



**STÒRAS UIBHIST**  
1 Bornish, South Uist HS8 5SA  
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## **Letter to Members**

Dear Member,

### New Chief Executive for Stòras Uibhist

August has seen the arrival of our new Chief Executive, Huw Francis, and his family and I am sure you will join with me in welcoming them to Stòras Uibhist. Huw is from South West Wales and has worked in the both private and public sector in business advisory and consultancy roles since originally qualifying as an engineer.

### Communication with Outside Agencies

Over the summer, members of the Board, as well as the Chief Executive, have written to, or met with, the Scottish Government, our MSP and MP to secure ongoing support for developing the company and the major projects under development.

During August the Estate has been visited by Drew Ratter of the Crofters Commission as well as members of HIE Community Land Unit to view the progress of the community buyout project in general and some of the individual projects the company is working on. Huw Francis will be meeting with both organisations regularly to secure their continued support in developing the wider economy of the Estate area.

### Crofting

The computerisation of the crofting records is progressing and we also hope to participate in a pilot project with the Crofters Commission that will digitise the mapping of the Estate and crofts, which will assist us in better managing and developing the crofting aspect of the community.

A submission has also been made by the Board of Stòras Uibhist to the Shucksmith Inquiry into Crofting outlining the need for greater powers to be ceded to Community Landlords by Scottish Government Ministers to allow for greater community control of economic and social development and crofter diversification in line with the community's own expectations and desires.

### Grogarry Lodge

After a quiet summer season Grogarry Lodge will be busy from now until the end of the season in December. We have already begun some initial marketing of the lodge for next summer through VisitScotland and received enquiries from potential visitors for the 2008 season. We are actively seeking editorial space in magazines to promote Grogarry Lodge, the fishing and the wider tourism sector on the Estate.

A development plan is being produced on ways to upgrade the Lodge facilities, extend the season and attract new visitors by offering additional services and activities from outside providers in the Estate area. We expect some of the information gained to be of use to other tourism service providers on the Estate and we plan to share any relevant knowledge gained with them.

### Golf Course

Interest in the Askernish Golf Course development is still high around the world and regular requests for information on a completion date are received by the Golf Club. A new

committee has been formed that includes representatives from Askernish Crofting Township and Stòras Uibhist to help address and resolve the current issues affecting the crofters and the course development. Three meetings have been held so far and we are confident of moving the project forward.

#### Renewable Energy Projects

Investigative and planning work for renewable energy projects is continuing and work should begin soon on a visual impact study prior to a public consultation exercise on one of the prime sites, as well as feasibility studies for other sites.

#### Lochboisdale Port of Entry

Work is continuing on the Lochboisdale Port of Entry project and Stòras Uibhist are meeting with partner organisations covering project management, transport, housing and commercial premises to develop initial plans and project goals for public consultation purposes and to secure financing.

#### Estate Management

A review of the Estate assets, including the quarries, fish farms, fishing, other leases and sporting resources, is currently under way and we are looking to regularise and standardise our commercial arrangements for the maximum benefit of the community.

On the Estate, geese have continued to be a problem and to better help assess the level of problem and the worst affected areas we would ask that all requests for geese control work be directed to the Stòras Uibhist office in Bornish, so we can log the problem and co-ordinate responses from the keepers. This will help us better assess the worst affected areas and develop a long-term plan to try and improve the situation.

We will also set up a similar system for monitoring and responding to problems with the deer and would ask that all issues with marauding deer be reported to the Stòras Uibhist office too.

#### Communication

At the recent board meeting the directors of Stòras Uibhist agreed to report back to the community on the proceedings and we are currently working on producing the minutes in a format for general publication. We anticipate the report being available on the Stòras Uibhist website and in public places throughout the Estate area.

Our list of email addresses continues to grow and increasing numbers of members are now receiving their letter from the Chairman electronically. If you have not yet informed us of your email address please complete the slip at the end of this letter and return it to the Estate office.

If you require any further information on the development plans for Stòras Uibhist please do not hesitate to contact us at the Bornish office.

Angus MacMillan  
Chairman  
Stòras Uibhist

## Members Contact Information Reply Form

We are continuing our drive to increase the number of newsletters sent out by email and would ask that you return the slip below so we can add you to the email list, if we have not already done so.

Please also remember to notify us of any change in your contact details and/or email address.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_