

IKDT NEWS

Special Edition



New North/South Road!

Wednesday 3rd November 2021 will go down in Kerrera history as the day that our two separate communities were finally connected by a much needed and long desired link road. This critical part of island infrastructure has been something that the community has required for over half a century- and something that has always seemed like it might never happen. The big machinery and equipment arrived on the island on the 3rd August and in a few short months, Alistair McCrae and his team from Barrachander Quarry (Taynuilt) had completed the forestry grade track from the ferry in the centre of the island, up to Ardentrive Farm in the north. While it took only three months to dig and build the road- this project has taken years of hard work and perseverance behind the scenes of the Isle of Kerrera Development Trust.



A momentous occasion- the community walk together on the new road, Sunday 7th November 2021

Project Manager, islander Martin Shields was delighted to see Stage One complete:

"I don't know how many meetings myself and my fellow board members have attended over the years but it's a lot! Add to that the decades of other boards doing the same and it's easy to see why many doubted a positive outcome. In spite of this, I've always felt that we needed to keep believing, to keep getting people round the table because sooner or later, it will land on the desk of someone able to unlock the funding to make it happen.



The formation of the Scottish Government's Islands Team in 2019 and subsequent engagement with the IKDT was the key moment in progressing the project and from that moment, things moved pretty quickly and soon we had A&B Council committing funds as well."

The board of directors are really proud to say that we have successfully delivered Stage 1 of the project- to provide a forest grade track that connects the north and south of Kerrera. This means that our northern residents can have equal access to the lifeline ferry service this winter and beyond, giving them more resilience and opportunity. It also gives the rest of the island access to the excellent marina facilities at the north end, which will be of great benefit in terms of accessing out of ferry hours activities on the mainland. We hope islanders and visitors will make great use of our new fleet of island ebikes on this new route.



Photos 1, 2, 3 - the machinery arrives on Kerrera on the 3rd August. Photo 4 - Alistair McCrae with his digger. Photo 5 - Chair of the IKDT Tim Vollum inspecting the works. Photo 6 - the work in action. Photo 7 - islanders look on from Kerrera Ferry as works begin. Photo 8 - Councillors Roddy McCuish, Elaine Robertson and Jim Lynch inspect the progress.



The road brings many benefits for the community, tourists and businesses

With our new community hub at the Old School very close to completion, this new road allows the whole island access to what will be a much needed neutral venue to meet, learn and socialise for generations to come.

The road will improve Kerrera's already excellent 'tourist offer' and will open up areas of the island previously only accessible by the most intrepid of travellers. The myriad of cyclists and walkers who visit each year will have a new route giving them easy access to the various tourism businesses on the island, including our new ebikes.

Importantly, we will now be able to engage with the local NHS management to try to implement a much needed emergency plan for the island now that the majority can be reached by road. The fire service can now be confident that they could make potential call outs throughout the community in good time- this is great progress for island resilience.



Next steps - Stage 2

No sooner have we cut the ribbon at the end of the whirlwind that was Stage 1, now we are working on Stage 2 which will see the road tar topped. We are hopeful that we can work with the local authority to take advantage of having the plant and manpower on island and try to make some much needed improvements to the existing south end adopted road at the same time. We hope to have Stage 2 completed by March 2022. Look out for the proposed celebration parade for the launch!