

**Applecross Community Company AGM**  
**28<sup>th</sup> March 2017, 7.30pm**

**Present:** Judith Fish (Chair), Owen Kilbride, Elodie Matthews, Nick Goldthorpe, Jill Olsen, Alison Macleod, Roslyn Clarke, Valerie Hodgkinson, Henry Robertson, Alasdair Macleod, Jacqueline Liuba, Sean Kilbride, Mike Summers, Roger Evans, Phil Buckley, Ewen Gillies, Chris Ward, Frankie Ward, Tim Daplyn

**Apologies:** Daniel McCowan, Rober Macrae, Marion Macrae, Gordon Cameron, Sarah Paramor, Aron Paramor

### **1. Welcome from the chair**

Judith welcomed all who attended.

It has only been 10 months since the last AGM where it has been 14 or 15 months between the last 2 or 3 AGMs. We have moved the AGM to March and will aim to keep it round that date as it suits most people better, before the season starts.

### **2. Approval of minutes of previous AGM on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2016**

Minutes approved by Phil Buckley and seconded by Alasdair Macleod

### **3. Chair's report**

Judith reported that 2016 was on-of-a-kind, a year of great contrasts. Great opportunities and successes, yet very stern challenges. It was a year when the company performed exceptionally well in some very difficult times and the members have remained loyal to the company and she thanks them for it.

We have a better handle on admin, this is paid from income to the company and isn't grant funded. Mostly income from calendar sales.

The board of directors meets once a month to make sure everything is proceeding smoothly and to plan ahead. Zuzana, who does the admin takes minutes from these meetings.

Two volunteer boards (ACC and ACT) are now operating properly, meeting regularly and are clear on what their roles are. There is a good communication established between the two.

Judith thanked numerous volunteers who continue to support the company with their time and skills, namely Ewen and Ali (who look after the hydro and filling station), Sean (who gives more than his paid time to broadband issues and filling station as well), Duncan Fraser (with his ongoing support towards filling station maintenance) and Valerie (helping out in many ways regarding design of newsletters, signs etc) The toilets are running well, donations continue to come in.

The company contributed £1500 to go towards a purchase of defibrillators.

Funding from Highlands and Island Enterprise (HIE) to ACC to allow employment of local development officer was recently extended for another year, until the end of March 2018.

AppleNet is being and managed by the trading company (ACT). We are now connected to the West Coast backbone but have still some work to do to ensure it works to its full capacity. We are looking for people to provide support. Training would be provided and they will be paid to attend training and to provide support.

Local energy use from the hydro scheme is in discussion. New developments in use of local energy which will increase the benefits from the hydro scheme, income and access to affordable heat. We've been reassessing the potential of a private wires scheme, but more recent developments elsewhere have been in "virtual private wires" and this might be the way to go. All fairly new and we want to make sure that the right option for Applecross is chosen, but it's encouraging that so much more research and development is going into this now. We won £12,500 from Marks&Spencer Energy competition that will be put towards the cost. It's great to see the completion of the new cladding and very soon we can hold our opening ceremony.

We have officially applied to NHS to buy the land for housing. It will be one of the first sales to go through under the terms of the new Community Empowerment Act. Feasibility work is underway and we have started work on a business plan to support application for funding to build houses. We already have £56,000 from SSE Development Fund.

This is no good without care provision, so we are working with Scottish Care and Highland Home Carers to help HHC to set up a sustainable care service in Applecross to provide support for older people so they can stay in their own homes. We have an Open day tomorrow here at the hall from 2 to 6.30pm, for all interested in learning more about being a carer and all interested in the possibilities of having a carer to help. It will be a flexible service which allows people to identify the type of support they need. Highland Home Carers will employ, train and support the carers.

We are planning to bring in Planning Aid Scotland to work with all parties (ACC, Community Council, the Estate, Highland Council etc) to identify appropriate areas of development.

Judith mentioned that she thought this would be her achievement in six years, but failed to secure any land for affordable development despite many conversations.

Owen is a representative of ACC on the steering group (part of Estate Consultations), the group met up 4 nights in the last 4 weeks. The group tried to understand the meaning of the suggested "Shared vision" statement, which was confusing to start with, plenty interesting discussions, but slow progress.

It was concluded that there are communications issues between the trust and the community and an ongoing issue with an access to land. The group has put together an Interim statement which had gone to the Trust. The statement sets out conclusions of the group, trying to form a "shared vision" with the trust included. They are hoping to form a permanent group, this is still in progress.

In conclusion ACC is in a good place with great team and a solid strategic plan. We are clear on our financial framework. We have a good portfolio of projects and more to come with promising returns. Judith thanked all for their support, her colleagues, to Alison and the whole team. ACC has had to change and may be a small company, but is agile and ready for the future. That concludes Judith sixth year and last chair report to members. She is stepping down from her role as a Chairlady and from the board of directors after serving her 6 years.

## **Question time**

Query was raised by Roger Evans regarding the progress of the Toscaig pier project, wondering whether this is still in discussion. Alison explained that a draft of feasibility study was drawn up, application submitted, but still ongoing. Decent feasibility study is essential.

Mike Summers asked for a formal statement of the relationship between AppleJuice and ACC. Alison explained that the rules of AppleJuice entitle to have 3 representatives from ACC on the board of AppleJuice, profits from AppleJuice will be passed onto ACC. By profits, it was explained, it's meant all monies left after paying all expenses, shareholders etc. There is a limit as to the percentage of profits that will be passed to ACC.

Phil Buckley raised a question about the use of the profits passed onto ACC. The response provided was that it will be decided on an AGM what the money is going to be used for, separate from AppleJuice board.

#### **4. Election of new directors**

2 new directors have been appointed and welcomed by the chair.

Roslyn Clarke was proposed by Thomas O'Halloran and seconded by Alasdair Macleod.  
Valerie Hodgkinson was proposed by Gordon Cameron and seconded by Alistair Bruce.  
Henry Robertson was co-opted as a representative of the Community Council.

Judith and Elodie have left the board.

The board of directors after the AGM will therefore consist of: Owen Kilbride, Nick Goldthorpe, Jill Olsen, Roslyn Clarke, Valerie Hodgkinson, Daniel McCowan and Henry Robertson.

#### **5. Approval of accounts**

Accounts were approved by Ewen Gillies and seconded by Roger Evans.

Roger asked if there could perhaps be more up to date financial information in addition to the annual accounts. The board responded that this is not usual, but can be looked into.

#### **6. Appointment of accountant**

The accountant David Govan from Voluntary Action Lochaber will carry on being the company's accountant. This was approved by Phil Buckley and seconded by Chris Ward.

#### **7. AOB**

Alison presented the LDO's report:

##### Housing project on NHS surgery grounds

This will consist of potentially 3 houses (bungalows) for the elderly and disabled. They will be situated on the NHS surgery grounds looking out to the sea, accessible, with a nice set up. 2-bedroom houses have been suggested by the NHS and Dr Duffy as supposed to 1 bedroom, for example if a carer or a family member needs to stay overnight.

NHS is willing to sell the ground to ACC. An application to Rural Housing has been put in as well as Scottish Land Fund application. We are now waiting for Community Empowerment Act to come into place.

We already have £56,000 from SSE Sustainable development fund. Rural housing fund application has been submitted. Financial costs show that the project could bare a small loan.

Highlands Small Communities Housing trust will be allocating the houses to people that need them (not ACC). ACC will own the houses though.

Highland Home Carers and ACC will be holding an open afternoon on 29<sup>th</sup> March at the hall during lunch club. All people in the need of care and interested in providing care are encouraged to attend.

#### Extra heat

The grid constraints won't be resolved any time soon therefore using energy locally is being looked at instead. Private wires scheme has been explored in the past, but appeared too complicated. Alison has been dealing with consultants (EE Ricardo) who are assessing something simpler called "virtual private wires" (currently being run on Mull and Orkney). This means that the excess energy would be used locally.

#### Planning Aid Scotland

As mentioned in the Chair's report, ACC is thinking about bringing in this organisation to help the community assess potential suitable sites for housing. The difference will be that they will be working with all other organisations within Applecross at the same time.

#### DTAS heating oil buying scheme

This is an offer of buying heating oil at reduced rate for residents via DTAS (Development Trusts Association Scotland, which ACC is member of). It could be another income generator for ACC as well as beneficial to residents.

#### **Question time**

Chris Ward raised question about possibility of other people being able to move to these houses should there be no demand for them at a particular time. The response was – possibly, but this would depend on circumstances.

Roger Evans suggested building poly tunnels in order to use the extra heat, and grow vegetables as well as provide employment. This was a welcomed idea, however it was stressed that the project would need to be close by as costs of cabling are astronomical. ACC is opened to options.

The meeting was drawn to an end by Phil complimenting Judith on her contribution whilst serving on the board for 6 years and on the company's achievements.

**The meeting closed at 8.40pm**