

Scottish Natural Heritage  
The Isle of Rum Community Trust

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# **Isle of Rum**

## **Visitor Management Plan**

Final report – 23 May 2011



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## I Introduction

This visitor management plan was commissioned jointly by the Isle of Rum Community Trust (IRCT) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). Its intention is to provide a framework for creating memorable visitor experiences and for interpreting Rum's heritage resources, whilst helping to conserve and enhance those resources for current and future generations.

We have developed the plan through extensive consultation with SNH and with the Rum community, involving extended site visits during which we met most members of the community and carried out individual site appraisals throughout the island. We have also consulted with off-island stakeholders and drawn on previous development plans and other relevant documents, although we have carried out no primary research.

The plan considers the needs and aspirations of three principal constituent bodies – Scottish Natural Heritage (as the majority landowner, principal employer and National Nature Reserve manager), the Rum resident community and Rum's visitors. The plan attempts to draw these diverse requirements together into a coherent set of principles and proposals that build upon common interest and benefit.

The plan identifies key projects and the individual actions required if Rum is to achieve its potential as a high quality destination for visitors. It makes an initial attempt at setting priorities and suggesting broadly appropriate budget allocations. The plan also suggests the organisation that would be most appropriate to lead their development, although the vast majority should be run as joint initiatives.

This plan should not be treated as a document fixed for all time. Instead, it should be seen as a working tool that provides a foundation for an evolving understanding of visitor management on Rum that must respond to changes in the needs of SNH and the Rum community, along with wider political, social, economic and environmental factors. It is likely that this plan will require significant updating within five years, bearing in mind the political and economic changes facing the country, and the early stage at which Rum is at in developing an independent sustainable community.

## 2 Island characteristics

Rum is a distinctive feature in the seascape west of Mallaig, with a particularly rich range of both natural and cultural heritage interest. Its geology is spectacular, even to a non-specialist, from volcanic mountains to the raised beaches that are obvious along much of the coast. The island is dominated by the peaks of the Rum Cuillin, a dramatic group of mountains which, although it does not include any Munros, offers some of the most challenging hill walking in Scotland. There is a wide range of habitats, many of them internationally important, including different types

of heath, grassland affected by mineral flushes, bogs, lochs and scree slopes. There is little natural woodland, although small areas have been replanted in an attempt to restore some tree cover and there are some attractive policy woodlands around the village.

Land animal species are less diverse than on the mainland, but there are impressive herds of red deer and a wide range of breeding birds, including a large colony of Manx shearwater on the slopes of Hallival. White-tailed sea eagles were re-introduced in a successful programme some years ago; the birds have since colonised neighbouring islands and continue to breed on Rum.

The island's natural history has been intensively studied, making Rum world famous as a centre for ecological research. The red deer research programme is the longest-running study of large land animals anywhere in the world; other important research programmes look at birds and vegetation.

Rum has a long human history. Archaeological excavations have uncovered the remains of some of the earliest human activity in Scotland; there are also signs of Bronze and Iron Age settlement. Evidence for these prehistoric periods is not easy for non-specialists to find on the ground, but there are dramatic remains of later times. At Harris, the extent of the cultivation strips known as lazybeds is a potent sign of the size of the community that once lived on the island. After Rum's tenants were evicted to make way for sheep, shepherds were brought in from neighbouring islands to tend the flocks. There are substantial ruins of blackhouses from this time, as well as a poignant graveyard at Kilmory. The most noticeable historic monument on the island is Kinloch Castle, built as a holiday retreat in 1897 by the Bullough family, cotton industry magnates, but largely abandoned, together with most of its Edwardian furniture and fittings, shortly after the First World War.

Until the 1800s, the main settlements were at Harris on the west coast and Kilmory in the north. Now a permanent community of around 40 people lives at Kinloch, on the east coast, with a small number of red deer researchers staying seasonally at Kilmory.

In 1957 the entire island was sold to the Nature Conservancy, with the exception of the Bullough family's mausoleum at Harris. The Conservancy and its successor bodies, most recently SNH, owned and managed the island until 2009. Since then around 100 hectares of land and a number of houses and other buildings, mainly in and around Kinloch village, have been transferred to the IRCT. The trust was set up in 2007 and aims to increase the island's population through attracting people to live and work on Rum. Included in the land transfer were three blocks of land designated as crofts: the trust is currently looking for tenants for these.

## 2.1 Island context

Rum is the largest of the Small Isles group, which also includes Eigg, Muck and Canna. The islands are a well-established feature of tourist journeys on Scotland's west coast, although they are less well-known and less visited than their larger neighbour, Skye. The variety of landscapes and character among the Small Isles makes them particularly intriguing, with Rum by far the 'wildest' and least developed.

Through the Small Isles Community Council, the Small Isles as a group are considering possible joint marketing and information projects that might help to raise the profile of the group and encourage a sense of links between them, so that they appear more connected as a destination.

Rum's red deer herds were given UK-wide exposure when they featured on the BBC's *Autumnwatch* series.

## 2.2 Visitor interest & use

Rum's varied characteristics attract a similarly wide range of visitors. Experienced hillwalkers come to walk the Cuillin hills; birdwatchers to see the Manx shearwaters and sea eagles; others to see the red deer, particularly during the rut. All of these groups will tend to stay overnight. Day visitors may arrive on the CalMac ferry, with one of the private boat trip operators or on the cruise ships that occasionally anchor off Kinloch. Most day visitors will visit the castle for one of the guided tours, then spend the rest of their limited time on the island exploring Kinloch village and the shoreline between the village and the ferry terminal.

Anyone wanting to explore the island's interior, including the hillwalkers and wildlife enthusiasts, needs to stay overnight because of the distances involved in exploring the island and the short times ashore afforded by all boat timetables. In the past, accommodation on the island included a campsite, hostel accommodation in the castle and guest houses run by island residents. For a short period an attempt was also made to offer luxury hotel accommodation in the castle, but this business was unsustainable. A gradual loss of housing stock through fires and changes in building use means that the castle hostel, the campsite and two remote mountain bothies are now the only accommodation options. During the 1980s it was not uncommon for 120 visitors to stay over a weekend: current indoor capacity for visitors is barely a half of this figure. More details about visitors, their characteristics and the implications of their need for accommodation compared with what is available are discussed in following sections.

Although Rum is well known as a fascinating and impressive place, it has also suffered from an unfortunate reputation as the 'forbidden island'. This description was probably coined by a journalist looking for a catchy headline, and is rooted in its past as rich man's private playground. It may

also reflect past management of the NNR, which did not always encourage visitors. Although Rum is now as open to access as anywhere in Scotland, its association with the name ‘forbidden island’ persists: it is quite possible that present day newspaper features will still use the tired cliché. Combined with the challenge of planning a visit to coincide with ferry sailings, it is possible that some potential visitors will think it is difficult or even impossible to visit, let alone to stay overnight.

## 2.3 Sensitivities

In general there are few conservation sensitivities associated with visits to Rum. The habitats are robust, and especially given the relatively low number of visitors there is little risk of them causing damage to the environment.

There are some places where breeding birds are vulnerable to disturbance in the nesting season, especially by any dogs running free. Information on the exact sites of eagles and other raptors’ nests is obviously sensitive, although anyone intent on stealing eggs will probably have enough knowledge of the birds to find nests for themselves.

The shearwater nesting grounds on Hallival are also surprisingly robust. They are high enough for most casual visitors not to reach them, and experience shows that carefully managed visits to see the site at night, when the birds are present, do not pose a threat. Such visits should, however, be restricted to no more than two a week, should always be accompanied by a knowledgeable guide, and should restrict the use of bright lights.

The deer in the research area seem remarkably unaffected by human presence and will allow people to approach far closer than deer anywhere else in Scotland, probably because they have had several generations without any threat of hunting. Although this makes watching them a particularly rewarding experience, it is possible for visitors to change the deer’s behaviour or to drive them away from a particular area so that research work is disrupted.

## 3 Visitor profile

### 3.1 Introduction

Visitors arrive on Rum by a wide variety of means including the scheduled sailings of the Caledonian MacBrayne ferry, excursion boats such as the Sheerwater and various ridged inflatable boats (RIBs), private yachts and cruise ships.

However they arrive, Rum’s visitors are characterised by a major division between day visitors and those who stay overnight: in general the two

groups have very different expectations, levels of preparation and time budgets. They tend to pursue different activities and have very different patterns of movement during their stay.

Day visitors are usually focussed on visiting the castle; depending on the ferry schedule they may have no time to do anything else. There is however a good opportunity while they are at the castle to 'sell on' the potential of a longer trip and encourage them to return. If they do have time for other activities then a visit to the tearoom or a visitor centre, browsing in shops and generally pottering round Kinloch village will be the most popular choices. A short, clearly-marked walk that would take them beyond the village would be next in line: the North Side, South Side and proposed Corrie Dubh Trails are therefore important resources. The South Side Trail will also get some use as a 'time filler' by people with time to spare before the ferry leaves.

Their short stay on the island may distort day visitors' perceptions of the place. In particular, they may have difficulty recognising the island as a living, working community: it may appear that the whole place is 'an attraction'. They are also unlikely to be able to connect strongly with the wilder aspects of Rum's natural heritage.

The profile of overnight visitors changes with the seasons. From April to June, visitors tend to be 'task focussed', with clear aims to go hill walking and wildlife watching. From July to September, they tend to be more interested in general holiday making and sightseeing. Many visitors during the summer will be on tours of the Small Isles and perhaps other Hebridean islands, so Rum is a stop on an 'island collecting' trip. This means they will inevitably make some comparisons between their experiences on Rum and other islands.

All overnight visitors would appreciate having options for activities indoors or at low level during bad weather. Task-focussed visitors may be more knowledgeable, at least about particular aspects of the island, and so appreciate more in-depth interpretation. All overnights will have relatively ample time to spend, which will also allow them to explore subjects in more depth.

Holiday-makers would appreciate being able to get to some of the island's most spectacular sites (Harris and Kilmory) on clear, easy to follow routes, but many are likely to find the long return walks monotonous and perhaps challenging, especially to Harris. Opportunities for easier access, perhaps by mountain bike or vehicle, would make these trips significantly more accessible and attractive.

## 3.2 Visitor survey results

Results from the 2010 visitor survey suggest that a major motivation for all visitors is the chance to enjoy Rum's natural features. This is somewhat at

odds with the actual experience of most day visitors, who visit the castle and usually see little else except the immediate surroundings of Kinloch village. If day visitors could be given at least some impression of the dramatic scenery of the interior and of the island's wildlife value, this should make their visit more satisfying as well as encouraging them to consider a return visit with more time.

The survey also suggests that a high proportion of visitors are aware that Rum is a National Nature Reserve. We consider this finding should be treated with some caution, especially since the survey also suggests that many people do little research to prepare for their visit, having 'always known' about the island or heard about it from friends and relatives. At the very least, we suggest that most visitors will have little knowledge of why Rum is a National Nature Reserve or of the significant research work carried out there.

The survey confirms that day visitors do not venture beyond Kinloch and, to a lesser extent, Kinloch Glen. Nearly one-third of day visitors have less than two hours to spend on the island. Other visitor characteristics revealed by the survey include:

- Visiting parties include a lower proportion of children (11% of visitors) than at other NNRs.
- Visitors tend to be older and more affluent than the averages for the Scottish population as a whole.
- 87% of visitors come from the UK and 38% from Scotland. This may reflect the challenges of organising transport to and accommodation on the island.
- There is some dissatisfaction with the standard of facilities provided at the hostel and with the building's overall maintenance and appearance.
- Some visitors would like a longer tour of the castle, with more information.

### 3.3 Conclusions

Many of the implications of these findings are addressed in the following sections of this report. Concerning interpretation needs and opportunities, the visitor survey results suggest the following:

- The castle tour should include key messages about the National Nature Reserve as well as about the castle itself, so that all day visitors appreciate the importance of the island's natural heritage.
- The castle tour should also include references to the island's natural features, carefully integrated with the tour content, and encourage visitors to consider a longer trip next time if they would like to get a fuller experience of the island.

- The castle tour could be rather longer than at present. Tour guides should be well briefed about the building's history.
- The North Side, South Side and proposed Corrie Dubh Trails offer opportunities for day visitors to have a limited experience of the island's natural environment, and an enjoyable experience in bad weather for those staying overnight. Both trails should be attractive, well-maintained, easy to follow routes.
- A visitor centre can play an important role for both day visitors and over-nighters. It should offer easily accessible content for visitors with limited time as well as more in-depth material suitable for browsing by overnight and special interest visitors.
- Installations or decorations in the tearoom, which will probably be the first port of call for most day visitors after their castle tour, could reflect the character of the island's community. This would give day visitors an impression of life on the island that they might otherwise miss.
- Wet weather options need to be developed, particularly for general interest holidaymakers.

## 4 Visitor experience

### 4.1 Introduction

This section reviews the 'journey' people take on a visit to the island, from the information they receive before their visit and their initial arrival at the pier, through the experience of using the paths, hostel, tearoom and other facilities, to the memories they take home with them. It makes recommendations for future actions to improve the quality of the overall visitor experience and the individual elements that make it up.

Rum already provides some very high quality experiences for its visitors. For example, walking in the Rum Cuillin and staying at the Guirdil or Dibidil bothies is on a par with the best wild-land experiences that Scotland has to offer experienced hill walkers.

Other aspects of the island have the potential to provide equally high quality visitor experiences but require some modification in order to achieve their full potential. For example, Kinloch Castle can transport visitors back to a time of unimaginable grandeur and extreme decadence for some people, but key rooms such as the Bullough's bedrooms and bathroom need to be reinstated to the tour. Looking over the long-deserted settlement of Harris or exploring the graveyard at Kilmory can bring us face-to-face with the vagaries of island life for its ordinary inhabitants if appropriate interpretation is provided.

Visitor expectations rise inexorably over the years, leading to a surprising number of the island's visitor facilities and attractions requiring major interventions to bring them up to the standards required by today's visitors. The key experiences of island arrival and departure are spoilt by the ferry terminal's low quality industrial appearance and lack of adequate facilities. Accommodation for visitors lacks variety and the existing options are second or third rate in some respects. Many paths and tracks are in very poor condition, making it difficult for people to access some of the island's most spectacular attractions. Core visitor facilities such as toilets, visitor centre, shop and tea-room are very basic and their availability is unreliable in some cases.

These issues, along with the others described below, currently detract significantly from the visitors' experience of Rum, hence reducing the potential benefits that might be gained by visitors, residents and SNH. Resolving these issues will greatly improve the quality of the visitors' experience and connect them more deeply with the island, hence increasing the number of people coming and/or extending the length of their stay. Ultimately, the proposed interventions will help engage visitors more fully with the island's heritage and sustain the resident community both socially and economically.

Achieving the desired improvements will present significant challenges and may take some time, bearing in mind the modest capacity of Rum's small resident community and the current constraints on public spending. However, with public access and education being a core part of SNH's remit, and with tourism being key to the island's existence as an independent community, achieving them is vital to Rum's future.

## 4.2 Vision for visitors

In a country blessed with many special places, Rum stands out as being more remarkable than most. The drama of the island's landscapes are recognised by its inclusion in the Small Isles National Scenic Area. The international importance of its natural heritage is demonstrated by a host of designations, including National Nature Reserve, Special Protection Area for Birds and Site of Special Scientific Interest. Rum's human history stretches back 9,000 years, although it was the Edwardians who left their mark most memorably in the form of lavish buildings and modern conveniences for which no expense was spared.

These things combine to provide Rum with a unique offering for visitors and the underlying potential to become a world-class destination. Gaining meaningful insights into Rum's remarkable landscapes and nature, and into island life past and present would provide a fascinating and highly memorable experience for many people. Doing this within an environment of generous hospitality where the comfort of the visitor and the quality of

their overall visitor experience is paramount would turn this into a genuinely world-class experience.

On a practical level, the goals described below set out a vision for how visitors should engage with the island in the future, along with aspirations for the characteristics of their visit. These can be used as a bench-mark against which to test any proposals for future work.

- Overall, Rum is widely regarded as one of Scotland's top sites for landscape and wildlife. Anyone taking a trip to Rum is guaranteed a wonderful and highly memorable experience, that lingers in the mind for months and years after. People see Rum as a unique and remarkable place that they feel privileged to be able visit.
- The experience of the National Nature Reserve enhances perceptions of NNRs as valuable and enjoyable places, and establishes Rum NNR as an important place for nature and one worthy of conserving. The visit makes people think about the landscapes and wildlife, and of their own relationship with them and the wider environment.
- Promotional information that portrays the reserve as an impressive, attractive and interesting place, and that allows people to match its attractions and facilities to their interests and abilities, is available in appropriate local outlets and online. Having made the decision to visit Rum, booking travel and accommodation, and getting answers to any remaining questions is an easy and pleasurable experience for visitors. People have a seamless experience and receive the same information whether they are dealing with SNH or IRCT.
- Most visitors use the ferry terminal as their arrival point and the start of their island experience. The pier head is visually attractive, commensurate with it being a working area as well as a visitor arrival point to a special place. On arrival, all visitors feel a sense of anticipation and welcome, and can easily find the facilities they need, discover what there is to see and do, orientate themselves to the island and set out confidently on their chosen route. Most visitors are welcomed personally to the island.
- Overnight visitors have a selection of accommodation to choose from, ranging from tents and cabins, through hostel accommodation and B&Bs, to luxury guest houses and eco-cabins. All accommodation is of a high physical standard for its type and visitors are treated to warm and generous hospitality.
- All visitors are able to access the facilities they require, including toilets, shop, tea-room and public bar. These facilities are reliably open at set times that, in the case of the shop and tea-room, coincide with the period that day-visitors are on the island. People staffing these

facilities consider themselves to be island ambassadors with a key role in providing visitors with a warm welcome and memorable experiences.

- All visitors are able to access the majority of attractions that interest them. Most visitors do this by walking, cycling or being driven along well maintained paths and roads, including the South Side Trail, the North Side trail, the Harris road and the Kilmory road. Visitors who cannot access the island's key attractions in person are able to gain meaningful insights into them through carefully crafted exhibits.
- A general overview of the island's cultural and natural heritage is presented in a permanent exhibition featuring high quality, engaging exhibits. These insightfully interpret the island's history and special qualities, help to create a strong connection between it and the visitor, provide enjoyable activities for adults and children, and are used extensively by interpreters as props in conversations with visitors.
- Environmental interpretation is provided along four main visitor routes: the South Side Trail, the North Side trail, the Harris road and the Kilmory road. Along with the castle tour and the visitor centre, these are presented as the 'big six' attractions for non-specialist visitors. The promoted routes are furnished with waymarkers and other direction signs necessary to make them easy to follow by visitors who do not have a map. The mountains, hill paths and remote bothies are left uninterpreted and available for confident visitors whose aim is to escape from people and infrastructure.
- Adequate time is dedicated to interpretation and visitor-related work, with SNH staff, contractors or volunteers available to meet and talk to visitors every day during the peak summer season.
- Visitors do not damage the NNR's natural heritage by their presence. Throughout the reserve, all signs, interpretation and publications conform to the NNR brand and signs guidelines.

### 4.3 Overarching issues

There are a number of overarching issues that profoundly affect Rum's ability to develop its visitor offering, provide quality visitor experiences and increase revenue from visitors – all things the island must do if it is to broaden its economic base and sustain a more independent community. These are challenging and interconnected problems, the resolution of which will require concerted effort by community and agencies for many years to come.

Failure to address these overarching issues will severely compromise Rum's ability to attract and profit from visitors who, apart from SNH, provide the main source of income for the island. We believe that these issues are so fundamental that the success of an independent self-sustaining community

on Rum depends on finding satisfactory solutions to them. We have outlined some of these issues below, although it is outwith the scope of this study to develop comprehensive solutions for them.

### **4.3.1 Resident accommodation**

There is currently an acute shortage of accommodation for the people who live and work on Rum. This presents a major structural problem for the island, as Rum must increase its population significantly if it is to develop a stable and sustainable community. A larger, more diverse population would increase the community's capacity, bringing an investment of time, enthusiasm and capital, new skills and experience, fresh ideas and perspectives, and potentially children for the school.

The housing shortage also limits the options for filling any job opportunities on the island. Although someone from the mainland might be the best candidate, with the most appropriate skills and experience, the lack of housing means they are unable to consider the post. Vacancies are filled largely from within the existing small population and it is likely that this sometimes causes a mismatch between the job and the person. This can result both in the job not being carried out adequately and in the person being unhappy and unfulfilled in their work.

A more diverse community is important not just for the long term sustainability of the population, but could also help significantly in improving the range and quality of the island's visitor facilities and services. This would in turn improve visitors' experience and help generate additional income from them. Rectifying this situation will require new resident accommodation to be constructed, along with any upgrading of services such as the electricity supply that population growth will demand.

### **4.3.2 Visitor accommodation**

Experienced hill walkers are relatively well catered for in terms of accommodation, having two mountain bothies and almost unlimited wild camping opportunities. However, the majority of Rum's visitors have a limited range of accommodation options – they can pitch their tent on the campsite or stay at the hostel on a self-catering or full-board basis.

The campsite facilities have improved significantly in recent years, but the waterlogged ground and midges mean that it is still a fairly hard-core option that will be attractive to a very small proportion of Rum's visitors. The hostel is housed in an impressive and high status building, although the standard of accommodation is very basic. Whilst the hostel and bunk-house accommodation sector has moved on in recent years and now offers high quality, almost hotel-like facilities, Rum's hostel provides a standard of accommodation that would have been more typical a decade ago.

Rum's existing visitor accommodation may still be attractive to a certain low-value sector of its potential audience, but it is likely to put off higher-value visitors from coming to the island, or be a significant disappointment to them if they do come. Rum's future tourism growth is likely to involve attracting more higher value visitors who require much better accommodation than currently exists.

Rum is an unusual place that attracts visitors precisely because of its distinctive history and character. Consequently, visitors are likely to respond well to accommodation that is uniquely Rum flavoured. The island's accommodation does not have to be traditional but it must be of appropriate quality to attract high-value visitors. A primary objective for all accommodation should be to provide positive and memorable experiences that could not have been obtained anywhere else. Suitable facilities might include:

- Wooden 'camping cabins' located on the camp-site to provide basic accommodation that is one-step up from a tent. These might appeal to families and those on a low income amongst others.
- Hostel accommodation providing modern standards of clean and comfortable facilities with good food and service.
- Guest houses providing clean and comfortable private accommodation with great food and attention to detail. These must be run by people who are enthusiastic about Rum, who are warm and welcoming and have a passion for looking after visitors and creating a home-from-home for them.
- Wooden 'eco-lodges' providing stunning architect-designed well-appointed low-impact self-catering accommodation. The lodges would have fantastic views over Loch Scresort and would be marketed to design-conscious people who care about the environment.

Overall, Rum's visitor accommodation needs major increases in both quality and variety if it is to attract the higher-value visitors required to generate significant tourism revenue. It will also be highly beneficial if the majority of new accommodation is developed by the on-island private sector (either existing or new residents), so that income can be retained and reinvested within the local community.

### 4.3.3 Village centre

In the days when Rum was owned by a single family, the focus of attention was on Kinloch Castle. The castle lost its central role in village life many years ago, but until recently this had not been replaced by any substantial centre of gravity for residents and visitors. Kinloch's facilities have long been dispersed, with village life revolving around the shop, wherever it was located at the time. In recent years, facilities have coalesced around the village hall which currently houses the public toilets, shop, post office and

tearoom, although some of these are here on a temporary basis. The other important community facility, the bar, is located in the nearby castle.

The arrangement of physical space has a profound effect on the confidence and actions of visitors, and on the structure and health of a community. Having a central focus for village life can be one of the most important aspects of this. A village centre provides a common social realm for local people where planned and spontaneous interactions help maintain the community as a vibrant and coherent unit. A village centre also forms a secure base for island exploration by visitors, who know that they can return here for their basic needs such as toilets, refreshments, provisions and information, along with valuable opportunities to meet and interact with local people.

Rum's visitor centre is currently located near the campsite, and there have been proposals to move it to the ferry terminal. There have also been proposals to move the shop and tearoom to a new building near the old pier. Should these plans go ahead, the island's key community and visitor facilities would be dispersed along a kilometre stretch of the bay from the ferry terminal to the castle, ruling out for many years to come the possibility of establishing a permanent village centre.

We believe that creating a single vibrant hub to Kinloch village might serve the needs of local people and visitors better than returning to a pattern of linear development. In the absence of an up-to-date village development plan, we recommend that, before considering any significant new outlying developments, serious consideration should be given to permanently locating key village facilities such as toilets, shop, post office, tearoom, information centre and possibly the bar near to the village hall, to cement the role of this area as the beating heart of the village.

One possible issue with this proposal is the distance visitors will have to walk from the ferry terminal to the island's new centre of attraction. We do not consider this to be a significant problem, as the vast majority of people will in any case visit the nearby castle. However, basic arrival facilities such as toilets and orientation information will have to be provided at the ferry terminal, as will adequate provision for people who find it difficult to walk to the village centre.

In practical terms, an opportunity may exist to relocate core village facilities from their temporary home in the village hall to a more permanent location within the village centre. The Byres is a farm steading located adjacent to the village hall that is currently owned by SNH and used for estate management operations such as storing equipment, feed and tackle. The old buildings are far from ideal for this purpose, which would be better served by a modern low-maintenance agricultural structure located in the area behind the byres. Should this new agricultural facility be constructed, consideration should also be given to relocating the

woodworking workshop from its existing antiquated and maintenance intensive building to a new-build workshop in the same location.

The features that render the Byres less than ideal for modern agricultural use make it ripe for conversion into a community and visitor complex containing toilets, shop, post office, tearoom, information centre, bar and possibly even a hostel. The picturesque pitched slate roofs, stone construction, original features and communal courtyard would provide a characterful setting for social and leisure activities.

#### **4.3.4 Kinloch Castle & hostel**

Kinloch Castle is a central feature of Rum's unique character and sense of place, and is currently the island's most important visitor attraction. Its structure, contents and stories can provide a memorable experience for visitors and one which is highly marketable. The castle is accessible to a greater number of people than Rum's natural heritage features and spectacles, many of which are remote and only occur at certain times of the year. Whilst a few visitors come to Rum purely for its natural heritage, the castle forms a major part of the island's attraction for most people.

The hostel, housed in the castle's service areas, currently provides the island's only accommodation for the vast majority of Rum's overnight visitors, who are not experienced hill walkers or die-hard campers. Visitor accommodation is important on Rum as the best of its natural heritage is remote, without easy access routes. Visitors who are interested in natural heritage must stay at least one or two nights to fully appreciate it.

As things stand, it seems likely that loss of either of these facilities would reduce Rum's overall attraction as a visitor destination. This would have a significant impact on the number of people coming to the island and the average length of stay, and hence the potential overall tourism revenue that might be generated by the community.

Kinloch Castle is a large, old building that requires constant maintenance and is now in need of an extensive and very expensive overhaul of its fabric and services. Without this, there may come a point when significant portions of the main living areas and/or the visitor accommodation become unfit for public use due to health and safety issues.

SNH is carrying out a strategic review of its property on Rum, the outcome of which will affect the future of Kinloch Castle and hostel. Although the results of this have not yet been announced, we understand that it is unlikely that SNH can continue to run the hostel for more than a few years, although it is currently committed to keeping the Castle open for tours.

A very high priority for the community should be to develop alternative accommodation to replace the hostel when it comes out of service. Although potentially challenging in terms of the funding required, this represents a real opportunity for whole island economic growth and for

individual business development that should result in increased income for Rum's community.

#### **4.3.5 Quality experiences**

Today's visitors are seeking unique, authentic and memorable experiences that they could not gain elsewhere. In this way, Rum is competing for attention with the likes of Edinburgh's Old Town and Orkney's Neolithic remains. Rum has the potential to provide these desirable high-value experiences at Kinloch Castle, the Rum Cuillin, the shearwater nest sites on Hallival and the red deer rut at Kilmory. In particular, Hallival and Kilmory provide opportunities to experience wildlife spectacles that rank alongside the best that the country has to offer.

Some of these potentially high-value visitor experiences are currently chronically under-valued and under-utilised as tourism resources. For example, an opportunity may exist for Rum to market shearwater treks and deer rut watches, similar to the way in which capercaillie and badger watching is offered on the mainland. Packages including guided activities, accommodation and transport would make it easier for visitors to book. The value of the experiences could be enhanced through careful design – in the case of the rut this might be done by providing a high quality hide structure and a deer expert as a guide.

Visitors also expect high quality visitor facilities, although these need not necessarily be luxurious or expensive. Accommodation, food and service are all part of the overall experience, so it is vital that they are of good standard. These facilities should not be identical to those in other places, but should instead enhance Rum's distinctive offering and unique sense of place. Quality, originality, authenticity and integrity should be watchwords in the planning and development of all visitor facilities and services.

The quality of many of Rum's existing visitor facilities and services is rather poor and this situation will have to change if satisfaction levels and income from visitors is to be increased. From the ferry terminal environment and the island's roads to the hostel accommodation and the irregular shop opening hours, a great many improvements are needed. Rum will have to become more knowledgeable about tourism and more responsive to the expectations of visitors if it is to succeed in raising tourist income from its current low level.

#### **4.3.6 Community capacity**

28 adults currently live and work on Rum. This small population cannot reliably supply enough children to ensure that the nursery and primary school remain viable. It does not provide the diverse social and economic mix needed to guarantee a vibrant community, nor does it create a suitably large or diverse economy to support a range of independent businesses or the talent-pool necessary to develop and run them. It seems likely that

Rum's population will have to double or even triple if the community is to become independent, stable and sustainable over the long term. This change cannot be achieved overnight, but might be possible through incremental development of accommodation and employment opportunities over 10 or 20 years.

Rum's economy is currently based almost exclusively around SNH's activities in connection with the National Nature Reserve and on tourism related to Kinloch Castle and the natural heritage. This narrow economic base leaves the island vulnerable to changes in government policy on nature conservation and to changeable trends in tourism. It is clear that widening Rum's economic base is highly desirable in order to increase the security and stability of the community.

Opportunities for developing new businesses are narrower than they would be on the mainland. Rum's small resident population provides a tiny local market for products and services. The transportation overheads (time, flexibility and cost) associated with importing raw materials and exporting finished physical products make it more difficult to compete in this area, although marketing niche, high quality, Rum-branded products may help counteract this. Providing off-island services that rely on meetings, visits or other forms of physical presence will also be challenging, although other services such as specialist advice, computer programming, distributed call-centre work, etc, may be possible if communications are improved.

Due to its small size and consequent lack of diversity, Rum's community currently lacks the wide range of business abilities, skills and experience that will be important for building a strong island economy that is less dependent on government agencies. Gaining appropriate skills and experience within the existing community might be accelerated in the short term through some government support for capacity building in the form of skills training, mentoring and learning journeys. Short-term support for specialist business advice in the areas of customer care, product design and marketing may also be helpful. In addition to developing the business skills of existing community members, it will be vital that new people join the community bringing different abilities and experience gained elsewhere.

Key factors in communities being able to develop and sustain prosperity include adequate physical capital (water, power, internet, roads, land, etc), human capital (healthy, skilled, enthusiastic, enterprising people), social capital (support networks, shared decision-making, civic participation, etc) and environmental quality (clean water, inspirational landscape, abundant wildlife, etc). Sustainability calls for a holistic approach to developing communities that, in addition to focussing on jobs and wealth, uses the talents of residents, builds leadership and civic participation, and conserves and improves local amenities and natural surroundings.

Overall, achieving a sustainable community requires us to consider physical, human, social, and environmental issues when planning future developments. Things that can contribute to building a sustainable community on multiple levels include skills training, enterprise support, availability of development land, information and communications systems, and social and community spaces.

The following are some projects that might contribute to expanding Rum's population and widening its economic base:

- Build new accommodation for residents.
- Develop new accommodation for visitors.
- Increase the capacity and reliability of the energy supply.
- Install a fast broadband internet connection to all buildings.
- Provide a package of support for businesses, including an experienced business mentor to work with islanders on business development, subsidised training in business skills, sector-specific learning journeys to learn from good practice in other places, and subsidised business advice in specialist areas such as customer care, product design and marketing.
- Provide a package of support for individuals, including advice, education and training.

### **Actions**

- Pursue the existing key priority of developing new housing for existing and future island residents.
- Pursue the existing key priority of developing a variety of accommodation options for visitors.
- Consider permanently locating key visitor and resident facilities near the village hall to create a vibrant village centre.
- Consider converting the Byres farm steading into a home for key visitor and resident facilities.
- Pursue the existing key priority of identifying a sustainable long-term future for the castle.
- Establish a key priority to develop Rum's natural and cultural heritage attractions into memorable experiences for visitors.
- Establish a key priority to develop Rum's visitor facilities and services into high quality experiences for visitors.
- Pursue the existing key priority to build capacity for private enterprise within the community and to attract new residents with enterprise skills.

- Pursue the existing key priorities to bring a more reliable electricity supply and fast broadband to the island.

## 5 Interpretation

### 5.1 Introduction

Interpretation is concerned with how visitors come to understand and appreciate the places they visit. Strictly speaking, it concentrates on what happens during the actual visit, and so is closely connected with the physical experience of a place: the ideas and perceptions that visitors take away with them may be influenced just as much by the range and quality of facilities such as trail routes and physical infrastructure as by exhibitions and guided tours. In practice, planning interpretation for a site also needs to consider the ideas and expectations visitors form before their visit as well as how those ideas can be extended and shared afterwards.

Interpretation is often concerned with offering visitors new knowledge and ideas, but it is more than a simple transmission of facts. Good interpretation should help visitors appreciate why a place is special. It should also help them form personal connections, so the place and their experience of it becomes valuable and meaningful to them.

The most effective and flexible medium for interpretation is usually personal contact, either in a formal setting like a guided walk or in casual conversations that give the interpreter a chance to widen visitors' understanding and offer them new ways of experiencing a place. Other traditional interpretation media include panels, indoor exhibitions and publications. Over the last decade, interventions such as site-specific artwork have also made substantial contributions to interpretation. They may not communicate factual information, but they can be powerful and subtle tools to establish a sense of place and to suggest a more emotional response to it.

### 5.2 Interpretation aims

Interpretation is a particular form of communication. It is important to define the aims of any communication work, since these will shape the content and media used. On Rum, interpretation and wider visitor communications should:

- Promote an impression of Rum as a welcoming place, countering any lingering image of a 'Forbidden Island'.
- Ensure most visitors know that most of the island is a National Nature Reserve.

- Encourage visitors to appreciate the reserve’s special qualities and to value the research and conservation work done there.
- Encourage and help visitors to explore beyond the immediate attraction of the castle.
- Foster an impression of Rum as an active community that has a close, sustainable relationship to the island.

## 5.3 Interpretation themes

Based on the above aims, and on the salient qualities of the island, we propose the following overall themes for interpretation. These represent the key ideas with which visitors should engage. They are not things visitors should learn; rather they are impressions they should take away with them.

These themes are ‘big picture’ concepts. They are general enough to be supported and illustrated by many different sites and experiences on the island, while also defining something of Rum’s unique character and identity. Individual sites and interpretation projects will often be based on more specific themes, but nearly all of them will have links to one or more of these overall ideas.

Themes 1 and 2 should be seen as key ideas: all visitors to the island should get an impression of these. The range of other themes they engage with will depend on what they do and where they go on the island, as well as on their individual interests.

1. *Almost the whole of Rum is a National Nature Reserve. It is managed to safeguard rare wildlife and to enhance its biodiversity.*
2. *Today’s island community is a small, committed group of people who value this isolated place and who are working to develop and improve options for living here.*
3. *Rum’s geology is unique. It offers spectacular insights into what happens inside volcanoes and into how climate changes have shaped Scotland.*
4. *Scientific research projects on Rum include one of the longest-running, most in-depth studies in the world. Research work here has helped to define our understanding of iconic Scottish wildlife and of rare species.*
5. *Rum has a rich cultural history that spans over 7,000 years of human activity. People have left sometimes spectacular traces of communal effort to work the land, of cruelty and tragedy, and of a time when the whole island was a rich man’s playground.*

## 6 Projects

What follows is an outline of the key projects and the individual actions required if Rum is to achieve its potential as a high quality destination for visitors. We also suggest the organisation that would be most appropriate to lead their development, although the vast majority should be run as joint initiatives. The table at the end of the report makes an initial attempt at setting priorities and suggesting broadly appropriate budget allocations.

### 6.1 Pre-arrival

Pre-arrival visitor provision is mainly aimed at promoting a place to potential visitors and ensuring that those people who decide to visit have all of the information they need to do so easily, enjoyably and safely.

#### 6.1.1 Marketing

Rum is a fairly robust place that can accommodate relatively large numbers of people without causing significant negative impacts on the environment or the quality of the visitor experience. This is especially true if visitors are dispersed through the island on upgraded walking trails and roads using the bike hire and Land Rover tours discussed elsewhere in this report.

As such, a legitimate marketing objective might be to increase the number of people visiting the island, especially during less busy times of the year. However, marketing materials should present Rum accurately and honestly to create a desire to visit amongst those people who are most likely to appreciate and enjoy the unique experiences available. As Rum's visitor provisions improve over time, a further objective might be to increase the proportion of high-value visitors who are willing and able to pay more for higher quality facilities.

Rum's visitors can be looked at in many ways, but one of the most useful comparisons for the purposes of discussing pre-arrival information is day-visitors versus those who stay overnight.

Due to the time and effort involved in getting to Rum, it is likely that the vast majority of overnight visitors plan their visit well in advance, as opposed to making a spur-of-the-moment decision en-route between other destinations. Consequently, there seems little merit in targeting traditional, locally-stocked marketing leaflets at these people. The rise in use of the internet for holiday planning means that it will be more effective to address this audience using websites. These will include the National Nature Reserve website promoting the reserve experience, along with an Isle of Rum website promoting the full Rum experience.

Day visitors are essentially treating Rum as a visitor attraction. Setting aside large cruise ships, the vast majority of day visitors are likely to be holidaymakers based in Lochaber or touring Scotland's west coast. Day

visitors are able to make a decision to visit Rum at relatively short notice, so marketing this opportunity to holidaymakers whilst en-route in addition to during their holiday planning phase may be effective. The primary communication media for day visitors are likely to be websites for pre-planning and leaflets in Visitor Information Centres and local accommodation to encourage opportunistic visits.

CalMac already promotes the Small Isles as a visitor destination, and other boat operators promote Rum as part of day excursions, with both having existing marketing materials. Working closely with CalMac and other boat operators to enhance Rum's attraction for day visitors and to market ferry trips and cruises more effectively should be a high priority. For example, the CalMac website does not currently promote Rum to the same extent that it does many other Scottish islands and this should be rectified.

SNH might produce a separate National Nature Reserve marketing leaflet aimed at day visitors. However, people cannot currently access the reserve in a meaningful way during a day visit, making this option seem poor value for money, at least until reserve access is significantly improved. In the mean time, it seems likely that the reserve can be promoted effectively as part of a whole island leaflet commissioned jointly with the Trust. Kinloch Castle might also be treated as a separate attraction with its own leaflet if resources allow, although this should be seen as a much lower priority as the Castle will feature heavily in whole island marketing materials.

An interesting opportunity may also exist to work with neighbouring islands to produce marketing materials for the Small Isles as a whole. We recommend that Rum considers working collaboratively with Eigg, Muck and Canna to market the Small Isles as a single destination for visitors. In addition, the islands might work more closely with providers of accommodation and other visitor services in Mallaig and Arisaig, the two mainland setting-off points. Any marketing of the Small Isles should be seen as additional to marketing Rum as an individual destination.

Effective marketing will become ever more important to Rum as its tourism products become more sophisticated. This plan is not intended to be a marketing study, but we suggest that a marketing strategy should be produced for Rum or for the Small Isles. In advance of this, we make the following tentative suggestions for interventions on Rum.

### **6.1.2 Websites**

#### **SNH NNR WEBSITE**

We understand that SNH intends to redevelop its website presence for National Nature Reserves and that Rum will be featured in it. Key elements in the presentation of Rum should include:

- Evocative but accurate description of the reserve’s essential character, supported by high quality images.
- Accurate descriptions of the visitor facilities, including the trails, paths, accessibility and unique challenges of visiting the reserve.
- Maps of the reserve and how to find it.
- Downloadable reserve leaflet.
- Events information and notices (updatable by reserve staff).
- Facility opening times and contact details.

Given the challenges of visiting the island, and the remoteness of its key environments, it would also be worth exploring the possibility of developing more elaborate web-based content for the reserve. This could include ‘virtual visit’ material, which might allow website visitors to look at panoramic views of particular sites, watch video footage of nesting birds, deer rutting and commentary from reserve staff, and listen to audio recordings. Developing this range of content would require an investment of time and capital, but it should help considerably both to raise interest and motivation for making a ‘real life’ visit, and to provide access to the reserve for those who cannot make a physical visit.

### IRCT WEBSITE

The existing Rum Community website is in many ways excellent, as it provides local people with information about the community, and potential visitors with insights into the island’s heritage and community life. However, we suggest that the key functions of the site as an information resource for the community and as a marketing tool to attract visitors are clarified and reinforced. We recommend that the following modifications are considered:

- Change the site’s name from ‘The Isle of Rum Community’ to ‘Isle of Rum’ and develop a distinctive title typeface or logo with a more simple, consistent, elegant and modern page design.
- Create a more powerful and immediately engaging Welcome page aimed at potential visitors and featuring an evocative description of the character of the island, supported by inspirational images. Move the existing news stories to the News pages and consider using very short summaries on the Welcome page as links to the most important visitor orientated stories.
- Divide the news stories into two pages, one titled Visitor News and the other titled Community News. The former should contain announcements relating to visitor facilities and services, whilst the latter covers items of community interest. Consider integrating events information into the main News pages and removing the Events page if

there are too few events to keep it populated. Ensure that the resources are available to maintain the news pages over time.

- Create a new section titled Community Resources or extend the Community News page to include links to reports, minutes of Community Trust meetings and other official documents.
- Rename the Shops page to Facilities or similar and add sections for the Village Hall and the Bar as separate facilities.
- Add a page titled Attractions or similar and create sections for Kinloch Castle (general description and tour details), Guided Walks, Self Guided Trails (South Side Trail, North Side Trail, Harris, Kilmory), The Rum Cuillin, Visitor Centre and Stalking. SNH to agree inclusion and content of reserve-based attractions.
- Remove the existing main menu links to Kinloch Castle, Wildlife, Rum Ponies and Rum's Past and replace them with a single link to a new Heritage page containing a short general introduction and links to separate sub-pages dealing with the above topics.
- Amalgamate the existing FAQ and Contact pages into a new Visiting Rum page containing all of the information people need to know when visiting the island, including a small location map showing the its relationship to ferry routes, major roads and mainland settlements.
- Reinstate or remove the currently non-working Gallery feature.
- In the contacts section provide a single phone number and email address for the Community Trust and another for SNH.
- Create and/or manage a strong social media presence for the Isle of Rum, including groups, pages and feeds on Flickr, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, and link to these from the website.

If closer collaborative working with Eigg, Muck and Canna is successful, we suggest that The Small Isles considers producing a single website that promotes all four islands, with each island having its own pages within this. The domains thesmallisles.com, thesmallisles.org, thesmallisles.co.uk, smallisles.org and smallisles.co.uk are currently available, and we suggest that the Small Isles Community Council registers all of these domains immediately for possible future use.

### 6.1.3 Off-island leaflets

There are no existing marketing leaflets dealing with Isle of Rum as a whole, although Rum National Nature Reserve does have a general reserve leaflet. This is not particularly effective in its role as a marketing tool, as the salient points that might persuade people to visit the reserve are lost amongst a large amount of general information about its natural heritage.

The aim of attracting more visitors to Rum would be furthered by producing a dedicated pre-arrival marketing leaflet aimed principally at potential day visitors to the island. This leaflet should let people know of the island's existence, about what they can do there so they can decide whether it is somewhere they would like to visit, and how to reach it. The objective of the leaflet would be to encourage visits from people who are likely to enjoy the experience. The leaflet should fulfil the functions of marketing and pre-visit planning and should include:

- An inspiring but honest overview of Rum's landscapes, culture and heritage, along with the experiences available to its visitors.
- Inspiring images of the notable island features that visitors are likely to encounter.
- A small location map, showing the island's relationship to the mainland, the other Small Isles, ferry routes, major roads and settlements.
- Details of how to reach Rum, where to stay, what facilities are available, when to come and what to bring.
- Important visitor management information regarding any potential hazards, accessibility restrictions and any conservation related behavioural issues.
- The NNR, SNH and Isle of Rum Community Trust logos, along with SNH's and the Community Trust's contact details.

Development of this leaflet should be led by SNH with input from the Community Trust. The leaflet should always be in stock and clearly displayed in the Mallaig Visitor Information Centre (VIC), and should be included in accommodation bedroom packs in Mallaig, Arisaig and the surrounding areas.

We recommend that SNH sets up a distribution agreement with a specialist company so that pre-arrival leaflets for all NNRs are reliably stocked at appropriate VICs and in bedroom packs. In advance of a national arrangement being put in place, Rum reserve staff or representatives of the Trust should maintain regular contact with VICs and should deliver fresh stocks of leaflets to them as necessary.

#### **6.1.4 Ferry**

The majority of Rum's visitors arrive on the CalMac ferry. Time spent onboard during the crossing provides an ideal opportunity for visitors to become better acquainted with the island and what it has to offer.

We suggest that the SNH, IRCT and the Small Isles Community Council considers approaching CalMac with a joint proposal to install a mini exhibition on the ferry. This will fulfil the functions of orientation and

interpretation – helping visitors understand the location of key attractions and facilities, and giving them an introduction to the islands' special qualities and significances. The exhibition will feature a large map and photos of the key attractions, along with descriptions of the accessibility of various features and a summary of the main stories. It will also include a leaflet dispenser for Rum Guides and other official Small Isles publications, for which a reliable restocking arrangement will be required.

## 6.1.5 Ambassadors

Personal recommendations are highly effective in attracting new visitors, especially when the person doing the recommending is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the place. To make better use of this mechanism, people involved in the tourism industry on the mainland should be invited to find out more about Rum through annual 'familiarisation visits'. These might involve an interpreter guided walk focussing on the natural and cultural heritage of the island, along with its plans for the future. Visits by local Visitor Information Centre staff would be particularly welcome, as would those by local accommodation providers. The visits might also help strengthen links between the island and the mainland community.

### Actions

- Work with ferry and boat operators to enhance Rum's attraction for day visitors and to market trips and cruises more effectively.
- Consider working collaboratively with Eigg, Muck and Canna to market the Small Isles as a single destination for visitors.
- Commission a marketing plan for Rum.
- Ensure that Rum is adequately represented on the new NNR website and consider developing 'virtual visit' content.
- Make improvements to the Isle of Rum Community Trust website.
- Produce a marketing leaflet aimed at day visitors and ensure that stocks are always displayed at appropriate outlets.
- Consider working collaboratively with Eigg, Muck and Canna to install a small exhibition on the CalMac ferry.
- Invite staff from Mallaig visitor information centre and local accommodation providers on annual familiarisation visits.

## 6.2 On-island publications

There are no existing publications dealing with Isle of Rum as a whole, although Rum National Nature Reserve does have a general reserve leaflet that currently combines many functions:

- A pre-arrival leaflet, letting potential visitors know of the reserve's existence, about what they can do there so they can decide whether it is somewhere they would like to visit, and how to reach it.
- An orientation and navigation tool, with a map that visitors could use to find their way around once they arrive.
- An interpretive guide, giving visitors an introduction to the reserve's special qualities and significance.

It is difficult for one small publication to serve so many roles effectively. The current leaflet's role as an on-site navigation tool is compromised because the map is too small to show path routes in enough detail. The text, though generally well-written, is not designed to interpret a particular trail and is more likely to be used after a visit, if at all – a role perhaps better served by making detailed information available on the web. Much of the information in the existing general leaflet is also out of date following transfer of land and some visitor-related functions to the Trust.

Rum National Nature Reserve also has a 'Nature's Island' guide book that acts as a souvenir booklet giving the overarching story of the island, along with an on-island guide pointing out features of interest that visitors might encounter on their travels. Whilst being generally well written and functioning reasonably well as a souvenir, its performance as an on-island guide is severely compromised by the features of interest not being linked to a map.

## RUM GUIDE

We recommend that a new whole-island guide book is developed that would add interest to visitors' time on the island and serve as a souvenir or reference after they leave. The guide book would replace the existing 'Nature's Island' booklet as well as the general reserve leaflet. It would provide all of the information people need to make the most of their visit, including an introduction and orientation to the island and a trail guide with interpretation of the island's key features.

Text in the new booklet should cover key aspects of the island's natural and cultural heritage in separate chapters. It should be written in an accessible, lively style: although the individual sections might cover discrete topics such as geology and geomorphology, vegetation, and cultural heritage they should have lively, thought-provoking chapter names.

Within each section, call-out or feature boxes should deal with specific island locations that offer good evidence of the topic being discussed: these would include, for example, the features described along the Harris road that might otherwise be places for fixed interpretation. Text in these sections should be written so that it complements an experience of the site itself, although it must also make sense when read off site.

The booklet should contain a large pictorial map of the island as a whole. Any location covered by text in one of the call-out boxes should be highlighted on this map, with a clear reference to the relevant section of text. This should allow visitors to use the booklet as a companion during their visit.

The booklet should be designed in a format suitable for carrying in a pocket while out for a walk, probably using an A5 page size. Printing on water-resistant paper should be considered as an option to make the booklet more durable as an on-site guide.

The booklet should be made available throughout the island – at the ferry terminal, visitor centre, castle and village hall. It may also be stocked on the ferry and tour boats, but will probably not be widely available on the mainland, although local VICs and accommodation providers might be provided with reference copies.

Whether the booklet is distributed free or charged for will be a policy decision to be made as part of its development. The current 'Nature's Island' booklet is charged for. The proposed new guide book will need to be produced to a similarly high standard of design and printing, and it seems reasonable to ask visitors to pay for what will be a substantial booklet. However, it would be desirable for every island visitor to have a copy, so free distribution or at least a low cover price should be considered.

### KINLOCH CASTLE GUIDE

Although the Rum guidebook must include interpretation of Rum's cultural as well as natural heritage, it would be difficult for it to give adequate coverage to Kinloch Castle without becoming too long. We therefore recommend that the existing 'Kinloch Castle' booklet should be retained as a separate publication. The current booklet is, like the island guidebook, generally well-written but its content does need to be updated and corrected, and the design refreshed.

### **Actions**

- Produce a new island guidebook, including content developed to interpret specific locations and to serve as an accompaniment to site visits.
- Update and refresh the existing Kinloch Castle guidebook.

## **6.3 Ferry terminal**

Arrival at a destination, especially one which takes some effort to reach, is an important event for visitors. What Rum's visitors see and experience on first arrival will disproportionately colour their view of the island for the rest of their stay, making it important that the experience is positive.

### 6.3.1 Existing structures

The ferry terminal is a fairly recent addition to Rum's infrastructure and represents an important investment in the island's future, as it improves enormously the facilities available for landing people, equipment and goods. We understand that the terminal's development was planned in two phases, with the first intended to establish a functional facility and the second intended to improve its aesthetics and enhance its amenities for people. The second phase has not been implemented due to its high cost.

The ferry terminal provides the initial physical contact with Rum for most first-time visitors. Approaching the ferry terminal from the water, the dominant features are the rugged concrete pier, the rubble rock armouring, the rough aggregate surface, the large grey painted shed, the bright yellow skips, the randomly parked vehicles and the lighting poles. All of these elements are of poor visual quality and, taken along with the bare surrounding landscape, they give an overall impression of a low-grade industrial facility. Consequently, the ferry terminal currently provides a poor first impression of the island for visitors.

In addition to the visual issues, the ferry terminal currently has some significant functional shortcomings for visitors. On arrival by boat, it is not clear to people where they should walk, as the entrance to the pedestrian area is currently narrow, and as there is no obvious visitor-orientated focal point for them to aim for, resulting in pedestrians milling around in the same space as vehicles. There is currently no focal point for visitors, as information is split between four sign locations, none of which offer the comprehensive and easily accessible information visitors need to make the most of their visit. This lack of a focal point also makes it very difficult for the ranger to make meaningful contact with more than a very small number of visitors. Having a variety of badged clothing for use in different weather would make this task easier for the ranger.

To help resolve the issues outlined above, the overall layout of the terminal area should be rationalised, existing facilities should be upgraded and some new visitor facilities introduced to improve the terminal's ambience and functionality for visitors. This work should be planned, designed and managed by a professional landscape architect, although some initial suggestions are outlined below.

- The layout of the terminal area should be rationalised to create separate zones for moving vehicles, parked vehicles and pedestrians. A conveniently located and clearly delineated parking area should be created, along with a clearly delineated pedestrian walkway that guides people from the ferry, past the proposed visitor shelter and the minibus parking area, to the village road.
- The existing boulder barrier should be realigned to provide a more obvious and welcoming entrance to the pedestrian-orientated space.

- A new structure should be built to provide a focal point for arriving visitors who need to get their bearings, and to provide shelter for anybody waiting for a ferry to take them off the island.
- The uniform low-grade aggregate surface of the terminal area should be reduced in size and upgraded to more visually appealing and durable finishes, possibly using different surfaces to distinguish between pedestrian and vehicle spaces.
- The refuse skips should be relocated to another part of the island or to a less obtrusive position in the terminal area, as screening is unlikely to be effective at reducing their visual impact.
- The gas bottle store should be relocated to a less obtrusive position in the terminal area and screened to reduce its visual impact.
- All existing signs should be removed and replaced by a coordinated suite of visitor information in the new ferry shelter and by a large sandblasted timber 'Welcome to Rum' sign on the wall of the grey shed.
- The use of yellow and black plastic chain and movable metal barriers should be reviewed as part of the terminal area rationalisation and they should be replaced with permanent solutions if possible.
- Trees should be planted around the ferry terminal area to provide a backdrop to the development.
- The leaning lighting pole should be straightened.

### 6.3.2 Ferry shelter

A new structure should be built to provide a reception point for arriving visitors who need to plan their visit, and to provide shelter for people waiting to leave the island. As such, the building's primary functions will be to provide physical shelter from the elements, toilets and a welcome and orientation to Rum.

It would not be appropriate to develop an elaborate 'visitor centre' here, as the ferry terminal is not a place where people should be encouraged to stay, other than whilst waiting for the ferry. Any such development would be better sited closer to the centre of the village, where visitors can find it after their tour of the castle, and where local businesses and the visitor centre can both benefit from being close to each other.

The new shelter should be built near the slipway, in approximately the location originally suggested in the phase two ferry terminal development plan. This is the most convenient location for visitors and it places the shelter firmly within the area to be designated for pedestrians, creating a clear separation between this visitor-orientated facility and the working areas near the shed.

The structure must be designed to withstand the high winds and salt water sprays to which it will be exposed in this location. The building might be modern in appearance and made primarily of metal, natural timber and glass to reflect the other modern industrial structures at the terminal. However, the shelter should be of much higher quality design, appearance and construction than the existing structures. The building should be a bespoke design produced by a highly-regarded architect and intended to make a strong and positive statement about the island.

The building should provide effective indoor shelter for 30 people, with a closable door to provide some protection from midges. Further shelter might be provided in a covered outdoor area on the building's leeward side. Seats should be provided both inside and outside the building – these should be integrated into the structures as opposed to being free-standing pieces of furniture.

The shelter should be thoughtfully designed and detailed with people-friendly features such as large windows providing good natural light inside and good views out to the west and south, with at least some ferry-spotting views to the more exposed east. Orientation and information panels, along with a notice board and dispensers for additional information in leaflet form should be located in the covered outdoor area. Available inside wall-space might carry decorative printed panels.

### **6.3.3 Information**

There is an obvious need to provide visitors arriving on Rum with the information they need to make the most of their visit. This information is currently provided at four locations within the ferry terminal area – on a sheet-steel 'Welcome to Rum' road sign, an aluminium community notice board, a map panel on timber monoliths and ad-hoc advertising signs leaning against a lamp post. These signs detract from the appearance of the ferry terminal, the information contained on them is inadequate and out of date, and reserve-related information does not conform to NNR identity standards.

Information should include a brief introduction to the island and the reserve, orientation map of the island, details of the available recreation opportunities and facilities, visitor management messages, contact details, event notifications, promotion for the other Small Isles, leaflets and directions to the village centre. This should be contained in a coordinated suite of visitor information panels in the new ferry shelter, on a prominent direction sign and on a large sandblasted timber 'Welcome to Rum' sign installed on the wall of the grey shed.

The orientation map should be based on the bird's-eye-view illustration of the island that will appear in the leaflet. It should include an enlarged view of Kinloch, so that features between the ferry terminal and the village

centre are shown clearly. The enlarged view should show the key walking routes and identify the location of the castle, shops, tearoom and other visitor facilities. The text should:

- Describe the distances and terrain for the road to the castle, the South Side, North Side and proposed Corrie Dubh Trails, and the Harris and Kilmory Roads.
- Mention the hill paths to Dibidil, Guirdil and Bloodstone Hill.
- Specifically promote the South Side Trail as an option for departing visitors with a hour to spare before the ferry leaves.

A notice board should also be provided for events and small business advertising, along with a leaflet dispenser for guidebooks. If the guides are a priced rather than free publications, they might be stored in a coin operated dispenser or displayed next to an honesty-box. The leaflet dispenser will need regular re-stocking, which might best be done by the island ranger who meets all scheduled ferry arrivals.

### **6.3.4 Interpretation**

Whilst it is not appropriate to create a 'visitor centre' at the ferry terminal, it is fitting for decorations in the waiting area to reflect the island's character. The shelter should build a sense of expectation about the island for people arriving, and offer a reminder of its glories for those leaving.

To the extent that solid wall space is available, wall displays should use large images of key landscape features and wildlife, with short, evocative texts. We recommend that these should concentrate on illustrating the first two of the island's main themes, emphasising the importance of the island's wildlife and the character of today's community, although the images should also include an image of the castle and another of the island's mountain scenery.

The large images and the orientation display are largely for the benefit of visitors arriving on the island, giving them an impression of Rum's key qualities and helping them plan their visit. The shelter is also a place where visitors will spend time while they wait to leave and it would be beneficial for them to have something to do while they wait that would reinforce their understanding and appreciation of the place. We have considered providing more detailed displays, with more text, but since there is no way to stop arriving visitors from reading them, there is a risk they would delay people from exploring the island.

A better option would be for departing visitors to be able to read material in booklet or leaflet form. We therefore recommend that the reception point displays include a leaflet dispenser to hold copies of the Rum Guide.

### Actions

- Commission a landscape plan for the ferry terminal and implement the results, including improvements to its visual quality and functionality.
- Commission an architect to design a new ferry shelter with toilets and information area and implement the results.
- Provide a coordinated suite of visitor information in the new ferry shelter, along with a direction sign and 'Welcome to Rum' identification sign.
- Provide interpretation in the new ferry shelter in the form of large images with short, evocative texts.

## 6.4 Castle tour

Kinloch Castle is a central feature of Rum's unique character and sense of place, and is currently Rum's most important and accessible visitor attraction. Its structure, contents and stories can provide a dramatic and memorable experience for visitors and one which is highly marketable. The castle is accessible to a greater number of people than Rum's natural heritage features and spectacles, many of which are to be found in remote areas and only at certain times of the year. Whilst some visitors come to Rum purely to enjoy its natural heritage, the castle forms a major part of the island's attraction for most people.

For many visitors, the interpretation they are offered during a tour of the castle will be the only formal opportunity to shape their impressions and understanding of Rum. It is vital that tours are of a high quality and include key messages that are communicated to as many visitors as possible.

### 6.4.1 Tour management

Tours are led by the castle General Assistants, staff whose main responsibilities are to run and maintain the hostel. They do not usually have any experience or training in leading guided tours, and have varying degrees of confidence in doing so. Recruiting more specialised staff to lead the tours would currently be difficult, given the managerial realities of running the castle, so the current arrangement is likely to continue at least for the next few years. In these circumstances, new staff need good, consistent training as they develop both their knowledge of the castle and skills as tour guides. A process of periodic review would also be valuable to support their work, address any difficulties or issues, and ensure that the quality of tours is maintained.

At present, new staff are given a briefing document that describes a suggested itinerary and storylines, summarises information about the building's history, and includes details about the contents of each room. Another document is also available, based on the briefing notes, which was

prepared as a handout for a large party of cruise ship passengers. The briefing document has been amended and added to by several different authors, and the sources of the material it contains are not always clear. It contains some inconsistencies: for example the document says stone to build the castle came from Annan in Dumfriesshire, whereas other sources suggest it came from Arran.

We recommend that the briefing document should be revised so that it is more useful as a reference and as far as possible more authoritative. The structure of a suggested basic itinerary and commentary for each room, followed by 'extra information' is appropriate, but the extra information section should be given some structure, for example by dividing material into items relating to the Bullough family, to the contents of the rooms, and to the building. Where possible, references should be given for all material. The document should include the name of its compiler and a date: any subsequent versions should have this information updated and be saved as separate documents. The work of revising the document will need skills in historical research as well as familiarity with the castle.

New guides also spend time accompanying existing staff on tours before leading their own: a time-honoured training method often called 'sitting next to Nellie'. Anecdotal evidence suggests Nellie's company is more attractive than reading the briefing document, and it is possible that much of the tour content currently being delivered has been handed on by word of mouth through several generations of guides. There seems to be little managerial supervision of either the process of training or of the content and standard of the tours actually being delivered.

This situation does not mean that current tour content or delivery gives visitors a bad experience: feedback from visitors and our limited experience suggests tours are both lively and popular. Each guide has developed their own style of presentation, and has particular stories and items that they find interesting and therefore favour in their presentations. This lively, personal style is entirely appropriate for Kinloch Castle: it fits with the individualistic character of the island as a whole and with the atmosphere of the building.

A polished, scripted performance, duplicated by each guide, would be out of keeping with the castle's faded glory and quirky contents. We are however concerned that current arrangements have allowed hearsay to become canonical, that there is little consistency in the messages being given to visitors, that key ideas may well be missed, and that the system does not help staff to develop greater confidence in their guiding skills.

We therefore recommend that a clear system of induction and support is put in place that will help new staff to develop their tours, define a small number of key ideas that should always be included in a tour, and allow

the guides as a group, together with the castle manager, to review how the tours are going at intervals during the year.

It is important that this system recognises the value of each guide developing their own personal style, and is open to them being interested in particular stories and objects: this need not be inconsistent with the requirement also to communicate a limited number of key ideas. We suggest that training at the start of the season and reviews during it might best be done through a workshop approach that involves the castle manager and the guide team. At the beginning of the season the workshop should last for one whole day, or two half days. It should aim to:

- Establish the key role tours play in visitors' experience.
- Discuss what visitors are looking for and how their interests and characteristics may vary during the season.
- Identify any visitor management issues.
- Define the key ideas that need to be included on every tour.
- Review the stories that can be told about the castle.
- Explore ways in which key ideas and stories can be supported by particular objects.
- Encourage staff to read the briefing document so they deepen their knowledge.
- Develop, try out and review through peer discussion a variety of tour styles, itineraries and content.

Following this, new staff should be paired with an existing guide in an informal 'buddy' system that can support them as they begin to lead their own tours.

Review workshops of half a day each should then be held twice during the season, again bringing the guides and castle manager together as a group, to review progress and discuss any difficulties.

The castle manager should accompany each new guide on their tours at least once before the first review workshop, and all guides at least once during the season. This system should be discussed at the first workshop, and established as a support for the guides and for the quality of their product rather than 'spying'.

### **6.4.2 Tour duration, itinerary and content**

We understand that current practice aims to restrict the tours to 45 minutes. Given the amount of interest in the castle this seems on the short side, and we would recommend that a standard tour could last up to an hour if the ferry schedule and the group's apparent level of interest allow.

The itinerary of each tour may vary depending on the time available. The tour currently offered is a shortened version of the original tour which omits some of the most interesting areas such as the bathrooms with the spa showers. This is reputedly due to some problems with the structure of the building, although professional opinion seems to be divided on this matter. We understand that these issues should soon be resolved.

The castle tour plays a vital role in the visitors' experience of Rum: as such, the tour should provide access to all of the key rooms necessary to give a full picture of the life of its inhabitants. As a general principle, we recommend that as many rooms as possible should be available, and that guides should be encouraged to think about how they could vary their itineraries in response to particular interests or time constraints.

We particularly recommend that all tours should visit the upper floor and see the large landscape paintings of the island: these offer considerable potential for interpretation of the island's natural features, which most visitors give as their key motivation for coming. The paintings seem to be under-used at present. Ways in which they might be integrated into the tour are explored in the following section, on castle themes.

### 6.4.3 Castle themes

A visit to the castle clearly supports the last part of the main island theme

*Rum has a rich cultural history, spanning over 7,000 years of human activity. It has left sometimes spectacular traces of communal effort to work the land, of cruelty and tragedy, and of a time when the whole island was a rich man's playground.*

However, since a castle tour may be the main contact for most visitors with any interpretation on Rum, it is an important opportunity to address the islands' two key themes, about its status as a National Nature Reserve and as a living community.

In addition, many visitors ask about the castle's physical condition: the 2010 visitor survey identified as one of visitors' principal negative impressions a perception that not enough was being done to save the building. This interest may be partly due to the castle featuring in the BBC's Restoration competition in 2003. Memories of this programme will fade over time, but it is obvious that the castle is not in pristine condition, and its future is likely to be of continued interest for visitors. Although it is not possible to tell visitors that the building's future is assured, it is important they understand that significant repair work has been done recently (for example in the tower), and that SNH is doing all it can to meet the considerable challenge of future maintenance.

We therefore recommend that all castle tours should address the following ideas, whatever other material is presented. They may not form a major part of the tour, but they should always be included.

- *Almost the whole of Rum is a National Nature Reserve. It is managed to safeguard rare wildlife and to enhance its biodiversity.*

At first sight, this idea may seem out of keeping with a visit to a historic building, but the building is only there because of Rum's spectacular natural environment: the Bulloughs wanted a luxurious place to stay and to impress their guests on visits to their island. The obvious place to introduce this theme is at the relief model, where visitors can get a real sense of the scale of the island and the extent of the NNR becomes obvious. It would be useful to have a number of laminated photographs stored in a holder near the map that would allow guides to illustrate some points more vividly. These photographs could include shots of Manx shearwaters and their burrows, which could be shown after guides point out the Cuillin massif on the model, and images of Rum ponies: guides could explain that the ponies are a breed unique to the island and that their grazing helps to maintain its grassland.

In addition, the relief model can be used as a prompt to encourage visitors to explore the island: guides might point out Harris or Kilmory, talk about their magnificent scenery and explain that both places can be reached on easy-to-follow roads – although they should also make clear the distances and other difficulties involved!

Another support to this theme can come from the landscape paintings on the upper floor. These are very attractive, and can give all visitors a dramatic impression of the island's interior that might compensate for poor weather or encourage them to visit the sites themselves. We recommend that every tour should highlight at least one of these paintings, together with a message that to really appreciate the island you need to spend some time here and explore the interior. It is possible that George Bullough commissioned the paintings to serve a very similar function: to show off to guests the extent and character of his island, so there is an interesting parallel here with the paintings' historical interest.

We also see considerable potential in high quality reproductions of the paintings as souvenirs, and would recommend that a series of post cards or greetings cards is produced based on them. The series might well include other attractive features of the castle such as the stained glass and the Orchestrion.

- *Today's island community is a small, committed group of people who value this isolated place and who are working to a develop and improve options for living here.*

One way to illustrate this theme would be through anecdotes about the guide's own experience of life on the island, probably tangential to the main content of the tour. However, the opportunity to include these

may not arise, or it may not feel right to share personal anecdotes in this way. Other ways to describe the island's present day community might be by contrasting it with the situation in the Bullough's day.

When using the relief model to explain the extent of the NNR, guides should also describe how the area of land around the village is now owned by a community trust and can mention some of the development projects currently under way.

Each tour should conclude with a reference to the tearoom and shops available in the village, and an encouragement to visitors to explore the place before they return to the ferry.

- *The castle's design and materials are not well suited to Rum's climate, and it needs major, very expensive work to restore it. We are doing all we can to find ways of doing this and have carried out several substantial repair projects to keep it safe and stop it deteriorating too much.*

It is important not to underestimate the scale of the challenge here, but also that visitors should appreciate how significant work is being done to maintain the building. There will be many opportunities to refer to this idea, but it should not become a dominant theme of the tour.

Many other themes could be developed for the castle's interpretation. Ideally, tour content should be refined so that is based on a clear series of themes, using the castle's rooms and contents to support them. This will avoid any possibility of tours becoming just a 'spotters' guide' of rooms and objects: visitors should be shown features and objects because those things help them understand something about the Bulloughs, their era, the castle, or Rum itself. This principle would still allow each guide to choose which themes interest them most and to vary the content of their tours.

More detailed specifications for themes and how they might be illustrated are beyond the scope of this report, but should form the remit of a more detailed interpretive plan. The plan should identify themes specific to the building as well as linkages between the castle and the main island themes, together with suggestions for how all themes can be illustrated during tours. We recommend that castle guides should be involved in the development of the plan: their experience of the items and stories that most interest visitors would make a valuable contribution.

### **Actions**

- **Revise briefing document and ensure that all the stories presented are based on sound evidence.**
- **Develop a detailed interpretation plan for the castle.**
- **Establish training and support mechanism for guides and implement this for all subsequent seasons.**

- Produce laminated photographs for use with the relief model.
- Produce a series of post cards or gift cards based on the landscape paintings and other castle features.

### 6.5 Visitor centre

A visitor centre can serve a variety of audiences, making a valuable addition to the range of interpretation media and adding to the experiences on offer. For day visitors, it can give an impression and an understanding of the interior of the island, which they will not be able to see for themselves. For visitors staying overnight, it can be an interesting place to spend time in bad weather or to find out more about aspects of the island that interest them. Lastly, Rum attracts a small but significant number of specialists in subjects such as geology or wildlife conservation – they will appreciate somewhere that offers access to in-depth material and current reports. We therefore suggest that a visitor centre forms an important part of Rum's offering to visitors and we recommend that one should be retained on the island.

The Rum Visitor Centre is currently housed in a small tin shed adjacent to the campsite toilets. The centre has a small number of professionally produced exhibits, although the vast majority have been made by hand on a shoe-string budget using a word processor, printer and desktop laminator. The exhibits demonstrate the knowledge and enthusiasm of the people who have put them together, however the majority of today's visitors will expect a more professionally produced exhibition associated with one of Scotland's top sites for nature.

We suggest that it now becomes a high priority to develop a new Rum Visitor Centre, preferably located at the byres building in the heart of the village. In the mean time, the existing centre should continue in use, with the exhibits being renovated.

#### 6.5.1 New visitor centre

The new centre should act as a ranger base, an orientation centre and a traditional visitor centre. It should provide an unstaffed drop-in display and a place where visitors can meet the island ranger and talk with them informally when available. It should be large enough to accommodate a wave of visitors following a castle tour and to provide a wet-weather attraction for a significant number of people. All exhibits should be professionally produced to provide the high quality of communication and design to be expected at one of Scotland's most important sites for nature.

- As a ranger base, the centre should provide a workspace for the ranger with the ability to tailor the degree of privacy versus engagement with visitors, depending on the priority at any given time.

- As an orientation centre, it should contain large maps and detailed descriptions of walks and other recreation opportunities. These will be continuously available on an unstaffed basis and there should be staff available to assist people at peak visitor decision times such as shortly after the ferry arrives and after the castle tour ends.
- As a visitor centre, it should tell the overarching stories of Rum's nature and people. It should give an introduction to the island and background material for those who are able to explore Rum for themselves, whilst providing remote access through the exhibits to places that some visitors may not have the time or ability to reach.

Exhibit specifications for the new visitor centre should be developed in a more detailed interpretation plan. The plan should take account of the broad categories of users described above, specifying displays and other facilities that can meet all their needs without compromising use by any one. Day visitors, for example, who are likely to spend a very short time in the centre, will need easily accessible, concise and lively content: they will be discouraged by displays that contain too much text. Residential visitors will be prepared to read more. The displays will therefore need a carefully developed text hierarchy, and library material should be made available that is not on open display for visitors who want to study in greater depth.

Since Rum attracts a relatively small proportion of families with young children, the centre should not place too much emphasis on interactive exhibits. It could however make good use of high quality dioramas and models, particularly to interpret aspects of the island that are difficult to access. The shearwater burrow display in the current visitor centre is a good example of both appropriate subject matter and design quality. There should also be plenty of scope to introduce exhibits that can be handled, such as deer antlers, pebbles from the island's raised beaches, and samples of rocks such as bloodstone and olivine.

Live or recorded film from shearwater burrows and other wildlife sites on the island would do much to help visitors experience aspects of the island they might not otherwise encounter. It would be particularly valuable for day visitors, who may only have twenty minutes or so in the centre before they have to leave: film of real sites in the interior of the island would make its wildlife more accessible and perhaps reinforce a sense that this is a place worth coming back to for a longer visit. Such content would depend on the technical feasibility of installing cameras at suitable sites and, in the case of live feeds, of transmitting the images to the centre, but with modern remote viewing technology this should be feasible.

Temporary or changeable displays could feature photographs and comments by visitors as well as summaries of recent research: the latter will need professional editorial support to ensure that the work is presented clearly and accessibly.

## 6.5.2 Existing visitor centre

It is likely that the visitor centre will continue in its current location for some time to come, given the lead time necessary for any re-development at the byres. Given the potential to relocate the centre in the medium term and the vulnerability of the current building to the weather, it would not be appropriate to make major investment in the existing centre. Its displays could, however, be made much more accessible and attractive at relatively low cost and we recommend that this is seen as a high priority.

Much of the subject matter of the current visitor centre's displays is appropriate. Its presentation is compromised by the use of small type sizes, text being overlaid on images, rather too much text on open display and in some cases a writing style that is not appropriate for exhibit text. The extensive use of laminated A4 sheets, while having some charm, makes some areas of the display rather tatty.

We recommend that a new series of display panels should be produced, largely based on existing subject matter and factual content so as to avoid the need for major new research. The displays should be developed with professional editorial and design input, and the amount of material on open display should be reduced by putting some of the existing content in folders or other media. Most of the display panels should be professionally printed, using materials and sealing techniques that will withstand the environmental conditions in the building. There should also be some scope for display elements to be produced on-island to present temporary information or updates on current work: a series of design templates should be produced for use by island staff so that these home-produced materials have a consistent design quality.

### Actions

- Redevelop the displays in the existing Rum visitor centre.
- Develop a new Rum visitor centre, preferably located in the village centre.

## 6.6 Shop, tearoom, bar & toilets

Rum's shop, tearoom and main public toilets are currently located in the village hall, although the first two are only intended to be there on a temporary basis. The building is not ideally suited to these functions, although their presence does bring together many of the facilities around which village life revolves to form a real heart to village, perhaps for the first time. Rum's public bar is located in the hostel where serving staff and cellaring facilities are currently available, although this is unlikely to be the case in the long term.

Given the temporary nature of the facilities currently housed in the village hall and hostel, an opportunity should be sought to permanently relocate

the shop, tearoom, bar and public toilets to more suitable and permanent premises within the village centre. Development of these facilities, and in particular the bar, might usefully be linked to development of a new hostel, should the opportunity arise. Any or all of these facilities might be leased to individuals or companies to run as independent businesses.

For many of Rum's visitors, contact with the people they meet in the hostel, shop, tearoom and bar will provide some of the most insightful experiences of their visit. Staff should consider themselves to be island ambassadors working in tourism businesses that are vital to the future of Rum, with customer care being one of the most important aspects of their job. They should take opportunities to engage visitors in conversation, and should be able to advise them on where to go and what to do on the island. The shop, tea-room and bar should not just sell beans, biscuits and beer to visitors, but should also provide them with memorable and authentic island experiences.

## INTERPRETATION

As discussed in the visitor profile section, day visitors may find it hard to appreciate how Rum is home to a living community. Many of them will use the tearoom, probably at the end of their visit, so installations here offer a good opportunity to present something of daily life on the island.

This is not a place where conventional interpretation or large amounts of text are appropriate: visitors come to the tearoom to relax and enjoy a drink and a cake rather than look at an exhibition. Instead, the decorations in the tea room can reflect island life, perhaps through a frieze of images of people at work, photographs on menu cards with one-sentence quotations. Creative work by islanders that reflects Rum's character would also be appropriate: the large mural currently in the village hall is a good example.

## Actions

- Develop a new village shop, tearoom and bar in the village centre.

## 6.7 Campsite

The campsite is located on gently sloping ground close to the water, giving it excellent views over Loch Scresort. Facilities include a fresh water supply, two toilets, two showers with hot water, two wooden shelters, two picnic tables, one stone seat and a pair of washing-up basins built into a cairn looking over the water.

The campsite's facilities have improved significantly over the years, but the waterlogged ground and midges mean that it is still a fairly hard-core option that will be attractive to a small proportion of Rum's visitors. The quality of the environment on and around the campsite has been compromised in recent years by ad-hoc and uncoordinated developments

such as the separate toilet block and shower sheds, the dissimilar designs of shelters, and the different materials and colours used for seats and washing facilities.

If the overall quality of visitor provision on the island is to be significantly improved, the campsite should be upgraded as a single coordinated project that addresses it as a unit. Whilst this project will need to be planned separately in detail, the following are some initial ideas for improvements:

- Install land drains to dry out the site if local geology and archaeology allows.
- Build thoughtfully designed wooden 'camping cabins' to provide basic accommodation that is one-step up from a tent.
- Following relocation of the visitor centre to the village centre, redevelop the existing visitor centre building to house toilets and showers in a single high quality facility and remove the separate toilet block and shower shed that are currently lowering the visual quality of the area.
- Replace the two dilapidated bright blue picnic tables with higher quality items. One might provide a standard eating arrangement, another might form a larger social eating space and another might provide some less formal seating.
- Replace the existing shed-like shelter with a higher quality structure that might be a new building or the existing curved shelter moved from its current location.
- Construct a timber enclosure to house the wheelie bins as part of the project to improve the main campsite shelter.

### **Actions**

- Plan a coordinated upgrade of the campsite and implement as a one-off or phased project.

## **6.8 Hostel & bistro**

The hostel and bistro is currently housed in the old servants' quarters of Kinloch Castle. Guests can stay in traditional bunkhouse dormitory rooms containing between five and eight beds (£16 at 2011 prices), in standard double or twin rooms (£45), or in one of the Oak Rooms that have original furniture and fittings including four poster beds (£55). Self catering guests can use a shared kitchen, whilst full board guests are served breakfast (£7.50) and a three-course dinner (£15.50) in the bistro, which is also open to non residents and those partly self-catering. All rooms have shared facilities with one bathroom on each floor.

The hostel is currently housed in an impressive and high status building with plenty of original features and period character. Most of the hostel and bistro staff are friendly and helpful. However, the standard of accommodation is basic, with few concessions to modern facilities such as en-suite toilets and showers. The poor condition of the building is obvious internally, while outside the approach to the hostel is littered with randomly parked vehicles and redundant barriers, wheelbarrows, old car wheels and other debris.

In the bistro, the quality of the food itself is acceptable for a hostel, but it is clear that, through no fault of their own, the staff have had little training or guidance in waiting on tables.

Overall, the hostel and bistro offer poor value for money, with the cost of accommodation and meals being more than visitors might expect to pay for better experiences elsewhere.

Rum's existing visitor accommodation may still be attractive to a certain low-value sector of its potential audience, but it is likely to put off higher-value visitors from coming to the island, or be a significant disappointment to them if they do come. Rum's future tourism growth is likely to involve attracting more higher-value visitors who require much better accommodation than currently exists.

SNH is carrying out a strategic review of its property on Rum, the outcome of which will affect the future of Kinloch Castle and hostel. Although the results of this have not yet been announced, we understand that it is unlikely that SNH can continue to run the hostel for more than a few years. A high priority for the community will therefore be to develop alternative accommodation to replace the hostel when it comes out of service, although it is likely to be some years before this is in place.

In the meantime, there is significant room for improvement in the existing accommodation and catering arrangements. Although it is unlikely to be cost effective to upgrade the hostel's physical infrastructure for the remaining period of hostel operation, visitors would be much more likely to overlook deficiencies in the building and furniture if the standard of customer care, service, food and cleanliness were very good.

The existing hostel operation is under-funded and under-staffed, and this situation will need to be addressed if quality is to be improved. We suggest that a review of the services provided by the hostel and bistro is carried out, and that all changes necessary to provide a professional, customer-focussed and service-orientated service operation are implemented.

### **Actions**

- Carry out a review of the hostel and bistro service operations and implement all recommendations.

## 6.9 Trails

Glimpsing enormous birds of prey overhead, being very close to rutting deer and wandering amongst the gravestones of Kilmory are experiences that can connect Rum's visitors strongly with its natural and cultural heritage. However, access to these powerful experiences is currently limited due to the poor condition of many of the island's key paths and roads, and the lack of suitable interpretation. These experiences should be made available to more people through upgrading the access infrastructure and providing interpretive materials. This need is highlighted by the North Side and South Side Trails, along with the road from the ferry terminal to the castle being earmarked for core path status.

### 6.9.1 South Side Trail

The trail known locally as the South Side Trail is currently called the Loch Scresort Trail on signs and in publications, after the sea loch along which it runs. This is a better name than South Side Trail for visitors, as it does not require an appreciation of the island's orientation. However, attempts to rename it the Loch Scresort trail amongst local people have so far failed.

The trail starts near the ferry terminal at the far south end of Kinloch, making it an ideal 'time filler' for people who are waiting for the ferry to leave the island. Access is less convenient for people already in the village centre, although it is still a good option for longer-stay visitors who may be looking for something to do in poor weather or because they do not want to tackle more strenuous routes.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE & SIGNS

The path is in excellent condition and requires no significant upgrading, although regular maintenance will be required in the future. The end point of the waymarked route is currently not clear to visitors as the upgraded path surface carries on a short distance past the Otter Hide, suggesting that the trail also carries on. The path surface should be narrowed and made less formal beyond the hide.

It is important that people waiting for the ferry are able to make a realistic assessment of how long they need to walk the route, so we suggest that information about route length and a typical time needed to walk to the hide and back is clearly displayed on orientation panels and in leaflets.

#### INTERPRETATION

The trail does not offer an experience of Rum's most dramatic or characteristic landscapes, but it feels 'wilder' than the North Side Trail and ends at the well-designed Otter Hide. Interpretation along this trail should reach a good number of visitors and would enhance their experience.

The trail passes the atmospheric group of ruined post-clearance buildings at Carn an Dobhrain Bhig, which may well be the only contact day visitors

have with evidence of the island's farming community before the castle was built. The remains are a prominent feature in the landscape and provide an opportunity to provide powerful and poignant interpretation of one of key Rum's human stories. We suggest that a short detour to this house is signposted from the trail and an interpretation panel is installed to bring the associated stories to life.

The Carn an Dobhrain Bhig interpretation panel should be installed facing visitors as they approach from the main path. The content should explain how the ruins are probably of a shepherd's house and outbuildings from the time after the island was cleared in 1826. It should place this clearance in the context of similar actions across the Highlands, and explain how a few families from neighbouring islands were brought to Rum when it was realised that sheep would not look after themselves. The panel can also invite readers to look for other evidence of settlement nearby, in particular the old pre-clearance road that is clearly visible in the trees a little to the south of the current track.

The trail ends at a recently constructed wildlife watching hide known as the Otter Hide. Although it is relatively seldom that otters are spotted from the hide, it does provide a good view out to sea, where seals and many types of birds are commonly sighted. The hide itself is of an interesting design and built to a high quality. However, the windows do not currently open to provide an unobstructed view – these should be changed. A nameplate should also be added to the hide on or near the door.

Interpretation in the hide should use a panel fixed to the wall to offer an overall interpretive picture of the place, together with panels fixed underneath the windows carrying a panorama of the view from the hide and images of wildlife that visitors are likely to see. Interpretive content should build on the hide's shoreline location to emphasise the importance of the marine environment to Rum's wildlife. It can use the Manx shearwaters to illustrate this, describing how the birds spend most of the day out at sea, returning to the mountains at night. It should also refer to the Gaelic name of the settlement 'Little cairn of the otter' and explain why the island is a stronghold for these animals. Illustrations on the panorama panels can include otters, but should make clear that visitors are more likely to see them at dusk or dawn. It might also suggest other places to look for them. Other illustrations should concentrate on species that are more likely to be visible, such as herons.

The interior of the hide is of a high standard, apart from the windows, but it does feel slightly stark. We have considered the possibility of a sculptural installation in the centre of the floor area to act as a focal point for the space: this might take inspiration from any of the interpretive topics, such as otters, or the migration of shearwaters. However, we are not convinced that there is a real need for such a development. We

consider that other projects, for example along the North Side Trail, should have higher priority as additions to visitors' experience.

It would be possible to develop a third piece of interpretation at some point along the trail about the woodland, which is a relatively mature mixture of trees. This could be contrasted with the rest of the island, apart from the area around Kinloch, and linked with efforts to increase biodiversity by planting and fencing. A third piece of interpretation would make the route feel more 'complete' as a trail, but it is debateable whether the woodland really merits this treatment and it should be seen as an optional extra.

Interpretation at the ruined buildings and the hide should support the key themes:

- *Almost the whole of Rum is a National Nature Reserve. It is managed to safeguard rare wildlife and to enhance its biodiversity.*
- *Rum has a rich cultural history, spanning over 7,000 years of human activity. It has left sometimes spectacular traces of communal effort to work the land, of cruelty and tragedy, and of a time when the whole island was a rich man's playground.*

## **Actions**

- Install new signs as part of an overall sign project.
- Narrow down path surface after Otter Hide.
- Change Otter Hide windows.
- Develop interpretation at ruined buildings and Otter Hide.

### **6.9.2 North Side Trail**

The North Side Trail begins near the castle and village centre, and proceeds along a circular route up the north side of Kinloch River and back down the south side. The trail offers a pleasant walk through Kinloch Glen's fields and regenerating woodland to the edge of Rum's moorland and mountain area. The trail is conveniently located near to the castle and village centre, making it an important 'second tier' activity for both day and overnight visitors. It should be actively promoted as an option for visitors looking for a medium length, easy to follow walk.

#### **INFRASTRUCTURE & SIGNS**

Visitors cannot be directed to use the North Side Trail in its current poor state of repair. There are substantial stretches of mud and standing water to negotiate. Part of the path surface is made of large rock bottoming which is unfriendly to walk on. The route is indistinct in places and the waymarking is poor and of a temporary nature. Near its start, the trail route has been diverted into a field instead of along the original and more

enjoyable double-fenced path. We suggest that upgrading the trail throughout its length is now made a high priority, and that a maintenance programme is put in place. The trail should begin in the village centre and be waymarked throughout its length.

### INTERPRETATION

Since the route may be used by day visitors if they have a reasonable length of time on the island, and since this group may include a higher proportion of people unused to walking long distances, developing a number of resting points along the path would increase its accessibility. There are also opportunities here to reinforce some of the island's interpretive themes, but providing interpretation along the route poses some challenges.

The trail is pleasant, but passes through largely unremarkable scenery. There are no specific features, with the possible exception of 'the millionth tree', that are likely to arouse visitors curiosity or that offer obvious stories to illustrate the interpretive themes. In addition, the route is popular with island residents, and so any fixed installations along it must take account of their repeat use.

Given this trail's potential use by visitors, we consider it is worthwhile developing interpretation along it that can add to visitors' appreciation of the island. However, because of its low-key interest and its regular use by residents we do not consider that conventional media such as panels are appropriate here. Instead we recommend that a series of sculpted seats or resting places are developed, with designs inspired by aspects of the island's heritage. Not all of the installations need to be developed as seats: some might be simply landmark pieces along the route.

Exact locations for the installations would need to be decided once the path has been upgraded. Initial suggestions are:

- A point near the junction of the path through Glen Park field with the Old Kilmory Road, possibly next to the 'millionth tree'. The design for this might take inspiration from the work to re-establish woodland on Rum, and from the value of woodland for wildlife.
- A point along the Old Kilmory Road with a good view to the Cuillin hills. The slopes visible from here include some of the main shearwater nesting grounds, so the design could reflect the birds' nomadic existence and their lives spent partly at sea and partly in burrows.
- Further along the old road, where the view of Kinloch Glen opens out and there is an impression of the open, wilder landscape of the interior. This would be an appropriate place for a design that evoked moorland wildlife such as red deer and golden eagles.

- Beside the burn that runs down to Kinloch river. The burn is an attractive feature where it would be good to encourage visitors to linger. The design here might be inspired by the wildlife of the island's rivers and lochs. This represents the furthest and highest point of the trail and this feature might be significantly larger than the others to provide a 'destination' point.
- Beside the Kinloch River. Since the path here is close to the Land Rover track, it passes through an environment that feels more immediately managed than the rest of the route. The sculpture design here might take inspiration from the life of the community and how people's livelihoods are dependent on the environment.

There are a number of mechanisms through which this project might be delivered, each with its own strengths, weaknesses and potential for attracting external or partnership funding. One option would be to commission a member of the resident island community who has the right skills and vision to create the pieces: currently there is someone on the island who has worked on chainsaw sculptures in the past. This would be easy to manage, and has the appeal of the finished product being closely connected to the island community. However, chainsaw sculptures are not very durable, especially given Rum's weather, and restricting the commission to a single artist because they happen to live on the island means there is little scope to explore other approaches and styles.

Another approach would be to manage the project as a competition-based commission to one or a small number of artists, with all the works being developed at one time. These commissions could include the local chainsaw sculptor. This would extend the range of styles and materials that could be considered.

A third, more elaborate option would be to set up a rolling programme for artists in residence, with one or two artists involved each year over a period of three or four years. This project could be developed to include workshops with local residents and a 'sculpture festival', which could potentially invite international artists to work on the island for a limited period. Similar approaches have produced internationally recognised work in places like Grizedale Forest and the Forest of Dean. This approach would be complex to manage and would require a substantial budget, but could generate a lot of publicity for the island and its development. It would create extended interest during the life of the project, and depending on the commissioning policy could leave the island with a legacy of significant pieces that might attract a new audience sector.

### **Actions**

- Install new signs as part of an overall sign project.
- Upgrade path surface throughout trail.

- Initiate sculpture project that will deliver a series of high quality interpretive sculptures, some of which provide seating.

### 6.9.3 Coire Dubh Trail

The existing Coire Dubh path is an estate maintenance and hill-walkers route that leaves Kinloch village from a point near the Castle and leads a few kilometres uphill into Coire Dubh. Although its upper sections are best left to people with appropriate equipment and experience, the lower part of the path is safe and not too strenuous.

The route takes people through pleasant woodland and past some interesting estate features, including the Japanese bridge and the powerhouse, before coming out onto the lower slopes of Rum's moorland environment with good views up to the high ground. This provides the best impression of Rum's moorland and mountain interior available on a quick and easy walk from the village. In many ways, this path connects people with the NNR more strongly than either the South Side or North Side Trails.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE & SIGNS

We recommend that a new Coire Dubh Trail is established to complement the existing South Side and North Side Trails. The path will require some upgrading, principally to remove waterlogged areas on the moorland section. The route will need waymarking and a viewpoint feature should be built to act as a destination point where people can linger a while before returning to the village. We suggest that this feature should take the form of a stone 'sheep fank' with sheltered seats and an interpretation panel. The characteristics of the path up to the hydro intake will also be described for those people who might like to explore further.

#### INTERPRETATION

The place chosen for the viewpoint feature should give a good view of the hillside, particularly of the different colours in the vegetation, which are signs of changes in the underlying rock type as well as of the fertilising effect of the shearwaters' guano. Both of these topics would give visitors an impression of the factors that shape the ecology of the NNR. It would also be possible to interpret the story of attempts to encourage forest regeneration on the island, since the path passes through scrub woodland. However, this seems less appealing and less closely connected to Rum's unique characteristics. Full specifications for the content of interpretation here will need to be developed through a more detailed interpretation plan.

#### Actions

- Install new signs as part of an overall sign project.
- Upgrade path surface as required.

- Install 'sheep fank' viewpoint structure.
- Develop interpretation at viewpoint.

## 6.9.4 Harris Road

Harris bay occupies a highly picturesque location looking out to sea with the majestic Rum Cuillin providing a dramatic backdrop. Traces of lazy-beds, enclosures and houses from the pre-clearance Harris settlement are clearly visible and serve as powerful reminders of the men, women and children who once lived here. The Bulloughs' mausoleum, in the form of a miniature Greek temple, provides a bizarre but dramatic and strangely beautiful addition to the landscape. Rum ponies can often be seen grazing the old fields.

For visitors who are not able or confident to tackle the high level walks over the Rum Cuillin, an expedition to Harris offers the best and most memorable experience of Rum's unique scenery, atmosphere and both natural and cultural heritage. The road is easy-to-follow, so even visitors with no map reading skills are unlikely to get lost.

### INFRASTRUCTURE & SIGNS

We recommend that the Harris Road should be treated as an important access route for a wide variety of Rum's visitors. The road should be maintained to a high standard and a variety of transport options should be catered for, including walking, cycling, pony-trekking and added-value guided tours using a powered vehicle. Appropriate information and interpretation should be provided for a non-specialist audience who may not have maps or other navigational aids.

The road from Kinloch to Harris is in mostly excellent condition, a major part of it having recently been upgraded. Apart from the roadway itself, the landscape between the reserve boundary and Harris provides a fairly strong wild land experience and we recommend that no further physical interventions are made beyond those essential to provide easy access. All access related interventions such as direction signs should be designed to minimise their visual impact. Interpretation of landscape features should be accomplished with a printed guidebook.

A new high quality reserve entrance should be created at the reserve boundary in Kinloch Glen. The existing dilapidated deer fence should be replaced with a new deer or stock fence as required. The existing vehicle and pedestrian/bike gates should be replaced with hardwood gates and gateposts using features from the traditional Kinloch Castle gates in their design. The existing sign should be replaced with a new reserve identification sign from the NNR sign system.

A sandblasted stone direction sign should be installed at the junction of the roads to Harris, Kilmory and Kinloch. The entrance to the Guirdil path

at Malcolm's Bridge should be made more prominent on the ground, with a bridge nameplate of sandblasted stone being installed to aid navigation, although no mountain paths will be formally waymarked. Resting points in the form of natural-looking boulders might also be provided at key points of interest.

The view from the road immediately above Harris is remarkable as it takes in the whole scene, including the mountains, the bay and the mausoleum. It is also by far the best place from which to appreciate the structure and extent of the pre-clearance settlement. For this reason, and as the feeling of wild land is much reduced here due to the buildings, we recommend installing a small viewpoint feature. This would consist of boulders moved into position to create places to sit, along with a interpretive panel telling the story of the settlement and the mausoleum.

We recommend that Harris itself is kept free of on-site interpretation and that efforts are made to improve the quality of some of the more recent interventions. In particular, the unsightly stock fence around the mausoleum should be replaced with an estate railing following the line of the original stone fence posts. The accumulated rubbish to the front of Harris Lodge should also be removed.

## INTERPRETATION

The Harris road offers a number of places where interpretation could help visitors appreciate the features they are passing and give them a deeper understanding of the island's heritage. In sequence from Kinloch to Harris, these are:

- The old stone crushing machine mounted on a rock outcrop to the left of the track, which is bound to arouse visitors' curiosity. It was used in the Bullough's time to crush stone for road building.
- The view down Kilmory glen, from near the junction with the Kilmory track. The shape of the glacial U-shaped valley is clear. This location would also allow interpretation of the wet heath grassland, which dominates the hillsides in the glen.
- The remains of the dam built during Lord Salisbury's ownership in an attempt to manage the rivers and improve the island's fishing.
- The view into the heart of Atlantic corrie. Visitors are looking into the heart of an extinct volcano here, so there is a good opportunity to interpret the island's geology. Rocks next to the road include the crumbly diatomite that are part of the mountain's structure, and in which Manx shearwaters build their burrows, so this spot would also allow interpretation of the shearwater colony.

- The viewpoint overlooking Harris. This is a particularly rich location, with remarkable views of the lazy beds, a clear impression of the size of the original settlement and a good view of the raised beach.
- Features in Harris itself, including the remains of pre-clearance buildings, the post-clearance house and the Bullough monument.
- Visitors may also encounter a herd of Highland cattle along the road, and may well see some of the island's goats and ponies. Although there is no one spot at which these sightings can be guaranteed, the presence of various grazing animals would be a good starting point for interpretation of how Rum's grasslands are managed.

The route also passes close to a site where golden eagles have nested regularly. It would not be appropriate to draw attention to this specific site, although determined egg collectors could probably find the birds' nesting places for themselves. Instead we recommend making it clear in any guidebook or other media (see below) that the Harris road as a whole offers a good chance of spotting eagles.

All the features listed could merit some form of interpretation on site, with the exception of the view down Kilmory glen. The view of the glacial valley and the wet heath grassland in the distance are neither spectacular enough nor close enough to visitors' immediate experience to make good subjects for interpretation, unless this is delivered in person: remote or subtle features like these can be animated by a live interpreter in ways that are difficult or impossible for impersonal media.

We have given serious consideration to a series of installations along the Harris road, using carefully designed interpretation panels that would be presented so as to complement the landscape. This could be achieved, for example, by mounting them on large boulders. Panels would allow the interpretation to use large, high quality illustrations – particularly relevant to interpreting the ancient volcano at Atlantic corrie – and would be available to all visitors at all times.

However, despite the presence of the road and its bridges, which are obvious human interventions, the journey to Harris feels like a wild experience. There is a danger that introducing a series of panels would change this and create a sense of being in a closely managed landscape. On balance, we recommend that no fixed interpretation should be provided along the route, except at the viewpoint over Harris itself. Here the sense of human presence and influence on the land is so clear, and the range of features to interpret so complex, that we believe a panel would be appropriate. Further details about this installation are given below.

We also recommend against fixed interpretation within Harris itself. One reason for this is that it is difficult to predict what route visitors might take once they reach the settlement, although most will probably head for

the Bullough monument as an obvious landmark. It would be possible to mount a panel on the wall of Harris Lodge closest to the monument, but this seems inappropriate for a building that is still in current, if erratic, use as accommodation. Providing panels at all the features that might merit interpretation here could create an impression close to that of an open-air museum.

We particularly advise against providing any on-site interpretation at the Bullough monument. Although anyone arriving in Harris who does not know who the Bulloughs were might find the monument puzzling, the majority will probably already have taken a castle tour and should therefore be primed with the knowledge they need to appreciate the monument. The building is its own interpretation of the Bullough family and of how they saw themselves; adding to it with any fixed installation could seem crass. However, many visitors may not discover the remains of the original monument, which are equally as telling about the Bulloughs and their time. This feature should be highlighted in any interpretation that takes the place of on-site installations.

Although on-site panels are not appropriate along the Harris road, we consider it is important to provide interpretation that can accompany visitors' journey and help them appreciate the features described above. We suggest that this should be done through the new Rum Guide as described in more detail elsewhere in this report.

### 6.9.4.1 Harris Overlook

An interpretation panel for the view over Harris should be installed at the Harris overlook, together with some seating on rough stones – in fine weather this is a magnificent place to stop before the final descent to Harris, or to rest after the climb out of the settlement on the return to Kinloch.

The panel should support the following key themes:

- *Rum's geology is unique. It offers spectacular insights into what happens inside volcanoes and into how climate changes have shaped Scotland.*
- *Rum has a rich cultural history that spans over 7,000 years of human activity. People have left sometimes spectacular traces of communal effort to work the land, of cruelty and tragedy, and of a time when the whole island was a rich man's playground.*

The panel should use a high quality illustration that reconstructs a view of the settlement as it might have looked at the height of its importance. Enlarged sections should show details of everyday activities being carried out by its inhabitants.

### **Actions**

- **Install new signs as part of an overall sign project.**

- Install new gates and fence at Kinloch Glen reserve entrance.
- Install new estate fence around mausoleum and remove rubbish at Harris.
- Ensure key features along the Harris road are included in the Rum Guide.
- Develop interpretation panel and associated seating for Harris viewpoint.

## 6.9.5 Kilmory Road

A visit to Kilmory also provides a memorable experience for visitors. Kilmory occupies a picturesque location where the Kilmory River meets the sea at a lovely sandy beach. Traces of the old Kilmory settlement and the intact graveyard are highly evocative places that connect us powerfully with the human stories of the families that once lived here. At the right time of year, Kilmory is an excellent place to watch the red deer rut, which is one of Scotland's most impressive wildlife spectacles.

### INFRASTRUCTURE & SIGNS

The road to Kilmory is currently in very poor condition, being impassable to vehicles other than those equipped with four wheel drive. The road is very difficult to cycle and quite unpleasant to walk. We recommend that the Kilmory Road should be treated as an important access route for a wide variety of Rum's visitors. The road should be upgraded and maintained to the same standard as the Harris Road, with a variety of transport options being catered for, including walking, cycling pony-trekking and added-value guided tours using a powered vehicle.

Appropriate information and interpretation should be provided for this non-specialist audience who may not have maps or other navigational aids. Resting points in the form of natural-looking boulders might also be provided at points of interest.

Apart from the roadway itself, the landscape between the reserve boundary and Kilmory provides a fairly strong wild land experience and we recommend that no further physical interventions are made beyond those essential to provide easy access. All access-related interventions such as direction signs and boundary markers should be designed to minimise their visual impact. Interpretation of landscape features should be accomplished with a printed guidebook.

As mentioned above, a sandblasted stone direction sign should be installed at the junction of the roads to Harris, Kilmory and Kinloch. The boundary of the deer research area should be marked with a new boundary marker. The function of this marker should be simply to raise awareness of the research project's existence, prompt visitors who are already aware of it that they are entering the research area, and encourage suitable behaviour

while in the area. The boundary is currently marked by a low stone with a plastic panel which is partly hidden in the grass and does little to reflect the international standing of the project. The new marker should include the name of the project and up to 75 words of text. The text should introduce the research as the longest running study of a large animal anywhere in the world, make clear that it depends on observing the deer in as near to a natural state as possible, and introduce the fact that deer counts may be in progress at any time. It could also reinforce the need for responsible access, particularly not approaching wild animals and keeping any dogs under close control.

In combination with upgrading the Kilmory Road, the proposed deer watching hide offers an opportunity to dramatically raise the profile of the Kilmory rut as a unique opportunity for visitors to experience one of Scotland's best wildlife spectacles. A hide would also add a sometimes much needed shelter from the weather and should help to reduce possible disturbance of the deer. To create the required sense of occasion, the hide will need to be of high quality design and construction, equal to or even better than the existing Otter Hide. The hide must also be designed and located very carefully so as not to impinge on the existing and very special sense of place associated with the Kilmory graveyard.

## INTERPRETATION

There are a number of features along the road to Kilmory that could merit interpretation:

- The wet heath grassland. Visitors are walking through this habitat, and imaginative interpretation could bring alive its significance as one of the island's key habitat types.
- Woodland plots. The first plot on the left after the junction with the Harris road is a particularly good demonstration of how small woodlands, with a distinctive array of plant and bird species, can thrive on Rum given appropriate management.
- The deer research area boundary. This is an appropriate place to mark the presence of and introduce the research project, as described above.

At Kilmory itself, the work of the deer research team, their findings about deer biology and behaviour, the wildlife of the sand dunes and its sensitivity, and the haunting remains of the settlement are all rich topics for interpretation. It would also be possible to interpret the use of Kilmory as a laundry during the Bullough's time, although the building that once housed the laundry has been re-clad and it is hard to imagine its former use.

The Kilmory research project are keen to develop better communication with visitors who arrive at Kilmory, as well as to provide a sheltered hide from which people could have a good view of the deer and to encourage

them to approach the beach from Kilmory cottage rather than from farther up the glen, so as to avoid too much disturbance to the animals. The project team would also like to make clear that the project worker's cottage is private.

As with the road to Harris, there are arguments for and against using fixed panels as an interpretation medium along the Kilmory road. There is no easily identifiable place where the wet heath could easily be interpreted, and concerns about possible intrusion in the landscape mean it is difficult to justify a panel on this subject. The woodland plot is an obviously managed area, so fixed interpretation here would be more appropriate. However, it could equally be interpreted through the proposed guidebook.

At the boundary of the research area, a marker with more prominence and a more considered design than the current one is appropriate. This should not carry detailed interpretation: although visitors may see deer at any point along the road, they are almost guaranteed good views of them at Kilmory itself, where they are likely to spend time and be more receptive to interpretation about both the project and the animals.

Once at Kilmory, it is far easier to justify fixed interpretation. A panel mounted on the wall of the woodshed could introduce the place as a whole and guide visitors towards the hide. Within the hide, panels could interpret the research project and the deer in detail.

The settlement site and graveyard are more of a challenge. It would be possible to provide sensitively-placed interpretation here: the discreet low-level stone panels used at Skara Brae on Orkney are an example of how structures that help visitors understand a place can be installed in a sensitive environment. But their content is necessarily minimal, and Kilmory presents particular challenges. It is not a closely managed and manicured site like Skara Brae, and much of its charm lies in the sense that you are discovering the place for yourself, almost as if no-one has been there for years. Permanent installations would destroy this. Vulnerable to disturbance by deer, they would also need regular checking and maintenance. Lastly, the story represented by the gravestone for the children who died from diphtheria is so poignant and so eloquent in itself that any modern physical addition would be out of place.

Interpretation for the settlement site could be provided in the proposed deer hide, which may well be close by, but this would be an awkward combination of subjects. We would prefer to restrict interpretation in the hide to the deer, the research project and other wildlife watching opportunities. We suggest that the best place to interpret the former settlement is on a panel mounted on the woodshed, so that it forms part of an introduction to the place as a whole. More detail could be provided in the proposed guidebook.

For the sake of consistency, we suggest it is also preferable to interpret features along the road, such as the wet heath and the woodland plot, through the guidebook. The only installation along the road would be the marker for the boundary of the research project area. At Kilmory itself, however, fixed interpretation can play a valuable role and we see considerable potential for a more proactive approach to interpreting the research project. Details of these proposals follow.

### 6.9.5.1 Woodshed display

Once visitors can see the buildings at Kilmory from the top of the final descent to the settlement, they will tend naturally to head for the buildings. It is desirable to lead them away from the research worker's cottage, and a display mounted on one wall of the woodshed should help to achieve this.

Interpretation here needs to introduce Kilmory, orientate visitors to what is a deceptively extensive site, and provide some interpretation that can help visitors appreciate features that will not have more specific provision elsewhere, such as the former settlement. Many possible topics could be interpreted here, and the display will need several separate panels to present the content most effectively. Even so, a disciplined approach to the range of subjects covered and to the amount of detail presented will be needed.

Final specifications for the themes, content and design of the display will need to be developed through a more detailed interpretive planning exercise. The key elements should be:

- A plan of Kilmory, identifying the key buildings, the location of the deer hide, and showing the preferred access route to the beach. Text on the plan should make clear that the research worker's cottage is private.
- An introduction to the deer research project. This should build on the very brief statement at the boundary, but should not attempt to describe the project or its results in detail. Instead it should encourage an interest in the work by describing how exhaustively the deer are monitored, mention one or two key findings, and direct people to the deer watching hide, if this is developed, where they can find more information and a good view of the deer.
- A brief statement about how to behave when close to the deer so as to avoid disturbing them and interfering with research.
- An evocation of Kilmory as an active settlement both before and after the clearances. This should establish the settlement as the second largest after Harris and encourage visitors to find both the outlines of the ruined buildings and the graveyard. Interpretation might make a

direct comparison between the children's gravestone and the Bullough's ostentatious monument at the other end of the island.

- A description of how Kilmory was the site of the laundry during the Bulloughs' time. This should refer to how Kilmory is reputedly the driest place on Rum, and bring alive the experiences of the maids who worked here and the servants who brought dirty laundry by pony and cart from Kinloch. The text could refer to the short story by Linda Cracknell inspired by this history, as long as copies of this are available at the castle.

### 6.9.5.2 Deer hide interpretation

We support the development of a wildlife watching hide at Kilmory, subject to concerns about the currently proposed location and building design being addressed. A hide offers the best opportunity for interpreting the deer and the research work where it is most relevant. A visitor centre in Kinloch should also interpret the project, but it would be a missed opportunity not to present the work on site at Kilmory.

Current proposals are for the hide to have two internal spaces, one that can be reserved for research workers' use and the other open to the public. Proposals also include providing panels in the publicly accessible section that will carry interpretation about the project and its results. We support the idea of using panels to present interpretation here. Since people may spend some time in the hide, a fairly elaborate display could be developed. Panels mounted underneath the windows would interpret what visitors are likely to see in front of the hide, while panels on the walls could give more detail about the research work and its findings. We recommend that panels under the windows should include some mention of wildlife other than deer, since visitors may well see birds such as sea eagles during their stay.

Specifications for the structure of the panels and for their content should be developed as an integral part of detailed planning for the hide. It is particularly important that displays in the hide should be developed with professional interpretive input to their content and design. Although many students who have specialist knowledge visit Kilmory, the key audience for the displays should be seen as visitors who have no scientific knowledge. The level of detail presented, and the language and visual material used should be appropriate for them rather than for scientists.

### 6.9.5.3 Antler store viewing window

It would be fascinating for visitors to be able to see inside the old laundry: the dramatic collection of antlers collected over the life of the project gives a far more immediate impression of the length of time over which it has been running than can be achieved by any display of graphic panels.

If the increased light would not affect the antlers, we recommend that a viewing window is installed in one wall of the building, allowing visitors to

see inside. It will probably be necessary to provide a push-button operated light so the room can be lit for a few minutes: since this will only be used intermittently electricity might come from a solar power array. A panel next to the window should interpret both the collection of antlers, using an illustration to show how much information about an animal can be gleaned from measurements, and the history of the building as a laundry house.

#### 6.9.5.4 Research project open days

There is considerable potential to develop more proactive interpretation of the deer research project. Personal contact between research staff and visitors would give visitors an in depth and personalised insight into the project's work, allowing a detailed exposition of its methods and results.

Project staff do already meet visitors during times of peak activity in the rut. A Land Rover is often parked on the road to Kilmory and staff meet visitors as they walk along, give them a leaflet about the project and talk about their work as well as explaining what behaviour will cause least disturbance to the deer and to the research. We recommend exploring the possibility of extending this by organising a limited number of 'open days' when staff would be available to talk to visitors and show them the antler store. Ideally one or two open days should be held during the peak season for tourist visitors: they would need to be promoted in Kinloch and at the castle. An alternative or possibly an addition to this would be to organise talks by research project staff as part of the programme of activities offered in Kinloch, complementing and adding to the presentations currently offered by the island ranger.

#### **Actions**

- Install new signs as part of an overall sign project.
- Upgrade the road surface throughout its length.
- Work with the deer research group to install a high quality wildlife watching hide at Kilmory.
- Develop interpretation display for woodshed wall.
- Develop viewing window and associated interpretation for antler store.
- Develop interpretation for wildlife watching hide, once the design and location for this have been finalised.
- Consider developing programme of deer research open days and talks.

#### **6.10 Access services**

Staying overnight on Rum enables people to gain a meaningful experience of the National Nature Reserve, either by walking the hill paths or along the roads to Harris or Kilmory. However, it is currently much more difficult

for day visitors to experience the wilder aspects of Rum, primarily because they do not have enough time to walk into the island's interior.

Rum also imposes constraints related to the abilities of its visitors. People who are fit and experienced in hill walking can gain the widest experience. A large proportion of visitors could walk to Harris or Kilmory on the island roads and get a good flavour of the reserve. Anyone unable to walk these distances cannot currently access these important reserve experiences in person.

The two roads that traverse the island provide opportunities to increase reserve access for a wide range of people. The Harris road is currently in a good enough condition to do this, although the Kilmory road would need substantial upgrading, and both would demand significant ongoing maintenance. Opportunities for increasing access include:

- Providing bikes for the use of Rum's visitors. This would allow many of Rum's day and overnight visitors to experience more of the island's interior during the time they have available. Self-guided interpretation would be available in the new Rum Guide. The bikes could be made freely available by SNH or could be part of a bike hire scheme, the income from which would help pay for its management and maintenance, perhaps by a small local business.
- Providing guided bike tours with a trained interpretive guide who stops to interpret multiple points of interest along the way. This would provide visitors with a meaningful experience that helps them connect strongly with the reserve and its stories. This added-value service might be offered as an extension to the bike hire discussed above.
- Providing a simple return trip 'taxi' service to Harris and/or Kilmory. This might allow Rum's day visitors to experience at least something of the island's interior. However, due to the boat timetable, the length of the journey and the need for a tough vehicle, this is likely to benefit perhaps as few as three or four people per day. Being driven non-stop to Harris or Kilmory on a fairly tight schedule due to the ferry sailing times is also likely to produce a relatively shallow experience that does not connect people strongly with the reserve or its stories.
- Providing a 'Land Rover safari' to Harris and/or Kilmory with a trained interpretive guide who stops to interpret multiple points of interest along the way. Although this would benefit only a small number of people staying overnight on Rum, the experience gained by them would be much deeper and more meaningful than a taxi service.

Widening access opportunities to the island's interior is clearly a desirable aim. However, a large part of Rum's special quality and its attraction for visitors is the feeling of it being a remote and wild place, so an appropriate balance needs to be struck between enabling access and

preserving the island's special qualities. For example, we believe that disgorging 10-15 people at once from a minibus at Harris would significantly reduce the quality of the experience for people who have walked, cycled or even arrived there by Land Rover in smaller groups.

The taxi service and Land Rover safaris might cause similar problems if they were run multiple times a day. However, we believe these services are likely to be largely self-regulating due to demand, the boat timetable, the length of the journey and the need for a tough (probably small) vehicle. If the vehicles are licensed by SNH, the number of licenses issued would allow tight control over the amount of disturbance caused.

Licensing would also help ensure that all vehicles are appropriate for the purpose. In the case of motorised transport, this means vehicles that are durable, attractively presented, well maintained and insured. Ideally, vehicles would be capable of carrying people with a variety of disabilities. Guides would need to have appropriate people skills and be trained in guiding and face-to-face interpretation.

A seemingly ideal way of providing some or all of the access services outlined above is if they are licensed by SNH but provided by small local businesses on a fully commercial basis. However, it is quite possible that these services will not be commercially viable if provided at the quality required for a National Nature Reserve. In this case, to the extent that these services are seen as helping to deliver desirable or essential NNR visitor services, SNH may have to consider 'pump priming' their initial development, and/or buying or subsidising the ongoing services.

### **Actions**

- Investigate opportunities for improving access to the reserve.

## **6.11 Ranger service**

The island's Ranger Service is a valuable mechanism for interpretation, both through informal contact with visitors and more formal means such as events and talks.

The ranger currently meets the CalMac ferry as it arrives and has developed a 'joint ticketing' arrangement with CalMac so visitors can buy a ticket for a guided walk at the same time as their ferry booking. This seems to have good support at the Fort William ticket office, but not so much at Mallaig. Despite the variable support from CalMac, the arrangement appears to have had good results in increasing take-up for guided walks.

We recommend that the ranger should continue to meet the ferry, although we suggest that the new shelter and reception point should include a more clearly identifiable place for them to be stationed and that they wear more clearly badged clothing. We also support the ticketing arrangement with CalMac, and recommend ensuring that it is promoted at all ticket outlets.

There is an existing programme of evening talks and day-time events and walks. Experience with the joint ticketing arrangement suggests that a more strongly pro-active approach to the ranger's interpretive role would pay dividends, and we recommend developing and extending this programme. There is potential to establish Rum as a place where visitors can have a unique and personal interpretation of the island, and to promote the range of face-to-face interpretation as a strong selling point. Ideas to explore in developing the programme include:

- Supporting all staff involved in speaking to visitors so they can develop more sophisticated presentation techniques, including the use of audio-visual media, audience participation and using objects as part of the presentation.
- Extending the variety of evening talks so they include presentations on a number of defined themes, in addition to a general introduction to the island.
- Developing a range of indoor activities that can be offered in bad weather. Activities planned for the day time are often cancelled because of poor conditions: offering an alternative both for those who might have booked the activity and those who might be prevented from going for an independent walk would foster a sense of care for the audience and of commitment to a high quality visitor experience.
- Developing activities that most visitors can only try if accompanied by a guide. The chance to visit the shearwater burrows at night is an obvious example here. Anyone guiding visitors to the burrows on a commercial basis will need mountain guiding and night navigation skills and qualifications, and we understand that there is an intention to train staff to the level required. We strongly support this as a development that would enable Rum to offer a dramatic, world-class wildlife experience that is unique to the island.
- Coordinating input from other people, such as deer research project or estate staff, who could be invited to present their work and specialist interest. It is important that contributors should be comfortable and confident about speaking to the public so as to maintain a consistent quality of presentation.
- Encouraging awareness of and positive opinion about the range of personal interpretation on offer. Many visitors may not expect to take part in guided walks and talks: if high quality personal interpretation can be established as part of Rum's 'offer' it would help to build the island's reputation and drive custom for the events. We suggest that the ranger service should establish a presence on social media networks, particularly Facebook, and that audience members should be encouraged to 'like' the service and to post reviews of their experience both on Facebook and on review sites such as TripAdvisor. These

mechanisms have a lot of potential to raise the profile of the service but they will need regular monitoring and involvement, partly so that the ranger service is seen as an active member of the network and if necessary to respond to any negative comments.

### **Actions**

- Provide clearly badged clothing.
- Support all staff who have formal contact with visitors to develop more sophisticated presentation skills.
- Develop and extend ranger-guided events programme.
- Build awareness of ranger-guided events programme through social media.

### **6.12 Business opportunities**

Rum needs successful new businesses if its economy is to become self-sustaining. Some potential opportunities for small visitor-orientated businesses are outlined below, although business plans should be developed for these to determine their likely viability.

- A visit to Harris or Kilmory would provide a rewarding experience for many visitors, but the distance may be too great for some to walk there and back. Many more people might be able to experience these places if they could ride there on bicycles. The Harris road is currently suitable for bike riders of a wide variety of abilities, although the Kilmory road would need significant upgrading to make it usable. An opportunity may exist to rent bikes to visitors by the hour or day, with a further option to offer added-value guided bike tours.
- Some people who cannot walk or ride to Harris or Kilmory due to a lack of ability or time may be interested in vehicle-based access to these places. A limited taxi service may be appropriate, although a better mix of low impacts and high revenues may come from activities such as Land Rover safaris which include added-value elements such as an engaging and informative guide. Vehicle access to the National Nature Reserve would need to be professionally organised (suitable vehicle, insurances, guide training, etc) and be approved and regulated by SNH.
- There may be a demand amongst some visitors for guided tours of Rum's key natural assets and locations, including the Rum Cuillin, Hallival shearwater nest sites, Dibidil, Guirdil, Harris and Kilmory. These guided activities may be on foot, by bike, by Land Rover or by kayak. An opportunity may exist for an individual to set themselves up as Rum's resident guide available for hire. This person would need appropriate guiding and interpretation skills.

- There is a lack of variety and quality in the accommodation currently offered to Rum’s visitors. It is likely that many visitors would appreciate the opportunity to stay with a friendly local family in B&B or guest house accommodation. Others might be interested in hostel accommodation, basic camping cabins or luxury eco-lodges. Any of these may offer opportunities for small-scale hospitality businesses.
- In more general terms, the Isle of Rum has a level of brand awareness amongst the people of Scotland and further afield, many of whom are likely to associate the name with a variety of largely positive concepts such as mountains, wildlife, nature, clean air and mystery, amongst others. This ‘brand equity’ has significant marketing value that can be tapped into if the name is attached to suitable products or services. This can be seen in products such as Isle of Mull cheese and Orkney beer which use positive associations to help sell produce, although this works best if the quality of the produce lives up to that of the place. Rum should look for opportunities to leverage its positive brand equity in products and services that have a strong relationship to the place.

Building small visitor-orientated businesses is not an easy option, nor is it one that will be suitable for everybody. A customer-focussed and service-orientated ethos is a prerequisite for success in this field. A willingness to learn about marketing, book-keeping, tax, insurance and other aspects of small business administration is also required for anyone who has not done this before.

We suggest that enterprise agencies should be approached to provide a package of support for businesses, including an experienced business mentor to work with islanders on business development, subsidised training in business skills, sector-specific learning journeys to learn from good practice in other places, and subsidised business advice in specialist areas such as customer care, product design and marketing.

### **Actions**

- Encourage and support individuals to explore new small business opportunities.

## **7 Project table & costs**

The following table gives a summary of the actions and projects described in the report together with indicative budget costs for each. These outline costs are provided for preliminary budgeting purposes only, as a variety of currently unknown factors are likely to affect them as a result of further research, detailed planning and design. The table also suggests the organisation that might be most appropriate to lead on each action, although the vast majority should be run as joint initiatives. All costs exclude VAT.

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Ref	Item	£ cost	Lead	Report section
	<b>Overarching issues</b>			
01	Develop new resident housing		IRCT	4.3.1
02	Develop new visitor accommodation		IRCT	4.3.2
03	Consider creating new village centre		IRCT	4.3.3
04	Consider using Byres for key village facilities		SNH/IRCT	4.3.3
05	Identify long-term future for Kinloch Castle		SNH	4.3.4
06	Create memorable heritage experiences		SNH	4.3.5
07	Create memorable facility & service experiences		IRCT	4.3.6
08	Build enterprise capacity within community		IRCT	4.3.6
09	Establish reliable services and utilities		SNH/IRCT	4.3.6
	<b>Pre-arrival</b>			
10	Enhance boat & ferry marketing & experience	5,000	SNH	6.1.1
11	Consider marketing the Small Isles as a whole	20,000	IRCT	6.1.1
12	Develop Rum marketing plan	12,000	SNH	6.1.1
13	Present Rum effectively on NNR website	-	SNH	6.1.2
14	Improve existing Rum website	2,000	IRCT	6.1.2
15	Produce Rum marketing leaflet	5,000	SNH	6.1.3
16	Develop Rum exhibition on CalMac ferry	15,000	IRCT	6.1.4
17	Organise annual familiarisation visits	-	IRCT	6.1.5
	<b>On-island leaflets</b>			
18	Produce new Rum guidebook	20,000	SNH	6.2
19	Update existing Kinloch Castle guidebook	8,000	SNH	6.2
	<b>Ferry terminal</b>			
20	Develop landscape plan and implement	80,000	SNH	6.3.1
21	Design and build ferry shelter	80,000	SNH	6.3.2
22	Provide visitor information	15,000	SNH	6.3.3
23	Provide interpretation	5,000	SNH	6.3.4
	<b>Castle tour</b>			
20	Revise tour briefing document	5,000	SNH	6.4.1 6.4.2

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21	Develop guide training and support	3,000	SNH	6.4.1
22	Develop interpretive plan	10,000	SNH	6.4.3
23	Produce laminated photos	-	SNH	6.4.3
24	Produce post cards (inc photography)	4,000	SNH	6.4.3
	<b>Visitor centre</b>			
25	Redevelop existing visitor centre exhibits	20,000	IRCT	6.5.2
26	Develop new Rum visitor centre exhibits	150,000	SNH/IRCT	6.5.1
	<b>Shop, tearoom, bar &amp; toilets</b>			
27	Develop new facilities in village centre		IRCT	6.6
	<b>Campsite</b>			
28	Upgrade campsite facilities	20,000	IRCT	6.7
	<b>Hostel &amp; bistro</b>			
29	Carry out review of hostel & bistro services	10,000	SNH	6.8
	<b>South Side Trail</b>			
30	Narrow path beyond Otter Hide	-	SNH	6.9.1
31	Change Otter Hide windows	3,000	SNH	6.9.1
32	Provide interpretation at buildings & hide	12,000	SNH	6.9.1
	<b>North Side Trail</b>			
33	Upgrade path surface	35,000	SNH	6.9.2
34	Develop interpretive sculptures	50,000	IRCT/SNH	6.9.2
	<b>Coire Dubh Trail</b>			
35	Upgrade path surface	10,000	SNH	6.9.3
36	Install 'sheep fank' viewpoint	5,000	SNH	6.9.3
37	Provide interpretation at viewpoint	6,000	SNH	6.9.3
	<b>Harris Road</b>			
38	Install new gates & fence at reserve boundary	5,000	SNH	6.9.4
39	Install new estate fence around mausoleum	5,000	SNH	6.9.4
40	Install interpretation and seating at overlook	8,000	SNH	6.9.4

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	<b>Kilmory Road</b>			
41	Upgrade road surface	150,000	SNH	6.9.5
42	Install wildlife watching hide at Kilmory	40,000	SNH	6.9.5
43	Provide woodshed interpretation	6,000	SNH	6.9.5.1
44	Provide wildlife watching hide interpretation	6,000	SNH	6.9.5.2
45	Provide antler store window & interpretation	3,000	SNH	6.9.5.3
46	Develop deer research open days	-	SNH	6.9.5.4
	<b>Access services</b>			
47	Investigate reserve access opportunities		SNH	6.10
	<b>Ranger service</b>			
48	Provide clearly badged ranger clothing	300	IRCT	6.11
49	Provide training in presentation techniques	2,000	IRCT	6.11
50	Extend ranger-guided events programme	-	IRCT	6.11
51	Market events programme through social media	-	IRCT	6.11
	<b>Business opportunities</b>			
52	Encourage and support new businesses		IRCT	6.12
	<b>Signs</b>			
53	Install new Rum NNR and island signs	35,000	SNH	