



April 2021

the official newsletter of the Black Isle
Partnership

Befriending

We are excited to see the start of a new Black Isle-wide project focused on connecting people who might otherwise feel isolated. The project aims to engage up to 100 folk in one-to-one sessions, group chats, creative activities and even things like poetry classes and virtual walks.

The project has been made possible through the Resilience and Recovery Fund and runs for eight weeks until the end of May. Social exclusion was identified as a major concern for many locals over the last twelve months and it is hoped this important initiative will address some of the issues brought about by the pandemic and the lack of social interaction. Asia Cielecka is managing the project working alongside Helena Macleod from Befrienders Highland and other Black Isle freelancers to deliver the sessions.

If you would like to join this project or know someone who might benefit from it, please contact Asia via community@black-isle.info or speak with Helena at helena@bridgeagap.co.uk. We have adopted relevant policies such as Confidentiality and Safeguarding, yet our Project Activities will be creative and light touch.

Though this is a very short time frame to achieve an ambitious target it is hoped the concentrated effort will generate momentum that can be carried on long after the funding ends. Wellbeing is central to our strategy for a more self-reliant Black Isle and we trust the project will have everyone's full support. We wish it much success.

Implications for the wider partnership

With Asia's change of role there is a need for everyone to take responsibility for keeping other projects going which have already started.

Food – the 'larders group' has been meeting regularly and it is hoped this will continue. It is possible this group could broaden its remit to consider other 'local food' initiatives such as community growing spaces. If someone is willing to co-ordinate meetings, please let us know.

Employment – The Kickstart programme has generated 5 job opportunities with Black Isle businesses. The processes are in place for others to take advantage of this scheme and hopefully more opportunities for local employment will come as lockdown measures ease. As it is a successful small project with a big business potential, if someone is willing to co-ordinate a group of local businesses to build better opportunities for our young people, please get in touch

Communications – for the time being the directors will manage BIP communications – producing newsletters, co-ordinating the strategic partnership meetings, responding to general queries. Please continue to use the community@black-isle.info e-mail for correspondence and we will respond as quickly as possible.

BIP has evolved over the last twelve months and has benefited greatly from having a Projects Co-ordinator. The directors regard it a priority to secure long-term funding to enable us to employ at least one person in such a role in the future and this will be our focus over the coming weeks.

Tuesday Zooms

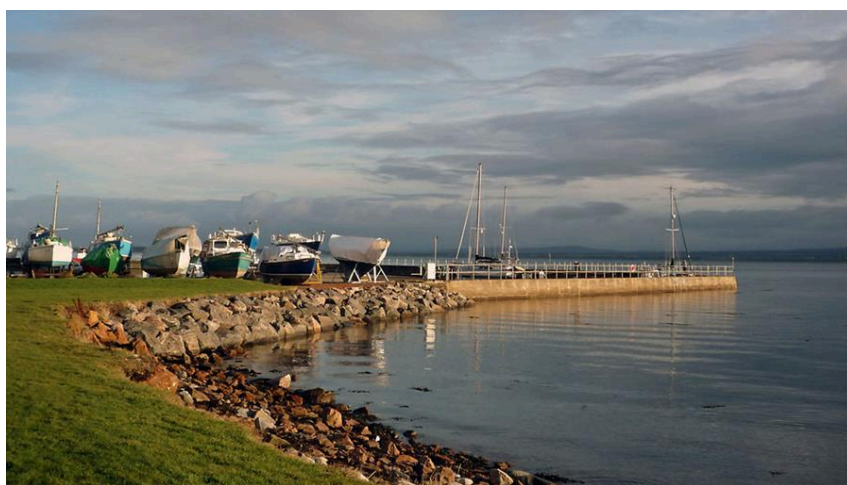
The notes from the meeting on 30th March are available [here](#).

We are conscious that not everyone is free to attend daytime meetings. So we would like to know which is preferable – Daytime (continuing on a Tuesday at 10.00am) or an Evening (most likely a Tuesday). Please let us know which suits you best.

Daytime

Evening

Tourism



As lockdown measures ease concerns have been raised about an anticipated 'bumper' year for visitors to the Black Isle. A great deal of activity has already been taking place to try and alleviate some of the obvious pressures on our communities.

1. A working group is looking at issues specifically around Chanonry Point and the Rosemarkie Shoreline. Black Isle Councillors along with Highland Council officers have been very co-operative and pro-active in finding practical solutions to problems caused by lack of sufficient parking, overnight camping and the local

road network generally not being designed for the extra volume of traffic.

2. Nige Shapcott has been investigating how local communities can take advantage of the Highland Council 'Comfort Scheme' to bring more existing toilet facilities into public use. His primary focus is to do this on behalf of Cromarty Community Council but is keen to work with other CC's on this.

If you are interested to be involved or wish to find out more about either of the above initiatives contact Becky Richmond via tourism@black-isle.info who is co-ordinating the Black Isle response to what might be called the '2021 tourism challenge'.

All Together Now

To further explore these issues and lots more besides, **The Black Isle Tourism Team** is facilitating a mini conference on Tuesday 20th April. It is an online event and everyone is invited to attend. For further details and to register go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/148817845181>

Please feel free to share this link with others.

Ag 'Case For Change' Report and Future Action

Since the release of the 284-page report investigating issues both at the B9161 Munloch Junction and Tore Roundabout, Cllr Gordon Adam called a meeting with Police Scotland and community representatives this week to explore what immediate actions could be taken. A priority is Munloch especially with the prospect of an increase in campervans and other visitor traffic attempting to navigate an unfamiliar junction in the coming weeks and months. A joint letter signed by Black Isle CC's is likely to be sent to Transport Scotland in the next week or so. It will urge for a reduction in the speed limit to 50mph for that section of road.

AGM

Notice is hereby given that the Black Isle Partnership will hold an **Annual General Meeting** at 7.30pm on Tuesday 4th May - online. The link to register attendance is [here](#).

We look forward to celebrating the achievements of our last 12 months of working together.

Membership. To check your current membership status, and/or which organisation you represent contact julian.paren@gmail.com

Directors. We welcome interest from anyone who would like to become a director (you have to also be a member!). Currently there is under-representation of younger people and women. The essential requirements of the role are a good understanding of the Black Isle and its communities; the ability to be objective and think strategically; knowledge of how a not-for-profit organisation with a community focus functions. In the first instance contact jon.palmer@hotmail.co.uk

This edition of Black Isle Bulletin was edited by Jon Palmer
Image of Avoch Harbour: Julian Paren

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