



NEWSLETTER Autumn 2020

Greetings from CCDC! Read on to find out what's been happening...



Welcome to the autumn newsletter. We hope this finds you safe and well. The last few months coping with the pandemic have been difficult, a new experience to navigate. CCDC has been working with local groups to try to help and, boosted by some extra Scottish Government funding, we have been able to provide masks, hand sanitiser and financial help when it was needed during the first lockdown period. We have also set up a mental health support page on our website (www.coigachcommunity.com) in recognition of the fact that some people may be struggling.

Coigach Community Fund The turbines are busy working away, turning wind and water into money for the community. Here's a breakdown of the public grants that CCDC has been able to award so far. Please have a look at the website or the Community Grants leaflet for more details – leaflets are available in the Post Office. We're in the process of updating the website to include details of all grants awarded to date.



- *CCDC Supporting Children and Young People Fund: £2474.50*
- *CCDC Education and Training Bursaries Fund: £8270.97*
- *CCDC Wellbeing Fund: £3000.20*
- *CCDC Welcome Coigach Baby: £1000*
- *CCDC Small Grant Fund for Organisations: £36,550.67 – e.g. providing the school with devices for online learning and helping the Community Hall financially while it has such a limited income*
- *CCDC Crisis Fund (using Supporting Communities Fund from the Scottish Government via Highlands and Islands Enterprise): £12,900*
- *In addition to these established funds we invested in such things as upgrading our wind turbine's control system for increased efficiency and replaced all the Schoolhouse windows with modern, double-glazed units.*

News from Community Land Scotland We are delighted to announce that CCDC has been selected, along with only 5 other community groups across Scotland, to take part in a project – *Owning Our Future* - to look at how we responded to the Covid-19 crisis. We'll be working with a facilitator to create a plan for moving forward. This is a community project so we hope to involve lots of people. For more information, including details of the facilitator's post if you're interested in applying, have a look at the Community Land Scotland website: <https://www.communitylandscotland.org.uk/whats-new/owning-our-future/>.

New Community Development Plan With Covid-19 colouring everyone's plans for the near future, CCDC included, we hope soon to put the finishing touches to our revised Community Development Plan, having had to put it on hold in the spring. We had lots of community input – and, unsurprisingly, the top priority identified then was affordable homes for people. We're currently working with Alison Sinclair who is undertaking an options' appraisal exercise. In other news, the Schoolhouse is shortly to have new tenants. Congratulations to them and best of luck to Suzie in her new venture and to Sarah and Seumas in their new home!

Coigach and Assynt Living Landscape Partnership projects We continue to collaborate with CALLP on projects, including the lovely Acheninver Path network, which runs down the Youth Hostel Burn and up from the cliff above Acheninver beach, and *Music and Tales of Coigach and Assynt* (see below). We're also working with Laura Hamlet on improving the path around Fox Point, and on the Sense of Place project, the aim of which is to produce 'toolkits' of written and visual information for use by the people of Coigach and Assynt. Future projects include signage and a map for a new Heritage Trail.



Music and Tales is a wonderful project, just heading into its fifth year. Ronan Martin, a Skye based designer and musician, is working with a team to take the oral history research project completed in 2019 and make it into a beautiful book of songs, tunes, photographs and stories. *The Coigach and Assynt Collection* will be a book to treasure and we hope to see it in print before too long. Alongside this project, musician, broadcaster and writer Mary Ann Kennedy and her team are composing an album of music, again inspired by Lorraine Shaw's piece of research. They have managed to spend some time up here recently, and during the lockdown met with members of the Coigach and Assynt communities via Zoom. This promises to be an exciting and unique composition, mixing elements of traditional and contemporary music. Watch this space for plans for next year's part of the project.

Annual General Meeting This year's AGM is to take place on Monday 16 November at 7pm by Zoom – we look forward to seeing you! Relevant documents will be sent out in good time. If you're unfamiliar with Zoom, please don't hesitate to get in touch in advance for advice and a practise run if you so wish!

We're always looking for new voices on the CCDC Board – directors' nomination forms are on the website (completed forms to be with us by 7pm on Monday 9 November), and we also welcome new CCDC members – those forms too are on the website.

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