



Welcome to Rum!

**Prospective Residents Welcome
& Information Pack**

The pack contains the following sections:

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- 2. Doctor & Medical Services**
- 3. The electricity system**
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- 5. Waste**
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Dear (New/Prospective) Rum Resident,

Welcome to the Isle of Rum!

You no doubt already know that Rum is a special place – a National Nature Reserve with several important international designations: Special Area for Conservation, part of the Small Isles National Scenic Area, Special Protected Area for Birds, and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The majority of the island is owned by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), but the houses and land around Kinloch village, as well as Harris Lodge on the other side of the island, are now owned by the Isle of Rum Community Trust.

This welcome pack contains lots of useful information that new residents have told us it would have been helpful to know when they arrived – it's a work in progress, so if there are other things you think should be added, please let us know!

Current IRCT Directors:

Denis Rixson (Chair)
Ewan MacDonald
Gregor Cushnie
Deb Ingram
Kate Bolas
Derek Thomson
Colin Kerr

Useful Contacts:

Dialling code for Rum, the Small Isles and Mallaig: 01687

IRCT Office: 462 404

SNH Reserve Office : 462 026

Emergency plumbing / gas: call IRCT office in the first instance

Arisaig Marine (Shearwater): 450224

Calmac (Mallaig): 462 403 (choose option 2)

Co-op Mallaig: 462 240

Johnston Brothers (Hardware store & fuel, Mallaig): 462 215

Morar Motors: 462 118

Small Isles Medical Practice (Eigg)(practice nurse only): 482 427

Spar Mallaig: 460 257



1. About the Isle of Rum Community Trust

The Trust is a charity and a company limited by guarantee. It currently has 7 volunteer Directors (4 are residents). The IRCT's governing document is the Memorandum & Articles – there's a copy of this and other handy IRCT policies in the village hall if you'd like to take a look.

Directors – what do they do?

- respond to or comment on issues as they arise
- hold regular meetings between each AGM (on-island directors meet once a month)
- set the strategy and policy of the Isle of Rum Community Trust
- generally control and supervise the activities of the Trust
- responsible for monitoring its financial position
- responsible for the day-to-day management of the Trust

Directors are guided by the needs of the community and are informed by the Rum Community Association. The Trust exists “to manage community land and associated assets for the benefit of the Community and the public in general”; to educate the Community about its heritage; and to promote rural regeneration following the principles of sustainable development – social, environmental & economic.

At each AGM one third of the elected directors must retire, so that other Ordinary members are given the opportunity to take a turn directing the Trust. No director can serve more than two consecutive terms of office (4 years in total) without at least one year's rest before being eligible again.

Directors need to be able to make decisions for the greater benefit of the community, setting aside personal opinions. Between them they have a wide range of skills, knowledge & experience, and work hard for the community while leading busy lives in addition to the work they do voluntarily for the Trust.

Membership

The IRCT would not exist without its members, and so we are very keen for all new residents to become members and to fully engage with what we're trying to achieve for Rum.

To become an Ordinary Member you must be resident on Rum and on the electoral register for this ward. Being an ordinary member entitles you to nominate and vote for new directors, to become a director yourself, and to vote on Trust issues. Membership is £1. Having a large percentage of residents as Ordinary Members helps to ensure that the Trust's activity has the backing of the whole community.

If you are not on the electoral register or you move away from Rum, you may become an Associate Member for £1, but you will not be able to vote. Membership is subject to approval by the Board of Directors of IRCT. A membership form is enclosed at the end of this pack, and you can talk to any of the Directors or paid staff for more information.

2. Doctors' Visits and Medical Emergencies

The Small Isles Medical Practice is located on the neighbouring island of Eigg. However, there is no doctor on Eigg (a nurse only). It is impractical to visit Eigg for medical needs. A

doctor from the mainland visits Rum about once a fortnight. To join the practice you need to phone the surgery and ask for a registration form to be sent to you: 482 427.

There is currently no physical doctor's surgery in the village and visits will be to residents own home.

If you need to see the doctor urgently, you can call and discuss your problem over the phone. The SNH reserve office holds some medicines that can be given out with the doctor's authorisation, and medication can be sent over on the next ferry.

All residents or prospective residents need to be very clear that the nearest doctor's medical practice is based in Mallaig, 20 miles away by boat (on ferry days). The nearest hospital is a further 45 miles away in Fort William.

If something is extremely urgent, a doctor (at the end of a phone) may advise calling emergency services. The lifeboat, an air ambulance or coastguard helicopter may be dispatched. There is also the NHS 24 helpline for advice: 08454 24 24 24.

If you or a family member have specific medical needs you should be very clear that you have fully thought through the above practicalities and any other related issues as detailed elsewhere.

3. Electricity

Electricity on Rum is provided by a small hydro system (up to 40Kw. Currently running at 18Kw max) with backup generators. A system of battery inverters has been installed to help manage demand and reduce use of the generator. The power supply is run and maintained by SNH. You can see the intake dam at the top of the Coire Dubh path.

Each house is fitted with a pay as you go card meter. Cards can be purchased from the hostel reception.

Living off-grid on an island is not like living on the mainland, where energy is provided from a variety of sources into a central grid system. The capacity of the hydro system is limited and the island grid cannot cope with sudden high peaks and troughs in demand. For this reason residents are encouraged not to use too many electrical appliances: high output kettles, toasters, etc; appliances such as panel heaters, electric showers, tumble dryers and electric cookers are not allowed as they draw too much energy.

Each house has a maximum circuit breaker of 5 amps, which sounds very small but most people get used to this quickly and don't find it inconvenient – it just means you can't put all your electrical appliances on at once! If you exceed this limit your supply will trip and will have to be reset. Village power outages are possible. We are currently working with SNH and other partners to seek funding to significantly upgrade the whole system. If you have any particular electrical demand needs then you will have to take full account of the above particular restrictions before choosing Rum as your home.

4. Gas and Kerosene

Gas can be organised through the IRCT office – call 462 404 or come to the office in Farmhouse Bothy (near the Village Hall).

Kerosene orders are usually done every 3/4 months or so through Scottish Fuels, this is the tenants responsibility to organise.. Their contact number is

they have a direct debit scheme to spread the cost over the year.

If you have any concerns or suspect a leak, contact the IRCT office.



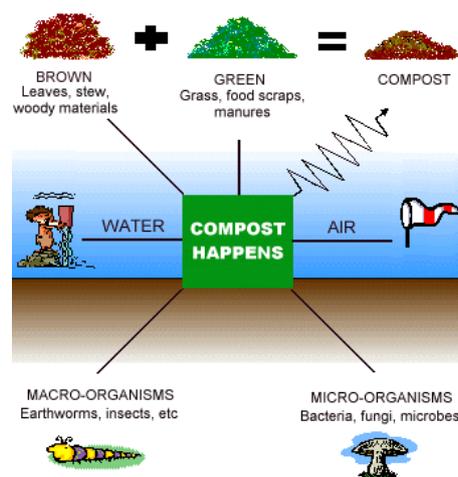
5. Waste

We are trying to be super “green” on Rum and substantially reduce the amount of waste we produce. There are recycling facilities for glass, cans, paper, plastic and card at the pier. There is a skip for general rubbish at the pier, but please make an effort to sort your waste to minimise the amount going into the skip.

Composting is encouraged and will produce a useful product for your garden.

Compost doesn’t just happen, however, it needs to be managed, and keep the lid closed and the bin secure to discourage rats. Try to put a mixture of materials into your compost bin: vegetable peelings, teabags, shredded cardboard, grass clippings, etc. Stir it occasionally. Do not put meat, bones or cooked food into your compost bin as it does not compost and it attracts rats. There is some good information about composting at

www.gardenorganic.org.uk/composting/



6. Shopping

The Isle of Rum has a fabulous shop in an annexe beside the community hall. Vegetable orders can be made on a form supplied by Jinty and handed in on a Thursday for delivery on Monday(summer) or on Monday for Thursday delivery (winter). If there’s something you want that isn’t in the shop, let Jinty know and she’ll order it in for you. See the notice by the shop door for opening times.

Salad and other seasonal vegetables are often available from local growers – ask around if you’re interested!

The Post Office is in the shop, and is open from 10-12 on days when the Calmac ferry runs. Last collection from the post box is one hour before the ferry. There is no post on non-boat days.

You can order things from the Co-op in Mallaig via their online ordering system – go to <http://co-operative.coop/Mallaig> and follow the instructions. They will then phone you to take your card details for payment. There is a small charge for freight on the ferry (around £2) and you will need to collect your shopping from the pier.

We would encourage you to use the Rum shop as much as possible though. Without the patronage of everyone on the island it would quickly become unviable and have to close, leaving us with nowhere to buy food when bad weather disrupts the ferry service!

7. Fire safety and prevention

Kinloch Village has no fire brigade so everyone needs to be vigilant with respect to fire. All the Trust properties have fire alarms which are provided for your safety. Please ensure they are unobstructed, serviceable, and tested regularly. If your fire alarm goes off it is up to you to ensure that everyone is evacuated and then check for fire. **THE ALARM ONLY SOUNDS IN THAT HOUSE** so no other help is coming unless you summon it.

Be particularly careful when lighting candles, fires or smoking (houses on Rum have been lost before by carelessness) and remember the nearest fire brigade is at least forty minutes away, with fireman arriving with limited equipment via the lifeboat.

If it turns out to be a false alarm (alerting you to burnt toast, for example) you can press the round button on the alarm which activated the rest of the alarms (it will have a red light). This will turn the alarm off for 10 minutes.

8. Rats

There are rats on the island.

You can help minimise rat visits by:

- Not putting meat or cooked food into your compost bin
- Keeping your compost tidy and the lid on
- Not leaving food, particularly animal feed, lying around
- Not leaving rubbish lying around



9. Dogs & Cats

Rum is a Special Protected Area for birds, and they are easily disturbed by dogs. You can help by keeping your dog under close control at all times, particularly in areas where birds are likely to be nesting. This includes along the shoreline, moorland areas, woodland, and meadows.

Do not let your dog wander around the village unattended.

Please be considerate to others and pick up any mess that your dog leaves behind!



Cats can be brought to Rum **but only if they are neutered**, as a population of feral cats would devastate wildlife on the island.

10. Other animals

As Rum is such a special place with important conservation designations, there are certain plants and animals which cannot be brought to the island because they would have disastrous consequences for the flora and fauna here:

Animals & plants which cannot be brought to Rum:		
Rabbits	Foxes	Japanese Knotweed
Mink	Hedgehogs	Himalayan Balsam
Ferrets	Rats	Cotoneaster
Weasles	Birds of Prey (inc. Owls)	Rhododendron Ponticum
Polecats	Crayfish	
Stoats		

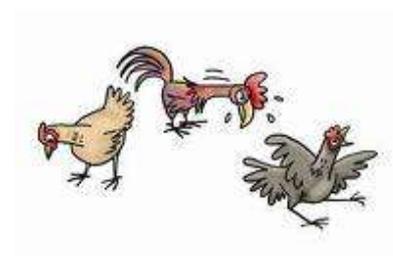
Other animals and plants which can be brought to the island without permission are:

Agricultural crop species
 Horticultural species
 Garden plants
 Cattle
 Sheep
 Dogs & cats(neutered)

Horses
 Goats
 Pigs
 Domestic breeds of duck
 Domestic hens & other poultry

Aquarium fish
 Guinea pigs
 Gerbils
 Tortoises

Animals and plants not referred to in these lists may only be brought to Rum with the prior written permission of SNH & IRCT. If you'd like to keep bees, check with IRCT first and please don't bring your own kit as it can introduce disease to the resident bee population.



11. Light Pollution & Shearwaters

Bright lights attract and confuse our lovely Manx Shearwaters when they return to their nests at night, so please restrict the use of outside lights during the summer and early autumn. Every year, shearwaters are attracted to the light and land in the village, often falling victim to cats, dogs and rats, which doesn't help to keep their population numbers buoyant. You can help reduce this by not leaving outside lights on, and by using curtains to blackout lights inside the house. If you do find a live bird hiding around the village the best thing to do is catch it, put it in an empty box until morning, then contact the SNH office so someone can collect, ring and release it.



12. Vehicles

Residents can bring vehicles to the island, but walking and cycling keep you healthier! You will need to obtain a permit to bring your car on the ferry; residents' permits are available for £20 per car from the IRCT office, and are valid for one year – you can make a monthly

payment of £1.67 if you prefer. Calmac will not allow vehicles without a valid permit to board the ferry.



These permits only permit you to bring your car to the island, they do not give the right of access to the Nature Reserve, which is at the discretion of SNH. Please check your vehicle for invasive stowaways (rats etc!) before you leave Mallaig.

A car share scheme called West Wheels operates from Mallaig & Arisaig and allows members to access car clubs in other cities – contact westwheelscarclub@gmail.com for more information. The car club has two cars based in Mallaig and one in Arisaig.

13. Services

The village road is not adopted by Highland Council, so repairs and maintenance have to be paid for by the Community. IRCT collects £24 per year or £2 per month from each adult to go towards the cost of road maintenance, and SNH contributes a percentage of the total cost to reflect their operational use on the Reserve and for the Hostel.

The water supply on Rum is also owned and maintained by IRCT. The water intake dam is the same one used for the Hydro scheme, at the top of the Coire Dubh path. The water has a little chlorine added to it and is tested several times a week. There is a water service charge of £6.25 a month to each domestic property; IRCT tenants pay an extra £6.25 a month which goes toward regular emptying of septic tanks. Businesses and higher-use properties pay an additional surcharge.

APPENDIX 1 – For IRCT Tenants

In general we expect IRCT tenants to make every effort to fit in to community life on Rum. Part of this includes looking after their house, their garden and the village as much as is possible. We would hope that tenants feel willing and able to play an active part in the running of community institutions and events. It is essential for a thriving community that the great majority of residents contribute in this way in any way they can throughout the year.

It is, of course, also essential for the smoothing running of the village that tenants pay their bills timely and in full. This is true for rent but also for any other charges or regular fees. Electric, water, sewage, roads and other charges are historically very low compared to the mainland. These are currently under review by the Trust and likely to rise to a level more commensurate with the costly maintenance of these off-grid systems.

Schedule of communications if a tenant falls into rent arrears:

Rent 14 Days Overdue:

When a tenant of Isle of Rum Community Trust has failed to make a rental payment 14 days after the due date (usually the first day of the month) then the administrator will send them a simple reminder, detailing the amount outstanding and the date on which it should have been paid.

Rent 21 Days Overdue:

IRCT recognises the inherent danger associated with tenants falling into arrears, and the difficulties an individual can face if they fall a full month behind. Therefore 1 week after the initial reminder, a second will be issued again detailing the amount due, and offering support should there be a problem. This support will usually entail a meeting with the Development Officer and a nominated Director to discuss the situation and arrange a payment plan.

Rent 1 Month in Arrears (therefore two months owing):

If a tenant falls a full month behind then the administrator will inform the board of directors and a warning letter will be sent advising the tenant that they are in breach of their tenancy agreement and risk action being taken against them should the situation not be resolved. Support will once again be offered in order to arrange a payment plan if necessary.

Rent 2 Months in Arrears (3 months owing):

In the unlikely event that action has not been taken to resolve such a problem by this stage, then a final notice will be sent to the tenant informing them that their case has now been passed to the board of directors who will consider instigating legal action to recover outstanding amounts and/or consider evicting the tenant should the arrears not be paid in full immediately.

As agreed at IRCT Board Meeting 2nd of June 2010