

November 2022

RANNOCH

Community Trust

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The Hub Gets Green Light from PKC Planners

Seven months after RCT submitted a planning application to convert the former Kinloch Rannoch school into the Rannoch Hub, planning consent has now been given despite a few hurdles along the way including the presence of bats and a last-minute hitch with a proposed bridge. This means that the project can at long last move towards the actual delivery of this much anticipated new community facility providing a bar, café/restaurant, and community office and meeting space.

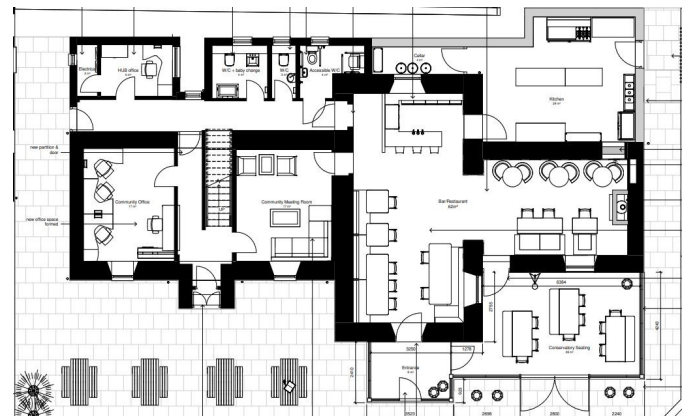
Richard Barclay, Chair of RCT, said “We are massively relieved as well as very pleased that we have obtained planning consent as it now secures significant grant funding which was at risk of being lost due to the time taken to get through the planning system. It also means that we can now begin the process of procuring a builder to carry out the conversion work which will hopefully begin in early 2023”

The presence of bat roosts in the roof space meant that a bat survey had to be carried out and this could only be done during the bat roosting season in the summer. Further delay arose from the requirement for a flood risk assessment of the impact of the proposed foot bridge over the Allt Mor burn. The outcome of the flood study required the bridge to be relocated to a position that turned out to be out with the boundary of the planning application. Rather than lose any further time by having to resubmit a new planning application it was decided to omit the bridge from the plans to allow a decision on the application to be made and the project to proceed. A separate planning application will be made for the construction of a footbridge which will a link to the existing paths network and provide off-road pedestrian access to the Hub.

As well as remodelling the inside of the building the outside space will be landscaped and include additional seating, play equipment, meeting and outdoor performance spaces and car and bicycle parking.



Hub south-elevation



Hub ground floor layout

Richard Barclay added “It has been a long and at times bumpy road since the idea of a community hub was identified as the number one priority in the community plan back in 2015 but at long last the end is now in sight. We just need a final push with fund-raising to ensure that we have the money we need to make the Hub a first-class facility for both local people and visitors. We have made really good progress in securing funds from national and local government as well as trusts and foundations but now we need to focus our efforts on local fund-raising in order to hit our funding target. We’ll be sharing details of how you can support or contribute to our local fundraising campaign shortly so watch this space!”

More information on the plans for the Hub are available on the [Rannoch Hub](#) website while details about the planning application and decision can be found at on [PKCs planning portal](#).

'Sure by Tummel and Loch Rannoch along the new riverside path I will go'

(with apologies to Harry Lauder)

Perseverance by the Paths & Open Space Group pays off with the opening of a new all abilities riverside path providing a safe, off-road walking, wheeling and cycling route between the Primary School and the Health Centre.

About a decade ago Perth and Kinross Council removed the old toilet block and when it became clear it was not to be replaced several members of the Paths & Open Space Group started to dream of an accessible path from the square in Kinloch Rannoch down and along the riverside.

Many years later Bid Strachan from Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust (PKCT), who had already help to create and improve other paths in the Rannoch area, offered to help the Paths & Open Space group with making their dream become a reality. This included developing a plan, obtaining landowner permissions, carrying out feasibility and design work, and, crucially, helping to find funding to build such a path.

Three years after this offer was made, there is now a new all-abilities path running along the River Tummel from the Health Centre all the way out towards the primary school and houses in Craig Varr Place. In March this year the construction work started and was finally completed in time for our grand opening in May. About 70 people, locals, construction and engineering teams, and various funders witnessed Cameron McNiesh, Patron of PKCT, cut the ribbon, surrounded by Rannoch primary school children.



The group carried out "before and after" surveys and despite the heavy rain for the recent "after" survey the numbers of users were up. The new path has also solved the issue of the flooding under the bridge that made the old path impassable when the river was high.

Although several people were unhappy about the prospect of a wide



Flood free path beneath the bridge



Picnic table on the new Riverside Path

Feedback from users of the Riverside path

- Residents who live next to the path report that the path is much busier than before with residents and tourists. They regularly see people running on the path.
- Several dog walkers report that they use the path daily – sometimes twice a day.
- Resident with small child on tricycle comes regularly – it's a safe place for children to learn to cycle.
- Individuals walking from Craig Varr place to the shop use the off-road path making a safe short cut to the shop across the river.
- A family on holiday at Bridge of Gaur with two children on bikes and a baby with push chair had used it at least 4 time during their week at the request of their children.
- A Stride for Life participant said she felt so safe on the path because all the tree roots have gone.

tarmac path through the woodland the Paths & Open Space Group report that feedback from users (see sidebar on the previous page) is very positive about the new route which, as time goes by, will settle more naturally into its surroundings.

There is now a safe off-road route from the Loch Rannoch Hotel and Highland Club (the Lochend path was also organised by Bid Strachan several years ago) all the way to the square which be of real benefit to both local residents and visitors alike.

Rannoch Care Coordinator - Here to Help

The Rannoch Care Coordinator's post was established by RCT to provide a point of contact for people who may be vulnerable or struggling for a variety of reasons and are seeking information and advice about services and organisations that can help. The Coordinator also helps to manage a number of local support projects including the Foodbank, Befriender Service, Hospital Transport Scheme and Care in the Community.

Food Bank

Over the last few years and especially during the Covid pandemic, the Food Bank provided support to a number of individuals and families in the community. Although demand has noticeably reduced in recent months, we anticipate that with the current cost of living crisis and winter approaching that more people may be in need of this service. To find out more about who is eligible to use the foodbank and how to access it please get in touch using the contact details at the end of this article



Befrienders Service



The Befriender Service aims to support individuals who are housebound or vulnerable and who may feel lonely or isolated. Befrienders are trained and have been PVG checked and aim to help people overcome feelings of loneliness by carrying out regular visits, spending time with them over a cup of tea and having a chat, helping with errands such as shopping or collecting prescriptions and, occasionally, going for an outing.

If you or someone you know could benefit from using the Befriending Service then please get in touch .We would also like to hear from those of you who are interested in helping out as volunteers – why not get in contact? For any enquiries or information about the Befriending Service please use the contact details at the end of this article.

Hospital Transport Scheme

The Hospital Transport Scheme provides transport to hospital and other medical appointments for people in the Rannoch area who do not have access to, or are unable to use a car, or have difficulties accessing public transport. In the last newsletter it was announced that due to the increase in the cost of fuel that we would have to start charging a small fee for this service. However, we have been fortunate to receive funding from Perth and Kinross Council and a generous contribution from a local charity allowing us to continue to provide this service free of charge.

Affordable Housing

Work is still on-going on a masterplan for a mixed housing development on the field that lies between the B846 (across the road from Buchanan Place and the Medical Centre) and the River Tummel which will include 12 houses for affordable rent and low cost home ownership. Due to a number of reasons progress has been slower than anticipated but we hope to be able to share draft masterplan designs sometime in the New Year.



CARING
FOR OUR
COMMUNITY

The scheme relies on local volunteer drivers to drive people to medical appointments in Edinburgh, Dundee, Perth, Pitlochry and Aberfeldy and my thanks goes to all the volunteers who make this service possible and especially to Penny Tree who has continued to diligently coordinate this service.

Requests for assistance with travel through the Rannoch Hospital Transport Scheme should be made through the admin staff at the **Rannoch Medical Centre on 01882 632216**.

Covid Boosters and Flu Vaccination



Following discussions with NHS Tayside people 70 years and over can now get their Covid and Flu vaccinations at the Medical Centre in Kinloch Rannoch instead of having to travel to Pitlochry.

Diabetic Eye Tests In addition, following discussions with NHS Tayside it has been agreed that people with diabetes can have their eye tests in Kinloch Rannoch rather than having to travel to Aberfeldy.

Care in the Community?

With an increasingly ageing population, access to care and support is of critical importance to enabling older residents to continue to live independently in their own homes. We are probably all aware of the challenges facing social care but for a remote community like Rannoch, the challenges are even greater. We only have three carers for the whole of Rannoch and the demands being made on their time is not sustainable – one carer has been working 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year since the Covid pandemic. This is not fair either to the carer or to those receiving the care.

People in Rannoch looking for care and support at home also face very limited options about how this care is provided. Under the government's Self-Directed Support scheme people can choose the amount of control and decision making they want over the care and support they receive and how it is paid for. Options, of which there are four, vary from people receiving the funding they need, via a direct payment, to arrange and pay for their own care, to leaving it to the local authority pay for, arrange and provide care packages. However, in Rannoch people only really have one option available which is to receive direct payments and arrange their own care. While this level of control may be appropriate for some it is not suitable for everyone particularly those who don't have friends and family to support them through the process of budgeting for their care and employing someone to provide it. It can also be tough on carers who are regarded as self-employed and are not entitled to sick pay or paid holiday leave.

We are indebted to the three Carers who provide such a valuable service but we need to be looking at how we can increase community care provision in Rannoch, and putting it on a more sustainable footing.

Working together this Winter

We are approaching what is likely to be a difficult winter, with the increased risk of Covid and flu infections, and people struggling with the rising cost of living, particularly the cost of heating their homes. It is therefore more important than ever that we work together to make sure we have a strong and resilient community by looking out for our friends and neighbours and ensuring that those who are struggling can access the help and support they need.

Getting in contact (All enquiries and referrals are treated in confidence.)

If you or anyone you know needs a helping hand or wants to find out more about the Food Bank or Befrienders Service please contact me either by email at rannochcoordinator@gmail.com, or by telephone on 07876 746407.

Rannoch Community Trust



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