

## **North Harris Trading Company Limited**

# **Annual Report**

**November 2017 – October 2018**

### **Board of Directors**

**Chairman**

Tim Langley

**Vice Chair**

Shaun Hayes (part)

Gordon Ness (part)

**Directors**

Steve McCombe

**NHT/NHTC Directors**

Iain MacSween

Donnie MacLeod (part)

Barbara MacKay

**Company Secretary**

Gordon Cumming

# Chairman's Report

## Year ending 31st October 2018

Following the previous year's completion of various projects, this year has largely been one of consolidation.

The Huisinis Gateway has proved to be even more popular than expected, with the result that we have been in the happy position of having to increase capacity at the site.

Another notable success has been the recycling site at Urgha, whose operations have recently been expanded to include a commercial waste facility and the sale of agricultural feed.

The Monan and Bun Abhainn Eadarra renewable energy schemes continue to generate income for the estate, and the business units at Iomairt an Obain remain fully occupied.

As was indicated in my Report for last year's AGM, the company was looking forward to details of the areas of development on which the North Harris Trust intends to concentrate. Housing has now been identified as a priority. The company is the obvious vehicle to deliver that project, and we look forward to working with the Trust to do so.

As always, I am very grateful to the board of directors for continuing to give their time to the company. The year saw the departure of Shaun Hayes and Donnie Macleod as directors, both of whom gave valuable contributions for which I am very grateful. Gordon Ness took over from Shaun as Vice Chair on 30 April 2018. I also thank the Trust board and staff for their support, and in particular David Wake for his consistent enthusiasm and professionalism.

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# Development Officer's Report

**Year ending 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018**

The North Harris Trading Company (NHTC) is the wholly-owned subsidiary of the North Harris Trust (NHT). It was established in 2003 to deliver new income streams to the Trust to allow it to expand its community development activities.

The Bunavoneader hydro-electric scheme passed its second anniversary and delivered a performance slightly ahead of forecast generation this year. The support issues that blighted the first year of operation have now been resolved with the appointment for Renewables First to remotely monitor the scheme. NHTC continues to provide monthly checks on the scheme and has a minority equity stake in ownership.

The Monan Windfarm continues to operate as planned despite a major outage on Turbine 3. Ownership of the scheme has now passed from Windflow, the manufacturer to a company wholly owned by the financier. NHTC continues to hold a minority stake in ownership.

Huisinis Gateway has been through its first tourist season seeing some 38,000 people pass through the door. A number of upgrades have been made during the year including the installation of a cattlegrid on the carpark, vinyl flooring in the shower, additional parking spaces and donation posts. Feedback from visitors has been positive, with social media spreading the word about the facilities. The Trust has received a significant increase in donation income with the offer of showers, chemical disposal point and the campsite.

The Iomairt an Obain development continues to operate at full occupation. New leases have been agreed with all three tenants. Unit 3 is now being prepared for the production of beer rather than candles. NHTC is now looking for opportunities to develop further business space. A brief for a study to investigate demand for business space was drafted. We continue to work with HIE to progress this.

NHTC continues to operate the North Harris Community Recycling Site. This year CnES has been tightening the rules on acceptable waste for the site. This has caused some friction with the community. At the end of the year, a commercial skip was hired to allow customers to dispose of items not accepted at the main site. This service is chargeable and has been relatively well received.

For the majority of this year, the company has had the benefit of two fully funded placements -one from Community Jobs Scotland and one from CnES OHMEET. This has allowed a small team to carry out estate management tasks for the Trust in addition to operating the site. Public benches and picnic tables have been painted, paths repaired and parking space markers installed in car parks.

This year saw the launch of the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Scheme and Rural Housing Fund. The first scheme is being administered by CnES and HHP. A number of prospective development sites were offered for investigation in March. At the end of the year, all but one had been rejected and deemed unviable. Following this, an application was submitted to the Rural Housing Fund for assistance with our own feasibility study on a site at Ardvourlie. Funding was granted and a team appointed to progress the study. It is hoped that NHT/NHTC will find a way of making the scheme viable.