



Tìree Ranger Service

Development Plan
2017-2019



Overview

The purpose of the Ranger post is to operate and develop the Tiree Ranger Service [TRS] within the Tiree Community Development Trust [TCDT] under the direction of the Tiree Access Group [TAG].

The post operates over a total area of 78.34 km² with 58.1 km² holding a Natural Heritage designation at the national or international level.

TRS was first established in 2010 to address burgeoning access issues and resulting conflicts between community members and island guests.

These issues stemmed from poor guest behaviour on Tiree (with regard to access, camping and vehicle use), causing damage to common grazings and damage to designated habitats.

TRS aims to promote the sustainable and responsible use of Tiree's landscape by all under the Scottish Outdoor Access Code using the Three Ranger Aims outlined by Scottish Natural Heritage [SNH].

Structure of the Tiree Ranger Service

The post was initially created to promote adherence to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code by island guests and residents under the title of Access Officer.

TRS has since expanded its remit to incorporate more environmental education, recreation and community engagement. The job title changed to Tiree Ranger in 2013.

In Autumn 2016, TRS moved from management by Tiree Rural Development [TRD] to management by the TCDT.

The post is currently funded by grants from SNH, TCDT and Discover Tiree.

Objectives for Delivery by the Tiree Ranger Service

The Three Ranger Aims - as outlined by SNH:

- To ensure a warm welcome and provide support for people to enjoy the outdoors
- To increase awareness, understanding and responsible use of our Natural and Cultural heritage
- To support the sustainable management and use of the outdoors to meet a range of social, economic and environmental objectives



Core Ranger Service Provisions - as required and assessed by SNH:

- The provisions of 20 events and activities each year to raise awareness of our natural heritage
- To provide 5 activities each year that form part of the Curriculum for Excellence for young people
- To provide volunteering opportunities for 50 people each year, whilst enhancing the area using 200 volunteer hours
- The provision of training and development skills for young people and community members
- To increase the awareness among land managers of their responsibilities under the Scottish Outdoor Access Code
- To improve, manage and promote the use of outdoor resources
- The monitoring and management of designated natural heritage sites, priority species / habitats and invasive non-native species projects
- To engage proactively with other organisations, including other ranger services, to share resources
- To engage in activities that contribute to wider rural development, such as working with local tourism groups or businesses and engaging with community empowerment agendas at the local level



Core Duties of the Ranger - as required by TCDT:

Coordinating the Tiree Access Group

- The Ranger will arrange and attend regular meetings of the TAG; raising and undertaking action points as directed.

Engaging with Guests

- The Ranger will greet island guests routinely at the CalMac pier. This is with the intention of providing a warm and informative welcome for all; acting to encourage good guest behaviour and a positive island experience.
- Further, the Ranger will meet with participants in the Croft Camping Scheme as they arrive to collect payment and offer advice and directions.

- During the main guest season [June, July, August] TRS will operate a programme of guided walks, events and evenings for both visitors and residents. These events will include the distribution of publications, the sale of fund-raising items and the promotion of *Nàdair Thiriodh* membership.
- Off-Island contact will be offered through: the TRS Twitter account, the Discover Tìree Facebook page, *Nàdair Thiriodh* membership [with associated newsletter and blog] and Press Releases including regular articles in *An Tirisdeach*.



Engaging with the Community

It is essential that TRS maintains a positive relationship with the island community. Building trust by remaining transparent and keeping the community informed is a critical part of this process.

This will be achieved by:

- Posting regular updates using: Facebook Tìree, The TCDT newsletter and website; the *Nàdair Thiriodh* membership newsletter and blog; the Isle of Tìree website and *An Tirisdeach*.
- The Ranger will also maintain a visible and openly approachable presence on the island - in addition to attending meetings of the TAG and Discover Tìree to report on activities and collaborate on new initiatives.
- The Ranger service acts as an intermediary between island residents (in particular, the agricultural community) and island guests. Members of the agricultural sector are encouraged to engage with the Ranger in person at events such as NFU meetings, Livestock Marts and Agricultural Shows.



Managing Beach Parking Areas

- Condition monitoring and maintenance of beach parking areas (including signage and site marking) are an important part of this role.
- The Ranger will offer input on potential upgrades to parking areas and access tracks; with a view to minimising access conflicts and erosion damage to grazings and protected habitats

Overseeing the Croft Camping/Motorhome Scheme

- The post is responsible for the operation and promotion of the Tiree Croft Camping Scheme.
- The Ranger will take bookings and payments, liaise regularly with Croft Site owners and work to oversee croft sites and signage.

Service Administration

- The Ranger will manage the routine administration of TRS together with other TCDT staff: Including quarterly reports to SNH, drawdowns, budget tracking and payments to Croft Site owners.
- In line with core funding requirements from SNH, the Ranger is required to identify and obtain additional sources of funding for the Service. This takes place through grant-sourcing for specific projects, fund-raising through activities such as guided walks, evening events and the Croft Camping scheme and through promotion of the Friends of Nàdair Thiriodh; plus collaboration on the production, promotion and sale of publications [stickers, T-shirts, books and brochures] with Discover Tiree to raise funds.
- Two off-road wheelchairs are available to hire from the Ranger. The post manages their maintenance, allocation and promotion to guests and residents.

Supporting Education

- Further to objectives for encouraging the responsible and sustainable enjoyment of the outdoors, the Ranger works with the Tiree School and other community or visiting groups to deliver educational projects.
- The service actively seeks to strengthen links with The Hynish Centre, Cùram, and the Tiree GP Surgery to promote and support outdoor activities for vulnerable groups.

Working with Volunteers

- To support cost-effective operation of TRS - and to offer opportunities for people to enjoy working outdoors for their community, the Ranger is responsible for promoting, providing and coordinating volunteering and volunteer training schemes on the island.



Schedule and Budget for the Tíree Ranger Service

SNH requires that the delivery of the Three Ranger Aims [as divided into SNH Core Ranger Service Provisions and their associated target figures] is reported on and evidenced every quarter. This gives access to the next drawdown of grant funding for the post.

In total, SNH provides the service with £12,000 annually [divided into three-monthly drawdown payments of £3,000] under the current funding agreement. This agreement has been secured until autumn 2019; though payments after 2017 are indicative.

The SNH payment schedule for 2017 is as follows:

PERIOD COVERED BY CLAIM	ANTICIPATED CLAIM VALUE	CLAIM DATE
1 October 2016 - 31 December 2016	£3,000	15 January 2017
1 January 2017 - 31 March 2017	£3,000	15 April 2017
1 April 2017 - 31 June 2017	£3,000	15 July 2017
1 July 2017 - 30 September 2017	£3,000	15 October 2017

The Ranger post is then match funded by:

- Tíree Community Development Trust at **£7,000** annually - paid as a monthly salary; variable total annual contribution based on input from Discover Tíree
- Discover Tíree at **£5,000** annually - variable; paid at the end of each financial year
- Donations from 'Friends of *Nàdair Thiriodh*'

To ensure the sustainability of the TRS, additional sources of income will be considered on an ongoing basis, including:

- Grants from external funders
- Donations or fees generated from TRS events
- Local fundraising opportunities (raffles etc.)

Delivery and Outcomes of the Tiree Ranger Service

1/ What does TRS do to **promote** opportunities to enjoy the outdoors?

- Authoring bi-monthly articles in *An Tirisdeach*
- Authoring the quarterly *Nàdair Thiriodh* members' newsletter
- Authoring weekly blog articles for *Nàdair Thiriodh*
- Creating an online 'Events' calendar detailing Ranger activities for the public
- Distributing six printed island brochures, in association with Discover Tiree
- Distributing printed and online posters for each public event
- Maintaining a strong presence on the Isle of Tiree website which averages 100,000 hits per annum
- Managing content for the Isle of Tiree Facebook page [3,000 followers and rising in May 2017]
- Managing content for the new TRS Twitter feed [225 followers and rising in May 2017]
- Producing four press releases per annum
- Promoting three 'Look and See' books on Tiree's Natural Heritage [children 8 – 12 years], created in association with Discover Tiree
- Promoting use of the Tiree Visitor App in association with Discover Tiree [included on the Ranger email account signature]
- Sale of the Tiree Walks Guide [twelve self-guided routes] in association with Discover Tiree



2/ How many people does the Tiree Ranger Service **welcome** and **engage** with?

- 21,150 guests arrived by ferry in 2016
- 5,750 guests arrived by plane in 2016

- 162 bookings from motorhome owners in 2016
- 650 Islanders reside here and engage with TRS
- 100 schoolchildren reside here and/or visit the island per annum
- 50 schoolchildren with a disadvantaged background visit the island per annum
- 20 people with a disability engage with TRS per annum

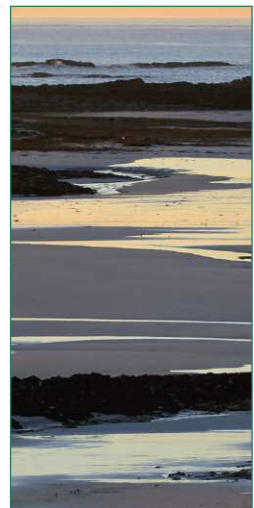
3/ What does the Tiree Ranger Service do to **increase participation** by a broader demographic range?

- The Ranger is working to establish links with the Health Care service on the island, to offer tailored activities for people with mental illness, poor physical fitness or those suffering from isolation
- The Ranger works closely with *Cùram* to encourage elderly and less mobile residents to enjoy the outdoors through a programme of tailored activities and events
- The Ranger works closely with The Hynish Centre to provide outdoor learning opportunities for young people from a disadvantaged background and young people with a disability
- TRS provides two adapted wheel chairs, free of charge, for use off-road and on the island's beaches. The wheel chairs are available to residents and guests.

4/ How many **volunteering** opportunities does the Tiree Ranger Service offer? Approximately **how many hours does this amount to** per annum?

Approximately fifty volunteers per year assist TRS with:

- Beach Cleans
- Erosion Control [dune re-profiling, marram grass planting]
- Guided Walks
- Maintenance of Access Routes [tracks to parking areas]
- Maintenance of Infrastructure [signage, stiles, wildlife hides]



- Steering Group Meetings
- Wildlife Surveys and Recording

This amounts to approximately two hundred hours of volunteer time per annum.

5/ How many **partnership projects** and **partnership initiatives** does the Tiree Ranger Service contribute to?

- The Ranger coordinates the Tiree Access Group; a partnership between TCDT, TRD, RSPB Scotland, SNH and Discover Tiree
- The Ranger works with Discover Tiree to promote and provide information on the island as a destination
- Tiree Ranger Service contributes data to the Scottish Marine Animal Stranding Scheme
- TRS runs Shorewatch events as part of the national Whale and Dolphin Conservation project
- TRS works in partnership with Argyll & Bute Council on: Core Paths, the Curriculum for Excellence [via the school] and the waste disposal facility at Scarinish.
- TRS works in partnership with The Hebridean Trust to deliver environmental education sessions for young people at The Hynish Centre
- TRS works with Health Care providers on Tiree and *Cùram* to offer an improved outdoor recreation service for the elderly, those with a disability and those with physical and mental health conditions

6/ How does the Tiree Ranger Service contribute to the monitoring and management of **priority species and habitats**?

- The Ranger actively carries out recording and data submission in conjunction with agencies, Conservation Partners and NGO's
- The Ranger conducts routine Site Condition reports, and liaises with the SNH area officer regarding priority species/habitat management projects or concerns



- TRS disseminates advice on the responsible enjoyment of Tiree's natural environment under the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, with particular attention to the use of fragile Machair and Sand Dune systems
- TRS educates guests and residents about priority species/habitats verbally and with printed guides.



7/ How does the Tiree Ranger Service contribute to **rural development** and **community empowerment** at the local level?

- The introduction of the Croft Camping Scheme simultaneously curbed poor guest behaviour (leading to the damage of priority habitats), resolved access conflicts between land managers and recreational users and created a new income stream for the crofting community. This initiative was implemented by TRS, and continues to be managed by the Ranger
- TRS provides educational and volunteering opportunities to up-skill young people in tourism and conservation work through the accredited Rural Skills Programme. Ultimately, these skills are a way of helping young people to remain on Tiree. Potentially, young people may gain the experience to start their own businesses or gain employment in the conservation sector



This plan will be continually assessed and reviewed during the course of its delivery.

