

# SUMMER 2024

The latest news from Urras  
Oighreachd Ghabhsainn (Galson  
Estate Trust)

## In this issue:

Foreword by Agnes  
Rennie

PAGE 02

Investing in our  
community

PAGE 03

Land management

PAGE 04

Summer fun with Ploigh!

PAGE 05

2025 calendar comp -  
now open!

PAGE 07

na Dorsan progress

PAGE 08

And lots more!



# FOREWORD BY AGNES RENNIE, UOG CHAIRPERSON



Fàilte oirbh.

Chan eil math dhomh ràdh, “aig deireadh samhradh fada blàth”.

A’ coimhead timcheall nan lotaichean ’s na leasan, chan eil teagamh nach eil an t-uisge air fàs a thoirt air feur agus blàth agus duilleach. Tha stoc air a thighinn air adhart math agus tha uain agus laoigh a’ dèanamh feum dhan chothrom air feurach. Tha mi an dòchas a-nise gu faighear prìsean math air stoc math.

Chan eil droch thìde air maill a chur air clann na sgìre bho bhith a’ gabhail pàirt san iomadh cur-seachad a tha na diofar bhuidhnean a’ cur air adhart aig Plòigh.

Chan eil maill air a bhith air luchd-turais a bharrachd, agus tha mi an dòchas gu bheil gach gnìomhachas anns an sgìre air an cuid fhèin a chosnadh bhon t-sluagh tha air ais ’s air adhart air busaichean agus baidhsagalan.

Tha mi an dòchas gu bheil teaghlaichean air cothrom fhaighean cuairt a ghabhail gu càirdean thall sa bhos. ’S deagh chaomh leam fhèin tadhal air sgìrean eile san eilean agus bha feasgar math againn bho chionn ghoirid nuair a rànaig sinn Calanais agus thadhal sinn sa bhùth ùr ann an Càrlabhaigh. Abair goireas dhan sgìre sin agus nach math a bhith faicinn ar nàbaidhean a’ faighinn air adhart.

Mun àm a nochdas a’ chuairt litir seo bidh sinn a’ coimhead air adhart ri Dùthchas agus fosgladh na Dorsan agus gheibh sibh tuilleadh fios mu iad sin agus gu leòr eile sa chuairt litir-sa.

A warm welcome, but unfortunately not after a warm summer.

Looking at crofts and gardens in the community it’s easy to see that the wet, mild weather has certainly encouraged grass and other foliage to grow. This season’s lambs and calves are looking good, and I hope that crofters are rewarded at market with good prices for good quality stock.

The weather has not dampened spirits for the younger members of our community and school holidays have provided a host of activities during Plòigh and other programmes.

The weather has clearly not deterred visitors to the area either and I hope they have enjoyed their visit and local businesses catering for tourists have all been able to benefit from the many people arriving by bus and bicycle.

Summer has always been a time to welcome back family members and friends and I hope this summer has been generous in that regard. Personally, I always like to visit other parts of our island and a recent trip to Callanish included a coffee stop at the excellent new community shop in Carloway. Good luck to everyone involved in this exciting new venture.

By the time this newsletter is published we will be looking forward to Dùthchas and another packed programme of events organised by the Urras and community partners. More on Dùthchas, plans for na Dorsan and much more in the following pages.







# COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND

Since October 2023 the Community Investment Fund has invested **£63,773** of funds from the renewables project income back into the community of the Galson Estate. The programme supports projects and activities that can demonstrate they will deliver against UOG's wider objectives and aim to:

- Develop skills
- Improve health and wellbeing
- Relieve poverty
- Protect and conserve the environment
- Protect and promote heritage and culture
- Develop and revitalise growing industry sectors
- Support active community engagement



If you would like to find out more, please visit our website [www.galsontrust.com](http://www.galsontrust.com) or email [cif@uogltd.com](mailto:cif@uogltd.com)

## June/July CIF Grants

Stornoway Running & Athletics Club  
Storage  
Facilities/Training for Junior Coaches  
**£2,000.00**

Clan MacQuarrie  
Community Centre  
Tourism Equipment  
**£2,000.00**

Ness Cemetery  
Association  
Old Cemetery  
Path Clearance  
**£1,500.00**





# LAND MANAGEMENT

Credit Kathryn Ferguson

## PEAT CUTTING

It is peat cutting season on Galson Estate! With the price of heating our homes at an all time high, more residents living on the estate are returning to cutting peats. Peat cutting is still permitted in Scotland, however the crofting commission guidelines state that it must be done sustainably. The traditional method of cutting peats using a tairsgeir and then reinstating the turf, is the most sustainable method and the method encouraged by UOG. Modern machinery based methods are convenient but not as effective for preserving the fragile environment. Often, such methods can be extremely damaging so all peat cutters are urged to cut sustainably where possible and always make an effort to reinstate the turf.

If you do wish to cut peats, please contact your grazing clerk for advice on which bank you are permitted to cut. The grazings committees manage the land where peat cutting takes place.

If you do not know who your grazings clerk is, UOG can provide this information.



## GUNNERA

The weather has not been kind for gunnera spraying this summer. We need dry, calm conditions and those days have been few and far between. However, by the end of July we have completed spraying plants in Ballantrushal and Borge and are half way through Skigersta (which is by far the most covered village on the estate). Eorodale and Port of Ness will be next, weather permitting. Gunnera can be sprayed throughout September and even into October. If you have small plants in your garden or croft, they can be sprayed with Roundup weed killer which can be bought locally. If seed heads are present, they should be removed and disposed of in the organics bin prior to spraying





## THREE WEEKS OF SUMMER PLÒIGH

Our Summer Plòigh was a success this year, with many of the activities selling out within the first couple of days of booking going live! Activities lasted for a full three weeks which included art sessions, drama workshop, dancing, surfing, snorkeling and lots more. Plòigh provides subsidised activities during the holidays from UOG. This summer we partnered up with Barvas Estate, enabling Barvas Estate residents to be subsidised during Plòigh!



The next Plòigh programme runs from 14th - 18th October 2024.

Plòigh is a collaborative effort in partnership with Sporsnis, Taigh Dhonnchaidh, CnaG, RSPB, An Lanntair, Surf Lewis, Clan MacQuarrie Community Centre, Barvas & Brue Community Centre and Urras Sgìre Oighreachd Bharabhais

## KEY FIGURES:

43 SESSIONS

692 SESSION  
PLACES SOLD

UOG WERE ABLE TO  
SUBSIDY THE  
PLOIGH EVENTS BY  
£1825 AMOUNT,  
ALLOWING 523  
CHILDREN TO TAKE  
PART IN THIS  
YEAR'S  
PROGRAMME









# CALENDAR COMPETITION

Credit: Marie Anne Macdonald

## YOU STILL HAVE TIME TO GET YOUR ENTRIES IN!

The theme of our 2025 calendar competition is 'Galson's Heritage'

This is open to the interpretation of the photographer, however, entries should feature Galson Estate at the heart. Photos can depict Galson's history and genealogy, music & dance, traditional skills, food and drink, or Gaelic language - it is up to you!

There are two categories - Adult & Junior - and you can enter up to three images. The two overall winners will receive photography vouchers as well as featuring in the calendar.

Head over to our [website](#) to find out more, complete an entry form and submit your entries! The deadline is 23rd August. Good luck!



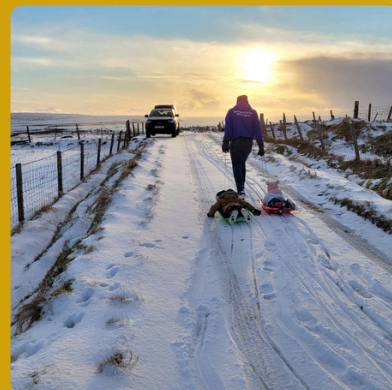
Credit: Roddy John Macdonald



Credit: Sofia Ona-Hamer



Credit: Iain MacIver



Credit: Rebecca Robson



# NA DORSAN



The Summer weather may not have been on our side, but despite this, work is well underway at the centenary monument site, “na Dorsan”, located behind the Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn Business Centre.

Chris Barrowman is doing a sterling job, and his work is a welcome sight as you approach from the path. If you are passing, why not pop by to see the work in progress? It’s a short walk from our office car park and the vistas that await you are worth it! It is hoped the monument will be unveiled in October, along with our complimentary exhibition currently being finalised by Pearse at Loom Graphics - look out for updates on this.

Part of the meaning behind na Dorsan mentions ‘gatherings’, and we had them aplenty during the month of June! We were delighted to have designers Will Maclean and Marian Leven visit recently to see their design coming to life.



Furthermore, On Thursday 13th June, primary 3-6 pupils from Lionel Primary School visited our office to learn more about na Dorsan and participated in a storytelling, poetry and art session, as well as a site visit to speak to Chris and to add their own stone to the structure.

Comunn Eachdraidh Nis are also hosting their exhibition ‘Galson: from prehistory to community ownership’ which is well worth a visit.





# TOURISM

## BRINGING CRUISE EXCURSIONS TO NORTH LEWIS

The construction of the deep water port in Stornoway has allowed more cruise liners to include a visit to the Hebrides in their itinerary. UOG saw an opportunity to bring some of that custom to North Lewis to showcase the array of talent and culture our area has to offer. We

invited interested parties to come together last Autumn to build a package of tour options and have been successfully selling these this summer to cruise passengers.

This season we have seen over 450 passengers enjoy cookery demonstrations of local produce and traditional ingredients, get up close with Highland Cows and have an insight into crofting life and discover the treasures of Commun Eachdraidh Nis while learning a phrase or two of Gaelic.

We hope to be able to expand the tours on offer for 2025.

**If you would like to be involved please get in touch via  
[office@uogltd.com](mailto:office@uogltd.com)**



## KEY FIGURES:

OVER 450 PASSENGERS

22 TOUR DATES

OVER £13,500 BROUGHT INTO THE LOCAL  
ECONOMY







## BUTT OF LEWIS LIGHTHOUSE DEVELOPMENT

As reported in our Spring newsletter funding had been received from HIE to use in addition to UOG funds to install a toilet facility at the Butt of Lewis, the facility has now been installed and is being well used by visitors to the area. We were unable to attract a food vendor to operate in the area for this summer but hope that this will be in place for 2025.

We have appointed a team of cleaners who have done a fantastic job of keeping all our visitor facilities in pristine condition.

Work is still ongoing with the Northern Lighthouse Board to obtain a lease to the Lighthouse buildings to allow full redevelopment of the site, progress is being made but it is a slow process.

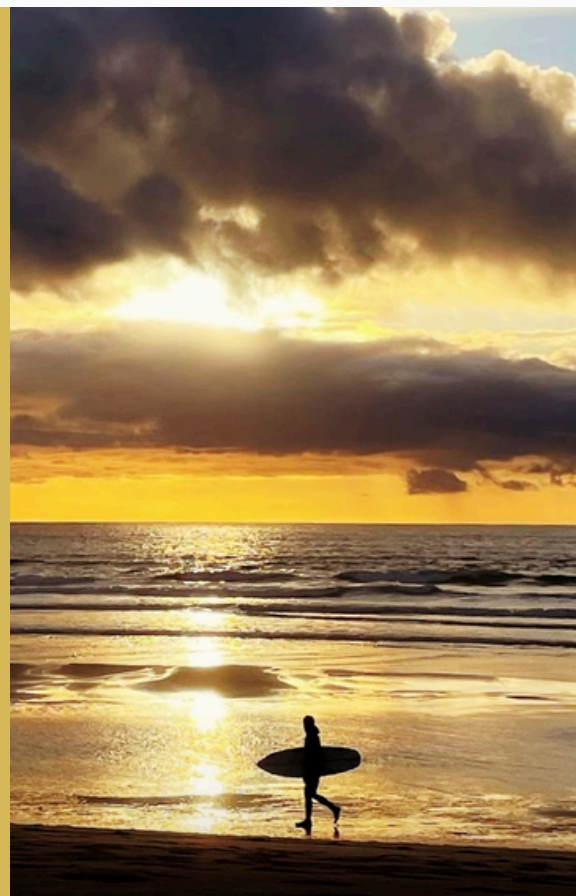
## VISIT NORTH LEWIS REBRAND

Feedback from local tourism operators has resulted in Visit Galson being rebranded as Visit North Lewis this year.

The website is currently under review and the social media pages are being populated to showcase all the area and local businesses have to offer.

Work is still underway to build the brand and encourage visitors to experience all there is to offer, we have attempted to capture all businesses and tourism providers.

If you have any feedback, would like to be involved or have any information relating to your business updated **please get in touch with**  
**[comms@uogltd.com](mailto:comms@uogltd.com)**.



Credit: Philly Hare





# STAFF UPDATES

## Hugh MacDonald | Summer Placement

Hugh began his 14-week summer placement with us in May 2024. He is currently in his final year at the University of Highlands and Islands studying Sustainable Development, with his interests lying in land management. Hugh's main responsibility while with UOG has been writing a feasibility study for upgrading the walk along the coast between Port of Ness and Eoropie. He has spent time walking the route and meeting with experts including Shona from RSPB. He has also been assisting with spraying gunnera, helping with the dry stone wall building at "na Dorsan" and has been an incredible help during Plòigh. We appreciate Hugh's hard work over the summer months.



## Murdo Maclean | Board Member

Murdo, who lives in Port of Ness, was appointed as a board member in April 2024. Murdo is the HSE Manager at Harland and Wolff and has already contributed his valuable skills to the organisation through joining our health and safety sub group. He also chairs the Western Isles Citizen Advice Service so provides a valuable insight to the challenges faced by our community to help shape our future support projects. Thank you for your contribution already Murdo, we are grateful to have you on board and continue to work with you.



**Should you be interested in joining our board please do get in touch to discuss**





# UPCOMING EVENTS



## Coming Soon!

## A' tighinn a dh' aithghearr!



### 7 - 20 an t-Sultain 2024

### 7-20 September 2024

Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn is a company registered in Scotland - No: 273903 and a charity registered in Scotland - No: SC036903



History & Genealogy

Music & Dance

Traditional Skills

Food & Drink

Language & Writing





# DATES FOR THE DIARY



*Thanks to everyone who came to our family fishing day in June!*

It has been a very busy year already but there is still lots to come!

You can find a full list of our upcoming events on our [website](#).

## NESS GALA DAY

- 10th August, at Ness FC Football Pitch, Fivepenny Machair

## DÙTHCHAS

- 7th - 20th September

## OCTOBER PLÒIGH

- 14 - 18th October
- Keep an eye on social media in September for more info

## COMMUNITY LAND FESTIVAL

- 18th October - 3rd November
- Keep an eye on social media for more info

## AGM

- 19th November 2024, Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn Business Centre, Tom na Ba, South Galson



# HABOST AMENITY SITE

## HABOST HOUSEHOLD WASTE AND RECYCLING CENTRE

Bulky Household Waste Disposal and Recycling Point for the  
disposal of household waste only

**SUMMER OPENING HOURS**  
**1 APRIL 2024 - 27 OCTOBER 2024**

### MONDAY

11.00AM TO 1.00PM  
4.00PM TO 6.00PM

### TUESDAY

CLOSED

### WEDNESDAY

11.00AM TO 1.00PM  
4.00PM TO 6.00PM

### THURSDAY

11.00AM TO 1.00PM  
4.00PM TO 6.00PM

### FRIDAY

11.00AM TO 1.00PM  
4.00PM TO 6.00PM

### SATURDAY

10.00 AM TO 1.00PM  
2.00PM TO 5.00PM

Operatives will be onsite during the opening times.

Please refrain from disposing of items outwith these times as this will be treated as fly tipping.

Contact Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn – 01851 850411

#### OUT OF HOURS

Zero Waste Western Isles (CNES): 01851 709900

SEPA: 01851 706477

SEPA 24 hour pollution report line: 0800 80 70 60

UOG: 07469 189 449

Site Licence Number: WML / N / 0220269







# BECOME A MEMBER



## BECOME A PROUD MEMBER OF YOUR COMMUNITY LAND TRUST!

Are you a resident of the Galson Estate for over nine months each year? Are you eager to play an active role in your community's growth, support local initiatives, and stay in the loop about all things community land trust related?

### Membership Perks:

- **Voting Power:** Have your say and vote at the AGM
- **Your Voice Matters:** Opportunities to voice your opinions
- **Get Involved:** Take part in various local working groups
- **Stay Informed:** Get registered for our E-Newsletters

**Becoming a member is easy and costs just £1 for a lifetime membership!**

If you're 16 or older and fall into any of the following categories, you're eligible:

- Live within the Galson Estate Trust area
- Reside on the Isle of Lewis and registered with the Crofters Commission as a tenant of a croft within the Galson Estate area
- Live elsewhere but registered with the Crofters Commission as a tenant of a croft within the Galson Estate Trust area and actively work on that croft

**Join us today and help shape the future of our wonderful  
Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn!**

**Become a member at [www.galsontrust.com](http://www.galsontrust.com), visit us at our  
office in South Galson or call us on 01851 850411**



# STAY IN TOUCH

## CONTACT US



01851 850 411



office@uogltd.com



Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, Tom na Bà,  
Gabhsann bho Dheas Eilean Leòdhais, HS2 0SH

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