



HARRIS | FORUM

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Pursuing development through community connection

Title	Harris Forum Business Meeting Minutes		
Date	02/09/2025	Time	7.30pm
Venue	North Harris Trust building		
Distribution	Harris Forum Member Organisations (MOs)		

Present	Member Representatives: EVA KREILEDER (EK), HFDO – Minutes North Harris Community Council, NHCC: FRAN MILLER (FM); Chair of the HF Scalpay Community Council, SCC: SHAUN BLOOMFIELD (SB) South Harris Community Council, SHCC: DONNIE MACDONALD (DMD) North Harris Trust, NHT: KIRSTY MACKAY (KMY) CALUM MACKAY (CM) West Harris Trust, WHT: NEIL MACDONALD (NM) Harris Voluntary Service, HVS: TANIA MACLEOD (TM) Harris Development Ltd., HDL: ANGUS J MACLEOD (AJM) Western Isles Community Care Forum, WICCF: PEGGY MACKAY (PMK) Scalpay Community Association, SCA: GORDON NESS (GN) Community Learning & Development, CLD: - Sport Harris: - Rionnagan Òga: KATHLEEN DUCE (KD) Leverhulme Community Hub: - Councillors: KENNY MACLEOD (KM, Cllr)	Agenda: 1. Welcome from Chair 2. Apologies 3. Approval of Minutes of Meeting 28th July 2025. 4. Matters Arising 5. Leverhulme Hub 6. SportHarris 7. HFDO Update 8. Local Place Plan and the way forward 9. Housing Subgroup 7.1 Future 7.2 Scottish Island Federation Housing Alliance 10. Member Organisation Reports 11. Councillor Report 12. EGM? Structure of the HF 13. AOCB 14. DONM
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Agenda Item		Summary and Action	Who?	When?
1	Welcome from the Chair	All MO representatives welcomed.		
2	Apologies for absence	AGNES MORRISON (AM), North Harris Community Council ANN PARRY (AP), West Harris Trust MAIRI MACIVER (MM), Community Learning & Development GORDON MACDONALD (GM), SportHarris; PAUL A. FINNEGAN (CIlr) CATRIONA MACLENNAN (CML), Leverhulme Community Hub		
3	Previous Minutes 28th July 2025	Proposed DMD, Seconded NM.		
4	Matters Arising	No matters arising		
5	Leverhulme Hub	An email will be sent to the Leverhulme Hub regarding their membership, with cc of the hub chair. DMD will ask the Leverhulme Hub chair for their email address and forward it to the DO. During the conversation, the role of the DO was explained to all member organisations again. The DO supports the groups with their projects but does not do the work for them.	DMD	04.09.2025 <i>Contact details provided and email was sent on 04.09.2025</i>
6	SportHarris	SportHarris sent its apologies for the last number of meetings. There is no chair of SportHarris at the moment, and GM stated in his apologies email, that it will hopefully be solved after the football season.		
7	HFDO Update	A written HFDO report was tabled and comments invited. Beside the support of funding application, the DO worked intensely on the delivery of the Local Place Plan (LPP). The LPP was submitted to the council on the 27.08.2025. The LPP must be taken into account by the council to produce their Local Development Plan for the Western Isles. The Council will publish all LPP on their website. During the whole period of consultations (20.11.2024 - 17.08.2025) there have been 517 participants and unique website visitors. The Harris Forum thanked EK for the fabulous job of producing such a great LPP for Harris.		
8	Local Place Plan and the way forward	EK compared the Harris Plan with the LPP's consultation outcomes. It seems that there is a lack of projects focusing on health, social care and childcare in Harris. There is a request for better childcare facilities and retirement homes on the island with sufficient staff provisions. PMK pointed out that this is primarily a national issue that requires government attention, and that the pay of carers is too low to be competitive. PMK also mentioned that the DYW is looking into youth engagement. Further steps need to be discussed within the HF to address the topics mentioned in the LPP. Meetings need to be organised with relevant parties, e.g. the NHS, SSEN, NatureScot and the police, as well as local groups such as community centres, sports centres and schools, to present the outcomes of the LPP to them.		

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		Some issues need to be addressed from the ground up. EK pointed out that some issues need to be brought to the attention of the Scottish Government. Currently, the Scottish Island Federation (SIF) is the only platform doing this successfully. There needs to be stronger representation of Harris Forum member organisations within the SIF.		
9	Housing Subgroup Meeting	It was a very useful meeting. The participants learned a great deal about the allocation policy of HHP, and all external partners were open to questions. Unfortunately, no chair could be appointed at the last meeting, and the NHT's development officer pointed out that he does not intend to attend any further meetings. KM emphasised that a member of the board from each member group needs to take part in each subgroup meeting. KMY added that, if that were the case, the meetings would have to be held in the evening due to work commitments. This wasn't possible in this case due to external bodies being invited to the meeting. All subgroup meetings with only HF members present will be held in the evening to allow representatives from each MO to participate. It was also pointed out that employees of MOs focusing on various topics are more than welcome to attend. All of the subgroups need a chair to receive stronger support from the individual MOs. In the case of the housing subgroup, the MO providing the chair would participate in the Scottish Island Federation Housing Alliance with the DO's support.		
10	Member Organisation Reports	Written reports from MOs were tabled and comments invited. The member report from the NHT wasn't circulated before the meeting but will be added to the next email to all MOs.		
11	Councillor Report	Things have been a wee bit quieter over the summer. Housing: - Lorraine Graham has been appointed to replace Iain Watson who recently retired from the Comhairle Housing dept. There will be a report going to the September series of meetings on the new Housing Strategy document. - Consultations re Scott Road housing have been progressing. Transport: - There is an important Consultation re the Sound of Harris and Sound of Barra Ferry services that he would urge everyone to complete – you don't have to be a passenger on either of these to be able to give views etc. They continue to push for a two-vessel provision on the Sound of Harris when the SVRP vessels come on stream. We are also pushing for three sailings a day on the triangle route once the new vessels arrive. Some are arguing against this because of infrastructure challenges but we need to also consider the improved availability that the three crossings will give to local residents - for whom the ferries are primarily aimed. - Concerns have been raised with Transport Scotland about the huge impact the renewables work will have on ferry services for the next number of years. With The Loch Seaforth unable to cope with any		

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		The HF requires a Treasurer. The DO will work on a draft statement to present to each MO regarding the structural changes within the HF, and to find a treasurer among the MOs. The new structure of the Harris Forum, and the long-term employment of the DO under the HF, will be the main topics at the next HF meeting on 11th November 2025.	EK	11.11.2025
13	AOCB	a) Additional information from the Harris Transport Group, DMD: New timetables are available on the Calmac website. There have been new issues with the mezzanine deck on the Tarbert – Ui ferry. Calmac is holding a consultation in Tarbert on the 24.09.2025 Next meeting of the Harris Transport Group is on the 9th October, where the CEO of Loganair has been invited to attend. If you have any issues that you would like to raise, please contact DMD or Rhoda Campbell. b) Tuna fishing Currently, there are five Catch & Release and one Catch & Land licences in operation from Leverburgh. The Catch & Release licence is for statistical and research purposes only. The Catch & Land licence could serve as an additional tourist attraction, extending the tourist season further into the year. c) Rotation of meeting locations The HF meeting will rotate to different locations in Harris at each meeting, in order to cover all areas of the island.		
14	DONM	Next Business Meeting on NEW DATE: Tuesday 11th November 2025, 7:30pm, Talla na Mara.		