DORNOCH HERITAGE SOCIETY
Meeting of the Board of Trustees, Minutes
Tuesday 26th August 2025

1. **Present:** Alison Davies (Chair), David Bell, Jerry Bishop, Richard Hickson, Fiona McKinlay (Minutes)
   Apologies: Andrew Senior (Co-Chair), Fiona Hampton, Lynne Mahoney
   In Attendance: Peter Wild

2. **Declarations of Interest**
   None

3. **Minutes of meeting held on 10th June 2025**
   The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

4. **Matters Arising**
   The VJ Day event was very successful, with the museum hosting an exhibition in the Lifeboat Station. PW photographed the event. Discussions regarding a Pictish Festival in collaboration with the Tarbat Discovery Centre are ongoing. The interim evaluation report for the Heritage Hub project has been received; the process will conclude at the end of September.

5. **Financial Reports**
   a: Museum Financial Reports: - JB advised that July and August footfall is down quite significantly in comparison with previous years. Gifts and book sales are up and the cash position is reasonably healthy, however. The downturn may be weather related as it has been a particularly good summer. It was agreed that more aggressive marketing is required. Feedback from the cruise passenger visits has been positive.

   b: Heritage Hub Finances: - JB gave an update on the current financial position and advised that all expenses must be submitted by late September in order to finalise the account. The Donald Ross Trail leaflets will be delayed until next year so that a photograph of his statue can be included. The cost will now be borne by the museum account. AD advised that the audio for the golf workshop is progressing. LM has researched Donald Ross's life, DB will follow up a suggested scriptwriter and AD will approach a suggested narrator.

   c: Friends Committee: - PW did not have the current financial information to hand but will circulate it to the Board after the upcoming meeting.

   d: Electricity Contract: - JB advised that Utility Aid has offered a 3 year lock in to our existing contract which is due for renewal in October 2026. It was agreed that this will provide insurance against future cost rises. JB will progress.

6. **DHSCIO Business Plan**
The final draft has been circulated, agreed and signed off. It will now be sent to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

7. **Sub Committee and Curator Reports**
a: Museum Committee Report: - the latest draft minutes had been circulated. AD reported that funding has been denied for the Oral and Family History Scoping Project.

b: Friends Committee Report: PW spoke on current and future activities, particularly a music quiz to be held in Clashmore Hall on 26th September. Tickets will go on sale shortly. JB has booked the Community Car for that evening to help with transport and attendees driving there will be encouraged to take passengers. As September is a busy month for membership renewal, PW enquired about the progression of the online system. AD will ask AS for an update.

8. **Governance**
a: *Change of Charity Name: -* the change to Dornoch Heritage Society from Dornoch Heritage SCIO has now been approved by OSCR.

b: *Treasurer Vacancy: -* Tessa Palmer has agreed to take over this role on a 6 month trial basis following JB's departure at the AGM.

c:: *Museum Sub Committee Chair: -* AD advised that Jim McPherson has agreed to take on this role next year but will initially shadow AD from January 26 onwards. It was agreed that he should be invited to become a Trustee.

d: *Annual Report and Draft Accounts: -* these have been approved by the Board and will now be sent to the accountant. Both will be presented at the AGM.

e: *Trustee Information for OSCR: -* AD will circulate a pro forma to be completed by all trustees.

f: *DHS AGM: -* this will be held on Wednesday, 29th October 2025 at 7.30pm in the Heritage Hub. A quorum of 21 is required which includes proxy votes.

9. **HR – MGS Requirement for a Staff Policy**
AD drafted and FM agreed a document that MGS has accepted as a 'work in progress'.

10. **AOCB**
a: Accreditation:- AD advised that accreditation has now been granted.

b: *Shed Project:-* JB reported that further quotes have been requested for the construction of the new shed and that the initial estimate was too low.

c: Pictish Stone:- PW advised that an application has been submitted for the acquisition of the stone. It is understood that Historylinks is in competition with Inverness and the National Museum of Scotland.

d: Future Project '26 – new entrance porch / modifications to car park: - AD advised that Ian Levens has offered to provide sketches pro bono. It is suggested that the car park and the ground behind it could be modified to make better use of the space. An application will be made to the MGS Repairs and Adaptation fund.

11. Date of next meeting

As per the agreed schedule, the next meeting will be held on 14th October 2025 at 10.30am in the Historylinks Museum Community Room.