

## **BOAT OF GARTEN AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

### **Draft MINUTES of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 12th May 2025 in Boat of Garten Community Hall**

#### **1. Record of Attendees and Apologies Received:**

**Community Council Members:** Kathryn Gillings (KG), Chair; Alan Bennet (AB), Treasurer; Lesley Taylor (LT), Secretary; Don Walker (DW)

**Ex Officio:** Muriel Cockburn, member, Highland Council

**Members of the Public:** Dan Harris, CNPA

**Apologies:** Neil Maciver - Police Scotland

#### **2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 13th May 2024:**

The minutes were proposed as an accurate record of the meeting by AB and seconded by DW.

#### **3. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### **4. Chair's Annual Report:**

In the past year we've had 8 meetings of Boat of Garten and Vicinity Community Council. Despite lots of advertising there are still only 4 members. We desperately need up to 3 more.

Our discussions have ranged over a variety of subjects.

We started with 'smells'. Not this time from the river end of the village but from Deshar School end. This was reported to environmental health and we wait to see if anything improves this year.

We have a standing item on our agendas about the 'BOG Standard' and have had some meetings with members of the team.

There has been a lot of discussion about a brown road sign on the A95 near the Deshar turn off. It was a large sign with half missing and the remainder was bashed and looked unsafe. This had been an ongoing problem for several years. It seemed that no organisation laid claim to it and no-one could remove it in case they were accused of stealing! We kept on trying and by April 2025 it had been removed.

Other signs that are causing comment are the wooden 'osprey' signs at the entrances to the village. They are in very bad condition and need restoration or replacement. Again we don't know who owns them. Discussion is ongoing.

A lot of time has been given to the old sawmill site. There have been lots of ideas put forward but the bottom line is that the site is privately owned so it ultimately depends on the owner.

Planning also causes a lot of discussion. One of the big problems is the number of applications for Short Term Lets (STL's). The feelings of the community council is that we don't want to lose our village to holiday properties. Our policy over planning applications for STL's is in line with Highland Council concerns. They have designated Badenoch and Strathspey as a Short Term Let Control Area (STLCA) to address concerns about the loss of housing for full-time residents and the impact on local communities.

As a result we have decided not to query existing businesses that have been holiday lets for several years but to object to new applications. We need houses for people to live in and become part of our village life.

Our big event of the year was being part of the Community Action Plan (CAP). This was organised by VABS with input from various village groups. A questionnaire was distributed to every house in the village (as well as being online) and there were drop-in sessions where people could view all of the answers and give their priorities. These have been sorted and the top ideas selected as priorities for the CAP.

The Bicycle Bus to school has already been organised which means that several children can cycle to school together with 2 or 3 adults supervising.

As we were requested, a village clean up was set up in April. This proved rather disappointing as very few people turned up. The general feedback was that there is very little litter - which does show that we have very well trained villagers and visitors! Due to health and safety regulations we are not allowed to clear up litter along the sides of the roads.

There have been some problems with Capercaillie during their mating season. The public have been asked to keep away from the lekking areas at certain times of the day. This has not gone down well with some birdwatchers and has resulted in wardens, and even the police on occasion, being involved. The answer is to obey the notices and keep alert.

Neil Maciver, our police link, has been to a lot of our meetings. He produces a list of police reports for our area which show that our crime rate is extremely low. He is also very patient at answering our questions. Thank you Neil.

Our thanks also go to Muriel Cockburn who is our Highland Council representative. She is unfailingly helpful and very knowledgeable. If she doesn't know the answer to something she'll find out or direct us to someone who does.

My thanks also to our little band of community councillors. They work hard for the benefit of the community and search out information online - I just write about it at the end of the year!

A final thank you to members of the public who have come to our meetings over the year to ask questions, bring ideas or presentations or even to complain.

**Kathryn Gillings, Chair, Boat of Garten and Vicinity Community Council**  
**May 2025**

## **5. Treasurers Report for the Financial Year 2024-25**

Financially, 2024 - 25 has been yet another quiet year.

The key financial factors were:

- 1) With income of £3260.56 and expenditure of £2114.45, we ended the year with a surplus of £1146.11.
- 2) The surplus for the year is in part due to the BoG Standard. Our accounts are prepared on a cash basis and therefore shows some income relating to previous years as well as not having yet been invoiced for the 2024 Festive lights.
- 3) When added to the balance at the end of 2023-24 of £6173.47 we now have total funds of £7319.58. This is split between the Environmental account £4000.00 and the Treasurers account £3319.58.
- 4) There were no transactions on the Environmental account in 2024-25.
- 5) The Treasurers account shows income of £3260.56 being a donation of £600 from the Reidhaven Estate, advertising income of £2223.42 via the BoG Standard, and an administration grant of £437.14 from Highland Council.
- 6) Expenditure breaks down into administrative costs of £581.45, a refund of £120 for an advertisers overpayment and £1413 for the printing of our community newsletter, the BoG Standard. As mentioned previously we have yet to pay for the 2024 Festive lights.

At this moment in time, financially, our key activities appear to be meeting administrative costs required for a community council, organising the village festive lights using the Reidhaven donation as the principal funder for this and the printing of and receiving advertising income from the BoG Standard.

In closing, there are a number of people to thank. Firstly, we are grateful to Reidhaven Estate for their continued support and donation of £600 to the community.

We are as always, extremely grateful to all those involved in producing the BoG Standard which continues to provide us with our additional income. To mention a few, our varied and loyal advertisers, the many article contributors, the entire editorial team

who have given up a lot of their time and put in a tremendous effort to keep the BoG Standard continuing, to Jackie Wilson for among other things, her work with our advertisers and finally, thanks to the team of BoG Standard distributors.

In finishing, thanks again to John O'Donnell for his continued scrutiny and examination of the accounts.

**Alan Bennet, Treasurer, Boat of Garten and Vicinity Community Council.  
May 2025**

## **6. Demit of current office bearers and election of office bearers**

All office holders stood down. MC thanked all on BoGCC for the work they do. She asked for nominations for chairperson. KG was proposed as Chair by LT and seconded by DW.

KG then asked for nominations for treasurer and secretary.  
AB was proposed as Treasurer by KG and seconded by DW.  
LT was proposed as Secretary by KG and seconded by AB.

- ***LT to return details of office bearers to Highland Council***

## **7. Meeting Dates for the Coming Year**

The following dates were agreed, with the proviso that we can call a meeting at 7 days notice if necessary:

8 September, 13 October, 10 November and 8 December 2025  
9 February, 9 March, 13 April. 11 May 2026.

- ***LT book the meeting room***

## **8. AOCB**

There was no AOCB

KG declared that the provisional date of the next AGM will be **Monday 11th May 2026**, following which she brought the meeting to a close at 7.20pm.