

Development Officer Update – 19th September 2017

Seilebost School

We now have plans from Architects and prices from QS (should have them for the meeting.) The LEADER Officer Charlene has asked if we are proceeding with funding application for the deadline on the 11th of October. In order for us to tick any of the boxes for LEADER the artist's residency idea would be the only one that would work, but we would get funding for the part of the school that the artists would be using i.e. one classroom. They asked that we price for the one part of the building, and then it would be 50% of that cost. They also require a full business plan for the artist's residency option. We can discuss this at the meeting.

Rural Housing

All bids for the work have been received and circulated round the directors, looking for a decision to be made on who will complete the work for us. I also submitted an expression of interest to the Rural Housing Fund, they will aim to respond with initial comments and an indication on whether our application will be supported to go forward to application stage within 15 working days (2nd October) John McIver from Hebridean Housing Partnership also contacted me to discuss future plans for building houses in the area, they are keen to see the results of the feasibility study and would like to work with us again.

John Muir Trust

Sandy and his team came to Talla Na Mara on the 7th September to do some outside work for us, they cleared fence wire and old fence poles. They also gathered the old rock and stone around the building so this can be made into a natural bench/seat. This will possibly happen next year when they come in the spring. Sandy has said they usually have a professional dyker in the group.

Archaeology

Kevin Murphy (council archaeologist) and Nick Smith (manager of Comhairle Heritage Service) came down to the office to meet with Mark and myself at the beginning of September. They gave us some information and are keen to help with any future plans we have to establish an archaeological/heritage and history trail. Is this something the directors feel we should proceed with? The primary aim of this project will be to introduce more information on various highlighted sites for tourists and community benefit alike. If you are happy for us to proceed we can ask for opinions at AGM on starting this project.

VHF System/Generator/Community Emergency Plan

The VHF test – this should be complete by the meeting on the 19th with Murdo, Neil C, Richard & Finlay.

Generator – Ian Ross (Barnies) & Donnie MacDonald (DTGen) have made contact with each other to discuss how to install the 50kVA generator (& a suitable compatible auto-changeover) in to the electrical installation. Ian also sent Donnie the Electrical Schematic, I have a copy available to view. Ian suggested WHT ask CDMM to re-design the scheme to integrate the generator, although after I spoke with Donnie he thinks it may be more straightforward. He has recommended an ‘interlock switch’ that will ensure the mains and generator can’t be on at the same time. This is very important should we be relying on volunteers to come and turn on the generator in the event of a power outage. It may be an idea to select a few people for some generator training and what to do with switches etc. in an emergency. Any suggestions would be welcomed. Donnie will keep in contact with Ian Ross so we can get this all in place before the winter sets in.

Lisa MacDonald

Development Officer

14th September 2017