

Curator's Report 9th November 2022

Building and Grounds

The controller for the roof ventilation is not working and the electrician cannot work out why. Nor can they figure out what the timer under the reception desk is for. We have been given a lead to find the lead electrician who did the installation and I am trying to track him down.

Simpsons are unable to help with the ventilation and car park sign repairs as they do not have anyone available at the moment. They suggest we find a local contractor.

MGS have indicated that we can apply for an uplift to our capital resilience grant. The application form is brief and we need to set out a case for financial need, emphasising the impact of paying the overspend from our reserves. The deadline is 25th November.

Collections

The application I submitted to the SCA Twenty Treasures competition was successful and our item has been included in their 20th anniversary exhibition. Allan and Gillian Templeton will attend a reception at the Scottish Parliament on 23rd November to celebrate.

Sofie and I had a meeting with Archives Hub about exporting our archive data onto their platform, which would make it searchable remotely. Sofie is reading up on the technical aspects and we will trial this with a small section of the archive.

Since the last board meeting, MGS have announced that they are directing all their funds for this financial year to resilience. This requires a rethink of the collections project that I was drawing up and I have circulated a paper on this.

Interpretation and Displays

I had a meeting with Rowantree Consulting, the Gaelic Society of Inverness and the Skye Gaelic Trust about the new interpretation panels for the beach carpark. We agreed the way forward for the bards panel and this is now in the pipeline. I am also reviewing the general panel about the village that Rowantree have produced.

As soon as we have the technical specifications for the new solar panel display, we should reengage with Pixelstag. The funds have to be spent by the end of March and time is becoming tight.

Professional Development and Training

I have attended the following professional development sessions since the last board meeting:

i) the MA Trustees Annual dinner at the Tate Britain which was a great opportunity for networking and maintaining our good relationship with Art Fund.

- ii) the AGM of Museums Heritage Highland.
- iii) an information session on Smartify run by XpoNorth.
- iv) a briefing on the next round of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund.
- v) with funding from the Scottish Museums Federation, the MA annual conference in Edinburgh in November and took part in an advocacy event with six other specially selected museums to show MSPs the good work that museums are doing in their communities.

Projects

We have appointed an excellent candidate for our Gaelic Development Officer and I will report more on this at the meeting.

I completed the list of objects for the 'Museum of the Highlands' Digital Hub. They have now requested a number of sound files to go with this and the photographer is coming on 25th November to photograph the objects.

Our HAF roundhouse dig was well supported by volunteers and we had some unusual finds, which will be reported by Tom Gardner in his talk on 17th November.

We have been asked whether we would like to collaborate on a touring project with Community Land Scotland (see attached). My feeling is that we do not have the capacity within the timescale.

I am applying to XpoNorth to be one of five museums and heritage attractions included in their Smartify project, would give us one license for Smartify.org, the resources to make a video about the museum for the platform and 5 days support creating digital content.

Misc

Jen has resigned and replacements have been found. A handover period is taking place. I have circulated a paper to explain this. The funders have been informed.

I have returned SPIs and accounts to High Life who should now release our second tranche of funding.

We had a placement student for a week from Newcastle Upon Tyne who was a very willing helper and really enjoyed her experience at the museum.

Karen Buchanan (Curator)