

HUNTLY'S HEALTHIER LEGACY

Trust Reveals Plans for Next Generation Indoor Centre

Huntly & District Development Trust is pleased to reveal the latest conceptual drawings of a proposed indoor Sports and Wellbeing centre here in the heart of Huntly. The centre focuses on providing toddler to senior wellbeing solutions for the town and the surrounding AB54 community.

From a needs analysis report created by appointed consultants Alan Jones Associates and on further detailed discussions with numerous user, sporting and community groups throughout the community, the Trust has combined all the information on requirements into conceptual drawings and business plan to illustrate what such a facility could bring to Huntly.

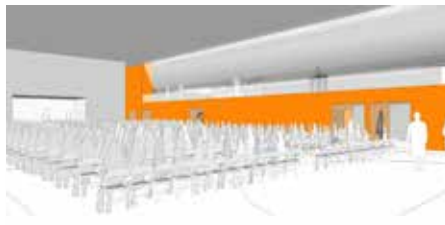
The project, originally started in May 2014 when a clear need was identified, required the Trust to source suitable funding to carry out the study. With the support of the 2014 Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund supported by Robertson Trust funding HDDT was able to appoint consultants and start the project in earnest at the end of 2015.

In March 2016, HDDT released the initial findings of the Stage 1 report from the consultants. The report highlighted the lack of quality and fit for purpose indoor space within the area and also confirmed that there was no allowance for capital projects by Aberdeenshire Council for Huntly up to 2027.

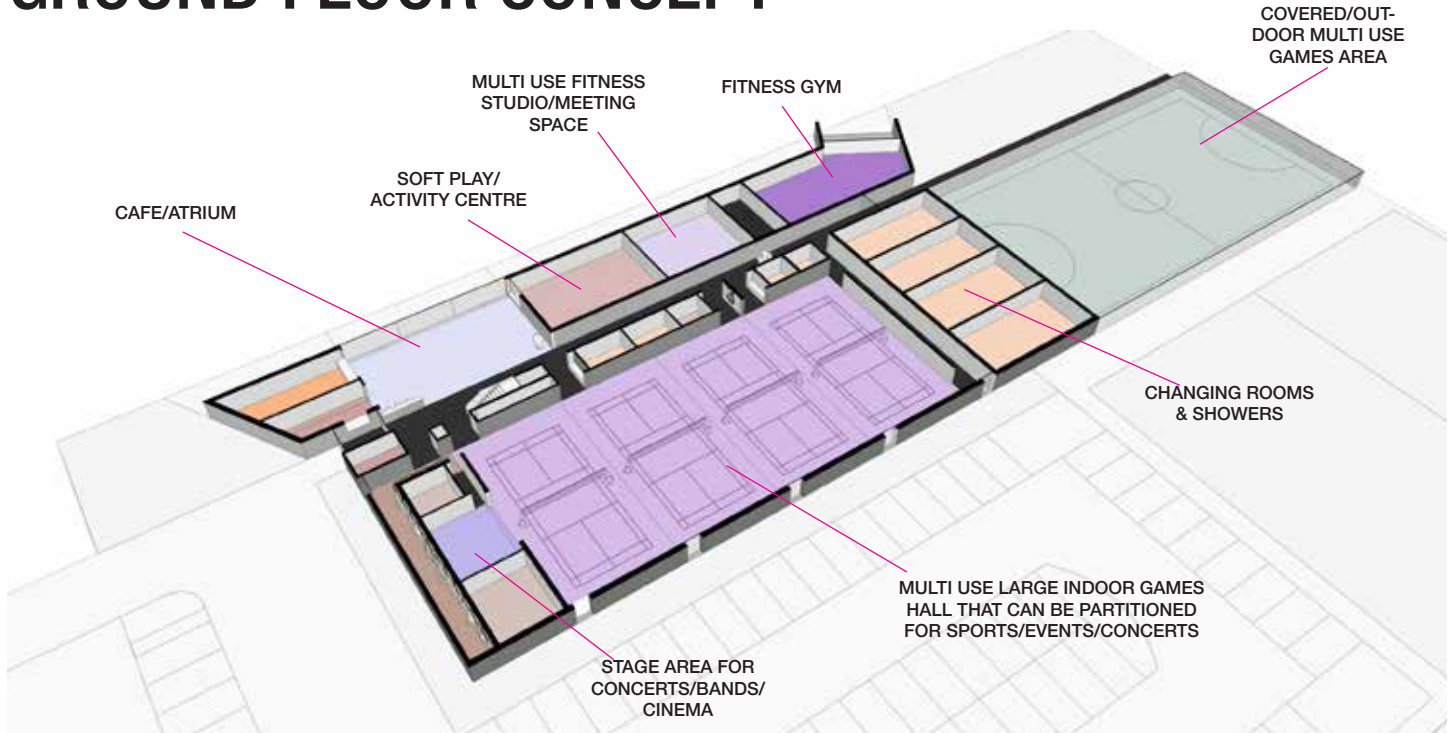


WHAT'S INSIDE

- Huntly's Healthier Legacy
- Up, up and Away
- Car Club Future Looks Bright with Secured Funds
- Trust Out to Maximise the GREEN in Greenmyres
- Huntly set for Room to Ride
- Cairnborrow Switched On
- Huntly – the Place to Be
- New Directors join the Trust



GROUND FLOOR CONCEPT



The feasibility study, carried out by the consultants, indicated a distinct need for a purpose built facility to become a centralised hub for all sports, health and wellbeing requirements for the community, HDDT identified 3 sites within the town for possible locations for such a facility.

After carrying out site appraisal scoring on each of the 3 sites, the Meadows was selected as being the most appropriate site to build such a facility as it allowed a clear link with existing outdoor environments, linked to the schools, provided additional solutions to moving traffic away from the town centre such as school buses and resolved the issue with using the site of the existing all weather pitch which is no longer fit for purpose.

The new facility will enable the town to provide a health and wellbeing solution for all ages - from toddlers to seniors. A soft play area combined with cafe environment

allows parents to come along and introduce their toddlers to healthy exercise at an early age, a large multi use hall which can be split to offer multi activities throughout the day and evening not only can provide the community with sporting opportunities such as gymnastics classes, netball, badminton and basketball but can be utilised by all forms of community groups for stage shows, rehearsals and cinema nights.

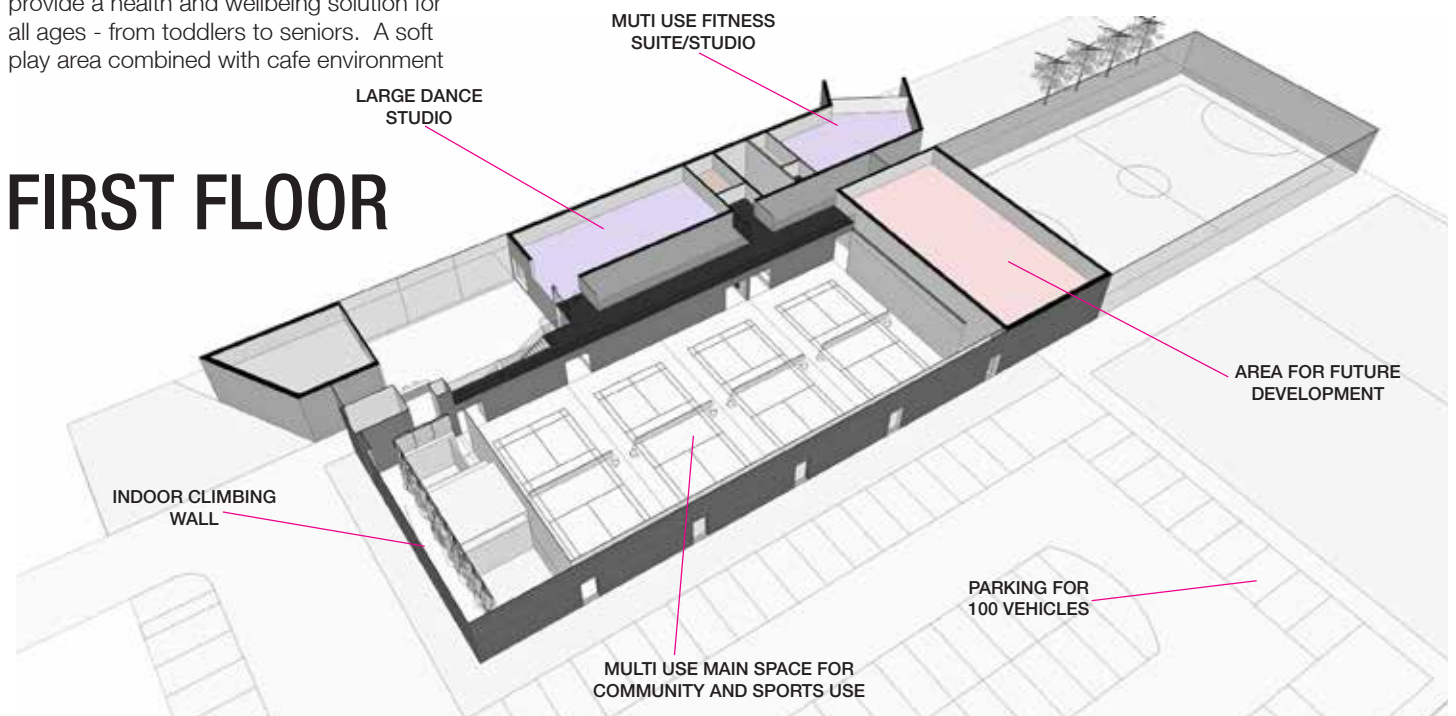
For adult and more senior residents, the centre would provide a number of spaces and facilities to provide a range of fitness classes, an air conditioned dance studio, a fitness centre with weights through to chair based and low impact activities for senior residents.

The Trust is currently in discussions with Aberdeenshire Council and SEPA

(Scottish Environment Protection Agency) with regards to the Meadows site. With the completion of the new flood prevention solutions for the Town, the Trust is now in a position to carry out a comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment of the proposed site to ensure that all preventative flood measures are built into the design of the building along with suitable draining solutions to the existing outdoor pitches and surrounding area. This will determine if the Meadows site can be utilised for such a facility.

Subject to the outcome of the consultant's assessment, the Trust is looking to apply for outline planning approval later in the year. If you'd like to find out more about the Sports & Wellbeing centre, simply get in touch with the Trust or come along to one of our members' meetings for further information.

FIRST FLOOR



UP, UP AND AWAY

After 6 long years of planning, turbine project now delivering funds to the AB54 Community



After six years of sweat, near tears but thankfully no blood, the blades on the community wind turbine at Greenmyres are now turning. In the previous edition of *Energise* we reported that the turbine had arrived on site. During the last days of September the 3 sections of tower and nacelle were then pieced together. Finally, on Saturday 1st October 2017, the hub and blades were painstakingly lifted into place: a great spectacle which generated a huge sense of relief all round!

Over the course of November Enercon and their contractors completed various internal fitting out and testing works with full commissioning achieved on 24th November.

Even this last phase brought with it its own challenges. When the commissioning

engineer's specialist toolkit was held up in transit from Germany. Whilst he arrived safely in Aberdeen, the tools were still in Amsterdam! In short, the project kept surprising us to the very end.

Fortunately, since then the turbine has operated smoothly and largely in line with the projections underlying our business case.

In February, HDDT received the first income from selling the power that the turbine has generated and are making good progress with securing the Feed in Tariff element of the income.

All of this is keeping the Clydesdale Bank happy and helping in our discussions with them about releasing unused funds from

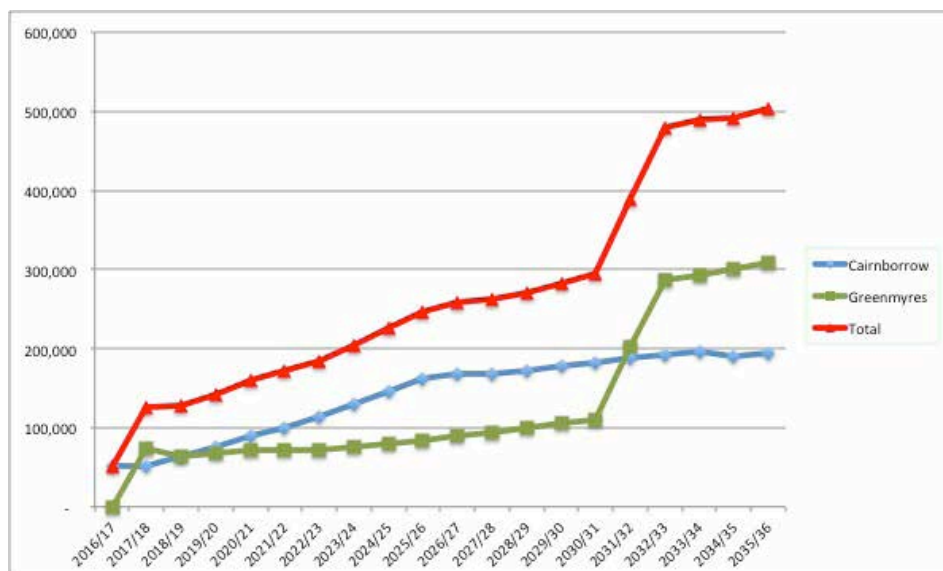
the project back to the Trust. This would be very welcome at a time when HDDT funds are tight. Over the 20 years of the project's lifespan we forecast to generate around £2.5 million, most of it in the later years. Our aim is to use these funds to secure match funding from elsewhere and bolster the total value of the income stream to in excess of £10,000,000 into the area.

HDDT are also progressing two other energy-related initiatives at the Greenmyres site. Discussions are ongoing with the Clydesdale Bank and the Financial Conduct Authority about the proposed community share issue. We had hoped to have this all resolved by now but of course things are not as straightforward as we'd have hoped.

The other piece of work, the CARES-funded study looking at how HDDT could supply future developments at the Greenmyres site through the wind turbine and proposed solar array is progressing well.

Phase 2 of the work is ongoing and study will be rounded off by the end of March. We should then be in a position to know whether proceeding with the solar installation makes financial sense to both us and potential users.

All in all, the energy side of development at Greenmyres has moved on significantly over the last 12 months and opens many opportunities for the next phase of site development.



Over the course of the next 20 years, HDDT forecasts generating access to funds of over £10,000,000 to support projects.



CAR CLUB FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT

Further funding secures more club vehicles

HDDT welcomes a new face to the team this month. Dave Simpson joins us as temporary Room to Roam Green Travel Hub Project Manager. Dave is a keen cyclist, part-time writer and is a well-known figure in the community.

Car Club: Usage continues to grow with November and December being our busiest months to date.

We received a major piece of good news in February. HDDT has been successful in securing further funding from the Climate Challenge Fund which will allow us to expand and develop the Car Club and build

on existing membership and usage. Our plan is to add to the two existing cars with an electric and hybrid vehicles and also expand to other locations and communities within the AB54 area.

Another piece of good news is the electric vehicle charging points at Nelson Street and the Market Muir are now back in operation and are being used by several electric vehicles.

E-Bikes: The popularity of using e-bikes in the UK continues to grow, and our own e-bikes are following this similar trend. A recent and great example is when a Dutch

couple specifically chose the Huntly area for a week long Christmas cycling holiday. They chose Huntly due to our location and the fact that they could hire e-bikes locally. Huntly's unique location with its beautiful countryside, history, our rail and airport links make AB54 a perfect location for cycle tourism.

If you'd like to try an e-bike, pop into the Brander building to see our bikes and arrange a trial. The bikes are ready to go and come complete with helmet, lock and lights.

Cheaper

Owning a car has the added cost of insurance, tax, service & maintenance and depreciation. With the Huntly Car Club, you just pay for what you use. People who don't need a car everyday save money by giving up their own car or a 2nd vehicle and using Huntly Car Club instead.

Greener

HDDT wants to provide people with better travel options. We want our members to choose walking, cycling and public transport much more and only using the car club when it really is the best option. You'll drive less, pollute less and when you need a car, the Huntly Car Club vehicles are electric, hybrid & low emission.

Convenient

Owning a car is a hassle. With the Huntly Car Club, you can book with a minutes notice and be on your way in a clean, well looked after car. You use the car for only as long as you need it and we have a range of vehicles for different journeys.

MAXING THE GREEN

TRUST OUT TO PUT THE GREEN IN GREENMYRES

Space

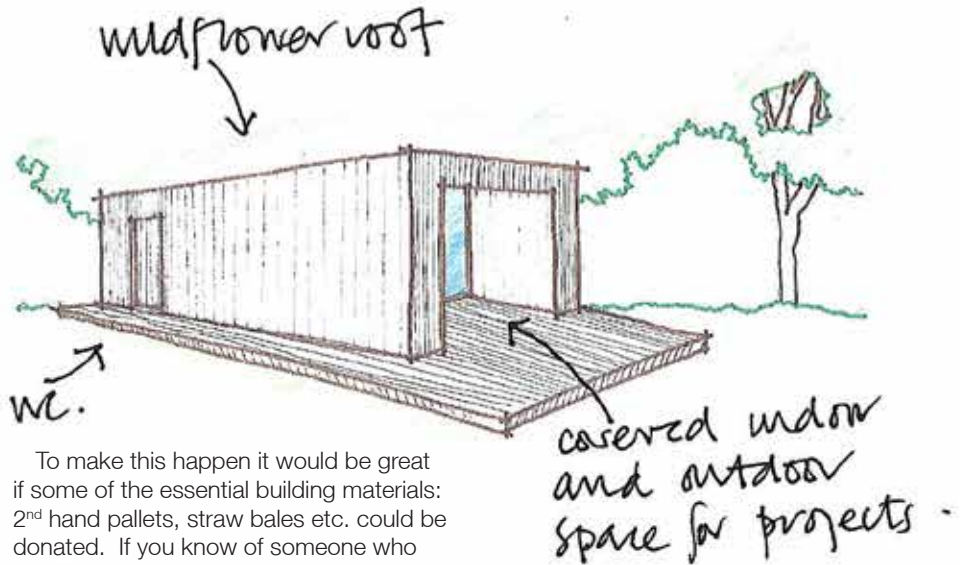
The demolition warrant for tidying up the dilapidated buildings at Greenmyres has now been granted and work should start on this as soon as we have secured funding. We want to make this area as safe and attractive as possible. We are planning to remove the ruinous structures but to leave some of the natural stone walls as lower walls to define project space and give some shelter and interest. There will be volunteer opportunities when this work goes ahead so if you've got some time to spare and you'd like to help with this community project, please get in touch.

Eco-Bothy

We're currently researching the exciting possibility of creating some green and sustainable covered space whilst working with members of the community to build confidence and skills. We'd like to create a small building, we're calling it the Eco-bothy, which would give us an accessible toilet and a covered sheltered area for running events and activities at Greenmyres.

We're exploring creating the walls of the eco-bothy using a double structure of old pallets and insulating with straw to give an environmentally sound construction technique.

The roof would also be built from pallets and topped with turf and wildflowers. We plan to work with local groups to teach essential construction skills and build confidence in the community as this project progresses. If you're interested, please get in touch.



To make this happen it would be great if some of the essential building materials: 2nd hand pallets, straw bales etc. could be donated. If you know of someone who could help please call us at the HDDT office (01466 799416).

Trees and Biodiversity

To help make the site more attractive to both people and wildlife, more trees and some shrubs will be planted on the island in early spring by volunteers. Special thanks go to Dave Whitehead who provides the use of his canoe in addition to his other help. Plans to plant trees elsewhere on the site are currently being developed.

We had another successful Christmas tree selling venture in December and hope to repeat this again later this year.

After our successful Bats, Moths and Stars night last year we're planning a Bioblitz in April / May this year to record and observe the flora and fauna at Greenmyres in the company of experts. Watch our website for more information on

this as it'll be open to our members and the community to participate.

We're currently taking part in a scientific trial which involves growing daffodils at high altitude under stressful conditions. When grown this way the daffodils can produce extra high levels of galantamine which is used in the treatment of Alzheimer's. As the daffodils haven't surfaced yet, at the time of going to press, we can safely say they're being stressed by the biting winds and snowy conditions still to be found at Greenmyres, which sits 290m above sea level. Hopefully we'll have more to report on this in the next issue of energise.

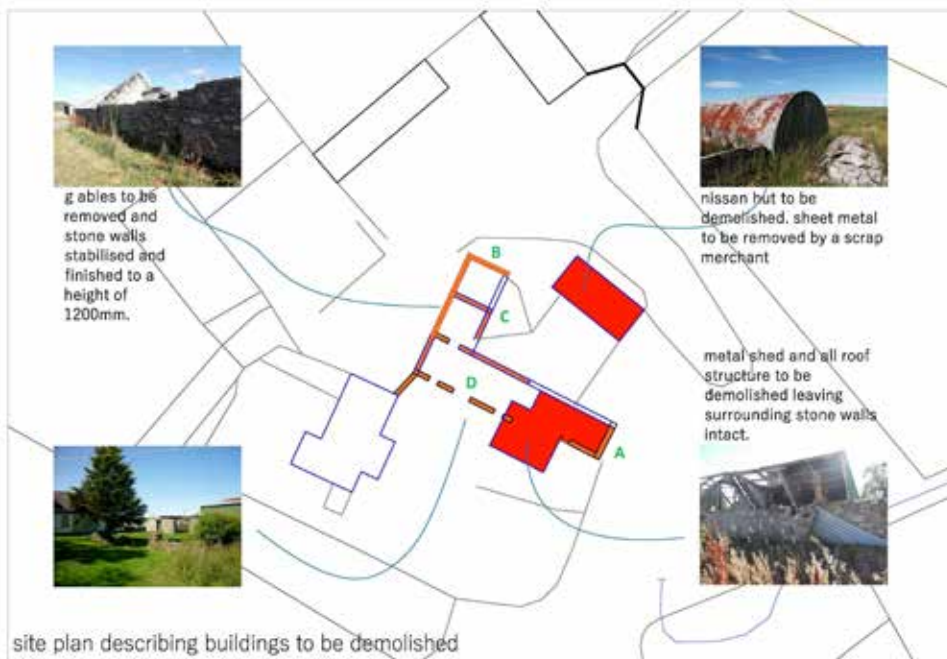
Walking

We're working hard with the Forestry Commission to develop a footpath linking Greenmyres into Gartly Moor. The path is currently submitted for planning permission and will provide a low gradient path through attractive terrain from Greenmyres to join with the walking and biking tracks in Gartly Moor.

Deveron Projects are holding their Slow Marathon on 15th April this year which will include a route through Greenmyres and past the turbine. HDDT volunteers will provide refreshments to the walkers passing through the farm. Hope to see you there.

Angling

This spring we will be launching the Greenmyres Community Angling club. Members of the Trust will be invited to join at a cost of £10 enabling you to fish up at Greenmyres pond at any time and retain two rainbow trout. However, it is essential that catches are recorded so we can monitor the stocks in the pond - forms will be available at the notice board at Greenmyres.





Just some of the riders from last year's audax event. HDDT is looking to build on last year's success and make this year's event even bigger and better.

COME JOIN OUR CLUB

The Huntly Car Club operates two cars in the town. These are available to hire from as little as an hour for £5.25 making it cheaper, greener and a more convenient alternative to owning and using your own car.

Our car club partner Co-Wheels has secured vehicles for Huntly with a Toyota Yaris Hybrid and a standard petrol engine Yaris. The vehicles are located at the Nelson Street car park and at the Huntly Train Station and are identifiable by their Co-Wheels livery.

To rent these vehicles, all you have to do is register on the Co-Wheels website at www.co-wheels.org.uk, you'll then be sent a smartcard through the post. Then simply book the vehicles whenever you want, via the website, with as little as a minute's notice.

Or for further details visit the HDDT website or contact the office where we'd be delighted to talk you through anything to do with the Car Club.

Huntly gets ready for next Room to Ride Audax event

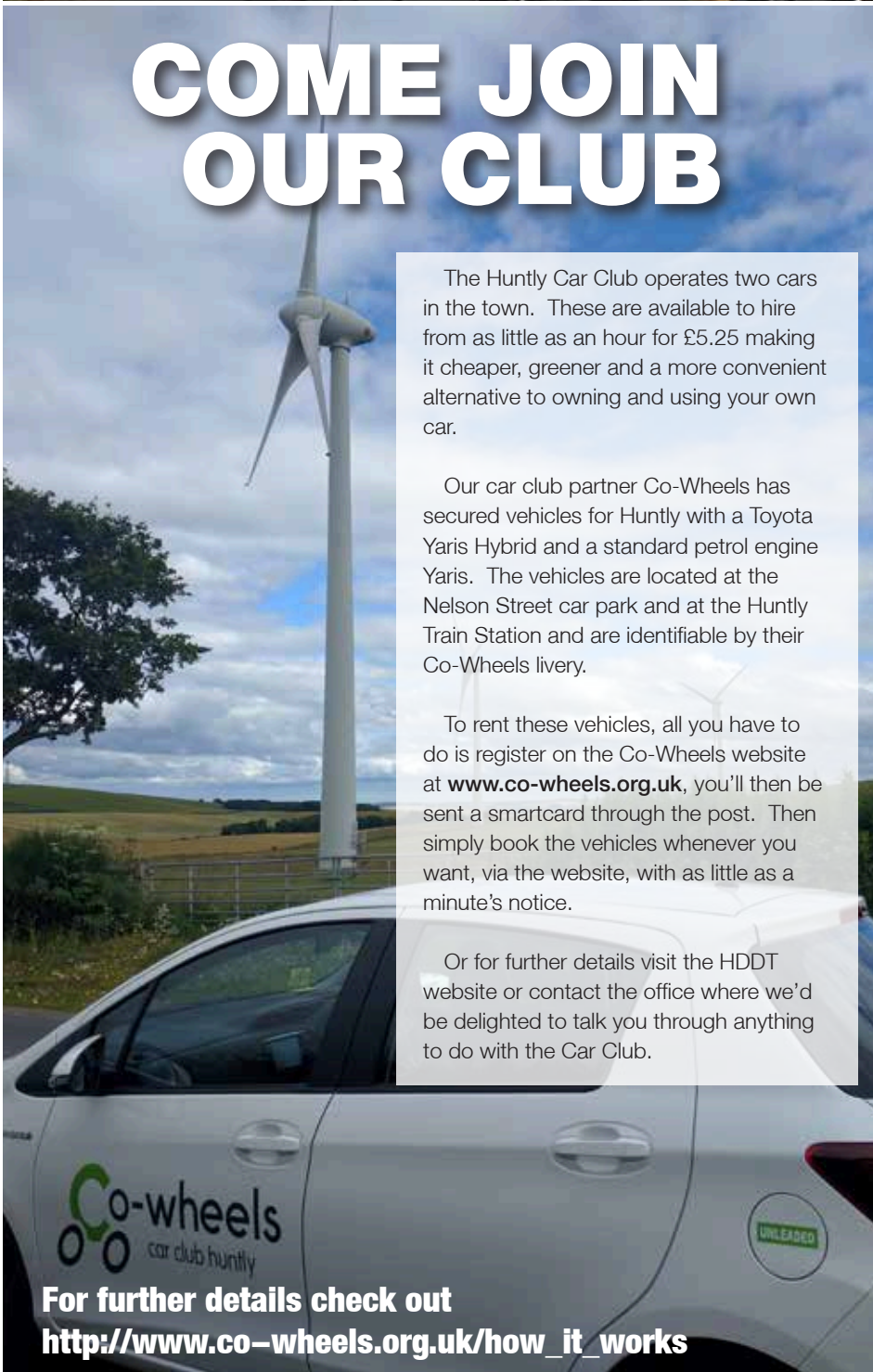
Our Room to Ride Audax continues to grow in popularity with over 80 riders taking part last year. For 2017, we've added a new route aimed at the long-distance cyclist bringing the total number routes to 4. At 200km/125 miles in length, it follows the existing 160km route with a new additional section taking in the coast via Banff and Cullen.

If you're not familiar with the format of an audax, it's a timed event rather than a race. It's like a ride in the countryside which you aim to complete within a generous time limit. The Huntly audax is a great social event to do with friends or on your own against the clock. There are even refreshment stops at Boogie Woogie in Keith and The Grouse Inn at the Cabrach for those taking part in the longer courses.

The existing routes cover most abilities, starting with the 50km/30 mile route which is a nice easy cycle around Cornhill and Rothiemay, it's a great route for beginners.

The 100km/60 mile route takes you through Cornhill to Portsoy, the Cabrach and Dufftown, and If you want a harder challenge the 160km/100mile route adds a further leg via Alford before returning back to Huntly.

No special bike, equipment or previous experience is needed to take part, so why not give it ago. For more information visit <http://www.huntlydevelopmenttrust.org/room-to-ride-2017/> and watch out for details on Facebook over the next couple of months.



For further details check out http://www.co-wheels.org.uk/how_it_works

RAISE A GLASS TO CAIRNBORROW

Wind Farm Project begins to deliver

The recent commissioning of the Cairnborrow wind farm has provided another significant milestone for HDDT, the communities of Glass and Cairnie and the wider AB54 area. The developer Engie 'switched on' the five-turbine site on the road towards Dufftown in January 2017 after many years of planning.

On behalf of the community HDDT negotiated a 10% share in the wind farm profits, subject to an index-linked annual floor of £5,000/per MW installed. Given that the combined output of the wind farm is 10.25MW this represents a basic income of over £50,000/year. 25% of that will be reserved for the communities of Glass and Cairnie, the closest to the development, to fund their own projects. HDDT will invest the remainder in the organisation and projects towards meeting our charitable objectives across the wider AB54 area.

Over the 20 years of the wind farm the profit-sharing arrangement is expected to be worth in the region of £2,800,000, some 3-4 times the community benefit that would have been achieved if we had not entered the innovative partnership with Engie. As with the Greenmyres revenue, it is our intention to use the Cairnborrow funds to lever other finance into the area, making the final income attributable to the project worth in excess of £10,000,000.

Earlier this month Engie hosted a site visit for members of the wind farm's community forum. We are currently liaising with Engie on the date and programme for a wider community open day at the wind farm. We'll obviously keep HDDT members posted.



The community project team gathered with the Engie team to celebrate the commissioning of the Cairnborrow turbines.

HUNTLY TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

Long awaited project to breath new life into centre

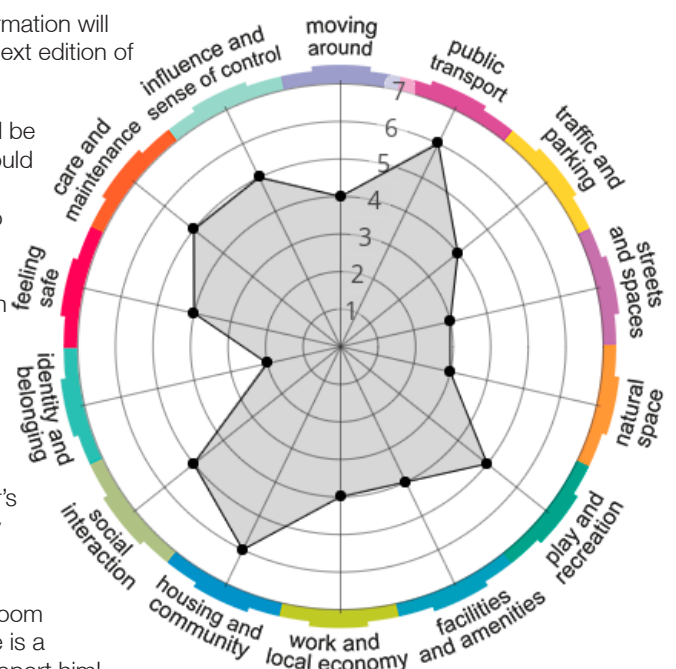
Work on one of the long-awaited HDDT aims has progressed positively in recent months with the establishment of a Town Team group looking at ways to regenerate Huntly Town Centre. The forum is chaired by Janelle Clark, the Marr Area Manager of Aberdeenshire Council and attended by representatives of a range of local groups. These include HDDT, Huntly Business Association, Huntly Community Council, Huntly and District Tourism Action Group, Networks of Wellbeing, The Gordon Schools and Deveron Projects (formerly Deveron Arts).

Four meetings have been held to date with the most recent devoted to an assessment of Huntly using the Place Standard tool developed by Architecture and Design Scotland. The findings of this exercise, and a review of previous community consultation work, will form the basis of a bid to the LEADER programme

and other funds. More information will be available on this in our next edition of Energise, if not before.

In the meantime, it would be great if HDDT members would engage with South African artist Jacques Coetzer who has returned to Huntly through an Aberdeenshire Council funded commission via Deveron Projects. Jacques' task is to work with the community on ideas to regenerate the town centre.

He combines an outsider's fresh perspective on Huntly with his local knowledge gained during his previous time here developing the Room to Roam brand in 2008. He is a friend of Huntly - please support him!



NEW FACES ONBOARD

HDDT is pleased to welcome some new faces to the Board of Directors. Since the previous edition of Energise we have secured the services of three new directors and waved goodbye to some long-serving others.

Joining us are Elaine Murray, Alastair Ross and Jamie Wilkinson. Elaine joins us as Finance Director in place of Stuart Thomson who has fulfilled this challenging position over the last five years. Like Elaine, Alastair and Jamie bring enthusiasm, skills, a fresh perspective and experience to the table. You can read more about each of them below and if you'd like to join the team please get in touch! As we welcome our new faces we'd like to say a hearty thank you to Claudia, Stuart and Richard who have stepped down after five years of service.



ELAINE MURRAY – Finance Director
Elaine is from Clydebank originally, moving to Glass around 15 years ago. She trained with Grant Thornton CA for 4 years before returning to study for a professional management diploma. She then spent several years in various management roles before returning to accountancy practice. She currently works locally at Faith Simpson

Accountants as a Senior Accounts Manager. Elaine still lives in Glass with her husband, two children, two dogs and cat. Any spare time is spent walking her dogs or taking her boys to football matches.



ALASTAIR ROSS

Like Paddington Bear, Alastair was born in Peru and likes marmalade. He was however raised rather conventionally in Edinburgh. He gained a degree in Physics from St Andrews University and more recently gained a degree in Psychology at the Open University. He is a graduate member of the British Psychological Society. His career has primarily been in industrial computer systems where he progressed from computer programming, through project management, and into business management. In 2000 he set up his own business employing a small handful of people providing consultancy to a variety of industries including oil, telecom, and the Post Office. He closed the business in 2009. In 2007 he was elected as an Aberdeenshire councillor representing Huntly, Strathbogie, and the Howe of Alford, was re-elected in 2012, and resigned in 2015 following some health difficulties - he's better now. He was a director of Advocacy Service Aberdeen for 12 years and is currently Finance Director of Networks of

Wellbeing in Huntly. He has been an enthusiastic walker and rock climber, held a private pilot licence and is now enjoying woodturning and cooking.



JAMIE WILKINSON

Jamie was born in Aberdeen and brought up in the Aberdeenshire countryside. After leaving Alford Academy in 2003 he studied Geography at Glasgow University and then completed a Master's degree at the University of Aberdeen. Following some time spent working in rural development funding Jamie joined Community Energy Scotland as a Development Officer, supporting community groups develop renewable energy resources. During this period he worked with HDDT on the Greenmyres wind and solar projects. In early 2016 Jamie started in a new position as Co-ordinator with a development funding programme for fishing communities in Aberdeenshire. Jamie lives in Glass with his wife, daughter, son and two chocolate Labradors.

Get Involved.

Huntly & District Development Trust can only be successful with the support of its members, volunteers and supporters. If you'd like to get involved in some of the projects listed in this newsletter or just want to find out more about developing community projects in the AB54 area, we'd love to hear from you.

For further information go to the Huntly & District Development Trust web site, give us a call or simply pop into the Brander Building for a chat.



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