

RANNOCH

Community Trust

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Rannoch Hub – Form Filling & Box Ticking & Bats

It seems a long time since Rannoch Community Trust officially acquired the former Outdoor Centre back in July 2021. Not long after, we were excited to launch our dedicated website www.rannochhub.co.uk, social media channels @rannochhub #RannochHub, and invite members of the Rannoch community to our open evening and BBQ in August. Since then, everything seems to have stopped....

Well not quite! A project such as the development of Rannoch Hub has many stages and processes to complete, some of these are not as visible as others.

There have been the usual tasks that are involved with owning property, electricity contracts, water rates, business rates and all the un-glamorous tasks that seem to take a lot longer to process due to the effects of Covid including “working from home” or “staff shortages”.

Meanwhile our architect partners, StudioEast have been taking our Hub design and turning that into a full planning application. Once again, there are many design statements and consultant reports required to compile a complete application.

Two of the big pieces of work have been an energy study and an ecology assessment. Firstly, our architects have to write a brief to be issued to consultants based on the required reports. Quotations from a number of companies have to be compiled and then assessed by the RCT Board for both quality, timescale and of course price. Once selected the consultant then has to identify a suitable time to carry out the survey (everyone’s busy due to the “Covid” backlog), before publishing a report for the RCT board to assess.

Our energy survey helped us to identify the possible energy efficiency measures, calculate the potential future energy requirements of the Hub, and design sustainable systems suitable for efficient and economical operation.



An ecology survey was required as the Hub is a registered BAT Roost!

The presence of bats in the former Outdoor Centre is well recorded and Perth & Kinross Council even had information for users of the building regarding the presence of bats. By law all species of bats are protected in the UK. That means to carry out renovations we must have a formal plan in place to mitigate any disturbance to the bats. In late December FDM Ecology carried out an Initial Roost Inspection, the purpose of which is to identify signs that bats are present. In the words of our surveyor “If you wanted to design the best Bat Maternity Roost, then the roof space of the Hub would be perfect”

The next stage of the bat assessment involves 3 activity surveys which must take place 2 weeks apart and cannot be before 1st May. These assessments will be used to devise a plan of works with any contractor appointed to the project.

Our [Planning Application](#) is now live on the Perth & Kinross Council website using the reference 22/00211/FLL. We have been advised by PKC that they will not be able to make a determination on the application until the bat survey is complete. We have informed PKC that we are keen to avoid any significant delays as a substantial chunk of the funding that we have secured needs to be spent by March 2023.

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Our work continues behind the scenes to bring our plans for Rannoch Hub to fruition including fundraising to pay for the conversion works. We have raised nearly £400,000 but still need to a further £150,000 if we want to fully realise our plans and make to Hub a fantastic asset for the Rannoch Community. See the following article on our crowd-funding campaign to see how you can help.

Get in with the in-crowd! Join the Hub Crowd-funding Campaign

Be part of our exciting village project to create a multi-use venue to serve at the heart of the local community.

We will soon be launching an online crowdfunding campaign where you can be part of this historic venture. We will be opening our fundraising options to allow the local community to donate any sum of money they can afford - be it large or small - and anything we can raise will be 100% used on the construction or interior fit of The Hub.

Imagine sitting after work with a cold beer or nice glass of wine knowing you helped in creating this venture. Or sitting with family and friends at the weekend enjoying a hearty meal, knowing that this is a place you can now bring them too when they visit. You will also benefit from the meeting rooms and the facilities indoor and outdoor, that we will construct. With your generous help, this project will flourish and come to life.

Every penny we raise from you, the locals or the tourists, past or present, will be used in some way. We hope to raise a sum of £10,000. Keep an eye on our socials to find out more.

And a massive thank you in advance. It is exciting times!

Care Co-ordinator Update

by Veronica Grosset

It is now five months since I took over as the Care Co-ordinator. The work that has been undertaken has been the Food Bank, the Befriender Service, the Hospital Transport Service, and issues regarding the provision of Care in the Community.

Food Bank

The good news is that last year during the Covid lockdown we were supporting 15 people, but this has been greatly reduced and we now support 5 -6 people in the community. We are extremely grateful for all the kind and generous donations that we have received from Rannoch Community Trust, the community, and the support that I get from Sue Francis who the helps with of Food Bank and also undertakes the running of the Food Bank in my absence. Should you or anyone you know be in need of assistance please contact rannochcoordinator@gmail.com or telephone 07876746407 . (All enquiries or referrals are treated in confidence.)

Befriender Service

Volunteers continue to support several people in the Rannoch Area. This scheme was invaluable during the Covid pandemic when many people felt extremely



lonely with no family or friends to help them. The Befrienders kept in contact initially by phone

and as the restrictions were gradually lifted, they were able to meet in person and once again the Befrienders can take their friends out for a walk, a run in the car or simply sit and have a chat. I am indebted to the two Befrienders who have done excellent work coming alongside people when it is most needed. Having spoken of the work under the Befriender's scheme I also give thanks to the number of people who regularly support and help others in this community. Anyone interested in acting as a Befriender, or knows of someone who might benefit from this befriending scheme should contact rannochcoordinator@gmail.com or telephone 07876746407 . (All referrals are treated in confidence.)

Hospital Transport Service

Since 2015, over 30 people in the Rannoch area have benefitted from this service which provides transport to hospital and other medical appointments for people who do not have access to, or are unable to use a car. It has been able to assist with transport to Dundee, Perth, Edinburgh, Pitlochry, and Aberfeldy. This is undertaken by volunteers, and we are grateful for the drivers who have been willing to give up their time, and partly finance support this project. Initially, the service which is

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free of charge, was unable to pay volunteers expenses so the cost of fuel etc... was met from their own pockets. However, in 2018 RCT secured funding which enabled volunteer drivers to claim back expenses at 20 pence a mile. The usual expenses mileage rate for similar services is 40 pence a mile.

We are currently the only hospital transport scheme in the Perth and Kinross local authority area who do not ask for donations from users to help meet these expenses. However, in the light of rapidly increasing fuel costs it has been decided that this is no longer sustainable. In future we will need to ask for a donation of £20 for Perth and £30 for the Journey to Dundee (equivalent to approximately 20p per mile). People who receive benefits will be asked to collect a claim form from the department that they are attending and make a claim from the Hospital Cashier's office either at the time or retrospectively and donate the money to the Transport Service. Arrangements are also being made for the driver to have a Blue Card to allow them to park in the Disabled Parking Bays. Needless to say we are indebted to those who provide this service allowing folk a more convenient and comfortable journey and with

friendly chat "en-route". Without their generosity those who need the service would struggle to attend appointments without having to make much longer and more demanding journeys.

Care in the Community

Over the years the Rannoch area has benefitted from excellent care from people in the community thus allowing residents, needing care, to remain in their own homes. Currently there are two Personal Assistants providing care in the community. Unfortunately, due to a lack of people willing to provide home care they have been working 7 days a week without days off or holidays. This is not sustainable. The community of Rannoch urgently need people who can provide relief care in the area and provide continuing care for those who require a care package to enable them to remain in their own home.

This is paid employment, hours negotiable and in a developing service with support and training available. Interested? Please contact myself, Veronica Grosset – email: rannochcoordinator@gmail.com or telephone 07876746407 for further information .

Affordable Housing – Work starts on site masterplan

A masterplan for a proposed affordable housing development on the site that lies between the B846 and River Tummel is now in development following an award of funding by Perth & Kinross Council to RCT to enable more feasibility work. RCT in partnership with the Dunalastair Estate, the owners of the site, have commissioned architects Andrew Black Design to prepare a masterplan which will include a proposed layout for community owned affordable houses as well as some houses for private sale and, possibly, a communal workspace.

The masterplan will consider the whole site although any development will initially involve up to 12 two and three bed houses for affordable rent and low-cost home ownership, and 3 – 4 houses for private sale. It won't provide detailed designs for the housing itself as these will be provided, if and when, we submit a full planning application. However, both Dunalastair and RCT are committed to ensuring any development is in keeping with the local built and natural environment. It is anticipated that we will have a draft masterplan by May which we will then consult on to seek the views of the community before submitting it to planners at Perth & Kinross Council for their feedback.

The masterplan is being led by Hans Grabowski from

[Andrew Black Design](#), a Dundee based architectural practice with significant experience of developing affordable housing in highland and rural Scotland. Hans is being assisted by Ben Poulter a landscape architect from Ironside Farrar while Joe Gribben from the Community Housing Trust continues to provide technical support and advice to RCT.



On site –from L-R: Hans Grabowski, Ben Poulter, Joe Gribben

Rannoch Paths & Open Space Group

Riverside Path

Following a recent community newsletter giving the history of the new All-abilities Riverside Path in Kinloch Rannoch this is an update. For anyone who missed the earlier information or would like to look over the proposed route and plans please check out the Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust website <https://www.pkct.org/rannoch-riverside-all-abilities-path-project-newsletter>.

In the meantime, here is a short update. Starting at the Health Centre/Weir, west end of the path the contractors have already scraped the surface and laid a terram style membrane on which they have laid a stone surface.



Some concerns have been voiced about the width of the path. The first part is on the existing roadway which leads to the weir and will be no wider than before. The second part down passed the picnic table to the bridge seems

wide however it will have grass edging and drainage taking it to a finished width to about 2.5 metres. This meets equalities legislation and allows two people to walk together or next to someone in a wheelchair rather than following behind or striding out in front. It lets people pass from the opposite direction. There will be a second picnic area, with wheelchair accessible table, further back from the river, and still with lovely views of Schiehallion. The path through the woodland is constructed of a root protection system, with the sealed surface on top. The path under the bridge plus the base of the middle section leading to the village centre access point has a "Riprap" design, against scour and water erosion.

Hillside Path

The Paths group has been working on the drainage and surface of these two paths. A handrail has been installed down a steep set of steps on Hillside Path making it more accessible. It can be used as an alternative route for those who are currently missing the Riverside path.

Meall Dubh



We have also started to tackle the extremely wet and very muddy Meall Dubh path from the Highland Club and Loch Rannoch Hotel across to the Allt Mor waterfall at the village. This will be a much longer job. While it is as wet as this, it should only be walked with care and wearing shoes/boots to cope with mud.

Our Volunteering Paths Group.

We are always hoping for new volunteers. No experience necessary, we all work together and so learn from each other. Occasionally we are able to attend training courses. It's a great way to meet new people and anyone is welcome to contact me to find out more. Currently we meet on Monday mornings but would be happy to change some workdays/or evenings to suit new members who perhaps have other commitments. Contact Annie Benson 01882632377 or rannochscotland@gmail.com

Rannoch Community Trust

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