



Welcome to the latest newsletter from KCDC, the charitable company established in 2006, 'to manage community land and associated assets for the benefit of the Community and the public in general'. From small beginnings, KCDC has grown into an important driver of improvement in the area. We hope the reports below demonstrate the breadth of benefit generated over recent years, in particular, during this particularly difficult Covid year, and will encourage the continued support of all within our community.

KCDC COMMUNITY HYDRO GRANTS

Since the Hydro Fund was established in 2015, a steady stream of income from the elegant micro-hydro scheme at Strathlynn, and from associated sale of electricity to Kingussie Golf Club, has enabled many community organisations to benefit in a wide variety of ways. To date almost £30,000 has been awarded, sometimes through major grants of £2500, as in the case of support for staging the Camanachd Cup Final at the Dell, but more often through smaller awards. This year has seen support for:

- The very successful Hogmanay Fireworks a year ago
- Support for the People of Badenoch project
- Assistance for the Covid support operation, One Kingussie, and subsequently for the distribution of Christmas meals to 56 households (84 individuals) as a 2020 alternative to the Old Folks Christmas Lunch. Our grateful thanks to the Duke of Gordon Hotel for their cooperation.
- Badenoch Muzzle Loading Rifle Club for landscaping of a new rifle range
- Caberfeidh Horizons for planning permission and signage as they progress with redevelopment of the Bank of Scotland building
- Kingussie Brownies during a year where their normal fund-raising has not been possible

The fund remains open and new applications are welcomed. Guidance and forms are to be found on the new website, <https://www.kcdc.co.uk/hydro-fund-application>, or from Treasurer Len Cruickshank at hydro-fund@kcdc.co.uk

COMMUNITY WOODLANDS

The community woods, on either side of the River Gynack from the Cross Bridge to the Golf Club car park, have had lots of visitors this year during the many weeks of lock down.

Volunteers have kept the paths clear of branches and carried out regular litter picking.

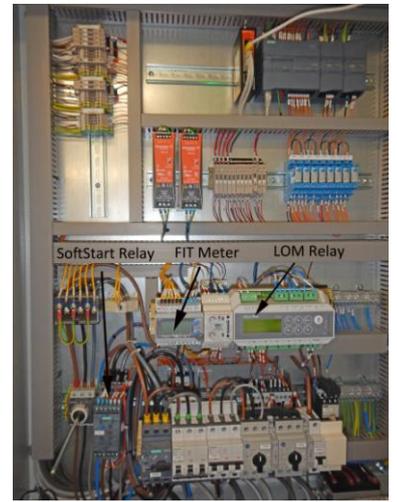
Other work carried out has included the removal of invasive snowberry - still more to remove, protecting oak saplings and fence repairing. The saplings planted a few years ago are now peeking up above the tree protectors.

The area overlooking the hydro dam and the River Gynack was improved with the laying of more pathing material and slabs under the original all abilities bench and a second all abilities bench was installed. These have been used often over the summer with families and individuals seen to be "brewing up" on camping stoves. The gap in the seat makes the table accessible for wheelchair users while youngsters in a buggy can be part of the family get together out of doors. Two additional benches, with views of the River Gynack, including one suitable for all abilities, have been placed by the Jubilee Walk.



KCDC COMMUNITY HYDRO

The 6th year of operation of the hydro has been marked by a series of electronic equipment faults in the hitherto very reliable control system. These have resulted in about 3 weeks of down time while the faults were diagnosed and replacements obtained. The Feed-in-Tariff meter was replaced in January and the Soft-Start Relay in August, with support by the control system manufacturer. In addition the Loss-of-Mains relay was reprogrammed by the original electrical contractor, Kestral Engineering in October. The electricity network operator required this to be done to avoid over-sensitivity to disturbances such as lightning strikes that all UK generating plants were prone to. Since then we have had no spurious shutdowns. This photo shows the complexity of the control system equipment



The inlet Coanda screen (the stainless steel part that forms the width of the weir) is designed to be largely self-cleaning but periodically has to be cleared with a brush or by remote back-flushing. This is particularly the case in autumn when leaves, peat fibre and pine needles are brought down by the river. The efficiency of the screen has progressively deteriorated as a result of damage to the curved plate that directs water over the crest of the weir. This damage is mainly to the East side of the screen and was triggered by Hurricane Bertha in 2014. As a result cleaning has been needed more frequently and the peak output generated has fallen. It is planned to repair the damage next summer and materials to replace the worst section and strengthen the other sections have been delivered.

The combination of equipment failures, screen damage, and a particularly dry spring have meant that the output this year, at around 40000kWh is about 10% down on the design value achieved in 2019.

KINGUSSIE PATHS NETWORK

The initial elements of the footpaths upgrade, funded by the Cairngorm Trust, saw contractor works at the end of last summer which resulted in key upgrades to three sections of the local network. A lengthy muddy section on the core path from Kingussie to Newtonmore was resurfaced; a damaged bridge at Allt Gorton on the same route was repaired; and a steep section of steps and handrail on the Golf Course Circular path was made safe.

Since late August, the concentration of work has been through volunteers working on the lower section of the path leading to 'Kingussie's Hill', Creag Bheag.



The upper section of the 487m hill benefited from work carried out ten years ago as part of a mountain path training exercise by the Cairngorm Outdoor Access Trust. However, time ran out and the lower section leading to West Terrace received no such upgrade.....until the arrival on the Kingussie scene of Sandy Maxwell, who had previously worked on upland footpaths for the John Muir Trust. Under his guidance, and with his expertise, the volunteer group of retirees was established, and now 6-10 enthusiasts meet on a weekly basis for some hard work and good craic. Over the past three months, around 500 volunteer hours have resulted in the transformation of what had previously been a rocky/muddy and awkward 110 metre section through the installation of drainage ditches, cross drains, regular rock steps and solid sub surfaces.



Over the year, KCDC has also benefited from over £5000 of funding via the Coop Communities Fund, which has enabled us to buy materials, hand tools, plus a power barrow and compacter, both of which have recently been put to good use on the Golf Course Circular and on the approach to the Creag Bheag route from Middle Terrace.

Thanks to all Coop customers who elected to support the project.



GYNACK GARDENS PROJECT

Kingussie Community Development Company, working in partnership with the community have created 'Gynackgate 2020' as a Town Centre Project with Sustrans Scotland. This project has been funded by the Scottish Government and delivered through the Places for Everyone programme sponsored by Sustrans in partnership with Highland Council to encourage walking and cycling.

As well as creating the Gynackgate area with additional seating, we have also installed a new secure bike shelter and maintenance column. The symmetry of flower beds has been retained as much as possible, allowing for path slope angles that meet the needs of all ability use. A new path has also been created and a new entrance across from the primary school. Along the path you will see refurbished bench seating undertaken by KCDC.



The monument is now lit with state-of-the-art illumination. We have also recently planted "a real Christmas tree", a Nordmann Fir for the town.

This is one of three projects being supported by Sustrans. The other two projects are still in the planning stages: redesigning the Spey street/Ruthven road junction to make it safer and more attractive, and the extension of the Sustrans path from Newtonmore end of the town to Ruthven road. We are hopeful that we can find the funding for both projects to be delivered at some stage in 2021 or early 2022.

We are also applying for additional funds from the Highland Council Town Centre Fund, with the aim of improving the south end of the garden, the important link between the developments that have already taken place and the anticipated work at the Spey street junction. Landscaping will include an avenue of Cherry trees, the possibility of a petanque park and wild flower section to the gardens. Provision is already in place for an Indian war memorial. There are some additional works to be concluded at the North end including further seating, fencing and planting which were not included in the original drawings.



Visual of the design for the Spey street junction

Finally we have applied for planning permission to create a centrepiece sculpture at the front of the gardens. The design is a Scottish thistle with parts of the Thistle incorporating Shinty Camans to provide a unique sense of place here in Kingussie. This will not only be a visually very attractive feature but also provide an 'insta' photo point for visitors. It is hoped that this project will be completed by the middle of 2022.

NEW WEBSITE

Over the past few months KCDC embarked on a process to update and modernise our website: www.kcdc.co.uk.

The new website is now active and we hope you like it. Our aim is to use the new website much more to inform people about KCDC's aims and objectives but also to highlight achievements throughout the year

We have also taken advantage of the various systems available at no cost, to improve email and other "back office" systems for KCDC and Cycle Friendly Kingussie. These systems will enable us to become much more efficient and contribute to improved data protection.

CYCLE FRIENDLY KINGUSSIE

Covid restrictions have limited the opportunity for regular rides for much of this year as well as having to cancel our flagship summer event: The Bikeathon. Nevertheless CFK continues to thrive and it was possible to run the annual “socially distanced” Christmas ride from Cairngorm to Kingussie which was a big success. (The non-socially distanced picture is from 2019)

In partnership with Kingussie High School an options appraisal and community consultation was commissioned to look at the possibility of creating a pump track facility somewhere in Kingussie. The next stage will be to look at the feasibility of this development.

Finally CFK has taken an active role in the “One Kingussie” initiative.



AMAZON SMILE

We are aware that many members may have objection to using the retail giant Amazon, but for those who do resort to shopping in this way, it is possible to benefit KCDC, as well as Jeff Bezos. Simply shop at smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/SC040259 or with AmazonSmile or in the Amazon Shopping app, and AmazonSmile donates to Kingussie Community Development Company at no extra cost.

All you need to do is select KCDC as your chosen charity, and shop in the same way. The amount is not a great deal (0.5% of purchase value), but every little helps.

Support Kingussie Community Development Company

When you shop at smile.amazon.co.uk,
Amazon Donates

DIRECTORS AND/OR VOLUNTEERS

The date of our AGM, and associated financial report and appointment of Directors is yet to be confirmed, but will probably have to be Zoomed. In anticipation Chair Ian Moffett reports that approaches have been made for people with useful skills to join the Board and he is delighted to report that we have 3 such volunteers, which will bring the Board to full strength..

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS

At the last AGM, it was again decided to leave the subscription level at a nominal £2, and you are invited to support the day to day running of KCDC by completing the enclosed form and returning it to any Director, to the Treasurer, KCDC, Forestville, West Terrace, Kingussie PH21 1HA, or handed to Goldwells, 15-17 High St Kingussie, the company's official address Payment of membership and any donation can be made by cheque or cash, as outlined above or if preferred, directly to: KCDC Bank of Scotland account:

Sort code 80-05-40 Account no 06001925, in which case **please remember to include your name.**