

ARISAIG AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

AGENDA

15TH Jan 2024 7.30pm

1. Those present and apologies for absence
2. Minutes of meeting held on 20th November 2023
3. Matters arising from the minutes:
 - Heritage Trail Project
 - Local Heat & Energy Strategy
 - Swing Park
4. New board members – up to 4, consider youth members / associate members
5. Key dates for ADCC eg Fireworks, Christmas Lights & future plans for these events
6. Macintosh Centre – update
7. Burial Ground (see attached info)
8. Lochaber National Park
9. Local Area Phone Book Update
10. 20mph consultation - *The new speed limits are intended to encourage more people to enjoy the great outdoors by walking and cycling as well as road safety..*
11. Areas where ADCC should possibly be proactive
 - Democracy matters (see attached links)
 - Local place plan (see attached links)
12. ADCC Website / email addresses
13. Reports
 - Treasurer
 - Police
14. Planning Applications – Nothing of concern
15. AOCB

Dates for 2024: The meetings take place on the 3rd Monday of the month. There are no meetings in July, Aug and December – therefore the dates for 2024 meetings will be: Feb 19th, March 18th, April 15th, June 17th, Oct 21st & Nov 18th.

All meetings are open to local residents to attend. Meetings can be joined on Zoom or in person. Please contact the Secretary for joining details: ArisaigCC@hotmail.com

Arisaig CC is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: My Meeting

Time: Jan 15, 2024 07:30 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81969983028>

Meeting ID: 819 6998 3028

Notes for Point 7 from Sheila Kingswood (Burial Ground)

There is a grave lack of burial plots in Arisaig. Sheila outlines the situation below and goes on to look at various alternatives.....

As I understand it – correct me if I'm wrong:

Hugh Gardiner identified that there are few suitable sites in Arisaig, the most suitable being the field in front of the Primary School. This has been investigated in the past. Firstly, the owner was willing to sell but the Council wasn't interested, then the Council was interested but the Landowner was looking for full commercial sale price.

This does seem an obvious site, so what steps need to be taken to find a solution?

I note that in the Local Plan of 2010 the field is not designated for either housing or an open space.

Have the planning committee been approached to find out if planning permission would be likely to be granted for private or commercial housing on the site.

Do we know what the position is regarding compulsory purchase? Does the Highland Council or Scottish Parliament have any influence over any of this?

Has a valuation of the land been done?

If this is the only/best solution then it may be that money needs to be found to take this forward.

Might it be possible to reach an agreement with the Landowner whereby the Council purchases the land but the Landowner retains grazing rights on any unused portions at any time. This would allow, say a strip along the church and school boundaries to be designated for lairs immediately and others to be designated as and when required.

If it was decided that natural burial and sites for containers of remains should be offered, a portion of the field – say further away from the church, as these would be non-denominational, could be so designated and a landscaping plan drawn up.

In respect of a location for a Natural Burial site, would there be any possibility of land to either side of the cycle track from the main road down to the war memorial?

What is Ann Macdonald (Isobel Mary's daughter)'s status in regard to the woodland to the south? Or who owns it?

Who owns the field on the north side of the track?

Traditional burial and cremation pollute the ground and emit carbon dioxide. People are looking for new options.

One cremation creates an average of 534lbs of carbon dioxide. Toxins from embalming fluid and nonorganic implants like pacemakers or tooth fillings also go up in smoke.

Water cremation

Water cremation—also known as aquamation or alkaline hydrolysis—produces the same result with significantly less environmental impact and for some, a spiritual benefit.

Water cremation machines work by pumping a heated alkaline fluid around a body for four to six hours, exponentially accelerating the natural decomposition process. Bodies can be embalmed or unembalmed and dressed in any material that is 100 percent natural. After the body breaks down, only bones and non-organic implants remain. The bones are dried, crushed, and returned to the family.

The only byproduct of water cremation is non-toxic, sterile water that can be recycled into the local water supply—270 gallons of it, or around what the average household uses in a day. There are no emissions into the ground or air.

Water cremation does have its drawbacks. For one, traditional cremations are more readily available, faster, and usually less expensive. Water cremation also requires energy to heat the water and run the pump, although a Dutch study from 2011

(https://www.petmemorialcenter.ca/aquamation/TNO_report_Environmental_impact_of_different_funeral_technologies.pdf) showed that's only 10% of the energy used in flame cremation.

Some critics of water cremation argue it is immoral or disrespectful to the deceased, akin to flushing your loved one down the drain. However, advocates counter that water cremation simply accelerates the natural decomposition process and is no different from the blood from routine embalming that also goes through water treatment to be neutralized.

Water cremation is being considered in the UK - <https://www.legacyoflives.com/water-cremation-uk#:~:text=Water%20cremation%20%2D%20also%20known%20as,end%20of%20this%20year%2C%2023>.

Human composting

Human composting turns bodily remains to soil through a highly controlled process—very different from food composting that can be done in your backyard. In a sealed container, a body is cocooned in a mix of natural materials like wood chips and straw. Over a month or more, the vessel heats up from active microbes that start to break the body down. Fans blow oxygen into the container, which is regularly rotated to reactivate the microbes.

After 30 to 50 days, bone and any non-organic matter are taken out. The bones are then ground down and returned to the material. It takes another few weeks to “cure,” as microbes finish their work and the soil dries out. The end result is a cubic yard of compost that families can use or donate to environmental causes.

There are environmental costs to human composting, also called natural organic reduction (NOR). Fuel is needed to transport elements like wood chips, and electricity is used to power air pumps, fans, and the vessel rotation.

“We’re just getting started as a company tightening [those elements] up,” says Katrina Spade, founder of Recompose, the first NOR facility in the country located in Seattle, Washington. Still, she says the company’s own assessment of the process showed just over a metric ton of carbon savings per person over traditional cremation or burial.

Even if you’re not interested in an eco-friendly afterlife, these burial alternatives come with another advantage: Families can be more involved in the death care of their loved ones, from bathing and dressing them at home to lowering their body into the grave if they choose a green burial.

Adapted from National Geographic article

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/rest-in-compost-these-green-funerals-offer-an-eco-friendly-afterlife>.

<https://terramation.uk/2023/03/21/what-is-terramation/>

Human composting is currently illegal in the UK, but there is a growing campaign to legalise it. In 2022

the Alkaline Earth Society, a UK-based organisation that promotes human composting, submitted a petition to the UK government calling for the legalisation of the practice. The petition received over 100,000 signatures and the government has said that it will consider the issue.

Natural / Woodland Burial

<http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk/index.php?page=future-sustainability-of-natural-burial-sites>

Closest one in Cairngorms (national park!)

Argyll & Bute – woodland and green burials within existing cemetery. Rules. Non-denominational

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/births-deaths-and-marriages/deaths/woodland-and-green-burials>

The Law Commission for England and Wales has this to say

<https://lawcom.gov.uk/project/burial-cremation-and-new-funetary-methods/>

The problem

The law governing how we dispose of the bodies of our loved ones when they die is unfit for modern needs.

While we often think of the choice as being between burial and cremation, new methods of disposal are being developed and used in other countries which are unregulated here.

Further, the legislation governing more traditional methods of disposal is outdated, piecemeal and complex.

The law does not ensure that a person’s own wishes as to the disposal of their remains are carried out, leading to disputes where family members disagree. Disputes also arise as to entitlement to a person’s remains.

The project

This project came out of our [13th Programme of Law Reform](#).

The project began with a scoping phase in December 2022. This phase has now concluded, with the publication of our [terms of reference](#).

Due to the wide range of issues involved, and the different stakeholder groups which are interested in different elements of this work, we have decided to split the project into three strands. Each strand has its own project web page at the links below.

1. Burial and Cremation, which will look at the law governing different types of burial grounds and crematoria. This will include consideration of grave reuse.
2. New Funerary Methods, which will consider a future-proof regulatory framework for new methods of dealing with a body after death, such as human composting and alkaline hydrolysis.
3. Rights and Obligations relating to Funerary Methods, Funerals and Remains, which will look at issues including whether a person's wishes about their body after death should be legally binding, who should have the right to make decisions about bodies, and public health funerals.

As set out in the terms of reference, a number of issues are out of scope of this project. These include the regulation of funeral directors, death registration, regulation of the preservation of bodies (such as by cryopreservation), and the criminal law relating to the desecration of a body.

Next steps

In recognition of the pressing need for reform in this area, we have agreed to conduct the Burials and Cremation, and New Funerary Methods strands of the project alongside each other. The overall timetable for each strand, following conclusion of the scoping phase, will be as follows:

1. Burial and Cremation has now started and will run until the end of 2025;
2. New Funerary Methods will run from the beginning of 2024 to spring 2026;
3. Rights and Obligations relating to Funerary Methods, Funerals and Remains will run from the end of 2025 to the end of 2027.

Each strand will include a public consultation on a consultation paper, and will conclude with the publication of a report containing recommendations to Government. We intend to publish a draft Bill to accompany the New Funerary Methods report. We also intend to publish a draft Bill addressing both Burial and Cremation and Rights and Obligations at the end of the Rights and Obligations strand.

More: <https://lawcom.gov.uk/laws-on-burial-cremation-and-new-funerary-methods-to-be-reviewed/>

The Law Society of Scotland has made a minor start on considering the subject

<https://www.lawscot.org.uk/news-and-events/legal-news/views-invited-on-new-burial-and-cremation-regime/>

Most recent regulations were set in 2016.

Notes for Agenda Point 11:

Democracy Matters

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/democracy-matters-phase-2-consultation-easy-read/>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/local-governance-review-analysis-responses-democracy-matters/pages/7/>

<https://consult.gov.scot/local-government-and-communities/democracy-matters/>

Local Place plan – lots of useful material available. Big task.

<https://www.transformingplanning.scot/media/2236/draft-how-to-guide-pdf-format.pdf>