

Aithisg Bhliadhnail

Annual Report

Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan

Scottish Charity Number SC017646

2025 – 2026

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Overview

Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan was established in 1991 to provide traditional music and Gaelic opportunities for young people in Ardnamurchan, Sunart, Morvern and Moidart.

The Fèis delivers lessons during the school term to children in Lochaline, Ardgour, Strontian, Acharacle and Kilchoan.

In July each year, a week-long summer Fèis is held where residential and day attendees receive music tuition, and take part in a range of Gaelic activities including song, drama, film-making, dance and shinty.

This report covers lessons delivered during the school year from August 2025 to July 2026 and the summer Fèis which ran from 13th to 17th July 2026. It also presents the most recent financial statement covering the financial year from April 2025 to March 2026.

The Fèis is managed by a team of volunteers and one freelance part-time administrator.

There were changes to the makeup of the Committee at the AGM in October 2025. The current Management Committee comprises the following individuals:

Committee Members 2025-26	
Position	Name
Chairperson	Violet MacDonald
Treasurer	Karin Sinclair
Secretary	Sue Sinclair
Gaelic Officer	Aonghas MacKay
Child Protection Officer	Cailean Masterton
Committee Member	Jacob Hunter
Committee Member	Ann Moffat
Committee Member	Sarah-Jayne Shankland

Chairperson's Report

I am pleased to present the Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan Annual Report 2025/2026 outlining our activities and celebrating our success.

Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan took place from the 13th-17th July 2026 at Acharacle Primary School: bringing together young folk from Lochaber and beyond, talented tutors, and a supportive community, for an enjoyable week of traditional music, and Gaelic song and culture. This year's Fèis welcomed 70 participants in the main Fèis and 25 in the Fèis Bheag groups. The week was led by a fantastic group of highly respected tutors whose talent, skill and enthusiasm provided inspiration and fun throughout the week as they shared their knowledge and skill in music, Gaelic, song, sport, film making and drama.

Events organized to involve the community throughout the week brought together people of all ages to enjoy music, stories and each other's company. Fèis week kicked off with an outdoor music session with Kirsten MacLeod and Orin Simpson on Sunday the 12th in glorious sunshine. A brilliant new addition for this year. On Tuesday evening, at Acharacle Primary school, Allan Henderson entertained an audience with his tall tales and strange stories. On Wednesday evening, everyone thoroughly enjoyed a family cèilidh in the school with live music from the Lochaber Cèilidh Trail. Tutors then went on to the Loch Shiel Hotel to provide a lively music session. On Thursday evening, our amazing tutors showcased their talent during the tutor's concert with support from the local band Sealladh.

The Fèis week finale was different this year as the local halls were out of action, so the Committee and the local hotel came together to provide the Park Bar experience in Acharacle, with music from Robert Nairn and friends - a great success!

We have continued to offer a comprehensive provision of weekly ongoing instrument tuition in local primary and secondary schools across Ardnamurchan, Sunart and Morven.

Fundraising opportunities and community events have included: the annual Garden open day at Ardshealach Lodge, the Blas festival, the Fèis week raffle and ongoing support/ donations from the local community and businesses.

I would like to thank all Committee members, tutors, students, parents, volunteers and friends of the Fèis for their time, effort and dedication over the past year. Also, thanks to Fèisean nan Gàidheal for their continued support, guidance and funding. This support has been instrumental in our success.

Finally, this year we have said farewell to long-standing Committee member/Chairperson Sarah-Jayne Shankland. Her commitment and dedication to the Fèis all these years have been inspiring. We also have said farewell to Jill Gosney of Ardshealach Lodge, who has shown huge support for the Fèis over many years through hosting the garden open day, providing accommodation for tutors and catering both lunch and evening meals for participants during Fèis week. We will miss you both.

Thank you.

Violet MacDonald

Cathraiche | Chairperson

October 2026



Financial Report

This has been a good year in terms of Fèis finances. The Financial Statement shows details of financial transactions during the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 and shows the account balance at the end of the financial year.

Can I express my sincere thanks to Janette, Fèis Administrator, who does a fantastic job and always takes the time to provide help and advice when it comes to banking and accounting. The invoicing for lessons is always kept up to date.

The tutors' hourly rate has been raised to £35. We should aim to work towards suggested Musicians' Union rates but we are still about 20% below that. I would recommend that the Committee work to try to increase the hourly rate if possible, and I would suggest working with Fèis nan Gàidheal to get advice on how to increase tutor payments in a sustainable manner.

Ongoing fundraising efforts, such as the Garden Open Day and the Main Fèis raffle, contribute significantly to our finances. Unfortunately, we were unable to hold a Fèis dance this year.

This fundraising is making a huge difference, both now and for the future, in the provision of experiences and services for the local youth in Gaelic music, language and culture.

I would like to suggest that the Committee develop a fundraising plan and consider additional options to help with ongoing costs.

Karin Sinclair
Treasurer
October 2026

Weekly Lessons

Student numbers have been reasonably stable throughout this reporting year with approximately 100 students taking lessons across the range of instruments, and with nearly 1100 hours of teaching being delivered across the school year.

Weekly lessons 2025-26		
	Number of lessons	% of total lessons
Accordion, Group Lessons	87	3.6
Accordion, Individual Lessons	196	7.9
Chanter/Pipes, Individual Lessons	174	7.0
Clarsach, Individual Lessons	14	0.6
Fiddle, Group Lessons	233	9.4
Fiddle, Individual Lessons	630	25.5
Guitar, Group Lessons	357	14.4
Guitar, Individual Lessons	68	2.8
Keyboard, Group Lessons	147	5.9
Keyboard, Individual Lessons	567	22.9
Total Lessons Delivered	***2473***	***100.0%***

Tutor pay was increased to £35 per hour from November 2025 although this remains short of the industry standard rates (Musicians Union rate = £44 per hour from August 2025). We will continue to work towards this rate as funding allows. The mileage allowance remained at 40p/mile throughout this year.

We are grateful to our tutors for the tremendous amount of work they put in during the year: Karin Sinclair (fiddle), Murdo Cameron (guitar, accordion and keyboard), Lesley Achim (keyboard), Allan MacKenzie (chanter, whistle) and Lauren Moir (clarsach); and we extend our thanks to Sarah-Jayne Shankland for stepping in to take some fiddle lessons in June.

Fèis week 2026

A full week of activities was held between 13th and 17th July 2026 in the Primary School in Acharacle. Attendees were able to undertake music tuition in a wide range of instruments and partake in a variety of additional activities including Gaelic song, drama, film making and sports.

Lunch was provided each day by Jill and her team from Ardshealach Lodge. The Management Committee would like to extend our thanks to Jill for so many years of support to the Fèis.

Thirteen choices were offered to participants. The tuition was provided by many talented musicians. The tutors for Fèis 2026 were:

Fèis tutors July 2026	
Accordion	Kirsten MacLeod
Chanter/Pipes	Angus Binnie
Clarsach	Lauren Moir
Drama	David Walker
Drumming	Andrew MacPherson
Fiddle	Karin Sinclair, Allan Henderson
Film making	Méabh Ni Dhoibhlin
Gaelic song	Ellen Macdonald
Groupwork	Alasdair Murray
Guitar	Murdo Cameron
Keyboard	Orin Simpson
Shinty	Claire Ford
Tin whistle	Alasdair Murray

There were 70 participants at the main Fèis including thirteen residential attendees.
Thanks must go to the four supervisors (Emma MacLennan, Jacob Hunter, Karen Oakley and Beth Jackson) who looked after the residential participants, supervised break and lunch times, assisted with evening activities and generally made themselves very useful. The residential attendees stayed in accommodation at Garmoran Square and at Moss and huge thanks go to the owners of the accommodation for making it available to the Fèis.

Fèis Bheag was attended by 13 children from P1 to P3 and a further 12 nursery-aged children attended Fèis Bheag Bhìodaich. Fiona Duncan, Kayla Burgess and Karen Oakley supervised crafts, play, singing and dancing.

The sun shone for the whole of Fèis week so the evening activities for attendees included football and a couple of trips to the beach. Events for the wider community included a family cèilidh, a concert by the tutors, several music sessions in the Loch Shiel Hotel and an evening of story-telling. The week ended with an excellent participant's concert on Friday afternoon followed by a lively session in the Loch Shiel Hotel in the evening.

Thanks to all of the tutors, Committee members, parents, helpers and volunteers who made the week such a success.

From the feedback received after the event, 75% of attendees who responded thought the Fèis was excellent with the remaining 25% classing it as good. For 20% of the attendees, it was the first time that they had attended the Fèis. It is encouraging to see new children being introduced to the Fèis experience.

When asked what they had enjoyed about the Fèis one attendee reported that: *"The tutors are really fun and funny"* while others said: *"doing guitar, the tasty lunches, being with people"* and *"having fun and playing music with all my friends".* One of the few comments of things that had not been enjoyed was *"it was too hot":* not a common complaint in the Highlands!

Feedback from the tutors again commented that the communication and administrative support was very good and that the facilities were great. Their feedback was generally very positive with comments such as: *"Overall a great week made even better with the fantastic weather"* and *"I had a lovely week at the Fèis…everybody was lovely and did a fantastic job. We were extremely well looked after"*.

One tutor commented that it would be good to get more Gaelic into the film-making and drama options and, although this will be affected by the level of Gaelic in the students taking these options, it will definitely be addressed for next year.













Annex A: Audit Report and Financial Statement

See accounts below.

Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan

Scottish Charity Number SC017646

Receipts and Payments Accounts

For the year ended 31st March 2026

Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan
Scottish Charity Number SC017646

Independent examiner's report to the charity on the unaudited accounts of Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31st March 2026 which are set out on pages 3 to 6.

Respective responsibilities of trustee and independent examiner

The charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the 2006 Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

* to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and
* to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have not been met, or

2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Marie McMillan

Marie McMillan Cert Acct (Open)
Date: - 22nd July 2026
Finance Manager
Voluntary Action Lochaber
An Drochaid, Claggan Road
Fort William
PH33 6PH

VOLUNTARY ACTION LOCHABER
Buidheann Saor-Thoileach Locaibsair

Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan
Receipts and Payments Accounts
For the year ended 31st March 2026
Scottish Charity Number SC017646

	Note	Year to 2026 Unrestricted £	Year to 2026 Restricted £	Year to 2026 Total £	Year to 2025 Total £
Receipts					
Grants and Donations					
Grants	4	21,126	-	**21,126**	16,277
Donations	5	2,483	-	**2,483**	3,239
Bank interest received		-	-	**-**	-
Charitable Income					
Fundraising Events		1,354	-	**1,354**	5,656
Merchandise		995	-	**995**	789
Performances		300	-	**300**	300
Raffles		2,513	-	**2,513**	2,184
Instrument Hire		1,120	-	**1,120**	1,123
Registration Fees		9,855	-	**9,855**	6,896
Tuition Fees		19,181	-	**19,181**	17,084
Total Receipts		58,927	-	**58,927**	53,548
Payments					
Charitable Activities					
Advertising / Promotion		-	-	**-**	50
Administrators Expenses		2,430	-	**2,430**	1,737
FnG Subscription		200	-	**200**	150
Fundraising Costs		40	-	**40**	-
Instrument Purchases / Maintenance		982	-	**982**	674
Insurances		(214)	-	**(214)**	214
Meals, Entertainment, Performers		1,300	-	**1,300**	900
Printing, Postage and Stationery		133	-	**133**	104
Room Hire / Accommodation		7,843	-	**7,843**	4,287
Software Expenses		230	-	**230**	242
Supplies		2,237	-	**2,237**	1,219
Travel / Transport		153	-	**153**	-
Tutor Expenses		7,280	-	**7,280**	6,327
Tutor Fees		38,903	-	**38,903**	29,116
Governance Costs					
Independent Examination	7	150	-	**150**	-
Total Payments		61,665	-	**61,665**	45,020
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year before transfers		(2,738)	-	**(2,738)**	8,528
Transfers between funds	6	-	-	**-**	-
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		(2,738)	-	**(2,738)**	8,528

Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan
Receipts and Payments Accounts
For the year ended 31st March 2026
Scottish Charity Number SC017646

		Year to 2026 Unrestricted £	Year to 2026 Restricted £	Year to 2026 Total £	Year to 2025 Total £
Statement of Balances - as at 31st March 2026					
Opening cash at bank and in hand		21,845	-	**21,845**	13,317
Add Income		58,927	-	**58,927**	53,548
		80,772	-	**80,772**	66,865
Less Expenditure		61,665	-	**61,665**	45,020
Transfers	6	-	-	**-**	-
Closing cash at bank and in hand		19,107	-	**19,107**	21,845
Bank and Cash Balances					
Treasurers Account		19,107	-	**19,107**	21,845
Outstanding Lodgements		-	-	**-**	-
Outstanding Cheques		-	-	**-**	-
Petty Cash		-	-	**-**	-
	9 & 10	19,107	-	**19,107**	21,845
		-	-	**-**	-

Signed on behalf of all Trustees:

V. MacDonald

Name: VIOLET MACDONALD
Date: 13/7/ 2026

The notes on pages 5 to 6 form part of these financial statements

Fèis nan Garbh Chrìochan
Scottish Charity Number SC017646
Notes to the accounts
For the year ended 31st March 2026

1 **Basis of Accounting**

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with the Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

2 **Nature and purpose of funds**

Unrestricted funds are those that may be used at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the objects of the charity. The trustees maintain a single unrestricted fund for the day-to-day running of the Charity.

Restricted funds may only be used for specific purposes. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for specific purposes.

3 **Related party transactions**

No remuneration was paid to the trustees or any connected persons during the year (2025: £NIL).

4 **Grants**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2026	Total 2025
Fèisean Nan Gàidheal	21,126	-	21,126	16,277
	21,126	-	21,126	16,277

5 **Donations**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2026	Total 2025
Misc Donations	2,483	-	2,483	3,239
	2,483	-	2,483	3,239

6 **Transfers between funds**

There were no transfers between funds during the year (2025: £NIL).

7 **Governance Costs**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2026	Total 2025
Independent Examination	150	-	150	-
	150	-	150	-

8 **Volunteers**

The trustees would like to record their thanks to all the volunteers who dedicate a significant amount of time for no remuneration to the charity.

9 **Restricted Funds**

	At 1st April 2025	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	At 31st March 2026
Restricted Funds	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-

10 **Unrestricted Funds**

	At 1st April 2025	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	At 31st March 2026
Unrestricted Funds	21,845	58,927	(61,665)	-	19,107
	21,845	58,927	(61,665)	-	19,107