



Shieldaig Community Council

Email: ShieldaigCC@gmail.com Website: <https://www.shieldaig.info/communitycouncil>

D R A F T

Minutes of meeting Thursday 6th November 2025

1. Attendance and apologies

Present: Community Councillors: Jim Alexander (Trs), Julia Böger, Ian Livingstone, Laura Mackenzie, Richard Munday (Chr), Daniel Sharp (Sec) **Village Association:** Kalie Wilkinson
Highland Councillor: Chris Birt **Members of the Public:** 3
Apologies: Hugh Gosling

2. Minutes of meeting on 9th October

Community councillors approved the minutes of the meeting on 9th October.

3. Matters arising

3.1. Visitor Levy

The visitor levy will be discussed at a meeting of the Highland Council in December.

4. Finance

The current balance remains at £5,710.

5. Overnight Parking in the Village

The Community Council feels that advisory signage is the best approach, and the meeting discussed the signage in place in other areas, such as Lochcarron and Applecross. The Community Council feels that there should be a consistent approach across all the local communities.

The signage attached to the gates at the cattle grids at either end of the village will be removed, as the busy period for visitors is now at an end.

Action: Cllr. Birt to check with Highland Council what the approach for signage is to try to ensure a consistent approach locally.

6. 40 mph speed limit reduction on the top road

Iain Moncrieff (Ross and Cromarty Area Roads Team) has agreed to do a "walkaround" in Shieldaig with Cllr. Birt on Monday 24th November. In addition to the 40mph and related issues on the top road, it is hoped that there will also be an opportunity to assess the risks of rock fall on the contiguous stretch of road just to the south (see AOB).

The issue of speeding in the 20mph zone was raised. The possibility of traffic calming measures to address this were discussed.

Actions: Cllr. Birt to confirm meeting details. Richard will also attend and any other Community Councillors who wish to join them will be welcome. **Cllr. Birt** to contact Lisa MacKellaich to ask about the possibility of traffic calming measures in the 20mph zone.

7. Community Resilience and Emergency Planning Group

Richard gave the meeting an update. Members of the Group had had a useful and constructive meeting with Pamela Harvey (Highlands and Islands Customer Relationship Manager) and Alasdair MacRae (Network Integrity Manager) from SSE(N) on 27 October to discuss the best ways of building community resilience to cope with power outages. The general assessment was that Shieldaig, is likely to see more and longer power outages over the foreseeable future. It was therefore sensible to update the Shieldaig emergency plan to build in more resilience to such outages and various possibilities were discussed such as powerbanks, generators and shared charging facilities. Scottish Water will be contacted to assess the risk to the mains water supply during power outages.

The group will collate a resource list that may be called upon in the event of an emergency, such as satellite internet connections, backup generators, chainsaws etc. The existing “telephone tree” is being updated with the contact details of individuals to be identified across the community area to facilitate communications in the event of an emergency. Given that fixed telephone lines, mobile phones and the internet may not function during power outages, the possibility of building a local short wave radio network using existing/enhanced facilities will also be considered.

It was suggested that the Hall could be used as a hub for the village in the event of an emergency, possibly with facilities to charge devices, provide internet connectivity, and prepare hot food and drinks. But “mini hubs” would also be needed for the more isolated communities on the Coast Road.

The Group welcomed the suggestion by Pamela, that it might be in touch with Nethybridge CC which had developed a very good Emergency Plan for their area.

Cllr. Birt suggested the possibility of installation of a wind turbine as a longer-term solution, which would have the advantages of making Shieldaig more resilient to power outages and potentially reduce the cost of electricity for local residents. Richard noted the existing hydro scheme at Inverbain which fed electricity back into the national grid.

8. Plans for the village hall

Kalie presented plans for the renovation and extension of the village hall to the meeting. There have already been consultations in the village hall, where local residents can come and view the plans, ask questions and fill in a form to identify their preferred option. Two more consultations have been scheduled.

Kalie advised that once the preferred option had been decided upon, funding would be sought. Cllr. Birt advised that the Community Regeneration Fund would be appropriate for this and suggested that a notice of interest be made, so that there is awareness that a more formal approach for funding would be made in due course.

9. Closure of the village shop

The meeting discussed the recent closure of the village shop. Although we have been told that this temporary, the closure is of concern to the Community Council given the local people who rely on the shop for the provision of essentials.

As mitigation during the closure period several options have been put forward, including setting up a temporary shop elsewhere in Shieldaig, using the South West Ross Community Car Scheme mini bus to organise shopping trips to Lochcarron or “click and collect” at Torridon. It was noted that the SPAR in Lochcarron already makes regular local deliveries, including to Kishorn and they may be willing to extend this service to Shieldaig.

The Community Council will keep in touch with these developments to try to ensure that arrangements are made to help those local residents who previously used the shop.

10. Short Term Let Control Area

The proposal to introduce short term let control areas, whereby planning permission would be required to obtain a short term let license has recently been on the agenda at Highland Council area committees. While some areas have chosen not to progress this, Highland Councillors who represent Ward 5, which includes the Shieldaig Community Council area have voted to progress and initiate a consultation process, before the start of STL Controls across the whole of Ward 5.

Some of the pros and cons of this were discussed at the meeting.

The meeting noted the number of residential properties in Shieldaig which had been converted to short term lets over the last 25 years and the impact that this had had on Shieldaig as a community. This might be addressed by the measures, although there was also a nervousness about the impact these might have on local businesses and individuals. And questions were raised about the likely views of local residents who may be faced with a drop in the value of their property, along with how those who work locally to service STLs might be affected. Whether STL control would result in an increase in second homes in the area was also mentioned.

Cllr. Birt advised the meeting that these measures would not be retrospective and only apply to those wishing to set up a new short term let. He also noted the drop in house prices that had been seen in Strathspey and Badenoch, the only area in the Highlands that has implemented an STL control area so far. He said that he was in favour of implementing similar controls in the Shieldaig CC area.

The consultation period is due to start in February and the Shieldaig Community Council will welcome the opinions of local residents.

11. Road Maintenance

Cllr. Birt advised the meeting that he has had every assurance that work to make improvements to the coast road will start next year.

12. Woodland Management

12.1. Woodland Trust

No community update this month, although Malcolm Turner advised the Community Council prior to the meeting that plans for an access bridge over Abhainn nan Lub in Glen Shieldaig should be ready for the next meeting.

12.2. Kinloch Woodlands

Richard said that Kinloch Woodlands at its recent AGM had welcomed the appointment of Ann Barton as a community nominated trustee and thanked Ruairidh MacLennan for his helpful 10 years of service.

13. Planning

Laura presented the meeting with details of a planning application for an extension to Kinloch House. No issues were raised.

14. Any Other Business

14.1. Rocks on the road

A local resident raised the issue of large rocks on the road on the A896, just north of the southern cattle grid and the risk of land slip. It was agreed that this should be raised as part of the "walkaround" scheduled with the Ross and Cromarty Area Roads Team (see item 6 above).

15. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be at 7pm **Thursday 5th February 2026**