



**BAILIES OF BENNACHIE 2024 Annual General Meeting – Draft**

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024

**Venue:** This meeting was held as a hybrid meeting to allow those further afield to attend.

**Attendees - Trustees:** David Bale, Lorna Bell, David Caney, Alex Doig, Alan Henderson, Willie Linklater, Peter Stock and Allan Will.

**Attendees – Bailies:** Ann Baillie, Karen Noble, Stella Gauld, Barry Foster, Chris Foster, Bob Coleman, Anne-Marie Coleman, Griselda McGregor, Michael Coutts, Colin Hawkins, Susan MacCellan, Peter Kellas, Brian Mackie, Iain Ralston, Graeme Ralph, Donald Thomas, Hugh Fraser, Colin Miller, Jim Rose, Norman Still, Gordon Elsey, Alison Kennedy, Alison Sutherland.

**Minutes of the Meeting**

1. Welcome	Peter Stock opened the meeting with a welcome to all.
2. Apologies	Apologies were received from Margaret Garden, Lord Forbes, Patricia Brown, Anne Reid, Jackie Cumberbirch, Frank Musgrave, Sue Taylor, Rod Campbell, Mary MacKay, David Baillie, Anne & Mike Skitmore.
3. Previous Minutes	Willie Linklater advised that the previous AGM minutes of 27 <sup>th</sup> April 2023 had been sent out with the Agenda and invited comments on the content. There being no adjustments to the minutes, these were proposed and seconded by Allan Will and Alan Henderson and unanimously accepted as approved.
4. Chairman Report	<p>Peter Stock reflected back to 2022 and how the impact of Storms Arwen and Corrie, awareness of governance gaps, significant legacy received and the change of leadership then impacted and drove some of the actions and decisions in 2023, particularly as this covered the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.</p> <p>For 2023, the logo change to A Voice for the Hill is now embedded as part of the culture and the five key points (see attached) need to be met when there are budget or action decisions. The fire on Millstone Hill at the start of the year has progressed some key relationships with the Fire Service to improve maps/access knowledge. Excellent relationships are also held with the key stakeholders of Forestry and Land Scotland, Foresight/RTS, Garioch Heritage Centre and Bennachie Visitors Centre. The financial resources available has also helped establish admin systems and processes with support staff, to put on a professional footing for all GDPR, membership &amp; volunteering records, sales and assist the trustees. This only uses income generated, not capital.</p> <p>For 2023 the Work Parties held a full year, now supported with an Outdoor Coordinator for planning and leading. Battery operated tools are now permitted and these are being purchased for the 2024 work parties. Onboarding of volunteers is now largely automated.</p> <p>The BLPG has created a Colony Management Plan, and this will assist the management of preserving the historic sites. Broadleaf planting started by</p>

	<p>the Bede House for the Community Woodland Project. The Pittodrie Dig in 2023 was very successful, with the highlight of finding two medieval corn drying kilns. There was a successful 2 day conference called the Cultural Landscapes of Northeast Scotland which will be published during 2024.</p> <p>The Wildlife Group held many well-attended walks over the course of the year, and planning for an Environment Report with actions into 2024.</p> <p>The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was very well received and celebrated. The Bailies commissioned some piano music from Phillip Cooke, collated some old and new tunes composed for Bennachie in traditional music form by Ian Thow, and also commissioned a play by Alan Bisset called The Hill that was a Home, which was a sell out when performed. Also notable in this anniversary year was the publicly voted award for Community Initiative Award from the RSPB.</p> <p>During 2023 there was a loss of Trustees for various personal reasons, and those Trustees were thanked for their many years contribution. Ann Baillie and Donna Taylor had stood down at last year's AGM, and through the year Fiona Cormack, Kim Morgan, Margaret Garden and Jim Herbert (4 Jan 2024). Also thanked was Jill Matthews for her contribution as the Wildlife Group Leader. New Trustees were being actively sourced and David Caney was mentioned as having been co-opted on early Jan 2024.</p>
5. Accounts	<p>Alan Henderson, Treasurer, reported on the Accounts of the Bailies of Bennachie. With the legacy, the majority of our income now is Bank Interest and Dividend income, totalling some £63k in 2023. Expenditure had increased to £81k from £49k, mostly due to investment management fees and the costs in relation to the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Overall, the year end funds balance had increased by £80k.</p> <p>Rathbones, who manage the investment, have met the Bailies twice now, to review the investments. The performance is slightly under from a financial viewpoint (principally due to our timing on entering the market just before it dropped due to government policies) and slightly over from the ESG perspective. Environmental, Social and Governance view, which is a benchmark for charities. All Trustees review the financial picture at every Trustee meeting, some 8 times a year.</p> <p>A question from the floor about whether the donator of the legacy had given any instructions on it's spend was confirmed as a no.</p>
6. Election of Trustees	<p>As required in the Constitution, the 8 incumbent trustees, David Bale, Lorna Bell, David Caney, Alex Doig, Alan Henderson, William Linklater, Peter Stock and Allan Will stood down.</p> <p>Peter Stock led on the voting of the Trustees. All Trustees were willing to re-stand for election, which was unanimously approved from the attendees.</p> <p>Additional new Trustees were then requested to be put forward for election. No names were put forward at this time.</p>
7. Membership Fee	<p>Due to the costs of processing new members, the fees had been raised from £10 to £25 for Life Membership. This was to be retroactive to January 2024.</p> <p>This item was approved by members present.</p>
8. 2024	<p>Peter Stock then gave a look ahead to 2024 to be a year of progress. With the financial security, investment was to go ahead with projects that alight</p>

	<p>with the aim of A Voice for the Hill. Continuing programme of Work Parties, BLPG Archaeological Digs and Colony conservation by implementation of the Colony Management Plan, along with Environmental projects such as wild bird crop planting at Afforsk Loch. New info boxes will be added to the hill, along with a new colony leaflet and trail posts to be installed shortly. Battery tools agreement will have tools purchased shortly, 136 volunteers on the database which also allowed a thank you lunch, along with new First Aid Training provided.</p> <p>Nominated for the Kings Award for Voluntary Service, which is a great honour.</p>
9. AOCB	<p>There were no items of additional business. The meeting closed at 20:14.</p>

Signed: Peter Stock (Chair from Item 7) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: Willie Linklater (Secretary) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

A presentation and talk then followed by Veronica Llorente of RTS Forestry on their 20 year plans for the Bennachie area, along with how they are working together to preserve the archaeology when found.