

Isle of Canna Community Development Plan 2013 to 2023

V4 July 2018



Photo : A. Munro

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1.0 Vision

The vision of the Isle of Canna Community Development Trust (IoCCDT) is for sustainable demographic growth supported by good employment opportunities, good services and facilities and affordable housing.

2.0 Background

2.1 Recent history: in 1981, the Hebridean islands of Canna and Sanday together with their farm, crofts and all buildings [except the Presbyterian Church, St Edward's Church (now deconsecrated) and the Schoolhouse on Sanday], were gifted to the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) by Dr John Lorne Campbell. Included in this gift were Dr Campbell's library, archives of papers, sound recordings, and collections of moths and butterflies. At the time of gift, the NTS purchased Canna House from Dr Campbell and also set up an endowment, both funded by a grant from the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF). The grant came with certain conditions, in particular that the libraries and collections owned by the NTS and situated in Canna House could not be removed from the island without written approval by the NHMF Trustees. The conditions also stipulate that the NTS is required to ensure appropriate public access to the property. Dr Campbell died in 1996.

2.2 Designations: the entire NTS property, approx. 5 miles long and 1 mile wide and covering 1,514 ha, is held inalienably, with all except the in-bye land being designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its geological and biological importance. The island has also been designated a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EU Birds Directive for its large assemblage of breeding seabirds and is covered by the Small Isles National Scenic Area (NSA) designation. Many of the structures are listed buildings and there are a number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMS). A Marine Protection Area (MPA) has been established around the Sound of Canna.

2.3 Canna today (July 2018): the island has a community of 18 people. There is a primary school on the island which is currently not in use. The main source of employment is the NTS (including the farm) although the community as a whole undertake a wide range of other jobs including crofting, running a cafe, the provision of guest house, camp site and other self catering accommodation and a web based graphics business. The island's infrastructure, including houses, road, power supply, water supply and pier, has been developed and improved over the years by the NTS but there is still potential for significant further development.

With few cars on Canna, the main form of locomotion for visitors is by foot. The islanders' main link to the mainland is via the Small Isles Caledonian MacBrayne ferry, which runs on a regular basis from the mainland port of Mallaig. Mallaig also has the closest secondary school for the children of the island and is the nearest point for provisions. The island is served by the new Small Isles practice doctor, based in Skye and is visited by members of both the Catholic and Protestant ministries.

2.4 Community asset management: in 2007 the Canna Community Association was formed. By 2013, the community were in a position to add to its growing list of assets and it was agreed that a more appropriate governance structure should be adopted. With the community looking to positively manage its own growth and development, in partnership with other organisations including the NTS, it was decided to set up a Development Trust, the IoCCDT.

The first objective of the new Trust was to collect ideas, hopes and concerns for Canna from its residents and prepare a 5 year Community Development Plan (2013 - 2018). The main objectives remain unchanged and are to assess the main areas of potential community development in terms of employment opportunities, housing, population growth and infrastructure for the benefit of the community and to do this with consideration of the landlord's (NTS) own Conservation Management and Development Plan.

This plan and the community it will serve, is dynamic and will change as community priorities change over its five year cycle. In order that its relevance is maintained a process for review is considered important (see 6.00). The plan is a guiding document and forms the basis of decisions about what to prioritise and how to resource community based projects and initiatives. The involvement of the Canna community in the process of developing this plan has been very important and participation and feedback from all members of the community is vital in shaping our future.

With the successful development of the CREE project, a further company limited by guarantee was set up in August 2017 to administer the build costs and the future sale of electricity. This is Canna Renewable Energy and Electrification Limited, trading as CREEL.

3.0 Introduction

The Islands of Canna and Sanday share many of the assets and the challenges which face all of our remote Island communities on the West coast of Scotland. The Island has many strong historical and cultural links associated with the Hebrides of Scotland and this gives it a strong sense of identity. Compared with the 19th century when many lived an impoverished existence, 21st century living places heavy reliance on infrastructure.

3.1 Assets

3.1.1 Our people

The previous owner Dr. John Lorne Campbell once called it the "Living Island". The experience and skill of the members of our community is its main asset. Living on a remote Island requires people to be hard working, to be resourceful, and to develop a wide range of skills and competencies.

3.1.2 Our environment

The island has a huge natural and historical interest and is one of the main reasons it was gifted to the care of the NTS for the benefit of the people of Scotland. No one cares more for the Island than the people who live here and the community are effectively ambassadors of the NTS and in tune with the organisation's Conservation aims and principals.

As an Island community one of its prime assets is the sea, whether it's in providing local seafood, an amenity for boating or other sea adventure or just a stunning backdrop to the island scenery.

The land is a further asset which supports a diverse crofting township as well as many aspects of wildlife and flora. The sheltered natural harbour and the terraces of columnar basalt all contribute to the unique experience that is a visit to Canna.

3.1.3 Our history

The rich Gaelic heritage of the Islands is a major attraction for people to the area. The links to the Scottish Diaspora of countries like Canada, the USA, Australia and New Zealand gives Canna a world wide appeal. Cultural tourism is becoming a huge market for remote communities and Canna is well placed to reap the rewards of this. The development of links between Canna and Gaelic speaking communities across the world has been much assisted by the appointment of a Gaelic speaking archivist by the NTS.

3.1.4 Existing community achievements in establishing infrastructure

- Canna Renewable Energy and Electrification project: building work completed Oct 26 2018
- All tides road: the first road for access to Sanday not relying on tides, in place June 2018
- Community moorings: well maintained moorings have opened the door to increased yacht visitors
- A community space created in the Shearing Shed with a Public Entertainment License. Used for performances, workshops, temporary displays, meetings, community activities
- Community shop: opened in 2012 and successfully run almost entirely by community volunteers, with one part time job in the summer months
- Exhibition in the Pier waiting room - members of the community contributed to the project set up by NTS staff
- Canna Campsite: established by the community and now providing a business on Canna
- Dairy Shed Heritage Centre
- Community polytunnel and vegetable garden
- Small Isles Community run CIC Hebnet broadband

3.2 Challenges

3.2.1 Geography

- Remoteness: whilst attractive to tourists, is challenging in terms of infrastructure maintenance and development.
- Secondary school boarding: the requirement for school children to board away from home on the mainland whilst attending High School can be a challenge for some.

3.2.2 Economy

- Seasonal fluctuations: a big challenge to community development, particularly for tourism based businesses.
- Tourism: although a huge advantage, tourism creates its own challenges both in terms of available infrastructure and also in destroying the very thing that the tourists want to experience. The balance between too little and too much will need ongoing consideration.

3.2.3 Population

- Community structure: The future viability of our Island community presents a major challenge. A large percentage of the current population are aged 40 plus and it is important to retain a balance of age ranges to maintain a sustainable community.

3.2.4 Infrastructure and Services

Working in partnership with the NTS and other organisations is seen as being a crucial factor in increasing the infrastructure, housing and services potential. In the past 30 years the NTS has invested heavily in the infrastructure of the Island, but there remain many areas for further improvement, for example:

- Water supply: In dry summers, the water supply cannot cope with existing use. A single point water treatment system would also be more efficient.
- Additional visitor facilities currently only three public toilets and one shower which is not disability compliant. There is no laundry or drying facility.
- Establishing a dedicated ranger office and store.
- Residential housing: increasing the existing population would require more housing.
- Small business units: with the recent investment in a new high speed broadband link, there is now a need for space for local businesses to develop.
- Holiday accommodation: increase required to support additional tourist stopovers

4.0 Objectives

The following objectives are set out as part of the revised 5 year development plan for the Community of Canna, commencing July 2018.

1.0 Short term - immediate focus and complete in 1 to 2 years

2.0 Medium term - complete in 2 to 3 years

3.0 Long term - longer term focus, complete in 3 to 5 years

1.0 Short Term Objectives	Rationale	Status / Lead	Links	Challenges	Cost
1.1 Fundraise for and appoint Development Officer (DO)	The present community does not have the expertise or time to work on the projects included in this plan	Exploratory discussion with NTS and other potential partners / Canna Community, IoCCDT, NTS, HIE, DTAS, LEADER	all below apart from NTS led projects	Finding funders to enable such a position to be filled. The possibility that funding for a DO will be on a single project basis. Accommodation on Canna, for such a post.	£30,000 2019? £24,000 pa full time = 2015 advertised figure for Rum Development Officer.
1.2 Establish additional water supply and install a single point water treatment system	Any further increase in tourist or community numbers needs to be underpinned by adequate water supply. The current supply struggles in dry weather. A single point water treatment system would save on maintenance costs and recurring leaks in domestic and business installations.	Exploratory discussion / NTS led - basic infrastructure	essential to any project below that will lead to an increase in either residents or visitors	Finding funds. An old water supply on Sanday might not be re-useable. A single point water treatment system would make the entire water system very vulnerable to any problems with the treatment system	
1.3 Set up a feasibility study for the development of Coroghon Barn	This would be the first step in a complex project to renovate the listed building that is Coroghon Barn and create a unit for preferred option of bunkhouse accommodation / staff flat /kayak or other storage /display space.	Needs a Development Officer in place / NTS with Development Officer, Canna Community, IoCCDT	see 3.1 (develop Coroghon Barn)	Needs a Development Officer in place to take forward. See rationale 1.1 Finding funds	£12,000 2019? £8 - 10,000 range of costs for feasibility study done on previous Community Hall project 2015.

1.4 Set up a feasibility study for the provision of additional residential housing to enable an increase in the number of residents on Canna	This would be the first step in the provision of additional housing for new residents. There is a need to increase the population to enable sustainable development to take place: the current population is at full stretch. Additional housing is necessary to achieve this as all suitable housing is currently occupied. New build is cheaper and more eco-friendly than renovation of existing buildings for this purpose.	Needs a Development Officer in place / NTS with Development Officer, Canna Community, IoCCDT and other funders	see 3.2 (create additional residential housing)	Needs a Development Officer in place to take forward. See rationale 1.1 Finding funds	£12,000 2019? £8 - 10,000 range of costs for feasibility study done on previous Community Hall project 2015.
1.5 Ensure that resources are available for the necessary renovation of Canna House and the management of Canna House Garden	This doesn't have to be a show garden but having a well kept garden will enhance the visitor experience and complete the Canna House package for visitors	Ongoing / NTS led		Finding funds	
1.6 Better overall signage and interpretation across Canna and Sanday	To achieve a more enjoyable and informed experience for visitors	Exploratory discussion / NTS led - basic infrastructure		Finding funds	
1.7 Work with NTS to better promote Canna businesses and offer business training support as required	To make best use of the opportunities on Canna for businesses	Exploratory discussion / Canna businesses and NTS			
1.8 Establish a ranger's office and store	Neither the community nor the rangers are happy about having an office and store in the ranger's home. Ideally there should be a purpose built structure near to the pier	Exploratory discussion / NTS led - basic infrastructure	link to 1.9, and possibly 3.4 (Drs room) and 3.5 (exhibition space)	Finding funds Finding a site	

<p>1.9 Establish additional visitor facilities: more toilets, showers, laundry and drying areas</p>	<p>There is only one shower and three public toilets on Canna / Sanday. Of these there is only one toilet that has disabled access - and Canna is thus unlikely to be disability compliant. This is not enough for existing visitor numbers and any increase in visitors will compound the problem. There are no public laundry facilities and no dedicated drying area. Ideally there should be a purpose built structure near to the pier</p>	<p>Exploratory discussion / NTS led - basic infrastructure</p>	<p>link to 1.8 and possibly 3.4 Drs room and 3.5 (exhibition space)</p>	<p>Finding funds Finding a site</p>	
<p>2.0 Medium term objectives</p>	<p>Rationale</p>	<p>Status / Lead</p>	<p>Links</p>	<p>Challenges</p>	<p>Cost</p>
<p>2.1 Investigate the possibility of increasing the number of moorings</p>	<p>The well maintained, existing moorings are a valued commodity and in the summer, it can be difficult for visiting yachts to access a mooring. It is thought that the initial project allowed for a further 4 moorings (little paperwork has been found relating to the project) and this needs to be checked.</p>	<p>Needs a Development Officer in place / NTS with Development Officer, Canna Community, IoCCDT and other funders</p>		<p>Needs a Development Officer in place to take forward. See rationale 1.1 Finding funds. Negotiating agreement with Crown Estates and the yachting community regarding the continued provision of free anchorage in the bay. Limited suitable space.</p>	

3.0 Long term objectives	Rationale	Status / Lead	Links	Challenges	Cost
3.1 Renovate and upgrade Coroghon Barn	The renovation of a vernacular listed building would be in line with NTS website statement under 'Buildings'. The incorporation of a bunkhouse with provision for kayaking and staff accommodation, would provide a valuable business opportunity for Canna. The position of and amenities already located at this building, make it ideal for development.	Needs a Development Officer in place / NTS with Development Officer, Canna Community, IoCCDT and other funders	link to 1.3 (feasibility study for Coroghon Barn)	Needs a Development Officer in place to take forward. See rationale 1.1 Finding funds	An estimate of £3,000,000 and probably more. The new build for the previous Community Hall project (2015) was priced between £2,541,132 and £2,893,308
3.2 Provide additional residential housing	There is a need to increase the population to enable sustainable development to take place: the current population is at full stretch. Additional housing is necessary to achieve this as all suitable housing is currently occupied. New build is cheaper and more eco-friendly than renovation of existing buildings for this purpose	Needs a Development Officer in place / NTS with Development Officer, Canna Community, IoCCDT and other funders	link to 1.4 (feasibility study residential housing) and 3.7 (derelict buildings)	Needs a Development Officer in place to take forward. See rationale 1.1 Finding funds Finding a site	
3.3 Provision of small business units	To offer the facility for cottage industry / studio space for new residents. Could possibly use existing derelict buildings in this way.	Needs a Development Officer in place / NTS with Development Officer, Canna Community, IoCCDT and other funders	link to 3.2 (residential housing) and 3.7 (derelict buildings)	Needs a Development Officer in place to take forward. See rationale 1.1 Finding funds	
3.4 Establish a dedicated room for doctor's visit	The Small Isle practise doctors have asked for a lockable, dedicated room so that they can safely leave equipment on Canna and offer the island a better service. Ideally there should be a purpose built structure near to the pier	Needs a Development Officer in place / NTS with Development Officer, Canna Community, IoCCDT and other funders	link to 1.8 (rangers office) and 1.9 (additional toilet/shower/laundry /drying)	Needs a Development Officer in place to take forward. See rationale 1.1 Finding funds	

3.5 Provide a dedicated exhibition and resources space	A space for properly displaying artifacts and exhibitions related both to the history of Canna and present day life.	Needs a Development Officer in place / NTS with Development Officer, Canna Community, IoCCDT and other funders	link to 1.8 (rangers office), 3.4 (Drs. room) and 3.8 (Rhu)	Needs a Development Officer in place to take forward. See rationale 1.1 Finding funds Finding a site	
3.6 Road improvements	Maintain surface work on existing track and improve access to Tighard and Kate's.	Needs a Development Officer in place / NTS with Development Officer, Canna Community, IoCCDT and other funders		Needs a Development Officer in place to take forward. See rationale 1.1 Finding funds	
3.7 Renovation of derelict buildings other than Coroghon Barn	LDN architects did an initial survey of all NTS derelict buildings on Canna in 2016. It may not be realistic to create new residential homes from them but the creation of bunkhouse type accommodation or small business units could create further business opportunities on Canna.	Needs a Development Officer in place / NTS with Development Officer, Canna Community, IoCCDT and other funders	link to 3.2 (provide addit residential housing) and 3.3 (provision of small business units)	Needs a Development Officer in place to take forward. See rationale 1.1 Finding funds	
3.8 Rhu Church: consolidation and use	Currently owned by the Church of Scotland. For visitors leaving the pier, this is the first building that they encounter and whilst a lovely space, it is currently very damp and neglected. This would make a wonderful exhibition space.	Needs a Development Officer in place / NTS, Church of Scotland with Development Officer, Canna Community, IoCCDT and other funders.	link to 3.5 (exhibition and resources space)	Needs a Development Officer in place to take forward. See rationale 1.1 Finding funds	

5.0 Plan Review

The intention is for the IoCCDT and the community to review and update this plan regularly in order that it remains dynamic.

Development Plan Review History Date	Revision No.	Comment
Jan 2014	V2	
April 2015	V3	
July 2018	V4	Major overhaul

6.0 Partners, local community groups and voluntary organisations

Community Land Scotland

The National Trust for Scotland

The Development Trusts Association Scotland

Highland Council

Highlands and Islands Enterprise

The Isle of Rum Community Trust

Isle of Muck Community Enterprise Ltd.

Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust

Small Isles Community Council