



Loch Ness Hub & Travel: Our Story



LOCH NESS HUB & TRAVEL
COMMUNITY OWNED & RUN

About Us

Loch Ness Hub will incorporate community transport facilities that will provide a number of active travel services for local people and a visitor information service that will support the vibrant tourism sector around Drumnadrochit, Glen Urquhart, Strathglass and the wider Great Glen area running from Fort William to Inverness.



Loch Ness Hub and Travel is a community benefit company in Drumnadrochit. Offering baggage and shuttle transfers for the Great Glen Way, e-bike hire and visitor information services, Loch Ness Hub and Travel is a one-stop shop for visitors exploring Glen Urquhart and Loch Ness. All profits are invested back into the community to support local businesses, groups and amenities.

The Hub has become a leading supplier in baggage transfers for those walking the long distance trails in the Highlands. The pride and passion of staff shines through in their work, ensuring that visitors to the area receive world class service and the Hub acts as a welcoming face of the community. Sustainable and authentic visitor experience are at the forefront of what the Hub now delivers, with a special collaboration with a local crofter in delivering now famous Highland Cow tour experiences. The hub is seen as an exemplar in Community Led Tourism and is often consulted by communities across Scotland, the UK and Europe.



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In 2018, the Glen Urquhart community investigated the possibility of taking over the recently vacant Tourist Information Centre in Drumnadrochit. Under the guidance of the Glen Urquhart Rural Community Association (GURCA), the local community made use of the centre on a trial basis before moving forward with an asset transfer of the building for community ownership.

Volunteers decorated the building and local groups used the venue to showcase information and activities of interest to visitors, before committing to full community ownership and opening to the public as Loch Ness Hub. To ensure the project was sustainable in the long-term, Loch Ness Hub Ltd was established as a community benefit company to raise funds for the purchase of Loch Ness Travel through a Community Share Offer in 2020. The initiative successfully raised its maximum target, and with additional funding from SSE and local community charity Soirbheas, the purchase of Loch Ness Travel completed in February 2021.



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In 2019, the local Development Trust, Glen Urquhart Rural Community Association (GURCA – charity no: SC 020223) made a successful bid, under the terms of the Community Empowerment Act, for a Community Asset Transfer of the former Tourist Information Centre in Drumnadrochit. The building had been owned by Highland Council and had been dormant since it was vacated by Visit Scotland in 2018. GURCA has secured the necessary funding to purchase the building, which it will own and lease to Loch Ness Hub. The ambition to take over ownership of the building was driven by the community's strong desire to retain a facility within the village, to provide visitor information and promote local attractions and business.

However, it was recognised from the start that the provision of visitor services would require revenue support, so there was a need to identify a business model, which could generate sufficient income to support the maintenance of the building and staffing costs.

At this time, the opportunity arose to purchase Loch Ness Travel, a well-established and successful local business, which provides a baggage handling and taxi service to walkers using the long distance footpaths that pass through and close to Drumnadrochit.

In order to attract funding we needed to demonstrate that our project would provide more benefit to the community and not just to visitors. Around this time, a Transport Feasibility Study commissioned by Soirbheas, highlighted the need and demand for improved community transport and greener/low carbon travel solutions for our area. It became apparent that by working together we could create a transport hub for the community, and the former Tourist Information Centre building's central location would make it the perfect base for the development of the Hub. Incorporating all these elements into the business model for the Loch Ness Hub means the project has greater community benefit and becomes a sustainable model.



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