

Nether Lochaber Community Association Meeting
Thursday 16 June 2022 at 7.30pm by Zoom

Attendees	C. Barnett, L. Glaze (Chair), I. Jenner, G. Macintyre, G. Milne, B. Pearson, S. Pearson
Apologies	R. Barnett

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Roger Barnett.

2. Minutes of last NLCA meeting Proposed and seconded

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Treasurer's statement

Most recent figure from the account is from 1st June: £7,215.41

Reserves.

We do not need to hold any at present. It may demonstrate good financial management if we do. However, we don't have any generic funds with which to do so. For example we have surplus funds from the Picnic Site money, but we cannot hold these to meet contingencies. We would need to work back and calculate the unrestricted fund total, but it is highly likely that there will not be enough to set aside for reserves.

The chair has deposited £2,000 in the account. This is from the hydro project and we will be in receipt of £500 per annum. These funds are not ringfenced. Previously the Community Council (CC) used to fund some groups in the village. These could be used for that purpose as the CC are no longer in receipt of Council funding.

The suggestion was to have an application scheme where a group could receive £50 for their chosen event. For example, the village hall, Children's Christmas party, and the Christmas lunch. These groups used to get a donation from the CC each year. The criteria should be that the group is based in Lochaber and NL. G Milne will check that these funds have been received. All agreed that this was a good idea and the chair said it could be advertised.

4. Inchree Project

We have successfully submitted the Stage 1 application form for the Scottish Land Fund (SLF). Questions were received from SLF which have been responded to. We are awaiting a response, which should arrive around mid-June.

We are currently working on an application to the Investing in Communities (IIC) fund. The fund opened for applications on 31st May and the deadline is 28th June. Most of the application answers are completed, but C Barnett has asked for help from S Pearson with the budget template. Once complete we will ask Iain to look over this to check for any omissions and then send it.

The UK Government Community Ownership Fund is open and has a deadline of 12th August. We have submitted an expression of interest initially, and on the basis of this they will decide whether or not we will be invited to submit an application. We anticipate we will get a response soon.

I Jenner met Emma Thorpe (Cuilchenna house) to discuss the walled garden being used as a community growing space. She is meeting her partner next week and Iain said the most important thing to be clarified is what form a lease agreement might take if the community were to use this space. They have no plans to develop the walled garden. We would need it for at least five years, preferably ten. We would need to put up polytunnels and raised beds etc as well as encouraging people to get involved.

The lease of the walled garden is central to the IIC application. That application is about tackling poverty issues and a transition to net zero, so we are pitching the application to develop a community hub BUT we want to lease the walled garden and turn it into a community market garden and have a vegetable box scheme set up to supply the residents of NL with affordable fresh produce. Inchree barn needs to be a passive building. The bulk of funding from the IIC application if successful will be for the walled garden, but they could also give us £20,000 towards the redevelopment of the barn.

Originally the idea was that the barn would take over the housing association area. The ground inside the walled garden has been well maintained which gives it an advantage over the housing association land. It was used for rearing hens in the past. It has heavy nutrient soil, and as it is walled it has its own microclimate. Developing a similar sized area at Inchree would be a much longer development. The walled garden could be up and running in a year.

5. Village Hall

Work was done around the hall on activity day. There is an issue as it comes under the umbrella of the CC but the village hall needs a committee to run it. Do you know anyone who would be interested in this? The chair of CC wants to have a meeting so this topic will come up and there will be a request for committee members. The hall is limping along. There ought to be a proper group that can make decisions about it.

G Milne said he had tried to rod the drainage but it is still an issue. There is still spilling water so this needs to be addressed. There are major structural issues and some things cannot be fixed.

6. Tubs, garden areas

One or two tubs need replaced and it was agreed that these should be checked prior to replacing them to check exactly how many need replaced. We might be able to get a better price if we buy in bulk. All members agreed to check the tubs nearest their area.

It was suggested that we should replace the troughs at the picnic site. There are leftover materials at the village hall from building the CC noticeboards. I Jenner will work out what is needed and report back to us.

There are some problematic tubs that need to be moved, but we would need to get a skilled and willing tractor driver. There is development work starting at Onich church so inevitably the tubs there will be moved. I Jenner will speak to Thomas McLean who is the handyman at the church. We will need to think about where to put the two tubs being removed from the church, for example Creag Mhor, the bus stop at Corran – opposite the Birchbrae planter with the rowing boat, or perhaps at the Old Town sign.

7. Creag Mhor

Some walling has been done, but there is still work to do. We have had positive feedback about the mosaic. All agreed that we would be happy to put a plaque there from the artists

and we should have something about the community effort, too. We should consider this and come up with suitable wording at the next meeting. There are planters at the picnic site which have a flat surface, and we could add something to these.

8. Picnic site

The picnic site needs weeding. Jennifer reported lots of rubbish in the area below the picnic site. The bins are not being emptied regularly. The commercial collection doesn't seem to be happening as planned (Thursdays). Caution was raised about asking for bigger capacity bins as inevitably they attract people getting rid of rubbish locally to save them going to the recycle centre in Fort William. One of the team should check the bin on a Thursday.

9. Activity day

Meet at the picnic site for weeding on Sunday 3rd July 2022.

10. 500 club draw

This has not been done yet. G Macintyre said that he has some new people interested so will check for payments from them before doing the draw.

11. Correspondence

There was some bank correspondence regarding changes to the account. Pat Douglas from Sustrans thanked us for the completion of the mosaic. We need to submit a final report to them, which Helen Michie and I Jenner will complete.

12. AOB

The chair reported that there was no response to the request for an events organizer post.

Midsummer BBQ on the beach: This will take place on 25th June at 5pm on North Ballachulish beach. I Jenner will ask Alison Grieve about back-up food, but we will ask that people bring their own sausages! S Pearson will ask the Gleaner manager if they would donate charcoal.

Purchase of Water Tank: G Macintyre reported he had negotiated the price to £0! However, we will have to pay our own legal fees which will be around £2k. The school wish to be involved and it would be a good project for them.

Community bus: Is now up and running.

13. Date of next meeting

Thursday 21st July 2022. 7:30 pm by Zoom.