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

15 July 2026
Gairloch Museum. 4.30pm.

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

Apologies Liz Forrest; Anne MacLennan.

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

2. Minutes of the Board meeting of 13 May 2026
   The minutes of the meeting held on 13 May were agreed to be a correct record, proposed by Jean and seconded by Gordon. There were no matters arising that are not being considered at this meeting.

3. Report of the Executive Group
   The Executive Group met on 15 June. Notes from the meeting have been circulated to inform of progress on action points. Further to this:
   i) Eilidh's contract has been amended, as from 1 July, and she now works four days each week, to take into account extra responsibilities and tasks for retail and marketing aspects of the Museum operation.
   ii) Having stopped the unrecognised debits, and being alert to the potential for fraud, we will continue to take membership payments through Paypal.
   iii) A thorough review of all our general policies has been completed and the revised documents will be tided up and, we hope, serve for the next three years. Amendments can be made whenever necessary to meet changed circumstances. Pauline and Corinna were thanked for working through the considerable admin. required.

4. Financial report
   Pete had provided reports on our income and expenditure to end June, with comparative figures. As always, the weather plays a big part in admission numbers. He has revised some of the original budget forecasts to reflect 2026 reality and it looks likely that we will break even on operational figures with up-front grant payments giving us an end-of-year positive balance. Scott recommended an analysis of 'debtor days' to monitor performance in cash collection and interest earned.
   The monthly figures now include estimated employee 'costs' for front of house/retail duties, for potential Corporation Tax return purposes. Scott proposed this extend to broader overhead costs for the shop, gallery and café areas, to set against any future tax bill.

5. Financial Strategy Group
   Minutes of the FSG meeting of 20 May had been circulated and noted. Gairloch Museum now has three accounts: the Current Account for operational and grant purposes; the 'Endowment' Fund, interest from which will support Museum Collection development and exhibitions; and the

Education and Training Fund, from donations and currently-surplus cash from the business account. A further, short term account has been set up to maximise interest on cash-in-hand. The Chairman and Treasurer are the signatories for each account and expenditure decisions from the two Fund accounts will be made by the Executive Group.

Marketing: Helen's report will be added to the Agenda papers for this meeting. She continues to follow up eight tourism-related contacts arising from the Glasgow trade fair, is optimising the use of the website and Facebook posts to promote exhibitions, and is considering how we might attract lower-income visitors. She has been successful in securing a £1000 photographic bursary from MGS to update our imagery on publicity and there is potential for drone footage to create short reel adverts.

6. Curator's report

Corinna's report has been circulated. It covered: Roundhouse project update; Archaeology; Schools Engagement; Health and Wellbeing Programme; Digital interpretation; Acquisitions; Geology timeline. There was also a paper on her visit to the Crannog Centre. Corrina was commended on the clarity and interest of her papers. Further points arising:

i) The Roundhouse project continues to absorb the great majority of her time, currently including the evaluation of tender responses from traditional craftspeople, ongoing close liaison with the funders, and press releases now that full funding has been secured.

ii) £1K is still needed to fully fund the Geological Trail plans. As it is anticipated that this will be secured through individual donations, the Board agreed that the project could now progress to its delivery stages.

7. Events and Outreach

Ell's updated record of events recently undertaken and planned (from May to October) was circulated. Outreach work has been extended to the Kinlochewe community this year, and the many natural history activities are attracting a different audience, as intended for the role. An ongoing summary of the financial outcomes of the programme was requested as a progress measure against the FSG-set targets. Eilidh confirmed that the data is available. Scott suggested this be presented as a 'dashboard' incorporating outreach, exhibitions and operational financial performance.

Pauline emphasised that there are many intangible and not easily measurable benefits from our ambitious community heritage engagement.

8. Exhibitions

Notes from the most recent EPG meeting, 20 May, with the updates on planning undertaken, have been circulated. Two new exhibitions have just opened and been well received, with some resulting sales. Promotion of the autumn RSA exhibition is now underway. Several of the exhibiting artists are able to attend the preview.

9. Operational matters

i) Front of House & retail: Eilidh's report has been circulated. Further points:
   - the first Monday and Tuesday of July had broken all records for visitor-related income - they were exceedingly wet!
   - two new volunteers have been recruited to help with back office admin.
   - the purchase of new computers for the upgrading of our IT systems has begun as it is too risky to wait, given the overload. Omniscot are advising.
   - there is a noticeable take-up of the vouchers now available at Gairloch Hotel; that there is a temporary VAT reduction on entry costs appears to be relatively unknown to our visitors.

ii) Café: Jean reported that we are still seeking seasonal staff, though two new part-time assistants have joined us recently to replace those who have left. Despite best efforts, Saturday opening is again not feasible this year. The café continues to attract extremely favourable reviews.

The fan saga continues and we are now seeking quotes for a smaller and quieter fan.

iii) Facilities and Health & Safety: Gordon has now received the information from Guy. His report detailed a session with Eilidh and Barbara on 27 May to begin to establish new procedures and review existing snags and maintenance issues, an internal walk round on 22 June (identifying the need to service one of the Fire Doors - Simpsons to be consulted in the first instance) and then an external walk round on 3 July. Action points are being addressed, including changes to the layout of the parking areas to improve access, and filling in potholes. There continues to be an issue with dust from the concrete so Gordon will check the maintenance requirements for the filters on the extractor fans.

10. Any Other Business

i) Pauline advised that our 2025-2027 Forward Plan is due for its first annual review. She and Corinna will undertake this initially, then request those with particular responsibilities for the different sections to check for further updates needed, before circulating to everyone for comment before the next Board meeting. In due course, it would seem appropriate that the FSG integrate both the Forward Plan and the Company Risk Register into their work using the AIM 'fragile to flourishing' museum operation model.

ii) SSEN will be asked to compensate the Museum for the considerable loss of income consequent of the cancellation, at very short notice, of the planned power outage on 24 June. Eilidh will check whether the new date for their work does or does not affect us.

iii) Sadie enquired as to whether the Museum was a member of the Museums Association. The response was that we had been in the past, but, given the fee, had not renewed membership as it was agreed that we were not able to take sufficient advantage of what was available. Corinna will review the costs of both individual and corporate membership, the potential benefits of each, and make a recommendation.

11. Summary of Action Points

Roy to progress the Delivery stage of the Geology Trail.
Pauline to complete the editing of all General Policies and add them to the Board Sharepoint.
Corinna to manage the appointment of craftspeople for the Roundhouse project, once tenders have been received (deadline 28 July).
Eilidh and Ell to collate a summary of the income from the activities programme.
Helen to prioritise the promotion of the RSA Select Exhibition (preview on 4 September).
Barbara to continue to work on resolving the fan noise issue.
Gordon to progress the necessary maintenance of the fire exit door and, if needed, of the filters for the extractor fans.
Pauline and Corinna to draft reviews of the Forward Plan action points and then circulate sections to those responsible for each for further consideration.
Eilidh to contact SSEN requesting compensation for the loss of the day's trading on 24 June.
Corinna to report on the costs and potential benefits of renewing membership of the Museums Association.

12. Dates of next meetings

The next Executive meeting will take place on Monday 24 August.
The next full Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 9 September at 4.30pm.

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