AN SLÈITEACH
SLEAT'S NEWSLETTER

£1

Sleat Community Trust
Sleat Community Council
Camuscross & Duisdale Initiative

Urras Coimhearsnachd Shlèite
Comhairle Choimhearsnachd Shlèite
Iomairt Chamas Chrois & Dhuisdale

and the Sleat Community

An-diugh | a-màireach | còmhla ~ today | tomorrow | together

Geàrr-iomradh de naidheachdan Shlèite November 2026 ~ An t-Samhain 2026

"We are delighted to be sharing our ambitions for the restoration of Armadale Estate" Michael Hutchison of Armadale Estates Ltd and his staff share their development ideas - p3

SLEAT – an amazing community of active people
SLÈITE – coimhearsnachd air leth de dhaoine èasgaidh

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Support our Shops

Our Community shops at Armadale and An Crùbh are not here just for visitors. Our craft and gift shops have much to offer residents. Give them all as much custom as you can over the winter months so that they can develop as an essential part of life in Sleat.

Cùm taic ris na bùithtean againn

Chan ann airson luchd-turais a-mhàin a tha na bùithtean againn ann an Armadal agus aig A' Chrùbh. Tha tòrr aig na bùithtean ciùird is thiodhlacan ri thabhann dhuinne a tha a' fuireach san sgìre cuideachd. Feuch gun toir sibh taic dhaibh cho tric 's as urrainn dhuibh tro mhìosan a' gheamhraidh, gus an urrainn dhaibh cumail orra a' fàs agus a bhith nam pàirt chudromach de bheatha Shlèite.

Remembering Una MacLeod 1934 – 2026

The Funeral Directors place the following announcment

A gathering to remember Una
will be held at An Crùbh
on Friday 25 September between 7 and 9pm.
In keeping with Una's wishes
her ashes will be fired into the sky by rockets during the gathering



An Crùbh was busy with friends, photos and conversations at a Gathering to remember Una MacLeod on Friday 25 September. While we were able to touch only lightly on Una's remarkable life story, everyone knew that her impact on life in the Sleat community was enormous.

Sleat has a lot to thank her for - in her persistence in making sure that public services were delivered as they should be – whether it was buses, the NHS or even the quality of scones in the Stables restaurant.

Una was instrumental is getting a proper bus-stop built at the Sligachan road junction.

An Crùbh wrote

"We would like to express our heartfelt thanks for the generous donations made at Una MacLeod's service in September, which raised over £500.

Una was very fond of An Crùbh and had a particular interest in the Lunch Club, which she considered a very worthwhile part of its work. It is especially fitting that the donations will support something she cared about so much.

Some of Una's beautifully embroidered tablecloths and covers were also made available in return for donations. A couple are still available in the café for anyone who would like one. Donations can be made in cash or by card using our donation station.

We're very grateful to Una's family and to everyone who has contributed. It's a lovely way to remember her and continue supporting something that meant a great deal to her.

An obituary was in the WHFP of Friday 9 October 2026.



Young Traditional Musician Award 2027



Well done to Camuscross singer **Emily Macdonald**, who is through to the **finals for BBC Radio Scotland's Young Traditional Musician Award 2027.**

Emily is currently studying to be a Gaelic high-school teacher at Sabhal Mòr. Well done, Emily!

Neach-ciùil Traidiseanta Òg na Bliadhna 2027

Meal a naidheachd air Emily NicDhòmhnaill à Camas Chros, a tha air àite fhaighinn sa chuairt dheireannaich de cho-fharpais Neach-ciùil Traidiseanta Òg na Bliadhna 2027 aig BBC Radio Alba.

Tha Emily aig an t-Sabhal an-dràsta agus i a' cur roimhpe a bhith na tidsear Gàidhlig aig ìre na h-àrd-sgoile. Tha sinn uile uabhasach moiteil às a soirbheachas.

Sin thu fhèin, Emily!

An award for Lady Claire Macdonald

We congratulate Lady Claire Macdonald OBE on being honoured for her outstanding contribution to rural Scotland at Scotland's flagship rural awards, hosted by Scottish Land and Estates. A full report was printed in the WHFP of 16 October 2026.

Armadale Estate's Development Plan

The Stables was busy on Wednesday 7 October when members of the community came along to see a display of images and maps relating to a wide array of projects planned for the Armadale Estate. There was no formal presentation but **Mr Michael Hutchison**, owner of the Estate, along with staff and consultants, were present to talk to residents.

Afterwards **Chris Guest**, General Manager for Armadale Estate Ltd sent us this message:-

"We are delighted to be sharing our ambitions for the restoration of Armadale Estate, with the castle as its focal point. When we started, we spoke about an exciting new chapter for Armadale and sharing these ideas is the first real step in that chapter.

The community is at the core of everything we hope to achieve. We want the estate to act as a catalyst for growth in Sleat: creating a wide range of jobs and real career paths for local people, attracting more interest in the peninsula in a way that benefits other local businesses, and helping to pave the way for more resilient infrastructure for everyone who lives and works here.

Our commitment to being responsible custodians hasn't changed. Restoring the castle and the wider estate is as much about safeguarding its heritage, landscape and natural environment for future generations as it is about looking ahead.

We are still at an early stage, and we would like to thank everyone who came along to the recent community event and shared their views, as well as the wider community for the warm welcome and support we have received so far."

"The community is at the core of everything we hope to achieve."



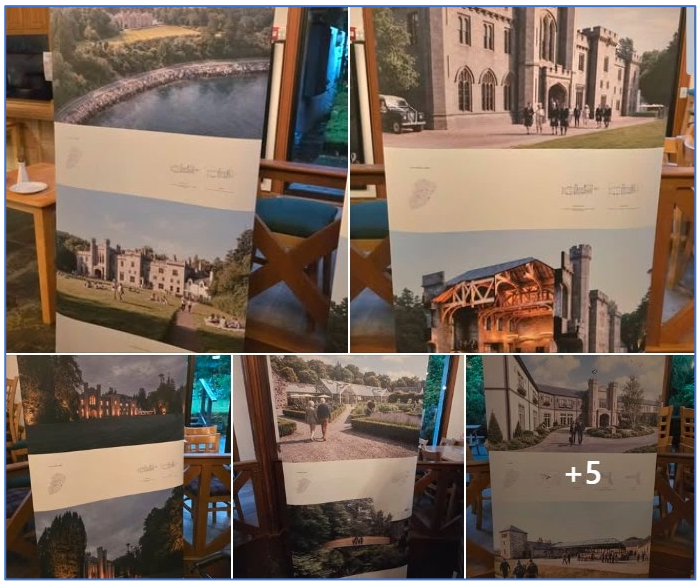
Separate meetings had been held with representatives of Sleat Community Trust, Sleat Community Council, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and the Crofting community.

Donaidh Macdonald, Chair of Sleat Community Trust responded to an enquiry from the WHFP by saying

"We are pleased to see the new owners are committed to significant investment in the area and we look forward to working with them on opportunities of joint interest and to the benefit of our communities.

At its next public meeting in early November, Sleat Community Council will seek feedback from the community on what was presented by the Estate at the meeting last week.

Andrew Tobin *took photos of the stands on 7 October and placed them on FB. You can see them in more detail by going to the Sleat and Everything Sleat FB page for 9 October*



Sleat Community Council Open Meeting

Thursday 5 November at 7pm in Ardvasar Hall.

The main items are:-

Community reaction to Armadale Developments

Care in the Community project.

Agenda on the SCC Facebook pages and website.

The public are welcome to attend

Christmas Market

The Stables, Armadale Castle

28 November from 10am to 3pm

Camuscross and Duisdale Initiative and An Crùbh

It's been another busy few months for CDI and An Crùbh, with new plans taking shape, opportunities for collaboration and plenty happening across the peninsula. Here's a round-up of our latest news.

An Crùbh – another successful season

As we approach the end of the main visitor season, we're pleased to report a good year for both the café and shop, alongside the excellent work of **Eve Majawat** in developing events and hall bookings.

We'll shortly be reviewing our opening hours for the quieter months and will keep everyone updated through social media. We're keen to work positively with other local eateries to ensure that businesses across Sleat have the best possible opportunity to remain open and viable throughout the year.

A huge thank you goes to all the staff, Board and volunteers at An Crùbh for their hard work and commitment.

CDI – planning for the future

It's been a busy year for CDI too, with some exciting projects progressing behind the scenes.

Plans have now been submitted to Highland Council for two bothies, which we hope will provide a much-needed additional income stream. Creating a more sustainable financial footing for An Crùbh is a key priority, allowing CDI to invest in other projects that will benefit the wider community.

We're also keen to develop more activity around Gaelic language and culture. Sleat has a strong Gaelic heritage and remains home to a significant proportion of Gaelic speakers, with Camuscross recording the highest percentage on Skye. We want to make sure that Gaelic continues to have a meaningful place in the life and future of our community.

Welcoming Community Land Scotland to Sleat



On 8 and 9 October, CDI was delighted to help host Community Land Scotland's regional gathering, bringing together around 20 representatives from community trusts and woodland organisations.

The first day took place in Broadford, where Norma, Ann and Phil gave a fascinating introduction to the work of Broadford and Strath Community Company, followed by a tour of some of its projects.

On day two, the group came to An Crùbh, where Norman, Nicola and Susan shared CDI's story, the development of An Crùbh and some of the opportunities and challenges involved in running a community-owned enterprise.

Gatherings like these are valuable. Community organisations often face similar challenges, from funding and governance to keeping facilities financially sustainable. Having the chance to exchange ideas, learn from one another and share what has worked (and what hasn't!) is both useful and encouraging.

Community Land Scotland is no stranger to Sleat, and we hope to welcome them back again soon. They're also exploring plans for a film festival next autumn, which could provide another opportunity for Sleat to play host.

All in all, two excellent days of interesting conversations, inspiring ideas and a welcome reminder that we're not tackling these challenges alone.

An Crùbh Lunch Club

Skye Older Peoples Welfare Committee

'Is mòid rud a roinn'

Following a successful pilot earlier this year, we are delighted that the Budhmor Fund will continue to support the **An Crùbh Lunch Club** for 2026-27.

We start on **Thursday 22 October** at 12.30 pm and then on every second Thursday in the An Crùbh café.

The Lunch Club is open to everyone over 65, and proof of age may be requested! It is essential to pre-order and to let us know if you require transport to and from An Crùbh. This is a great opportunity to meet with friends and neighbours and to visit the shop and Post Office.

Please contact **Lorna Pike** on lornapike50@gmail.com

Lianag

The next issue of CDI's local newsletter Lianag will come out in January 2027.

Regular events

Whist - 10th November and 24 November at 7pm
Table tennis - Wednesdays – 7pm
Art book club - 19th November - 2pm
Capacitar - Fridays – 11am
Line dancing - Fridays - 2pm
Evangeline Majawat

Special Events

Art exhibition by Sleat artists - 18th-22nd November
CDI Christmas Fair, 21st + 22nd November
Sleat Nature Group talk - 27th November - 7PM

An Crùbh Opening Times

Café	Wednesday - Sundays, 10am – 4pm
Café	01471 833417
Shop	Mondays - Thursdays, 10am - 4.30pm
	Fridays/Saturdays, 10am - 5.30pm
	Sundays 10am – 4pm

Post office closes at 4pm and is closed all day on Sunday
Shop 01471 833780

Working together across Sleat

CDI have had three very productive meetings with Ash, Andy and Donaidh of the Sleat Community Trust, exploring opportunities for greater collaboration between our organisations. So far, we've identified community transport, sports facilities and community care as three areas worth investigating further. These are early conversations, but encouraging ones, and we're looking forward to seeing where they lead.

Ag obair còmhla ann an Slèite

Tha trì coinneamhan feumail air a bhith aig CDI còmhla ri Ash, Andy agus Donaidh bho Urras Coimhearsnachd Shlèite, agus sinn a' coimhead air mar a dh'fhaodadh an dà bhuidheann barrachd co-obrachaidh a dhèanamh.

Gu ruige seo, tha sinn air trì cuspairean a chomharrachadh air am b' fhiach tuilleadh rannsachaidh a dhèanamh: còmhdhail coimhearsnachd, goireasan spòrs agus cùram coimhearsnachd.

Tha na còmhraidhean fhathast aig ìre thràth, ach tha iad air a bhith misneachail agus tha sinn a' coimhead air adhart ri faicinn dè thig às.

South Skye Nature Festival 2026

A huge thanks to all who attended the first South Skye Nature Festival at the end of July. It was organised by the South Skye Nature Group and was based at An Crùbh, with many events in lots of indoor and outdoor spaces around Sleat.



The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. People thought it was really well organised and loved the wide variety of sessions and activities, stating they learnt a lot from high-quality events and leaders. The event appealed to a wide range of ages and people commented on the lovely community feel. There will be a full report on our website soon.

Kathryn Rawlinson sleatnaturegroup.org

Photos by **Dan Milner**



Editorial

An Slèiteach is growing. Our purpose is to highlight the fantastic array of positive stories coming out of the Sleat Community. The extended editorial team of **Duncan MacInnes**, **Ashleigh Airey** of SCT and **Nicola Thomson** of CDI allows us to have far more contact into the community with great stories coming back.

We have again professionally printed copies for sale in the Armadale Stores, An Crùbh Shop and Café and the Medical Centre. You might find more copies alongside donation boxes in other outlets as well.

Buy a hard copy – it is much better to have one in your hand than browsing a digital copy – and send one to friends outwith Sleat, or leave a copy in your B and B or cottage if you run one.

Many thanks to **Strath Print** for a quick turn around in the printing.

Mòran taing gu **Nicola** for the speedy work on translation for the Gaelic pieces.

Thank you everyone who contributed, and the various photographers.

Also to Nic Goddard, Editor of the award-winning **West Word Newsletter** across the Sound of Sleat, for advice and support.



*An Slèiteach is collated by **Sleat Community Trust**, in conjunction with **Sleat Community Council**, **Camuscross and Duisdale Initiative** and other community groups.*

Available online from www.sleat.org.uk November 2026

Tormore Hydro Fund



The next deadline for applications is Friday 30th of October. If you have just missed a deadline it is worth making a rapid application. And then, late January, 2027.

Contact Myrielle at the SCT office on myrielle@sleat.org.uk or 01471 844776

Sleat Community Hydro plc – Cumhachd Shlèite - is a community hydro scheme in Sleat. It was formed by Sleat Community Trust in 2020.

All profits from the sale of electricity will be used for community benefit in Sleat for decades to come.

Each year 50% of the funds are allocated for community development within the Tormore Woodland. The rest is available for other Sleat community benefits.

Applications can be submitted by community groups or individuals who live in Sleat, whose activities are mostly in Sleat or by groups outwith Sleat for projects with significant tangible benefits to people in Sleat. An individual can apply for development funding if they can demonstrate benefits to the Sleat community.

In 2026 the fund supported:

Sleat Community Cafe	aprons and equipment	£ 500
Tormore Community Volunteers	equipment, signage and tools	£ 3,000
Sleat Nature Group	Nature Festival	£ 400
Bun Sgoil Shlèite	P7 Trip to Edinburgh	£ 500
Armadale Stores	Blister Pack Recycling	£ 500
Isabelle Law	Photo Book	£ 500

Community Language Plan for Skye and Raasay

Work is progressing on a new Community Language Plan for Skye and Raasay, with a draft expected before the end of the year.

This comes as a decision is awaited from Highland Council about the designation of Areas of Linguistic Significance under the Scottish Languages Act. The legislation provides for areas to be designated based on factors including the proportion of Gaelic speakers, the historical significance of Gaelic and the presence of Gaelic-medium education.

The plan will be an important opportunity to look at how Gaelic can be supported, strengthened and used across our communities in the years ahead.

Plana Cànain Coimhearsnachd an Eilein Sgitheanaich agus Ratharsair

Tha obair a' dol air adhart air Plana Cànain Coimhearsnachd ùr airson an Eilein Sgitheanaich agus Ratharsair, agus thathar an dùil gum bi dreachd den phlana deiseil ro dheireadh na bliadhna.

Aig an aon àm, thathar a' feitheamh ri co-dhùnadh bho Chomhairle na Gàidhealtachd mu bhith a' comharrachadh Sgìrean Cànain Sònraichte fo Achd nan Cànan Albannach. Fon lagh ùr, faodar sgìrean a chomharrachadh a rèir grunn nithean, nam measg an àireamh sa cheud de luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig, cudromachd eachdraidheil na Gàidhlig san sgìre agus foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig.

Bidh am plana ùr na chothrom cudromach dhuinn coimhead air mar as urrainn dhuinn a' Ghàidhlig a neartachadh, a bhrosnachadh agus a cleachdadh nar coimhearsnachdan sna bliadhnachan ri teachd.

Sleat Community Trust

The Trust and Sleat Trading (Armadale Stores) now has Living Wage Accreditation

The Generator Fund

One of the major ongoing projects at Sleat Community Trust is the fundraising for a back-up generator. This project initially began after the particularly bad storm in August 2025, where several areas of Sleat were left without power for days, and now it has grown to be part of a wider resilience measure to keep the proverbial fires going during testing times.

Thanks to the hard work of **Ruud Van Ruitenbeek** with support from SCT and shop staff we have been successful in our application to the SSEN Powering Communities Net Zero fund.

SCT trustees and community development officer have also applied for public grants from the Highland Council Community Regeneration Fund. We have also received wonderful support from the community in which **£2,015** has been raised from donations, bake sales, and carwashes. We want to thank everyone who donated and championed the project from the very beginning. With your continued support, we hope our generator will be in place soon!

A Growing Resilience for Sleat



In response to this growing need and community support, our CDO, Ashleigh Airey, is developing a broader resilience plan for Armadale Stores to strengthen Sleat's emergency preparedness and response capacity. The back-up generator will be at the heart of this project, helping Armadale Stores provide residents with a warm, connected space where they can access essential food supplies and stay up to date during prolonged power cuts.

Our online Crowdfunder is now live, giving friends and supporters in Sleat and further afield the chance to help us bring this important community project to life. An amazing **£795** has already been donated, and we are incredibly grateful for the enthusiasm and generosity shown so far. The Crowdfunder will run until December and may also help us unlock further grant funding. We'll continue to share updates as our resilience plan—and, of course, our back-up generator—moves forward!

We also have an SCT charity page, where we'll share updates on our community projects. If you'd like to support our work, you can donate directly to the Trust there. You can also follow our Crowdfunder for project updates and more ways to get involved!

Go to https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/armadale-stores-resilience-project

Ashleigh Airey - Our new Development Officer

Thanks to funding from the Scottish Government's Strengthening Communities Programme, Sleat Community Trust (SCT) appointed a Community Development Officer in July 2026. **Ashleigh Airey** has taken on the role and will work alongside residents and groups to support community projects across Sleat.

Ashleigh explains her role "My role is to listen to the community, understand what matters to people, and help turn local ideas into reality. This might involve developing projects, applying for grants and finding funding opportunities, building partnerships, and connecting people with the support and resources they need. Ultimately, it's about working alongside the community to support local priorities and help Sleat thrive."

"Keeping local people's needs and voices at the heart of what we do and supporting projects that make a real difference to their lives"

This is something that excites her "For me, it's about helping people and being part of something meaningful. I've always loved supporting others, and I really enjoy seeing the passion people have for their community and watching local ideas grow into projects that make a real difference."

"I hope Sleat continues to be recognised for all that makes it special, from its beautiful landscapes to the people who make it such a wonderful community. I'd love to build on this by keeping local people's needs and voices at the heart of what we do and supporting projects that make a real difference to their lives.



Ashleigh and SCT Chairman Donaidh Macdonald

"I'm looking forward to getting to know more people across Sleat, hearing your ideas and finding ways we can work together. If there's something you'd like to see happen in the community, or you just fancy a chat, I'd love to hear from you."

Contact Ashleigh on ashleigh@sleat.org.uk

Sleat Renewables Ltd

Alan Drever and **Polly MacInnes** continue the work to finalise the Tormore Woodland Management Plan and the Deer Management Plan. It is a slow process, with the relevant authorities persistently returning with yet more questions of detail. Once accepted, the extraction of the last pieces of commercial forest can be started.

SRL aims to reinvigorate a Sleat Deer Management Planning group between the various Estates and Crofting interests

Tormore Community Woodland Group

Apart from the ongoing volunteer work in Tormore Woodland a more focused group has been looking at some particular projects. Now that we have a community development officer we hope these can start to become realities.



Tormore projects might include:

- Repairs and construction of a light roof over the entry bothy for visitor displays and shelter.
- A dry toilet similar to that at the Plock in Kyle
- Extension of campervan parking
- Renovation of the entry gates, signage and visitor information
- Improvement of footpaths and bike trails
- Signage, information and interpretation boards.
- Accessible seating and artwork around the footpath system
- A programme of guided walks and talks
- Developing links with Bun Sgoil Shlèite and SMO students



10 year development Plan

To bring this all together in a co-ordinated and properly funded manner, we are starting to work on a Tormore 10-year Community Development Plan. Please keep sending in your ideas and aspirations.

A Visit to Dundreggan Rewilding Centre







On 14 October, **Ash, Duncan and Donaidh** from Sleat Community Trust visited **Dundreggan Rewilding Centre** to learn more about its woodlands, the story behind the project, and the work being done to support nature and the local area.

The three of us visited the Centre and then took a good walk around the lower footpath system – looking at path creation, signage, benches and interpretation.

After lunch we were welcomed by Laurelin Cummins-Fraser, Rewilding Centre Director, who spent some time explaining the development at Dundreggan. She shared its journey, its approach to rewilding, and the work involved in creating a centre in this natural environment.

We then visited the extensive tree nursery, which in the past has supplied Tormore Woodland with compost.

For Sleat Community Trust, visits like this are a valuable chance to share knowledge, exchange ideas and explore what we can learn from others as we continue to support our own community.

A big thank you to Laurelin and the team at Dundreggan for their warm welcome and for taking the time to show us around.

New Benches in the Tormore Woodland



We thank the **South Skye Men's Shed in Broadford** for the two new picnic benches n the Tormore Community Woodland.

Tormore Woodland Volunteers

We continue to hold our monthly volunteer sessions with between 10 and 20 folk coming along for a great couple of hours outdoors. Everyone is welcome.

All tools and advice and leadership is provided as well as tea and cake.

Meet at the Tormore polytunnel.

We have also tried a couple of mid-week late afternoon sessions and will develop that for 2027.

Come along ~ all welcome

Sunday 8 November, 10.30am to 1pm

Sunday 13 December, 10.30am to 1pm

with hot drinks and mince pies.

Thereafter every second Sunday of the month.

Electric Minibus Volunteers – come and be a driver!

Our minibus continues to be used regularly for Thursday shop deliveries, community groups and individuals needing access to national transport or medical appointments.

All the driving is undertaken by our volunteers – and we always need more. Just contact the SCT office and bring your driving licence – to get registered. You will get instructions of how to drive our wonderful bus and how to get it charging properly at the end of each visit.

If you are a regular user of the bus it may help if you can find your own regular volunteer driver.

EV at Armadale

The charging unit at Armadale Stores is only for the electric bus. SCT is investigating how we might install a public charging unit. However the cost and the limitations of the carpark have meant the idea is currently on hold.



Buy your logs locally and support Sleat Community Trust.

Skye and Lochalsh Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle (R^3) Collaboration

SCT is applying to join the R^3 project

The R^3 VISION is to work collaboratively towards reducing waste, increasing reuse and repair, improving recycling, and retaining resources within local communities across Skye, Raasay and Lochalsh.

More details on slcvo.org.uk



Community Sales

Bakesale Success

Over £500 was raised at a bake sale at the Armadale Stores on 19th September, with all proceeds going to Bun Sgoil Shlèite our local primary school. Thanks to all who contributed so generously on the day and to all those who created such delicious fare.

Ardvasar polytunnel

A very successful café was held in Ardvasar Hall to raise funds for the restoration of the Ardvasar community polytunnel.

Alison MacGillivray



Skye Archery Tournament Donation

You might well remember the Archery Tournaments on the lawn of Armadale Castle from the late 1980s.

Karen Henderson, the Tournament Organiser, recently wrote to Sleat Community Trust to say

"As you may be aware, there was a week long archery tournament held in the grounds of Armadale Castle which ran for over 30 years.

Unfortunately, due to a change in CDLT management, the tournament ceased and while attempts were made to relocate the tournament elsewhere on the Island, nowhere really lived up to the Sleat peninsula."

The organisers have decided to close the tournament bank account and wish to distribute funds to the local community."

Enclosed was a cheque for £2,072.62.

Thank you very much, Archers, for your generosity.

You might have your own memories and images of the competition. *"They were always such a friendly bunch when they came to the pub" Eilidh*

.

Sleat Community Café



The new Café aprons and other items were funded by the Tormore Hydro fund.

The Community Cafes are held every two weeks in Ardvasar Hall from 12 - 2pm.

They are a meeting place for everyone to enjoy soup, sandwiches and home baking with friends and family both old and new.

Payment is by cash donation.

Tuesday 27 October
Tuesday 10 November
Tuesday 24 November
Tuesday 8 December
Tuesday 15 December for a Christmas celebration.

Jo Stokes

Armadale Stores Opening Hours

Shop	Monday to Friday	08.30 to 17.30
	Saturday	08.30 to 15.30
	Sunday	Closed
Post Office	Monday / Tuesday	09.00 – 15.30
	Thursday / Friday	09.00 – 15.30
	Wednesday / Saturday	09.00 – 13.30
	(closed for lunch 13.30 – 14.00)	
	Sunday	closed

Armadale, Sleat, Isle of Skye IV45 8RS
01471 844289
trading@sleat.org.uk
www.facebook.com/ARMADALESTORES

Sleat Community Trust Contact

01471 844776
info@sleat.org.uk

SEALL Concerts and Festival of Small Halls

Saturday 31 October, 7.30pm An Talla Mhòr, SMO
Tuesday 3 November at 5pm, An Crùbh
Tuesday 24 November at 7.30pm, Ardvasar Hall
All details on www.seall.co.uk

CALA, Scottish post-trad band
SEALL Strùpag – catch up with SEALL's work
Festival of Small Halls (+ all over Skye)

SEALL Festival of SMALL HALLS

Naidheachdan an t-Sabhail! | Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Quarterly Round up

It's wonderful to see all that has been happening at Sabhal Mòr and the fantastic opportunities we have on our doorstep.

Nach math faicinn na tha air a bhith dol aig SMO anns na trì mìosan a dh'fhalbh agus na cothroman a th' againn air ar stairsnich.

August

The prestigious **Silver Chanter** Piping Recital Competition was held again with thanks to event sponsors, Tòrabhaig Distillery.

Mark Wringe retired after nearly 30 years teaching at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig! Mark also sits on the board of Camuscross & Duisdale Initiative.



Gillian Munro, Mark Wringe and Marsali MacLeod

The fully funded **Cùrsa Drochaid** (bridging course) is proving successful yet again with 13 students who arrived at the start of summer with no Gaelic, now enrolled on the intermediate language year An Cùrsa Comais. As usual, demand was higher than the places available! There were 76 students on campus this year.

September

Irish President, Catherine Connolly and the Cabinet Secretary for Education, Culture and Gaelic, Màiri McAllan, visited Sabhal Mòr Ostaig on the 19th September. Mrs Connolly delivered the annual lecture, Òraid an t-Sabhail.



The Irish President meets children from Bun Sgoil Shlèite.

The SMO-led BA (Hons) Gaelic and Education, has been ranked seventh in the **Guardian University Guide 2027,** alongside three other UHI teacher education programmes – together forming the only Scottish entry in the UK top ten for education.

The annual **Fèill na Gàidhlig** community Gala day was another success, welcoming families to the campus to learn more about Gaelic, participate in the activities and enjoy some early Christmas shopping at the Gaelic merch stalls!

Professor Hugh Cheape delivered a lecture at the **Royal Society of Edinburgh,** 'A people without a voice': Reconstructing the past in a West Highland community.

October

As outlined in the Languages (Scotland) Act, SMO will soon be undergoing a full review to support its wish to develop as the National Centre for Language and Culture.

Kilbeg Housing Project received the **Herald Community Impact award,** and SMO Development Trust Chair, **Prof Norman Gillies** collected the award.



Principal Gillian Munro and **VP Marsaili MacLeod** visited **Cape Breton** as part of ongoing partnerships, in conjunction with the West Highland Chamber of Commerce mission.

Dr Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart was also on a lecture tour of Nova Scotia, giving various lectures about the Second Sight, omens, forerunners, and spirits and on the so-called Glenaladale Emigration.

70 students graduated from the College at a highly enjoyable evening, featuring Somhairle Johnson (award winning Somhairle Spins) from BBC Alba, an alumnus of the Gaelic Media course.

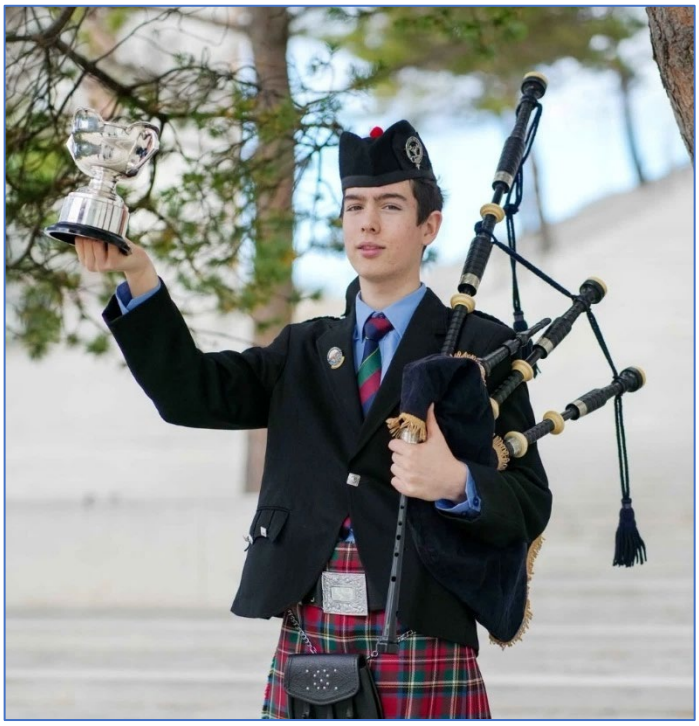


The **autumn/winter online Short courses** are now available to book smo.uhi.ac.uk/winter-classes.

To keep up with all the news at Sabhal Mòr visit smo.uhi.ac.uk/get-the-news.

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Local Success at the National Mod



Seonaidh Forrest won the Royal Highland Fusiliers Cup for the 18 and under March, Strathspey and the Col. Murdoch Mactaggart Memorial Trophy for the Hornpipe and Jig.



Micheal Forrest took 3rd place in the U13 2/4 March on the chanter.



Màili MacLennan, came second in the U13 poetry competition at the National Mod.



Òran McGillivray-Williamson, Dòmhnall Crìsdean MacKinnon, Johnny Mackenzie, and Isabelle Mackenzie also participated in this year's Mòd.

Còisir an t-Sratha and SMO at the Mod



Còisir an t-Sratha - which features many Sleat voices, and is conducted by SMO's Vice Principal **Dr. Marsaili MacLeod** - held a practice performance at the College, before heading to the National Mòd.

The Concert featured many excellent performances from pupils from Bun-sgoil Shlèite, including **Hamish de Vries** on pipes and their Headteacher **Kenny Nicolson** and Parent Council Chair **Alison McGillivray**.

Although Strath Choir didn't come home with medals this time, we wish to congratulate **Portree Gaelic Choir** who lifted the Margrat Duncan cup.



Soirbheachas ionadail aig a' Mhòd Nàiseanta

*Chùm **Còisir an t-Sratha**, anns a bheil grunn sheinneadairean à Slèite agus a tha fo stiùir Iar-Phrionnsapal Shabhal Mòr Ostaig, an **Dr Marsaili NicLeòid**, cuirm-chiùil aig a' Cholaiste mus do dh'fhalbh iad dhan Mhòd Nàiseanta.*

*Bha e na thlachd na h-uimhir à Bun-sgoil Shlèite fhaicinn a' gabhail pàirt, nam measg **Hamish de Vries** air a' phìob. Ghabh Ceannard na sgoile, **Mgr. Nicolson** agus Cathraiche Comhairle nam Pàrant, **Alison NicIllebhraighe**, pàirt ann cuideachd.*



*Ged nach do choisinn iad duais an turas seo, faodaidh sinn meal-a-naidheachd a chur air **Còisir Ghàidhlig Phort Rìgh** a thog Cumha Mairead NicDhonnchaidh!*

Young Vestry Visit

Kilmore Church's YV group spent a weekend at the Abernethy Trust outdoor centre back in September. It was a great weekend, organised by **Archie MacCalman** and **Nicola Thomson**.

A big thank you to all the Slèitich who supported our fundraising activities via the bake sale at Armadale Stores and the An Crùbh car boot earlier in the year. Mòran taing.

Back L-R: CJ Thomson, Seumas Mackay, Esmae Micski, Lexy Mackay

Front L-R: Corran MacCalman, Johnny Mackenzie, Elie Munro and Millie Hannah.



Turas na h-Òigridh

Chuir buidheann YV à aig Eaglais na Cille Mòire seachad deireadh-seachdain aig ionad Urras Obar Neithich san t-Sultain. Bha deireadh-seachdain air leth aca, a chaidh a chur air dòigh le Eairdsidh MacCalmain agus Nicola NicThòmais.

Taing mhòr dhan a h-uile duine a chùm taic ris na h-oidhirpean aca gus airgead a thogail na bu tràithe am-bliadhna, gu h-àraidh aig fèill bhèicearachd Bùth Àrmadail agus car boot a' Chrùbh. Cha bhiodh an turas air a bhith comasach às aonais ur taice. Mòran taing dhuibh uile!

Sa chùl, clì gu deas: CJ MacThòmais, Seumas MacAoidh, Esmae Micski agus Lexy NicAoidh.

San aghaidh, clì gu deas: Corran MacCalmain, Johnny MacCoinnich, Elie Rotahch agus Millie Hannah.

Focus on Young Entrepreneurs

Laura Cunningham – Stonechat Baskets, Drumfearn



Weaving a business around family and crofting life

There's a lot more to making a willow basket than you might imagine. In fact, by the time Laura sits down to start weaving, she may already have spent the best part of a year preparing the willow!

For Laura, basket making began with curiosity and a course with Monique Bervoets in Sallachy. "I just fell in love with it," she recalls. With young children and a busy working life, she initially managed only one or two baskets a year, squeezing them in whenever she could.

Originally from Aberdeen, Laura trained as a pharmacist before changing to study environmental science. A spell working as a ranger on Handa Island, a seabird reserve off the north-west coast, proved particularly influential. It was there she met her partner Phil and discovered a love of living somewhere quieter, surrounded by nature. Eventually, the couple settled in Drumfearn, where they now live and work on their croft, with their two daughters.

For several years, Laura juggled employment, self-employment and childcare, but eventually concentrated on crofting and basket making.

"I decided to try and become a basket maker! Almost immediately there was so much excitement and demand. People wanted baskets and workshops, and I was still learning. I still feel like that now, but it's been fun!"

Laura grows much of her own willow, supplementing it with other suppliers. Planted in winter, it grows with relatively little attention before being harvested by hand. The willow then needs around six months to dry, before being sorted and graded. When Laura is ready to make a basket, the selected willow must be soaked for one or two weeks and left to mellow for several days. It's a slow craft, but one that fits well with crofting and family life.

"I can work around what the children need, and that's the most important thing. We don't have family nearby to help with childcare, so having that flexibility gives me peace of mind."

Laura describes basket making as part of a wider mosaic of activities on the croft, bringing creativity, enjoyment and opportunities to connect with others in the community.

Recently, she created two willow crowns for a medieval-themed exhibition at CREATE in Kyle, enjoying the opportunity to experiment with bark, colour and different techniques.

Looking ahead, she hopes to develop more workshops, particularly for children, although finding the right approach for little hands is still a work in progress.

"There are loads of things I want to do. I just need more time, energy and confidence."

And judging by the enthusiasm for her work so far, there's plenty of encouragement to keep weaving.

Sàl Sauna ~ Aileen Nicolson, Ord



Aileen Nicolson (or Aileen Ord as we know her so well) started Sál Sauna earlier this year - a mobile, wood-fired sauna for the communities in south Skye. Here, Aileen shares more about her idea and how it has helped bring people together.

For the last few years, I've been doing various cleaning jobs, but I've always wanted to venture into a business of my own. I wasn't quite sure what that would be until I started using the community sauna over in Plockton and it got me thinking about bringing that experience to Sleat. I loved the idea of having somewhere people could take time out from everyday life, relax and enjoy the benefits of sauna.

Ord was the obvious location, with the beautiful surroundings and views towards the Cuillins. However, after three months of waiting for planning permission, I decided not to sit around when I could be getting the business started. I realised I could take the sauna to different communities around south Skye, working with landowners and common grazing committees to find suitable locations where I could operate temporarily.

Initially, moving the sauna was stressful because I didn't have the means to move it myself. I am very grateful to have had help from people in the local community, including the grazing committees, but especially **Ruaridh MacInnes**, who helps me move safely between locations.

Being mobile has been really good fun as it has allowed me to meet different people and introduce Sál Sauna to different communities. I love how it brings complete strangers together. People arrive not knowing each other and soon they're chatting away and sharing the experience.

Skye is home, and so being able to build a business here, where I've grown up, is really important to me. I also wanted it to be for local people, as well as tourists; an opportunity to take time for ourselves, relax and try something different without having to leave Skye. The support I've received from the local community has been wonderful.

"I also wanted it to be for local people, as well as tourists."

Looking ahead, I'm hoping to have six pop-up locations in place so I can continue bringing Sál Sauna to different communities, although my dream remains in having the sauna based at Ord. It's been a huge learning curve but I'm excited to see where Sál Sauna goes next.

To find out more or book the sauna, head to **salsauna.com**.

Sleat Community Council

Everyone is welcome to attend the monthly Sleat Community Meetings held at Ardvasar Hall, An Crùbh or Tarskavaig Hall on varying days of the week to avoid clashes.

Thursday 5 November at 7pm in Ardvasar Hall

Tuesday 1 December at 7pm in An Crùbh

Look out for 2027 dates

What we talk about

All the minutes are on the website. Apart from the 6 Councillors we thank our Highland Council Member **John Finlayson** for his regular and informative presentations, either in person or on-line. In the last two meetings we have covered:

Roads – we are delighted that substantial re-tarring work has been completed on most roads around Sleat. It is not yet perfect but Sleat has received £700k worth of improvements, around 20% of the total Skye and Lochalsh budget.

Tourist Tax – information and conversation suggest the need for further changes, particularly in how to cover campervans and those not staying in paid accommodation.

Short Term lets – Skye has 17% of its housing licenses for short term compared to 5% across the Highlands. There seemed to be a lack of clarity in the proposals.

Ferry – Our local group Sound of Sleat Ferry users Group, with representation from Sleat and Mallaig, noted that the service has stabilised this summer, albeit with a greatly reduced capacity.

Full fibre Internet – is slowly being installed in Sleat, but with many gaps that need addressing.

Armadale Estate Ltd – There has been contact from both SCT and SCC with the Estate management who have now presented some development plans following the first season of operation.

Housing and planning – SCC has been in contact with Highland Council about housing allocations and has the ability to comment on planning applications.

www.sleatcommunitycouncil.org.uk and social media

Cùram Shlèite | Care in Sleat

Looking out for our neighbours has always been an important part of life in Sleat, with a great deal of informal support already happening across our townships. But are there people who need help and aren't receiving it, or others who would happily lend a hand but don't know where to start?

Cùram Shlèite

Mar choimhearsnachd, bha sinn riamh math air cumail sùil air ar nàbaidhean agus tha an t-uabhas taic is coibhneas gan toirt seachad ann an dòighean neo-fhoirmeil anns na bailtean beaga againn mar-thà.

Ach a bheil daoine ann a chuireadh feum air taic is nach eil ga faighinn? No cuid a bhiodh toilichte taic a thoirt seachad ach nach eil buileach cinnteach càite an tòisicheadh iad?

Work is underway to explore how we can strengthen community care and resilience across the peninsula, particularly for older residents and those who may be more vulnerable or isolated.

Some of the issues being considered include befriending, access to care services, digital exclusion and preparing for severe winter weather. There's also the longer-term challenge of ensuring suitable care is available locally as our population ages.

An immediate priority is looking at how we can better prepare for winter, particularly supporting those who may struggle to access essential services during periods of bad weather. We're keen to explore opportunities to work with Sleat Community Council, local health and care services, voluntary organisations and others already doing valuable work in this area.

"Sometimes it's the simplest things that can make a difference."

For example, do you know how your immediate neighbours heat their homes? Some may struggle with the cost of heating oil, while others might simply need a hand carrying logs into the house. And if there's a power cut, who has access to a gas cooker, heating or hot water, and who might be left without any of these? Being aware of our neighbours' circumstances and knowing who might need a bit of extra support, could make all the difference during a spell of severe winter weather.

These are still early discussions, and we'd welcome thoughts and ideas from anyone with experience of these challenges or an interest in helping make Sleat a more connected, caring and resilient place to live. We are in discussions with the Community Council about where the best "home" for these discussions would be.

Meantime we'll hold two drop in sessions to collate your views, ideas and concerns around what is needed to develop and support Community Care in Sleat. We've already had some views around housing for older folk, care homes and private carer requests. We need to have the full picture so we can start working together on a plan with other organisations.

"Could you be a contact for your township?"

We are keen to identify a contact person in each township who could help share information, gather local views and act as a link as this work develops. This wouldn't mean taking responsibility for providing care, but simply help improve communication. If you'd be willing to put your name forward, or would like to contribute your ideas, please email Nicola Thomson at curamshleite@gmail.com

Curam Shlèite has come together after conversations between **Nicola Thomson**, **Rosy White** and **Sara Taylor**.

Cùram Shlèite | Care in Sleat Drop-in

Come and share your views, concerns and ideas

Wed 25th November

An Crùbh 11-12.30pm

Sleat Community Trust Board Room 1.30-3pm

Sleat Local History Society ~ Comunn Eachdraidh Shlèite

Wednesday 4 November - SMO: Talla Mhòr at 7.30pm

Nicolson's Traditions of Skye, local launch of a brand-new edition/revision by Coinneach Maclean of his great-uncle's famous history of the island.

Monday 7 December - An Crùbh at 7.30pm

AGM + From Skye to Carolina (and back): Island emigrants caught up in the American Revolution with Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart

January: TBC - Ardvasar Hall at 7.30pm

Photos of Sleat: People and Places taken by Evelyn Loyd, Tormore, c. 1907–34

Thursday 4 February - SMO: Talla Mhòr at 7.30pm

Robert Burns' Tour of the Highlands, 1787 with Nigel Leask, retired Professor of English Language and Literature, University of Glasgow, and guest musicians and singers

Wednesday 24 March - SMO: TDC at 7.30pm

Scottish Highland Jewellery with Dr Sarah Laurenson, Principal Curator of Modern and Contemporary History, National Museum of Scotland. You are welcome to bring along any interesting Scottish family jewellery for Sarah to have a look at!

Tuesday 20 April, SMO: TDC at 7.30pm

Stòras Shlèite with Greg Thomson: the most recent phase of Sleat's local history project: people, places, and music.

Entry to meetings is free for members and £5 for non members (or £1 if a student).

Membership rates are as follows: single £10; double £15; student £3

Plot for Sale at Capisdale, Sleat

Planning Permission in Principle for a Single House

The site lies close to the Ardvasar to Aird road and is in a south facing setting with a backdrop of the community owned Tormore Forest and views over the Sound of Sleat. It is easily accessed from the main road with water and electricity supplies close to the site. Planning Permission in Principle was issued on 28th September 2026.

The site is being sold by the Sleat Community Trust which would like to prioritise purchasers who have a connection to the local area. Proceeds from the sale will be invested in community development. Offers are invited in the region of £60,000.

Further information from the Trust Office at Armadale. Office@sleat.org.uk 01471-844776



