

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS NEWSLETTER

July 2021 Issue Number: 24



OUR COMMUNITY, OUR FUTURE? YOU DECIDE!

The draft Community Action Plan is now ready for you to check and comment on. It's exciting and engaging - but it's not yet a fix!

This is an important moment. Since the Action Plan will set our community's future agenda, we need to encourage everyone in the local community to check it out and tell us what they think:

Does it match the challenges and aspirations expressed in the community survey results from February and March? Which parts of the plan do local folk support and maybe like to be involved with? Any other suggestions?

So, what can you personally do to help?

Our three big 'asks' of each Trust member, and the whole community, are:

1. Encourage everyone you know locally - family, friends, colleagues - to check out the draft plan on www.communityfuture.net. Share the link on social media, get your kids to do it over breakfast... whatever works for you!
2. If you know someone who's not online, help them to check out the draft plan. Why not pop round to their house with your phone, tablet or laptop and go through it together? If they'd prefer a paper copy or would like to speak to someone about it, please contact Nick Wright from the Community Action Planning team (07900 334110, nick@nickwrightplanning.co.uk).
3. Don't forget to check out the draft plan yourself! Go to www.communityfuture.net and say what you think about the draft Plan. Go on, do it now!

Want to find out more? Come along to the Summer Gala and Community Market on Saturday 24th July. Nick Wright from the Community Action Plan team will be there with a stall. Or you can contact Nick direct on 07900 334110 / nick@nickwrightplanning.co.uk.

What comes next? After around 4 weeks we'll close the consultation, share the results (anonymously of course) and prepare the final Community Action Plan. COVID rules permitting, we're hoping to organise a face-to-face event to share and celebrate the fruits of everyone's hard work. We'll keep you posted!

Nick Wright,
Community Action Plan Lead Facilitator

OUR COMMUNITY OUR FUTURE
ERIDGE - FOYERS - CORTHECK - INVERARIGAIG - TORNESS - WHITEBRIDGE

**DRAFT
COMMUNITY
ACTION PLAN
NOW LIVE!**

HAVE YOUR FINAL SAY!  HURRY DON'T MISS OUT!

communityfuture.net



MAKING THE MOST OF THE SUNSHINE!

It's the summer holidays! We have been busy enjoying the sunshine in our garden and getting exciting about the upcoming Gala day at the Wildside Centre. Preparations are well under way to make it an amazing event and we have been adding the finishing touches to our miniature garden ready to enter the kid's competition and practising our best moves for the kids disco. It's shaping up to be a great community day, with lots of our local groups taking part and hosting a stall – we hope to see you all there.

A few weeks ago I attended the FIRA BBQ at Wildside. This was an opportunity for Nick Wright to speak to local young people and get their views to the CAP, but also a great chance to get together for a chat and some food. It was lovely to see the kids playing together and Nick captured some excellent ideas to include in the action plan.

Thank you to all the people who organised this event and came along to help make it a success. Hopefully we can get together again soon.

Last week we had an exciting event at our Baby and Toddler group. We booked Messy Ness to host an outdoor sensory play session for us and everyone had a great time. There were different play stations dotted around the lawn and the kids loved getting involved with their messy play. Because it's the summer holidays we have booked a few Saturdays, so come along and join us if you can. We are hopefully going to be doing a lot more outdoor activities now that the weather is warm and the grass area is ready to use. We have been discussing how our group would like to see the grounds around Wildside develop as it's the perfect facility to shape according to our local groups wants and needs. If you would like to join the Wildside Steering Group please get in touch or send us an idea. We will also give you the opportunity at the Gala day to jot your ideas down on paper to be included in the future plans of Wildside.

Kirsty Balfour
Chair, SFCT

BOARD REPORT

Thank goodness for extra time! The Trust Board met early July and continued until the last ten minutes of full time in the England v Denmark game. It covered everything from the Community Action Plan, Grants, Housing, Budgets, Communications, Mini Galas, Wildside Developments, Ongoing Projects, Asset Ownership and equipment purchases. At the end we felt we had gone a full ninety minutes, half time team talk, extra time and a penalty shoot-out! And I thought it might be quieter during the summer months.

Each month we also do a report for the Community Council and update about the work of the Trust. It was a very interesting meeting with windfarm discussions, grant submissions and a robust and frank debate on the planning process.

As promised the results of the Riverside Field Survey are out and we sent them to the Community Council for information. Details here - <https://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/projects/Riverside-Field-Foyers/> - with a report featuring all 160

comments on the project. This has been sent to Directors of the Trust, the Community Council, the Community Steering Group for Riverside, Planning and shared online with the local community (and below now in print)

The Trust facilitated this survey. The methodology and survey sample size are robust and represents a picture of what the community think of the project. Your community voice and invaluable comments (for and against) will help guide how this project develops. The results can help you realise the conflicting messages we hear in several forums when developing a project and how we aim to come to a balanced view on moving forward. We hope those on the Community Steering Group will help guide Trust Directors through any conditions that may come through the consultative planning process. This ongoing dialogue will hopefully lead to a consensus that meets the aspirations of the community with a sensible approach to the environment in which we live.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the recent Riverside

Field Survey. 73 people expressed their views, which is a healthy sample to accurately reflect the current community view on the Riverside Field Development.

There was 82.19% support for Sports and Recreational facilities across the area.

There was 58.90% support for the location at Riverside Field.

SCFT said in this report we would pull out the thoughts of nearby residents to Riverside Field.

Of those closest to Riverside Field:

- 13 people are against the proposal
- 9 people are for the proposal.

There is a break down of comments for their reasoning for or against in the report at the earlier survey result link.

15 people expressed an interest in being part of the Riverside Field Community Steering Group. Thanks for volunteering your time.

Tony Foster
Trust Manager



PROMOTING LOCAL WALKS!

As part of the work on the Community Action Plan, one of the tasks highlighted is to draw far more attention to the vast number of options on our doorstep for walking, cycling, horse-riding and even skiing in the winter! Once the results of the Community Action Plan are out, work can begin on some of the points suggested. In the meantime, the Trust has put together a few suggestions of local paths and tracks for this newsletter, and we will be working with a number of stakeholders going forward to produce a page on the Trust Community website dedicated to walks and cycle routes in our area. Please contact me at pc@sfctrust.org.uk if you would like to help with this.

The first resource we would like to highlight is the South Loch Ness Access Map (pictured). This was originally put together 5 years ago and updated in 2018 to highlight some of the tracks and paths available throughout the wider South Loch Ness area. More information can be found here - www.southlochnessaccess.org.uk/, and printed copies are available from Wildside. Listed on this map are a number of more challenging routes. Below we have included some suggestions for all abilities:



Easy:

- Whitebridge to Upper Foyers via Dell (part of the South Loch Ness Trail)
- 'The Vennel' – Foyers Fire Station to Foyers via Fairyburn
- Whitebridge Plantation forestry tracks – options available for all abilities and cyclists

Medium:

- Farigaig Woods - <https://forestryandland.gov.scot/visit/farigaig>
- The Fair Haired Lads Pass, Torness (this forms part of the South Loch Ness Trail & Trail of the 7 Lochs)

Challenging:

- Trail of the 7 Lochs
- South Loch Ness Trail - <https://www.explore-inverness.com/listing/activities/outdoor-activities/south-loch-ness-walk-cycle-trail/>
- For cyclists, this link might be helpful - <https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/recreation/article/rec20110819-recreation-Routes--South-Loch-Ness-Trail-0>

Another useful link for routes around the wider Loch Ness area is the Walk Highlands website - <https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/lochness/lochness.shtml>

Caroline Tucker
Project Co-ordinator, SFCT



BUSY TIMES FOR BOLESKINE COMMUNITY CARE

In March of this year 2021, Boleskine Community Care entered into a new partnership with Highland Hospices' 'Sunflower Home Care'. This has promoted better terms and conditions for our carers and a very welcomed increase in their hourly rate.

The carers were involved in choosing their new smart uniforms and are very proud to display the Boleskine logo along with Sunflower Home Care.

Our community members who require care continue to receive self-directed support (SDS) option 2 and this will continue to be offered as an option if they so choose.

BCC continues to support the Care at Home service and will ensure our carers feel valued within our community. Ongoing talks with SFCT and others for grant funding is essential to ensure that current carers are retained and the role attracts new applicants.

Covid has restricted a lot of services being developed due to the space available at the BCC hub, however we are hoping to get more activities up and running using the Wildside Centre temporarily if space is available.

Our very popular foot care service was the first to restart at the hub following reduced covid restrictions. We now have a medical reclining chair suitable to provide many other health services too. The chair was purchased through a grant funded by 'Age Scotland.'

A future service operating mid-July is 'Holistic Therapies and Massage' which will appeal to a mix of age groups.

ACTIVITIES

Our volunteer led activities currently are

- Moovin about and 'Strength and Balance', held at Wildside Centre fortnightly from 1-2pm. Tuesdays, 3rd, 17th & 31st Aug
- Also the 'Coffee Morning' at the hub is held monthly 10-12. The next one is Wednesday 11th August.
- The hub walks, a well-established activity is next planned for Tuesday 10th August 6th July 2-3 at and around the hub in Lower Foyers.
- The Art group will run the first Monday of the month 2-4pm. Donations of paint 'stuff' is welcomed. The next session will be Monday 2nd August, with Susan Faller.
- A gardening group is to be established. BCC received funding from Arnold Clark. BCC is looking for anyone interested in gardening to run this group. We would like to make this group inter-generational, bringing all age groups together to share their knowledge and experience and to have fun.
- The Befriending service – 'BCC Helping Hands', provided in partnership with Highland Hospice, has recently started. Main aim is to engage with those in our community who may be feeling lonely, low of mood or isolated. Referrals can be made. More volunteers are needed to join this small team.

- Community Transport Scheme – grant funded by Highland Council has continued to run by volunteers throughout the pandemic although in a very much reduced capacity. Many of the drivers were of an age that they had to isolate and some feel that they no longer wish to volunteer anymore. BCC has a few core volunteers who continue to collect prescriptions, (delivered food boxes during restrictions) and now deliver 'Soup to Go'. Some community members use the transport to attend events and activities. The scheme continues to transport for GP and hospital appointments where public transport is not available or not suitable to needs of individuals. If you would like to use this service please contact 07944228830.

Refreshments are served after all volunteer led activities held at the hub and provides a chance for a chat and catch up. There is no charge but a small donation to BCC is always welcome.

Some sad news I'm afraid. BCC is sorry to lose our Support and Development Officer (SDO) Jayne Brinkworth who regrettably has decided to move on. Jayne started with BCC at the beginning of the pandemic and despite the restrictions has carefully managed the refurbishment of the hub making it a brighter more attractive environment. Jayne has used her short time with BCC most effectively and we thank her very much for her passion and enthusiasm during this time, wishing her all the best for the future.

We will be looking for a replacement in due course. However, in the meantime, and this has been in the pipeline for some time, BCC is advertising for a part time Business Admin position. If anyone is interested the details are below.

Kit Cameron
Chair of BCC Trustees

BOLESKINE COMMUNITY CARE VACANCY – BUSINESS ADMIN

Monday – Friday 3½ Hours per day
Approx. 10am – 1.30pm (flexible)
Salary £21,000 - £25,000 (pro rata)



Boleskine Community Care is seeking a self-motivated person to run the day-to-day functions of their Office at the Hub, Lower Foyers.

The successful candidate will have genuine interest in the Stratherrick & Foyers community as well as a balance of secretarial (I.T.) and general administrative abilities. Personal qualities being more important than work experience in the Care Sector.

This position is part-time and could suit a person with other daily commitments in early mornings/afternoons. Own transport and driving licence are essential.

For further information, including the Job Description and Application Form, please visit www.boleskinecc.com or contact Kit Cameron by email at chair@boleskinecc.com

Closing Date for Applications – end July 2021
Interviews are scheduled – 14th August 2021

ERROGIE CHURCH UPDATE

We are pleased to let you know that the Errogie Church project has made good progress over the last few weeks. Caroline, our new Trust Project Co-ordinator, along with our Community Liaison officer, Steven, have been busy moving the planning process along. The recent developments are:

- An accurate 3D model of the building has been made. This will be incredibly useful during the design stage when the architects will be able to provide a virtual walk-through of their proposed design.
- Structural engineers have conducted a detailed survey of the fabric of the building, confirming the initial finding that the structure is fundamentally sound. There was a question mark over the timbers in the roof. Closer inspection shows that the trusses will need to be strengthened.
- A detailed costing of the repairs has been prepared by surveyors and a budget approved by the Trust Board.
- The architects are now preparing the tender documents and will shortly issue them to several construction companies.
- The architects have been notified about the local building firms who will be interested in working on the building.
- The process of finding match funding for the main build has started and Highland Council is supporting the search for grants.
- We have conducted a search of architects who are interested in handling the main build (the transformation of the building into a multi-use centre) and Tender documents have been prepared and sent - with a one-month deadline to get back with their conceptual ideas and costs.
- The grounds of the church are now being maintained.

We hope that essential repairs will start in the Autumn. However, there is currently huge demand on building companies and also a shortage of materials which may have an impact on when work will start. The expectation is that we will have the main architect appointed by then so that they can input into the specification of the essential repairs required at this stage.

As you will be aware, a lot of time recently has been invested into the development of the Community Action Plan, and conversations surrounding this have included the role the Errogie Church building, plus the other properties in the ownership/control of the Trust, will play in providing a wide range of amenities in the future.

We are working towards a Steering Group meeting, hopefully at the church, in the near future. The main focus of this is to get into more detail about how the community would like to use the building, feeding in from the survey conducted last year. These results will be discussed with the Architects to help focus their design proposals.



We are also pleased that the Heritage Group has made an inventory of the artifacts in the church that are of historical value. This included pewter altar chalices and plates and, out of a pile of what looked like scrap wood, they found a portable pulpit, which was featured in May's newsletter. We hope a display for these items can be incorporated into the design for our new community hub.

If you have any questions regarding this project, or would like to get involved, please get in touch with Gareth or Lorraine.

Gareth Jones
Vice Chair, SFCT



NEW SEASONAL ACCESS RANGER TEAM FOR SOUTH LOCH NESS

The Highland Council's new Seasonal Access Rangers are now active throughout the Highlands, with a team covering the South Loch Ness area. The Rangers will patrol sites and engage with visitors to promote and raise awareness of the Outdoor Access Code, monitoring use and reporting incidents to the relevant Council teams or emergency services if required. A particular focus of their work will be centred on responsible camping and promoting the 'no fires' message.

The rangers will also carry out duties to keep tidy, maintain and manage countryside areas and core paths. They are keen to work and build relationships with communities and land managers on other sites to protect the habitats and encourage respect for the landscape. Where possible, the rangers will work with local volunteers to engage with visitors.

The Senior Access Ranger for this area is Tim Francis, who can be contacted by telephoning 07909 051223 or by email at accessrangers@highland.gov.uk. Please also visit and like the Highland Council Access Ranger Facebook page, where you will find advice and regular updates of their work. www.facebook.com/thcaccessrangers

Caroline Tucker
Project Co-ordinator, SFCT



OBITUARIES



Sadie Chisholm, 1925-2021

A much loved and long time resident of the Strath sadly died on the 7th May. She died peacefully at her daughters home in Buckie. Her funeral took place on the 18th May in Greyfriars Free Church in Inverness followed by her burial at Boleskine. An appreciation for her long life will be published in the winter edition of the Strath News.

Jane O'Donovan



John Alexander Junor, 1959 - 2021

John passed away on Sunday, 11 July 2021, aged 61, at his home after a long, hard battle. A farmer and Christmas Tree grower at Dell Farm in Farr, he will be a great miss to all the extended family, the farming community and his many friends. Much loved husband of Linda, loving dad of Barry and Jack, dearly loved brother of James, Margaret and Peter. His funeral service was held at the family farm on Wednesday, 21st July 2021 with the burial to taking place on the farm.

Caroline Tucker

HELLO FROM THE NATURAL CAPITAL LABORATORY AT BIRCHFIELD

We've been finding our footing over the last few years and it's now time we introduce ourselves to you. Roger and I bought Birchfield about four years ago with the intent of reforesting the site with native tree species. Through a bit of luck, we found kindred spirits who were interested in doing something different, ambitious and maybe a bit nutty. So, the Natural Capital Laboratory at Birchfield ("NCL") was born.

The NCL is a pioneering project taking place on the site of a former small commercial forest near to the Whitebridge Hotel. We aim to restore the native woodland and inspire people to connect with the environment. At the NCL, we're bringing together charities, such as the Lifescape Project, businesses, such as AECOM, and academic institutions, principally the University of Cumbria, to collaboratively look into how we can better understand and recognise the value of the natural world. We'll be using technology such as drones, satellites and AI to understand the natural landscape and imagine alternative futures and we'll be doing good old-fashioned native tree planting.

We've been busy on site and some of our most recent activities have included, planting trees, conducting research and using technology to try managing some of the fauna. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has delayed our plans for a significant planting of Scots pines. Hopefully, that will happen later this year. We've also been undertaking a baseline study of plants, animals, insects and aquatic species at the site (finding evidence of brown trout, haddy charr which are endemic to Loch Killin, pine martens, red squirrels, hares, badgers, brook lampreys and golden and sea eagles). We had a somewhat successful drone-assisted deer drive, which we believe may be the first of its kind in Scotland. Subsequently, one of the gates was left open and more deer got in. We intend to have another deer drive. We've started extending one of the walking paths, are in the early stages of planning a bird and nature-watching hide and recently joined the Northwoods Rewilding Network. All along, we've chosen to work with local outfits, including Crosscut Forestry, Northwoods Design, Scotland 360, Black Isle Renewables and Andrew Fraser Joinery.

We're also keen to include artists and creatives in our project. We believe creativity can only be enhanced by the surroundings and nature itself is a magnificent source of inspiration. We have already hosted EVER, a singer songwriter who composed much of her most recent album on site and Roland Arnison, a wildlife documentary filmmaker. One of the ideas we're currently considering for the future is to incorporate sculptures made of local materials along the paths. We're always looking for interested creatives, so let us know if you have any ideas or suggestions.

Later this summer, we're cautiously optimistic we'll be hosting a crew from a very popular rural television program visiting and featuring the site. If that happens, we'll keep you posted on the Facebook group page.

If you're interested in any of the things we've mentioned or want to learn more about us, please see our website at <http://birchfieldhighlands.org> (which is just our Facebook page for now). If you like videos, see RE:TV, a showcase for inspiring innovations and ideas that point the way towards a sustainable future, curated by editor-in-chief, His Royal Highness The Prince Of Wales, at <https://www.re-tv.org/rebalance/rewilding-highlands>. And if you like multimedia scientific reports, then check out the first year report here (<https://bit.ly/2TXeGW9>). Or feel free to contact us at birchfieldhighlands@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Emilia A. Leese

WILDSIDE LANDSCAPING UPDATE

The good news is that we have managed to achieve our first 3 goals as part of the Landscaping team for Wildside!

-The lawn is now sown and if you have not already noticed, the grass is growing! A massive thank you to Bob Main for his fantastic work on this and Peter for his dedication to mowing and caring for the lawn!

- We now have 6 fabulous, solid benches that we can now use around the grounds at Wildside, we will try and pop them in appropriate places over the coming weeks. A big thank you to Mike for these.

-The whin bushes are now cleared at the back of the building so we can see what a great opportunity we have in this area now. Thank you Graham for all your work on this!

The marquee has now been erected and available to use for the community, so please email Laura at admin@sfctrust.org.uk if you would like to book the outdoor space or indeed the indoor space as well.

Higher Ground have been contracted to carry out the ground works at Wildside so they will continue to keep the grounds looking good over the coming months as we come into the next stage of the Wildside developments.

The Summer Gala is to take place on Saturday 24th July at The Wildside Centre, and the Trust are having a stand at the event. We think this is a fantastic opportunity for the

Community to see the potential in the grounds at Wildside, so we are hoping to have a large map of the grounds where members of the Community can come and put their ideas onto the map.

If you are attending the Gala, please have a chat with some of the directors and note down your ideas.

If you cannot make it to the Gala, then please just send on any ideas to kirsty-dir@sfctrust.org.uk or jillian-dir@sfctrust.org.uk at any time. After the Gala, we will then analyse the feedback and drill down the most sought-after ideas. We will discuss with the steering group how we will progress and what our next steps at our next meeting. Date TBC.

Jillian Barclay
Director, SFCT



EVENTS THIS MONTH

Wednesday 7th July

Saturday 24th July

Tuesday 27th July

Trust Monthly Board Meeting

Summer Gala & Community Market, 11am-3pm

Community Council Meeting

Every Thursday

Baby & Toddler Group at The Wildside Centre, 9:30-11:30am

Every Wednesday

Phoebe's Fitness Bootcamp Classes at Camerons Tearoom,
5pm, 6pm, 7pm. Booking essential

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/482716562849362>

Boleskine Community Care have a wide range of activities that are going on throughout the month including coffee mornings, art classes and the popular Moovin' About classes. You can find out all about these here: <https://boleskinecc.com/whats-on/> or phone The Hub directly on 01456 486 247.

Do you have any events you would like added to the Community Calendar?

Please email any events to: admin@sfctrust.org.uk

You can find all the upcoming events on our What's on page here:

<https://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/whats-on/>

JOIN THE TRUST

If you would like to become a member of the Trust then please click the link.

<https://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/join-the-trust/>

GRANTS AWARDED MAY - JUN 2021

The following grants were awarded at the Board meetings held on 5 May and 2 June 2021

Student Grants

Meg Somerville, £500

Non-Constituted Grants

Gary Fentiman, for Lower Foyers, £953.80

Constituted Grants

Stratherrick Green Team, £1,962

Strathgorfoybridge Outdoor Sporting Association 2019 (SOSA2019) £8,715



DIRECTORY
SERVICES

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

We are currently working on a Business Directory for the Community Website. Thank you to the businesses that have already contacted us with regards to this - if you would like your business to be listed please get in touch with Jillian at jillian-dir@sfctrust.org.uk

24th July 2021

SUMMER GALA & COMMUNITY MARKET

11am to 3pm
The Wildside Centre, Whitebridge, IV2 6UN

Stalls ~ Refreshments ~ BBQ
Raffle ~ Local Produce ~ Crafts
Foyers Fire Brigade
Kids Disco ~ Games
Mieles Gelato Ice Cream
Piper
Family Fun Day

contact - sfc-greenteam@outlook.com (Traders)
clo@sfctrust.org.uk

SFCT 
Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust

 

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