

Proposal for use of Graham House, Dornie.

Following the closure of the above building this year 2011 we as a small collective, to become larger, would like to offer the following proposal. Personally as a working teacher and artist in Skye and Lochalsh, and following two successful years as co organiser of the Lochalsh Art Fair (LAF) - August 2009 and 2010, I believe there is a real demand for a multifunctional Arts and Creative centre in the area. The building could offer the following and more.

- Affordable studio space for established artist, craftspeople and performance artists.
- Up and coming local artists with on hand help to advise on courses and portfolio work (pupils have to leave the area to access courses where they are totally immersed in workshop and creativity. Why is it not here on their doorstep!!!)
- Exhibition space for short or longer exhibitions. Once again this could apply to final year pupils in school as well as local artists.
- Possible small retail outlet showing and selling local handmade art and craft. This could also apply to local produce grown in the area.
- UHI college could have a workable space south of Skye so pupils don't have to travel to Portree to access courses. There are local artists and teachers that could also help in this area (this has already been broached with the college course leader and has been met with a favourable response)
- There would be the possibility of a visiting artist to the area renting a studio space on a short or long term let. Again this specialist could have an input into local pupils engaged in creativity. This was also met very favourably by a local lady running established holiday accommodation who noted the following: that the two very successful American/Russian Artists who stayed and worked in Dornie last year for three weeks had asked about local workshop space for rent. Unfortunately for them there wasn't any.
- Saturday morning/ holiday Art and Crafts clubs for children, both local and visiting.
- A museum area dedicated to local crofting and traditions with a trail for tourists to follow.
- Communal garden /greenhouse areas for children and the older generation to access where produce could be grown, harvested and sold in the local shop or served up in the Hotel.
- The residents from the new centre could access therapeutic sessions in Art, creativity and even Dance.

- Life skills work for those school leavers who have not quite found their direction, such as health and hygiene, cooking, and advice on day to day living.
- An area for local musicians who would like to teach to have a centralised area for taking lessons and inspiring local children and adults to take up an instrument.
- Skills based courses for practical vocations such as joinery, carpentry and others where local craftspeople could feed in to develop young person's aspirations in going into a trade.

We understand that the castle has close to 300,000 visitors a year through its doors and many of its visitors turn either right out of the gate to Inverness or left to Skye driving right by Dornie and all it has to offer. The centre would help to increase the visitor numbers into the village and local business would benefit from this as well as providing local employment and sustainability of local accommodation. We believe that having this local resource would have a positive impact on the area and give future generations something really special. As a parent of four children accessing local education and as a teacher of special needs giving guidance to young people I believe that the community deserves such a building that offers a safe, inspiring, and captivating environment.

“Do what you can, with what you have, where you are” - Theodore Roosevelt.

Thank you for your time and we would be happy to submit a business plan if you feel the above could be possible.

An existing centre like this is An Talla Solais in Ullapool <http://www.antallasolais.org>

Or Moray Arts Centre <http://www.morayartcentre.org>

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