

Feasibility Study
March 2025
OSCR Charity Ref: SC054021



https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall



Nigghallsteering@gmail.com



Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,

NIGG COMMUNITY HALL

Feasibility Study

March 2025

OSCR Charity Ref: SC054021



INDEX

- Executive Summary
 - Project Overview
 - Methodology
 - Market Research
 - Organisational Feasibility
 - Financial Feasibility
 - Technical Feasibility
 - Conclusion
 - Recommendations
 - References & Appendices
 - Appendix 1 – Funding Sources
 - Appendix 2 – Public Entertainment License Guide
 - Appendix 3 – Projected Income + Expenditure
 - Appendix 4 – Sample Programme of Activity
 - Appendix 5 – Structural Survey
 - Appendix 6 – HSE Checklist + Village Halls Handbook
 - Appendix 7 – Needs Analysis and Survey Graphs
- Pg 3
 - Pg 4
 - Pg 5
 - Pg 6,7,8
 - Pg 9, 10
 - Pg 11
 - Pg 12
 - Pg 13
 - Pg 14
 - Pg 15



https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

Nigghallsteering@gmail.com

[Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,...](#)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024 The King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (KLTR), the body which administers ownerless property on behalf of the Crown, notified the Nigg and Shandwick Community Council of the 'ownerless status' of Nigg Community Hall (hall) and advised on how the local community can have the hall returned to community ownership. The Nigg Community Hall Steering Group (NCHSG), comprising seven local members of the community, was formed and with support and guidance from the Scottish Land Fund and the KLTR the NCHSG commissioned this study and 5-year business plan for the Community Hall - known as Nigg Community Hall - to explore its viability as a community asset.

Using both primary and secondary data sources a market analysis highlighting consumer demand and competitive landscape was conducted. The findings highlight a desire from 20% of the Nigg and Shandwick adult population and local businesses for the return of the hall to the community, as a community hub, that will deliver a varied programme of events and opportunities to reduce social isolation and increase community cohesion. In-depth consultation and research with market competitors identified two operating models - Model 1 = volunteer led and Model 2 = management led, to meet the needs of community, visitors to the area and rising operational costs. Potential income generators to ensure sustainability, including, lets; shop; cafe and heritage centre, were well received by respondents to the survey, and with commitment to robust management, marketing and partnership approaches the hall has the potential to be a successful and sustainable venture.

An RICS level 3 structural survey has confirmed that, although the building is structurally sound, there is a requirement for some repairs/maintenance and upgrades to be actioned at an estimated cost of £205k and an energy survey be conducted and actioned before the building is re-opened for public use.

On completion of the building works it is recommended that a Community Development worker be recruited to support the NCHSG in all aspects of managing the hall including governance, marketing, programming and community engagement.

Funding streams supporting community led projects is essential to enable the development of the hall. A list of potential funders have been identified in *appendix 1*.

Financial projections Yr 1 as a basic community hub indicate the following costs as detailed in appendix 3:

- Capital Expenditure in response to structural survey - £205K
- Start-Up core/running costs Model 1 = Yr. 1 - £28k Yr. 2 £22k
- Start-Up core/running costs Model 2 = Yr. 1 - £45k Yr. 2 £38k

Projected Income when re-launched (based on sample programme appendix 4.

- Community Events / Fundraisers /donations - £7000k per year 6 events per year e.g. dances, quizzes, bingo
- Venue Hire ordinary lets - £11,k per year at 7 x 2hr @ £16 p/h
- Weddings/Childrens Events - £4k @ £250 each 16 per year

Ultimately the NCHSG must adopt a progressive and enterprising approach to income generation essential to address rising operational costs for community venues, which is dependant on which operational model is implemented.

The NCHSG should consider appointing a design team - architect, quantity surveyor, project manager - to develop the *aspirational goals of the hall such as the proposed accessible toilets and cafe extension, which would take in the stunning views of the surrounding area.

- Future *aspirational development estimate (cafe extension/accessible toilet block) - £222k (subject to inflation)

It is recommended that the development of the hall as a hub be conducted in two phases. Phase 1 will enable community engagement to combat social isolation, opportunities for individuals to contribute to their community to make a positive impact, and foster a vibrant and resilient neighbourhood. Phase 2 will enable the hall to develop and expand its offer to capitalise on the growing tourism market and ensure sustainability.

https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

Nigghallsteering@gmail.com

Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Nigg Community Hall has been an asset to the community since 1844 in its original incarnation as the Nigg West Church. In 1958 a Lease of the hall (formerly known as Nigg West Church) was assigned by the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland to the Trustees for Nigg Hall. At the time the property was owned by Miss Rosa Ross Williamson Ross. Following the death of Miss Ross in 1971 the title to the property was disposed by her executors to the Trustees for Nigg Hall.

Since becoming a community hall the management group changed identity from charity to company limited by guarantee and when the 2003 company was wound up in 2015 the title of the hall was not dealt with, so it fell as ownerless property to the Crown. A new company was set up in 2016, however the directors were unaware that they did not have any title to the property.

In 2024 The King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (KLTR), the body which administers ownerless property on behalf of the Crown, contacted the Nigg and Shandwick Community Council to highlight the ownerless status of Nigg Community Hall and to discuss steps the local community can take to have the hall returned to community ownership.

The Nigg Community Hall Steering Group (NCHSG) was formed and with support and guidance from the Scottish Land Fund and the KLTR, the Nigg Community Hall Steering Group commissioned a single-phase feasibility study and 5-year business plan for the Community Hall known as Nigg Community Hall to explore its viability as a community asset.

The main areas of investigation were defined as:

- Is developing and adapting the Nigg Community Hall the best way to meet the aspirations of the community
- What is the most sustainable use of the building that will impact most favourably on the community as a whole?
- What investment and commitment is needed to maintain the building and sustain its use for the future?

This project will enable the NCHSG and Nigg & Shandwick Community Council (NSCC) to better understand whether this project is practical and in the public interest, financially viable and sustainable.

The Nigg and Shandwick community is comprised of a scattered remote rural community with clusters of housing in Shandwick, Pitcalnie and Nigg Village. The hall sits on an undefined road in Nigg Village. Shandwick is part of the Seaboard Villages 5 miles north of Pitcalnie. The development of the hall aims to deliver a community hub which is defined as a multipurpose centre that provides a range of services to the local community, with the potential to develop new services in response to changing community needs.

The development of the hall aims to align with Scottish Government Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, which helps communities to do more for themselves and have more say in decisions that affect them, and the three strategic priorities of the 2024 - 2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP) this project aims to focus on *People, Place and Prosperity*.



https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

Niggghallsteering@gmail.com

Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,

NIGG COMMUNITY HALL

Feasibility Study
March 2025
OSCR Charity Ref: SC054021



METHODOLOGY

The sources of data gathered are both primary and secondary data.

Primary Data

The primary data was collected using:

- A survey/questionnaire (*appendix 7*) was the main instrument for data collection for the study. The questionnaire was validated by Nigg Community Hall Steering group (NCHSG). The survey, circulated in person with support of members of the NCHSG and electronically via social media platforms including Nigg and Shandwick CC, Balintore & District Residents Group (BDRG) and Tain Community.
- Discussion with local management groups (Nigg and Shandwick CC, Nigg Community Hall Development Board) to understand their ideas and vision for the hall.
- Focus group with the Nigg & Shandwick Friendship Group, local primary school. youth groups and open community event.
- A survey of local businesses about potential development and links with the local community and community facilities.
- Contact with local hospitality sector to gauge demographic and interests of visitors to the area.
- One-to-one conversations with past users.
- Update statement with contact email distributed late 2024 by the NCHSG.

Secondary Data

The secondary data sources were accessed as part of the strategy to collect adequate data for the feasibility study.

Secondary data sources are referenced at the end of this report.

Research Design and Framework

Using qualitative and quantitative research approaches the research design is descriptive and exploratory in nature.

The qualitative research approach is used to gather the rich data/voice of community members, market competitors and potential partners for the Nigg Community Hall project, and used to examine the need and demand of all stakeholders in establishing a sustainable business plan and model.

The research frame provides the detailed step by step procedures to conduct the research which was undertaken in a limited timeframe of six weeks.



https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

NiggHallsteering@gmail.com

Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,

NIGG COMMUNITY HALL

Feasibility Study

March 2025

OSCR Charity Ref: SC054021



MARKET RESEARCH

Nigg Community Hall is located between the Easter Ross village of Nigg and the hamlet of Pitcalnie.

The role of the hall has over the years has identified as a community organisation, a charity and Company Limited by Guarantee, each with the purpose to facilitate the functioning of community groups, community events and as a catalyst to community activity more broadly. The pandemic led to a much less active committee and a community less used to coming together and socialising. In spite of this the Nigg and Shandwick residents and local community groups continued to utilise the hall – post pandemic – for events, however since 2020 the hall has been underused by the community.

Market research conducted examined community engagement/desire, market competitors, and opportunities for growth.

According to the Highland Council 2022 census the Nigg and Shandwick community has a population of 349 people, with the demographic split as follows:

- 0 – 15 = 39,
- 16 – 64 = 198
- 65+ = 105.

This is comparable to the village of Inver (ward 7) who with a population of 392 and have a community led operating hall and Knoydart (west coast), population 93, has a community hall.

The survey resulted in an 20% adult completion rate. A high proportion of respondents to the survey and membership invitation were completed by community members aged 61+. In addition , through one-to one conversations with community members a recurring theme of apathy arose due in part to work and family commitments and negative past experience of previous committees. However the overriding view is that the renewed drive in the revitalisation of the hall would benefit the community with the right leadership and operational model.

There is a strong desire from respondents for community activity to improve social wellbeing and development for the hall with suggestions for improvement to the fabric of the building and initiatives, where there are gaps in the market, such as child centred opportunities e.g. soft-play/bouncy castle days, football academy, as well as concerts and dances to increase participation.

There is a thriving youth service in neighbouring communities and to date youth engagement to the survey has been negligible. However a focus group with young people identified the following:

- Young people love where they live.
- Young people feel there is nothing to do in their community.
- Young people engage in a range of out of school activities.

A Highland Council report for the Inner Moray Firth area highlights “latest population trends suggested growth around the Inner Moray Firth,” As part of the Green Freeport development the likelihood is that there will be increased working population in or near the community.

A high proportion of respondents 90% (across each demographic) indicated that a community shop and café would be of benefit to the area for local people and visitors to the area.

Despite a low number (4) of pledges to lead in the development of a heritage project –for the hall –20% of respondents felt it would benefit the community and attract visitors to the area via the Pictish Trail, Nigg Bay RSPB nature reserve and the North Coast 500 route, In 2024 David Hughes interim Chair NC500 said “Beyond the economic benefits, which are substantial, it (NC500) has provided a platform for showcasing the unique crafts, traditions, and culture of the Highlands, creating new opportunities for local businesses. “This has not only boosted local economies but has played a crucial role in sustaining some smaller communities.”

A 2023 Visit Scotland survey that identified visits to Scotland were up 23% compared to 2022 and 15% compared to 2019 pre-covid. Highland tourism is one of seven growth industries in Scotland.

Hospitality businesses in the Nigg and Shandwick area identified heritage, Scottish culture and leisure as the primary interests of their guests.

Market competitors across Easter Ross and Sutherland were consulted to identify which operating model they employed:

- Volunteer Led
- Management Led.

Four halls were contacted with two responding. Namely the Seaboard Centre and Doll Hall.

https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

Nigghallsteering@gmail.com

Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,

NIGG COMMUNITY HALL

Feasibility Study
March 2025
OSCR Charity Ref: SC054021



MARKET RESEARCH – CONTINUED

The Seaboard Centre, is a charity based in the Seaboard Villages, Balintore. The Seaboard Villages are three contiguous coastal villages, with a population of approximately 1500 people (including Shandwick) situated about 10 km southeast of the town of Tain. The centre faces east onto the Moray Firth and has been operating for decades. The hall was built as a memorial for fallen soldiers and was originally run for the community, by the community.

In the 2002 the original hall was replaced with the new build that stands today. The new building was built to meet the needs of the community with the inclusion of meeting rooms and commercial kitchen with café. The café was originally run by volunteers, however due to waning volunteer commitment the decision was taken to run the café as a trading arm of the organisation.

The Seaboard Centre is account managed by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) who give business advice and financial support which had been invaluable in its development.

The centre is available for hire to community groups, businesses and individuals and has diversified over the years to meet the needs of local people and the growing tourism industry. In the noughties they added an annex with facilities for touring caravans and motor homes. In the past five years they have added a cinema and screenings to their program, a gift shop and post-office service.

The centre is available for hire to community groups, businesses and individuals. The centre employs 11 staff that work in the café/kitchen, cleaner, office, post-office. *Operating model – Management led*

Doll Hall, Doll is a scattered mixed crofting township and rural village 2 miles southwest of Brora, Sutherland. The hall is successfully run by a volunteer committee for the benefit of the local community. They fundraise through events such as ceilidh dances, donations and raffles. *Operating model – Volunteer led.*

The Carnegie Hall – also known as the Clashmore Hall, located in the village of Clashmore, near Dornoch is a beautiful Arts & Crafts-style Highland village hall. It was erected in 1907 for the workers on Skibo Castle Estate and the residents of Clashmore to use as a village hall and library. In its lifetime the hall has been used as a cultural, community and wedding venue. Sadly the hall will close its doors in Jan 2026 due to high running costs. *Operating model – Volunteer led.*

Ardross Hall – Owned by the community and run by largely volunteers, the hall provides a focus for the rural community of Ardross which lies just north of Alness in Easter Ross and is host to a range of local events and activities. Including creative arts events as part of the Touring Network. The hall accommodates a nursery aimed at children aged 0– 3 years old during term time. *Operating model – volunteer led.*

Embo Old School – Embo is a village in Sutherland about two miles north-northeast of Dornoch.

The trust deliver a calendar of daily events and activities for the benefit of the community.

The 'Old School' successfully ran a community shop, run by volunteers however the impact of covid forced the closure in 2022. The trust continue to offer a post office outreach service.

The café is leased by an independent firm. *Operating model – Volunteer led*

Nigg Community Hall – has backing of 20% of the adult community and has the potential to capitalise on growing tourist trade due to its location as part of the Highland Pictish Trail and it's position next to the Northcoast 500. As a registered SCIO the hall will be able to advertise on the NC500 website at no additional cost.

Café – The opportunity to open a café has been well received by the respondents to the survey. The suggestion to add an extension to the rear gable end, overlooking the Cromarty Firth was put forward. However in the interim the NCHSG may wish to consider positioning a cafe in the rear meeting room and open the views through the installation of a picture window. Management of a cafe by the hall will incur additional costs, however the NCHSG may consider letting the space to an independent operator and generate a regular income. The inclusion of a cafe will incur additional costs for planning permission and building warrant through the Highland Council. Building, commercial kitchen equipment, water rates, waste and recycling and food safety training should all be considered. The NCHSG will also be required to register – free of charge – a food business with the environmental health service 28 days before opening.

Shop – Charity law imposes restrictions on the nature and level of trading activity charities can carry out, and some types of trading are subject to tax. Guidance can be found on the SCVO site. Feedback and conversations with the community favoured a fresh produce shop to serve the community. In addition feedback from hospitality sector identified a gift shop as a positive outcome. The Nigg Old Church currently run an honesty box for items of local interest, which is monitored daily by local volunteers.

https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall
Nigghallsteering@gmail.com
Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,

NIGG COMMUNITY HALL

Feasibility Study

March 2025

OSCR Charity Ref: SC054021



MARKET RESEARCH – CONTINUED

Car Park – the structural survey conducted by Frazer Gillespie MRICS Caledonian Building Surveyors Ltd has considered the re-surfacing and line painting of the existing carpark.

Feedback through the focus groups and survey highlight the requirement for additional parking to facilitate the users of the hall. Historically well attended events have resulted in an overspill onto the single track road.

Touring Caravan/Motorhome Development – In recent years Nigg Hall has been an unofficial park up spot for touring campervans. However the hall does not currently have a license or facilities such as electrical hook up, waste disposal or toilets to cater for touring campervans.

The hall sits between two certified sites for camping, namely, approximately 2 miles south, the Nigg Ferry Hotel IV19 1QU which accommodates up to 5 vans on hardstanding points, with waste disposal facilities, but no electrical hook up, showers or toilet facilities.

In the nearby Seaboard Villages, 5 miles north, is the Camping and Caravan Club facility of the Balintore Bothy Drying Green. The site is set adjacent to the harbour with hardstanding electrical hook ups and motorhome service points. In addition the Seaboard Centre welcome touring campervans and have access to waste disposal, toilets, shower and laundry facilities, although there is no electrical hook up.

Concerts/Performances – There is a desire, from 50% of respondents to the Nigg Hall questionnaire, for the introduction of concerts/performances in the hall. The current layout of the hall does lend itself to a cultural venue for performances, however it should be noted that a public entertainment license, from the Highland Council, will be required. Before a license is granted the Nigg Hall Steering group must comply with licencing conditions as stipulated on the [Highland Council Website](#). A copy is included in *appendix 2* Which include event management plans; fire safety plans and health and safety.

Operating halls that have been consulted have reported varying levels of success when staging concerts/performances in their communities.

Ardross hall has a popular arts programme which can be attributed to their collaboration/involvement with 'the Touring Network'

Wedding Venue – Over the lifetime of the hall it has successfully been utilised as a wedding venue for hire. With the closure of Clashmore Hall imminent, the steering group have the opportunity to develop the hall as a wedding venue/destination in collaboration with Nigg Old Church and Bishops Walk which are a few hundred meters away.

Nigg Heritage Project – Nigg and Shandwick have a rich history and feedback from the community demonstrates a wish to create a Nigg Heritage Project which will compliment Nigg Old Church. A historical context for the community can be found in '[The Parish of Nigg](#)', a book written by Barbara Scott and Anne Gordon originally published to mark the Scottish Women's Rural Institutes' Golden Jubilee in 1967. A 2nd edition was printed in 1994. Research conducted by Visit Scotland finds that "the history and heritage of the Highlands – as well its scenery and landscape – are the main reasons tourists visit the region". Eight respondents to the Hall survey have expressed an interest in supporting the development of a Nigg Heritage project.

The Heritage Lottery Fund – fund a broad range of projects that connect people and communities to the UK's heritage. The fund is available at 2 levels from level 1 = £10k – £250k and level 2 £250 – £10 mill.

Community Hub – A hub delivers a variety of benefits, including social connections, personal growth opportunities, access to resources, and a sense of belonging.

The Nigg and Shandwick communities are classed in the [Rural Scotland Key Facts document \(2021\)](#), as remote rural area where access to services is limited and pay rates are lowest. In addition more residents in rural area Scotland are self-employed and homeworking resulting in a need for increased opportunity for human connection to combat social isolation. The development of the hall as a hub will enable community engagement, individuals to contribute to their community to make a positive impact, and foster a vibrant and resilient neighbourhood.

There are exemptions from the need for a [public entertainment licence](#) for music entertainment, in defined circumstances as set out in the [Guidance](#), including for:

- places of public worship, village halls, church halls and other similar buildings

https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

Nigghallsteering@gmail.com

Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,

NIGG COMMUNITY HALL

Feasibility Study
March 2025
OSCR Charity Ref: SC054021



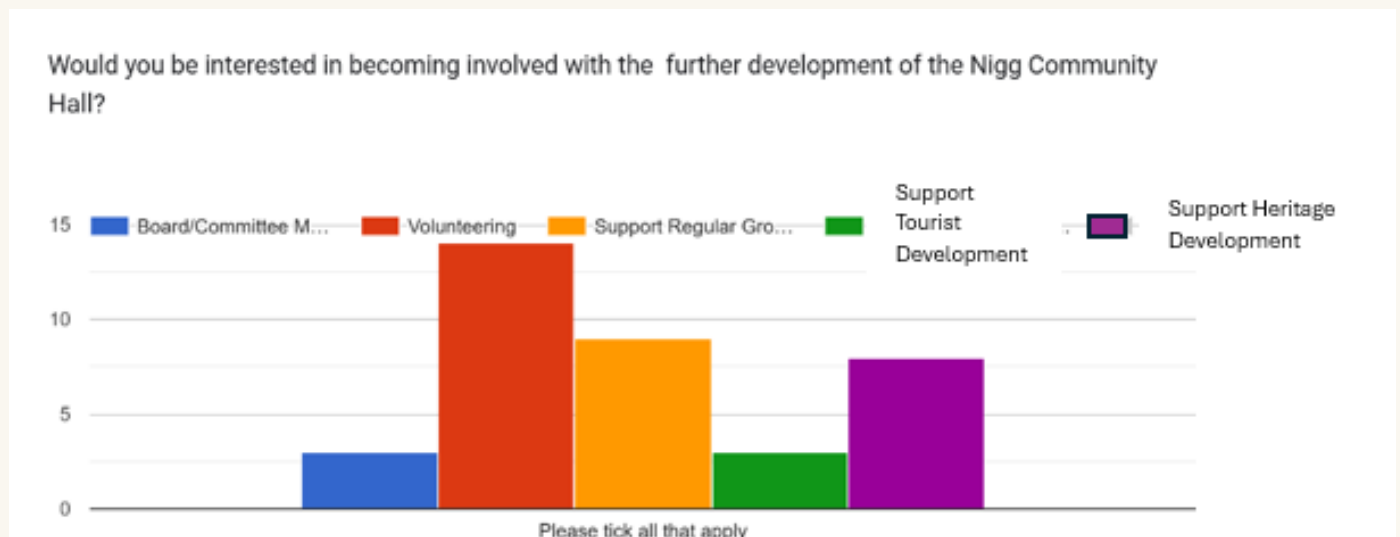
ORGANISATIONAL FEASIBILITY

The Nigg Community Hall Steering Group (NCHSG) was formed with seven local members of the community who have a complimentary set of skills and business knowledge to support and deliver on the development of the hall. The NCHSG have conducted a skills analysis of the steering group with the purpose of identifying the strengths of the group to take the project forward.

In March 2025 the NCHSG became a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). The SCIO is set up as a two-tier structure (governed by charity trustees with a membership body) which has certain powers or duties including:

- Resolutions of members are required before certain actions can be taken;
- Members are subject to some of the duties of charity trustees;
- Meeting of members must be held at least every 15 months;
- Membership cannot be transferred.

As a SCIO the group have a free membership and at the time of writing over 20% of the adult population of the Nigg and Shandwick population are members. A needs analysis survey return identifies that more than 50% of respondents would volunteer or support the development of the Hall. With seven respondents interested in running events.



Survey feedback advocates the appointment of a paid coordinator who will manage all aspects of the hall including bookings, marketing, governance etc. In addition the appointment of a caretaker and/or cleaner would be essential for the future success of the hall to ensure a high standard is maintained.

As a charity the NCHSG can sign up to become a member of the SCVO a national membership organisation for the voluntary sector whose mission is to support, promote and develop a confident, sustainable voluntary sector in Scotland.. Membership is available free of charge although there is a tiered system in place.

On a local level the Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI) is an independent charity who support, encourage and inspire work with community groups, clubs, charities and other Third Sector Organisations throughout Highland. Membership is available free of charge.

https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

Nigghallsteering@gmail.com

Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,

NIGG COMMUNITY HALL

Feasibility Study
March 2025
OSCR Charity Ref: SC054021



ORGANISATIONAL FEASIBILITY CONTINUED

Conversations with individuals and focus groups have identified concerns re the development of the hall. See below:

"Why go to the bother when the Seaboard Centre is just down the road".

The Seaboard Centre recognise the benefit of a community hall to connect communities, enhance lives and develop opportunities for inward investment". Cllr Ross.

Past experience with volunteer led hall not good, same people doing all of the work".

The research has identified members who wish to volunteer and SCIO status ensures collaboration /improved comms with members to identify strengths to share the load.

"Communication in past set-ups has been not been great, and not everyone has the internet"

The implementation of communication strategy (using in-person meetings, hardcopy and digital platforms) is advised to ensure local people and wider community are regularly consulted re activity of the hall.

The community is too scattered to make use of the hall".

A hub delivers benefits, incl. social connection, personal growth opportunities, access to resources, and a sense of belonging bringing people together.

Volunteer fatigue or burnout, ageing population and communication and connectivity were highlighted on several occasions with individuals and through conversations with local halls.

Research identifies that volunteers are often the lifeblood for community organisations, however when those volunteers become disheartened and no longer enjoy the work they do they suffer from burnout.

Volunteer burnout can have a direct effect an organisation's impact and overall productivity will likely decrease. Preventing volunteer burnout begins when volunteers and their managers have stable working relationships with open lines of communication, starting when volunteers first sign up to help out.

"Our population is ageing, we need younger families, adults to support development."

Highland Council reports "latest population trends suggested growth around the Inner Moray Firth," As part of the Green Freeport development the likelihood is that there will be increased working population in or near the community.

"Accessible toilets (out of hours) to accommodate local walkers; visitors to the area would enhance the hall."

The suggested phase 2 for the development of the hall incorporates development suggestions for the future of the hall which is funding dependent.

"Car parking limited and undefined".

The existing carpark re-surface and works have been included in the RICS3 Survey. In addition the NCHSG plan to investigate options to extend.

"We don't believe that development as a heritage centre / tourist destination would be appropriate or add to the area."

Nigg & Shandwick have a distinctive and diverse people, culture, and heritage. A heritage project would bring people together and encourage positive community engagement.

https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

Niggghallsteering@gmail.com

Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,



FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

The identity of the NCHSG as a SCIO will enable the hall to access statutory and third-sector funding streams for capital and revenue projects to bring the hall into the twenty-first century. Examples of existing funding streams can be accessed in *appendix 1*.

Through the process of the feasibility study potential links with local businesses have been sought, to strengthen the opportunities for development and growth through corporate events or occasions, and development of meaningful links to maximise impact with replies from two of out of 6 contacted.

Consultation with market competitors, in neighbouring communities, has identified the requirement for the NCHSG to consider operational costs opening to the public including public entertainment license every 3 years, annual insurance, annual fire safety checks, installation of 2x class a fire extinguishers and annual extinguisher checks, annual security alarm maintenance, electrical checks every 5 years, annual pat testing, annual water rates (commercial kitchen) and premises licence and personal license (alcohol) every 5 years. Projected costs are detailed in *appendix 3*

Market research has identified that the cost to hire local halls is generally based on a two-tier system i.e. local and non local and is broken down into areas of the halls to increase capacity and opportunity The average cost to hire a space is £16 per hour rising to £30 per hour for the entire building.

Each of the halls contacted are used as wedding venues. With costs ranging from £250 + deposit of £200 for a 3 day hire self directed event to all inclusive wedding planning service including catering.

Potential income streams for the Nigg Community Hall to ensure sustainability have been calculated using both models i.e. :

- Volunteer led management – *Appendix 3*
- Community Development Officer led management *Appendix 3*

Income streams have been identified as:

- Lets – community groups, private party lets, weddings*, christenings, wakes
- Fundraising events – e.g. quiz nights, bingo nights, ceilidhs, concerts, dances
- Café – either as a let to catering business which would generate a regular income or hire catering staff as part of the Hall which would result in additional costs to the hall including wages and consumables.
- Shop – Depending on the structure and type of shop i.e. is it a gift shop or fresh produce.

A needs analysis survey was distributed in person and via social media channels to identify the community desires,*See sample programme based on survey feedback *appendix 4*.



https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

Nigghallsteering@gmail.com

Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,





TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY

Frazer Gillespie MRICS Caledonian Building Surveyors Ltd (CBS) conducted a structural survey of the building which is of category-B listed status with Historic Environment Scotland – but is not contained within any local authority designated conservation area. The survey identified that the building requires some repairs/maintenance and upgrades to bring the property into the 21st century, however it is noted that the building is structurally sound. See *Structural survey. Appendix 5*

The structural survey identifies two options for insulation in the hall (items 1.05 and 1.06 of the CBS schedule). It should be noted that advice sought from the surveyor advocates item 1.06 and advised that the stone wall construction of the hall is suitable for this option.

The building is a substantial traditionally constructed ecclesiastical church building originally built around 1844. Based upon fence positions the total site area is approximately 1,380m² or 0.341 of an acre or thereby. The ground floor external building area is approximately 323m².

The layout of the hall includes a kitchen, meeting room with storage, toilet block, storage cupboard at side exit, foyer, and main hall. To increase capacity for lets and activity the NCHSG may consider the installation of a 'partition wall/room divider' in the main hall. The benefit being to accommodate smaller, separate events.

Nigg Community Hall is located between the Easter Ross village of Nigg and the hamlet of Pitcalnie, approximately 3.5 kilometres north, north-east of Nigg Ferry. The hall is positioned to the west of the unclassified Nigg to Pitcalnie road. Inverness Airport is approximately 41 miles away by road, Inverness 36 miles, Tain 8 miles, Invergordon 13 miles, and Dingwall are approximately 24 miles by road. The nearest train station is at Fearn around 7 miles away from where the national rail network can be accessed.

Community feedback has identified the existing heating system as inadequate. An energy survey will be conducted, when the Hall is returned to the community, in accordance with guidance sought from two sources, Tyrone McDonald of Business Energy Scotland and Mhairi MacSween Local Energy Scotland. The energy survey will provide an energy performance certificate (EPC) including generic improvement recommendations.

The current hall kitchen is not compliant for commercial needs, which would require the installation of a commercial kitchen to meet the aspiration of opening a Café to meet the needs of the community and visitors to the area. CBS include an estimate of £8k for the installation of a commercial kitchen to replace the existing kitchen in the existing layout. (pg3 schedule of repair item 2.10).

Community feedback also includes suggestions for improved parking; disabled access; installation of hearing loop; improve kerb appeal; improve communications with community; provide self contained access to toilets*, improve signage to the hall through the installation of road signs.

Brown tourist signs are widely recognised around Scotland. Providing visitors with clear and consistent directions to their destination. [Visit Scotland's](#) remit is to approve eligibility before you submitting an application to the local authority roads department. However this is changing in March 2025. Keep abreast of the changes by referring to [Visit Scotland's](#) website.

*The development of self contained toilets would benefit the community and visitors to the area out with opening hours and address "variable or limited access to public toilet facilities" as referenced in the 2022 Highland Council Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan. It should be noted that the nearest accessible toilet facility is located in the Seaboard Villages.

https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

Nigghallsteering@gmail.com

Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,



NIGG COMMUNITY HALL

Feasibility Study
March 2025
OSCR Charity Ref: SC054021



CONCLUSION

The development of the hall as a viable and sustainable community hub has the potential to meet the needs of the community as a place that will deliver social connections, personal growth opportunities and opportunity for inward investment through events, fundraising and as an attraction for visiting tourists.

The project is supported by a strong steering group and the wider community, though consideration must be given to the capacity of the NCHSG, each of whom are busy professionals.

- It is recommended that the group appoint a project manager who will have responsibility for the management and implementation of schedule of repair and maintenance contained in the structural survey report. *See appendix 5*
- The NCHSG should consider which operating model for income generators including hall lets; proposed cafe and proposed shop. i.e. will they be volunteer run, a rented space to outside agencies or will the hall create employment for local people.
- To meet the aspirational goals of the group and its members in phase 2 (referenced below) should consider the recruitment of a Community Development worker who will manage the day to day business of the hall and will report directly to the NCHSG.
- Develop a communications strategy to effectively communicate with residents, partners and visitors.
- Develop a Volunteer pack and policies to support volunteers in their roles.

The group should consider delivering the project in two phases:

Phase 1 –

1. Source funding for capital investment.
2. Address structural and energy surveys to re-open the hall, which will allow the NCHSG to build community connection and continue raise funds for the future development and sustainability of the hall.
3. It is anticipated that Phase 1 development commencement, if the KLTR application is successful, will commence from July 2025. Projected income is based on the hall re-launching in January 2026.
4. Consider duration/timeline of works for capital investment due to unknowns e.g.
 - appointing project manager.
 - seeking quotes as per structural and energy survey.
 - commencement/completion of works.

Phase 2 –

1. Seek funding and professional services to deliver aspirational development of cafe extension and accessible toilets.



https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

Nigghallsteering@gmail.com

Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,

NIGG COMMUNITY HALL

Feasibility Study
March 2025
OSCR Charity Ref: SC054021



RECOMMENDATIONS

Immediate

- Decide which operational model to proceed with.
- Register free with SCVO
- Register free with Highland Third Sector Interface
- Cost phase 1 proposal to install gable end picture window and accessible toilets which can be used when the hall is out of hours.
- Source funding via grants/fundraising events to finance repairs, maintenance and recruitment of Community Development Worker and Project Manager. *See appendix 3.*
- Communicate progress and developments on a regular basis to maintain community engagement.

On acquisition

- Conduct Energy Survey before commencing with structural survey findings.
- Recruit Project Manager to address structural and energy survey recommendations.
- Public liability insurance up to £5 mill
- Health & Safety – action [HSE checklist](#) for village and community halls. *Appendix 6*

On Completion of works

- HCHSG or Community Development Worker – to develop and market the hall, it's programme, connection with members and to manage all aspects of paperwork pertaining to the SCIO.
- Recruit part-time caretaker/cleaner.
- Apply for the following licenses – Public Entertainment; Premises (Alcohol); Raffle
- Implement a robust marketing strategy to inform members, attract visitors and potential users of the hall.
- Set up a website.
- Register with NC500 and begin process of introducing Brown signage

Future Development – considerations

- Fundraise to add cafe extension and main hall divider option.
- Land acquisition required to extend car park.
- Seek planning advice from the Highland Council for the proposed cafe extension and toilets.
- Before incorporating a shop at Nigg Hall the constitution should be reviewed and revised.
- The hall carpark is currently, unofficially, utilised as a motorhome park up place. To make the site official the NCHSG would be required to acquire a license and obtain planning permission from the local authority.



https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

Nigghallsteering@gmail.com

Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,

NIGG COMMUNITY HALL

Feasibility Study

March 2025

OSCR Charity Ref: SC054021



APPENDIX AND REFERENCE PAGES

<https://scvo.scot/support/running-your-organisation/finance-business-management/trading>

\highland Outcome Improvement Plan 2024 – 2027 – 1/2/2025

Population: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cllp40j30v9o>

Business Energy Scotland accessed 21 Feb 2025 <https://businessenergyscotland.org/>

<https://seaboardcentre.com/>

<http://www.ardrosshall.org/Welcome.html>

<https://www.facebook.com/dollhallbrora/>

Structural Report

A historical context for the community can be found in 'The Parish of Nigg' written by Barbara Scott and Anne Gordon.

Accessed 2/3/2025

<https://www.disclosure.gov.scot/> Accessed 2/3/2025

<https://highlandpictishtrail.co.uk/project/the-nigg-stone/>

<https://www.northcoast500.com/about-nc500/>

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/205/planning_

[_policies_advice_and_service_levels/780/planning_and_building_standards_fees](https://www.bing.com/search?q=carnegie+hall+sutherland&form=ANNT1&refig=b5f9d0dadfed4a26be4300613b57f41d&pc=NMTS)

[https://www.bing.com/search?](https://www.bing.com/search?q=carnegie+hall+sutherland&form=ANNT1&refig=b5f9d0dadfed4a26be4300613b57f41d&pc=NMTS)

[q=carnegie+hall+sutherland&form=ANNT1&refig=b5f9d0dadfed4a26be4300613b57f41d&pc=NMTS](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/13353/building_warrant_fee_guidance)

https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/13353/building_warrant_fee_guidance

<https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/visitor-experience/brown-tourist-signs>

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/99/roads_information/9

<https://www.visitscotland.org/>

[resi.co.uk/advice/cost-and-planning/how-much-does-it-cost-to-build-an-annex](https://www.visitscotland.org/resi.co.uk/advice/cost-and-planning/how-much-does-it-cost-to-build-an-annex)

Accessed 5/3/2025

<https://www.highlandtsi.org.uk/>

<https://scvo.scot/>

Accessed 13/3/2025

[https://www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/campsites/uk/highland/ross-shire/balintorebothydryinggreen/?](https://www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/campsites/uk/highland/ross-shire/balintorebothydryinggreen/?msockid=0a7cf3edb32364db24a4e64eb2f665cb)

[msockid=0a7cf3edb32364db24a4e64eb2f665cb](https://www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/campsites/uk/highland/ross-shire/balintorebothydryinggreen/?msockid=0a7cf3edb32364db24a4e64eb2f665cb)

Accessed 17/3/2025

<https://www.ukcampsite.co.uk/sites/details.asp?revid=2977>

[https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2025/01/trends-rural-](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2025/01/trends-rural-scotland-working-paper-2025/documents/trends-rural-scotland-2025-working-paper/trends-rural-scotland-2025-working-paper/govscot%3Adocument/trends-rural-scotland-2025-working-paper.pdf)

[scotland-working-paper-2025/documents/trends-rural-scotland-2025-working-paper/trends-rural-scotland-2025-](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2025/01/trends-rural-scotland-working-paper-2025/documents/trends-rural-scotland-2025-working-paper/trends-rural-scotland-2025-working-paper/govscot%3Adocument/trends-rural-scotland-2025-working-paper.pdf)

[working-paper/govscot%3Adocument/trends-rural-scotland-2025-working-paper.pdf](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2025/01/trends-rural-scotland-working-paper-2025/documents/trends-rural-scotland-2025-working-paper/trends-rural-scotland-2025-working-paper/govscot%3Adocument/trends-rural-scotland-2025-working-paper.pdf)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/rural-scotland-key-facts-2021/>

<https://mycommunity.org.uk/what-are-community-hubs>

<https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/about-our-visitors/why-people-choose-scotland>

Accessed 21/03/2025

Scottish Tourism – <https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/regions/highlands>

<https://roadgenius.com/statistics/tourism/uk/scotland/>

Partition Walls – <http://www.pellco.co.uk/> or <https://movablepartitionwall.co.uk/>

https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/25436/strategic_tourism_infrastructure_development_plan

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/entertainment-licensing-changes-under-the-live-music-act#overview>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/community-empowerment-scotland-act-summary/>

<https://givingcompass.org/article/recognize-avoid-volunteer-burnout>

<https://caringandsharingrochdale.org/volunteerings-dark-side-fatigue-undervaluation-and-neglect/>

https://www.nascc.org.uk/#xl_xr_page_hall

Nigghallsteering@gmail.com

Nigg Community Hall, Pitcalnie, Nigg,

