

26 March 2024

Special Resolution

Approval of the membership to the acquisition of a property or a lease.

Information for members

The Board have been pursuing for some time the acquisition of a suitable property for a community hall in the village. Some years ago the attempt to secure the old Gordon Arms Hotel was unsuccessful and, since then, we have been following a number of different leads.

We have now reached a point where we consider that we should try to reach a conclusion on one or both of two alternatives. Prior to the agreement with the present owners we would have to put the case to our members under the Articles of our constitution for their approval to proceed.

We have also been considering a lease on an area of ground which could be developed as an amenity area for residents and this also requires the members approval.

The Old Community Hall

This building, located to the rear of the school on Richmond Terrace, has been used as a community hall previously. Owned by Aberdeenshire Council, it has also served as a polling station and other functions. The building has deteriorated due to lack of maintenance and rising damp. This led to the floor becoming damaged and rising such that it became unsafe. Other damage is also evident. As a result of this the Council closed the building and it has been unused for some years.

Some years ago we were approached by the Council with a view to a possible Community Asset Transfer. Unfortunately this would then have been on the basis of a rental or lease which would have restricted our ability to raise funding to repair and reopen the hall. There were also possible restrictions on the use of the hall as it was owned by the Education Department who wished to retain the option to use the building. So we declined their offer.

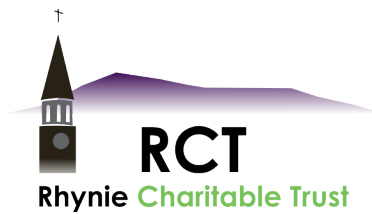
Ownership of the hall has since passed to the Leisure Department who we believe would be keen to dispose of the building. We have now restarted discussions with regard to a C.A.T. The terms of such a transfer have not been discussed in any detail but we would be hopeful that it would be at minimal cost, bearing in mind the present state of the building.

Our inspections suggest that the replacement of the floor could be achieved relatively easily and, hopefully, this would enable the building to be re-opened. Any further repair and maintenance could be carried out once it is back in use. We would need to discuss with the school in regard to the ground surrounding the hall which we would wish to obtain for parking and access.

Although we would hope to acquire the building for a nominal sum, the repair work would need significant funding and we would have to undertake grant applications to fund much of this.

Rhynie Community Facilities Development Charitable Trust
Company registered in Scotland: SC309832
Registered office: The Cottage, Cottown, Rhynie, Huntly, Aberdeenshire, AB54 4LX
Charity registered in Scotland number SC037455





Congregational Church

This building is owned by The Masons and is located in a prime position on the Main Road. We were approached by the Masons a few years ago with a view to taking over the building and we had almost reached a point of agreement regarding the terms of a transfer. This was, however, opposed by a member of their committee and we declined to take it further.

The building was in a poor state of repair at that time and was/is on the Buildings at Risk Register. We commissioned a feasibility study which demonstrated possible uses for the building which could include an event/function hall, a small museum and a cafe. It has been largely unused since then as the Masons have become more active in Huntly and has deteriorated further.

We now understand that they would still be agreeable to RCT acquiring the building and we have restarted negotiations. One consideration for ourselves would be to provide a suitable home for Rhynie Man, a long-term aspiration of both RCT and TONCC.

Once again the costs of the refurbishment of the building would necessitate considerable fund raising efforts.

Rhynie Chert SSSI.

The Rhynie Chert Site of Special Scientific Interest lies on the outskirts of the village alongside the Cabrach road. It is managed and maintained by NatureScot and is presently let for grazing. The lower part of the site, adjacent to the Essie Burn, has been partially planted with trees.

A couple of years ago we were contacted by NatureScot and asked if we would be interested in participating in the use of the site. Our immediate thought was to develop some paths for use by residents, similar to Moss Wood. However, we have long had a wish to have a footpath extending from the village up Tap O Noth, and we could see how this might help facilitate this wish.

Consequently we began discussions with a view to leasing the lower part of the site, which would be at a nominal rent, and developing a path network. NatureScot would draft the lease at no cost to RCT.

We reached this point last year just at the time the Board were becoming concerned about the membership and support accorded to the Trust from the village. The drafting of the lease was put on hold until such time as we were confident to proceed.

To develop the paths we would need to gain planning approval which would require a number of surveys to be carried out. We have provisionally costed these and the design work at about £7500, and would propose to raise funds to cover this work if we go ahead.

We have provisionally established a suitable route from the village to Tap O Noth via the SSSI which would lead up to the Windyfield road but we have, so far, not received the agreement of landowners to take it further. This would be something we would be keen to progress.

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