



Newsletter 11, 29 June 2022.

Dear member

This is the 11th in our series of newsletters designed to keep our members up to date with the work being carried out by Rhynie Charitable Trust and to address any issues or queries raised by our members. We have been somewhat remiss in keeping up with sending out these newsletters, which has not been helped by the CoVid19 pandemic, the last edition (No.9) was sent on 19 November 2019 prior to the lockdown.

The 2021 AGM was held on Sunday 10 October 2021 in No.14, The Square, Rhynie. Attendance, as at previous AGMs, was small although we did manage to achieve a quorum, allowing the AGM to proceed. As we had a Special Resolution to consider it was important that we were able to hold the meeting. We would like to impress on members that we need your input and feedback to ensure we continue to take the Trust in the best direction for its members.

The minutes of the AGM will be available for members to download, together with a copy of the Special Resolution which was not passed but is being made available to allow members to have full knowledge of our deliberations.

We were able to briefly update those members who attended the AGM on some of the projects we have been working on but there was a suggestion that we should resume our newsletters to ensure that the information reaches as many of our members as possible.

Also we now have more news for you about a project we know will be of interest many of you. This concerns the Pictish Stones for which Rhynie is well-known, including the Rhynie Man. The final report has been provided enabling us to move forward and start some of the conservation work. The report was presented to members at the 2019 AGM by Gordon Noble of Aberdeen University.

Previous newsletters have been distributed by an email mailing through MailChimp. We are a little concerned about the level of opening of these emails, and whether members are receiving them. The rate of opening for our last message announcing the AGM was only 69.7%. This was sent out to 76 members for whom we have an email address so only 53 members opened this. It may be that some of these disappear into Spam boxes so are never seen but we are open to suggestions for how we can improve this.

Trust officers

Mike Davies continues as Chair and Colin Mumford is responsible for the membership. George Beverly has been working on path improvements for Tap O Noth. He also gives us the benefit of his wide local knowledge and experience. Averil Stewart is continuing as Treasurer although not a Director.

Colin Neesom continued to organise and run the 100 Club and other events, besides serving as announcer for the Gala until January 2022 when he moved to Aboyne. The 100 Club



was, sadly, closed at that point. Debbi Beeson is also now no longer a Director.

Since this leaves us at the minimum number of directors under our constitution we are keen to appoint new members to the Board. We have had two people, Martin Dow and Alastair Wilson, express an interest but would still have a vacancy for one more. We would also be very keen to welcome anyone who may be interested in assisting the Board with taking on the Secretary's duties. This does not need to be a Board member. Please contact Mike (861535, or mike@braeheadrhynie.co.uk) for more information.

Members list

Since we changed the membership grades to make all members Life members a few years ago we have been struggling to make sense of the records we hold of members information. In particular, for some members we only have an email address, some we have only a postal address, some we have both and for a very few we appear to have no address at all. This does make it awkward when trying to send out information to members and we are trying to rationalise things. Some members we know have left the area and some are deceased.

Colin Mumford is now responsible for our member information and he would welcome any up to date contact information you can provide. You can email him at colin.jwmumford@gmail.com.

100 Club

The Club started in December 2015, so passed it's 6th anniversary. In March 2021, money raised for RCT hit the £10,000 mark The total paid out to members since inception amounts to over £13000. During the last calendar year, we gave out more than £1900 in prizes.

Colin Neesom, who set up and organised the Club, has now left Rhynie and moved to Aboyne. Sadly this has meant the closure of the Club as we have no one else available to run it. If anyone felt able to take this on we could resurrect the Club and I am sure Colin could advise on the running. We would like to express our thanks to Colin for his efforts with running the Club and the funds raised.

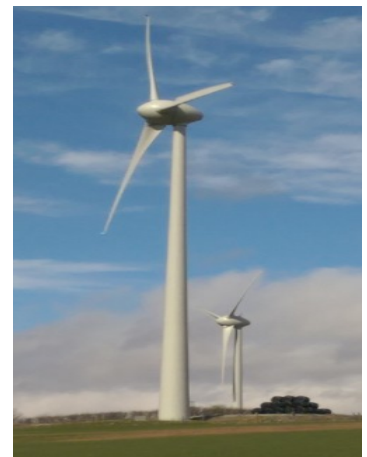
The club had 92 members before its demise. The prize fund was 60% of the subscriptions divided between 5 prizes each month (£110, £55, £30, £20 & £15) and the remainder was retained by RCT for community purposes.

A full list of past winners can be seen on our website.

Wheedlemont Turbine Fund

Since the inception of this fund, up to April 2022, a total of £73724 has been paid by the developers to Huntly Development Trust (HDT) with £18431 transferred to RCT. The value for 2019 was £9660, which was significantly higher than expected, plus three smaller

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payments in 2020, 2021 and 2022. There have been five invitations to apply for grants which have led to awards to 19 qualifying projects in Rhynie and Auchindore & Kearns parishes. We have so far distributed a total of £16650 to these projects.

Paths projects

a) We are still working with other communities on a project known as 'The Kingdom of the Picts' Trail to provide a walking and cycling route linking six communities from Gartly in Strathbogie to Corgarff in Strathdon. This has now been extended to reach to Huntly.

A route for the Trail has been drafted running from Huntly through the Clashindarroch Forest to the ski trails at Black Middens, over The Buck then across the south side of the Cabrach into Glen Buchat, along the Ladder Hills and then down to Corgarff. The steering group is still seeking to discuss the issues with the estates but in the meantime will be looking at tracks to link communities to the route.

b) We have completed the upgrading and repair of the path to Tap O Noth from the car park to the first deer gate. Funding came from RCT, TONCC, Marr Area Committee and Cairnmore Wind Farm. Problems over the signing have been resolved and new signs have been supplied by Aberdeenshire Council. Overall, comments on the new path have been positive and it is wearing well.

c) In 2019 we also provided information to a project for Huntly Development Trust seeking to identify paths in the AB54 area which are either currently used by walkers or would be aspirational paths. Various public meetings were held to gather information on paths presently used and paths to which people would aspire. A consultant was appointed to report on the information, which was completed early in 2020.

HDT are, unfortunately, still in the process of setting up a website with mapping so these routes can be available for local residents and visitors to the area. The report can be downloaded at <https://www.huntlydt.org/uploads/AB54-path-network-survey-record-9-Nov-2020.pdf>. We understand that they now expect the website to be functional by September 2022.

Rhynie Chert SSSI

We still have aspirations for this site and we have been looking at a possible path up the hill to join with the higher path up Tap O Noth. This would allow walkers to ascend the hill from the village without using the road. We have identified a line for the path through the SSSI which would reach the road to Windyfield. Beyond that would obviously require discussion and negotiation with landowners and we have spoken to them but, so far, we don't have agreement to promote the route.

If anyone has any ideas for this site or would like to help with any development, please contact us. The area at the bottom of the site, near the Essie Burn, might be available for paths similar to Moss Wood but is a bit wet.



Pictish Stones project

We have been discussing the Pictish stones around Rhynie with Gordon Noble of Aberdeen University and how these could be best displayed. We commissioned a feasibility study to look into the present state of the stones and how they could be preserved and presented for the future. This would, hopefully, include the return of Rhynie Man which we understand would be supported by Aberdeenshire Council subject to provision of a secure location.



The report was presented at the AGM in 2019 by the consultants and the final report was received in 2020. This set out their recommendations for how we might proceed with an indication of the priority for the various proposals. We are now starting work on the most urgent issues, beginning with the shelter by the cemetery which will be rebuilt.

We are applying for Scheduled Monument Consent to erect protective fencing around the Craw Stane and have contacted a stone conservator to undertake an inspection of all the stones to determine how these can be protected for the future.

Rhynie Memorial & Platinum Jubilee celebrations

We noted before that the War Memorial in Rhynie Square was 100 years old on 20 May 2020 and proposed to commemorate this with a street party. Unfortunately, due to the CoVid restrictions this was postponed until 2021, and then had to be further postponed to 2022. The Queen's Platinum jubilee in June this year provided a further reason for celebration. A sub-committee was formed to organise this and events were held on Thursday 2nd June and Sunday 5th.



A beacon was lit on Tap O Noth on Thursday evening as part of a nationwide event and this was attended by more than 60 people. On Sunday we held a family picnic in The Square using No.14 with gazebos and tables in the garden. Children's competitions were organised and a tractor run. A memorial tree was planted adjacent the church and a time capsule containing documents and articles was buried. The event was well attended and enjoyed by all.

The events were funded by grants from Wheedlemont Turbine Fund, Tap O Noth Community Council and Cairnmore Wind farm.

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Finally, we would like to extend an invitation to any persons who wish to help with the work of the Trust. If you would like to serve on the Board or assist in any other way we would be pleased to hear from you. Please contact any of the Board members below.

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Newsletters and other member communications will be distributed by email or post depending on the information provided by individual members. Please note, if you do not receive an emailed copy we do not have your email address. **We would appreciate any members who have so far not provided an email address to do so, if possible, since this is our preferred communication medium as it is cheaper and quicker.**

If you have not received our previous newsletters and would like to see copies of these or if you would like to check that we have your correct email address, please do not hesitate to contact us. Copies of this and previous newsletters can also be downloaded from our website rhyniecharitabletrust.co.uk/pages/members/newsletters.php.

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