



## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GAIRLOCH & DISTRICT HERITAGE COMPANY LTD

4 March 2026

Gairloch Museum. 4.30pm.

Present Allan Templeton; Corinna Annetts; Pauline Butler; Liz Forrest; Peter Lynn; Roy Macintyre; Anne MacLennan; Gordon McIntosh; Sadie Paige; Jean Ross; Eilidh Smith; Scott Steedman (Zoom); Alastair Stephen; Ben Thomas (Zoom).

Apologies Guy Seaman.

1. Conflicts of Interest

No potential conflict of interest was declared with respect to the Agenda.

2. Minutes of the Board meeting of 7 January 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 January were agreed to be a correct record, proposed by Jean and seconded by Anne. Matter arising:

Advertising consent has now been given for the proposed Geology Trail. Planning permission is required for the seat along the route.

3. Report of the Executive Group

The Executive Group met on 12 February. Notes from the meeting have been circulated to inform of progress on action points. Further to this:

Roy and Irene were thanked for their commitment to the Museum over so many years with an informal dinner and a gift presentation.

4. Financial report

Pete's monitoring reports on our budget forecast to end 2026, and detailing our first two months of trading in 2026, have been circulated. He indicated some updating to the original draft budget for 2026, including revised targets for visitor numbers, café and shop sales. A further £4K has been committed to the Geology Trail project, and approximately £6K has already been spent on essential repairs, painting and maintenance. The wages for all staff are being increased by the 6.7% uplift in the Real Living Wage to maintain differentials.

Our income in January and February was considerably better than in recent years: the café being open has had a positive knock-on effect on other income sources.

Pete continues to be alert to the financial implications of operating a trading company for our non-charity activities.

5. Financial Strategy Group

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 January and a Marketing Report have been circulated. The latter has also been sent to the donors who are funding the Marketing Officer post. Allan reminded us that a further £2K per annum is required to fully meet those costs.

Sadie has offered to attend an online webinar hosted by AIM on 'Fragile and Flourishing' on 19 March and will report back to the FSG. Eilidh and/or Helen may well also join the session.

6. Curator's report

Corinna's report has been circulated. It covered: Acquisitions; Gaelic; Grants; *Whatever the Weather* funding; Roundhouse update. Further to this:

- i) The Board was delighted to hear that a donation has been offered to secure the continuation of *Whatever the Weather* sessions.
- ii) After considerable discussion of its possible provenance, relevance to the area, potential costs of restoration to playing standard, and appropriate location within the Museum, it was agreed that we will decline the offer of a Golden Tone Reed Organ.
- iii) The Board agreed that Obj.205, a bench, should be deaccessioned.
- iv) Corinna spoke to a proposal from Archaeo Build to collaborate with Gairloch Museum as its charitable project partner with respect to training in traditional turf construction skills. This is only available through attending courses in Iceland. Archaeo Build would contribute £1250 for the staff costs to manage related grant applications as well as provide admin support. Demonstrating such active partnership would underpin our roundhouse grant applications and there would be longer-term benefits in developing our knowledge and understanding of heritage crafts for the future maintenance of the roundhouse. Corinna is interested in the course and knows of another possible trainee. The Board agreed in principle for the Museum to act as the named lead applicant, with Corinna to agree further details with Achaeo Build.

7. Events and Outreach

Ell's updated record of events recently undertaken and planned (from January to May) was circulated. Almost all have attracted good attendance, including the most recent one on the West of Scotland Herring Hunt, with its complex technical demands. The postponed Sea Eagle talk is being rescheduled. The Museum Open Day on 28 February was very well supported. The Board also noted Sarah's updates on *Whatever the Weather Wednesdays*, outreach and school visits.

8. Exhibitions

Notes from the most recent EPG meeting, 27 January, with the updates on planning undertaken, have been circulated. There has been strong interest in the current exhibitions and the associated film in the Upper Gallery is working well. Corinna is in contact with Glasgow Life Museums with respect to the desired loan of a masterpiece. They appear receptive to our request, which she will now formalise.

9. 'Ever Greener' task force

General maintenance work was carried on in February and plans are being made for ongoing cultivation of the 'potato beds' with plants used traditionally for medicine and dyeing. Wire tree guards are being acquired - more would be welcome. In due course, the group will prepare a Biodiversity Plan to meet Highland Council's planning permission requirements.

10. Operational matters

- i) Front of House: Eilidh reported that most volunteers had attended the Season Starter session on March. The Museum is open for 4 days each week through March, before full 6-day opening from April. Barbara continues to juggle the Front of House rota, given varying availability. Irene has ensured that there is good shop stock, with more to come in April.
- ii) Café: Jean reported that we have now recruited another full-time member of staff for Am Bàrd who is willing to work on Saturdays, though we still need to appoint a second Saturday assistant. There will be a meeting at 2pm on 20 March of all café staff, to which Board members are invited. Purchases for the 2026 season include new tablecloths, another blackboard and T-shirts for the team. The Buffalo Grill is defective once again and requires replacement; Eilidh is in contact with the suppliers. The Pancake Day opening had been extremely successful, as had the external catering bookings, and Pudding Club will resume in the autumn.

Jean will discuss with the café team how to make best use of the additional storage space being made available below the stairs. This will require screening - possibly a curtain will suffice.

- iii) Facilities and Health & Safety: Guy's overview had been circulated. Procedures and Risk assessments have been reviewed and revised over the winter months. It was agreed that we will have to commit the expenditure necessary to resolve the long-standing gents' urinal flushing system problems, in line with his recommendations.  
The external render repairs have recently been undertaken by Simpsons and it was agreed that we should pay the amount requested towards the costs.

11. Any Other Business

- i) Allan advised the Board that Guy has informed us that he will be moving away from the area. He is willing to continue with his current commitments until that time. We will then need another Board member to be the link with our staff on premises issues, and also to be on the 'call-out' rota - volunteer(s) to make themselves known, please!
- ii) Pauline is giving a talk about the history of the Museum to the Dingwall U3A on 16 April. Non-members are welcome: <https://dingwall.u3asite.uk/events/>
- iii) Roy advised that, given the delays, he needs to re-cost the materials that will be required for the Geology Trail, and that the estimated costs are not yet fully covered by donations. There are various geology-related events in the near future which may offer opportunity to encourage financial support.

12. Summary of Action Points

**Roy** to prepare a Planning application for the proposed seat for the Geology Trail.

**Corinna** to discuss further details with Archaeo Build about the proposed partnership for turf construction skills development.

**Corinna** to put in a formal application for a masterpiece loan from Glasgow Life Museums.

**Sadie** (and likely also **Eilidh and/or Helen**) to participate in AIM's 'Fragile and Flourishing' webinar, and report back to the FSG.

**Pauline** to begin work on a Biodiversity Plan for the Outdoor Museum grounds.

**Jean** to provide Pauline with details for the café employee contracts for 2026.

**Guy** to arrange the necessary repairs to the gents' urinal flushing system.

13. Dates of next meetings

The next Executive meeting will take place on Thursday 29 April.

The next full Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 13 May at 4.30pm.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5.50 pm.