



Morvern Community Development Company  
Quarterly Newsletter  
Special Edition  
May 2026



## Live Life Morvern Update—Four Years On!

Hey Morvern!

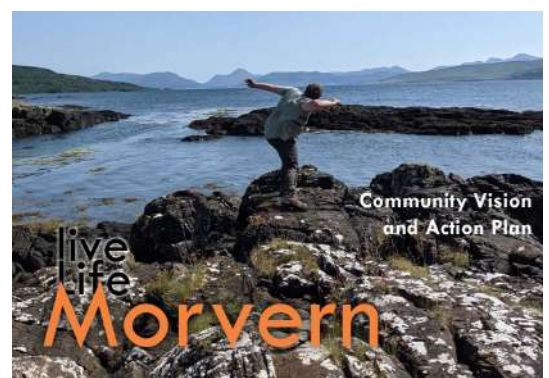
This newsletter is all about the progress we've made on the Live Life Morvern action points. It's a chance for us all to catch up and see where we're at.

Keith Adams, Angus Robertson and Henriette Laidlaw have been reviewing the actions and wanted to share the latest. The Live Life Morvern Action Plan was managed by Morvern Community Council (MCC), funded by Morvern Community Trust (MCT), and a lot of the work is being carried out by Morvern Community Development Company (MCDC).

We're four years into the 10-year action plan, and we've been blown away by all the work that's been done in this time. We want to thank all the local groups, volunteers, and everyone else who's contributed to where we are today. From creating new housing opportunities, setting up re-use/re-cycling schemes to re-introducing local species, Morvern is definitely making a big impact. A huge thank you to all of you for helping us get this far.

We hope you enjoy the read!

Keith Adams, Angus Robertson, Henriette Laidlaw  
Chair MCT, Chair MCDC, Chair MCC



# Housing

In Live Life Morvern in 2022, housing was identified as one of the top priorities for the Morvern community over the next decade: “Our vision for Morvern in 2031 pictures Morvern as having high quality, sustainable housing of all tenure types available for everyone who needs it, including family homes to attract new families to the area.”

Three housing opportunities were explored as part of the community vision and planning process. Morvern Community Development Company’s affordable rental homes project, Morvern Community Woodland’s Woodland Crofts project and the development of Ardtornish Estate’s existing housing stock.

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## Morvern Community Development Company Community Owned Affordable Rental Family Housing Project

### Breaking Ground on Affordable Housing

The directors and staff of Morvern Community Development Company (MCDC) are delighted to announce that we have completed our funding package and achieved the final planning consents to move to the build phase of our affordable homes project in Lochaline. MCDC will be building 14-two-and-three-bedroom homes and are very grateful to everyone who has worked so hard over a number of years to bring the project to this point.



The site was cleared in Spring 2026 with thanks to local contractors and some of the preliminary electrical work has been completed. Some of the trees were planned to be retained but unfortunately, they were all damaged by recent storms and had to be removed for safety reasons. MCDC are now in the position that we will be breaking ground in May 2026 with the main build project being delivered across the year and estimated to complete by summer 2027. MCDC hope to welcome our first tenants shortly afterwards. If you would like to express interest, please email [development@morvern.org](mailto:development@morvern.org)

Angus Robertson, chair of MCDC, commented that “we are keenly aware of how long affordable housing has been a top priority for the local community (as emphasised in Live Life Morvern and our Local Place Plan) and are delighted to be able to deliver these homes which will be available for affordable rent to people wanting to live and work in Morvern.”

This is a £4.4 million project and we are grateful for the hard work of the Highland Council planning department and the support of a number of funders who are enabling the project to move forward. The Scottish Government is supporting the project with a significant grant from the Rural and Islands Housing Fund alongside financial support from The Highland Council. We are very grateful to the More Homes Division of the Scottish Government for their advice, support and guidance over the last year as we brought the project to application stage.



...Continued on page 3.

We're also grateful for the long-standing support of our outgoing MSP, Kate Forbes, for this and our many other projects. We were pleased to welcome Kate to our community hub (which she opened in 2021) for a meeting in early August to hear about the housing project and other future plans. After viewing the housing site Kate said: "The team have been working hard for a long time to deliver new affordable housing in the community, so I'm delighted that work can now begin. I have helped the development company to secure funding, and I am impressed that they will reinvest their own community generated funds. Reversing rural depopulation and retaining our young people is reliant on delivering more affordable homes."



We'd also like to extend sincere thanks to the Coram Fund who gave us a grant of £50,000 at a crucial time in the project allowing us the confidence to move forward. Annabel Bath, Funds Adviser to the Coram Fund said that "The Coram Fund was set up to support rural and urban regeneration, with a particular interest in community ownership and the belief that good quality housing is key to a productive and happy life - and should be available to everyone. We were delighted to support this initiative to build family housing in Lochaline and hope that generations will benefit from having a secure and happy place to call home."

The funding package was completed by a part grant, part loan from Social Investment Fund (SIF), £450,000 of MCDC's own reserves generated by the Barr Hydro Scheme, a loan of a further £200,000 from MorVolts and a grant of £50,000 from HIE towards the design team pre-construction costs.

MCDC is now undertaking the construction phase alongside our architect Richard Graves of G+GA, our QS Tommy McQuade from Morand & Brotchie in Oban and TSL Contractors who have been appointed to manage the construction phase of the project. We look forward to keeping the community updated as the project progresses. Please follow MCDC on Facebook and Instagram for quick updates and sign up to our quarterly newsletter by emailing [admin@morvern.org](mailto:admin@morvern.org) for more details. 14 houses will significantly increase the number of affordable rental homes in Morvern. MCDC has had to provide evidence of local demand to the Scottish Government and has so far received expressions of interest in excess of the number of homes being built. Unfortunately, a phased approach to the project was not financially viable, mainly due to the infrastructure costs, meaning a smaller phased project did not demonstrate sufficient value for money to be funded. This is a once in a generation project aiming to meet the affordable housing needs of Lochaline for the foreseeable future and to ensure a sustainable community. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Lilia via [development@morvern.org](mailto:development@morvern.org) and Suzanne via [operations@morvern.org](mailto:operations@morvern.org).

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## Urram's Housing Survey

MCDC was grateful to be able to use a recent local housing survey by Urram to be able to support their funding applications as the survey clearly demonstrates the local need for more affordable housing. Louise White from Urram contributed the following update regarding the survey:



"200 questionnaires were sent out, and we received and we received 43 responses. This consisted of 7 responses from rented properties and 36 from owned properties. There were a range of responses when asked about timescale of moving home, ranging from soon as to within 5 years. The number of bedrooms needed in the home was from 2 to 4. The budget that people had for renting was from £400-£600 per month and for purchasing a property was from 100K to 200K+.

We received questionnaire responses from people who had registered with the Highland Council for a rental home and people who had tried and failed to find a house to rent. Many answers said that if they could not find suitable housing to fit their needs they would move. 30 people who answered the questionnaire severely agreed with the statement "Community needs more housing for affordable rent" and "Applicants who wish to live and work here should get priority for new affordable housing" A lot of people say that people who are local should get priority and families who have primary aged children."

# Morvern Community Woodlands—Woodland Crofts

The Live Life Morvern Action Plan identified housing, croft creation, path networks and protection of the rainforest in Morvern as important to the Morvern Community. Morvern Community Woodlands (MCW) is hoping that The Lochaline Community Forest project can address these priorities.

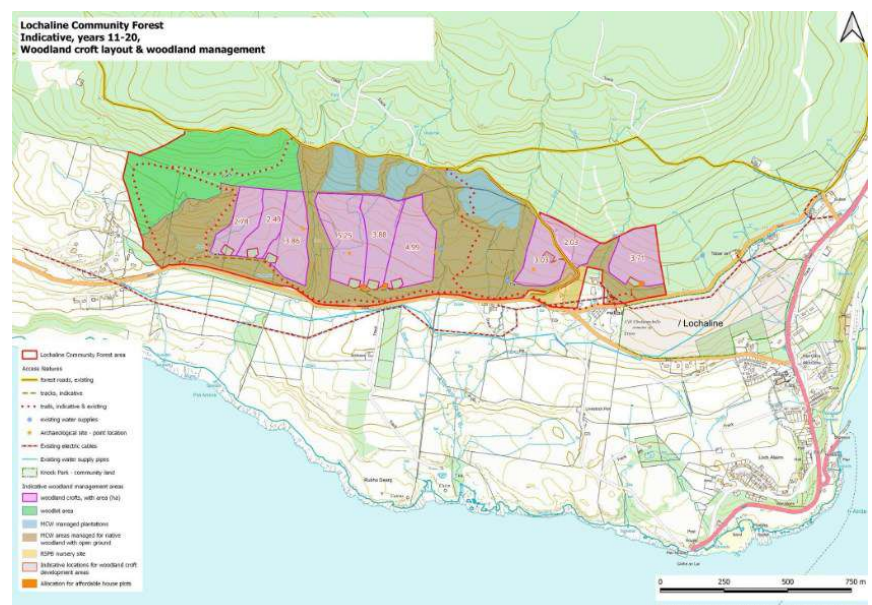
The vision is to create a community-owned forest that supports the local economy through crofting and land based livelihoods, restores native rainforest habitats, provides access to native woodland for recreation and learning and delivers lasting social, economic, and environmental benefits for Morvern. The purchase will see an end to unsustainable and unsightly clear fell cycles and create a forest that is productive, provides homes and is a beautiful place to spend time in, for everyone who visits, in perpetuity. We hope to create eight crofts in the first phase.

In 2024 MCW gained funding from the Scottish Land Fund and the Highland Council Community Regeneration Fund to commission a feasibility study for the project which was delivered by the Community Woodlands Association. This gave us a huge amount of information about the site; a good indication on the area, possible layout and financial viability. In 2025 MCW submitted a Community Asset Transfer request to Forest and Land Scotland (FLS). This was successful, and in January 2026 MCW was awarded a discount of £177,000 on the land on the basis of the economic benefit that will be brought to the area. This qualifies as match funding for the purchase.

MCW submitted an application for the Scottish Land Fund Stage 2 Funding at the end of March 2026 for funding to purchase the land. We will find out in July 2026 whether we have been successful. In the meantime, we have been awarded £20,000 from the Pebble Trust and the Highland Council Community Development Fund to pay for staff and consultants to work on the project. This includes; a full hydrology report; a review of the cash flow and business plan, a woodland management and deer management plan; planning permission in principle for croft housing and writing a croft allocation policy. There is further community consultation planned as well as training and engagement events.

We are looking at models for crofters to be able to self build homes whilst the community retains ownership of the land and are working hard to ensure living on the crofts is viable and affordable. Tree planting schemes and native woodland restoration will be an important part of the project and we are looking at how to fund and maintain a path network through the site that will connect Lochaline with Achaebeg and Achnaha. We look forward to ongoing community consultation and engagement about how this new area of community woodland in Morvern is shaped.

Whilst consulting on woodland crofts MCW identified a number of local people desiring access to land for agricultural crofts; most had generational farming heritage in Morvern. Having made enquiries, Ardtornish Estate have expressed they would be open to the possibility of creating crofts on agricultural land if a local community group were to take this forward. Morvern Community Woodlands would be very keen to see this happen in tandem with the creation of woodland crofts.



## Ardtornish Estate—Development of Existing Stock

Ardtornish has been doing considerable work redeveloping their existing housing stock. Hugh Raven, of Ardtornish Estate has provided the following update on their progress:

“I am pleased to say that work is underway at the Old Post Office – not, unfortunately, converting it for local affordable use (as the quotes we got from contractors were astronomical and uneconomic). Ardtornish is intending to use it ourselves. We often need accommodation for contractors and also have a growing research partnership with the University Of Edinburgh, which includes masters and other postgraduate students doing fieldwork in Morvern, who need accommodation. We plan for it to be back in use in the spring.

West Pier House is still being used for staff housing. We intended it to become a self-catering property (discussed with the local authority, which has no objection). But we need it ourselves to accommodate new members of a slightly increasing workforce. This may change next year.

We had hoped to be able to bring the little-used semi-detached house at Acharn back into use this year – but again, the cost has been prohibitive. So we plan to do it next year. We need it, but cash shortages preclude it for the time being.

Of the three Ardtornish houses at Larachbeg, two are currently in use and one requires an electrical upgrade – which we intend to complete this spring. Then all will be occupied.

All other houses at Ardtornish are occupied, with the exception of Uileann and Alltachonaich (the houses in the upper white glen). The latter is a bothy that hasn't been occupied for decades (I think, apart from one short period, since before the war), and requires very large spending to make it habitable. Uileann House too will require several hundred thousand pounds to make it reach current housing standards. The bothies at Inninmore, Eignaig, Tearnait and Crosben are all regularly used as bothies.

Unless and until our hydro rates crisis is resolved – we have been invoiced for over £700,000 by Highland Council this year in non-domestic rates for our hydro schemes alone, making us almost certainly the highest-rate payer, proportionate to business size, in all Scotland – funds will remain short, so a resolution in the case of these two houses, Uileann and Alltachonaich, is some way off.”



## Old Fish Farm Houses

MCDC and MCC have been working with Scottish Sea Farms to have their Morvern housing stock brought into use. The conclusion has been that Lochaline Quartz Sand are now using these houses for employees. Veronique Walraven of LQS said:

“Without the use of these houses, we wouldn’t have been able to employ two vital members of staff. However, these two houses are not sufficient for our needs as we are hoping to employ another worker from further afield soon and we haven’t been able to find a place for him to stay yet.”

This further emphasises the continued need for more housing and how vital the work that MCDC, MCW and Ardtornish is doing.

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## New Housing at Morvern Crescent and Rowanbank Steading

There has been exciting development of private housing in Morvern Crescent with the building two houses on land at the end of Morvern Crescent which are now both occupied and the development of Rowanbank Steading into five one-bedroom flats some of which have been completed and are occupied.



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**Live Life Morvern demonstrated that Morvern needed to prioritise more housing across the peninsula and we’re pleased to see huge progress in that area in a variety of different ways—community owned housing, woodland crofting, private development and re-development and re-deployment of existing housing stock. This would not have been possible without a huge amount of local volunteer and staff effort. Affordable housing is a significant issue across Scotland so for a community the size of Morvern to have achieved this level of progress since 2022 is a tremendous achievement.**

# Live Life Morvern

## Community Life and Local Resources

In 2022, the Live Life Morvern report said that —“Our vision for Morvern in 2031 pictures Morvern as a welcoming, inclusive and caring place with a strong community spirit. A creative and ambitious community where all generations can socialise together and thrive at all life stages.” The report described 17 proposed actions grouped into 6 main areas: Buying Local, Gathering Together, Promote Recreation and Creativity, Reuse and Recycle, Sharing Our Resources and Young People. There are a number of ways in which progress has been made in these areas.

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### **The Attic**

The Attic started in 2023 and is a community charity shop organised and run by volunteers and is based in the community hub building. It is open on Saturdays from 11am-3pm. Attic volunteer Gillian Llewellyn said

“Three years of trading in the Attic has raised £13,000, involved 29 volunteers and transformed thousands of things from the unwanted to the desirable, giving them new life. A massive number of articles have been diverted away from landfill to be recycled and reused while reducing the cost of living and raising money for the community of Morvern. It is a great thing that household goods from house clearances are now part of new homes and that recycled clothing is now sort after. Some things may simply have crossed the road. The Attic funds have paid for part of the telephone box refurbishment which was also supported by generous volunteer labouring work from several members of the community. More recently, over the 2025/2026 winter, The Attic funds subsidised a number of creative workshops, from weaving to filmmaking, for the local community which were held in the Hub.”



### **Community Events**

Community spirit is strong in Morvern with over 30 different groups to belong to—there’s something for everyone! Throughout the year the community gathers together for an amazing number of different events organised by these groups. In the summer there are Water Sports Open Days organised by Morvern Watersports Club, plant and produce sales at the allotments, easter egg hunts at Morvern Community Woods, CAOLAS and MCTC open days at the harbour, Morvern Heritage Society walks and talks and of course Morvern Games and Gala week. In the winter, we come together for the Christmas tree festival, the young at heart Christmas lunch, the primary school panto, bonfire night at the allotments, St Andrews celebrations and Burns night celebrations. Throughout the year there are regular events both at the social club and the hub café including fundraising events, events for families and workshops. There are musical groups who both gather together and perform. There are regular yoga sessions, Gaelic play group and gymnastics in the village hall. Several groups organise work parties including Morvern Community Woodlands who prepare and deliver pensioners firewood. Whatever your interests are, there are lots of things to get involved with and everyone is always welcome to join in.

## Morvern Community Trading Company—Development of Social Spaces

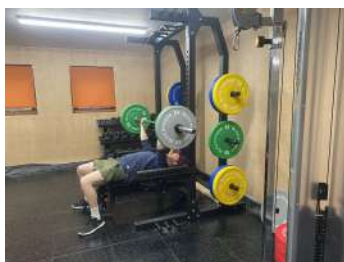
Morvern Community Trading Company (MCTC) is one of the subsidiary trading companies of MDCD and is responsible for managing Lochaline Harbour (including gym, sauna and e-bikes), the Hub (including Hub Café) and the fuel pumps. The MCTC board provided the following update:

### Tourism, Social spaces and recreation

During 2025/26 we have developed the harbour area with the view of enticing yachts to stay longer as well as providing our community with additional recreational opportunities. We obtained a licence to sell alcohol in August 2025 and purchased a nomadic tent. The harbour bar, open 4-7pm last year offered a welcoming place to meet for visitors and locals alike, with the tent providing cover for inclement weather and a new barbecue available for use. A limited and manageable range of soft drinks, cocktails and local ales was enjoyed by local yachts during the season, as well as by Morvern residents of all ages. The bar has been open again with slightly extended hours from April 2026.



Our new sauna was installed in April 2025 and has proved to be highly popular with locals and visitors, with yachts booking the pontoons to use the sauna. A thriving winter sauna club for locals (October – March) has been highly successful over this period when the pontoons have been closed.



Following consultation with young people, older people and regular gym users we opened our community gym at the harbour which has membership options and is open to visitors. At the time of writing 19 people have been inducted. The gym was a specific ask in the Live Life Morvern plan and has provided another space for young people to meet as well as benefitting older residents. The range of equipment available was informed by a steering group of all ages and abilities.

### Enhancing use of the Hub for recreational activities and a place to meet and socialise

The Hub Cafe is overseen by the MCTC board and employs a cafe manager/chef. In line with Live Life Morvern, in particular improving our local recreation options, we have been keen to maximise the use of the hub for local people as a venue for socialising. During winter, in addition to daytime opening (Wednesday, Thursday & Friday) we have offered a reasonably priced home cooked meal one evening per week which has proved popular. There were nearly 6000 transactions at the till during 2025. Music nights, board game nights have also taken place with more planned. The hub provides part time employment for 7 local people and 2 volunteers who enjoy being part of the team.



We would like to thank the Attic who have subsidised some community learning opportunities in the form of a series of 3 willow weaving workshops ‘weaving through winter’ and 2 film making workshops which have been enjoyed by all age groups of local people. The feedback has been highly positive with an ask for more. The Attic have also subsidised our gym inductions.



### Providing opportunity for social enterprise

There are many talented artists and makers locally and we have used the hub to showcase and sell crafts without commission to help these micro businesses. We currently have over 20 different makers using the hub as an outlet.

# Heritage, Land and Sea

In 2022, Live Life Morvern stated that: “Our vision for Morvern in 2031 pictures Morvern as a place where our rich heritage is cherished, protected and enhanced both as a good in itself but also as a key component of our tourism offer. We also envisage a Morvern where we are living sustainably and lightly in relationship to our land, coast and marine environment. We want to promote Morvern’s wild places, protect its woodland and especially its remaining Atlantic rainforest and maximise the flourishing of native flora and fauna.” Morvern Community Woodlands, the RSPB, CAOLAS, Ardtornish Estate, Drimnin Estate, the Deer Management Group and MCDC have all been involved in making significant progress on the Live Life Morvern action points.

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## **Saving Morvern’s Rainforest – Morvern Community Woodlands**

Saving Morvern’s Rainforest was identified in the Live Life Morvern Action plan as high priority for the community. It has been one of the aims of Morvern Community Woodlands (MCW) since it was created in 2001. Since then, the woodlands group has campaigned for; the conservation and restoration of native woodland on Morvern; better access to woodlands for local people; and the promotion of woodland skills and jobs.



Over the years MCW directors, trustees and volunteers have contributed to this by both active conservation, woodland management and connecting local people to the woodland through forest school programmes, rhododendron clearing, guided walks, promoting skills such as carpentry, boat building, and wood turning, tree planting, woodland archaeology and theatre in the woods. MCW has had thirty five directors over the years, and countless volunteers and we are proud and grateful for the legacy of these many contributions and contributors over the years.



MCW’s continued efforts to bring woodland into community ownership are driven by the understanding that those who live and work on the land are best placed to care for it, particularly when they work together. Community woodlands across Scotland have demonstrated ecological restoration can come hand in hand with social resilience. The Lochaline Community Forest and Woodland Craft project forms part of this vision by expanding native woodland cover and helping to create rainforest corridors across the peninsula.

In addition to this, in response to the Live Life Morvern Action Plan, Morvern Community Woodlands commissioned a survey to identify areas of internationally significant Hazelwood rainforest in Morvern that are not currently designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). We contacted the landowners involved and all but one were supportive. We have since written to NatureScot to request recognition and protection of these sites. We hope this designation will strengthen ecological protection and enable access to restoration funding for those landowners.

MCW considers the protection of Morvern’s forests not to be a one off project for delivery by an external organisation, but as a continuous, community-rooted effort spanning decades. The current RSPB initiative builds on local knowledge, work, advocacy and engagement. It has been informed by the work of Morvern residents Donald Kennedy and Alasdair Firth. MCW believes that as long as there are people living on Morvern, there will be people caring for Morvern’s rainforests.



## Saving Morvern's Rainforest – RSPB

Since the publication of the Live Life Morvern Community Action Plan in June 2022, the Saving Morvern's Rainforest Project (SMRF) has gone through a development phase and is now being actively implemented on the ground. Led by the RSPB, this project has been supported through various funding streams. In January 2023, the Nature Restoration Fund was awarded funding for 18 months, covering the development phase of SMRF. This allowed in-depth surveys to be carried out relating to rhododendron cover and potential costs of removal, woodland expansion potential and increased understanding of existing landowner and community support. The Nature Restoration Fund then awarded further funding as part of their delivery grant, supporting active restoration works on Morvern between November 2023 and March 2026. So far, work clearing rhododendron has taken place around Lochaline village, on Ardtornish and Drimnin Estates, at Ferinish and on the Isle of Carna. Additional funding from the Rainforest Restoration Fund, also managed by NatureScot, was awarded in 2026 to support ongoing project delivery, as well as outreach and engagement with the community. Events related to this have included deer management related activities as well as education on the special character of the temperate rainforest that exists in Morvern, with school-sessions in Lochaline Primary School. An equivalent total of between 6 and 7 full time staff have been employed by RSPB on the project since mid-2024.



The RSPB are now aiming to secure funding for a further four years of project work through the Our Rainforest Futures project managed through the National Heritage Lottery Fund. If this funding bid is successful, it would pave the way for the next stage of the project, centred around community capacity building. The aim in this stage will be to embed the necessary skills in the community to allow local businesses and individuals to take on work on the ground in the long term. Rhododendron eradication work will continue, with the focus switching to East Morvern, and critical future follow up monitoring will be supported.



So far, the project has encouraged awareness and understanding of rainforest through community outreach. A series of rainforest-focused events were delivered to the community of Morvern in March 2026. These included sessions on deer management, butchery and consumption, engaging deer stalkers, land managers and the wider community. Creative expression was also linked to rainforest restoration, with a painting workshop taking place in Drimnin Village Hall. School outreach has also taken place, including tree nursery planting days and a day visiting Achnaha Woods to look at rainforest lichens with Lochaline Primary School students. The tree nursery in general has become a hub for volunteer opportunities, with regular sessions occurring in seed harvesting and tree planting.

Morvern Deer Management Group has been engaged more widely in the project. This is since Rainforest Advisor Alasdair Firth has been attending MDMG to provide deeper understanding of the rainforest habitat in relation to deer management.

The RSPB's tree nursery has progressed well, with many improvements to the site such as landscaping, the creation of two polytunnels and erection of a deer fence around the site perimeter. Future ambitions include linking the site to mains power and creating a more permanent shed for tool storage. The RSPB are in the final stages of securing a lease with Forestry and Land Scotland. The tree nursery site is part of the area owned by Forestry and Land Scotland that Morvern Community Woodlands (MCW) are hoping to purchase with the aid of the Scottish Land Fund. The purchase of this area along with the transfer of the lease to MCW would secure the site for the community in the long-term.

# CAOLAS—Lochaline Native Oyster Project

Native oysters (*Ostrea edulis*) provide significant ecosystem services, including water filtration, nutrient cycling, and the creation of complex reef habitats that support biodiversity (van der Schatte Olivier et al., 2018). However, oyster reefs are among the most threatened marine habitats, with an estimated 85% of global populations lost (Beck et al., 2011).

The Loch Aline Native Oyster Project (LNOP) was established in 2021 to restore a native oyster population within Loch Aline on the Morvern peninsula and carried out by volunteers and trustees of CAOLAS (Community Association of Lochs and Sounds). Early shoreline surveys by CAOLAS volunteers revealed the near-complete loss of the historical population, with only three live oysters identified within the loch. In January 2024, CAOLAS and Ardtornish Estate secured funding through the Nature Restoration Fund (NRF) Delivery Phase to support restoration activities. The project supports the NRF priority theme of *coastal and marine initiatives* through promoting the restoration of native oyster habitat. It has also met aims outlined in the Morvern Community Action Plan, by expanding the existing oyster project, and engaging the community in marine restoration.

The project restores oysters by purchasing hatchery spat and growing them within a marine nursery system before releasing them into the loch once they exceed 35 mm shell length. The long-term goal is to

establish a self-sustaining oyster reef ecosystem that significantly enhances biodiversity and improves water quality.

In the beginning of the project the nursery system has supported 21 cohorts of each 10,000 oysters. During the NRF-funded phase the project successfully obtained approximately 42,500 spat, awaiting an additional 25,000 to arrive in summer 2026, and expanded nursery infrastructure to support future releases.



Image 1: Google Earth map view on Loch Aline; pink triangle = potential release site 4, green squares = pot. Release sites 2 (South) & site 3 (North), yellow square = release site 1

In parallel, extensive monitoring of environmental and ecological conditions has been undertaken to improve restoration success. The project has also delivered volunteer training and education programmes, strengthening community capacity for long-term stewardship of the marine environment.

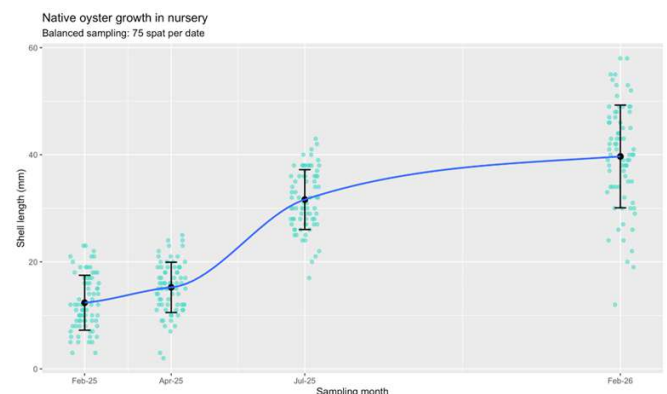
## 1. Impact and Benefits to Nature

### 1.1 Direct Ecological Outcomes

#### Nursery Performance

Oyster spat obtained during the NRF-funded period demonstrated consistent growth and low mortality across cohorts.

Image 2: shell length measurements of 75 samples per date of cohort 4 spat on shell; blue line = trendline to show growth/length incline



Continued on page 12...

CAOLAS update continued...

Improved nursery performance resulted from:

- Structured husbandry and maintenance schedules
- Increased nursery infrastructure capacity
- Improved environmental monitoring using automated loggers
- Regular cage cleaning and rotation to reduce biofouling and sedimentation to improve nutrient flow and minimise health risks

Automated temperature, salinity, and light sensors allowed the project team to detect environmental stress events such as freshwater influx and stratification, enabling fast responses such as cage depth adjustments and maintenance.

These improvements significantly increased operational resilience and survival rates compared with earlier project phases.

Cohort reference Name	arrival	amount	type/ origin	location/release site
Cohort 1	June 2021	10.000	Single spat/ More-cambe Bay	Released at site 1 2022
Cohort 2	2022	10.000	Single spat/ More-cambe Bay	Majority lost due to mortality
Cohort 3	October 2024	5.000	Single spat/ More-cambe Bay	Boat nursery
Cohort 4	February 2025	~8.000	Spat on mussel & scallop shell/ The Oyster Restoration Company	Boat nursery
Cohort 5	September 2025	2.500	Single spat/ More-cambe Bay	Boat nursery
Cohort 6	November 2025	~27.000	Spat on mussel shell/ The Oyster Restoration Company	Community Marina pontoons nursery

### Larval Distribution and Settlement Modelling

NRF funding enabled the commissioning of a hydrodynamic and larval dispersal model developed by MTS-CFD Ltd (see attachment 1). The model simulated dispersal of approximately 30,000 virtual oyster larvae across a 14-day reproductive cycle from the established release site 1 and a potential site 2, integrating tidal currents, bathymetry, freshwater inputs, and larval behaviour.

Key findings include:

- High larval retention within Loch Aline
- Predicted 53% successful seabed deposition
- Broad dispersal across the loch basin
- Limited export to the Sound of Mull due to stronger currents

Importantly, modelling suggests that release site position within the loch has limited influence on overall larval settlement success because the loch's geomorphology promotes retention. These results provide a strong scientific basis for restoration planning and support the potential for loch-wide ecological recovery, if benthic substrate is provided.

Continued on page 13...

CAOLAS update continued...

### **Biodiversity Associated with Nursery Structures**

More than 35 marine species were recorded on the nursery cages and spat-on-shell during the project period (see attachment 2). They provide three-dimensional hard substrate within an otherwise sediment-dominated environment, replicating early characteristics of oyster reef habitat.

Recorded species included filter feeders such as mussels, scallops, ascidians, and anemones; grazers such as sea urchins, cowries, and topshells and predators including starfish and nudibranchs.

These communities contribute ecosystem functions such as:

- Water filtration and nutrient cycling
- Biofouling control through grazing
- Increased habitat complexity

The rapid colonisation of nursery infrastructure indicates that oyster restoration activities already provide measurable biodiversity benefits.

### **Remnant Native Oyster Presence**

Targeted snorkel surveys along the eastern shoreline identified two large adult oysters, likely predating restoration activities.

Their presence confirms that environmental conditions remain suitable for oyster survival and that historical settlement habitat persists within the loch.

#### **Evidence of Reproductive Maturity**

Condition Index (CI) analysis of five oysters from the 2022 release cohort showed:

- CI values between 2.6 and 2.9
- 3 of 5 oysters displaying developed gonad tissue

These results indicate that nursery-reared oysters are reaching reproductive maturity and good physiological condition, representing an important milestone toward establishing a naturally reproducing population.

## **1.2 Improved Ecological Understanding**

The project implemented 19 monitoring metrics recommended by the Native Oyster Restoration Alliance (NORA), significantly exceeding the UK restoration average of 6–8 metrics.

Monitoring included:

- Sedimentation rates
- Temperature and salinity dynamics
- Turbidity and light penetration
- Benthic composition
- Shell substrate availability
- Reproductive condition

Combined with hydrodynamic modelling, this monitoring framework has improved understanding of environmental drivers affecting oyster survival, sediment dynamics and burial risk, larval transport and retention patterns as well as optimal restoration site selection.

Monitoring protocols were designed to remain cost-effective and community deliverable, ensuring continued ecological monitoring beyond the funding period.

Continued on page 14...

CAOLAS update continued....

## **Sedimentation**

Sediment monitoring revealed elevated deposition at the original restoration site (Site 1), with some oysters partially buried creating anoxic conditions.

Hydrodynamic modelling (see attachment 3) identified the likely cause as local sediment resuspension and west-to-east transport, rather than river-derived sediment.

This understanding informed revised site selection, identifying potential Site 2 as the preferred release site and Site 4 as a strong alternative, while Site 1 is no longer recommended. In future additional sites on the east coast will be monitored for release suitability to diversify and mitigate sedimentation risk.

### **1.3 Volunteer Training and Community Engagement**

Community involvement remains central to the project. A core volunteer group has been trained in nursery maintenance, biodiversity monitoring, and environmental data collection.

Training resources developed include identification flashcards, citizen-science recording data sheets and monitoring guides.

A volunteer coordination network (WhatsApp group) supports communication and organisation of training sessions.

Volunteer participation increased substantially:

- Average attendance rose from 9.75 (2024) to 12.8 (2025) participants per event
- Total community volunteer hours increased from 52.5 (2024) to 74.5 (2025)

The project also delivered extensive education outreach, engaging:

- 128 primary school pupils across six schools
- Secondary and university students through field workshops

These activities strengthen community stewardship and inspire future careers in environmental conservation.

## **2. Project Outputs**

### **Nursery Infrastructure**

The project installed 25 cage sets, exceeding the original target of 14, following increased spat availability in 2025.

A secondary nursery site was established to reduce environmental risk and improve biosecurity by spatially separating cohorts.

A rotational cage cleaning protocol was also implemented to control biofouling and maintain optimal water flow.

### **Oyster Production Target**

The project aimed to rear and release 70,000 oysters by 2026.

During the funded period:

- 42,500 spat were procured and reared
- An additional 25,000 spat have been ordered for delivery in 2026

Existing nursery infrastructure is sufficient to maintain these oysters until release.

Continued on page 14...

CAOLAS update continued...

### **Volunteer Engagement**

Ten volunteer training events were delivered during the funded period. Participation increased significantly year-to-year, demonstrating strong community engagement and supporting long-term project sustainability.

### **Restoration Site Testing**

Four potential release sites were assessed using environmental monitoring and modelling.

Findings include:

- Salinity and temperature suitable across all sites
- Sedimentation identified as the key limiting factor
- Site 2 selected as preferred restoration location, but site 3 and 4 are also suitable

Shell substrate availability was low across all sites, suggesting that cultch enhancement trials may be beneficial to support larval settlement.

### **3. Maintenance and Long-Term Capacity**

CAOLAS trustees and trained volunteers will continue project activities beyond the funded period.

Automated environmental loggers installed at nursery and release sites allow continuous monitoring with minimal labour requirements. Equipment purchased through NRF funding — including sampling gear and underwater cameras — supports ongoing ecological monitoring.

Volunteer training ensures continued capacity for:

- Nursery maintenance
- Environmental monitoring
- Biodiversity surveys
- Data collection

### **4. Legacy and Future Development**

The NRF-funded phase has delivered significant progress toward restoring native oysters in Loch Aline.

Key legacy outcomes include:

- Evidence-based restoration planning
- Improved ecological monitoring capacity
- Strengthened community stewardship

Future priorities include:

- Cultch deployment trials to improve larval settlement
- Experimental trials with willow structures to establish reef habitat structure upon oyster release, promoting sessile and mobile species diversity through offering 3 dimensional habitat and enhancing reproductive success through maintaining high density of oyster clusters per square metre (application for Marine construction is pending with Marine Directorate submission February 2026)
- Exploration of small-scale hatchery solutions to address spat supply limitations
- Continued ecological monitoring and adaptive management
- Expanded nursery infrastructure potentially with CAOLAS owned moorings for floating nursery

Collectively, these advances improve the effectiveness, resilience, and scalability of oyster restoration in Loch Aline.

Continued on page 16...

CAOLAS update continued...

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## Morvern Deer Management Group

One of the action points in Live Life Morvern was to reduce the numbers of deer in the peninsula to protect the local habitats. Peter Lawson, Chair of Morvern Deer Management Group, has given the following update:

“The Morvern DMG is composed of 11 member land holdings. In 2018 a helicopter deer count was conducted over the peninsula. Following on from this MDMG carried out habitat impact assessments, set impact targets and agreed a 5 year cull plan to reduce deer numbers in a controlled fashion. In 2025 we repeated the group blanket bog assessment and the impact targets on that habitat had been met. Nature Scot hope to carry out a drone count of deer on the peninsula this spring. It is anticipated that, even with a different count method, deer numbers will have reduced in the major sub group areas. While members have diverse environmental interests, the group recognises the wish to maintain a healthy deer population on the peninsula. Cull figures reported to MDMG have increased from 2019/20 - 2024/25 by 37%. In the last 5 years we estimate projects to create 252Ha of new woodland and regeneration have been actioned.”

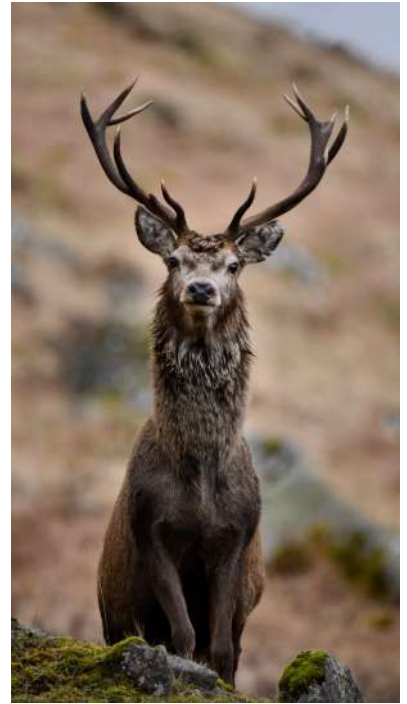


Photo credit:  
George Riddle

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## Species Reintroduction—CAOLAS, Ardtornish Estate and Drimnin Estate

Species reintroduction across the peninsula was noted as an action point in Live Life Morvern and CAOLAS, Ardtornish Estate and Drimnin Estate have all made significant progress in this area. As mentioned above CAOLAS has been involved in a successful native oyster re-introduction project. Both Ardtornish and Drimnin Estates successfully reintroduced red squirrels and there are now healthy populations in both Drimnin and Ardtornish. Henry Dobson of Ardtornish Estate also gave the following update about other recently reintroduced species:

“In April, we successfully relocated eight nests of *Formica lugubris*—commonly known as hairy wood ants—from the Ardnamurchan Peninsula to Ardtornish. These ants are one of only two ‘true’ wood ant species native to Scotland. While historical records and insight from local ecologists suggest they may once have been found in various locations around the Morvern Peninsula, it's unclear when or where they were last present on Ardtornish. This loss of wood ants from most of Morvern, as with much of the Highlands, is likely due to centuries of changing forest cover and land use.

Hairy wood ants are considered ecosystem engineers and keystone species for the important roles they play in woodland environments. Their activities include dispersing seeds, enhancing nutrient cycling, and influencing tree growth through their complex and fascinating interactions with aphids.



Henry Dobson, Ardtornish Estate, continued

“The donor nests came from a Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) plantation scheduled for felling in the next few years. With valuable support from FLS, the Woodland Trust/Arkaig Community Forest (preparing for their own translocation effort), and the local RSPB team in Morvern, we undertook the hour-long journey with the ants carefully packed in hessian sacks—a far greater distance than typical for such translocations. Despite having to rely on some good weather in the west of Scotland, we successfully moved plenty of ants across 2 days (minus a few escapees from the hessian sacks in the backs of vehicles). Teamwork made all the difference in this endeavour working out.

Since their arrival, the ants have made the most of a dry, sunny spring—rebuilding their nests and even establishing new ones in more optimal locations than we had picked out for them. There have been two attempted raids by badgers or pine martens looking for an easy meal, but all nests remain active and resilient. Now, with the return of the rain, we’ll be closely monitoring how our new residents adapt to their new home.”

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## The Hazelwoods—Morvern Community Development Company

Following community consultation and engagement with the Woodland Trust and Forestry Scotland, MCDC has recently completed a programme of maintenance work in the Hazelwoods to remove some non-native species and cut some brush back from the area around the war memorial. Thank you to all who were involved throughout the process.



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## Energy, Facilities and Services

The Live Life Morvern report stated: “Our vision for Morvern in 2031 pictures Morvern as a place where renewable energy production has been maximised but in a way that is sensitive to the environment and the needs of the local community. Local facilities such as public halls will have been upgraded and maintained to the highest standard, the local surgery will continue to enable face-to-face appointments and dispensing but also enable the best in telemedicine for specialist services. Education for all life stages and needs will continue to be of a high standard.” There has been significant progress in the last few years upgrading various local facilities, working on resilience planning and developing a Gaelic Medium unit at Lochaline Primary School.

## Lochaline Village Hall

The village hall in Lochaline is run by a small group of village residents as a Scottish Charity. The hall is a multi-functional building which is well used by the community. The building comprises of a main area with a stage, a kitchen area and a back room. The back room is currently used for storage, but our project for 2026 is to create a dedicated storage area allowing use of our back room. In recent years we have received grant funding to upgrade the tables and chairs which can now be stored and moved on trolleys. The hall is regularly used for community lunches run by Urram and local organisations run 'Let's Do Lunch' events. They are generally very well supported.



There are regular children's events: a gymnastics club, a gaelic youth club, Christmas pantomime and frequently booked to celebrate birthdays. Local organisations rent the village hall for meetings. There are also regular bookings for yoga, badminton and choir practice. In recent times there have also been workshops covering basket weaving, yoga, arts and crafts, martial arts etc run by local residents and very well supported. The NHS vaccination team hold regular clinics, the LQS mine hold their training days and it is the Polling Station venue. In recent years we have resurrected the 50:50 Draw, giving participants the opportunity to win prizes whilst also providing valuable fund raising for the hall. Lochaline Village Hall is a well used community asset.

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## Develop Emergency Resilience Strategy



Rhian Evans, Chair of the Morvern Resilience Group, has provided the following update on Morvern's Resilience Strategy:

"Following Storm Amy, and the impact it had on Lochaline and Drimnin communities, a Morvern Resilience Group has been established. The aim of the group is to try to improve preparedness for extreme weather and other events that may impact the communities of Morvern in the way of loss of power, communication, water and road access by learning from what happened during storm Amy and other climate related incidents that have posed challenges for the community in the past.

The group will work alongside Highland Council, NHS Highland, the Emergency services and other local resilience groups in Lochaber to plan and prepare for such events, and to try to minimise the impact on the community, especially the more vulnerable amongst us.

We are currently working on a resilience plan which will formalise any action that will take place in advance of future events, and will allow us to apply for funding and support these actions.

Priorities would include ensuring accessibility to power, warmth, food and communication for the community during such events by provision of fuel, generators, internet, and also how to reach every member of the community in the event of a loss of phone line communication. A big part of this is encouraging households to proactively prepare for such events with advice provided by Highland Council and NHS."

Continued on the page 20...

Developing Morvern's Resilience Strategy continued...

"The group is currently made up of representatives from Morvern Community Council, Morvern Community Development Company, Lochaline Village Hall, Drimnin Village Hall, Scottish Fire & Rescue and HM Coastguard.

As well as responding reactively to weather and climate events, the group is looking to further develop resilience within the community by establishing a community first responders group and to deliver CPR sessions that members of the community will be able to participate in. We will continuously look for further opportunities to build on the existing resilience of the communities of Morvern by offering opportunities to develop skills and deliver training locally."

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## Lochaline Primary School Wildlife Garden

One of the action points in Live Life Morvern was to further develop the Wildlife Garden at Lochaline Primary School. Steve Hardy who has been involved in this project said:

"There has been a wildlife area at Lochaline Primary school since the early 1990's. When the new school was built much of this was lost, but a small area, including a pond, was retained in the southwest corner. The pond was prone to drying out, so in 2020 a new liner was installed. This has meant that the pond no longer dries out, but shortly after the new liner was put in its level did drop, so it must have a puncture somewhere. However, although the level isn't as deep as what would be ideal, at least it doesn't dry out completely.



A Scottish Wildlife team built a bridge across the pond so that school children could use it for pond dipping and observations. This bridge was refurbished in 2024.

A new fence was erected around the school in 2025, and the wildlife area and pond are now outside of this.

The wildlife area is in need of some attention. It has become too enclosed by large trees, cutting out much of the light and usable space. Some tree thinning would be good. Also the paths need strimmed and maintained, and there is a rubbish pile at the back of the pond area that needs cleared away. Any clearance work should be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season. Also, any clearing / maintenance should be minimal, allowing better access and making the area child and people friendly, whilst maintaining a natural wild state for nature.



The school wildlife garden / pond area could become a much better resource for the school with a bit of time and attention.

The pond and wildlife garden is located at the end of the school access path that runs from the shop to the school. This path was put in place so that children could walk safely to and from school, avoiding the main road.

This path runs alongside an area of rough pasture to the west of the path and village, which is now being actively managed by Ardtornish estate to improve it for a rare butterfly, the marsh fritillary. Ardtornish will be grazing the area at certain times of the year, using cattle, and removing grazing at other times, following advice provided by butterfly conservation. It's hoped that this grazing program will improve the habitat for the butterfly and improve biodiversity generally.

Continued on page 21...

Lochaline Wildlife Garden continued...

“ There is great potential to improve the school wildlife garden, not just for the school, but also making it accessible to members of the public outside of school hours, as is the path already. There could be a bench / seating area at the pond.

Also, there could be some interpretation / a seating area along the path to and from the school / wildlife garden about the area being looked after for butterflies and nature that the path runs beside.

The path and school wildlife area could link up to other paths around the village, and to potentially new ones.”

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## Gaelic at Lochaline Primary School

One of the action points in Live Life Morvern was to explore the possibilities of Gaelic provision in Lochaline Primary School. After a significant amount of effort from local parents, volunteers and school staff, a Gaelic Medium Unit has been set up and a Gaelic teacher has been recruited to start in August 2026. Lochaline Nursery also has a Gaelic nursery teacher in the nursery two days a week. Erin McHale, a local parent said “We are delighted to see Gaelic Medium Education established within our community. It is a hugely positive step that will help preserve and celebrate our language and culture while creating exciting opportunities for future generations. This will be a wonderful asset for the whole community and something we can all be proud of.”

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## Upgrading of Play Equipment at Lochaline Primary School

One of the action points from Live Life Morvern was improving spaces for young people in the area. As part of the MCDC housing scheme, a contribution will be made to upgrading the local play equipment. Shonah Wood, chair of the Parent Council, shared the following update:

“Parent Council were approached by MCDC via the head teacher to gather thoughts on developing the play facilities as part of the developer contribution for the new housing being built (no money has been given directly to Parent Council, we have merely been approached for ideas by MCDC).

Parent Council met and discussed ideas, which were fed back to MCDC via the head teacher. Parents were very happy to hear that there was an allocated budget for developing play facilities and were keen to put forward suggestions. We look forward to new facilities being added. Our only concern fed back to MCDC is who would be responsible for the maintenance of the new facilities.”



# Transport and Digital

The Live Life Morvern report stated that: “Our vision for Morvern in 2031 pictures Morvern as a place served by a well maintained and fit for purpose transport and communications infrastructure. It anticipates everyone being able to access high quality broadband, especially businesses, whether serving larger local enterprises or enabling small business owners to operate efficiently and with a global interface where required. It anticipates a healthy community with an excellent offer for walking, wheeling and cycling across the peninsula, serving locals and tourists alike. Morvern in 2031 would be a place where people can choose less polluting modes of transport to travel beyond the area as far as feasibly possible, whether sharing local travel capacity or accessing appropriate public transport services. And it would be a place where travel is safe and unproblematic on well-maintained routes, where the hierarchy of road users is respected and catered for appropriately.”

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## **Lochaline Sand Mine Trail—Morvern Heritage Society**

One of the big action points in Live Life Morvern was to create more walking trails. A sub action point of this was to create the Sand Mine Trail walk which has been done. Jennie Robertson, Chair of the Morvern Heritage Society, said:

“The project arose from a desire to explain and celebrate the Lochaline Sand Mine, which has had such an impact on the history and landscape of Lochaline village and is still in operation today, run by Lochaline Quartz Sand (LQS) and employing around 30 people.

Morvern’s silica sand deposit, with its very low iron content, is one of the purest in the world. Its purity is perhaps helped by having been sealed by a layer of basalt on top, though this also means that the only way to get it out is by going underground – Lochaline is the only underground sand mine in Europe.

The deposit was first noted in 1895 but the remoteness of the location and difficulty of access meant that exploiting it was not economic. During the Second World War, sources on the continent were cut off, while at the same time, demand was rising for high quality glass for periscopes, binoculars and gunsights. The mine opened in 1940, at first using men and equipment from the Ballachulish slate quarries. In the 1950’s the mine employed 65 people and the works probably dominated most of the village.

The sand is extracted using the room and pillar method, in which tunnels are mined into the seam and pillars of sandstone are left behind to support the roof. A giant honeycomb of over 70kms of tunnels spreads out almost as far as Kiel and along Loch Aline beyond Achadh Forsa. At first the sand was removed on a narrow gauge railway, which continued along the shore of Loch Aline and round to the West Pier, where it was crushed and loaded onto ships. In 1974, new plant and ship-loading facilities were constructed on the foreshore of the mine and huge trucks now transport the sand from the quarry face to the crushers.



Continued on page 23...



Lochaline Sand Mine Trail continued...

The Sand Mine Trail was officially opened on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2024 with a ribbon-cutting by Creina Jackson, daughter of one of the original crew from Ballachulish.



This project would not have been possible without a significant grant from the Community Regeneration Fund, issued by the Scottish Government via Highland Council. A further grant from Historic Environment Scotland paid for half the cost of the interpretative panels, while additional funding was provided by LQS and Ardtornish Estate. We are most grateful to all the funders, to the contractors: MacDonald Orr from Arisaig, who designed and made the panels, and Richard Livett from Strontian, who constructed the footpath, to volunteers who helped with vegetation clearance and to Diana Noel Paton, who undertook the lion's share of form-filling and liaising with funders.

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## **The West Pier—Morvern Community Development Company and Morvern Community Council**

Upgrading the West Pier was one of the action points that came out of Live Life Morvern. MCDC, MCC and several other local volunteers have been exploring this recently and Henriette Laidlaw, chair of MCC and director of MCDC said:

“Iggersund has indicated they are interested in selling West Pier,

MCDC have participated together with the community council in several meetings between Holmen (Owner of Iggersund) and FLS who is also an interested party.

Currently MCDC is evaluating the opportunities.”

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## **EV Charging—Morvern Community Development Company**

Developing and implementing a long term EV charging strategy was an action point from the Live Life Morvern report. Two EV chargers have now been installed next to the community hub by MCDC. MCDC are also currently exploring the opportunities for fast chargers.

## Organising Ourselves

The Live Life Morvern report stated that: “Successfully sustaining delivery of the actions in this plan over time will require co-ordinated effort across all the active groups in the community, not just by individual groups themselves. Five final action areas under the theme Organising Ourselves suggest actions emerging during both the LLM process itself and the community group forum attended by different community group representatives. Twenty-six actions are listed under the following five action areas: 1. How we want to collaborate – our values 2. How we want to make decisions and relate to wider stakeholders 3. Improving community communications 4. Making things happen 5. Support volunteering & volunteer groups.”

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### **Morvern Community Calendar —Morvern Community Council**

Robert Melohn has created a digital calendar for community events. This is an aspirational project to provide a useful alternative to Facebook if all local groups can get involved. There is a read only link here to have a look and if you are planning an event and would like to know how to add it to the calendar, please get in touch and we can put you in touch with the calendar team. Link—<https://teamup.com/ks3zvojm66xdhpwtmi>

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### **Develop a mentoring scheme for young people to join and lead community groups**

The community council has over the last two years had 4 youth councillors on the council. This has been a good way of introducing the younger members of the community to the running of a council. As a community we should investigate further how young members of the community can take an active role in our many volunteer groups to initiate them into future leadership roles in the community. MCDC have opened up for 16 year olds to join the board with this change to the articles: "Annually after each AGM, the Board may co-opt a Co-opted Director from the Ordinary Members, who is aged between 16 and 25 years, with the specific role of representing the interests of young people in the Community."

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### **Develop a Local Mailing List**

A local mailing list was created as part of the Live Life Morvern process. This is managed by MCDC and has been used to provide updates about the Local Place Plan.

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Live Life Morvern

# What's Next?

I trust this update has been beneficial. As part of the follow up from the Live Life Morvern it was decided that we would follow up with a Local Place Plan which has now been completed and has been uploaded on the Highland Council website. We appreciate all the feedback and assistance from the community to pulling that together, especially the steering group consisting of Sam Firth, Sarah Jones, Henriette Laidlaw, Peter Lawson, Annabel Lawrence, Douglas Taylor and Megan Whyte.

However, an update on the community action plan is incomplete without reviewing the actions that have not yet been addressed.

## **Morvern Business Forum and Develop Morvern Wide Information Website**

The Morvern Community Development Council (MCDC) continues to work on establishing a community website, which should provide a platform for a Morvern Business Forum. Nevertheless, in the interim, it has been gratifying to observe the number of microbusinesses on Morvern utilising the Hub for sales.

## **Development of a Boatyard at East Net Station**

This development has not garnered any interest from any parties to pursue further. It is evident that the interest of the current landowner is necessary for its continuation.

## **Restoration of Drimnin Water Taxi**

The Taxi was briefly reinstated, but the uptake was insufficient to sustain the project's viability at present.

## **Development of Walking and Cycling Routes**

This is an area that we anticipate the community will revisit. While Morvern Community Woodland has been enhancing its paths within the woodland, it is worth visiting if you have not been there for some time, particularly with the recent installation of new boardwalks. CLAM is still seeking funding to commence its project of installing a circular sensory accessible path around the allotment. Knock Park has indicated its willingness to construct a more extensive circular path with access to Kiel Church.

## **Improved Transport Links**

The community council maintains regular communication with Calmac and the Corran ferry to explore potential options for enhanced connectivity.

## **Dail Mhor Redevelopment**

Regrettably, this project has been temporarily suspended by Highland Council. The community council is cognizant of the absence of local care homes and collaborates with URRAM to support any endeavors that may address this issue in the future.

## **Formation of Co-operatives of Local Existing Owners to Reduce Retrofitting Costs**

The Morvern Community Development Council (MCDC) has conducted preliminary investigations into potential grants available to the community, but these efforts have yet to yield success.

## **Establishment of Bulk Buying of Green Energy**

This initiative has not been pursued by any groups.

## **Baseline Study of the Natural State and Biodiversity on Morvern**

Initial steps have been taken to assess the feasibility of conducting a baseline study involving various ecological groups and local estates. However, no formal commitments have been made as of yet.

## **Marine Management Plan for Waters Around Morvern**

Caolas have been engaged and have provided valuable information to the community council. This project is at the government level, and the community council is eager to stay informed and contribute to its success.

## **Volunteer Bank**

Although attempts have been made to establish a volunteer bank, no funding has been secured to initiate the project. However, there is a substantial number of volunteer hours being dedicated to this cause within the community.

## **Development of Social Spaces for Young People**

This was identified as a priority in the Local Place Plan. While there is support for such a project, it will require the active involvement and initiative of young people to make it a reality.

## **Development of a Pontoon for Swimming in Lochaline**

MCTC is continuously evaluating ways to enhance the area surrounding the marina. Having already established a sauna and a gym, additional facilities will be considered when they become financially viable.

As you can see, there's always something new to start and improve upon. Morvern proves time and time again that we can achieve great things, so I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who makes Morvern so special. We're a welcoming, inclusive, and caring community that works hard to involve everyone in our lives. We have a thriving and positive community spirit, and we're a place where people of all ages can stay true to themselves as they go through each life stage. And that's what truly makes Morvern a special place.

Henriette Ebbesen Laidlaw  
Chair, Morvern Community Council

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Thank you for reading this special edition of MCDC's quarterly newsletter—The Live Life Morvern 4 Years on Update! If you would like to receive further updates about Life Live Morvern and join our community mailing list, please email [admin@morvern.org](mailto:admin@morvern.org) and ask to join the Live Life Morvern mailing list. MCDC's next newsletter will be published later this year with further updates about the progress of the housing project and information and updates about the work of MCDC, MCTC and MorVolts. In the meantime, if you have any questions for MCDC, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us via [operations@morvern.org](mailto:operations@morvern.org). Follow our social media (Morvern Community Development Company) for further updates and details of our next drop in sessions.

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MCDC is a community led development company committed to enabling a vibrant, inclusive, resilient and sustainable Morvern for present and future generations. MCDC works alongside two subsidiary companies, each with its own board: MorVolts who manage Barr Hydro and Morvern Community Trading Company who manage Lochaline Harbour, The Hub Café and Lochaline Fuel Pumps. If you have any questions or would like to speak to anyone from MCDC, MCTC or MorVolts, please contact our Operations Manager, Suzanne Pender, on [operations@morvern.org](mailto:operations@morvern.org) or come along to our monthly drop ins in The Hub Café.

If you would like to donate, volunteer or become a member of MCDC please email Samantha at [support@morvern.org](mailto:support@morvern.org). All that is required to become a member is to fill in a short form providing your address (to show that you are a resident of Morvern).

