

CAITHNESS BROCH PROJECT

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER 2020 TO OCTOBER 2021

We did not hold an AGM in this period – we had pulled the AGM forward to September in 2020 but moved it again to December in 2021. Despite the greater disconnect between the period under review and the AGM date, it was considered that people had greater availability in the evenings during the winter months.

The period has been dominated by 3 themes: website development, the promotional video, and replica broch build site selection.

The website requirements were broadly to create a website that would reflect the ambitions of the project in terms of the scale of content and design aesthetic. We also had challenging technical integration requirements: a looping video, a shop mainly fulfilled by an external supplier (primarily using direct to product printing and drop-shipping) but with some products fulfilled by ourselves, and a map which combined the power of Google maps with our fantasy-style map and pop-up information on attractions throughout Caithness. All of this to be rendered on the myriad of devices that people use these days. Our financial requirement was that the solution should have low ongoing costs. The whole website was designed with an almost unified content management system, with the addition of the web shop which is visually integrated with the rest of the site but is actually delivered independently.

The website is a showcase for the project work the team has done, the broch design work of Bob Marshall, historical reconstruction artist & 3D modelmaker, the fantasy map, and content created by the team – the broch technical description, blog posts, and map content.

The website design contract was funded by a donation by Justin Stottlemyer.

The promotional video preparation involved the usual tussles that come from a team creative work, but ultimately picking the right filmmaker and letting him take creative control was the key to success. The first edit was very exciting but needed some input from the team to refine the vision. The second edit was perfect. This was edited down further in-house to form a looping video for the home page of the website, with a link to the full video including audio. We reached out to our network to get captions in 14 languages.

The replica broch site selection has progressed with some new sites coming into the mix and existing shortlisted sites falling by the wayside. Coming out of this period we had a draft memorandum of understanding for the purchase of one of the sites. This is not a legally binding document but is a statement of intent on behalf of us as purchasers and of the seller, and allows us to get the scope and other conditions down on paper.

CBP reserves are sufficient to cover the current project work, but will need to build up over future years in the expectation of managing larger value projects.

DIRECTORS DURING THIS PERIOD:

Robin Herrick (chair), Iain Maclean (vice-chair), Chris Aitken, Joanne Howdle, Dawn Mackay, Pete MacRae, Kenneth McElroy

NON-DIRECTOR POST-HOLDERS:

Sara Herrick (Treasurer & Membership Secretary)

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THE YEAR IN BRIEF:

Month	Activity
October	Website meetings
November	Talk in Preston
	Ayrshire Archaeological & Natural History Society
	Meet MP and MSP at Ousdale Broch
December	Meeting with Hoskins Architects
	Website design contract kick-off meeting
January	Zoom quiz
	Orkney talk
February	Landowner meeting
	Zoom quiz
	Meeting with filmmaker
March	Dig Ventures talk
	Caithness Science Festival quiz
	Filming with Scene-It Media
May	Kilwinning Heritage talk
	Ousdale site meeting with engineer and Historic Environment Scotland
September	Meet Prehistory Guys
October	Coastal Cannibals talk
	Edinburgh talk