

GBCDT Meeting 20 February 2026

PRESENT: Calum Fraser, Brenda Jones, Anna Macdonald, John Porteous, Helen Strong, Mark Bryant (via videolink)

APOLOGIES: Catherine Muir, Zoe Paterson Macinnes

POINTS DISCUSSED

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes for December 2025 were approved by Mark and seconded by John. The meeting which took place on 28 January 2026 was non-quorate.

2. BOARD MEMBERS

Following the resignations last month of Catherine Muir as Chair and Melanie Muir as Treasurer, the new Board configuration is as follows:

- Anna proposed John as Chair and Mark seconded.
- John proposed Anna as Director and Mark seconded.
- Catherine would like to continue as a Board member.
- Brenda is considering joining the Board.

Some other residents have been approached but have said they don't wish to join the Board. It was agreed a plan was needed to recruit more Board members. Mark will speak to Donna to ask if she can take on the Treasurer role in the meantime.

3. ACCOUNTS UPDATE

Balance on 17 Dec: £18,806.92

Incomings to 27 Jan: £ 658.53

Outgoings to 27 Jan: £ 943.22

Balance on 27 Jan: £18,522.23

Mark and Calum are on the bank approved list, and Mark can authorise bills.

The financial year ended in October 2025. Mark will contact Donna about the audit.

4. COMMUNICATION

a) Website

The website is almost finished. Helen has sent the link to the new site to the Board and asked for feedback by 1 March. The planned launch date of 31 March should be achieved.

b) Admin / Google Drive / Email traffic

- Helen flagged invoices that had been received and needed to be paid. She will send a summary to Mark and Calum for them to check if direct debits/standing orders have been set up or whether they need to be paid manually.
- Helen will continue monitoring the email account and performing other admin functions for the time being.

c) Membership audit

Anna circulated a spreadsheet of the current membership database: there are 155 members (118 full, 37 associate). 83% can be contacted by email, 13 households by paper. 7 associate members have left the community. There is a function on the new website of generating dedicated mailings to members. It was agreed that a mailing will be sent out upon the launch of the new website in March giving members an update on Trust matters and assuming they wish to remain members of the Trust unless they advise otherwise.

5. ESTATE BUYOUT

a) Business Plan/Community consultation

John circulated the Business Plan that had been drawn up by Kerrie Grant from SKS/HIE. It was decided that, rather than present this plan to the community, a community consultation/workshop would be held, probably over three days in May, to ask for community input on the Estate Buyout. John, Brenda and Calum will contact people from Galson and Carlway Trusts, and look for a suitable person from outside the community to facilitate the consultation. Brenda will also prepare a roadmap/timeline for the consultation process.

John also spoke with Calum Iain Mackenzie (Hacleit grazings clerk) about holding consultations with crofters only (in addition to the consultations with the whole community). It is expected that crofters would welcome the opportunity to explain the improvements they would like to see as a result of Community ownership of the Bernera estate.

b) Mapping

John met John Gillies, the estate factor for Ken Macdonald & Co, who gave John a list of all areas taken out of the estate (by feuing off, de-crofting, or by utilities or CnES) up to 2022. John Gillies also confirmed that all subsequent areas taken out had been dealt with by Inverness Solicitors Murchison Law. John will approach them and request copies of the relevant title plans.

c) Charity status

John has been looking into adding charity status to the Trust as a bolt-on, as this would yield a few advantages. Ongoing.

6. DUBH THOB

a) Business Plan

The Buyout Business Plan includes a section on the Dubh Thob and this can be used to prepare a Business Plan just for Kirkibost pier. The Business Plan is needed to apply for the asset transfer (purchase of the land where the facilities are located) at a heavily discounted rate (90%).

b) Rates and insurance

The Trust qualifies for 100% rates relief on the facilities building. John has already applied for this.

c) Completion of facilities building

The washing machine and tumble dryer have now been ordered and delivered. There is minor final work that needs to be done in order to get a completion certificate. John will chase up with Tim Macdonald re the rendering of the ramp and plinth.

7. AOB

a) CnES meeting about Bernera school building/cross-committee meeting

The CnES are planning a community meeting on Tuesday 3 March at 6pm in the Community Hall to talk about the mothballed primary school in Bernera. None of the community groups had been approached in advance about this meeting but it was agreed that a cross-committee meeting should take place, ideally prior to this date. A suitable date and time is currently being sought.

b) Writ received

A writ has been issued on the Trust and the Trust is seeking legal advice and responding accordingly.

Next meeting: 18 March 2026, 7.30pm in the Small Hall