



**The Scottish
Crannog Centre**



**The Scottish Crannog Centre
Sustainability Report 2023-2024**



The Scottish Crannog Centre

The Scottish Crannog Centre has moved to a new site and built a new home. We aim to be Scotland's most sustainable museum. Our practice is inspired by the lives of the original Crannog dwellers and their relationship to the environment around them.

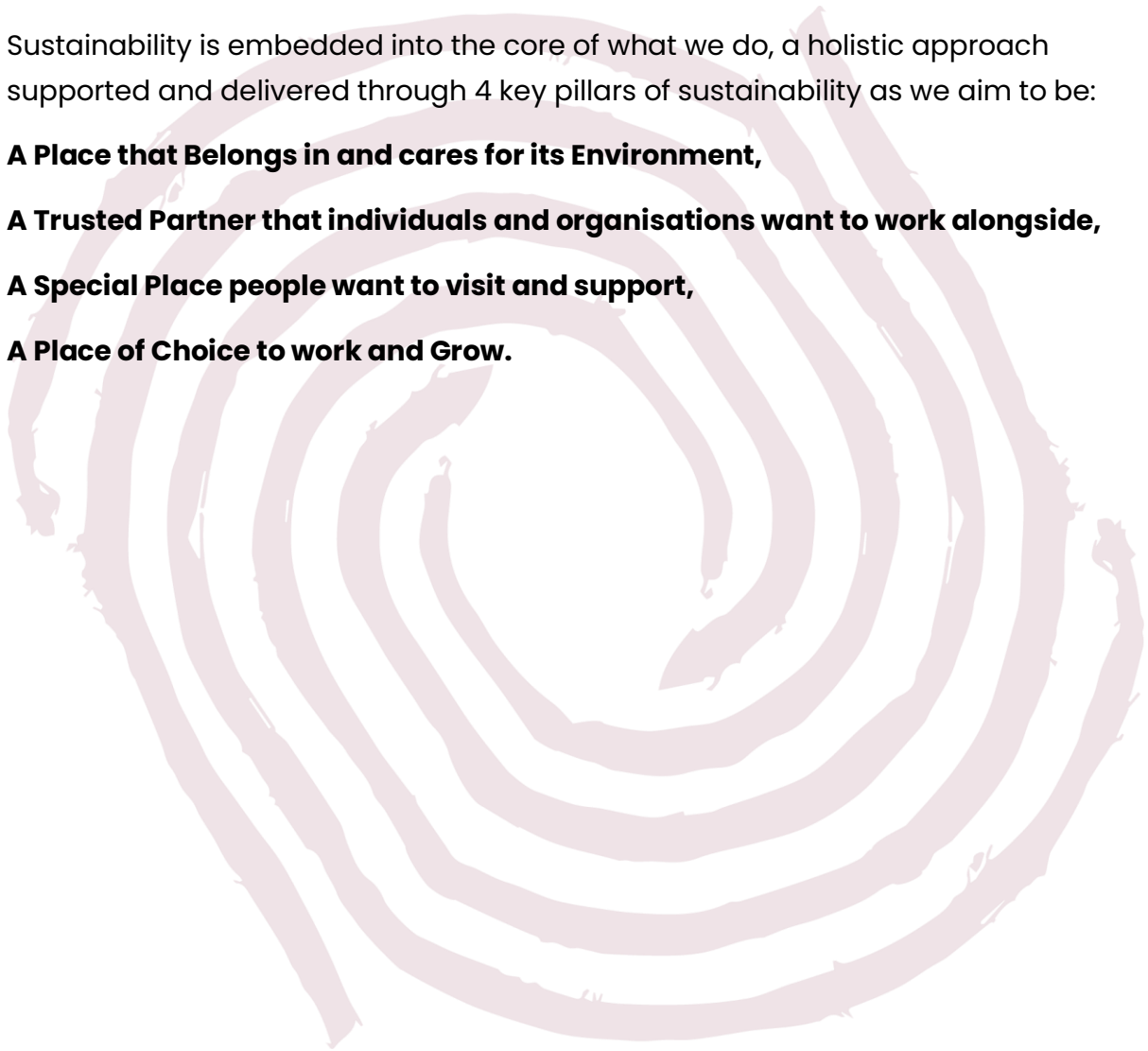
Sustainability is embedded into the core of what we do, a holistic approach supported and delivered through 4 key pillars of sustainability as we aim to be:

A Place that Belongs in and cares for its Environment,

A Trusted Partner that individuals and organisations want to work alongside,

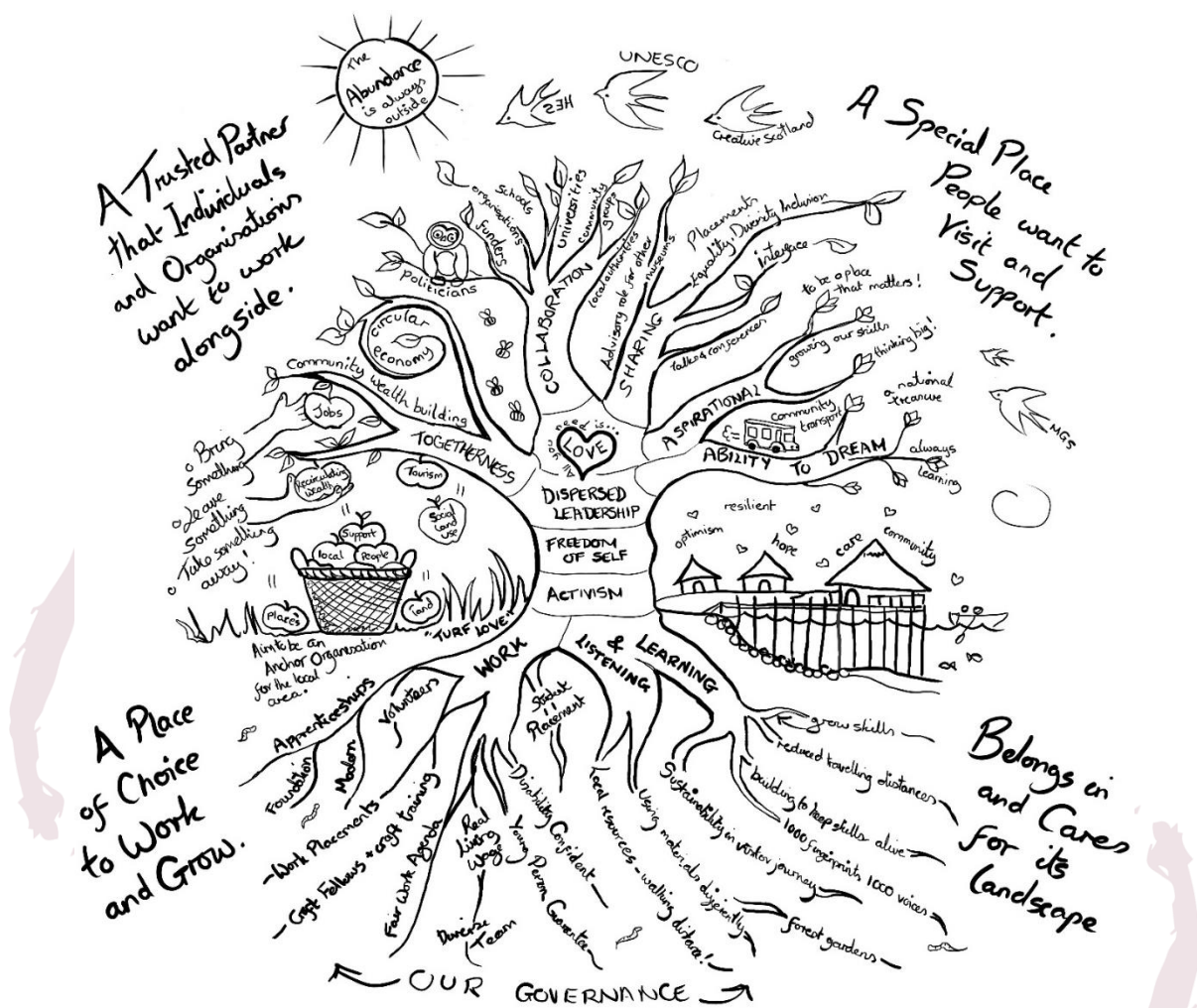
A Special Place people want to visit and support,

A Place of Choice to work and Grow.





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A Place of Choice to Work and Grow

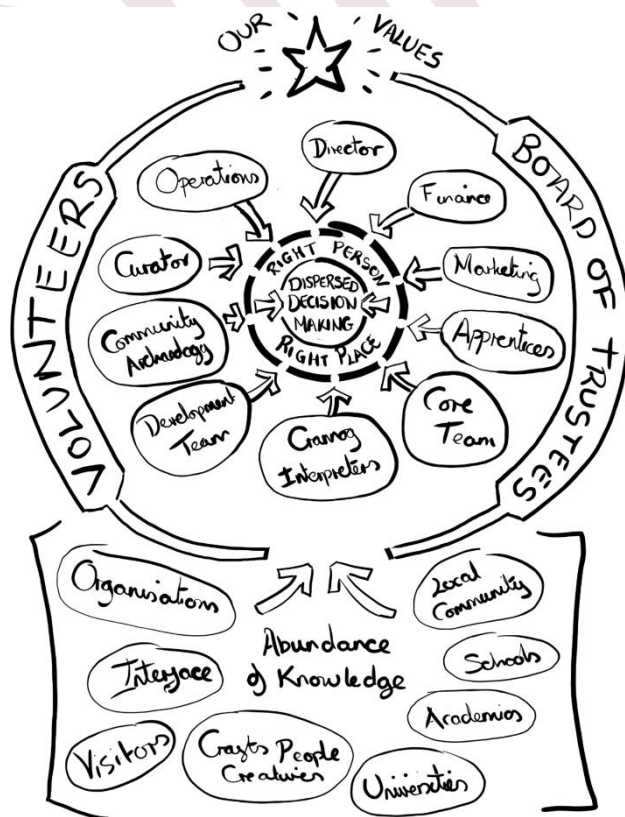
Our legacy is embedded in the programme of training within the development. 4 apprentices aged 16-21 are working on the build. We have designed and delivered a new NPA working with the SQA, a new qualification so we have the skills needed to maintain and develop the site in the future. We are owning our future ourselves as a community – exactly what people 2500 years ago would have done. Local community land trust Dun Coilich approached us and we are working to support them to set up their apprenticeship scheme, with learning provided in partnership with the Crannog around customer service, heritage and coppicing. A Craft fellow has been provided by HES to learn from the build – thatching, dry stone walling, green woodworking and turf building, and is currently producing maintenance plans for all the buildings, to ensure their futures, and the project legacy.



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Sustainability in terms of growing the team and growing our relationships -
Shared decision-making and Dispersed Hierarchy:

This new museum has been co-designed with museum users, community groups, a team of architects, structural engineers, academics, craftspeople, and advised by external partners. With over 40 contributors at zoom meetings, this process was a completely new way of working for these people, as hierarchies changed and shifted, along with expertise, and we created an environment for level conversations where different kinds of expertise were valued on the same level. It's about radical trust, and everybody involved learnt from this. The museum and café pods also came from this thinking – both old and new buildings inspired by this. Our work with our communities and strategic partners is the same, through this design process we have opened ourselves up to their knowledge of the needs of their service users, and of their organisations, leading us, it's a 2-way conversation that is constantly changing (testimonial attached). This connects back to the values of the organisation so that the village is not just simple reconstructions, but inspired by the original crannog dwellers, and our modern Crannog community today. It's all about embracing the power of uncertainty, and a fierce belief in what we can achieve collectively when we trust each other.



This is also evident in our day to day work – sharing decision making also means being empowered to be a critical friend, and this is encouraged throughout the team – a non-linear hierarchy – include atom drawing – everyone in the team and the wider community has the opportunity to lead, to be the right person in the right time and place to make big decisions – this speeds up how we work,



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become fleet of foot, able to respond rapidly to change, lead to us being able to build and open a new museum in 2 years. Also results in development of team, growing new leaders who are passionate, active and engaged.

A trusted Partner Organisations and Individuals want to work alongside

There is a sustainable legacy, we have developed what we believe to be a sustainable model based on growing materials, growing skills, growing partners and growing audiences. It is a philosophy that democratises how we tell our story, and this has been designed in from the start. It has been a messy process, but it has been human. This also embodies our political support and advocacy – main agencies, senior politicians, local politicians, senior officers have all bought into this ‘feltness’ from the very beginning, Jenny Gilruth met our community of refugees, choirs, pole dancers, veterans, archaeologists and school children.

Our core strategic partners are: UNESCO Chair for Refugee Integration through Languages and the Arts, Glasgow Association for Mental Health, Perthshire Women’s Aid, Breadalbane Academy, Kenmore and Grandtully Primary Schools, and Perthshire Autism Support.

See Separate Strategic Partners 2023-2024 Update.

Belongs in and Cares for its landscape

We have a water bore providing all the water we need, we are growing own food and developing coppice sites on the local hillsides working with local farmers and landowners. All the materials for the village have been built from resources within travelling distance for Crannog people. Sustainable procurement policy – local food in the café, growing food later in season, local coffee (Glen Lyon Coffee) and hot chocolate (Iain Burnett Highland Chocolatier), café furniture handmade by Scottish craftspeople, local goods in the shop. Museum buildings will be reused in phase 2 of the museum development – becoming incubator units for micro businesses and artist workshops.

Creating Deeper Connections to the Land – Feltness:

Feltness comes from being in a social space. The feelings of place, the location, the people, and the way of work – feeling part of it, feeling valued, heard,



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understood, feeling able to lead – feltness is inherent to what we do at the Crannog Centre. Throughout reviews, conversations and our work, people refer to the feeling of the place, a feeling of being home, being welcome. One volunteer said this year that after 52 years with autism, she felt ‘accepted for who she was’. For the over 200 volunteers, crafts people, partners and organisations involved, the social space created through designing and building together becomes a place where people can find their own way of working, leading, and making change. Everyone involved in the project felt deeply connected to the build, and we are currently working with Queen Margaret University Lecturer and PhD in Public Sociology Linnea Wallen to explore the full implications of this. The new museum and Iron Age Village are not just a reconstruction. Built by a community, for a community, it is a living, feeling place, created by 1000 people, influenced by 1000 voices, and constantly able to adapt to new needs.

The structures have been built by hand to academic and archaeological theory, designed to host modern visitors and tour groups, and with romance embedded – considering what we don’t know – embracing the uncertainty of our knowledge of life 2500 years ago. Three buildings have the same archaeological footprint, but look completely different above ground, and all showcase a particular prehistoric building material or technique. Using materials from within travelling distance of an Iron Age person, timber from Drummond Hill, heather from Glen Lyon and Dun Coillich, stone from the castle, turf from the golf course, hazel from the borders and Fife, this supports a sense of place that is felt, promoting ways of living sustainably in nature that we can learn from today.

A Special Place people want to visit and support

By moving fast we have achieved more, we have not had to close to the public until November – which was necessary to begin transferring sites. It has kept relationships and roles going, sustained and built momentum, and allowed our apprenticeship scheme to continue. It would have been easiest for the organisation, and made financial sense, to close after the fire, and especially during the build – to lay off the team and focus solely on building. This is the norm within most museum redevelopments across the UK today. However, we all felt this would not be right, we would lose the incredibly talented team who had



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brought us this far, we would set ourselves back in our relationships with partners and our social justice work, and we would lose our cohort of apprentices. We have worked incredibly hard to ensure that this did not happen. We ran both sites side by side throughout 2023, with two teams working – one delivering award-winning customer service, tours, and sharing our story, and the other building for the future. Both teams have been involved in all aspects of the work, with craftspeople presenting at events, and interpreters and museum staff helping build. This has included our director of operations leading heather pulling for thatch, with apprentices, volunteers and senior staff spending 6 hours up the hill, to the whole museum staff and volunteers cutting and lifting 40 pallets of turf from the local golf course to laying this turf on the roof of the blacksmith's house.

Being bold has also meant we have not given way to pressure to reduce the impact of the build – not concrete legs, or not engaging volunteers. By engaging this broad range of people from the beginning, we have not had to compromise – everybody on board, cheering us on, not having to use concrete modern materials, everything on the site is within travelling distance of a crannog dweller, and their technologies. There have been times when we didn't quite know – but we have met uncertainty head-on, and used it as a positive, unleashed its power, to learn, grow, train, and from the beginning accepted not everything will be right – this was built into plan – we will change and rebuild structures as we use the site. Uncertainty and 'not always knowing' has been cherished, impacting our work with partners and the community, as we ask for their knowledge.

Awards:

[Joint Winner – Most Sustainable Museum Project \(Museum and Heritage Awards 2024\)](https://awards.museumsandheritage.com/2024-winners/)

<https://awards.museumsandheritage.com/2024-winners/>

Winner – Best Visitor Welcome (Museum and Heritage Awards 2023) – Ceremony 10th May.

<https://awards.museumsandheritage.com/2023-shortlist/>

Winner – SME Employer of the Year – Promoting Diversity (Scottish Apprenticeship Awards 2023)



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<https://www.apprenticeships.scot/events/scottish-apprenticeship-awards/>

<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/news-events/2023/march/scottish-crannog-centre-apprentices-are-on-top-of-the-world/>

Winner – Most Sustainable Business Award (Scottish Excellence Awards 2023)

<https://www.scottishexcellenceawards.com/>

Finalist – Disability Confident Impact Award (Disability Smart Awards 2023) – runner-up to Balfour Beatty and Vodafone UK

<https://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/disability-smart-awards-2023/finalists/>

Articles:

[Is this Scotland's most responsible attraction? – Travel Tomorrow](#)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-68661012>

<https://news.stv.tv/north/iron-age-museum-scottish-crannog-centre-in-aberfeldy-reopens-three-years-after-being-destroyed-by-fire>

<https://www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/news/launch-of-scotlands-museums-and-galleries-strategy-2023-2030/#:~:text=The%20strategy%20supports%20museums%20and,the%20heart%20of%20Scotland's%20communities.https://www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/news/launch-of-scotlands-museums-and-galleries-strategy-2023-2030/#:~:text=The%20strategy%20supports%20museums%20and,the%20heart%20of%20Scotland's%20communities.>

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/20605996.trip-scottish-crannog-centre-proved-day-group-refugees/>

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/local-news/popular-crannog-centre-loch-tay-29368544>

<https://exarc.net/history/scottish-excellence-sustainable-business-award>



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<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/20207260.tripadvisor-reveals-best-uk-attractions-experiences-2022---see-scotland-winners/>

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/23489583.scottish-crannog-centre-once-in-a-lifetime-job-opportunity-arises/>

<https://interface-online.org.uk/case-studies/scottish-crannog-centre/>

Visitor Reviews:

https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attraction_Review-g1041952-d1553350-Reviews-or10-The_Scottish_Crannog_Centre-Kenmore_Perth_and_Kinross_Scotland.html

Testimonials:

<https://youtu.be/xVugA0-X-TU> - Apprentices

<https://youtu.be/LppOXThFoZQ> - Breadalbane Academy

<https://youtu.be/zarPOGJqw00>

<https://youtu.be/rWr8snFOaFU> - Perth Women's Aid

<https://youtube.com/shorts/92rosxPqanaw?feature=share> - Glasgow Association for Mental Health

<https://youtu.be/X4zRZ5RiyGk> - Alison Phipps, Chair of UNESCO Refugee Integration through Languages and the Arts.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=huhCN8Jdkxg&ab_channel=ScottishCrannogCentre - Gordon Morrison (ASVA), Markus Offer (MGS), Alison Phipps (UNESCO RILA), Kim Tyrie Brown (PWA)

Katrina Wallis – Deputy Head Breadalbane Academy

The things our student has been getting out of his placement is responsibility, he has had ownership of jobs, getting to do things he wouldn't do at school, use tools he wouldn't be able to use and he feels a sense of reliability and responsibility, he feels trusted, really helped him, and he has felt part of a team, talks so



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passionately about the crannog, and the people there, and a lovely relationship with them all... he's developed the ability to focus too... given him a big sense of calm and self-worth and we can't thank the crannog enough for that.

Perth Women's Aid

The work that the team at SCC do is often therapeutic, given us access to different therapies for women and children who have been affected by abuse. Takes them out of their own lives, and puts them into a peaceful space, with activities that calm the mind.

GAMH Simon – group team co-ordinator for Glasgow Association for Mental Health

'During February we had a set of truly inspirational workshops delivered to a set of GAMH participants, who were blown away by the attention to detail, the patience and the understanding that the crannog provides. As always, the warmth and sense of belonging to the extended crannog community is something that we as a group will always retain.'

Rebecca Davies – leather worker at the Crannog Centre

"I found the Crannog Centre very welcoming and felt I fitted in straight away, here I have been able to have a go at all sorts of things, which has improved my employability, given me a lot of confidence, and I have found a place to fit. This is the first time I have done full-time work, I was always looking for part time as I get tired, and have been told off for falling asleep, but here I can take breaks and do a full day 5 days a week, which I never thought I would be able to do. The Scottish Crannog Centre accepts me for myself."