

# Third Annual Report

Secretary  
November 2004

## **Introduction**

This is the third year of activities of this company and can be recognised as the first year where many of the plans have been put into practice. Many of the ideas have been converted into projects and during this year they were initiated. This has brought the group to a new responsibility. Effort has been made to ensure the smooth running of current projects and efforts to consolidate and maintain what has been achieved. New projects have been not given the priority but there is no shortage of the ideas to develop further schemes.

People and Agencies that have been contacted and involved in Development Group discussions or funding.

- Ian Wilson Durness Estate
- Rowan Tree
- Renewable Energies
- Caithness and Sutherland EnterpriseASE
- Community Economic Development
- Community Fund
- Heritage Lotteries
- Glasgow University
- Leader +
- Social Inclusion partnership

## **Durness Estate**

During the Estate feasibility studies there were several visits from various consultants, housing, archaeology, tourist potential and valuation. Part of the brief was to involve someone from the local community in the process and the secretary was involved. During the process there was public meeting in Durness and a telephone survey. Draft reports were circulated and all comments considered before the final was accepted. The final reports are now on file. The value of the estate by the district value has yet to be ascertained.

The Community Fund Application for a full time youth worker was approved as was the Heritage Lotteries Fund Application for the back to the Future Mackay Country project.

### **Heritage Lotteries**

Several discussions and meeting took place with Leader+ / CED and CASE and SCARF but the total funding package was approved by all the agencies except leader as only one source of European money could be included. CED increased their share. Interviews and appointments for the posts took place and the project is well underway with results being obtained far in excess of expectations. Two reports accompany this report on the project. A further 3 year plan has been drafted and submitted for provisional discussion with the Heritage Lotteries. Back to the Future 2.

### **Community Fund**

The procedure of appointing a youth worker was carried and the post is in operation as a job share. Further details are available on file in the form of the Youth workers reporting procedure.

### **North West Youth Initiative**

Communication has been kept open with the NWYI regarding their use and responsibility of the premises in Bard Terrace. The secretary has attendance meetings and advised as necessary.

### **Motor Club**

Early in the year the secretary met with Meeting with leader+ Youth Projects manager. This was to introduce the expansion of the Motor Club and submit an application for funds to purchase Go karts. Arrangements were made for volunteer labour to build and restore a track at Ierinebeg as part of the input to funding. The Military and K Mackae had agreed to carry out this work. The work has been started and is slowly moving on. After some enquires and discussion Public Liability insurance is not a condition of the grant and the waiver and parental approval forms will suffice. The planning department wish an application and this is being complied.

### **Appeal**

A Finance charities appeal was launched and some funds were obtained. This process of selecting and writing to possible grant giving charities is a long and a hit or a miss process.

### **New Ideas Science Centre**

An application to the Scottish Executives Communities New Ideas fund was accepted and funds were received for a consultation and feasibility of a Science Centre being developed in Durness. The report is on file and waits for decisions to be made on the next step.

### **Business Awards**

The group were invited to apply for Highland & Islands Business Awards. Unfortunately we were short listed but failed to win.

### **Archaeological Dig**

Glasgow University carried out an Archaeological dig part of a five year scheme. The DG sourced funds to allow more community involvement. CED and SIP awarded money for Youth and Community participation.

### **Bard Terrace**

The supervisors post for looking after Bard Terrace ceases at the end of December 2004. The internet connections are now the sole responsibility of the group and meters for regulatory charging have been installed. Several small problems have arisen mostly connected with the change over from the Scottish Executive. This and small computer faults have been carried out by the secretary.

### **Intervillage Marketing**

The end of grant of the Intervillage marketing Scheme was completed and the reports and outcomes are all on file.

- Raw video
- Brochure
- Photograph library
- Mackay Country Text

### **Signage**

The signage of Mackay Country was completed. Tenders for the work and appointment with consultation with contractor resulted in all 6 signs being erected. The first unveiled

by Lord Thurso on May 2004. Current disappointment with one being vandalised has brought about much support to have sign replaced.

### **Walking Network**

The Development Group received funds to hold for the Walking network project. The leaflet to accompany the walks is now almost ready to print. The secretary and chairman have been involved in the production.

### **Princes Trust**

The new director of the Princes Trust requested a meeting and several possible ideas for development of the youth activities were mooted. This could be an avenue to pursue.

### **Meetings**

More Directors Meetings were held during the year but latterly they became less frequent. Definite dates could be decided well in advance to alleviate this problem.

The secretary met with Lord Thurso to discuss mainly the Mackay Country project and advice sought is being carried out.

The secretary met with a croft holder in Scourie regarding the inheritance of a traditional working croft but after local discussions encouragement is being given for a local Scourie group to be the benefactors.

### **Ceannabeinne Township**

A proposal to move this forward is available and this project is moving forward in consultation with the Grazing Committee. From Helen Smith Rowan Tree Consulting