



# Delivering Rannoch's Sustainable Future Development Plan Summary

April 2016

A person wearing a green jacket and dark trousers is walking away from the camera on a dirt path through a forest. The trees are mostly bare, suggesting a late autumn or winter setting. The path is covered with fallen leaves and twigs. The background is a dense forest of thin trees.

# foreword

The world has changed at a phenomenal rate over the last 20 years and will continue to do so. Cities now cover 0.5% of the world and consume a staggering 75% of its resources. Overall population has grown more since 1970 than in the rest of history combined. The over-60s have increased 50% in the last 60 years through better living conditions and health care. Through technology we can reach 60 million people in seconds, and by 2020 there will be 50 billion devices connected to the internet. All of these technological developments, and more, are here to stay and shape our world.

People who live in Rannoch & Tummel who are looking outward at these changes, probably wonder how the area will survive these challenges and also how they can access some of these, in the main, undoubted benefits. And they may be wondering what it means for us as a population that has chosen to live in an isolated and unique Highland place with an increasingly fragile community, but where there is wonderful fresh air to breathe and room to roam. We now have an opportunity and responsibility to prepare and sustain our community for that future. We can create a place to live where the evolving world does not leave us behind, but rather is embraced for our benefit, whilst at the same time protecting the values and fragile truce with nature that makes our community so special.

This community plan is the first stage in driving those changes to enable us to remain responsive and to equip ourselves to derive the most benefit from today's innovations. The plan has been community led, is community owned and will be community driven. Our community is well intentioned and committed to developing and moulding a society fit for tomorrow's world right here in Rannoch & Tummel. This plan outlines our steps to prepare for this and aims to deliver a sustainable future for all in our community.

*Richard Barclay*

Rannoch and Tummel Community Fund Group

	Page
Foreword .....	2
Who are we .....	4
What We Did .....	5
What We Found Out .....	6
Our Community .....	6
What People Value Most .....	6
What's Missing .....	6
Our Think Big Vision & Key Themes .....	7
Our Actions .....	8
Our Organisation .....	8
Our Place .....	9
Our Space .....	10
Our Services .....	11
Proposed plan .....	14
Conclusion .....	15



# who we are

Rannoch & Tummel<sup>(1)</sup> is a remote highland community located in the North West corner of Perthshire. A small population (c. 750) is located in two villages and a few hamlets across a large geographical area from Rannoch Station in the west to Tummel Bridge in the east, a distance of over 25 miles. Spanning two designated National Scenic Areas centred on Loch Rannoch and Loch Tummel, the natural environment and its assets are key characteristics of the community and drivers of sustainability, with employment strongly linked to forestry, renewables, agriculture and the visitor economy.

The area has seen a shift over the last decades away from labour-intensive land-based industries and the vulnerability of other hubs of private employment sources such as the former Rannoch School and hotels/visitor accommodation. This has impacted significantly on the population profile, housing, employment and ultimately community life. The community recognises that they need to re-think the “way of life” in Rannoch & Tummel and consider how they strengthen their community and its assets to retain them for themselves, visitors and future generations.

Discussions have been ongoing over a number of years amongst key community stakeholders about the ongoing sustainability of the area, with various initiatives undertaken to greater and lesser success. With renewed energy, the Rannoch & Tummel Community Fund Group (CFG) was formed in the summer of 2014 under the auspices of the local Community Council. The broad aims agreed by the community for this voluntary, non-constituted group were:

- To draw up a short term and 5-10 year community plan based on the community’s view for the benefit of Rannoch & Tummel
- To seek funding from whatever source to support the actions of the development plan and administer any funds raised.

(1) As defined by the Community Council boundaries



# what we did

With the advice of Foundation Scotland, the CFG were able to secure CARES grant funding from Local Energy Scotland (based on a now withdrawn renewables application). This allowed them to commission independent consultants Community Enterprise to work alongside the community to research and draft a community development plan.

It was important to the CFG that any process to develop a community plan was inclusive, with the community both engaged in the process and taking ownership of the resulting proposed actions. The CFG were therefore intrinsically involved in the design and delivery of the project to ensure that it was an inclusive process. Inspired by the initial positive discussions around the project, branding was designed and proposed by a CFG member. The “**YOUR VISION. YOUR PLAN.**” logo has been adopted and further developed to present the community’s work.

## YOUR VISION. YOUR PLAN.

The CFG also wanted to encourage the community to challenge previous mind sets about formulating this plan, and developed a three-step “Think Big” process:



Stage 1 **Current Thoughts** took place between June and September 2015 using various methods to gather individual and group perspectives on the community. Through desk-based research, online and paper surveys, public meetings and community events (e.g. the Rannoch Gathering), individual and group stakeholder and focus group meetings, all sectors of the community were invited to give feedback.

Throughout Stage 1 and the rest of the process, the community and key stakeholders were encouraged to “Think Big”, thinking in terms of wildest dreams and inspirations without imposing either resource or financial constraints. During September and October 2015, the CFG sought inspiration from others to develop **Think Big Ideas** by visiting communities who are already implementing inspirational plans and by hearing from local entrepreneurs. This enabled key themes to be developed to provide the framework for Rannoch & Tummel’s **Think Big Plan**.

# what we found out

## Our Community:

- Remote and isolated, area unusually elongated with high-profile features and long journey times between places
- Beautiful with numerous high-profile recognised sites
- Vulnerable to the loss of population, facilities and services
- Some services like the school, medical centre and post office are highly valued but particularly vulnerable to population change
- Highly skilled with great capacity
- Diverse population with different kinds of people
- A changing demographic with an aging population and young people leaving
- A need for strategic leadership
- Developments restricted in part by various environmental designations of certain areas
- Many small businesses and a high proportion of self-employed people with opportunities for growth.

## What People Value Most:

- 71% of those surveyed said they “love it here”
- The outdoors, the natural environment
- Outdoor activities
- Lots of active community groups and self-reliance
- People are talented
- Heritage – Clan Trail and other tourist potential
- Good neighbours, people care
- Community spirit, though this needs nurturing
- Peace and quiet.

## What's Missing:

- Children's and youth facilities and services
- Community hub, creating a heart
- Accessible services particularly for people as they grow older and for young families
- Social/affordable housing
- Reliable broadband connections
- Job opportunities to encourage people to stay
- Places to eat, public toilets and other facilities for visitors
- More initiative and infrastructure for tourism to promote economic regeneration and jobs.

# our think big vision & key themes

## Delivering Rannoch's Sustainable Future

Based on the Current Thoughts process, the CFG developed the Think Big Vision for agreement by the community. It was endorsed in December 2015. The vision defines key principles for the plan and provides the mechanism for filtering what is and what is not important for the community.

The simple four-word vision statement of **"Delivering Rannoch's Sustainable Future"** encapsulates the following:

<b>Action</b>	the Rannoch & Tummel plan should consist of clearly defined actions and accountabilities
<b>Outputs</b>	there should be a focus on achievable results so that the community experiences positive development
<b>Rannoch &amp; Tummel</b>	any reference to Rannoch includes Rannoch & Tummel as defined by the Community Council boundaries
<b>Community</b>	the plan is primarily focused on the views of the people that live in the community
<b>Environment</b>	the plan takes account of the unique natural environment of Rannoch & Tummel
<b>Social</b>	actions and changes identified will positively affect the way that people live in Rannoch & Tummel
<b>Commercial</b>	any action needs to have longer term viability and should be based on a strong commercial perspective. This would include self-financing projects, environmentally considered outcomes, employability, etc.
<b>Forward Thinking</b>	the plan should cover a 3-5 year strategy considering future generations and potential social, technological and environmental advancements
<b>Long Term</b>	investment should focus on both short and long term outcomes.

The Think Big Vision provides an overarching framework for the following emerging themes. These themes drive the action plan:

**YOUR ORGANISATION.  
YOUR PLACE.  
YOUR SPACE.  
YOUR SERVICES.**



# our actions

The following emerging themes arose from the Current Thoughts process and the feedback received from the community. These themes were “tested”, validated and prioritised by the community at a public meeting in December 2015.

## our organisation

The purpose of this theme is to ensure implementation of the Plan, to build community cohesion and to facilitate strategic coordination of services. It underpins the other three thematic areas. This theme aims to create a system and mechanism to bring together the large volume of community activity and to ensure they work within a broad vision that will make a demonstrable difference. This outcome will be achieved through effective coordination and enhancement of existing activity as well as implementing new initiatives and securing funding for projects. Openness and community control will be vital so that it is viewed as enhancing rather than restricting development.

### potential actions

1. Establish an interim Rannoch Development Plan Team (CFG Phase 2) to maintain momentum on the development plan until a formal structure is in place (community endorsement 02/12/15).
2. Secure funding for the employment of a Community Development Officer.
3. Undertake a legal options appraisal to set up a legitimate, constituted authoritative community entity to be responsible for the delivery of the Plan.
4. Work with existing community groups to create a mechanism to improve alignment and partnership working around key projects, activities and the Plan.
5. Initiate project-specific business plans for the Key Themes arising from the Plan.
6. Identify and develop relationships with key stakeholders to build support and funding sources for the community-driven actions.
7. Explore opportunities for locally based funding sources including extending partnership working with local landowners/operators of hydro or other renewables schemes.
8. Develop a community communications plan and lead on communications arising from the Plan.

high priority / short term

## our place

The concept most universally demanded across all the research methods was the better use of community space, of which there is a wealth in the area. Unfortunately, much of the community “estate” is no longer fully fit for today’s community in terms of geography, age profile and social demands. This theme is focused on the desire to develop a community “hub”, which will be the “beating heart of the community”.

## potential actions

1. Develop a multi-purpose, community managed hub which will meet the needs of local residents, visitors and tourists alike, with social, economic, community cohesion and heritage/tourism outcomes. The facility should be self-sustaining and eco- and future-proofed.
2. With relevant community groups, review derelict or under-used community buildings to rationalise or redevelop assets where appropriate. This might include community halls or Perth & Kinross Council (PKC) buildings (e.g. the Outdoor Centre, Old School House). The objective is to protect all other viable physical assets that exist across the community using a “hub and spoke” model.

high priority / short term

feasibility study year 1; business plan year 2/3; funding year 3; start project year 3/4



# our actions

## our space

Valuing, protecting, utilising and enjoying the natural environment emerged as a strong theme during the research. There is a delicate balance to be struck between exploiting and protecting it too much. This theme will be addressed through a number of small sensitive, independent projects or activities using broadly sustainable principles.

### potential actions

1. Further explore common branding for the area to create a cohesive destination message to help maximise existing natural and heritage assets – from Rannoch Moor, Black Wood of Rannoch through to both Loch Rannoch and Loch Tummel. Consider designations such as “Dark Skies” to gain national/international credibility.
2. Support existing projects to reach implementation e.g. the Clan Trail under the Rannoch & Tummel Tourist Association (RTTA) and Loch Rannoch Conservation Association (LRCA).
3. Continue to improve accessibility of existing foot and cycle paths with better signage and marketing.
4. Review opportunities to provide links with other established branded regions or trails e.g. Cairngorms National Park.
5. Consider creating a centre incorporating scientific research and educational activities opening up a deeper understanding of the natural environment for local people and visitors. This could be linked to the Community Hub.
6. Build on the high level of local artistic talent and creativity to promote the area.
7. Explore potential partnership arrangements with local renewables schemes with land owners.
8. Consider the development of lochside facilities to enhance use of the water.
9. Explore recreational demands of younger residents and potential solutions within the community “estate”.

high to medium priority

feasibility study year 2; business plan year 2/3; funding year 3; start of project year 3 /4



## our services

This theme identifies services and facilities that are priorities for development over the next 10 years and beyond to support the vision and proposed long-term change in Rannoch & Tummel. These will often be dependent on additional feasibility studies and research, and are impacted on by changing external drivers. As a result they are aspirational in outlook but will require operational delivery plans at each stage. These projects build support around key groups, from young children and younger people to families and older people, and cover the following areas:

- Broadband & Technology
- Activities for younger residents
- Support, socialisation and mobility for older residents
- More affordable housing for working families
- Improved local employment opportunities.

### Broadband & Technology

Improved and reliable broadband or other technology will support the number of small businesses and home workers whilst also providing a service for all residents. It is now a key driver for encouraging people to stay in the community, particularly, though not exclusively, young people. While vital for business consolidation and growth, it is also important for many other aspects of life including for example future developments such as tele-care relating to supporting older people.

### potential actions

1. Support existing activities in the western end of the community (Bridge of Gaur exchange) to progress improved and reliable broadband and/or 4G with the appropriate bodies and suppliers.
2. Initiate contact with the appropriate bodies and suppliers to progress improved and reliable broadband and/or 4G for the eastern end of the community (Kinloch Rannoch & Tummel Bridge exchanges).

high priority / short term  
year 1



# our actions

## Younger Residents

### potential actions

1. Explore opportunities to develop a child-minding and after-school club “social enterprise” business potentially linked to broader community controlled purposeful children’s activities. This could be linked to employability as well as securing and attracting families to the area.
2. Explore opportunities to re-develop existing community assets into a space for youth-focused eco-educational projects prioritising locals while opening up to visiting young people. Activities could range from play-based learning for children to curriculum for excellence linked learning for older children.
3. Explore vocational training and work experience opportunities for young people.

medium priority / medium term  
years 2 or 3

## Older Residents

The community has a strong network of “neighbours, family and friends” who provide voluntary care for elderly and vulnerable residents, allowing them to continue living independently for as long as possible. The focus is on socialisation and mobility. As a remote community, structured support from the relevant bodies can be problematic owing to finite resources.

### potential actions

1. Identify sources of support, training and development that are available if needed for existing groups and individuals to continue their work with older and vulnerable residents.
2. Engage relevant stakeholders to develop a longer term strategy for care in our rural community to give solutions for people as they grow older which combine support with independence.

Based on programmes elsewhere in Scotland, options to consider could be:

- sheltered housing, co-housing or other independent living options
- a community controlled social care infrastructure with wrap-around care potentially funded by Self Directed Support (Scottish Government initiative)
- a centrally based tele-care and peripatetic well-being clinic (developing social care initiatives to be researched with appropriate local bodies).

medium priority / medium term  
years 2 or 3

## Affordable Housing

The high number of second homes, coupled with estates renting out properties privately, have pushed up the price of housing in the area, leaving a lack of affordable housing for working families. This, combined with a lack of well paid jobs, has led to many young families leaving the area and moving to Aberfeldy or Pitlochry.

### potential actions

1. Work with appropriate bodies to review opportunities to build suitable housing for social or mid-market rent.

medium priority / medium term  
year 5 & beyond

## Local Employment

This theme will be part of other themes and projects, creating a cross-cutting employability strand, e.g. ensuring an employability perspective within tourism, agriculture, construction, child care, youth work, and social care.

### potential actions

1. Review opportunities for local employers, community organisations and individuals to:
  - liaise with Skills Development Scotland on the development of modern apprenticeships to provide opportunities for younger people to stay living in the area
  - develop support for employability skills and self-employment, and encourage social entrepreneurs and social enterprises. A small Rannoch & Tummel social enterprise zone could be developed as is being done in Argyll and Bute
  - consider setting up a community controlled social care business
  - work with the private sector developing joint opportunities for social/private partnerships (SPPs).

high to medium priority / short term  
within other projects



# our actions

## proposed action plan over first 12-18 months (starting 2016)

	Stage 1 Months 1-3	Stage 2 Months 4-6	Stage 3 Months 7-9	Stage 4 Months 10-12	Stage 5 Months 13-15	Stage 6 Months 16-18
<b>OUR ORGANISATION</b>						
1. Establish an interim Rannoch Development Plan Team	■					
2. Employ a Community Development Officer		■				
3. Set up new community entity structure		■				
4. Agree community mechanism for partnership working		■				
5. Develop project-specific business plans for the Key Themes				■		
6. Develop relationships with key stakeholders		■				
7. Develop and implement a Communications Plan		■				
<b>OUR PLACE</b>						
8. Undertake a feasibility study and write a business plan for a multi-purpose, community managed hub			■			
9. Review other community assets with relevant community groups			■			
<b>OUR SPACE</b>						
10. Undertake feasibility study on <b>Our Space</b> options				■		
<b>OUR SERVICES</b>						
11. Initiate contact with the appropriate bodies and suppliers to progress improved and reliable broadband and/or 4G for the eastern end of the community (Kinloch Rannoch and Tummel Bridge exchanges)		■				

The work to date of the CFG has been undertaken on a voluntary basis. With the number and focus of actions required to take the Development Plan forward, the employment of a Community Development Officer is seen as the next critical step. Without additional resource, the achievement of the above actions will be delayed.



## Delivering Rannoch's Sustainable Future

The community of Rannoch & Tummel have spent the last 9-12 months undertaking an extensive exercise of inclusive community consultation to understand the key areas which will make the community a better place in which to live and work and visit. There is a strong commitment to deliver a sustainable future for the area, and the key themes of Our Place (a multi-purpose hub), Our Space (enhancing our natural assets) and Our Services (providing key services across the age demographics) have been endorsed by the community.

To ensure that the research findings and the resulting Think Big Plan are progressed, it is imperative to review the structure required to enable the community to source funding (and support) and take action. This, along with further scoping of some of the major actions, needs to be undertaken in the next 12 months to maintain momentum.

This Plan, however, is not intended to be static and will continue to be reviewed to ensure that any actions taken are truly future-proofing the community of Rannoch & Tummel for future generations.

The Community Fund Group would like to thank the community of Rannoch & Tummel for their considerable and continued input and support during this process.

**YOUR VISION. YOUR PLAN. YOUR JOURNEY.**





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Printed copies of the full Community Plan are available to read at Kinloch Rannoch Medical Practice and Kinloch Rannoch Post Office. Copies can also be borrowed from The Shed Gallery. If you would like this document digitally, please email the Community Fund Group at [rannochnews@gmail.com](mailto:rannochnews@gmail.com).