

# BENNACHIE COMMUNITY NEWS

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## WHERE TO GET PRINTED COPIES

Bennachie Leisure Centre, Inch;  
The Old Post Office and  
Bennachie Visitor Centre, Chapel  
of Garioch; Morgan McVeighs,  
Colpy; Kellockbank and Butterfly  
Effect Inch, Poppy's Old Rayne  
and Inch Library.

## HOW TO CONTACT US

If you have a group or event  
coming up and want this added  
into the next newsletter email

[bennachiecommunitynews@gmail.com](mailto:bennachiecommunitynews@gmail.com)

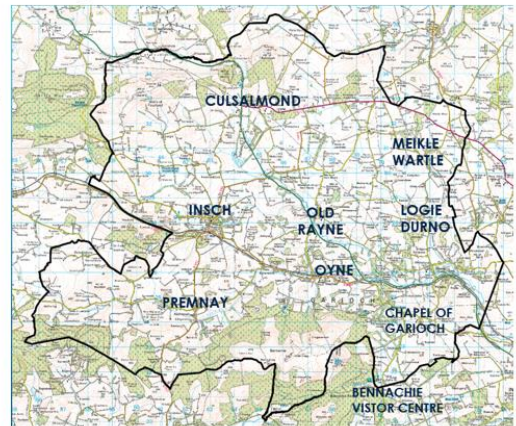
At the time of print all facts  
were correct as far as we could  
verify.

## INTRODUCING THE NEWSLETTER

The aim of this newsletter is to promote what is going on in the Bennachie Community Council area and also inform people within the area what's happening.

The Bennachie Community Area covers

- Inch
- Chapel of Garioch
- Culsalmond
- Leslie
- Oyne
- Premnay
- Meikle Wartle
- Rayne
- Durno
- Pitcapple
- Duncanstone



We would like to say a massive thank you to the Glens of Foudland Community Windfarm Trust for the grant they gave us. This grant has enabled us to continue bringing our newsletter to you. Thank you very much.

It's been a busy last three months with lots of things happening in the area and next year looks as if it's going to be busier with various projects being worked on.



**We  
Wish  
You a  
Merry  
Christmas  
And Happy  
New Year**

## WHAT'S ON IN THE AREA

JANUARY	What	Where
1st January 7pm – 10pm	Family Fun Ceilidh	The Bennachie Leisure Centre, Insch
1 <sup>st</sup> January door open 7.30 dancing starts at 8pm	Survivors Ceilidh	Logie Durno Village Hall, Pitcaple
FEBRUARY	What	Where
14, 15, 16 <sup>th</sup> February	Galentines/Valentines afternoon tea	Leith Hall, Kennethmont, AB54 4NQ
MARCH	What	Where
8 <sup>th</sup> + 9 <sup>th</sup> March	International Womens Day Tour and Afternoon Tea	Leith Hall, Kennethmont, AB54 4NQ
15 <sup>th</sup> March	Tipsy Tea Party	Insch Golf Club, Golf Terrace, Insch
15/16 <sup>th</sup> and 22/23 <sup>rd</sup> March Guided Tours 10.30,11.30, 12.30, 1.30, 2.30 and 3.30	National Lottery Open Week Guided Tours and Tearoom is open 10.30 to 3.30	Leith Hall, Kennethmont, AB54 4NQ
29 <sup>th</sup> + 30 <sup>th</sup> March	Mothers Day Afternoon Tea and Ladies of Leith Hall Tour	Leith Hall, Kennethmont, AB54 4NQ

## NEWS FROM THE COMMUNITY



The Bennachie Community Council (BCC) is a group of elected local volunteers who liaise with Aberdeenshire Council and other groups to represent the views of the area. We meet on the fourth Monday of the month and our next meeting is on January 27<sup>th</sup>. We are still looking for one new member each from Insch, Meikle Wartle / Durno and Premnay areas. If you want to help your community, please let us know at [bennachieCC@outlook.com](mailto:bennachieCC@outlook.com)

So, who are we: - Chairperson: Andy Miller (Oyne), Vice Chair: Kevin Shand (Culsalmond and Colpy), Treasurer: Wally Rhodes (Leslie), Secretary: Lynda Bain (Chapel of Garioch) Alan Simpson (Leslie), Frank Musgrave (Oyne), Mark Worsley and Duncan Thow (Chapel of Garioch, Whiteford and Pitcaple), Gill Walker and Diana Muriel (Rayne), Gill Bishop (Durno and Meikle Wartle) David Wylie (Premnay), Janette Taylor, Gordon Hood and Fiona Heinonen (Insch)

We are supported by our 3 Councillors: - Moray Grant, Sam Payne and Hazel Smith.

If you want to contact us our email is [bennachiecc@outlook.com](mailto:bennachiecc@outlook.com) or see our [Facebook](#) page

The five main topics we are looking at just now which are keeping us really busy are: -

1. Insch Hospital and health care within our area.
2. Resilience Planning. Work is ongoing at looking at village hall resilience.
3. Community Action Plans and Local Place plans.
4. Developments within the area i.e. Coreen Windfarm and Battery Energy Storage at Meikle Wartle.
5. We are also starting up a paths group in the New Year to see how we can take this forward.

### Insch Hospital and Health care within our area

When the Integrated Joint Board decided not to reopen Insch Memorial Hospital they promised action on three fronts to ameliorate the closure:

- ✗ evaluate new build inpatient beds
- ✗ wellbeing hub with additional clinical services
- ✗ interim arrangements for in-patient beds

After two and a half years there is no progress on any of these areas and the local position has deteriorated

with the closure of the Meadows Care home in Huntly in 2023, the Westbank Care home in Oldmeldrum this year and the reduction in hours for the Minor Injury Unit in Huntly. BCC have continued to work with all relevant authorities to convey the concerns of local residents and press for action.

### **1. Local Development Evidence Plan Formal Dispute**

Proposed planning policy for the next LDP period from 2029 excluded Inch Hospital. When BCC enquired about this NHS (Grampian) advised the Planning department that the hospital was closed, even though it has not been through the mandatory closure process. This has now gone to the Scottish Government as a formal dispute.

### **2. NHS(G) Annual Review**

NHS Grampian Annual Review 2024 was held in Elgin on October 24th, with Maree Todd MSP, Minister for social care, mental wellbeing and sport, supported by Caroline Lamb, director general and chief executive of NHS Scotland. BCC submitted in advance a question on the position relating to the closure of Inch Memorial Hospital and BCC was represented at the meeting along with representatives of Friends of Inch Hospital. Although the response to our question was bland, our active participation was acknowledged, we had the opportunity to speak face to face with the Minister, the Chair and CEO of NHS(G), the CEO of Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership and the NHS(G) Director of Infrastructure, Sustainability and Support Services agreed to visit Inch Hospital for discussions.

### **3. AHSCP strategy and budget engagement.**

BCC members attended engagement sessions with AHSCP in Inverurie, Oldmeldrum and Huntly. BCC's formal submission highlighted the insidious erosion of resources from Rural areas and that overall financial savings would be achieved with more in-patient beds in the area and more resources in the GP practice.

### **4. Cooperation with other affected CC's**

Changes such as the closure of the care home in Oldmeldrum and the reduction in MIU hours in Huntly affect neighbouring areas and BCC is working with affected communities to see if collective action is more effective.

## **5. Integrated Joint Board meeting**

With the FOIH we aim to have a meeting with the IJB, the managing body for both AHSCP and NHS(G) to see why they are not implementing their own plans.

In answer to a question in Holyrood about the recent Critical Incident at ARI when ambulances had to be turned away the Cabinet Secretary for Health recently said "The important element now is making sure all possible capacity – not just within ARI but within NHS Grampian – all possible beds are being utilised." Perhaps somebody should tell him.....

## **Community Action Plan**

Earlier this year a group of volunteers formed a Community Action Plan Group and we asked everyone their views through a Community Action Plan Survey. Eight hundred and fifty of you told us what you thought and we got an additional 48 young people 13- to 19-year-olds responses to our Young Person's Survey.

We summarised the main themes that people wanted us to work and took these to the Strawberry Fayre for you to vote on so that we could prioritise which ones we should start on.

The next stage was to have a meeting with all of the various stakeholders, different departments within Aberdeenshire Council, Nestrans, and the Health and Social Care Partnership. Due to an election taking place this had to be put on hold until 4<sup>th</sup> November. Representatives from the Bennachie Community Council, Friends of Inch Hospital and Bennachie Leisure Centre who are all part of the Community Action Plan Group were also there.

At this meeting we gained a lot of contacts on who to approach for help. The message however was if we wanted anything then the community had to come together and apply for grants to try and get it themselves as there was no money available. We have been working quietly in the background to achieve some on the actions on the action plan. Here is what has been done so far by the various groups in the area:

- 
- ✓ Thanks to Friends of Inch hospital we have Christmas lights in Inch.
- ✓ Thanks to Lodge St Andrew NO. 228 for the Christmas Tree in Inch.

- ✓ Thanks to The Studio, Stephens DIY, Louis Little Haven, Inch Parish Church and Bennachie Leisure Centre for the Christmas Shopping night.
- ✓ We have started a path/ green space group which will have its first meeting in the new year. We applied for a grant for funding for a consultant to help us with paths but was not successful this time. They have encouraged us to apply again next year.
- ✓ We applied for a grant to employ a consultant to carry out independent work on Local Place Plans for the area and we have just been told we have been successful in getting that, so this work will start in 2025.
- ✓ Invites have been sent out to local groups in the area to come to a meeting to discuss the vision for the area and whether we need to form a local Development Trust as there is strength in numbers.

If you would like to help out with any of these then please get in contact with us either through our [Facebook](#) page or email [bennachieCC@outlook.com](mailto:bennachieCC@outlook.com)



At a well-attended meeting on Friday 13 December at the Inch Library room at The Institute, Rannes Street, Inch, the Community showed a coordinated and vocal response to protect the current location of the library facility from relocation.

The Head of Service for Live Life Aberdeenshire, led the consultation discussion about how the service is mandated to change and accelerate savings in the current financial crisis for services. The libraries have been changing the delivery model since 2018, with increased digital offering, doorstep delivery and click & collect services. However, the intention was to maintain a physical library space in Inch, and 5 hours of Librarian time funded by the authority. Pressure to look at co-locating facilities in Council buildings to make them more cost-effective was part of the engagement process and the views of the community would be taken on board within the Integrated Impact Assessment.

A brief history of the Institute was given by the grandson of the founder of the Institute which included gifting the building and dedicated library space to the

village. He emphasised that the Institute had a well-maintained building, which had further supported the library since 2019 by not increasing rent despite the tripling of energy costs. There had been no discussion to date on whether further support was required to look at the rental and other costs to try to achieve a saving for LLA by retaining it where it is. The alternative proposal to relocate to the Community Centre has not been costed and the view of many in the meeting was that the condition of that building was in much need of upgrading, so a saving was highly unlikely.

Residents were adamant that the space and sense of place could not be replicated successfully elsewhere in the village. Membership and usage were growing and volunteer effort to extend activity to improve access and times would be impeded by such a move. The Head of Service welcomed the conversation on volunteering to support services going forward.

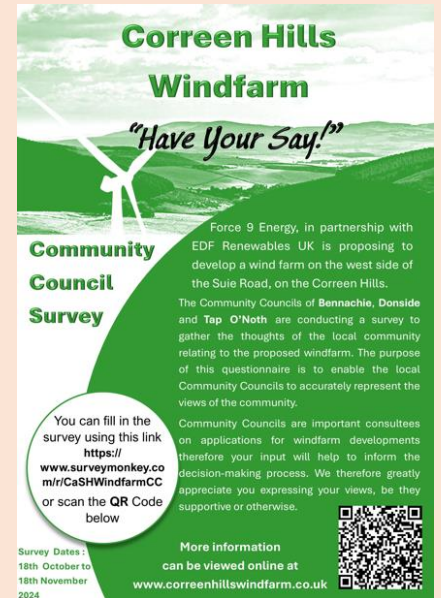
The Bennachie Community Council highlighted that their current work on the Community Action Plan, and a future Local Place Plan, had only really got going and we would need more time to speak to local stakeholders within the area to collaborate on where future services could best use local facilities. The Area Manager confirmed this work was ongoing and supported by the Garioch Area Team and a planning consultant. This would come together in the medium term in 2025.

In summing up the mood and progress in the meeting it was felt that the short-term action was for Live Life Aberdeenshire to discuss potential savings with The Institute rather than proceed with the alternative proposal. The Community offered to support this option so Libraries could take this forward to the Garioch Area Committee on 14 January and to the Bennachie Community Council meeting on the 27th January 2025. If agreement could be reached on a saving this would go as part of the overall service proposal to the Communities Committee on 13 February 2025.

The threat to the library has demonstrated just how important residents value this service and current facility. Local stakeholders are talking and working more closely together which is positive for the future and the general feeling at the end of the meeting was that progress had been made.

# CORREEN/SUIE HILLS WINDFARM DEVELOPMENT SURVEY RESULTS

There is a proposal to build 10 wind turbines at the end of the Gordon Way on the Correen Hills. The height of these turbines to the blade tip are 8@200m and 2@180m tall. The Bennachie, Donside and Tap O'Noth Community Councils have been working jointly to survey local residents on what their views were on the proposed development following the publicised local consultation events in November 2024. An independent survey was carried out to find out the views of the people living in the area. Residents were asked to fill out the questionnaire whether they were for or against the proposal to allow the Community Councils to represent their constituents' views. Four hundred and five people responded throughout the three Community Council Areas. The percentage of answers is listed below both for the total result of the 3 Community Council areas in **RED** and the Bennachie Community Council in **BLACK**.



## Bennachie Response Data Comparison to Total Number of Responses

Overall Response in <b>RED</b> BCC response in <b>BLACK</b>	YES	NO	Don't know
1. Have you attended a presentation and /or reviewed the available information? ( <b>405 replies</b> ) (94 BCC replies)	<b>77%</b> 75.5%	<b>23%</b> 24.5%	<b>0%</b> 0%
2. Do you have a direct view of the Correen Hills from your property ( <b>402 replies</b> ) (94 replies)	<b>53%</b> 51%	<b>40%</b> 44%	<b>7%</b> 5%

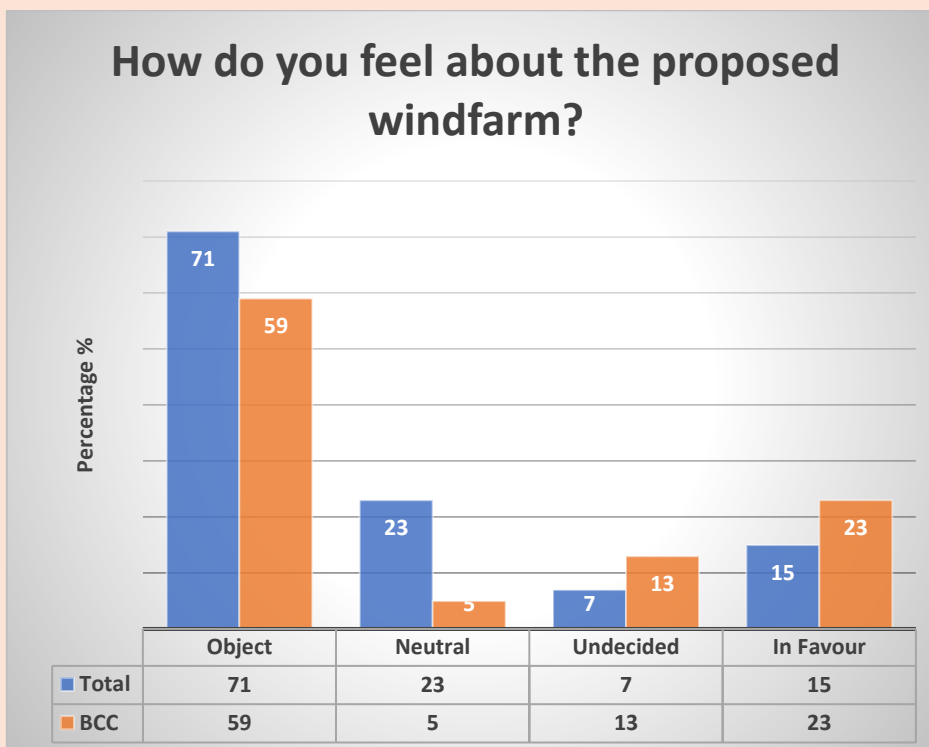
3. Can you share how you currently use the Correen Hills for recreation? ( <b>354 replies</b> ) (33 replies)			
Dog Walking	Walking	Cycling	Skiing
<b>50%</b> 51%	<b>83%</b> 68%	<b>27%</b> 22%	<b>9%</b> 10%

4. How do you feel about the proposed windfarm?			
Object	Neutral	Undecided	In Favour
<b>71%</b> 59%	<b>23%</b> 5%	<b>7%</b> 13%	<b>15%</b> 23%

Overall Response in <b>RED</b> BCC response in <b>BLACK</b>	YES	NO
5. Would you support the wind farm if it provided a Community Benefit Fund towards clearly identified community needs? ( <b>397 replies</b> ) (40 replies)	<b>29%</b> 40%	<b>71%</b> 60%
6. Have you had any experience with any other wind turbine developments? ( <b>402 replies</b> ) (40 replies)	<b>43%</b> 45%	<b>57%</b> 55%

7. How much of an impact do you feel the wind farm will have on you? ( <b>404 replies</b> ) (40 replies)				
A great deal of impact	A lot of impact	A moderate amount of impact	A Little impact	No impact at all
<b>40%</b> 19%	<b>20%</b> 20.5%	<b>16%</b> 18%	<b>10%</b> 20.5%	<b>14%</b> 22%

## How do you feel about the proposed windfarm?



Seventy one percent of the total respondents and 59% of those in the Bennachie Community Area said they objected to the windfarm.

### Summary of Comments

In terms of individual comment, there were observations around the following themes:

- Visual Impact, the size and scaring of the landscape
- Concerns about why here and not offshore and damage to the environment, including large use of concrete for bases and infrastructure to construct the turbines
- Fears of noise and the physical impact on the environment and wildlife
- Questions around the overall strategy for wind, whether we need the extra electrical capacity and previous evidence of little direct benefit to local energy use or pricing
- Some suggestions on where community benefit funding could be spent and clarified before any development goes ahead. There was a 60:40% split of BCC residents against the development even if there was a Community Benefit Fund.

### Where do we go from here?

- Dialogue continues to be open with the Consultants for the Developers and the three Community Councils.
- Force 9 / EDF intend to submit a Planning Application in March 2025 and the Community Councils will submit their formal comments in this process.
- We watch for other precedents on windfarm development and what the Planning Authorities and the Government are doing.
- Bennachie Community Council will use the information from the survey when submitting its comments for planning purposes.

Thank you for your feedback and when we know more, we will keep you informed.

Please look at the websites to find out more information about the proposals.

1. [Home - Force 9 Energy - Correen Hills \(correenhillswindfarm.co.uk\)](http://correenhillswindfarm.co.uk)
2. [CaShWIG - Home](http://CashWIG.org) (Correen and Suie Hills Windfarm Information Group - Cashwig.org)

# DUALLING OF A96 ROAD

Transport Scotland has published in draft for consultation the outcomes from the detailed appraisal carried out as part of the A96 Corridor Review. The feedback received from members of the public and key stakeholders will be key in helping inform the Scottish Government’s final decision on how best to take forward improvements to the A96 corridor whilst also balancing the demands of the challenging economic climate and the climate emergency, and will inform timescales going forward.

The consultation period will run for a period of 12 weeks from 28 November 2024 till Friday 21 February 2025. During this time, the Scottish Government is asking the public and other stakeholders to complete an online survey relating to the A96 corridor. This is to help it understand the views of local people, businesses and communities on the outcomes of the review, to what extent the outcomes address their travel priorities along the corridor and how the outcomes should be prioritised. Links to the Corridor Review material published on the Transport Scotland website and the A96 Corridor Review Project Pages have been provided for your information:

Transport Scotland A96 Corridor Review website – <https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/strategy/a96-corridor-review/>

A96 Corridor Review Project Pages - <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/46a76788ae2141ce8f52f7949baf0f19/page/Home/>

A link to fill in the feedback form regarding the corridor review is found here: - [Provide your Views | A96 Review StoryMap](#)

## INSCH LESLIE PREMNAY OYNE PARISH CHURCH



Greetings! My name is Ian Manson and I’m delighted to introduce myself as your new minister. I’ve recently moved from the beautiful village of Beaulay, near Inverness, and now I’m excited to become part of this community. I’ve been struck by the warmth and friendliness of everyone I’ve met so far. Getting settled into and new house and meeting new people always has its challenges, but your kindness has made me feel right at home. It is clear that this area has a rich history and a strong sense of community spirit. The stunning landscapes, the bustling local events, and the care people have for one another truly make this place special.

We should never take such things for granted. I’m sure you’ll be aware that these are ‘interesting times’ for churches, not only in Scotland but all round the western world. The speed of change has left us all looking a bit dated and irrelevant. Nonetheless I believe that the church can have a vibrant role at the heart of the community, not as a private club for people who like ‘that sort of thing’, but a place where everyone feels welcomed, valued, supported and encouraged. I hope that we can create a space for reflection and prayer, and that together we can celebrate the good times and support each other through the challenges. At this time of course, we’re approaching Christmas – you may have noticed! There will be plenty of opportunities to join in some of our seasonal Services, both in my own church and with our friends at St



**A96 Corridor Review**

Your views are essential in helping us shape the future of the A96 corridor.

We have listened to your feedback which has informed the Review and the draft outcomes are now available for you to see.

We now want to hear from the public and would urge anyone with an interest in the A96 Corridor to view the material and give us your views. The Scottish Government will then consider all the feedback received before deciding on the way ahead for the A96 Corridor.

The consultation starts on **28 November 2024** and closes at midnight on **21 February 2025**

More details on the A96 Corridor Review, including the consultation feedback form can be found at: [bit.ly/A96Review](https://bit.ly/A96Review) or scan the QR code to the right here.

For a paper copy of the feedback form phone 07432 112790.

Drostan's. We both offer Services over Midnight taking us into Christmas day, which is always a special time of peaceful reflection in the midst of such a busy period. If it doesn't suit you to be out so late, we are holding a traditional Family Christingle Service on the Sunday before Christmas, at 10.30.

Hopefully we can meet up in person at some point over the coming weeks and months, but in any case, I take the opportunity to wish you a peace filled and blessed Christmas.

Warm regards,  
Ian Manson

## Insch Mens Breakfast Club

Some of the men from Insch and surrounding area have been meeting on the first Saturday of the month for tea/coffee and a catch up. We meet from 8.30am to 9.30/10am for a chat, fellowship and food. We meet and alternate between Parish Church Hall and the Episcopal Church in Insch, Aberdeenshire. It is interdenominational, and the focus to support each other, and have a catch up. Put the world to rights.

Given the 1st Saturday in January lands before the schools are back, we decided the first catch up in 2025 will be on Saturday 10th January 2025, in Insch Parish Church Hall on Western Road.

Take some time out and refresh your spirit.  
Feel free to bring a friend with you.

It is free of charge, there will be the opportunity to provide a donation, which will go to a charity.

If interested email Tom Aitken [taitken2@gmail.com](mailto:taitken2@gmail.com) or Andrew Mackie, [jandamac109@gmail.com](mailto:jandamac109@gmail.com).

See our Facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2318970508286732/?ref=share>

## ST DROSTAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, INSCH



We gather for worship every Sunday at 10am and after the service we enjoy a hot drink and a fine piece.

Everyone is welcome to join our Sunday service and refreshments afterwards.

On the first Sunday of every month, we have an informal Family Service at 4pm in the church for all ages. We spend an hour exploring a Bible theme in fun ways and then finish by sharing a meal together. Everyone is warmly invited to join us.

Every Monday from 11.30am to 1.30pm we have our Community Café in the hall at the back of the church. Why not come and enjoy a soup lunch, a fine piece, a hot drink and a chance to enjoy chatting with others.

The new Church Hall at the back of St Drostan's is available for hire. We have a great kitchen, four toilets, a small meeting room and space in the garden that can be used. The church itself can also be hired for events. For more information on hiring the hall or any of our other activities please contact Alastair on 07513 400081 or [macinsch@gmail.com](mailto:macinsch@gmail.com)



## Bennachie Leisure Centre

### A Heartfelt Thank You from Bennachie Leisure Centre

As 2024 comes to a close, we want to take a moment to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the wonderful community that has supported Bennachie Leisure Centre throughout the year. Your kindness and generosity have been truly overwhelming, and we could not have achieved all that we did without your support.

From the donations and purchases in our charity shop to the inspiring health and wellbeing classes, from the warm atmosphere of our community café to the lively family events, and of course, our iconic Santa's Bothy, we are constantly reminded of how crucial the power of community is to our success. We are here for you and because of you and we are incredibly grateful for your continued involvement.

We would also like to express our heartfelt thanks to our dedicated staff and Trustees. Their hard work, team spirit and enthusiasm has been instrumental in helping us keep our doors open and we are extremely proud of them. Alongside our staff team, of course we could not do what we do without the unwavering support of our



volunteers and the care they bring to everything they do. We send all of them our sincere thanks too.

Looking ahead, we are excited for what 2025 holds. We're making plans to stabilise our finances and build a sustainable future for BLC, continuing to grow and evolve our services to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

Let's make it a fantastic year!

Please note our Christmas and New Year opening hours and of course don't forget about the New Year's Day Ceilidh – tickets are still on sale so don't miss out!

Thank you once again for being such an important part of the Bennachie Leisure Centre family. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

From all the team at Bennachie Leisure Centre

### BLC CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS

CLOSED 23<sup>rd</sup> December – 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2025

GYM ONLY OPEN - 3<sup>rd</sup> + 4<sup>th</sup> January

OPEN AS USUAL – 6<sup>th</sup> January



### JOG SCOTLAND INSCH

New Jog Scotland Insch Couch to 5K Beginners sessions start again on Monday 6th January 2025 at 6.30pm gathering at the Bennachie leisure Centre.

These usually last about 10 /12 weeks of super fun with our JSI leaders Diana and Charlie!

If you can happily walk briskly for 30 minutes and are over the age of 18 then come along and train to run. You won't regret it!

We also run a second Couch to 5k session on Thursdays, time to be confirmed, and a session on Mondays at 7.30pm for a 5K route and 5K plus alternating with speed sessions.

To find out more information or contact us, see our Insch Jog Scotland [Facebook](#) page.

We also have a walking group if you are interested.

OSCR  
BENNACHIE LEISURE CENTRE

New Year's Day  
**FAMILY FUN**

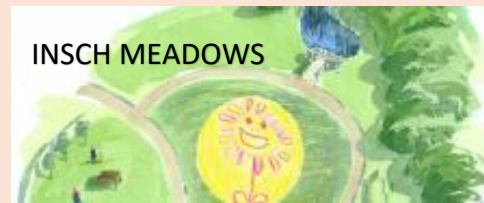
**Ceilidh**  
**01 JANUARY**  
**2025**

with **SHARON HASSAN,  
JONNY HARDIE & FRIENDS**

**RAFFLE PRIZES TO BE WON!**  
*Bring your own drinks and nibbles*

**TICKETS FROM BLC  
£8 CHILD / £15 ADULT**

7PM - 10PM / DOORS 6.30PM  
TICKETS ARE RESTRICTED AND  
MUST BE PURCHASED IN ADVANCE



INSCH MEADOWS

It's that time of year when everything slows down in the Meadows.

The Meadow has been cut and the Willow trees were coppiced. Even though this looks like a big change to the Willow trees they will quickly start to regrow.

One downfall of cutting back the willow trees is that the bird feeding station which was also a willow tree has gone. There are feeders in the trees behind the bird blind and we are working on getting a feeding station for the birds. We would like to thank Norvite for providing the bird seed for the feeders. They have done this since 2009 and we are extremely grateful to them for this as well as the volunteers who fill up the feeders.



### Club Diary Events:

19 January 2025 1300-1400 – Track session at the Chris Hoy Velodrome Glasgow

27 April – Etape Loch Ness; not strictly a club event but we usually have quite a large contingent taking part in this our most local sportive.

6 September 2025 - club audaxes with an updated 200km option

### Other News/Non-Club Events for your diary

A listing of up-to-date events is available on the club calendar on the website

Rapha 500 – This annual challenge is to ride 500km between Xmas Eve and Hogmanay – log it on Strava, if there is enough interest we could do a club challenge over the festive period.

11/12 January 2025 it is the annual challenge more commonly known as Strathpuffer. Entries are now open.

### Bennachie Leisure Centre Spinning Classes

For those of you without Turbo/Smart trainer options for keeping fit over the winter or for those who prefer a different social indoor cycling experience, BLC runs Spinning classes 6 days a week:

Monday	09:15
Tuesday	17:30 and 18:15
Wednesday	17:30
Thursday	18:00
Friday	09:15
Saturday	10:00

It is always advisable to book on to these sessions as they are very popular, and spaces are limited. Class prices are £6 for pay as you go and £5 if you are a concession, however if you are a member at BLC you get the classes as part of your membership package. There is also a pay for 9 classes and get 1 free option too. As a side note BLC also runs a circuit class on a Thursday evening at 7pm that is specifically aimed at runners and cyclists, so you can build on strength and endurance over the winter month. See poster across the page.

### Routine Rides see Website for more details

Sunday – Now on winter timings departing from BLC at 0845/0900.

The Returners Sunday – Departing BLC at 0900

Tuesday – Departing BLC at 1900

Wednesday - Departing BLC at 1930

Thursday - Rides will re-start in the spring of 2025

### Club Communications:

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/InschCC>

The Club Website has a lot of useful info - <https://inschcyclingclub.wordpress.com/>

If you have any questions email [Inschcc@gmail.com](mailto:Inschcc@gmail.com)

**SPINNING CLASSES**  
**6 Days a week**  
Book your place at reception

Mondays at 9:15am  
Tuesdays at 5:30pm & 6:15pm  
Wednesdays at 5:30pm  
Thursdays at 6:00pm  
Fridays at 9:15am  
Saturdays at 10am

BENNACHIE LEISURE CENTRE

OSCR  
Scottish Charity Regulator  
www.oscr.org.uk  
Registered SC17  
SC023000

All of our spin classes are suitable for beginners and advanced riders.

**LEITH HALL  
GARDEN & ESTATE**

Henrietta's tearoom will reopen on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2025.

The Tearoom is open Saturdays and Sundays, 10:30 - 3:30 in January, February and March. See below for special tours and openings. The Hall will reopen for the season on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> of April.

The Garden and Grounds are open every day. Please check the website for up-to-date information. Or view our weekly specials via the Leith Hall Facebook page.



Booking for afternoon tea is essential, check out the QR code or the link below.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/leith-hall-garden-amp-estate-33806233645>

## 2025 Events

### February

14 / 15 / 16 - Galentines / Valentines Weekend afternoon tea

Treat a special person in your life this February to our delicious afternoon tea in Henrietta's Tearoom.

### March

8 / 9 - International Women's Day Tour and afternoon tea

Join us for a fascinating tour into the lives of the women who lived at Leith Hall, afternoon tea included. Or simply enjoy one of our delicious afternoon teas with the fascinating women in your life!

15 / 16 & 22 / 23 - National Lottery Open Week - We are opening for both weekends of NLOW after a great attendance last year. Entry is by guided tour. Tours take start at the following times, 10:30 - 11:30 - 12:30 - 1:30 - 2:30 - 3:30. The tearoom will be open from 10:30 - 3:30.

*Between Saturday 15th March and Sunday 23rd March 2025, any person bearing a National Lottery ticket or scratch card will be granted free parking and entry to participating National Trust for Scotland properties that are open to visitors either for the entire period or fixed days within.*

29 / 30 - Mother's Day afternoon tea and Ladies of Leith Hall Tour

To celebrate this special day why not join us for a fascinating tour into the lives of the women who lived at Leith Hall, afternoon tea included. Or simply take your mother / other out for one of our delicious afternoon teas!



**Hapy New Year to everyone in our wonderful community!**

We hope you enjoyed the festive season and the Christmas lights we provided, which shone brightly throughout the village. It was heartwarming to see how much they added to the festive cheer, and we're proud to commit to supporting this initiative in the years ahead.



We're excited to share some updates about the Cycling Without Age scheme. The tri-shaws have been approved, and we've had a fantastic response from volunteers signing up to train as pilots. Additionally, we're thrilled to have secured a grant to help cover the cost of the first tri-shaw. This initiative will bring so much joy to the community, and we welcome anyone who would like to join the committee or assist with admin to get in touch.

On the hospital front, while there are no significant new developments, we continue to work tirelessly behind the scenes. Campaigning and lobbying NHS Grampian, the Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership, and local politicians remain our priorities, especially with the ongoing pressures on healthcare services making headlines. Rest assured, we're doing all we can to keep the needs of our community front and center.

Looking ahead, we are thrilled to announce that the next Strawberry Fair will take place on Sunday, 8th June 2025. Save the date—we can't wait to welcome everyone to what promises to be another fantastic event.

Thank you for your continued support, and we wish you all a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2025.

## Friends Of Rayne Kirk



Friends of Rayne Kirk (FORK) is a newly registered Scottish charity created in response to the Church of Scotland's proposed closure of the parish church of Culsalmond and Rayne.

This church in Kirkton of Rayne is a beautiful and historic building which can trace worship on the same site through the millennia since Christianity came to Scotland. FORK's initial aim is to acquire the building so that it can continue to be an important focus for our rural population. This new community hub would be a wonderful space for arts and culture; celebrations and meetings; young and old.

FORK held 3 successful community engagement meetings in November at the village halls of Logie Durno, Wartle and Old Rayne and our membership is growing. As well as your enthusiasm and ideas, we are looking for help with the whole range of skills needed to make this fly – buildings assessment and planning, legal skills, fundraising; roofing, plumbing, windows expertise etc will follow at a later phase. Please join us!

For more information please visit our facebook page, Friends of Rayne Kirk (FORK) or email [friendsofraynekirke@outlook.com](mailto:friendsofraynekirke@outlook.com)



A new year, a new you? Connect with nature and become an active part of Bennachie. Membership of the Bailies of Bennachie is £25. This fee goes to supporting our work and projects on the hill. These include Wildlife, Environment, Archaeology, Path Maintenance and Volunteering. See our website for news, dates of 2025 events and the shop to join us as a member <https://www.bailiesofbennachie.co.uk> . Any queries may be directed to [info@bailiesofbennachie.co.uk](mailto:info@bailiesofbennachie.co.uk)

GREAT NEWS: The Bailies of Bennachie has been awarded The King's Award for Voluntary Service on the awards list announced on 14th November. This award is the highest a local voluntary group can receive in the UK and is the equivalent to an MBE. Chair Peter Stock says, "This is a huge honour for the Bailies of Bennachie, and I want to acknowledge the founders, current and past Trustees and especially the volunteers and members who have worked in so many diverse capacities over the past 51 years to achieve this outstanding award. This is a legacy that we can be very proud of and hand over to the next generation as we strive to be "The Voice for the Hill". Being recognised with this award is such a boost for the Bailies."



While there aren't many volunteer events over the next couple months we will not be resting, as planning and preparation for 2025 events progresses. In the meantime, we wish everyone a Merry Christmas and wish you all the best for 2025, when we may see you on the hill.





Wartle  
Community  
Association

## WARTLE VILLAGE HALL

Wartle Hall, the village hall in Meikle Wartle, is located on the left hand side of the road as you enter the village from the Drum Filling Station. The main hall is 10m x 5m internally with audio visual equipment, including a screen for projections. There is a well equipped kitchen and bar area and a good sized external patio.

The hall is available for hire for private parties, meetings, events, etc. at a cost of £15/hr.

Enquiries can be made to [wcahallbookings@gmail.com](mailto:wcahallbookings@gmail.com)

Here is a list of upcoming events

- 17 th Jan 2025 Friday 7pm Bingo – to be confirmed
- 1 st Feb 2025 Saturday 10am Coffee Morning & Puzzle Exchange
- 14 th Mar 2025 Friday 7pm Quiz Night – BYOB
- 3 rd May 2025 Saturday 10am Coffee Morning & Plant Sale
- 21 st Jun 2025 Saturday 3pm Mid-Summer Topsy Tea Party

We're looking forward to changing our window display and showing you all lots of lovely new handmade gift ideas.

Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas and New Year, Becky and Hayley X



**Scottish Ambulance Service**  
**INVERURIE FIRST RESPONDERS**



@ the heart of your community

Inverurie First Responders are volunteers who for over twenty years have been supporting the areas of Garioch, Formartine & Marr along with Aberdeen City in times of need providing lifesaving intervention. They will respond to a call whilst an ambulance is on its way.

Below is a breakdown of the areas they responded to in 2024. The six most frequent areas they went too were:- Inverurie 43%, Aberdeen 15%, Kintore 15%, Kemnay 5%, Oldmeldrum 5% and Inch 4%.

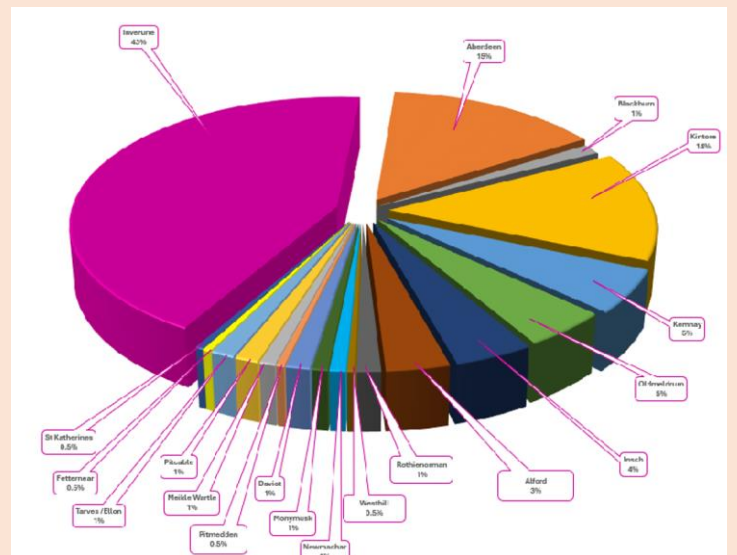


## Winter at The Studio!

It's been a wonderfully busy festive season for us at the studio. Thank you so much for your continuing support. The Christmas shopping evening was a great event and it was lovely to see so many people enjoying themselves and choosing to shop local.

During January and February our opening hours will change a bit as we recover from the craziness of running small businesses over Christmas time. We'll keep you updated through Facebook and Instagram and will pop a notice on the door too.

We already have a few creative workshops planned, so if you fancy hearing about them first why not join our email list? Email us at [thestudioinsch@gmail.com](mailto:thestudioinsch@gmail.com) and we will add you to it.



These volunteers do an amazing job. Congratulations to Jim Brand and Alan Milne who were presented with the King’s Coronation medal. Jim Brand and Alan Milne are both Community First Responders and Sas wildcat cardiac responders. They received their medals from Duncan McNeill of the Scottish Ambulance Service community resilience team.

See their [Facebook](#) page for more information.

Our golfers are still out on the course weather permitting we just have to hope there is not too much snow coming our way in the New Year. December is always a busy month in the club with lots of groups and families getting together for a festive meal, it is great to see so many people using our facilities which is why we have won the Scottish Enterprise award for most hospitable golf club for the second year running. If you wish to become a social member, please contact us on 01464 820363 or email [administrator@inschgolfclub.co.uk](mailto:administrator@inschgolfclub.co.uk)



Our Bingo sessions commence again on Friday 17th January and every second Friday after that. We are holding our annual Topsy Tea Party on Saturday 15th March tickets go on sale in January keep your eye out as tickets usually sell out in less than an hour.

## TALL SHIP RACES 2025 19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> July

The Tall Ships Races is Europe’s largest Family Free Event and is calling in at Aberdeen for the first time since 1997. The Tall Ships Races are organised annually by Sail Training International. Ships from around the world gather to participate in competitive races, and to share and enjoy the ensuing shoreside festivities and celebrations. These events are youth-focused and bring a huge spectacle to the ports they call at.

Do you want to do something different? If you are 15-25 and live in the AB postcode area why not apply be a Sail trainee. You could join the trainee crew from 10 - 21 July to sail from Dunkirk, France to Aberdeen or from 21 July - 2 August to sail from Aberdeen to Kristiansand, Norway.

## LOCAL GROUPS IN THE AREA

DAY	WHEN	WHERE
<b>MONDAY</b>		
Community Café See St Drostan’s Facebook page	11.30am to 1.30pm	St Drostan’s, Episcopal Church, Commerce Street, Insch, AB52 6JB

No prior sailing experience is required and the opportunity is designed to be inclusive, diverse and accessible. There are at least 100 funded places available, as well as the option of self-funding.

**BORED OF THE USUAL?**

**THE TALL SHIPS RACES Aberdeen 2025**  
organised by Sail Training International

**Sign up for THE adventure of a lifetime with The Tall Ships Races Aberdeen 2025**

Apply today for your chance to sail on a Tall Ship in July 2025, from Dunkirk to Aberdeen or Aberdeen to Kristiansand. This is an amazing opportunity and it's open to ALL 15-25 year olds living in an AB postcode. You don't need any sailing experience and funding support is available.

**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT BECOMING A SAIL TRAINEE**

Applications close January 2025.

**HOST PARTNERS**

PORT OF ABERDEEN  
ABERDEEN inspired  
ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

**TALLSHIPSABERDEEN.COM**  
Follow us on socials @tallshipsaberdeen

There are also volunteering opportunities for the Tall Ships if you are over 16 on the 1<sup>st</sup> July.

Applications are now open and there are a wide variety of volunteer roles to apply for with no experience needed:

- Ship Liaison Officer;
- Visitor Experience Host
- Event Operations
- Shoreside Crew
- Hospitality Host
- Transport Coordinator
- Media Assistant
- Volunteer Centre Coordinator
- Trainee Crew Services Assistant

**Applications close on 31<sup>st</sup> January.**

See [Get Involved | Tall Ships Aberdeen](#)

Craft Classes - beading, embroidery etc	11am to 2pm	Insch Institute, Rannes Street. Ann 07742 330717
Adult Badminton	11.15 to 13.00pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Tai Chi - Intermediate 12-1, Beginners 1-2pm	12-1pm and 1-2pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Grampian Cardiac Rehabilitation Group	14:30 to 15:30pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Satori Martial Arts – All ages	From 6:30pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Insch Tennis Club (see Insch Tennis Club Facebook page)	3 – 5pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Margot Cairns Pilates See Facebook page for details	6 -7pm and 7.15 – 8.15pm	Premnay Village Hall, Auchleven
Jog Scotland Insch Beginners and Intermediates-See Facebook page	6.30pm Beginners 7.30pm Intermediate	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Outdoor Bowling- April – September	6.50 for 7pm	Insch Bowling Club, Rannes Street Insch behind the Library, AB52 6JJ
Jazzercise	7pm	Oyne Village Hall, Onye
Bible Study Group 7pm to 8pm except holidays	7pm to 8pm	Small Church Hall, Western Road, AB52 6JR
Bennachie Community Council Meetings The Fourth Monday in the month except for July and December	7pm – 9pm	St Drostan’s Church, Commerce Street, AB52 6JB
Adults Football	20:30 – 21:30 pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
<b>TUESDAY</b>		
Painting for Leisure	10.30am to 12.30	The Institute, Rannes Street, Insch, AB52 6JJ contact Jill on 01464 820199
Insch Library	3pm to 5pm	Insch Library, The Institute, Rannes Street, Insch, AB52 6JJ
The Fun and Friendship Group Meets fortnightly every Second Tuesday	2pm to 4pm	Insch Church Hall, Western Road, AB52 6JR
Whist Group	2 – 3.30pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Insch Trail Running Club	7pm	See Insch Trail Running Facebook page
Box N Fit	7pm	Insch Institute, Rannes Street, Insch, AB52 6JJ
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>		
Sole mates Walking Group	10:00 – 11:00	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Zumba	10am	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Walking Rugby 18yrs to 80yrs	11:00 – 12:00	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Margot Cairns Pilates See Facebook page for details	9.15 -10.15am, 10.30-11.30am and 11.45 to 12;45	Insch Church Hall, Western Road, AB52 6JR
Insch Community Choir	6.30 for 7pm	St Drostan’s Church Hall, Insch, Commerce Street,
Junior Golf (spring and autumn)	6 to 7pm	Insch Golf Club, Golf Terrace, Insch, AB52 6JY
Jazzercise	7pm	Oyne Village Hall, Onye
Scottish Women’s Institute Largie- every 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month	7.30 pm	St Drostan’s Church Hall, Insch, Commerce Street, AB52 6JB
Scottish Women’s Institute Premnay - every 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month	7.30 pm	Premnay Village Hall, Premnay
Every few weeks see Craft Nights Logie Durno Facebook page for timings	6 pm to 9pm	Logie Durno Village Hall, AB51 5EB
<b>THURSDAY</b>		
Zumba	11am	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Brenda Gordon School of Dance	Thursday afternoon see Facebook page	Insch Church Hall, Western Road, AB52 6JR
Indoor Short mat Bowling- 2 <sup>nd</sup> October to March	6.50 for 7pm	Insch Bowling Club, Rannes Street Insch behind the Library, AB52 6JJ
Adult Beginners Tennis	6 to 7pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
BLC Book Club – Last Thursday of the month	7.30pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Yarn n Yarn. Knitting and Crochet group. First and Third Thursday of the month	7pm to 9pm	St Drostan’s, Episcopal Church, Commerce Street, Insch, AB52 6JB

Scottish Country Dancing - new members and beginners welcome. Starts 14 <sup>th</sup> Sept	8pm to 9.30pm	Insch Church Hall, Western Road, AB52 6JR contact Margaret 01464 821384 or Pam 01464 821304
Adults Netball	8 – 9 pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Line Dancing with Stella	11 – 12noon	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Aikido Ten Shin Kan	7 to 9pm	Premnay Village Hall, Auchleven
Jog Scotland Insch -See Facebook page	6pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Box N Fit	7pm	Insch Institute, Rannes Street, Insch, AB52 6JJ
Yoga	6.30pm to 7.30pm	Oyne Village Hall, Oyne
<b>FRIDAY</b>		
Flex and Stretch	11am	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Adult Beginners Tennis	12 to 1pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Tai Chi - Intermediate 12-1, Beginners 1-2pm	12-1pm and 1-2pm	Bennachie Leisure Centre, Largie Road, AB52 6LT
Insch Library	2pm to 5pm	Insch Library, The Institute, Rannes Street, Insch,
Bookworms- Insch Library Book Group monthly on a Friday	4.30pm	Insch Library, The Institute, Rannes Street, Insch, AB52 6JJ
Scottish Dance Last Friday in the month	2pm to 4pm	Insch Parish Church Hall, Western Road, AB52 6JR
Tea Dance every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday in the month	2pm to 4pm	Insch Parish Church Hall, Western Road, AB52 6JR
Outdoor Bowling- April – September	6.50 for 7pm	Insch Bowling Club, Rannes Street Insch behind the Library, AB52 6JJ
Bingo every second week starting 17 <sup>th</sup> January for members	8pm	Insch Golf Club, Golf Terrace, Insch
<b>SATURDAY</b>		
Reel Club (Scottish Dancing)	7 <sup>th</sup> Oct, 11 <sup>th</sup> Nov, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec and 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec for St Andrews Ball	Oyne Village Hall, Oyne
Men's Breakfast Club	From 8.30am to 9.30/10am	Alternates monthly between Insch Parish Church and St Drostan's Episcopal Church Insch
<b>SUNDAY</b>		
St Drostan's Episcopal Church	Service starts at 10 am see Facebook page for other services	St Drostan's Episcopal Church, Commerce Street, Insch
Insch, Leslie, Premnay, Oyne Parish Presbyterian Church	Service starts at 10.30 am see Facebook page for other services	Insch Parish Church, Western Road, Insch, AB52 6JR
Insch Cycling Club	Tuesdays, Wednesday, Thursday and Sundays	See Insch Cycling Club Facebook page
Insch Walking Group, Members of Grampian 50+ Network	Meet every Alternative Sunday at 9.30am	walk 5-6 miles within 30 miles of Insch, contact Morris on 07824 618369.
Insch Connection Museum	May to October 29 <sup>th</sup> 2 – 4 pm	Railway Station, North Road, Insch
Insch Ceilidh Club – See Facebook page for dates. Last full week of the month on Sunday	Family Club 2pm	Insch Parish Church Hall, Western Road, Insch, AB52 6JR

#### Contacts details for children's groups

Bennachie Leisure Centre, [Bennachie Leisure Centre \(blcinsch.scot\)](http://blcinsch.scot) ; Guiding – [Bennachiedc@gmail.com](mailto:Bennachiedc@gmail.com)

Scouting -[insch@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk](mailto:insch@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk) or [pitcable@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk](mailto:pitcable@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk)

Insch District Football club also have a Facebook page.

There is a Kennethmont Toddlers Group, Chapel Toddlers Group (0 to 5 years) and Inschy Winchy Spiders Baby Group up to 2yr olds – Contact details can be found on their Facebook pages. Old Rayne has a 2's Group on Tuesday and Wednesday's. Tiny talk Aberdeenshire Rural is on a Friday morning in Insch which teaches BSL. Abribeats and Playtheme at The Bennachie Leisure Centre. See all of their Facebook pages for more details.

Running Groups – Jog Scotland meet on Monday (6.30 and 7.30pm) and Thursdays 6pm at Bennachie Leisure Centre.

For information about Insch Trail Running Club see their website [Committee & Membership – INSCH TRAIL RUNNING CLUB](#)