

# LRCA Annual Meeting

**Date:** 20th of November 2025

**Time:** 6pm

**Location:** Loch Rannoch Hotel and Spa

Attendance: The meeting was well attended and was 'Quorate'. ([Attendance List](#).)

## 1. Opening Remarks and Attendance, ([Keith's presentation.](#))

The Chair, Keith Steel, welcomed attendees and noted the encouraging turnout, which included the participation of virtually all LRCA Trustees, signalling a strong starting position for the year. The primary aim of the gathering was to bring members up to date with the LRCA's activities and to formally serve as the Annual Report for the year.

## 2. Acknowledgements

The Chair extended thanks to key contributors:

- Nick Pattie (Rannoch Hotel): Thanked for kindly hosting the meeting. Nick Pattie's continued support was also acknowledged in his capacity as a Board Trustee.
- Andrew Duncan: A special vote of thanks was given to Andrew Duncan for his service as the Chair of the LRCA for the past seven years. This period was noted as challenging, encompassing the COVID years, and was managed alongside his full-time employment and management of the Tempar estate. His time as Chair was appreciated by the Association.

## 3. Re-institution of Vision and Guiding Principles

Acknowledging that some time had passed since a properly constituted AGM had been held, the Chair guided attendees through the LRCA's founding principles . The LRCA Introduction and Vision were formally reviewed and reaffirmed by the Board, confirming these principles will serve as the framework for all future board activities.

## 4. Meeting Structure

Due to the comprehensive agenda, attendees were asked to keep any questions or points until the end of the formal presentations. The Chair ,underlined the LRCA's commitment to listening and engaging with its core membership (riparians) and the wider community.

## **5. Reaffirmation of LRCA Purposes**

The Chair presented the purposes of the LRCA, which have been reviewed and reaffirmed by the current Board : .

### **Key Focus Areas:**

- Health of the Loch: Emphasizing the importance of water health, which directly relates to the upcoming Freshwater Project.
- Environmental Management: Focusing on the immediate environment around the loch, managed through the efforts of the wardens (Flora McInnes and Jeannie Grant from FLS) and support from Perth and Kinross Council (PKC).
- Community Involvement: A key objective is to involve the local community, particularly children and young people, whenever possible.
- Partnership Working: The LRCA aims to link up and work in partnership with other key community groups, including the Rannoch Community Trust, the Paths Group , and the Tourist Association.

## **6. Legal Status and Structure**

The Chair clarified the legal standing of the LRCA:

- Legal Status: The LRCA is not a charity; it is a Company Limited by Guarantee.
- Revenue Generation: The company generates revenue primarily through fishing permits (online sales and Flora's key role), which funds its operational work.
- Staffing:the only employee is Flora McInnes (Water Warden).
- Voluntary Roles: The roles of Treasurer (John Evans) and Secretary (Steve) are currently voluntary..
- Trustee Structure: The Board comprises Riparian Trustees and Appointed Trustees representing wider community interests and is committed to serving the local and wider community..

## **7. Current Board Members and Roles**

The Chair introduced the current Board, noting that the formal election/re-election would take place shortly. ([Board Members](#))

## **8. Strategic Focus for the Future**

The Chair concluded the presentation by outlining his three strategic areas of focus : :

- Strengthen and Revitalise the Board: Achieved by bringing on committed and active members.
- Communicate and Engage: Focus on building the riparian database, engaging the wider local community (including the Friends of Rannoch in conjunction with Finlay), and internal Board communication. Steve will be overseeing the upgrade and updating of the LRCA website to serve as the main communication channel.

- Identify and Focus on Key Activities: For next year and the immediate future these are ::
  - The Freshwater Project (centred on Loch Rannoch).
  - The ongoing Warden Activities (to manage the loch surrounds).

## 10. Trustee Election Results

The Company Secretary, Steve Roworth, presented the formal nominations for the new/re-elected Board members.

- List of Nominees: A list of the nominated individuals, along with the names of the proposer and seconder for each, was circulated to attendees and displayed on screen.
- Call for Discussion/Objections: The floor was opened for attendees to raise any comments, questions, or objections regarding the nominations.
- Result: As no objections were raised, the list of nominations was accepted and approved unanimously by the meeting.
- Resolution: The nominated individuals are formally appointed/re-appointed to the LRCA Board of Trustees as presented.

([Board Members](#)).

## 11. Financial Summary (2023-24)

The Treasurer, John Evans, presented the financial report for the year 2024, copies of which were circulated to all attendees.

- Overall Position: The Association is in a relatively stable financial position.
- Revenue Performance: Sales revenue was successfully maintained through the online permit portal.
- Cost Control: Costs had been kept down, notably due to low staffing costs during the reporting period.

([Financial Report](#)).

## Outlook for the Coming Year (2025-2026)

The Treasurer noted the financial outlook for next year will see a change in expenditure:

- Increased Staffing Costs: these are anticipated to increase with the return of Flora McInnes as Water Warden.
- Maximising Revenue: the aim will be to maximise permit sales through new and existing outlets, particularly via the Countrystore and Cornerstone..

## 12. Historic Research: eDNA Sampling (Lochs Rannoch, Finnart, Monaghan)

([eDNA Presentation](#)).

Bernd Haenfling (Director of Research, Biodiversity, and Freshwater at UHI) presented the findings of a monitoring project conducted in 2023 and 2024 for SEPA using environmental DNA metabarcoding to assess fish diversity.

### eDNA Methodology Overview:

- Method: eDNA involves collecting traces of DNA left behind by organisms (e.g., skin cells) by filtering water. This is combined with high-throughput sequencing to identify entire communities (metabarcoding).
- Advantages: eDNA methods have consistently shown superior detection probability for fish compared to conventional methods (electrofishing, netting). It allows for relative abundance estimates and can monitor changes/trends over time.
- Sensitivity: The method is highly sensitive, capable of detecting species at very low abundance (e.g., detection of the invasive species *Ruff* in Windermere years before conventional methods). It can also indicate spawning location and timing (e.g., Arctic Charr peak).
- WFD Status: UHI developed a methodology using eDNA to assess the quality status of a Loch, which is compatible with the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

### Key Findings in the Rannoch Area:

- Loch Finnart & Monaghan: The two dominant species found were the non-native species Accretion Carp and Rudd, though Minnow and Brown Trout were also present.
- Loch Rannoch: Dominant species identified were Minnow, Brown Trout, Arctic Charr, Salmon, Perch, Stickleback, and Pike.
- Rare Species: Three rare species were detected: Eel, Stone Loach, and the invasive Pink Salmon (a species of concern in other areas, like Norway, for its competition with native Atlantic Salmon).
- Comparison (2018 vs. Current): The data between the 2018 survey and the current data set were consistent.
- WFD Status: The WFD status for Loch Rannoch was calculated as "Good" in both survey years and has not changed over time.
- Vertebrate Bycatch: The assay also detected semi-aquatic mammals (Otter, Water Vole, Water Shrew), terrestrial mammals, and amphibians, providing valuable supplementary biodiversity data (though not quantitative in the same way as fish data).

## 13. Future Focus: The Freshwater Project

The Freshwater Project will be a long-term, and significant biodiversity project for the LRCA and will be a key project during 2026

### **Project Drivers and Rationale:**

- Unique Populations: The project needs to protect and learn more about the unique populations of trout and charr in the loch.
- Baseline Biodiversity: The Chair and Richard Paul stressed that establishing a baseline biodiversity is crucial for effective conservation efforts ("If you don't know what's in Loch Rannoch, then you can't conserve it"). This extends to the surrounding edges, which have international importance (e.g., Black Wood, rare mosses).
- Data Gap: Very little is currently known about the distribution of wider biodiversity, particularly macroinvertebrates (Mayflies, Caddisflies, etc.). The existing eDNA samples can be re-sequenced with a different assay to fill this gap.
- Loch Level Fluctuations: The potential impact of rapid and extreme changes in water level (due to hydro schemes) on macroinvertebrate diversity and the condition/access of spawning sites (charr spawning in shallow, gravelly areas) is a key concern to be investigated.

### **Planned Project Components (Outline):**

- Macroinvertebrate Survey: Use eDNA on existing samples to gather data on insect larvae (a key food source).
- Monitoring Water Changes: Use advanced technology to monitor the effects of rapid water level changes.
- Pollution Monitoring: Install sensors (nitrates, phosphates, water levels), led by John Cassidy (Technical Advisor), to provide rapid, almost live-stream feedback on water quality.

### **Citizen Science:**

- Richard Paul proposed incorporating a Citizen Science element to engage the local community (primary school, visitors, lodge owners).
- Focus: Participants could help monitor indicator species of insect larvae (like Caddisflies, Mayflies, Stoneflies) which are intolerant of pollution, providing a broad measure of water health. This could be promoted via social media (e.g., Facebook).

### **Conclusion:**

The Chair, Keith Steel, affirmed the project's importance, stating that it was crucial to look after the loch and its immediate environment. He was confident that the project was the right kind of long-term and impactful biodiversity project for the LRCA and that we were fortunate in having a high powered and committed team of experts working on this. (Bernd, Richard, Gordon, and John Cassidy).

## 14. Flora McInnes; Warden Activity Report

### (Warden's Report)

Flora McInnes, the Water Warden, noted she had not been active in the past year (2024), and therefore presented a report covering her previous active period. (A copy of Flora's report is attached).

#### **Positive Outcomes:**

- Wildlife Detections: There were reports of some significant wildlife sightings from wardens but there is a justified concern to share these too publicly for fear of attracting undue attention.
- Loch Health: The annual Newark Fishing Club competition had a particularly strong year, suggesting that the loch continued in good health

#### **Key Challenges:**

- Litter and Degradation: A primary issue remains the significant amount of rubbish and ground damage left by some visitors. .

## **Strategy for Visitor Engagement and Management**

The Warden team focuses when it can on education and partnership to address issues:

- Education:
  - The Children's Leaflet created by Kinloch Rannoch Primary children has been produced and distributed, proving to be well-received.
- Joint/Multi-Agency Patrols:
  - Effectiveness: Partnership patrols are considered best and essential, for safeguarding the Wardens..
  - Compliance: Having officials like the Fire Brigade (James) present when asking visitors to extinguish fires is more effective than the Warden acting alone.
  - Support: Working with experienced staff like Jeannie Grant (FLS), who is knowledgeable in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, provides crucial support.
  - Visitor Feedback: Many visitors appreciate the multi-agency approach and enjoy meeting the people responsible for managing the area.
- Positive Interactions: Flora noted that despite the problems, the job is made worthwhile by meeting many "really nice people" who want to help look after the loch side environment and occasionally assist with tidying up.

## **Community Partnership Highlights**

- The Path Group and Annie Benson were thanked for their valuable work on site maintenance especially at the launch site near the Hydro
- School and Community Projects:

- Bird Boxes: The team built bird boxes with the school. Though these were later vandalised they were subsequently repaired.
- Picnic Area: Maintained the picnic table area, which is well-used (especially for Christmas).
- Glen Leaflet: Worked with the local primary school to produce a “Glen Leaflet”. This was so successful that they were asked to help a group in Glenlyon with a similar leaflet production.

## Future Focus

Flora's goal is to continue working with **school children and community members** to foster a shared responsibility for the area. The emphasis is on encouraging both local residents and **visitors** to look after the loch and its surroundings.

## 15. Eleonore de Rochehouart : Visitor Management Partnership

### Acknowledgments and Safety Concerns

Eleonore de Rochehouart thanked Flora McInnes for returning and praised the commitment of the wider team, particularly those who have repeatedly replanted or repaired damaged areas.

- Key Partners Thanked:
  - Jeannie Grant (FLS): Acknowledged for her significant number of patrols.
  - James Black and the local fire brigade team (Steve, Ian, Hutch), thanked for volunteering personal/weekend time for patrols, emphasizing their crucial help.
- Warden Safety: Due to increasing incidents, including issues in the Tummel area (leading to a court case in January), the decision has been made that no warden, including Flora, should go out on solo patrols - hence the importance of co-ordinating patrol activity between the LRCA/Flora , FLS/Jeannie, PKC/Frank and the local fire brigade/James.

### Visitor Activity and Patrol Data

Close collaboration has been established with Frank Campbell (PKC Community Support and Enforcement Coordinator). Eleonore presented extensive data points based on 50 patrols conducted by Jeannie Grant in 2025 (covering Rannoch, Tummel, and Tay).

### Future Warden Strategy and Site Management

The LRCA and its partners are implementing several measures to improve monitoring and control:

- Site Marking: Flora and Jeannie are re-listing and marking the 78 sites around the loch to enable better monitoring and coordination between patrol teams.

- Riparian Signage: FLS is tidying and installing no-fire, take-litter-away, and no-cutting signs in their parking areas. Other riparian owners are invited to contact the LRCA to coordinate the ordering and installation of similar signs on their land.
- Access Code Recognition: There is wide recognition among all partners that the Scottish Outdoor Access Code (dated 2003) is not respected or understood by the majority of visitors and no longer relates to current camping/parking practice.

## Community and Enforcement Actions

### Reporting Incidents:

- Action Required: The community, residents, and riparian owners are asked to please report incidents.
- Reporting Channels: Contact Police Scotland, PKC, or NatureScot. The LRCA can provide necessary contact emails.
- Result: Reporting creates a log, builds history, and allows authorities (like PKC) to track incidents and apply pressure to improve the situation.

### PKC Planned Support:

- PKC is awaiting budget confirmation (expected January) to fund:
  - Sending rangers out from March to the end of October (Friday to Monday).
  - Collecting rubbish.
  - Organising and maintaining port-a-loos.

### Waste Management:

- The volume of waste is increasing substantially around Loch Rannoch and other Perthshire lochs.
- One or more community litter picking events possibly in partnership with the RCT and the Paths Group will be planned during 2026

### Killichonan Site:

- The Killichonan carpark/campsite is "out of control."
- Proposed Solution: Working with PKC to re-designate the site as a "green space carpark" to allow for better maintenance and monitoring by PKC.

### Clearway Proposal (Parking Restriction).

([Clearway map](#)).

The long-discussed proposal for a Clearway around the Loch has seen significant progress:

- Survey Conducted: PKC commissioned a surveyor who produced a proposal (received Tuesday night).
- Initial Proposal: The proposal is for an experimental Clearway of only two kilometres between Killichonan and the power station, which was deemed "not enough."
- Next Steps: The LRCA has until the December 10th deadline to submit a counter-proposal with a strong case for extension.
- Call to Action: The community, residents, and riparian owners are invited to write to the LRCA with their thoughts, opinions, and views to help build a comprehensive case for a wider Clearway. The LRCA is seeking help from the RCT and has support from SFRS and Frank Campbell (PKC) on this issue.

## Conclusion

Eleonore re-emphasized the commitment to communicate more with the community on all activities. The core message is a call for interaction and collaboration from all stakeholders and the local community to make the important loch side surroundings safe, clean, and enjoyable for both visitors and residents.

## 16. Chair's Closing Summary

Keith summarised the two main, yet distinct, areas of LRCA short and longer term activity presented during the meeting:

- **The Freshwater Project** : and this is a longer term project to research and then to conserve and where possible improve the "health" and bio-diversity of the loch and its surrounding environment.
- **Lochside Warden Patrol Activity** : this ongoing activity will continue to be a key LRCA focus led by Flora working closely with Jeannie from the FLS and supported by Frank and the PKC and James and his team from the Kinloch Rannoch Fire Brigade.

## Call for Engagement and Feedback

The importance of engagement and feedback from riparians and the wider community was stressed and would be welcomed by the LRCA.

Any incidents, concerns or thoughts and ideas that the LRCA should take note of or it is felt should be acted on should be passed to the LRCA Secretary or any of the Board.

Similarly anyone interested in helping support or taking part in any of the LRCA projects or activities would be very welcome and should let the LRCA know.

## **Closing Acknowledgments**

The Chair thanked all the presenters on behalf of the attendees Bernd Haenfling, Richard Paul, Eleanore de Rochechouart, and Flora McInnes.

## **17. Questions**

Anne Robertson opened the Q&A by asking about the reasoning behind the placement of boulders. This sparked a debate on the effectiveness of using physical barriers to deter wild camping and inappropriate parking.

### **Jeannie Grant's (FLS) View and Experience:**

Jeannie Grant provided practical field experience regarding the use of large boulders:

- Mixed Effectiveness: The use of boulders is "a bit of a 50-50 split."
- Successes: On FLS land, particularly in a couple of locations on the north side that were getting "completely decimated," the boulders did stop people from accessing and damaging the area.
- Failures/Displacement: In other areas, blocking access simply moves the problem on. Visitors started using spaces where landowners store silage or other sensitive areas instead.
- Alternative FLS Approach: FLS has been more proactive by formalising traditional parking spaces (where old tarmac was visible) and encouraging visitors to use these. They have blocked off other areas strictly due to environmental significance and importance.
- Specific Failure Site: Jeannie confirmed that in one specific location, the boulders have "definitely 100% not worked."

### **Contributing Factors to the Problem:**

- Hidden Communication: Visitors use means other than social media (e.g., stickers on passing place signs) as "secret messages" to highlight where people can camp, requiring wardens to constantly remove them..

### **Riparian Experience (Tommy Kienberger):**

Tommy Kienberger (Finnart Estate) confirmed that the use of boulders at two lay-bys on Finnart ground that were being misused (particularly on corners) seemed to work and achieved the desired goal there.

---

## **Chair's Conclusion and Path Forward**

Keith Steel concluded the discussion by acknowledging the complexity of the issue:

- Problem of Displacement: The primary risk of using barriers like boulders and the planned Clearway is the displacement of the problem to other areas.

- Fishermen Access: Any restrictions must be balanced with the need to ensure bona fide fishermen have accessible places to park. A Boulder/Clearway policy needs a "thought through aspect" regarding where displaced parking will go.
- Overall Strategy: The LRCA is unlikely to find an ideal or quick solution. The core focus must remain on managing camping constructively but with a no-nonsense approach.
- Core Solution: The ultimate long-term solution lies in engaging, educating, and getting visitors to buy into the LRCA's conservation idea while simultaneously urging the community to report all concerning sightings so the LRCA and authorities can take action.