

## **West Highland Housing Association Board Member Professional Biographies**

### **Gerry Boyle**

Gerry is a retired primary school headteacher. He started his teaching career in the east end of Glasgow and moved to North Lorn in Argyll and Bute in 1983 to take over as headteacher of Strath of Appin Primary School.

During his time in Argyll and Bute, he was able to experience a wider role with secondments covering ICT, Co-ordinating Education Development across schools and management of the Education Capital Building programme.

He is the Chair of Appin Community Sports and Leisure Association, a charity set up to promote health and well-being in the Appin area, that built and manages the all-weather sports field in the school grounds.

Gerry joined the Board in December 2017 and is the current **Chair**.

### **Linda Houston**

Linda is a semi-retired town planner and social scientist who has worked in the field of Area Regeneration and Economic Development for over 35 years.

She was the Deputy Director of the Planning Exchange, Glasgow prior to taking up consultancy and managing several fixed term private sector led regeneration delivery programmes in central London and overseas. She also has had experience in setting up legacy Trusts and Business Improvement Districts.

She is a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute.

Linda joined the Board in 2018 and is the current **Vice Chair**.

### **Donald Harrison**

Donald graduated from Glasgow university in 1970 with a BSc in Agriculture. He became a Chartered Biologist which was followed by his election as a Fellow of the Royal Agricultural Societies.

His work involved providing business plans and analyses of agricultural units. He also developed an Estate Management enterprise and was the lead agricultural consultant in the Isle of Gigha buy-out. Following his retirement, he continued with some freelance consultancy until 2009 when he retired completely.

Donald has an interest in music particularly Scots trad fiddle music where he is active in tutoring and the local Fiddle Society. He is also Clerk of the Taynuilt Crofters' Common Grazings.

Donald joined the Board in 2010 and is the current **Secretary and Treasurer**.

### **David Bittleston**

David is a retired Chief Executive of a Marketing business who has been a councillor in England for 20 years and is currently Leader of Woking Borough Council.

Current housing projects in Woking include over 1,500 new homes with 40% being affordable or new socially rented homes.

David retires from Woking Borough Council in May 2020 and intends to move full time to Crinan where he has built an eco-friendly house.

David joined the Board in 2018.

### **Jack Degnan**

Jack graduated from Jordanhill College, as a teacher of primary education, in 1975. He moved to Argyll and Bute in January 1982 as head teacher of Bunessan Primary School, Isle of Mull. In 1997 he was appointed head teacher of Rockfield Primary School, Oban where he spent 17 years until his retirement from education.

In his retirement he has been working as a tour guide on the Isles of Mull and Iona during the tourist season. He is also secretary of his local village hall committee and a director of South West Mull and Iona Development.

Jack joined the Board in 2016.

### **Mark Feinmann**

Mark is a retired Director in the Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership and was also responsible for Children's Services across Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board. His focus was on the aligning of Health and Social Work cultures and enabling them to jointly meet the needs of communities.

Mark led the closure of Lennox Castle, a large hospital for people with learning difficulties, working closely with Housing Associations to enable supported living options to be developed.

Mark joined the Board in 2018.

### **Anne Horn**

Prior to being elected as a Councillor in 2007 Anne was employed within Social Work with Argyll and Bute Council. This gave her experience of the pressures of working within a busy and demanding service. It also provided vital knowledge of working within a limited budget while demands on the service continues to grow.

Anne served on the foundation of the Integrated Joint Board of the Health and Social Care Partnership and is now a member of the Mid Argyll Kintyre and the Islands Locality Planning Group ensuring that the needs of the communities are addressed.

Anne joined the Board in 2017 ([Council Nominee](#)).

### **Kirsteen MacKenzie**

Kirsty has over 30 years of experience working in the social care setting in both local authorities and charitable organisations. For the last 18 years she has worked for Enable Scotland managing care at home and housing support services in the Oban area.

Within housing, Kirsty has a special interest in accessibility and adaptations.

Kirsty joined the Board in 2016.

### **Douglas Mackie**

Dougie is a retired Principal Teacher of Geography and Guidance who worked at Oban High School throughout his 35-year teaching career.

Dougie was a prominent lay activist within Scotland's largest teacher trader union, The Educational Institute of Scotland. He was National President in 2003/4 and, prior to retiral in 2011, was the union's salary convener and Joint Chair (teachers' side) of the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers.

Dougie was also an employers' nominated trustee of the Institute's Pension Fund and a Director of EIS Financial Services.

Dougie has been a board member of Link Group since December 2015.

Dougie joined the West Highland Housing Association Board in 2012.

### **Sine MacVicar**

Having retired two years ago, Sine's professional life involved her in working for 44 years in the field of Education at Dunbeg Primary School, initially as class teacher, and for the last 25 years as Head Teacher of the school.

During her time at Dunbeg Primary School, Sine's remit consisted of managing staff as part of the whole-school team, ensuring the progress of pupils through the curriculum ensuring they achieved their full potential and building positive relationships with, and reporting to, parents. She also encouraged the school to be very much at the heart of the community and involving the children in out-of-school pursuits.

Other interests are in the guiding movement, music and she is an elder in Kilmore and Oban Old Parish church.

Sine joined the Board in 2019.

### **Elaine Robertson**

Elaine is a retired Occupational Therapist (OT), and now one of the Oban Lorn and Isles ward 5 Councillors. As an OT she initially worked with young people with special needs in Corseford School, Johnstone. She then moved to Oban, and with medical colleagues set up the Dalintart Day Hospital. In 1971 she moved to Argyll Social Work Department with the task of setting up and developing a Community OT Service in the area.

In 2003 she was elected as the councillor for North Lorn. She is now the chair of Oban Lorn and the Isles Area Committee. She is also Chair of the Oban Common Good Fund, a member of the Community Planning Partnership, Chair of Crossroads North Argyll, a

member of the local Access Forum, Co-Chair of the OLI Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and has been involved in tourism for many years.

Elaine re-joined the Board in 2021 ([Council Nominee](#)).

### **David Sloss**

Davie is a retired Fire Service Group Commander. In a varied career Davie had a range of references and responsibilities including Fire Safety Enforcement, Community Education, Emergency Planning, Discipline, Personnel, Training (including secondment as an Instructor to the Fire Engineering Division of the national Fire Service College) and Recruitment.

As a senior officer in Argyll and Bute, in addition to his operational duties, he was responsible for the supervision and management of retained and volunteer units and liaison with the communities they served.

Davie is a member of Taynuilt Community Council, currently serving as its Convenor, and is actively involved in various community activities and projects.

Davie joined the Board in 2016.

### **Torquil Telfer**

Torquil joined the Board on retiring from the Bank of Scotland having completed 45 years' service. He was a Mortgage Advisor for over 20 years and covered an area throughout the West Highlands from Campbeltown to Fort Augustus including the Inner Hebrides. He was experienced in finance for Affordable Housing and Self Builds.

He is presently the Piping Steward of The Argyllshire Gathering and convenor of their World, solo piping competitions.

Torquil joined the Board in 2018.

### **James Tolmie**

Jim is a Chartered Engineer and is a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers and member of the Institution of Highways and Transportation.

His initial 13 years of work were spent on the construction of a number of varied infrastructure projects, while the remaining 26 years were spent as a senior manager dealing mostly with the maintenance of the Roads network on the west coast of Scotland stretching from Ardfern to Achiltibuie with the attendant offshore islands including the significant landmasses of Mull and Skye.

Jim is currently Chair of the Oban and District Access Panel which deals with local issues which affect the disabled.

Jim joined the Board in 2013.