

## Arran Eco Savvy Community

Community SCIO SC045785

**Minutes: AGM 26<sup>th</sup> August 2018**

**Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick**

**Present:** Elsa Rodeck, Isla Blair, Val Brown, Tricia Sloss, Graeme Bald, Karen Legge, Eric Kay, Gregor McKelvie, Helen Ross, Daren Townsend, Jan McGregor, Rebecca Lacey, Colin Smeeton, Hilary Maguire, Esther Brown, Sue Weaver, Beverley Walker, Jude King, Ruth MaLaren, Derek Morgan, Charlotte Mann, Sarah Kelly

**Apologies:** Holly Murdoch, Keith Robertson, Nicola Kelly, Bethany Walsh

1. **The minutes of the 2017 AGM** were adopted, proposed by Esther Brown, seconded Eric Kay.

2. **Chair Person's Report**, presented by Esther Brown

### General Charity Business

The last year has been full, full of achievements and challenges. In the spring of 2017 we embarked on the first funded project Eco Savvy has ever had. The Micro Hubs that covered the island and reached out to areas of Arran that were not yet engaged with our Charity were funded by Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) from the Scottish Government. The result of this funding award meant that significant changes were necessary to the way we operate, financially, on a day to day management level and the transition to being an employer. We employed a fulltime project manager, Jude King joined our team in July, after Michael Gettins resigned in June. We employed 6 part time hub managers who covered 8 village hubs until the end of the funding in March 2018. Jude remained an employee as we were successfully awarded £112, 151 from CCF to deliver the Energy Challenge in April of 2018. This brought the employment of two fulltime energy auditors, Derek Morgan and Charlotte Mann and Ruth McLaren as our part time admin. We currently have four members of staff funded by the CCF and in April 2018 we employed our shop manager Sarah Kelly. Sarah's role is part time and funded by the revenue from the Whiting Bay shop, and 5 hrs a week by Volunteer Action Fund (VAF) through the Scottish Government.

Over the last year there have been changes to the management board, Barbara I'Anson resigned as treasurer in August 2017 and Lynne Cameron resigned as secretary in November. Andrew Downing resigned as treasurer in March of 2018. Both Andrew, Lynne and Barbara contributed untold hours and energy to this charity and receive our heartfelt thanks at this AGM.

In February 2018 we warmly welcomed Sue Weaver, one of the founding trustees of the charity to return and very recently we have met with Hilary Maguire who is keen to become our treasurer. Myself Esther Brown and Beverley Walker have continued as trustees over the last year.

The trustees meet every 4 to 6 weeks and are in regular contact, and hold Open Working Group meetings every 3 to 4 months to encourage the wider group of Eco Savvy to engage in our projects and future. If you would like to become more involved, firstly if you're not already please become a member. This gives you a vote at members meeting and helps us demonstrate our support from the

community of Arran. If you wish to volunteer, working on project development, in the shop or as a trustee please talk to any of the trustees about how you can help and what would be involved.

We complied with new GDPR regulations and have our Privacy Policy and Data Protection Policy available online.

Other events this year were, myself, Beverley and Jude attended the CARES Community and Renewable Energy Scotland, conference in Glasgow and made some good contacts with other groups.

Eco has talked about an energy project since the creation of the group and we are still following this path to see where it leads.

Sarah, Beverley and I spent the day at the All Energy Conference in Glasgow recently and also made connections with different industry sectors.

One notable achievement of Eco Savvy this year has been the formation of Arran Sustainability Forum. We have started to work with groups and businesses across the island and the collective power to enact real change has been successful. The sustainability forum is divided into differing strands with representatives from many sectors working in small groups to identify potentials and problems.

In October 2017 we hosted the Big Arran Green Show and invited all the primary schools on the island to come to a day event with representatives from local environmental groups showcasing their work and purpose. The Big Arran Green Show was an important event, now in its second year, supported by as many green groups and organisations on the island that could attend. Arran Eco Savvy, Coast, Arran Community Land Initiative, Arran Bee Group, Arran theatre and Arts Group, NAC, Woodside Farm all held activities. Around 150 pupils attended. This model was also taken to the Arran High School Go Green Event in February. all pupils at the high school participated. We have been invited to host another high school event so the Arran Eco Savvy's schools green days look set to continue.

### Eco Park

Before Eco Savvy opened a shop, a group of likeminded people identified the need for an environmental group on Arran. The drive was to create a project that would bring Arran in line with other progressive, forward thinking communities.

An Eco Park could allow us to manage waste streams, generate energy, upcycle and reuse, look at sustainability, create community space and leisure. We have made some significant progress recently.

We have been meeting with NAC waste officers over the whole of this last year and Beverley Walker has developed a business plan for Green Waste Composting. NAC wish to enter a Public Service Partnership with a third sector organisation to deliver green composting on island and stop shipping it to the mainland. We wish to conduct a feasibility study to consider the green waste and also the food waste streams on the island. Also, a community energy scheme. We would like to know if combining these three would create an operation that would be sustainable and a viable business arm to our charity. It has been agreed we will produce a "Scope of Works" to identify the next steps.

We have met with representatives from Zero Waste Scotland who have offered practical project development support and encouraged us to apply for funding that will support infrastructure

development. This could be the agricultural building that goes on the park first to house parts of the composting.

The trustees met with Scottish Land Fund this summer, we have made the first steps through the big lottery to apply for funding to purchase land for the park with them. They have confirmed their stage one funding would allow for a feasibility study, not only for the composting but for the whole Eco Park proposal.

This was a significant leap forward as funding for feasibility was a bottle neck.

We met with the Forestry Commission and have outlined the proposed land and begun the application to a Community Asset Transfer Scheme (CATS)

We attended the Community and Renewable Energy (CARES) conference and identified similar communities in Scotland who are already conducting similar schemes. We have identified the funding stream through the Scottish Government that supports community energy and made initial steps to engage with CARES.

We met with an organisation Interface in July who facilitate collaboration between charities and universities. They have invited us to apply for a fund that would enable collaboration with Strathclyde University to develop Circular Economy on Arran. This would include the function of an Eco Park.

There are many aspects to this and we have many hurdles to overcome, it is our aspiration to fully investigate each area and possibility.

### Community Hub & Shop

The Eco Savvy Community Hub in Whiting Bay has been an ongoing success, it has had its troubles and challenges but it has remained a well-used and supported part of Eco Savvy's community presence. Before trustee Lynne Cameron resigned in November 2017 the responsibility for the daily running for the shop was hers. She managed the rota, volunteers and shop reports. With the loss of this role being performed by a volunteer trustee it was agreed with volunteers at OWG in December 2017 that we would employ a shop manager to fulfil some of this role. We closed the shop for two months and volunteers worked to clear and clean the shop. We redesigned some of the layout and created a project area to inform visitors to the shop of our charities purpose and projects.

We introduced the new range of Eco Products to trial the sale of bought in items. The focus of this was agreed to be products that would encourage a reduction in the single use plastics and support like-minded companies. We cleared some of the back shop but did not have time to fully renovate this space. These changes have been received positively by the volunteers and visitors to the shop, it has been described as a brighter, nicer place to be.

In April Sarah Kelly joined our shop team and has had her work cut out for her from the start. It is a challenge to keep the donations moving, new eco products stocked and the back shop safe and clear. The greatest challenge has been to fill the rota, the shop has not had consistent full opening and many shifts have been covered by Sarah and the extremely dedicated team of volunteers. We currently have new volunteers joining us and have put plans in place to recruit more. Following Sarah's appointment, we have been successfully awarded £27,387 by the Volunteer Action Fund or VAF. Partly for more hours for Sarah to put procedures in place for volunteers' health and safety, develop the back shop and recruit more shop volunteers.

Also, to support new areas of volunteering in the wider Eco Savvy Project, we have interesting project development opportunities for those who cannot or do not wish to volunteer in the shop. The funding will allow the volunteer task force to work on many different areas of the whole project and encourage volunteers to work from home and contribute to Eco Savvy no matter their circumstances. We recently met with the landlord of the shop and are working on proposals to renovate the exterior and back shop and toilet. VAF funding will be over a three-year period and help secure the health and growth of our whole charity. Eco savvy would not be where it is today without the shop and it is the beating heart of our charity. We thank everyone, past and present who has ensured the shop's continuation.

### Climate Challenge Fund

Over the 15 months since our last AGM we have delivered the CCF Arran Micro Hubs project, successfully been awarded funds to deliver Arrans Energy Challenge and submitted the draft application to the CCF for a new project which at the moment is called Sustainable Island Life. This has been an enormous challenge and taken unprecedented volunteer trustee hours and could not have been possible without the dedication, drive and adaptability of our Project Manager Jude King and the support of the Arran Community.

The success of our Micro hubs and the delivery of 74 workshops has been a huge achievement. 101, 891 CO<sub>2</sub>e tonnes of carbon were saved. We held 12 educational school workshops over the year and the Primary Big Green Show and High Schools Go Green event.

In July, we began the monthly themed workshops. We rolled out Sustainable Halloween workshops in every hub, and were focussed on the swapping or upcycling of old costumes to reduce the waste at Halloween. We then brought a fabric wreath making activity to 5 of schools in the lead up to Christmas.

A significant point in the project came from the Film Night in our Corrie Hub-where we screened the National Geographic Documentary: "Before the Flood", starring Leonardo Di Caprio. The discussion and support we received, not only immediately after, but still today, proves what a powerful tool education plays, in this case bringing home the reality of Climate Change to those never previously engaged. The film stimulated over 45 minutes of conversation about the issues and implications of Climate Change. Concern over excessive packaging, products with palm oil and general awe at how ignorant they were to the issue of climate change dominated the conversation.

We screened the same film for Arran High School students in February. As final call to action to close the project we held a final film night inviting the wider community to a screening of the film. This was a very well attended evening with a full hall of over 70. Positive engagement with a wide section of the local community through these film nights were enjoyed by all and resulted in some significant changes in understanding and engagement with issues around climate change.

Due to the publicity and word of mouth about Eco Savvy, we had two major island hotels getting in touch with us asking us if we would be able to use or distribute a significant amount of their old linen, which would be conventionally taken off the island and either incinerated or sent to landfill. We managed to recycle 95kgs of linen.

Eco Savvy's "Priceless" event that was open to the island which saw hundreds of donated and previously unwanted items being adopted into new homes; items were diverted from landfill. These items were accumulated over the year, about half from the revamp of the Whiting Bay shop and the

other half from the excess donations accumulated at the hubs. It was a successful event and considerable donations being made.

In all the micro hubs project saved 6,917 kg of items from landfill, held 74 workshops- 12 in schools, engaged with 3,020 people, clocked up 1,710 volunteer hours and saved 101,891 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

In April 2018 Arran Eco Savvy Energy Challenge was launched, offering free support across the island to help people save energy and costs in the home environments as well as supplying information on carbon literacy and climate change.

By engaging with energy drop-in surgeries and focused carbon literacy workshops, the project will enable significant carbon savings, simultaneously proving benefits that will shape behavioural changes amongst the residents of Arran, resulting in a long-lasting legacy.

The project will deliver its goals through

- Domestic Energy Audits
- Energy monitor loans
- Thermal imaging camera
- Energy Advice Drop-in Surgeries, Workshops
- Carbon Literacy Incentive Scheme

So far, we have engaged with over 70 homes and the target is to save 329,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> by March 2019. We are not sure if we can make this but we will all put our best into trying.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of August 2018 we submitted a draft application to CCF to deliver another project that would begin in April 2019.

Arran Eco Savvy propose to develop a 2 year “Sustainable Island Life Project”. This multi-functional project will continue the existing grant focus on energy efficiency, but additionally target two other low-carbon strands, namely, sustainable food and sustainable transport.

Energy Efficiency Audits will continue and Sustainable Food will aim to reduce reliance on carbon intensive transported food. We will empower households to grow their own low carbon food, providing food growing and composting kits and 1-1 tuition from a qualified gardening co-ordinator. This will contribute to engagement with Eco Savvy’s Green Waste & Food Waste composting project.

Sustainable Travel & Transport aims to

- reduce and replace individual car use on the island.
- Implement a car and lift sharing website app
- Offer Fuel Efficient Driver Training
- Deliver through Local business and the local community electric Bike scheme promoting and implementing the use of eBikes on island by residents
- Encourage more local cycling
- Encourage walking to replace car journeys.

We propose to Develop Arran’s first Green Community Transport Map.

- The map will identify prominent off-road cycling routes, and promote all ways of green and sustainable travel for residents
- The map will emphasize our network of hubs- which will provide check-in and maintenance points for bike travellers and walkers, providing bike tool boxes and places to refill water bottles.

The project will include the development of Develop Sustainable Island Life App enabling:

- Map use
- Lift and Car share
- Food/Active travel Log
- And highlight Arran's Environmental Information

This is just a draft and could change significantly once the funders give us feedback. The final application will go in October and we will not know if we are successful until after Xmas at the earliest.

We are already trialling ebikes and have one on loan from Home Energy Scotland to show today.

### Conclusion

Over all Eco Savvy has achieved more in the last year than ever before. It is moving in a very exciting direction and is achieving more and more. Our membership has grown, our reach around the island has increased. We have a team of volunteers and members of staff who are passionate and dedicated people out there representing us every day.

As Chairperson I thank all our members, volunteers, staff and trustees for all they have done to help Arran Eco Savvy grow. Thanks doesn't seem enough for all the hours given, energy put in and enthusiasm that is shown, it is inspiring. Thank you all.

Esther Brown

Chair Person  
Arran Eco Savvy

There was also a vote of thanks for Esther's own hard work as Chair and acting Treasurer.

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### **3. Treasurer's Report** 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017 – 4<sup>th</sup> April 2018

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2018 our balance was £9,062.13

We were still awaiting payment from CCF for two final claims for expenditure in the financial yr ending 4<sup>th</sup> April 2018, which amounted to £9847.51

This brings our total balance to £18,909.64

This is an increase on the year of £6,651.49

Income has been generated from the sale of unwanted items in the Whiting Bay Community Re-use shop.

Shop sales of donated goods are down last year from £12,270 to £11,884.67. A difference of £386.

However, donations were considerably up from £324 to £1,652, an increase of £1328.

Combined income from donations and sale of donated items of £13,536.67 for this year up £1,266.67 from year ending 2017.

These donations are made up from McTears auctioneers valuable items (£940), Compensation from RBS for the banking mistakes they made (£60) Priceless Event (£215.15) and the balance of £437.19 from shop donation jar.

Shop expenditure amounted to £10,179.65, this includes Eco Purchases which are products we have bought in to sell in the shop. Eco Purchases of £1,171.67 were made. In the time from reopening and the start of Eco sales on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February until 4<sup>th</sup> of April we sold £511.63.

We received £200 from the Arran Trust for our Arran Fills Water Bottles campaign.

Advertising was reduced from £809 in the previous year to £521.52, partly as CCF project advertised widely. £185 of this was our place on the Arran Banner Map.

In 2017 Arran Eco Savvy was awarded £63,436 with [The Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund](#) including a maximum funding of £31,718 from the [European Regional Development Fund](#). The CCF spending of £61,028.58 was delivery of the Micro Hubs project and was an under spend from the original funding of £2,408  
Micro Hub takings were £345.50

The sum of £10,000 ten thousand pounds is set aside and carried forward to purchase our proposed forestry land for community composting. And additional funds [will be required to be set aside] to safeguard the continuation of the Whiting Bay shop [(as part of the lease agreement)].

A full set of accounts will be available and will be held in the Whiting Bay Community Shop once they are independently audited.

The balance sheet will be posted on our website and links to it will be available from the charity regulator OSCR. The accounts will be examined by an independent examiner.

All Eco Savvy volunteers are thanked for helping to keep our Charity and community shop financially sustainable.

Esther Brown  
Acting Treasurer

4. There was a **discussion** following a question from the floor about the large number of projects being undertaken vs the limited number of Trustees, (at this point numbering three). The difficulties of this situation were acknowledged by the Chair, as well as the

effects on workload, due to the short-term nature of CCF funding. It was pointed out however that the CCF funding allows us to employ staff to manage those projects. It was also pointed out that Eco Savvy now attracts requests for help from business, which need to be responded to. Eco Savvy has made many efforts to attract new Trustees. The suggestion was made that in dealing with outside bodies and businesses, Eco Savvy might consider inviting reciprocal trustee help.

A questioner asking as to whether potential plans for electric bikes might be competitive with island business, was reassured to know that the proposed CCF project plan is not to rent them, nor to lend to visitors, but provide them as trials for use of Arran residents only.

**5. Election of Board Members.** Hilary Maguire was elected as treasurer (proposed EB, seconded BW). The remaining trustees were re-elected, with Esther Brown as Chair, (proposed SW, seconded BW) in addition to Beverley Walker (proposed EB, seconded Tricia Sloss) and Sue Weaver (proposed EB, seconded BW).

**6. AOB.** Beverley Walker introduced a discussion document about the possible need for changes to the Constitution, following discussions with the Scottish Land Fund about funding for a feasibility study on the Eco Park project.

#### Notice of requirement to consider amendments to the Constitution

- 1 Eco Savvy Trustees recently met with both the Forestry Commission (managing Community Asset Transfer CATS) and the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), managing the Scottish Land Fund (SLF), to discuss the current procedures for Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of land into community ownership.
- 2 The first stage offered by HIE was to review our constitution to decide if Eco Savvy was eligible.
- 3 Unfortunately the Board has been advised that Ecosavvy are currently ineligible for the Scottish Land Fund, for the reasoning outlined below.
- 4 However the HIE has advised  
*this is not a total showstopper – if eco savvy and it's members are willing and able to alter the constitution to become eligible by Stage 2, an application to Stage 1 can still be made. Eligibility for SLF stage 1 is: a constitution, a linked bank account, and three unrelated board members. If awarded an SLF Stage 1 using those criteria, then the award would be made with the caveat that the group become eligible by submission of a Stage 2 application.*  
*However, outlined below are quite major changes to the core of the organisation. It is worth considering with the board and your members whether changes of this nature will allow EcoSavvy to still achieve it's core mission.*
- 5 It was also noted that CATS will require an eligible body on submission of the CATS application

A summary of the changes that would be required is provided below (and further below for the HIE response):

## Definition of community and eligibility for membership

- 1 Change required to ensure that the transfer of land (and any other assets) is for the benefit of the Isle of Arran community (as opposed to the Eco Savvy 'community').
- 2 This has implications for membership. At present, membership of Eco Savvy is 'open to all' and not restricted to those living on or with an address on the Island.
- 3 Our membership currently totals 586, with 450 with an address on Arran, and 136 with an address outside of Arran (mostly in UK, Europe and US) 21% non Arran Residents, 70% Arran residents.
- 4 Clearly Eco Savvy wants to build an 'eco savvy' community and to send our message as widely as possible, and many visitors to the island sign up in support of our objectives and in particular to receive updates on our activities. I know that one groups in Perth Australia uses our newsletters and postings as an inspiration to their own community group.
- 5 However our constitution also states that all members can currently be nominated for the Board, and also have a vote on how the Charity runs.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- 1 Should only those members who are part of the local community (ie with an address on Arran) be allowed to vote on the direction of the Charity?
- 2 Should we limit potentially highly skilled trustees who perhaps live on the mainland, from becoming Trustees of the Charity?
- 3 Is it possible to separate membership into FULL membership (with full voting rights) and ASSOCIATE membership (all membership rights excluding the right to vote)?

## Exclusion of Membership

Clause 25 states that 'Any person may be expelled from membership by way of a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of those present and voting at a members' meeting, providing the following procedures have been observed:-

- a. at least 21 days' notice of the intention to propose the resolution must be given to the member concerned, specifying the grounds for the proposed expulsion;
- b. the member concerned will be entitled to be heard on the resolution at the members' meeting at which the resolution is proposed.

However, and although there are a long list of reasons provided in the Constitution which outline how a board member may be expelled, there are no reasons provided which would justify a member to be debarred, (other than failing the broad test of 'not supporting the objectives of Eco Savvy')

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- 1 should we retain the right to debar individuals who, for example
  - a. place the name of Eco-Savvy in disrepute
  - b. have a conviction or penalty for causing environmental harm
  - c. who, as agreed by two thirds majority of members, to be actively working against the objectives the charity?
- 2 Or, Should this clause be simply removed ?

## Other minor amendments

These amendments tidy up and bring the constitution up to date and are considered to be minor, (see blue text below)

- 1 Ensuring that membership is not discriminatory on race, gender or religion  
and
- 2 Establishing that surplus funds are reinvested back into the charity

Given that some of the amendments are considered to be major, the Board wishes to ensure that all members are properly consulted and given sufficient time to consider and respond. The Board plans to undertake the following actions:

- 1 Consult further with Scottish Land Fund
- 2 Develop a range of amendment options
- 3 Consult with members (30 day consultation)
- 4 Either call a members meeting, or seek agreement by email vote, to agree on the final changes

The AGM closed at 3.00pm, to be followed by refreshments and opportunities to discuss Eco Savvy activities with stalls and displays.

SLF Requirement	Relevant EcoSavvy Clauses	ET Commentary
<p><b>Definition of Community</b></p> <p>(p.11) “This is to be a geographic community as opposed to a community of interest. The boundary of the community to which the organisation relates must be clearly defined. For example, it could take the form of a community council area, parish boundary, local authority ward or could be defined using postcodes. We expect the boundary to be inclusive and to reflect commonly understood definitions of places and not cut across commonly recognised community boundaries.”</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Though the purposes reference Arran, Arran is clearly defined as the area of benefit for the organisation. This links to open membership, community control below.</p>
<p><b>Open membership</b></p> <p>(p.11) “Ordinary (or voting) membership must be open to everyone over 16 years (over 18 years is also acceptable) living within the defined geographic community. By ‘open membership’ we mean that membership eligibility requirements are to be inclusive and not discriminatory in terms of individual characteristics or circumstances such as race, religion, or gender.</p> <p>In addition, individuals who meet the eligibility requirements are to be admitted as members.”</p>	<p>Clause 11</p> <p>Clauses 13-15.</p>	<p>Clause 11 ensures that membership is open to individuals over 16. SLF requires members to be defined by the geographic definition of community (see below)</p> <p>S</p> <p>SLF does not see the ability to reject potential members as open membership. Current clauses 13-15 deem EcoSavvy ineligible.</p>
<p><b>Social Purpose</b></p> <p>(p.11) “The organisation’s main purpose must be consistent with furthering the interests of the defined geographic community. As we wish to support projects that will benefit the community as a whole, the Scottish Land Fund is best suited to organisations with a broad community benefit purpose and a good uptake of membership from within the defined community. Organisations that have a more narrow purpose can only be considered if</p>	<p>Clauses 4, 4.1</p>	<p>I am taking advice on whether EcoSavvy’s social purpose could be deemed wide enough for SLF purposes.</p>

<p>they meet our eligibility requirements and the applicant can demonstrate the project will deliver wider benefits.”</p>		
<p><b>Community Control</b></p> <p>(p.11) “Community control must be demonstrated at both membership and board level. The majority of the organisation’s voting members must be individual ordinary members and resident within the defined community. More than half of the voting seats on the board must comprise community directors resident within the defined community and elected by the membership.”</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>There is no statement ensuring community control at board level – though all directors must be members of the group, because there is no definition of the community at membership level and no control is displayed.</p> <p>Likewise, there is no community defined for membership.</p>
<p><b>Non-Profit Distributing</b></p> <p>(p11) “Surplus funds or assets should be reinvested into the work of the organisation to further its objects and not be distributed to members or others.</p> <p>In the event of the organisation being wound up, assets at dissolution must be passed to a non-profit distributing body with similar objectives.”</p>	<p>Clause 107</p>	<p>There is no statement ensuring surplus funds are reinvested into the work of the organisation.</p> <p>There is a statement regarding the winding up of the organisation.</p>