

The visitor's experience is enhanced by being part of a welcoming and still predominantly Gaelic-speaking community with personal or family memories of many of the dramatic episodes in the area's history.

The area of South Lochs is also outstanding for wildlife and outdoor pursuits. It has one of the highest densities of breeding Golden Eagle and White-tailed Sea Eagle anywhere in Europe, along with other birds of prey and animals such as Otter and Red Deer. There is easy access to wild country, providing ideal but testing conditions for walking, hill-climbing, sailing, canoeing, fishing, etc.



Golden Eagle in flight

Photo courtesy of RSPB

#### How to Contact Us

We would be very happy to discuss your needs and how we could help. For example, there are people in the local community who could be available to give introductory talks about aspects of the human or natural history of South Lochs, or to guide walks into some of the lesser-known parts of the area.



We are here

For further information, please phone Ravenspoint on 01851 880236 or email [info@ravenspoint.net](mailto:info@ravenspoint.net) Other useful sources of information on the hostel and facilities at Ravenspoint are [www.ravenspoint.net](http://www.ravenspoint.net) For more information on the Angus Macleod Archive, phone 01851 880737 or see [www.angusmacleodarchive.org.uk](http://www.angusmacleodarchive.org.uk) or [www.theislandsbooktrust.com](http://www.theislandsbooktrust.com) or [www.lochslewis.org](http://www.lochslewis.org)

## RAVENSPPOINT HOSTEL, ISLE OF LEWIS



## FACILITIES FOR EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND RECREATION



This leaflet gives information about the 14-bed hostel run by Co-Chomunn na Pairc (the Pairc Community Co-operative) at Kershader, South Lochs, Lewis for groups wishing to use the hostel as a base for educational visits, research, or outdoor recreational activities.

## Introduction

The 14-bed hostel has recently been upgraded and consists of 3 rooms of bunk beds (sleeping 6, 4, and 4, respectively). The hostel forms part of the Ravenspoint Centre at Kershader, South Lochs, Isle of Lewis, which is run by the local community. Other parts of Ravenspoint (a former school) contain a community shop, tea-room, and information about the South Lochs area, in particular the wonderful historical resource of the Angus Macleod Archive. The Co-Chomunn has plans for a major redevelopment of Ravenspoint which, depending on funding, will expand and improve the facilities offered. The main themes will be the outstanding history, Gaelic culture, and wildlife/landscape of this remote and rarely visited area.



Hostel, shop and café at Ravenspoint

telephone access is available in the adjacent part of Ravenspoint during shop opening hours. The hostel accommodation can be booked in advance on an individual or group basis. The current (2008) rates are £12 per night (£10 juniors), and this includes provision of a basic supply of foodstuffs (bread, milk, tea, coffee, etc) in the kitchen). Continental breakfast packs and other food can be purchased from the shop. The hostel also provides coin-operated washing and drying machines.

## Resources at Ravenspoint and in South Lochs

The main educational resource at present is the Angus Macleod Archive, a remarkable collection of books, manuscripts, photographs, and audio and video recordings left by the late Angus 'Ease' Macleod of Calbost, South Lochs. The material covers sub-



View down Loch Erisort from the hostel

## The Hostel

The location of the hostel, on the banks of Loch Erisort, at the entrance to a very interesting part of rural Lewis, is spectacular. In addition to the sleeping accommodation, the hostel has a fully-equipped kitchen and a sitting room with table and chairs – the latter is easily adapted as a meeting room during the day. Internet, FAX, and

jects such as crofting, fishing, Harris Tweed, genealogy, the Clearances, the Land Struggle, ceilidh-house stories, place-names and settlement history, etc. Some material is in Gaelic. The chief value of the archive – which is open to the public – is that it represents one man's view (and indeed the view of the community of South Lochs) about the area's dramatic and often harsh history. Parts of the archive have recently been digitised and placed on a website [www.angusmacleodarchive.org.uk](http://www.angusmacleodarchive.org.uk) although it is still necessary to visit Ravenspoint to see many items.



The Angus Macleod Archive

One of the key advantages of the resource is that it provides an excellent introduction to the human history of South Lochs, following which it is possible to visit many of the places described. These include, for example:

- The evocative deserted village of Stiomrabhagh (Steimreway). Remains of both the pre-Clearance settlement and the houses occupied by land raiders in the 20<sup>th</sup> century can be seen in this 'green oasis' between moor and sea.



The deserted village of Stiomrabhagh



The village of Calbost

- The beautifully situated village of Calbost, where Angus Macleod was born. A century ago it has a population of around 200 but by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century this had declined to just one person (the population is now beginning to increase again). Many shielings and feannagan (cultivation beds) vividly illustrating on the ground the past history of this community.