



Autumn/Winter Update November 2016

AMBITIOUS PLAN AIMS HIGH

A bold strategic plan for the area was launched at the Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn 2016 Annual General Meeting in early November. The Plan seeks to exploit some £8m of wind energy income across the Galson Estate community over the next 20 years.

Feedback from the community through recent consultation has highlighted three clear priorities - **elderly care** support services, **tourism** facilities plus **crofting and land use** activities. A range of other initiatives has also been identified, including recreational facilities, childcare, youth amenities, business growth, digital connectivity and also support for education and skills development.

The Plan, which addresses key challenges such as population decline, will be driven forward with income from the three wind turbines installed at Ballantrushal in North Lewis.

Agnes Rennie, chair of Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, commented: "We are delighted to launch our Strategic Plan for the long-term development of the area. It comes on the back of a comprehensive consultation process across the community with good participation from a considerable proportion of our households, businesses and organisations."

She added : "The Plan is highly ambitious and needs to be taken forward through partnerships and various forms of collaborative working, involving parties located both within and outside the community. If we can secure the essential partnerships and relationships we need to take matters forward, we can look forward to wind energy funds making a significant impact across Galson Estate in the years ahead."

The Strategic Plan can be downloaded from www.galsontrust.com



NEW COMMUNITY FUNDING STREAM

Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn has moved to the next phase of its Community Investment Fund with the launch of a new £5,000 grant funding stream. Since autumn 2014, the Urras has offered funds of up to £1,000 to organisations involved in social regeneration across the Estate. The Fund has gone from strength to strength with 36 voluntary sector projects having received support so far and £32,600 awarded in total. This new phase is expected to create opportunities for greater social impacts across the Estate as part of the overall vision. A £10,000 grant funding stream is also planned for launch in spring 2017.

FIRST ANNIVERSARY

The turbines have just completed their first year of operation and, despite nearly three weeks of production time lost due to electricity grid maintenance, have performed above forecast across the 12 months.

The performance over the the last quarter is as follows, given in MegaWatt Hours which is the standard unit of measurement :

July 546 MWhs (173% of forecast)

August 448 MWhs (77% of forecast)

September 939 MWhs (154% of forecast)

The first year of operation delivered a 39% load (or capacity) factor against a forecast of 38% and, based on average UK consumption, provided electricity for around 2,080 households.

SSE has advised that the next major grid maintenance outage will not occur until April 2017 which is welcome news.

**Visit the
website**

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