alasdair Satchel gave a presentation about Owing our Future which is a consultation project funded by Community Land Scotland. Alasdair has been working with SWMID and other community landowners to look at how communities have coped with Covid, what they believe their future looks like and how this is impacted by community land ownership.

## **7. Any Other Business**

Janna Greenhalgh suggested that SWMID investigate the production of sea salt at Bendoran.

Charley Streather raised the ongoing issue of the CCTV camera on the neighbouring property at Bendoran. Neil Harvey has been liaising with the owners and will continue to do so in order to resolve this situation.

Stewart MacDougall thanked Cameron and staff for managing to keep everything moving forward during the pandemic.