

STAFFING & DEVELOPMENT

STAFFING

There were significant changes in the staffing in the second half of 2023 with David Graham moving on from the project to pastures new in June. David started at the project in March 2014 having a personal history in recovery from drug use. David is blessed with real integrity and strong leadership skills. He progressed to deputy manager December 2017 and project manager March 2020. David has a passion for discipleship and was committed to building up residents and colleagues to live out their true potential.

We also said goodbye to Malcolm (Calum) MacLean, who took early retirement due to on-going health limitations. Calum has personal experience of alcohol addiction and 24 years sobriety. Calum is very gifted in his ability to empathise with residents and share his own wonderful testimony of recovery. The project is incredibly indebted to both David and Calum for their service, friendship, and valuable input to many residents' lives over the years. They are greatly missed, and we pray God's blessing over the next chapter of their lives

Stephen MacDougall who has been with the project since 2015 takes the helm as project manager, promoted from deputy manager in June.

Carol Maclean moves into the role of deputy manager. Carol has been full time support worker since 2020. Promoted in July Carol has already begun her management training.

Catherine Macritchie who joined us as relief staff member in Jan 2022 accepted a full-time support worker position in August and has begun SVQ 3 health and social care.

In October we welcomed aboard a new fulltime support worker Roddy Macleod who returned to his Island home from Inverness. Roddy was a scripture reader with SASRA (soldiers and aviators scripture readers association) for near 18 years. Roddy has a real heart for mission and had great opportunity to share the gospel with servicemen and women in his time with SASRA. He has many transferable skills for the work at Heb Alpha and has had personal experience of addiction and mental health problems.

DEVELOPMENT - ALPHA RE-CYCLE

We are excited to tell you about a new project made possible thanks to the Western Isles Development Trust. Alpha Re-CYCLE - a bike recycling project that aims to breathe new life into old and forgotten bikes. The project encourages creativity and meaningful use of time for our residents & staff well-being.

Alpha Re-Cycle aims to restore bikes or recycle old components.

HOW IT WORKS

- Community Collection: Residents in our community can donate unused or old bicycles, spare parts, and accessories that may be lying around in garages and sheds to provide for this exciting project.
- Restoration: Our skilled mechanic and team of volunteers will breathe new life into these donated bikes. From rusty frames to worn-out gears, every component will be carefully inspected and either repaired or replaced to ensure roadworthiness and distributed where there is a need in our communities.
- Creativity: Alpha Re-CYCLE does not just stop at restoration; we are also encouraging creativity. Some recycled bikes will be transformed into unique, custom creations that reflect the personality of our island community.

If you think you have anything you would like to donate to this project or know of someone who might benefit from this wonderful initiative, please get in touch.

manager@hebridesalpha.co.uk - 01851820830

Spread the word about this fantastic initiative!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.hebridesalphaproject.org

For all the latest information on Hebrides Alpha Project pay us a visit.

You can also like us on Facebook.



RODDY

DAVID & CALUM

THE YEARLY NEWSLETTER OF HEBRIDES ALPHA PROJECT



48B UPPER COLL, BACK

ISLE OF LEWIS

HS2 0LT

Tel: 01851 820830

Email: manager@hebridesalpha.co.uk

Web: www.hebridesalphaproject.org

HEBRIDES ALPHA PROJECT

SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

ISSUE 9 - FEB 2024

For the Lord is good; His steadfast love endures forever, and His faithfulness to all generations.

Psalms 100:5



Find us on Facebook

LIFE HOPE RECOVERY

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

EXPRESSION OF THANKS - STAFFING - ALPHA RE-CYCLE

RESIDENT UPDATE - ACTIVITIES - POLY CRUB - FUNDING/DEVELOPMENT

STEPHEN MACDOUGALL - MANAGER

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

Our Board of Directors, Mrs Finella Morrison, Mrs Deborah Miller, Mr Alex MacDonald, and Rev Tommy MacNeil join staff and residents in expressing our heartfelt gratitude to every funding entity, individual, family member, or group that has supported and financed us throughout this year. A special acknowledgement is owed to the WIHB Alcohol and Drug Partnership, The Hope Trust, The Robertson Trust, Western Isles Development Trust, Corra Foundation, CNES Crown Estate Fund, and all those who have made regular contributions or participated in community fundraising events. Your encouragement and financial backing have been invaluable to us.

We are incredibly grateful for those who contribute through regular monthly payments, one-time donations, and Gift Aid contributions. Without your ongoing support, sustaining the project would be a formidable challenge. We also want to express our appreciation for the numerous donations of food, gifts, furniture and clothing from individuals and churches. Although too many to name individually, please know that your generosity is deeply felt, and we offer our humble thanks.

Our appreciation also goes out to the Community Nurses/Substance misuse and Mental Health Services, CNES Drug and Alcohol Counsellors/Housing Benefit Section/Faire, Dochas, Road to Recovery group, The Shed Project, AA, and its members, all supporting churches, Hebridean Housing Partnership and Stornoway Dept. of Work and Pensions. Further thanks are also extended to the Food Bank, Tesco Fairshare Scheme, Back Football and Recreation Centre, Penumbra, Bliss therapy and our external advisers Mr Calum MacDonald (CIB services), Mrs Claire Smith (Orbit Agency) and all other partner agencies for your valuable services. You all play a crucial role in our supported accommodation service and contribute significantly to the recovery of our residents. Thank you very much indeed.





RESIDENT UPDATE

In 2023, the project provided support to a total of twelve residents, comprising eight males and four females. As of the current update, seven of the twelve remain abstinent. Four are still resident and actively engaged in the programme, demonstrating positive progress and actively planning for their future. Unfortunately, three of the eight individuals who transitioned out of the project did not complete their planned exit and returned to substance misuse, highlighting the ongoing challenges faced by some.

Of the five residents who completed their planned exit date, three maintain abstinent and two experienced relapses after exit but things have improved in recent weeks. Two individuals are in full time employment with another doing volunteer work.

Maintaining a connection with our ex-residents is a priority, with one former resident actively participating in aftercare. We are pleased to report good communication with several other ex-residents, and we warmly welcome those who occasionally visit.

In a heartening development, two ex-residents celebrated their baptism last year, marking a significant milestone in their spiritual journey. We extend our heartfelt wishes to them for a life filled with joy, peace, and a deep awareness of God's love.

Additionally, we have the pleasure of sharing the news of Clifford, a former resident who completed his stay in May who went on to tie the knot towards the end of the year. A huge congratulations to Clifford and Rosie on their wedding. We offer our sincere prayers for their bond to strengthen with time as they embark on this new chapter in life.

ACTIVITIES

It is important to find meaningful use of time and a sense of fulfilment in recovery, this is done in part by promoting two days Therapeutic Employment suitable to the individual. This is done through a range of volunteering placements. Some of the ways residents have been able to contribute to the community during the year were:

Collecting golf balls at Back driving range, Bethesda work experience, Red Cross Shop, Traigh Mhor Pony Trekking, Stornoway Skip Hire, College gardens/poly tunnels and Dry-Stone Dyking. A big thank you to all who were able to provide placements. There was plenty to do round the project too and we are thankful to have had a handy resident who kept the place shipshape and maintained the many planters round the project with flowers from the crub that were in bloom.

Some of the recreational therapeutic activities we enjoyed through the year were: Walking, Walking Football, Lawn Bowls, 10 Pin Bowls, Willow Weaving, Barbecues, Fishing and Knitting.

POLY CRUB

Our crub has proved invaluable once again this year for residents and staff. A continuous learning process, with successes and failures! Let's talk about the successes. This year we had a healthy yield of strawberries, some pears, apples and figs. Giant spring onions, parsnips, runner beans, salad aplenty and the most fragrant herbs. There was an area specifically for growing cut flowers which was amazing to be able to cut your own posey to enjoy or giveaway. Outside potatoes grew well in the raised beds - Roosters and Kerrs Pink. We shared growing tips with Iain, the Development Worker for Tong and Back as he showed us the Tong polycrub and how that was working for them. Each growing season provides opportunities for improvement, and we look forward to this year's harvest. The failures are in the compost heap!



FUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT

Hebrides Alpha Trading, a subsidiary of the Hebrides Alpha Project, unfortunately ceased operations in December 2022 due to a decline in service users. Despite its closure, the social enterprise remained financially viable until the end, and the remaining funds were successfully transferred to the project. We express our deep gratitude to Robert Sinclair, his colleagues, service users, and directors for their dedicated efforts in making this transition possible.

With the capital obtained, coupled with partial funding from the Robertson Trust, we were able to acquire a new staff car at the start of the year. Given the substantial distances we cover in supporting residents with appointments, shopping trips, recovery meetings, visits, and recreational activities, the new vehicle ensures the continued efficiency and safety of our operations.

Furthermore, the capital facilitated the purchase of an Arts and Crafts Studio, made possible through joint funding from the project, the local Alcohol and Drug Partnership, and the Crown Estate Fund. The foundation work has been successfully completed, and Karen, a staff member with a BA (Hons) Drawing and Painting, is currently undergoing Creative Therapeutic training in anticipation of the studio's operational phase. We eagerly look forward to having a dedicated space for creativity, fostering motivation, idea sharing, and complete immersion in the artistic process. Stay tuned for further developments in this exciting venture.

We continue to seek new opportunities for ongoing revenue to enable future support for Island residents.