

Chair's report – June 2023

2022-23 was another busy year for TKCC and I am pleased to say we made significant progress on a number of matters that members have been working on for many years.

The community development plan for the next 5 years has now been finalised and published. This is the first development plan of its sort for our area for a very long time, and TKCC members worked closely with other community organisations to produce it. The process included extensive consultation with the community by means of a survey and feedback events. It also involved discussions with community groups, public sector agencies, businesses and other stakeholders to come up with actions to address priorities.

The actions will now need to be taken forward by others within the community. The organisations to do this are likely to include the TDCA, COW Trust and Communities Housing Trust, and we look forward to continuing to provide them and others with support wherever possible. As members of the development plan action group, we will work closely with any development officers who may be appointed, help monitor progress of the plan and ensure the community is kept fully informed and consulted.

One of the priorities that came out of the survey was the need to improve our roads. Here I am pleased to say we have succeeded in getting the Highland Council to resurface a significant section of the A896 through Glen Torridon (with more to come), fill in a large number of potholes and repair the bridge at Braigh Beag, Wester Alligin.

We have also managed to secure the Council's approval of a new 20mph zone for the whole of Kinlochewe. This will complement a similar scheme in Fasaig. I very much hope it will bring to an end finally nearly 20 years of effort to address speeding issues in the village.

That is not to say there is not much more to be done. We have a good relationship with the Council's Roads Department and will continue to keep the pressure on by making a noise at Ward 5 roads meetings and so on.

In my last report, I highlighted that TKCC's profile had risen significantly over previous years. We now have close relationships with important stakeholders in our area, including South West Ross Community Car Scheme (SWRCCS), NTS, NatureScot, Woodland Trust and Kishorn Port, and better communication with Mowi. In part, this has come out of our work on the development plan but also I think because we are increasingly being seen as an organisation which has something to offer and which can represent the views of the community.

At our request, SWRCCS very kindly helped us to implement a community e-bike trial. We assisted them at a meeting with the Highland Council to discuss funding for a possible mini-bus service.

There have been numerous consultations that we have contributed to, including the Aquaculture Stewardship Council's evaluations of Mowi and Bakkafrost and Highland Council's consultation on Torridon Primary School. We regularly attend Kishorn Port liaison

group meetings and participated on the NTS panel to select a design for their new visitor centre.

In representing the community, we have done our best where necessary to express concerns about planning applications, visitor management, noise from fish farms, and the need to upgrade the electricity network. We have put up speed and no parking signs in Fasaig, and arranged for the large litter bin there outside the shop to be moved and emptied elsewhere.

Guest speakers at our meetings have included representatives from NTS, Highland Council Ranger Service, the NHS, Forestry and Land Scotland, SWRCCS, COW Trust and Slattadale SCIO. We have also made good contacts with neighbouring community councils which should help give us a stronger voice in the future.

We have welcomed Maud McIntyre as a new co-opted member of TKCC and have been working for a year now with our new Highland Councillor, Chris Birt. Both have contributed new energy and perspectives which have been very useful.

Finally, it goes without saying that none of what we have done would have been possible without the tireless work of all our TKCC members. I would like to thank everyone for their contribution and look forward to achieving more together in the future.

As before too, I encourage everyone in the community to be part of our discussions. Whatever it is that you are concerned about, please tell us how we can help and we will do our very best.