

DURNNESS HEALTH HUB

UPDATE JAN 2014

2014 An important year for the Durness Health Hub



What exactly is the Health Hub?

Originally, there were plans to build a fitness suite at the Village Hall. In time we recognised the need to make this a facility which would bring benefits to everybody in the community regardless of age or level of fitness. With this in mind, we have worked with Highland Council, NHS Highland, and more recently, Reshaping Care for Older People (RCOP) to extend the brief of the Health Hub to include a range of activities which will include;

OTAGO - an approach to preventing falls in less mobile people through the adoption of a series of guided exercises

HAES - Healthy at Every Size - Having a healthy relationship with food and enjoying being active rather than adopting a target based weight reduction programme. The aim is to bring about benefits for quality of life and a sense of wellbeing

GET ACTIVE - Support for people who are less active and wish to make a start

STAY ACTIVE - For people who are already active and wish to maintain their current level of wellbeing

CHALLENGE - People who are already active and wish to develop their health and fitness further

‘The overall aim is to encourage local people to become more active with the result of improving their long term health outcomes’

Won't people use it for a while and then stop?

That is a familiar story associated with traditional gyms but the Health Hub is more than just a gym. We have included in our business plan a full time co-ordinator's post for year 1 and part time post from year 2 onwards subject to income. We recognise that becoming more active doesn't have to be difficult but staying active can be a challenge for some. The coordinator task will be to make sure that a range of activities suitable for everybody is available and to help people on a one-to-one basis and in groups to keep motivated and to stay active.

Won't this just add to the running costs of the Village Hall?

Right from the start we have ensured that the Health Hub will not add to the running costs of the Village Hall. In the fitness suite the machines have low energy requirements and most are self powering. We have also now added Photo Voltaic Panels (solar panels) to the design. It is projected that the income from these will ensure that the Health Hub will actually reduce Village Hall electricity bills rather than increase them.

Where are we now?

Planning consent - the original planning consent expires soon and we will be extending this in the New Year. As a reminder, the extension will include;

- New reception lobby
- Fitness suite
- New Office
- Lots of new storage
- Treatment Room

There will also be alterations to the womens changing and showers area to accommodate additional toilets which was a condition of securing the building warrant.

The awareness sessions we have staged including the cycling and rowing challenges, 'Taster Day' and Duathlons have each been well attended and have contributed to the cost of the project. We have also received some kind and generous offers of funding. **Funds and pledges now stand at approx. £38,000.**

2014 will be an important year for the Health Hub Project. In addition to funding the local supervision of the project for another 15 months, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) have indicated that they recognise the social benefits that the project aims to deliver to the community and that they may wish to assist the project in other ways. We await further news of this. In the meantime, the search for the remaining funding required will be the focus of activity in 2014 and a number of potential sources have been identified. We are also inviting local people and businesses to pledge an amount towards the project. Any contribution will be most welcome and each donation will be recognised in the finished building.

For further information on any aspect of the Durness Health Hub, please contact Kevin Arrowsmith, Tony Jackson, or Lucy Mackay.

