

YES Highland na Gàidhealtachd

Business Meeting
Sat. 2 December 2017

InverYESs Hub
Inverness

Sederunt – 14 reps

Forres: Jim Farquharson

Inveryess2: Alastair MacDonald, Alison Fraser, Monica MacDonald, Morgan Cowley

Loch Yess: Malcolm Morrison, Marjorie Wilson

Lochaber Aye2Aye : Irene Salter

Nairnshire Yes2Indy: Aidan McCormack, John Robertson

Ross & Sutherland: Graham Bell, Neil Davidson, Peadar Morgan

Skye & Lochalsh: Carole Inglis

Meeting chair: Graham

Network secretary: Alison

Meeting minutes: Peadar

Minutes 9 September 2017

Approved on the proposal of Monica, seconded by Carole.

Forres report – led by Jim Farquharson

- Activity in neighbouring Nairn is encouraging rejuvenation of the Forres group.
- Moray Common Weal group is the main Yes presence in the rest of the district.

Inverness report – led by Alison Fraser

- Hub continues to be a success, with the street window display proving effective.
- Profitable quiz night money-raiser held in the Hub, and an active craft group.
- Series of talks in the Hub, and two private showings of the Cheviot, Stag & Black Oil.
- Acquisition of one of the last of the latest Indypack run.

Loch Ness report – led by Malcolm Morrison

- Meeting held including visit from Inveryess2 [& Loch Ness visit to Ross|Sutherland].
- Leaflet drop conducted.

Lochaber report – led by Irene Salter

- Hub now open 5 days a week, and with addition of Catalan & Polish branding.
- Video loop catching attention in the Hub window.
- Seeking to reach out to nationals of rEU.
- Conference being arranged for Kilmallie.

Nairnshire report – led by Aidan McCormack

- Stall in High St focussed against Universal Credit, with repeat stall coming up.

Ross & Sutherland report – led by Graham Bell

- Canvassing app by Ian Vallely trialled a few times, & now available on GooglePlay.
- Test samples suggest a No to Yes move, but vote weariness among Yes supporters.
- Aiming at holding full opinion canvasses, with analysis of data collected.

Skye & Lochalsh report – led by Carole Inglis

- Looking at holding a public showing of Google, Stag & Black Oil in Àros Centre.
- No Bridge Too Far crossing of Skye Bridge cancelled because of conflicting events.
- A decline in active participation, so meetings to be replaced by pie & pint sessions.

All Under One Banner report – led by Neil Davidson

- 2018 marches Glasgow 5 May, Dumfries 20 Jun, Inverness 28 Jul.

Bulk merchandising – led by Alison Fraser

- Indypack runs are national; is there value in producing region-specific materials? Designer Colin Dunn has offered his services & bulk buying would minimise costs.
- Meme cards could have local Highland contacts on the reverse.
- Statistics not seen as “facts” if not recognised by voters from personal experience.

Agreed: **Send names & ideas for the promotions group to <https://rossandsutherland@org>.**

Second homes and postal voting – led by Jim Farquharson

- Jim had sent three enquiries to the Scottish Government on this with no reply.
- Those concerns on vote security raised in the Ref. Bill consultation focussed on postal voting, in particular votes claimed by those not resident in Scotland, and on mass completion for care/nursing homes. Proxies were also a concern, but less so.
- Early sight of postal votes through thin paper likely to be resolved by new design.
- Second home ownership peaked in Scotland in 2012, with 36% reduction in discretionary council tax discounts; but there was an increase in 2nd homes where a discount is maintained, as in Moray (10%; & 50% on purpose built second homes).
- Peadar had mapped 2nd homes (2016 NRS household estimates) vs postal vote registration (2017 locals, Electoral Commission), revealing low correlation, but high postal take-up in Caithness and a band Loch Ness–south of Inverness–Moray.

Scottish Independence Convention – led by Marjory Wilson

- Latest gathering had heard that 2014 had seen concrete fears vs abstract hope.
- Confusion remains among voters on the division of responsibilities between the UK and Scottish governments, and also ignorance on voting registration and processes.
- There is campaign tiredness among voters, so the current focus should be on maintaining awareness and addressing issues.
- Influential locals should be targetted, and locally perceived boundaries respected.
- Any emergence of a Yes Establishment should be resisted.

Agreed: **Consider collaboration with Kavanagh on Highland gathering after Dunblane 16 Dec.**

AOCB

- Jim – there is a need for an updated list of Unionist myths and rebuttals of them.
- Peadar – Yes Highland should consider having a presence on the IndyApp; he is in touch with Jason Baird as to the best way a bottom-up regional structure can do this.

Next Meeting

Agreed: **To be determined in light of the 16 Dec. regional gathering in Dunblane.**