

# UCVO Newsletter

LATEST NEWS

June 2026



## Uist Third Sector Organisations : News



### Comann Eachdraidh Uibhist a Tuath

Gàidhlig Development Officer for Comann Eachdraidh Uibhist a Tuath (CEUT), Lisa Reid, has been programming popular events such a concert and activities for children, art and crafts, an Easter egg hunt, and a visit to Trinity Temple (pictured). Lisa is also interviewing, recording and transcribing memories from senior members of the community talking about their lives on the Island in days gone by.

CEUT volunteers run regular events such as Cupan aig Cairinis, and talks which have been well attended. Some members have also visited Sgoil Uibhist a Tuath to share photographs of the old primary schools of Uist.

Funding has been secured to undertake the restoration and redevelopment of the former Sgoil Chàirinis and the Schoolhouse to form a Community Heritage Centre and storage for artefacts, and work is underway.

In this newsletter you can expect:

---

Community Updates

---

Repair Cafe

---

Local Organisations

---

Health & Wellbeing

---

Volunteering

---

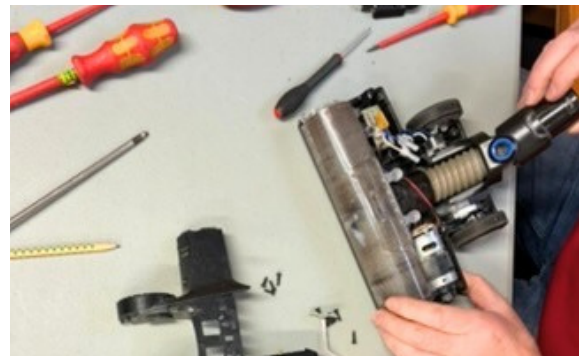
Gaelic Plan

## Clachan Sands Community Hub

The Clachan Sands Community Hub's phone box now features local information boards, including a community-submitted map of landmarks and services. QR codes provide access to details on transport, local businesses, Outer Hebrides Unearthed, and the Hebridean Way, with leaflets also available inside.

Visitor donations have helped fund Christmas lights and a successful 'Big Lunch' was held in July, which was supported by the Eden Project and the Co-op. The honesty box continues to offer drinks and treats for cyclists and walkers, with many leaving grateful messages. Plants and seasonal produce will be available through the growing months, and books and toys remain accessible throughout the year.

For updates, visit the Clachan Sands Community Hub Facebook page.



## Repair Cafe Uist

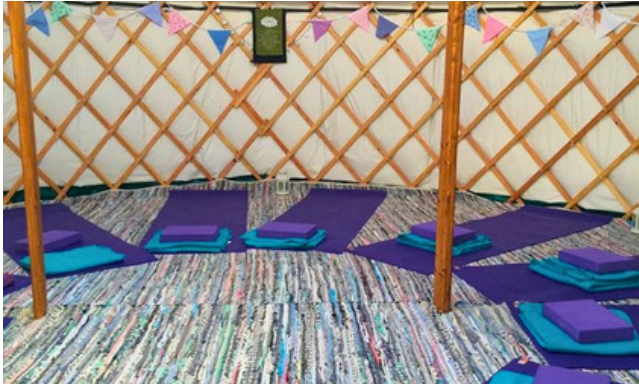
Repair Cafés are popping up around the world, and now in Uist! These events encourage people to repair and maintain items rather than replacing, helping reduce waste and building community. Volunteer repairers generously share their skills, fixing everything from vacuum cleaners and lamps to clocks, furniture, clothing, and even lawnmowers, saving many items from landfill. Held in different locations, Repair Cafe Uist has already visited Grimsay and Iochdar, with the next event scheduled for August in Sollas. These events bring people together over tea and cake, as well as

offering a chance to learn new skills, and exchange ideas.

Funding from the Scottish Communities Landfill Fund, has allowed the purchase of essential tools and a PAT testing machine.

If you'd like to attend or volunteer, visit [facebook.com/repaircafeuist](https://www.facebook.com/repaircafeuist) or email [repaircafeuist@gmail.com](mailto:repaircafeuist@gmail.com).

The Third Sector Community Climate Action Plan for Uist is available at [ucvo.org.uk/climate-action-plan](https://ucvo.org.uk/climate-action-plan)



## Western Isles Cancer Care Initiative (WICCI) Uist & Barra

WICCI Uist & Barra provides non-clinical support to cancer patients and their families across the area. Working closely with MacMillan Cancer Support, services include complementary therapies, counselling, support groups, and workshops.

Gentle Stretch & Relaxation sessions are offered by Sheila MacDonald from The Wee Haven in Benbecula, using breathwork and gentle stretches to help ease tension and support recovery after surgery or treatment.

Monthly support groups are held in North and South Uist. Local individuals, organisations, and businesses generously provide private, comfortable spaces and hospitality for these gatherings.

For more information contact:

Deirdre Steele, Co-ordinator  
uistandbarra@wicci.org.uk | 07538 566207  
Sandra MacKinnon  
icjwesternisles@wicci.org.uk | 07538 566113



## Uist Cat Rescue

Uist Cat Rescue, a small volunteer-run group, has been supporting the island's wild-living cat colonies for over six years. With no public funding or official premises, volunteers use their own homes and resources to trap, neuter, and care for cats, rehoming where possible and releasing others back. They rely entirely on donations to cover vet bills, food, and litter, with all fundraising going directly to the cats' needs. Recent efforts include building sheltered feeding stations in North Uist, monitored by donated cameras. For more information, visit [facebook.com/UistCatRescue](https://facebook.com/UistCatRescue)



## Tagsa Gardens

Tagsa Community Gardens would like to thank everyone who has offered their support by volunteering in the gardens. If you would like to be part of this – just get in touch. Activities included: seed sowing, planting, techniques & tips and most importantly, tea and chat in the volunteer shed! Collaborating with the Tagsa Adult Support team and Caraidean Uibhist, the first afternoon ceilidh was held in the new Tagsa Gardens Hub – even the sun came out to play.

For more info, email: [olli@tagsa.co.uk](mailto:olli@tagsa.co.uk)  
or visit the Facebook page:  
[facebook.com/uistgardeners](https://facebook.com/uistgardeners)



## Cothrom - training, tea and baking

Cothrom held a much requested First Aid and Defibrillator training class this month with the help of First Aid Hebrides. The Adult Learners Forum attended and completed their introductions to first aid, so now there are more people prepared to help on the island when people are in need.

The Hebridean Baker, Coinneach MacLeod recently held a virtual Grow and Bake session, allowing learners to tune in to learn about growing in the Outer Hebrides and baking

cardamon and carrot cake. We greatly appreciate him and Peter making the time to speak to us and answer our questions.

Cothrom is fundraising to replace their defibrillator battery, and hosting a Coffee Morning on Tuesday 9 June, 11am-1pm. Come along and support, raising money for an important cause while enjoying a cup of tea and a slice of cake! Any donations of baking would be gratefully received.



## North Uist Development Company (NUDC)

Work is well underway to develop a Community Benefit Fund for North Uist and Berneray. The fund will be established with the surplus revenue received from the operation of the two-turbine community windfarm at Clachan-na-Luib, operated by Uist Wind. The two turbines were named after a public vote – *Fionn Fuamhaire* and *Flòraidh Fuamhaire* – two helpful friendly giants! The people of North Uist and Berneray will soon be asked to outline their priorities, which will help shape a new Community Investment Plan. This will direct how the money will be spent and help to

support NUDC's aim to develop a sustainable and viable community in North Uist and Berneray.

NUDC is also running an Environmental Exhibition, *Arainneachd Alainn*, at Old Lochmaddy School, featuring marine and geological themes – check out the facebook page for details of talks and opening hours. [facebook.com/isleofnorthuist](https://facebook.com/isleofnorthuist)

To find out more: [isleofnorthuist.com](https://isleofnorthuist.com) and [uistwind.com](https://uistwind.com)



## Caraidean Uibhist

Peer-to-peer support has been a main focus recently, with introductions being made and impact has been immeasurable for many. The Recovery Support Workers have been assisting GPs, CPNs, Criminal Justice Social Work and the Substance misuse nurses, helping community members engage with them. Training courses have been offered to volunteers and befrienders, such as First Aid training facilitated by the Western Isles Community Care Forum, along with dates in the diary for Dementia and Safeguarding Training.

Through funding from Bord na Gaidhlig, Gaelic Ceilidhs take place twice a month at An Caladh, in addition to the usual gatherings facilitated by Caraidean in Berneray, Lochmaddy Hall and The Beacon in Lochboisdale and the monthly events for the Benbecula Group and North Group. As the befriending service continues to flourish, additional volunteers are needed to meet demand. If you can spare a few hours a week, or know of anyone who would benefit from our services, please do not hesitate to get in touch. [admin@caraideanuibhist.org](mailto:admin@caraideanuibhist.org)



## Advocacy Western Isles

Advocacy Western Isles has been shortlisted for this year's Scottish Charity Awards, and is the first charity from the Western Isles to be named as a finalist for this award. The Scottish Charity Awards celebrate the best of Scotland's voluntary sector, and winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in Glasgow in June. This recognition reflects the dedication of the staff, board, funders, and the people across the Western Isles who put their trust in Advocacy Western Isles. For more information about Advocacy Western Isles please visit: <https://advocacywi.co.uk/>



## The Beacon

A warm, friendly welcome awaits you at The Beacon Uist in Lochboisdale, South Uist. The Beacon aims to improve peoples mental health, by supporting wellbeing, and bringing people together through activities and community space. The cafe is entirely run by volunteers, and offers delicious affordable food, on Thursdays and Fridays, and hope to increase opening times through the summer.

*"We have an amazing group of volunteers and without them The Beacon would not exist! Always happy for more volunteers too."*



## Daliburgh Thrift Shop

SHARE Daliburgh Thrift Shop is run by over thirty volunteers, and offers tea, coffee, and delicious homemade baking, as well as second hand shopping. Proceeds go towards maintaining the premises as a social hub, and to local good causes, including sponsoring several young people to attend Ceòlas week in July. The shop is open 11am – 1 pm on Thursdays and Saturdays, and *The Monday Club* meets on the first Monday of June and July, providing tea and companionship in a friendly setting, everyone is invited.



## Benbecula Thrift Shop

The Thrift shop has a dedicated group of volunteers who sort through a huge amount of donations every week. Increased effort has been going into saving more items from landfill, with funding from the Scottish Landfill Communities Fund received to run workshops and upcycle unwanted textiles. The Shop opening hours have extended with two additional Saturdays per month plus usual hours of Wednesday to Friday 11am - 3pm. Proceeds from sales go to a community trust fund which provides financial grants to individuals living in Uist.



## Gaelic Plan

A new chapter for Gaelic in Uist has begun with the launch of [gaidhliguibhist.scot](http://gaidhliguibhist.scot), a bilingual site sharing the Uist Gaelic Community Plan, resources, and local project updates. It features a community blog and highlights growing local involvement. A “Gaelic Hub” will pop up at local events this summer, encouraging Gaelic language use through engaging activities. With strong support from organisations and the community, Gaelic’s visibility and sustainability are growing across the islands. For more information, email [ceiteag@ceolas.co.uk](mailto:ceiteag@ceolas.co.uk)

## UCVO & Third Sector Partners Moving office

This summer UCVO, Caraidean Uibhist, Western Isles Cancer Care Initiative (WICCI) Uist, Am Paipear, Community Energy Scotland and Volunteer Centre Uist are moving to new offices on Winfield Way, Balivanich.

Benbecula Thrift Shop will remain where it is at 41 Airport Road.

## Photography Credits

Dawn Webster	Cathy MacDonald
Lisa Reid	Chris MacClulich
Anne Corrance Monk	Mags MacAskill
Emily Durie	Rosemary Wicks
Sheila MacDonald	Sorcha Monk
Deirdre Steele	Yvonne Irving