

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS NEWS

March 2022 Issue Number: 31



REPAIRS TO
WHITEBRIDGE'S
WADE BRIDGE

CONGRATULATIONS
TO JOHN & CARRIE



NEW OFFICER FOR
BOLESKINE
COMMUNITY CARE

and... Shinty returns!

SPRING MAGAZINE SPECIAL

Welcome to the Spring Stratherrick & Foyers News! In this issue you will find community news, stories and events, as well as updates from the Board on projects and grants awarded. If you have any photographs, recipes, stories or news that you would like to share with the community, please send them through to strathnews@sfctrust.org.uk.

We are working hard to ensure that all members of the community are able to access copies of both our newsletter and our bi-annual magazine, which is widely available online or via email, with a small number of printed copies available for collection across the strath. If you would like to be added to our electronic mailing list please contact Caroline, our Project Co-ordinator at pc@sfctrust.org.uk.

Gareth Jones
Vice-Chair, S&FCT

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Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust

CHAIR'S BULLETIN:

Spring is on the way! Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust have been very busy over the past few months. It is great to see and hear that some of our projects are really gaining pace and will be something we can all benefit from in the near future.

The Wildside Centre is being used more regularly, thanks to the easing of any restrictions, and an enthusiasm for

community groups to hold regular meetings and get-togethers again. We continue to develop this building to suit the needs of the community and users, so please join us for our next steering group later in the month if you wish to add any suggestions. We have also welcomed our new Buildings and Facilities Officer, Steve; hopefully you have now met him and have said 'hello'. You will notice that we have upgraded the path around the building to make it wheelchair friendly and we are now planning the next phases of the outside space to make it more welcoming and usable. Your suggestions are always welcome as to how we can make the most out of this community building, so please get in touch.

We have our Community Action Plan, full of ambitious projects for our area. This year we will help to drive these projects forward via the Action Groups and we can start to see exciting things happen on the ground. Please share your skills and help out in delivering some of the projects you feel most passionately about.

This month we have employed two new Fundraisers and welcomed them to our team. This role will be crucial in helping us and you to find match funding for the projects we want to push forward and groups that we want to participate in. Once our new employees are introduced and settled into their roles, more information will follow on the work they will be carrying out and how this can benefit you.

Being a Director on Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust is an exciting and rewarding volunteer role where you can drive projects forward, get to know more about your community, meet new people, learn new skills and help our community in distributing funds. If it is something you are interested in, or you have any questions about, please get in touch to find out more about becoming a Director.

Kirsty Balfour
Chair, S&FCT

GORTHLECK HOUSE GARDEN OPENING

Katie and Steve Smith at Gorthleck House will be opening their impressive garden for charity again this year. The dates that have been announced on the Scotland's Gardens Website are Friday 27 May to Sunday 5 June 2022. Hours of opening are from 10am to 6pm. This is will be the longest spell that the garden has been opened in recent years and reflects the fact that more people are visiting each year. There are now more days to choose from and the hope is that even more money will be raised for Charity. The opening period coincides with the rhododendron season and as over 400 different varieties have been planted, it is when the garden will be at its most colourful. The garden is also being expanded to include an area where new ponds are being introduced.

For more details visit the Scotland's Gardens Scheme's website, or email Steve and Katie at

gorthleckgarden@gmail.com

Gorthleck House Garden (www.scotlandsgardens.org)

Steven Smith,
Gorthleck House



OCEAN POLLUTION

My name is Roxy Elgar, I am studying Patisserie at City of Glasgow College and my drawing's aim is to raise awareness about plastic pollution in the oceans.

In 2016, I first read that the ocean will contain more plastic than fish by 2050.

At first, I didn't believe it. I thought the writer must have made a mistake. More plastic than fish? Surely not. I cross referenced with other articles and found that there had been no mistake.

It was terrifyingly true.

That article has stuck in my mind ever since. It pains me that the ocean and all of its beautiful life is suffering because of human mistreatment.

Globally, 100,000 marine mammals die every year as a result of plastic pollution.

Even the mighty Sperm whale, the world's largest predator, which I depict in my drawing, is falling victim to death by plastic. Toothed whales and many species of dolphin hunt for their prey by using echolocation. Scientists believe that plastic waste confuses this sonar technique and animals are deceived in to thinking that plastic is food. Therefore whales, like the Sperm whale, are being found washed up on beaches, dead, with stomachs full of plastic.

Ghost Fishing equipment is also a major polluter of the oceans. Around 640,000 tonnes of plastic which enters the oceans annually is Ghost Fishing equipment – items that have been deliberately or accidentally cast off from ships. Ghost Fishing gear pursues its original purpose, entrapping marine animals who get in its path, resulting in a painful death by drowning and suffocation.

My drawing 'X-ray of a Sperm Whale' was created to raise awareness about the reality of ocean pollution. The picturesque vision that many of us have about the ocean being pristine, untouched from human interference is a falsity, a delusion. In my drawing, the Sperm whale, octopus, reef fish, seal, long-nosed dolphin, and turtles are all being forced to navigate a life versus plastic, struggling to simply survive versus entanglement and ingestion of plastic. Fishing ropes, nets, crisp packets, plastic bottles, carrier bags - you name it - are now floating around the ocean.

My art, unfortunately, depicts a nightmarish reality.

The UN's 14th Sustainable Development Goal is to 'Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development'. We can all, as individuals, make an effort to keep this goal. We can all reduce, reuse, and recycle where possible. We can prevent the suffering happening right now in our oceans. The oceans help us to breathe, they produce 50% of the world's oxygen. They host 80% of the planet's biodiversity and are the largest ecosystem on Earth. Whales have even been discovered to be important in tackling climate change: their excrement fertilizes the ocean, producing large phytoplankton blooms that absorbs massive amounts of carbon dioxide. Fishing can be reformed to be more environmentally aware. Countries, communities, individuals, schools, colleges, it's all in our hands to end marine suffering. Make a start today.

Roxy Elgar-Bond

Editor's note:

At the end of October 2021, shortly after we received Roxy's article and drawing, we were notified that Roxy had in fact submitted her artwork to and won the Cop26 "Better Tomorrow" Competition, in the category for Raising Awareness of Climate Change.

*The competition was organised by the Student's Association at the City of Glasgow College.
Congratulations Roxy!*



STRATHCROICK - CHAPTER 3

Now many Highland sporting estates like to keep a “sanctuary”, an area where deer and other game species can seek refuge from the guns and dogs of pursuing sportsmen and quietly go on about their business of producing the next generation of victims.

The estate of Strathcroick was no different in this respect. Some two miles into the hills and remote from the lodge and its outbuildings a small, but steep sided glen provided a cul de sac or in the best tradition of cowboy tales a “box canyon”. The glen was rarely disturbed by sportsmen or visited by heather burners in springtime. Murdo had a good idea that this could be the place where their beaver might have sought refuge from all the local excitement.

So, with young Peregrine at his heel they both sallied forth into this corner of their territory and before very long began to pick up a tell-tale trail of gnawed willow stumps along the course of the small burn that led into the coire. Soon the water began to move more swiftly until it suddenly tumbled over and through a sturdy and well-constructed dam that spanned the opposing banks. Behind it was a beautiful still and calm pool disturbed only by a “V” wake followed by a line of bubbles crossing its surface, closely followed by several smaller indentations each with its own trail of lesser bubbles.

Murdo and Peregrine froze to the ground as first their runaway beaver emerged onto the bank, to be closely followed by its three identical young offspring. The human duo held their breath; the only noise being Peregrine’s camera click as he recorded the scene. Murdo softly exclaimed, “so that proves she was a Beverley after all!” (which you have to admit has got to be better than the alternative suggestion of “Boris” the beaver!).

Back in the lower part of the Strath excitement was still high over their celebrity visitor. The Gamekeepers maintained their blood thirsty interest, the fundamentalists still held fast to

their view that it was an abomination not listed on the manifest for the Ark, a developer even wanted to start a beaver farm for their scent glands to manufacture a local perfume perhaps “Eau de Strathcroick” and even “beaver burgers” while the school children carried on with their Christmas decorations and pantomime which now of course included their beaver neighbour. Meanwhile the Scottish government and their advisers S.H.I.T. (the Scottish Heritage Institute Trust) were still trying to get to grips with the current craze for rewilding and reintroduction of extinct fauna and simply hadn’t been able to make up their minds.

Over to Murdo and his henchman young Peregrine, who rapidly uploaded their beaver pictures onto the internet with the star picture one of the young animals being nudged out of the water by its attentive mother, its siblings close behind. A potential Christmas card shot which was quickly snapped up by a major animal charity to become the front piece of their seasonal funding appeal. Suddenly the schoolboy Peregrine’s attempt to repair the fortunes of the ancestral estate began to appear more optimistic! The Scottish Government and their advisers the Scottish Heritage Institute Trust (S.H.I.T.) were still dithering over the rewilding question until the pictures became an internet sensation and the adorable beaver family began to feature nationally.

In the face of public enthusiasm for this unofficial rewilding initiative, the Government had no alternative but to grant the beaver family protected status with their refuge in the hidden glen awarded National Nature Reserve status with a moratorium on any attempts to trap or exterminate beavers which might be found in any other locations.

Perhaps this was going to prove the saviour of one run down highland estate and put an end to leaking roofs, moth eaten tweeds, and the other badges of aristocratic poverty but Murdo and young Peregrine’s inspiration was only just whetted when it came to shaking up estate management in Strathcroick.

Alex Sutherland

HIGHLAND COUNCIL LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION 2022

The Highland Council local election is due to be held on Thursday 5th May 2022. Polling cards will be sent out in mid-March.

If you are thinking of standing as a candidate in this election, either for a political party or as an independent, then the deadline for papers to be lodged with Highland Council is 4pm on 30 March 2022.

The result of the election, which is expected to see four people elected as Highland Councillors for the Aird and Loch Ness Ward is due on Friday 6th May 2022.

For more information or to download the Highland Council’s ‘Scheduled Election Timetable Timetable’, click here Local Government Elections 2022 | SLG - Scheduled Election Timetable Timetable 2022 (www.highland.gov.uk)





DONALD & LYN FORBES LOOK BACK AT LIFE IN FOYERS

Donald and Lyn Forbes handed over ownership of the Loch Ness Shores Caravan and Camping site to the Camping & Caravanning Club late last year. The Club has existed for over 120 years and run over 100 sites nationwide to benefit their 700,000 members.

The Forbes are entitled to look back with some well-earned satisfaction at the top class caravan park they have built from scratch. It is a real credit to Loch Ness and the Scottish tourist industry.

Donald and Lyn have now moved into Inverness but retain the remaining Foyers Estate land and Foyers Mains. Donald's family have lived locally for generations and farmed at Foyers and Glenlia. When the opportunity arose to purchase the Foyers Estate in 1994, Donald, who was then the agricultural tenant, purchased the land and buildings outright.

Donald and Lyn had seen Foyers decline from the busy centre of aluminium production, with the smelter and pier, to a village with few local jobs or prospects. Once the smelter closed

in 1967 and the completion of the Hydro Board power station in 1974 there was little option for working age people but to travel for work either to Inverness or go offshore. After 20 years of this, things were not looking good for Foyers. Donald and Lyn saw the astonishing potential of the Monument Park. It was and is one of the few places around Loch Ness with direct access to the shoreline. Caravanners and campers could wander along the shore and enjoy the loch here, which was certainly a unique selling point. Diversification from farming and estate management was the best option.

Planning the site was a major task. The Forbes wanted the caravans to be well spaced out, to have first class amenities and the highest environmental credentials. Foyers had been Donald's home for all his life, so sustainability and care of the environment were crucial to their blueprint. The toilet facilities use renewable energy and the other site buildings incorporate heat pumps, underfloor heating and solar gain to minimise energy waste.

The site was run as a franchise with the Camping and Caravanning Club. This set up gave Donald and Lyn the hands-on management of the business and also the benefit of being part of the national club's network. Lyn and Donald were proud to build a team of local people to run the park with them. They signed up to the Scottish Living Wage

and employed people all year round on annualised hours contracts. The site gained a Gold Award for sustainability and was awarded 'Loo of the Year' prizes on numerous occasions. The site catered for all comers, from tents to touring caravans, motor homes and static caravans. The Wigwam glamping pods were added which are always popular.

Over the years Lyn has also been a keen advocate for more rural housing and increasing the quality of the tourism facilities available around Inverness. Her former career in palliative care led to her being involved in many fundraising events.

So, we hope Donald and Lyn enjoy a less hectic life in Inverness and ocean cruising to Scandinavia or Madeira, they can look back at Loch Ness Shores and see a job well done which benefits this community in so many ways.

Steven Watson,
Community Liaison Officer, S&FCT



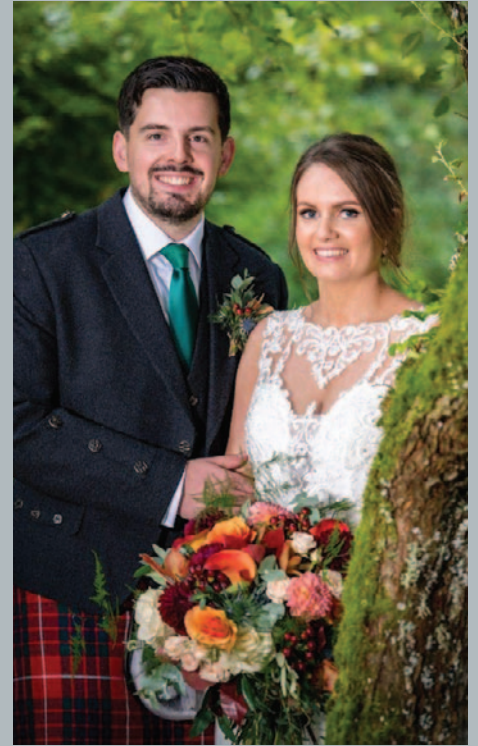
CELEBRATING THE WEDDING OF JOHN AND CARRIE

The wedding of John Fraser and Carrie Johnstone took place at Loch Ness House Hotel in October 2021. Both the bride and groom have strong connections to Stratherrick.

John is the son of Willie and Catriona Fraser, Glebe Cottage, and the grandson of the late Ewen and Ella Fraser, Gorthleck Mains. Carrie is the daughter of Alan and Jill Johnstone, Scorguie, Inverness. Alan is the son of Ann and the late Billy Johnstone, Achnabat Farm.

Having had to postpone twice due to Covid restrictions, it was lovely to finally

celebrate their marriage. The couple have settled in Dunblane where they live with their 3 year old son Malcolm.



WATERPROOF CLOTHING

It's that time of year when waterproof jackets and trousers are closer to hand and these days they are usually made of Gore-Tex or some other high tech material but the best water repellent clothing I ever had was by courtesy of the lanolin in raw sheep fleeces, which of course has done a pretty good job of keeping the four-footed clansmen dry over the years.

Some 60 years ago I was a junior ghillie in the hill country which lies between Caithness and Sutherland. A very remote area reached by railway request stop at Altnabreac station or 10 miles of unsurfaced road across miles of moor, lochs and bog we referred to as dirty "Flous" which is now rather more

politely called the "Flow Country" by the sooth mooth southern incomers who proclaim it as their answer to the Amazonian rain forest. There were several highlights in the year, heather burning, peat cutting, the fishing season, grouse shooting, deer stalking and then the annual clipping. North country Cheviot sheep were far and away the most numerous inhabitants of this sparsely populated area and every July they were separated from their woollen overcoats.

The clipping took place over 2 days and a marquee was erected next to the fank and pens at one of the two shepherd's houses when up to 2000 animals were divested of their outer garment. We had no electricity except for the standard Lister generator for electric light and peat for cooking & heating so the clipping was all done by hand shears wielded by a squad of clippers drafted in from down country. They were backed up by a squad of catchers, fleece rollers, fleece packers, cooks, and sundry helpers.

As the youngest and probably most agile in the company my job was to be in the bottom of the wool sack - a 10-foot long bag hung vertically between two tall poles. You climbed inside it and then the rolled fleeces would start raining down as you packed them

tightly and struggled up towards the daylight again. As soon as the sack was full it was taken down to be stitched shut and the next one strung up. The greasy wool made a great job of waterproofing your jeans, leather footwear became highly polished, and any exposed skin had a superb lustre! I guess everyone and everything around us smelled of sheep but I don't recall getting any ticks or other nasties.

The view from the top of the wool sack was of a scene of huge activity and noise, continual bleating from lambs parted from, then reunited with their dams and newly shorn sheep leaping high in the air when they realised they had lost their winter coats. I particularly remember the communal dinners in the marquee at the end of each day when everyone sat around the benches and tables exchanging news and consider myself fortunate to have been able to be a part of such a company when the stream of fascinating stories and conversations rolled out.

Since then, I have owned a succession of waterproof garments but none have had that distinctive smell and raw lanolin greasiness, or were ever acquired in such an original setting!

Alex Sutherland

PATRICK'S IRONMAN CHALLENGE

I signed up for the Ironman in Cascais, Portugal back in 2019. Shortly after, I injured myself in a bicycle accident and so was rather relieved when the 2020 event was cancelled and I had more time to recover. Unfortunately I hadn't put all that extra time into good use, and so I travelled out to Portugal in October with far less training under my belt than would be considered appropriate. This wasn't my first Ironman event, I had done two before, so I had no excuses, but I did know that if I paced myself correctly I would be able to complete the course.

Cascais is a beautiful part of Portugal, just along the coast from Lisbon. The swim started as the sun rose over the sea. It was a rolling start, with swimmers entering the water in a steady stream, with the fastest swimmers at the front. I was near the back. It was a long swim, 2.4 miles, made longer by my inability to swim in a straight line. In my defence we were swimming directly into the sun and it was impossible to see the marker buoys. I just followed the person in front of me, but that proved to be a mistake as they went off course and a group of us ended up on the rocks. It didn't delay us much, but I picked up a few scratches.

When I eventually staggered out of the sea there was a 600 metre jog through the streets to the park where the bikes were racked, the entire way was carpeted to protect our feet. The 112

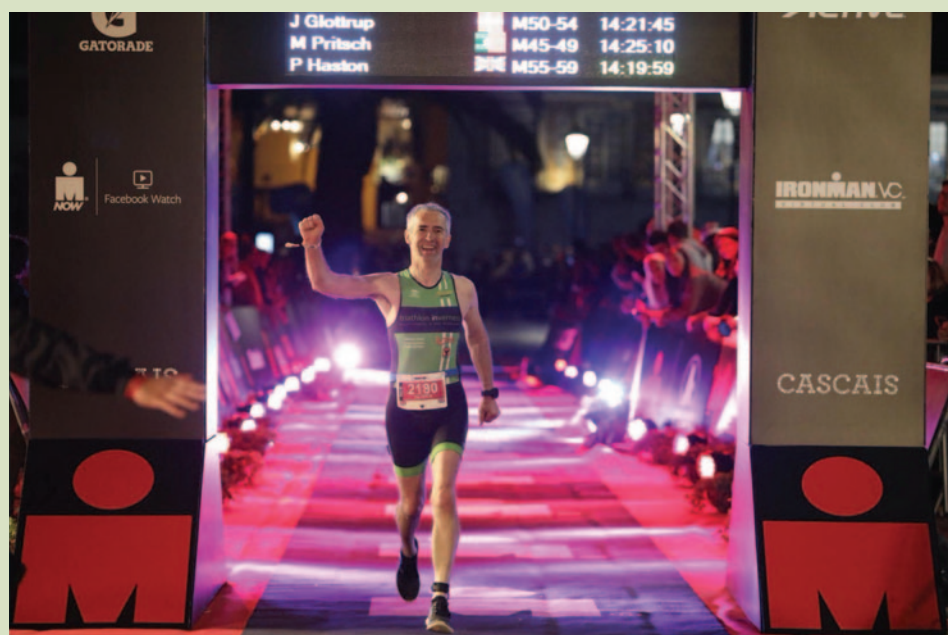


mile bike ride was spectacular: we followed the coast road around the cape to the north and then climbed up a mountain in the national park. The scenery was beautiful, but the climb was hard work. Coming down was much more fun! The route included a turn around the F1 race track at Estoril, then back along the coast road to Lisbon and back. I was quite glad there was a slight breeze: in the sheltered areas the temperature was in the high twenties.

It was starting to cool down by the time I got off my bike and started the run. This was a marathon with three out-and-back laps along the coast road, and I was treated to a beautiful view of the sun setting over the Atlantic Ocean. After completing my first lap I worked out that I had enough time in hand to walk the rest of the way before the midnight cut-off. This was a relief, because I was pretty tired and sore by this point. I started walking on all the uphill sections, but kept a little bit back to run the last bit in style!

It was a great event, and one I'd like to do again.

Patrick Haston



SCOTLAND'S BOTTLE DEPOSIT RETURN SCHEME DELAYED AGAIN.

Hopes that a Scottish bottle and can return scheme would help reduce litter on Loch Ness side and in Stratherrick have been dashed again. The Scottish Government has announced that the scheme will not now be introduced until summer of 2023.

The plan was first introduced in 2017. A 20p charge was to be added to the cost of a single use can or bottle when you bought it, and this deposit was to be returned to you when you handed the empty container back to a return point. The date for this scheme's implementation slips again and again. Lorna Slater, the Scottish Government Minister for the Circular Economy and a Green MSP made the announcement just before Christmas 2020. Ministers have blamed the COVID pandemic, Brexit and some issues about tax rules for the delays to the scheme.

If you feel strongly about this delay, you could always let one of your MSP's know.



Historic returnable bottles from Inverness lemonade producer, MacKintosh's of Abban Street

BOLESKINE COMMUNITY CARE - INTRODUCING OUR NEW CLDO!



Introducing Jan Stephen – New
Community Liaison & Development
Officer for Boleskine Community Care

Having lived in Inverness for most of my life, I was keen to move to a rural area and get involved in community life and was delighted to settle in Gorthleck 5 years ago.

For the past 20 years I've worked for third sector organisations/charities in the Highlands that focus on the support and development of individuals whose barriers to moving forward included disability, low skills, and social isolation due to rurality or other factors. My role required me to be innovative in my approach to help them maximise their potential as individuals in their own right and their contribution to their community.

I've been a carer for a family member for over 30 years and have observed first-hand the challenges carers, the cared for and the wider family experience. I would like to believe that despite these challenges I've remained positive and upbeat throughout and have used this mindset to help others in my working life.

I'm very happy to be appointed as the Community Liaison & Development Officer for Boleskine Community Care and look forward to getting to know many more of you.

It's an exciting time for our community as we see ideas become plans that will benefit the beautiful place we live in and the residents supported to live here. Personally, I'm looking forward to becoming part of a team that brings together services and activities that further enhance those already in place. Rather than target a particular age group, I'm in favour of bringing different generations together so that we can mutually benefit from each other's life experiences, energy and talents, thereby improving the health and well-being of all.

Jan Stephen,
CLDO, Boleskine Community Care



March 2022

Boleskine Community
Care Newsletter

Between 11am and 1pm Monday to
Friday to speak to Jan or Tilly
Telephone: 01456 486 247
Or email: admin@boleskinecc.co.uk
cldo@boleskinecc.com

Activities

Moovin' About	Fortnightly Tuesday 1-2pm
Cinema	Fortnightly Thursday from 2pm
Music and Song	Fortnightly Thursday from 2pm
Art	Fortnightly Monday from 2pm
Hub Walk	Every second Tuesday from 2pm
Coffee morning	Every second Wednesday from 10.30

News/Announcements

Welcome to our new **Community Liaison Development Officer** Jan Stephen. Jan started with us on 1st February. The hub has opened up again for activities. Come and join in or just drop in for a cuppa. We need new volunteer Drivers for the community transport scheme. A very valued service in the Stratherrick and Foyers community. Should you wish to volunteer or gain more information on how to use the service, please do not hesitate to get in touch. We would love to hear from you! Other health services currently are 'Foot Care' and Holistic Therapies. More in the pipeline! Watch this space!



March						
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April						
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Moovin-About

Cinema Group

Music and Song

Art Group

Coffee Morning

Hub Walk

Foot Specialist

Holistic Therapy

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Happy New Year to you all from the Community Council and we hope 2022 is going to be an exciting year! Community Council meetings are still having to be held by video conferencing, as directed by Highland Council, but meetings are open to the public if you are able to join online. Questions and issues can also be raised at meetings on someone's behalf if anyone cannot make a meeting. To attend a meeting or ask a question, please email the admin at email.sfcc@aol.com

All minutes from meetings can be found on our website at - <https://stratherrickfoyerscommunitycouncil.org.uk/> Paper copies also available on request.

Please find below an update on some of the work of the Community Council

FOYERS PUBLIC TOILETS – The amended plans for the toilets that we shared last year, were passed by Highland Council's planning department just before Christmas and the building warrant has now been submitted. We will shortly be going to tender and then we can share build timescales with the Community. Thanks to the sub-group volunteers from both the Community Council and the Community Trust who are working well together alongside a great team of professionals to get this long awaited building delivered.

ROADS – The Highland Council have recently completed resurfacing works on some of the worst parts of the local road network. Thanks go to Craig Lightbody who put a lot of work in and compiled the list of road defects last year that was then submitted to Highland Council and thanks to Cllr Davidson and Cllr Fraser who pushed to get the works done.

Craig is now working on a list of areas that need edging work done and the Community Council will also revisit the original surfacing list to check what areas still need done. We still very much encourage all members of the Community to report potholes as they get fixed very quickly once reported. This can be done at ~ https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/96/road_faults or by calling: 01349886601. Please don't assume that someone else has reported it.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL VACANCIES – There are currently two vacancies on the Community Council; one for a normal Community Council member and one for a Community Trust liaison Director. The 1st role involves being part of the Community Council and attending one meeting most months and having input on all Community Council affairs. The 2nd role involves being part of the Community Council but would also mean being a Director of the Community Trust. As per the Community Trust's articles, the Community Council can nominate an individual to be co-opted onto the board. This role helps maintain good communication between the two groups. The Community Council only has 5 members at the moment and there hasn't been a liaison officer for some time so if you have some spare time and would like to play an important part in your Community, please get in touch. If you would like to discuss either role or have any questions, please email admin on email.sfcc@aol.com or the chair of the Community Council on sfcc.chair@gmail.com

MICRO GRANTS – A reminder that the Community Council currently receive £5k per annum to give out in micro grants from the SSE Stronelairst panel. Applications accepted for up to £500 for anything that is deemed to have Community benefit. Applications can come from groups or individuals. More information can be found at ~ <https://stratherrickfoyerscommunitycouncil.org.uk/micro-grants>

Stratherrick & Foyers Community Council
email.sfcc@aol.com

STRATHERRICK HALL ROOF REPLACEMENT UPDATE

After several leaks in the flat roof at the rear of the Hall and various attempts to pinpoint the exact location of the faults, in January 2021 the Hall Management Committee received grant funding from Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust and were then able to issue a contract for the complete replacement of the leaking roof which covered the kitchen, committee rooms, toilets and stores. At that time Covid restrictions were in full force, and this created considerable shortages of the materials needed for the contractor to commence work with a view to having the work completed during the Summer of 2021.

Various items took considerably longer than expected to source, and although some work was started continued shortages of materials meant that work could not be finished during the optimum weather windows of last Summer.

Continued leaks have subsequently damaged the plasterboard in the Kitchen and the Toilets, and as winter approached a decision had to be made to cease work, make the building as watertight as possible, and wait for a better weather window in this coming Spring. Once the roof replacement has been finalised work will commence to remove the damaged internal plasterboard ceilings and walls, and re-sheet with new plasterboard and carry out redecoration of these areas.

The best estimates for this work mean that the Hall will possibly not be available for use until well into Summer of this year, but all efforts will be made to bring a completion date forward if at all possible. Further updates will be posted via the Stratherrick & Foyers Newsletter. In the meantime, if anyone in the Community has any queries please direct them to a member of the Hall Management Committee.

Hugh A Nicol
Chairman, Stratherrick Public Hall Management Committee

SOSA 2019 - STRATHGORFOYBRIDGE OUTDOOR ASSOCIATION (2019)

Lockdowns did not deter SOSA (2019) from arranging an exciting range of (legal!) activities for the members last year. Canoeing, kayaking, archery, rock and ice climbing, as well as first aid sessions all ran, many using the Wildside Centre and grounds as a venue.

Enjoying the outdoors often works best as a group of people, and with sufficient preparation, tuition and the correct equipment the fun can be guaranteed. Many SOSA members have tried some sports for the first time and increased their skills and confidence in the great outdoors. Both navigation and certificated first aid courses were held last year and SOSA (2019) expects to run these again if there is sufficient interest from members.

SOSA President Peter J Faye, Whitebridge said 'One of the benefits of SOSA is that it involves residents of all ages (over 18) and abilities from all around the area. For example, Graeme Ambrose, Inverfarigaig, arranged our rock and ice climbing and Geri Stocks from Foyers planned the archery competition. SOSA has also benefited as a result of members volunteering for marshalling duties at the Loch Ness Etape and the Loch Ness Marathon. This has raised £285 for future activities for the group.'

Peter continued, 'Financial support from Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust and Stratherrick & Foyers Community Council helps reduce the cost of these activities to members, for which we are very grateful. SOSA is based on the idea that outdoor sports on our doorstep should be affordable for all residents, with the firm objectives of providing environments and activities that benefit both physical and mental health - whilst having fun and trying something new!'

Peter concluded, 'Our 2022 activities will commence in April with two water based events. Sea kayaking sessions from Plockton (Learners) and Skye (Intermediate) are now confirmed and booked. We use a recognised firm which

provides first class equipment and instruction. Our previous sessions at Plockton were such a success we just had to go back!'

If you would like to join SOSA (2019), or just find out more about us and what we get up to and how we operate, please contact sosapiste@gmail.com

Photos credit SOSA (2019)

First Aid Training and Archery contest at the Wildside Centre

(Note : These photographs were not taken on the same day!)

Peter Faye,
President, SOSA



STRATHERRICK & FOYERS SENIORS LUNCH CLUB

Update from the Seniors Lunch Club

Owing to Covid 19 we have not been able to enjoy our monthly Lunch Club for the past two years.

We have been thinking about re-starting now that Covid 19 restrictions are being lifted but unfortunately Gorthleck Hall is not available for use for the foreseeable future. Also, after 11 years of volunteering, a number of our helpers are not able to assist.

After careful consideration - as things stand - it seems impossible to continue with the Lunch Club.

There will be a meeting of members at Wildside in March to make the final decision regarding the future of the club.

Janet Hobson,
Chair, Stratherrick & Foyers Seniors Lunch Club

Soup to Go



SOUP TO GO

As we head into Spring and the snowdrops are starting to show, it's time to reflect on what has been happening at StG (short for Soup to Go).

After an exciting summer we settled into a nice routine of regular weekly sit ins, takeaways and deliveries. Alistair joined Ernie in providing a wide variety of music for us all to sing along to, and for some, to dance to.

After lunch, on a lovely September day we were fortunate to have Neil Kirkland bring one of the trikes, from the charity Spokes for Folks, along to Wildside. Neil spent a heroic couple of hours pedalling several folk on rickshaw rides around the local area. It was great fun and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Here at Soup to Go we enjoy marking the changes in season, celebrating holidays (Halloween, Christmas, Shrove Tuesday, Easter, etc.etc.) we also enjoy celebrating your birthdays.

Recently it's been a frustrating few months for everyone with more Covid restrictions being imposed on us all. We were so used to having folk sitting in for lunch, Ernie playing his



accordion, very high decibels of chatter and laughter, and of course, Val's dancing!

Soup to Go had planned to hold a buffet Christmas party lunch. Invitations to dignitaries were written, Shopping list made and decorations were bought, but it was not to be. Once more we were in lock-down. It wasn't a problem stepping up our takeaway and delivery service, we just missed you all.

So the buffet became a takeaway, complete with mulled wine (alcohol free) and Christmas cake, Mince pie and a Christmas cracker. Lunch was very well received and we had some wonderful feedback.

Happily we came out of lock-down safely and were able to once more open the doors to Wildside and resume our sit in service. What a happy day that was, everybody smiling and so pleased to be back.

Looking forward, Soup to Go will have been going for one year on 15th March and we are planning to celebrate this milestone appropriately (Covid permitting), on Monday 14th March.

So look out for further information.

Finally, we'd like to say a few thank yous.

Thank you to Sandra & Alan Sutherland for their kind and generous donation to Soup to Go.

Thank you to Joe Ferguson for the supply of wonderful homegrown leeks over the past few months, many of you have enjoyed them in our soups.

Thank you to all our many wonderful Soup Makers and Bakers who work behind the scenes. You have risen to the challenge splendidly and your soups and cakes are always a big hit.

Thank you to our dedicated delivery folk, Andrew MacIntyre, Ros Nicol, and Catriona Fraser.

Thank you to our fabulous servers,
Marian Rule and Catriona Fraser.

Thank you to Ernie Randall and Alastair
Chisholm for the fantastic music that is
thoroughly enjoyed by all.

And finally, a very big thank you to our
wonderful community of regular
supporters. We so enjoy our Mondays,
preparing the soup service for you
and the joy and laughter you bring
each week.

Why not book in one Monday (12:00-
1:30) for lunch or takeaway?

Or join us at Wildside, come and sit in
and catch up with friends and
neighbours.

Cheers... Lyn, Pam, Gillian & Fiona



HIGHLAND HOOLIE AT CORRIEGARTH ESTATE!

We are working with Corriegarth Estate to run a family-friendly summer fair at Corriegarth on Saturday 23rd July!

Proposed events include:

Tug of War, Sheep-shearing Demonstrations, Dog Shows, Best Homebaking, Live Music, Highland Dancing Demonstrations and Pony Rides. There will also be a barbecue and refreshments available!

Would you like to help us organise any of these events?

Please contact Caroline by emailing pc@sfctrust.org.uk for more information on how you can get involved!

BOLESKINE CAMANACHD CLUB

We are pleased to announce that shinty is back for 2022! Please see below for our home fixtures – please come along and support us at Smith Park, Inverarnie. If you are a local business and would be interested in sponsoring the team, please get in touch. Follow Boleskine Camanachd on Facebook for all the news.



Boleskine Camanachd Club – Fixtures

Upcoming home & away fixtures for the 2022 Shinty season. Throw up is at 2:30pm unless stated on our Facebook page.

12 th March	Inverness	v	Boleskine	
19 th March	Aberdeen University	v	Boleskine	
26 th March	Boleskine	v	Strathglass	
2 nd April	Boleskine	v	Lewis	(Sutherland Cup)
9 th April	Boleskine	v	Kilmallie	
23 rd April	Boleskine	v	Strathspey	
30 th April	Caberfeidh	v	Boleskine	(Strathdearn Cup)
14 th May	Boleskine	v	Lewis	(Single Team Cup Competition)
To be re-arranged	Kilmallie	v	Boleskine	
28 th May	Lochaber	v	Boleskine	
4 th June	Boleskine	v	Beaulieu	
11 th June	Lewis	v	Boleskine	
25 th June	Boleskine	v	Inverness	
2 nd July	Boleskine	v	Aberdeen University	
9 th July	Strathglass	v	Boleskine	
16 th July	Beaulieu	v	Boleskine	
23 rd July	Strathspey	v	Boleskine	
30 th July	Boleskine	v	Lewis	(13:00 throw up)
13 th August	Boleskine	v	Lochaber	



Approximately 15 minute drive from Inverness. Set your sat nav to IV2 6AX, parking available.

For What3words users type in – redefined.purified.classic

<https://www.facebook.com/Boleskine-Camanachd-Club-160413940636346/>

Twitter - @BoleskineShinty

Visit www.shinty.com for more information on our sport.

WILDSIDE BABY & TODDLER GROUP

Wildside Baby and Toddler Group meets every Thursday at The Wildside Centre from 9.30 – 11.30am. We are an informal group where parents/grandparents/carers or expectant mums can come along and let the kids play with a wide variety of soft play equipment and other toys.

Everyone is welcome; most weeks there is tea, coffee and if someone magically finds time, we even have some home baking!

If you would like to come along or join we have a private Facebook page – Wildside Baby & Toddler group, or email Kirsty on Kirsty-dir@sfctrust.org.uk.

Kirsty Balfour,
Chair, S&FCT



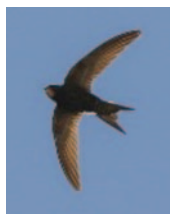
BOLESKINE ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK

SWIFT YE BACK! SPRING AND SUMMER AERIAL ACROBATS.

For me the real couriers of springtime are the first house martins, sand martins and swallows seen and heard flying low over the choppy waters of Loch Mhor, effortlessly gleaning flies from mid-air in boisterous acrobatic displays. We are lucky to be able to see all three UK species of breeding hirundines (the family that includes these three birds) on our doorstep. Together with the superficially similar looking Swift, which is actually more closely related to the hummingbirds and who arrives a little later, these birds provide a stunning display of fearless flying in spring and summer evenings, and give our local midges something to think about other than how best to infiltrate my new midge net, again. Unfortunately, numbers of some of these birds have plummeted over recent years. On the latest Birds of Conservation Concern report which was published in the Autumn, both swift and house martin have moved from the Amber list to the Red list, as a result of large population decreases (58% since 1995 and 57% since 1969 respectively).

We're lucky to still have populations of these birds present in our community but providing additional nest sites near where you live is one way you could help to boost their numbers locally. The lack of nesting places is thought to be one of the reasons for their declines. Both swifts and house martins frequently nest in man-made structures. Swifts will use the cracks and crevices in old buildings and nest in the same space year after year if possible. House martins build their own mud nests under the eaves of buildings. But you can also encourage them by installing specially designed nest boxes, which you can either buy or build yourself using plans found online.

Swift & Nest Box:



House Martin & Nest Cup:



Both boxes need to be placed under the eaves of houses which gives them a degree of protection from the weather. Swifts tend to be a little fussier, for example you'll need to have at least 5m clearance from the ground and in front of the box as they swoop down when exiting the box before flying off. Although this won't be possible for everyone, these incredible birds (which sleep with half their brain switched off so that they can stay airborne and only land to breed and bring food to their young) are worth the effort. Also it's always best to face boxes in a north or easterly direction to protect the occupants from the prevailing south-westerlies. Both swifts and house martins prefer to nest in colonies so multiple boxes may be more likely to be taken up. Swifts will also be more likely to be attracted to use the boxes if you play swift calls close to the box at the start of the breeding season, told you they were a bit fussier...

If you're interested in putting up some nest boxes, there is lots of information available online, just search for swift or house

martin nest boxes, and if you want further help/advice feel free to contact the Boleskine Environmental Network pedroconnell@gmail.com.

SKUNK CABBAGE CONTROL PROJECT



In 2020, a group of local residents initiated a project to control skunk cabbage in Loch Mhor under the auspices of Boleskine Environmental Network.

American skunk cabbage '*Lysichiton americanus*' is native to western North America. Small populations are now present in a number of locations scattered across Scotland, having escaped from botanical collections and private gardens and naturalised in the wild.

Skunk cabbage is an invasive non-native species and can establish moderately rapidly in suitable sites, and form dense colonies which quickly out-compete our native flora. Wet woods are a relatively scarce and sensitive habitat which supports a number of rare plants, so the impact on biodiversity can be significant. Several colonies are now present around Loch Mhor. Each of these is a fresh nucleus for further expansion, and without control, there is potential for exponential growth in the population. At least three of these sites hold small numbers of Coralroot Orchid *Corallorhiza trifida*, a rare saprophytic plant found in wet sites in north Britain.

Funding was raised from the Community Council and local landowners to pay an experienced contractor to treat the largest concentrations. Volunteers undertook the surveying and monitoring, and tackled the smaller outlying colonies. Small colonies were mainly tackled by excavating plants. On sites with many large plants, this proved slow and laborious, especially in heavy, waterlogged soils. There was a noticeable decline in all colonies following the first season's efforts, and few, if any, plants set viable seed in 2021. It is proposed to re-survey all the known colonies in May 2022, and repeat treatments in June. The aim will be to remove all remaining mature plants. Because the seed can remain dormant for many years, we anticipate the appearance of seedlings throughout the growing season.

Please do get in touch (alison.phillip3@gmail.com) if you are aware of any skunk cabbage colonies or if you would like to help us stop its spread around our community.

Thanks go to the local landowners who have provided support/funding and enabled access to control colonies around the loch and to the community council for funding.

Jane O'Donovan & Alison Phillip



ERROGIE CHURCH - GREAT TURNOUT TO OUR CONSULTATION EVENT

Many thanks to everyone who attended the Errogie Church consultation session in February. The event ran across two days, late afternoon and evening on Thursday 10th and then during the morning and early afternoon of Saturday 12th. We had a wide range of visitors both in the geographical areas they lived in (Torness in the North and Whitebridge in the South) and their age range.

We would also like to say thanks to the architects Simpson & Brown who did a splendid job facilitating the sessions. As you will see from the photos, they developed a set of display boards that were designed to stimulate discussion about the activities the building should host, the balance of noisy and quiet spaces, the feel of the building and how we could use the exterior areas.

The comments we received ranged from 'it will be a white elephant' to long discussions about how to make the building

a success. This included how to strike a balance between bringing the building up-to-date and maintaining a sense of history, the value of supporting health & fitness activities and how can be made to work as a heritage centre. A re-occurring theme was the importance of ensuring it was a warm, welcoming, and cosy place for people simply to meet socially and have some fun.

The architects are now analysing the feedback received in the sessions. Next steps are to finalise the list of activities the development will support, design the building and external areas, with support from the project team & steering group, and then submit the planning application to convert it into a community hub.

Meanwhile on the 26th February we held a volunteer day at the church, with the main priorities being the clearance of the area outside the church of saplings and undergrowth, and tidying the inside of the building prior to work starting on making the building wind and watertight. Thank you to all who came along to help!

Gareth Jones,
Lead Director, S&FCT



WILDSIDE CENTRE

Work on the new wheelchair-friendly path around the Wildside centre is now complete – thank you to Michael and Mark for all of your hard work on this. We are keen to hear your ideas for further developments around the building to make it more welcoming and useable. We will hold our next Steering Group meeting this month – please keep an eye out for the date – please come along if you have any thoughts you would like to share.

This will be a hybrid meeting, so if you would like to attend or have any ideas for changes & developments to Wildside and the surrounding area, please contact Kirsty or Catriona by emailing kirsty-dir@sfctrust.org.uk or Catriona-dir@sfctrust.org.uk

Kirsty Balfour,
Lead Director, S&FCT

KNOCKIE TRUST

After another challenging year, the Knockie Trust has continued to assist residents of the Stratherrick & Foyers Community with hardship grants in times of difficulty.

In addition to this the Knockie Trust offers annual winter comfort in the form of Christmas vouchers. Last Christmas 96 vouchers were distributed to different households within our community.

These can be used at Morrisons supermarket. The Christmas vouchers are available to anyone aged 65 years or over who has been resident within the Stratherrick & Foyers area for 4 years or more (one distribution per household). For further information on either hardship grants or Christmas vouchers, please contact the Knockie Trust on either of the numbers below.

Alistair Colquhoun (Chairman)
01456 486369

Fiona Bateman (Secretary)
07707 611742

BENEVOLENT FUNDS AND CHARITIES

‘SO WHAT SORT OF JOB DID YOU HAVE WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER?’

This is a question I have often asked people who need some help in their old age, perhaps with an unexpected repair bill at home, or even an electric scooter to help them get about.

There are dozens of charitable funds out there. Many of these were created to help people who worked in particular jobs, just in case they encountered some misfortune which meant they needed financial or practical help. Maybe you paid or donated to a fund years ago.

When I was young I worked on the railway. Every week, most of the workers chose to pay 5p into a benevolent fund which ran a convalescent home for railway workers. If you needed a week or two away to recover from an illness or an accident, you could get a ticket to go to the Isle of Bute with full board and even some pocket money! Ascog was a mansion purchased in 1924 and run by railway workers themselves, and not by the company. It was very well used, especially by railwaymen who lived in lodgings and who would benefit from a short seaside break to recover their health.

Other charitable funds focussed on cash payments to meet funeral costs,



or to support the dependents of workers who had died early, or as result of tragedies.

Many of these organisations still exist and do very good work, and you do not need to be a former member to benefit in many cases. One such fund is run by the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners Royal Benevolent Society who care for merchant seamen and their families. Another, the Royal Scottish Agricultural Benevolent Institution operates to support those involved in farming and forestry when they most need help. Similarly, there is still a society which supports former butchers and drovers who have ‘fallen on hard times’, which now distributes over £200,000 annually. A few logos of these and similar organisations appear below.

Perhaps your eligible to benefit from one of these funds. Maybe you could

do with some help to ease your personal circumstances now?

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust is often not able to provide financial help to residents because a grant would be a ‘personal benefit’ and may be contrary to the rules which attach to our agreements with the power companies. Other Benevolent Funds such as detailed here are designed to help individuals so they can be a good match when some help is needed by one person.

If you live in Foyers or Stratherrick and have a need - and want the Trust to search for a charity which might help you, please contact Steven at clo@sfctrust.org.uk There are no catches or charges for this service.

Steven Watson,
Community Liaison Officer, S&FCT



Horticulture Trades Association
Benevolent Fund



COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN - THE NEXT STEPS

The Community Action Plan has been published and we are now putting a call out for your help. We explain how to do this over the next few pages.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

We have had 32 responses to our skills and volunteer audit – thank you to those of you who have responded. We would like to reach 50 volunteers by the end of March, so we are over 3/5 of the way there!

If you have a specific skill that you would like to share, or there is a project you would like to help with, then please complete the survey today!



YOU CAN HELP!

<p><i>I WILL HELP WITH COMMUNITY WOODLANDS AND PATHS</i></p>	<p><i>I WILL HELP WITH PLAYPARKS</i></p>	<p><i>I WILL HELP WITH SPORTS FACILITIES</i></p>	<p><i>I WILL HELP WITH ARTS AND CRAFTS</i></p>	<p><i>I WILL HELP WITH FINANCIAL PLANNING</i></p>
<p>JIM, 68</p> <p>OCCUPATION: retired estate worker</p> <p>BACKSTORY: Jim spent all his life working on local estates. He loved the outdoor life and the folk. When he retired, he got a wee house in Foyers, living on his own. It's hard to keep warm in the winter and the heating costs a small fortune. But he's lucky with his health, enjoys getting out for walks, and likes meeting neighbours when there's something on locally.</p>	<p>CLAIRE, 34</p> <p>OCCUPATION: part-time jobs in local hotel and cleaning holiday lets</p> <p>BACKSTORY: Claire was born and brought up in Gorthleck. She went to uni in Dundee to study environmental science, then came home and got married. She's now divorced, her two children are at primary school, and she has a couple of part-time jobs to make ends meet. She is tired after work and is very busy then doing the housework and minding the children.</p>	<p>RYAN, 16</p> <p>OCCUPATION: secondary school</p> <p>BACKSTORY: Ryan's parents moved to Foyers when he was 8. Primary school was a bit strange because it was so small, but secondary school in Fort Augustus is better. It's a bit of a pain being driven there and back every day by his mum. He's not sure what he'll do when he leaves school – maybe go to college in Inverness, or maybe get a job to get some money?</p>	<p>AMY, 22</p> <p>OCCUPATION: recent arts graduate</p> <p>BACKSTORY: Amy has just come back to living with her parents after studying textile design at Glasgow School of Art. She liked art school, but prefers being back in a small community she knows. Amy is working in Inverness at the moment but petrol is expensive and the buses don't fit with her work times. She loves being back in the strath but the evenings are quiet with most of her friends now in Inverness.</p>	<p>PAUL, 52</p> <p>OCCUPATION: financial consultant</p> <p>BACKSTORY: Paul moved to Errogie a few years ago from the Edinburgh to become self-employed. He loves having the great outdoors on his doorstep, getting out when he can. He has a home office (although he wishes the broadband was more reliable), and occasionally travels to see clients in the Central Belt. Paul's wife Susan works part-time at UHI and plays a lot of tennis; most of her friends are in town.</p>

Does this represent you or a member of your family? We would love to hear how you can help make your community a better place. Please complete our survey today! <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SFCSkillsSurvey>

ACTION GROUPS YOU CAN BE PART OF

The Action Groups are where things happen. We are continuing the Action Groups established during the Community Action Plan with support from the Trust.

The first meeting, happening in March, will be co-ordinated by Nick Wright, who developed the CAP consultation.

ACTION GROUP ACTIVITY

Under each Action Group is a summary break down of the Community Action Plans to take forward. More detail for each can be found in the final CAP document – www.communityfuture.net

 <p>COMMUNITY LIFE</p>	 <p>OUTDOORS & NATURE</p>	 <p>GETTING ABOUT</p>	 <p>OUR HOMES</p>	 <p>ORGANISING OURSELVES</p>
<p>COMMUNITY LIFE</p> <p>Retain Post Office and Shop</p> <p>Local Community Hubs – steer purpose*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildside Centre • Errogie Club House • Stratherrick Community Hall • Inverfarigaig – land & forest classroom • Foyers Sports & Leisure Facilities • Torness – field sports club <p><i>(What Will Local Education Look Like)</i></p>	<p>OUTDOORS AND NATURE</p> <p>Develop Playparks</p> <p>Develop Community Woodlands</p> <p>Employ all year Community Ranger Squad</p> <p>Create employment by Tourism Development</p>	<p>GETTING ABOUT</p> <p>Community Transport Initiative</p> <p>Safe Walking and Cycling (To Schools)</p> <p>Better Roads Maintenance and Signage</p>	<p>OUR HOMES</p> <p>Pre School / After School / Nursery Care</p> <p>Specialist Care</p> <p>Affordable Zero Carbon Community Homes</p> <p>Broadband**</p> <p>Planning and Public Services That Meet Our Needs</p>	<p>ORGANISING OURSELVES</p> <p>Improve Community Communications</p> <p>Help People Into Work</p> <p>Support Volunteering and Volunteer Groups</p>

*LOCAL COMMUNITY HUBS

Managing the development of the properties within the Trust's portfolio that form the network of community hubs will remain the responsibility of the Trust Manager and Board of Directors. Each property will have an accountable director. This approach has been chosen because of the complexities of developing the brief, obtaining planning permission, fund raising, managing the build and then the ongoing management and maintenance. Each property will have a steering group that represents all views of the community and will be chaired by a Board Director.

**BROADBAND

Development of the broadband strategy will be the responsibility of the Trust Manager and Board of Directors. This will be the case until the provision of broadband services are provided by commercial operators and no longer require the financial support of the Trust. Development of the strategy will be driven by Our Homes Action Group.

CAP ACTION GROUPS – HOW THEY WORK

The Trust is committing funds of up to £50,000 for the Action Groups this financial year. The Trust has meetings which underpin the Governance of the Trust. They are a weekly communications and events group, a monthly fundraising group, a monthly finance meeting, a weekly business meeting, a monthly staff meeting, a monthly Q&A community meeting, a planned annual forum (made up of Action and Community Groups), the monthly Board meeting and the yearly AGM. The information below sets out how the Board of Directors, Trust staff and community volunteers on each Action Group can work together to achieve the goals set out in the Community Action Plan.

CAP ACTION GROUPS

Each Group will be made up of a key director/s, appropriate Trust staff, community groups, stakeholders, key individuals (skills based) and volunteers to meet as and when (we advise at least once a month). These will be identified in consultation with Nick Wright and his team and a general call out to the community. These are not 'meetings' as such but are calls to action in whatever forum is appropriate for that group, individuals' expertise and their subgroups. They should be action driven, coming to solutions to how to makes things happen. Timelines of activity will be developed from each by the Project Co-Ordinator with SMART objectives of Specific Goals (aligning to the CAP) that are Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound.

The Wildside Board Room will be provided to you free of charge to meet (extended into other rooms if required) or work from on a daily basis.

CAP Action Groups are responsible to meet the outcomes identified in the Community Action Plan. The first Action Group meeting will be held on 9th March.

WORKING TOGETHER

Those involved in the Action Groups will work together with the Board of Directors to identify resources required and meet a clearly defined set of outcomes, within a budget allocated to them on an annual basis. They will be responsible for ensuring a set of strategic goals, risk assessment, business planning, match funding, project planning and implementation of projects based on the outcomes of the Community Action Plan. Action Groups can call on the central resources of the Trust, as agreed with the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will oversee good use of said resources and will advise on and avoid duplication across the community if identified.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE ACTION GROUPS

Each Action group is accountable to the Board of Directors to ensure outcomes are met and undertaken within the governance structures of the community body (The Trust).

Each Action Group will be made up of Directors, Staff, Group Representatives, Volunteers, Professionals with skills in the specific area (if funding allows) and External Community Stakeholders who can facilitate action.

In the first instance we aim for these groups to be introduced by CEO and 'chaired' by Nick Wright and his team to ensure active participation by everyone on the action group and to ensure they cover the outcomes of the CAP.

SUB GROUPS OR SMALLER PROJECT TEAMS

At times Action Groups can be made into sub groups or a smaller project team. Sub groups do not necessarily need a Director or Staff Member but must report to the Action Group (via email or meeting) to agree any expenditure of the Group Budget.

ROLE OF THE BOARD OF TRUST DIRECTORS

The role of the Board is to ensure clear objectives are set out for the Action Group and each set of Directors on the Action Group (with staff support) are part of the group to ensure due diligence is being met. However, they also have the responsibility to agree courses of action at Action Group level, based on a set of identified criteria, to allow projects to move forward.

Action Groups are accountable to the Board of Directors who can, at times, reverse decisions if it is felt they are not meeting the objectives in the Community Action Plan or there are significant risks, challenges or change of circumstances that prevent projects moving forward.

COMMUNICATION AND MONITORING

The Board and Community will be fully informed of Action Group activities via the website on a weekly basis and monthly via the magazine/newsletters. The Board will also monitor Teams discussions, Project Plans and financial planning and make recommendations as appropriate. Annually, prior to the Trust AGM, Action Groups will meet and share achievements and report how each project is going in a open Community Forum. A simple traffic light system will be used to advise progress.

EVALUATION AND MEASURING IMPACT

Each project will monitor itself with a simple Traffic Light system – RED if no action, AMBER – if in progress or delayed, Green – If achieved. This will be reported by each group at an Annual Community Forum (as listed above).

BLACK can be used if a project is defunct based on outside factors not known at this time.

Using an annual benchmarking exercise, with support from Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC), we will report back the impact on the CAP, of each Action Group and working together enjoy success or look to solutions to bring projects back on track.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

It is recognised conflict can happen between groups and individuals from time to time. The CEO will undertake an investigation, offer mediation and inform parties of agreed resolutions or recommendations once mediation has taken place. Mediation may be internal (by the CEO) or by an external body.

STAFF SUPPORT

The Trust has employed staff to help support Action Group activity, as recommended by you during the consultation. Below we explain who the staff are and what they do.



Trust Manager TONY FOSTER – to oversee the organisation and move us forward in an objective and strategic way, engaging with relevant stakeholders and supporting staff and community volunteers. Contact Tony at tony-ceo@sfctrust.org.uk with any questions. 07734 884320



Community Liaison Officer STEVEN WATSON – to support community groups, business groups and individuals by advising them of best routes for advice and funding. To pro-actively support groups and ensure we promote their impact.

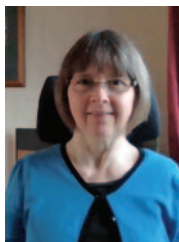


Administration Officer LAURA WALKER KNOWLES – to work with the Board in ensuring audit trail of all decision making, support grant applications, finance and HR, maintain IT network and update our annual timetable of activities to ensure good governance. There are other Administration Officers in other organisations.



Project Co-Ordinator CAROLINE TUCKER – to project manage and advise on timelines, ensuring follow up of suppliers and stakeholders to maintain project timetables. To keep the Board and community informed of progress on all major projects.

Buildings and Facilities Officer STEVE MARSHALL – to ensure our service to the community through our estate and ensure we meet our health and safety and legislative requirements. To manage sub-contractors and staff to ensure a quality of service throughout our estate.



Finance Officer CARLENE VINCENT – to ensure the financial stability and management of the organisation and report to all our stakeholders the financial position of the Trust. To advise us on the financial stability and viability of other groups and projects who are requested to meet the objectives of the CAP. To produce an annual budget and ensure we remain on target to meet those budgets on an annual basis and oversee our investment portfolio for sustainability beyond the lifetimes of the windfarm/hydro projects.

Fundraising Officers SARAH BYRNE and SHARON FERGUSON – there must be less reliance on grant funding from windfarm/hydro as the community expectations and legacy projects are developed. Our job share Fundraising Officers will help raise capacity for the Trust and other groups in a co-ordinated way, using the community needs identified in the Cap as the cornerstone for each application. There is an expectation we hope to raise £4million in five years for the benefit of the community.

OLD POSTAGE STAMPS POISED TO GO OUT OF DATE!

Maybe you thought those spare postage stamps from last year would come in handy anytime, but the Royal Mail has announced that from March 2023 all postage stamps will have QR style bar codes on them to assist tracking.

Some barcoded stamps already exist, and these have proved successful according to the Royal Mail's recent press release. Non-barcoded Definitive and Christmas stamps will remain valid until 31 January 2023.

If you have a pile of old style stamps in a tin and want to swap them for new coded stamps, the Post Office will exchange them for you. There is a form to do this promised from the Post Office soon.

New stamps will look like this. They have new colours but use the same image of the Queen which was introduced in 1966 and was produced by a Mr Machin and is one of the most reproduced images in history.



HIGHER PENALTIES FOR DOG ATTACKS ON FARM LIVESTOCK

With the lambing season approaching, farmers are again keen to emphasise the need for all dog owners to keep full control of their animals.

Higher penalties now apply to owners or those in charge of dogs which attach livestock. This year, the amendment to the law enacted in 2021 takes full effect. With 120 votes for and none against, the legislation increases penalties to dog owners and also changes the outdated 1953 Act.

One local said 'Dogs don't just worry sheep – they also attack them and cause them to lose unborn lambs. Even normally placid dogs can find it hard to resist chasing sheep.'

The new bill also widens the definition of animals which are covered by the law. Camelids such as alpacas are

now included along with more recent types of farmed livestock such as buffaloes, ostriches and farmed deer. Donkeys are also named along with horses for the first time.

The Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill became law on 5 May 2021.

For more information please visit: Police Scotland - www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information/livestock-attacks-and-worrying

Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime - www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk/ruralwatchscotland/the-scottish-partnership-against-rural-crime-sparc

Steven Watson, Community Liaison Officer, S&FCT

These alpacas at Mosstowie, Elgin are now covered by the new legislation.



AN UPDATE FROM STRATHERRICK PRIMARY SCHOOL

We have been really busy here at Stratherrick Primary School. As things are slowly getting back to 'normal' with some of the restrictions being lifted.

We have resumed our swimming lessons at the Aquadome in Inverness, this is such a valuable skill for all children but especially in our location. All pupils go to the lessons on a Friday. Thank you to the Parent Council and Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust for organising and funding the transport to and from the lessons. We could not have provided all the pupils with this opportunity without their help and funding.

It seems such a long time ago but our Christmas Party was such great fun. Playing lots of games and having a yummy Christmas lunch. We hope you all had a lovely Christmas and New Year.

The children have been learning about electric circuits and making circuit games has been super fun. We have played them with the nursery and they have loved this joined up learning. The nursery pupils have also been very busy – especially making a new mud kitchen with Mr Graham for the outside area. Using screwdrivers, hammers and even helping to chisel. Mr Graham couldn't have done it without them!

Hopefully next time we will have a bit more to share as we get out and about more, but we hope that this has given a wee indication of some of the things we have been up to.

The Team at Stratherrick Primary School



FOYERS PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

First of all our thanks must go to the team behind the Christmas fair at Wildside, who generously donated £90 to Foyers Primary School after we were unable to attend due to Covid restrictions set by Highland Council. The money is much appreciated and will be used to support our hoped for skiing trips at the end of March.

School has been very quiet generally speaking, except for one Friday afternoon when the fire alarm went off unexpectedly. Staff followed protocols impeccably, evacuating the building promptly and phoning 999. A fire engine responded from Inverness and checked the building over, finding no fire but an electrical fault in a smoke sensor. The fire crew were lovely and allowed the children to see some of their equipment for fighting fires and attending car accidents. They also heard the sirens as the team left the school.

We had a lovely Burns Lunch on Tues 25th January, where the children recited Scottish poems, read Address to a Haggis and said the Selkirk Grace before enjoying a fabulous lunch provided by Fiona Kirkland, school cook. Miss Pinkerton had done a great job getting the children prepped and ready for this occasion.

Recently the children did a litter pick through Upper Foyers, organised by Mrs J Troup. They collected a lot of rubbish and were kindly rewarded for their efforts by Jan at the shop.

Looking forward, we are still hoping to ski at the end of March at the Nevis Range but this will depend on the amount of



snow and the level of ski staff they have at that time. Easter is also fast approaching and we will be sharing our community planters again in the next term. Please feel free to water them if one is sited near you!

Louise Robertson,
Cluster Head, Foyers & Aldourie Primary Schools





SOUTH LOCH NESS HERITAGE GROUP UPDATE

Covid 19 has had an effect on the group's activities over the past two years or so, especially on open, public meetings. The talks we had organised for 2020 had to be totally suspended.

An outdoor visit to Invergarry Station was resurrected, as noted in the last magazine, but was abandoned due to a tightening up of Covid rules as a new variant emerged and also due to a lack of support.

Behind the scenes activities continued. Alister Chisholm was working on the compiling of his book documenting the background to the names on our War Memorials. More details on Alister's book can be found on the following page. Articles were also posted on the heritage group website. (southlochnessheritage.co.uk)

LEST YOU FORGET STRATHERRICK

A new book has been published telling the story of the men who have their names engraved on the Stratherrick War Memorial and the story of the memorial itself.

The memorial is a very evocative structure in a dramatic location on Cragan na Faranaich, Gorthleck. It is difficult to comprehend the devastating effect of the First World War had on the district, when thirty-four young men from the area lost their lives. Fourteen further names were added after World War Two.

The book gives family information on the names of all the fallen of both World Wars that are listed on the Stratherrick War Memorial. Also detailing events in the district during the First World War, including recruitment locally to the

The Errogie Church was purchased by the Trust and some members are also on the steering group of the project.

In the latter half of 2021 a relaxation in the rules governing meetings in public indoor spaces allowed talks to be restarted. The first of these on the 22nd of September was a very interesting and well attended meeting given by Norman Newton, a well known archivist and author.

This was entitled "Four Invernessians and a Free Church Minister go to the Klondike" and described the background to a somewhat ill-fated adventure to the Klondike c. 1899 in search of riches, during which one of the party lost his life by drowning in river rapids. Some descendants of one of those adventurers were in the audience.

The next meeting was one which had been postponed at the last minute as lockdown took effect in March 2020 and eventually took place on the 23rd November. This was a presentation called "Maps and Map Makers" by Dr Roland Spencer-Jones of the North of Scotland Archaeological Society (NOSAS).

The inspiration for this talk came from NOSAS looking at features and notes on a hand-drawn map of the Coigach area in Wester Ross, a map drawn by a young surveyor called Peter May who was sent there in about 1750 to record

forces, how the manufacturing and agriculture of the area managed during WW1 when so many men were away at war. Fund raising for help and comforts to be sent to the local serving men, military service tribunals and land raids by returning demobilised servicemen. Also includes a Roll of Honour of servicemen from the district who served during WW1 and List of Subscribers who contributed to the memorial.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust Manager Tony Foster said 'The Directors of the Trust were keen to support the cost of producing the book with a small grant. Many of those listed on our War Memorial still have descendants and relations who live locally and it is important we remember the loss that local families endured in the First and Second World Wars. Alister Chisholm's book is the result of many hours of research into national and local records. For your own copy of the book, contact Alister on 01463 715713,

land taken by the "Forfeiture of Estates" after the 1745 Jacobite uprising.

The follow-up to the use of this map was the "discovery" of over 400 maps of various ages in several drawers in offices of the Lovat Estate. These were due to be moved and so the suggestion was made that they be scanned and digitised. A specialist scanner was hired and a group of NOSAS volunteers spent over a week in April 2018 gathering over 200 GB of data. This was for the use of the estate and was also copied to the National Library of Scotland. The maps themselves are now in the Inverness Archive Centre.

The talk then looked at the changing conventions for showing features such as buildings, fields and woods on the maps and also the early surveying methods using chains (22 yards) and simple optical square sights.

On the 11th May we will be holding a talk on the Newfoundland Forestry by Alisdair Cameron at Gorthleck Hall – all welcome.

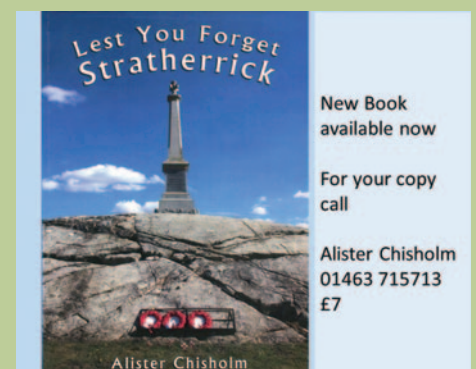
We are also planning a summer outing to Kirkmichael & Cullicuden. More information on this, and other proposed events, will be shared on the website and facebook pages.

Bob Main,
Chair, South Loch Ness Heritage Group

price £7. You can also find the books for sale locally at Cameron's Tea Room, Foyers and Inverarnie Stores.

Alister had hoped to have a book launch locally when the book went on sale in mid-December but Covid restrictions at the time prohibited it. It is intended to have a talk in the near future now that restrictions have eased.

Alister Chisholm,
Author



WADE BRIDGE REPAIRS



Wade Bridge of Whitebridge Trust Repairs in summer 2022

The Trust is planning a return to the bridge twelve years after first-aid repairs, to restore the missing north-west abutment corner which suffers from past river erosion. The arch above it shows new cracks and gives the repair some urgency. As it is not practical to rebuild in heavy stone, the trust will use shuttered concrete to mimic the remaining stonework.



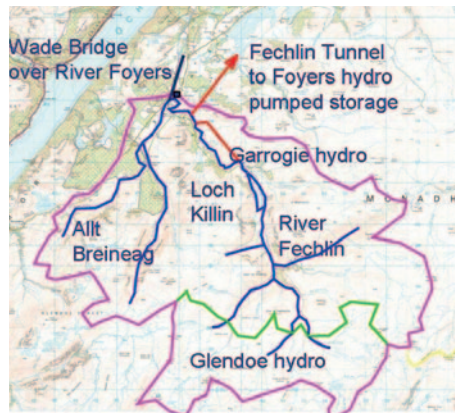
This proposal has been given listed building consent by Highland Council. The cost will be met by the trust's own funds and by a matching grant from Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust. The work will be by a mix of voluntary and paid labour. The timing will be about a week in the summer when the river is low and concrete can gain strength overnight, allowing formwork construction and concrete placing in a daily cycle

As the area is difficult to reach, the trust will set up temporary timber steps and scaffold, probably in place by the time this article is published. Concrete will be lowered in tipping buckets using an excavator and an electric hoist, as an alternative to an expensive mobile crane.

WILL THE BRIDGE LAST?

Many of the bridges built by General Wade nearly 300 years ago have more or less collapsed, including Inverfarigaig, Fort Augustus and High Bridge at Spean

Bridge At Whitebridge the risk is mainly from flood erosion, and it is interesting to look at the rainfall catchment area. Hydro schemes have helpfully intervened to take away some river peak flow, but the bridge is still left with climate change and the risk of an extreme flood.



DOES THE BRIDGE MATTER?

The bridge is crossed only by pedestrians. It was closed for three years by The Highland Council from 2008 after a pessimistic assessment by consultants, and re-opened after the trust stabilised it with grout and parapet repair. If it was not there, pedestrians would have to use the road bridge which has no pavement. The bridge has a symbolic and historical importance. It features in tourist information and in the recent Community Action Plan.

WHAT IS THE HISTORY?

After the 1707 Union of the Crowns of England and Scotland, the Jacobites led the unsuccessful 1715 Uprising to try to restore Prince Charles to the Scottish throne. In 1724 Simon Fraser, Lord

Lovat wrote a long letter to King George complaining that arms had been given up by loyal clans like his to meet the 1716 Disarming Act, but rebellious clans had handed in only unusable arms bought as scrap from Holland. King George asked General Wade to investigate. His report said there were 10,000 loyal men and 12,000 armed rebels, and recommended linking existing garrisons with roads and bridges to help King George's army counter the rebels. He was immediately given the task. He commissioned a large boat called the Highland Galley to take 60 soldiers between Inverness and Fort Augustus. One of the first roads built was between Inverness and Fort William through Whitebridge in 1725. The exact location of the road is debatable (does anyone know?) passing north of Loch Ceo Glais and what is now Loch Mhor. It was considered too vulnerable to winter snow, and an alternative road was constructed in 1732 north from Whitebridge through Foyers and along the shore of Loch Ness. The bridge at Whitebridge was also built in 1732 to replace a previous ford, and is one of the best examples of a single arch of this period.

The final network of military roads in Scotland was 1100 miles, of which the latter 800 were directed by Major Caulfeild. Ironically they were used for a reverse function when the Jacobite army in 1745 marched south as far as Derby.

John Townshend and Bob Main
WadeWhitebridge@aol.com

John Townshend and Bob Main



Photo by Russell Bain



WILD CRAFTS

Unfortunately I had to cancel the workshops scheduled for September and October due to a family emergency.

At our November workshop, we had 3 work stations. Due to popular demand, we did some more encaustic art work.



We also marbled paper and decorated bottles.



At the December workshop we made Christmas cards, salt dough ornaments and peg angels & characters.



The February workshop took place on 12th February, where we made crocheted storage baskets, and season crafts for Valentines and Chinese New Year.

You can find information on future workshops on the Wild Crafts-South Loch Ness Facebook page.

Wild Crafts workshops are held on the 2nd Saturday of each month at the Wildside Centre, Whitebridge, 10:30am - 4:00pm.

Workshops are suitable for age group 5yrs to 95yrs. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

You can pop in for an hour or two, or you can stay for full session (please bring a packed lunch).

Small charge will be made for materials used.

Workshop dates are:-

12th	MARCH
9th	APRIL
14th	MAY
11th	JUNE
9th	JULY
14th	AUGUST
11th	SEPTEMBER
9th	OCTOBER
12th	NOVEMBER
11th	DECEMBER

Lyn Woods

NEEDLES & PINS

Needles and Pins members have been busy this Autumn and Winter. Alison has been showing us how to make cosmetic drawstring bags, fabric trinket trays, and how to use up off cuts of fabric to make patchwork tote bags.

One star pupil even then went on to create this fabulous male waistcoat.

Following the end of lockdown on 24th January, we have restarted our regular fortnightly meetings at Wildside. These meeting run from 6pm to 10pm and folk pop in when they can for an hour or 2 or for the whole session. It is a very friendly group for all abilities.

We have decide to be a bit more ambitious in the Spring months. Our project is for us all to make something

that we can wear. It could be a scarf, an apron, a skirt, top or dress. Several of us have opted to make tops.

Material has been purchased and we will soon start cutting out.



So if you have ever thought about learning to sew, or if you would like to refresh old skills, why not come along and try it out. For information contact Lyn Woods on 01456 486786.

Needles & Pins meets on Tuesday evenings, fortnightly, at the Wildside Centre, Whitebridge, 6pm - 10pm. Dates are:-

8th, 22nd	March
5th, 19th	April
3rd, 17th, 31st	May
14th, 28th	June
12th, 26th	July
9th, 23rd	August
6th, 20th	September
4th, 18th	October
1st, 15th, 29th	November
13th	December

Lyn Woods

SPIN & CHATTER



Spin & Chatter has also resumed its regular fortnightly meetings at Wildside.

These meetings run from 6pm to 10pm and folk pop in whenever they can, for an hour or 2 or for the whole session.

It is a very friendly group for all abilities.

So if you have ever thought about learning to spin, either on a drop spindle or a wheel, or if you would like to refresh old skills, why not come along and try it out.

For information contact Lyn Woods on 01456 486786.

Spin & Chatter meets on Tuesday evenings, fortnightly, at the Wildside Centre, Whitebridge, 6pm - 10pm. Dates are:-

1st, 15th, 29th	MARCH
12th, 26th	APRIL
10th, 24th	MAY
7th, 21st	JUNE
5th, 19th	JULY
2nd, 16th, 30th	AUGUST
13th, 27th	SEPTEMBER
11th, 25th	OCTOBER
8th, 22nd	NOVEMBER
6th	DECEMBER

Lyn Woods

PLANNING FOR A BUSY 2022 SEASON WITH THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL ACCESS RANGER TEAM

As the seasons progress from summer through to winter so the Highland Council Access Rangers focus moves from patrol and public engagement; to site specific projects and the continued development of community relationships.

The summer season has enabled identification of specific issues at locations across the Highlands and the winter season provides the ability to work towards resolutions that will benefit the communities and visitors alike in readiness for 2022.

An example of this is the beautiful riverside location is at Dalcrag, between Whitebridge and Foyers. The area being close to Loch Ness is deservedly popular with both local visitors and those from further afield and provides an idyllic setting for recreational use. This popularity brings with it very real management issues that require monitoring and control to retain the beauty and protect the fragile environment for all future visitors. The Highland Council Access Ranger Team has worked through the season engaging with visitors at Dalcrag to educate and inform on responsible use

and discuss the fantastic freedom that the Scottish Outdoor Access Code provides us all.

Whilst the negative impact of continued visitor use such as the cutting of live trees, littering, toileting and intelligent decision making with regard to open fires will be an ongoing educational role for the Access Rangers; measures to protect this environment have already been undertaken. Vehicles driving on to the soft riverside area erode the peaty ground leaving a huge footprint that will take a long time for the ground and plants to recover. The visual scar alone should be a warning sign to visitors that this practice is both environmentally unsustainable and presents a very real risk of vehicles getting stuck in the soft peaty soil. The prevention of vehicles driving on to this soft environment rather than using the laybys has been a simple issue to resolve.

With the land-owner's consent, the Highland Council has facilitated the installation of low-level wooden barriers (Diamond Rail Fencing) that both complement the area and limit vehicle access whilst retaining pedestrian access for recreational use.

As the summer of 2022 progresses the Access Rangers will restart patrol duties at Dalcrag and across the Highlands. We hope that this first step to protect the area is sufficient enough to enable visitors to make the right balanced decisions with regard to responsible use.

Caroline Tucker,
Project Co-ordinator, S&FCT



VISIT INVERNESS LOCH NESS - INTRODUCING YOUR LOCAL RANGER



Loch Ness - ask school children and many adults across the world where Scotland is and a look of blank apology will be presented but mention Loch Ness and the light bulb is lit. As a world class icon Loch Ness and our elusive 'monster' ranks alongside the Great Wall of China, the Pyramids and the Taj Mahal.

As we all know Loch Ness and the surrounding area is so much more than a monster. A beautiful landscape

surrounded by proud vibrant communities wrapped in history and presenting a go-to tourist destination, Loch Ness deserves the recognition that it receives from around the globe.

Visit Inverness Loch Ness (VILN) as the country's first Tourism Business Improvement District was established with this in mind. The latest addition is Tim Francis whose role as Loch Ness Ranger supplements the VILN Team and brings further depth and experience to help achieve VILN's goals and initiatives.

Visitors will always be a vital part of our local economy and VILN are working with local partners to effectively manage the impact in a sustainable way.

Jointly funded by The Highland Council and as part of the Access Ranger Team in 2021, Tim's focus has moved from direct engagement, assistance and education of people enjoying the Loch Ness environs to project-based activities in preparation for 2022. Sustainability is high on the agenda and with initial scopes of work including the installation of measures to protect the fragile environment at popular visitor sites in the area; on-going path surveys for the South Loch Ness Trail (SLNT); development of a new SLNT section and strengthening community bonds through continued development of contacts and initiatives, Tim has already had a positive impact around Loch Ness and is looking forward to being part of the successful VILN and Loch Ness story.

Caroline Tucker,
Project Co-ordinator, S&FCT

ETAPE LOCH NESS AT THE WILDSIDE CENTRE

The Etape Loch Ness is due to take place on Sunday 24th April this year, 2022.

Caledonian Concepts who manage the event produced a statement in mid-January about the 66 mile road race which has raised over £1.4m for Macmillan Cancer Support since 2014.

As is always the case, the organisers make sure to thank all the local communities, residents and businesses along the route for their support and patience.

Sections of road can be closed for up to four hours on a Sunday morning, but emergency and planned access can



be arranged. Email info@etapelochness.com if you think you need access along the route on 24th April.

If you would like to be an Etape Volunteer this year, please contact Malcolm Sutherland at this email volunteers@etapelochness.com Volunteering is fun and helps by raising money for local charities or community projects around the loch.



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF EMMA RODDICK, HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS REGIONAL MSP

The Stratherrick and Foyers News asked new MSP Emma Roddick about her role as one of the Highlands and Islands Regional MSPs. Emma has been busy at Holyrood being elected in 2021 and is a member of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee. Emma has also joined seven cross-party groups on various subjects including disability, mental health and islands.

Emma writes

'I always struggle to know what to say when people ask me if I'm enjoying being an MSP. The role is unlike any other – it becomes your whole life. There are so many different things to get your head around, and your day is never done. There's always another question you can ask, more casework you can do, more places to visit.

I do love casework – getting things sorted for people. I love being able to travel the region and meet people I'd never have run into otherwise and hear their stories and their ideas on how to make all of our lives better. The region is so massive and full of exceptional, diverse communities, so it's a tough job sitting down before every recess week and deciding which visits to fit in this time around.

Speaking in Parliament is a privilege – having a platform to share my lived experience and speak on behalf of constituents or ask questions of government ministers and push local issues onto their agenda is such a valuable thing, and not one I underrate.

There are difficulties, too, of course, and I can say for certain that these are magnified when you are young, a



woman, disabled, or live far from Edinburgh. Unfortunately for me, I fit all four categories. It can be tough to be taken seriously, which is a problem when you're there to represent a whole region. I spend a lot more time than most have to fighting for meetings and to be heard, or just sitting on trains, buses, and ferries.

My team and I work to a values statement; every day when we carry out our roles, we keep four aims in mind. These are: providing an effective voice in Edinburgh for the Highlands and Islands; effecting positive change in policy by speaking up for those who are typically disenfranchised; being accessible and easily understood or contacted; and making it easier for disadvantaged groups to become involved in politics in future.

I like to imagine that in five or ten years' time, a young, disabled woman from the Highlands will be able to stand for election and serve this beautiful region while having to fight less than I have. In the meantime, I will continue to do everything I can to stand up for my region and be as accessible as possible to those in need.

You can sign up for my monthly newsletter here.

Emma Roddick MSP
Highlands & Islands | A' Ghàidhealtachd agus na h-Eileanan
Scottish National Party (SNP) | She/Her
emma.roddick.msp@parliament.scot

A WORD FROM MARGARET DAVIDSON, INDEPENDENT COUNCILLOR - AIRD & LOCH NESS

As we emerge from the worst of COVID there is a real sense of excitement and optimism in Highland. Let's be sure we make the best of that energy in Stratherrick and Foyers. You have recently completed your new Community Action Plan and I must commend you and Nick Wright for the work you have put into that. It is a great starting point for your development over the coming years. I am working right now with my colleague, Independent Councillor David Fraser, to ensure those parts of the plan that the Highland Council will help deliver, are clear and underway.

I am particularly excited by the plans for Natural History and community space at Errogie Church, improved transport and more affordable housing. Add that to the very real need and desire to see sporting facilities as part of your community and I believe we are in for a remarkable year.

A special word of thanks to Boleskine Community Care who have continued to serve their community well through the pandemic and are looking to the future. Their work alongside Highland Hospice is an inspiration to other communities throughout Highland.

I am very pleased to say the Boundary Commission has backed off and left the ward 12 intact and has not split the Loch Ness Community down the middle as was feared. Thank you to the Community Councils, including Stratherrick and Foyers who helped the council lobby to retain our existing boundaries and Councillor numbers.

However we are not through yet. The Commission is currently back to propose we move from 3 MPs for the Westminster Parliament to 2. The same arguments of massive distances to cover and splitting historic ties and communities hold true. The Islands, Western Isles, Shetland and Orkney, have the privilege of holding onto their lower parity requirements and retaining their boundaries intact. We will fight for the same privileges. A strong Highland Council and Highland identity will help us all.

Finally, I am always keen to hear from you and offer help where I can. We all have some very real challenges this year as we all grapple with the cost of living increases and the fearful bills that are arriving. Don't hesitate to make contact for help.

The Highland Council's welfare number is freephone 0800 090 1004; or email welfare.support@highland.gov.uk. Find out more on the Council's website at <https://bit.ly/WelfareSupportHighland>

Margaret Davidson Highland Councillor

Ward 12 Aird and Loch Ness

07818015689

Margaret.davidson.cllr@highland.gov.uk

RECIPES



Errogie Coconut and Jam Loaf

This recipe has a very exotic 1950's feel to it and is a firm favourite in our house.

INGREDIENTS

4 Large Stratherrick eggs whisked,
12 to 14 tablespoons of sunflower oil
4 ½ ounces of granulated sugar
1 teaspoon of vanilla essence
¼ teaspoon salt
1 ounce desiccated coconut
6 ½ ounces self-raising flour
1 teaspoon of baking powder

Put the oven on at 150 degrees

Baking Time : 50 minutes in a loaf tin, ideally well-greased or with a paper liner.

METHOD

Whisk together the eggs and sunflower oil thoroughly then add all the rest of the ingredients and mix together well.

Bake for 50 minutes

Cool for 10 minutes

Spread with raspberry jam on top before the cake is too cool so it seeps in a little. (You can fork the top if you want more jam in the loaf itself.)

Sprinkle liberally with more desiccated coconut.

This recipe can also be adjusted to make Coconut Madeleines and Eiffel Towers.

The loaf slices are also delicious in bowls of hot custard.

Best served with mugs of tea.

QUEEN ELIZABETH II PLATINUM JUBILEE



The weekend of 2nd to 5th June 2022 will see numerous celebrations and events to mark the Queen's 70 years on the throne. The Queen opened the Glendoe Hydro Scheme back in 2009.

An official website has been put in place with an interactive map. It shows where Jubilee events are taking place, including the many beacons which will be lit on hilltops around the UK and beyond. Bids for City Status are also being considered from Dumfries, Dunfermline, Elgin, Greenock, Livingston, Oban, St Andrews and 'South Ayrshire'.

One local remarked that applying for city status for Foyers would be 'a bit of a long shot'.

Events already on-line include a horse fete in Aberdeenshire and street party in Uphall, near Bathgate. You can check out the increasing number of events using an interactive map at www.platinumjubilee.gov.uk/events/

Keep your eyes peeled for details of how our community will be celebrating the Jubilee.



SPOTLIGHT ON OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES



OPEN FARM SUNDAY AT LYNE MHOR CROFT!

Lyne Mhor Croft will once again be taking part in Open Farm Sunday, which this year will take place on Sunday 12th June.

For more information, follow Lyne Mhor Croft's facebook page.

MORAG'S CRAFTY BOTHY

Morag's Crafty Bothy will be re-opening on 28th March, 11am – 3pm.

For Group bookings, birthday parties, hen parties or any other event please contact Morag on: 07592 604249, visit [facebook.com/moragscraftybothy](https://www.facebook.com/moragscraftybothy), www.moragscraftybothy.com or email moragscraftybothy@outlook.com

Come and join us for an Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday 18th April, 1pm – 3pm!

£5 per child, with all proceeds going to Stratherrick and Foyers Primary Schools.



Morag's Paint a Pot Studio
Morag Pickthall
07592 604249
The Bothy
Foyers IV2 6YB
moragscraftybothy@outlook.com
[facebook.com/moragscraftybothy](https://www.facebook.com/moragscraftybothy)
www.moragscraftybothy.com

**Birthday Parties, Hen Parties,
Group Bookings**

Morag's
Crafty Bothy
[facebook.com/moragscraftybothy](https://www.facebook.com/moragscraftybothy)
www.etsy.com/uk/shop/moragscraftybothy



A BUSY SEASON AHEAD FOR THE WHITEBRIDGE HOTEL



We are excited and enthusiastic for the coming months at the Whitebridge Hotel. After a challenging couple of years, we are looking forward to hosting events and moving into what we think will be a busy season.

We would like to say a big thank you to our local community for all the help and support you have offered us during difficult times – seeing local faces in and around the hotel is what keeps us motivated!

Our Christmas and new year celebrations were a massive success; we hosted a hotel full of guests who all had a fantastic time and as a result we are almost fully booked for new year 2022. Our Burns supper was a massive success for guests and locals, a big thank you to all the locals who took part - your contributions made the evening memorable and fun! The level of talent in the area is simply outstanding; let's keep this celebration going for many years to come.

As you will know, the hotel was closed for the month of February, allowing both our team and ourselves a much needed break. During this time we carried out a number of small upgrades to the building which should have a positive impact on the customer experience... the old girl needs regular TLC!

We are very pleased to welcome on board our new head chef Robert who joined us at the start of December and is doing a superb job – bringing interesting and innovative cooking to the Whitebridge. Stay tuned for Robert's take on a summer pub and restaurant menu – you won't be disappointed!

We are currently putting together our seasonal staff team and so far we have been very lucky. Once again we have a team of experienced staff who are enthusiastic for the coming months – our recruitment drive at the end of last year secured 6 local jobs which we are delighted with, bringing our local employment to 11 employees. Our staff are truly a credit to hospitality, demonstrating the true meaning of Scottish hospitality and for this we are eternally grateful.

We are currently looking to implement a locals discount card which will offer a discount on food, drinks and accommodation – updates on how you can make application will be on the Stratherrick & Foyers Community Facebook page in the coming months.

Robert has designed a lovely Mother's Day menu which will be available all day on 27th March. If you'd like to treat mum (or yourself), get yourself booked in as we always sell out that day.

We look forward to hosting another year at the Whitebridge Hotel and look forward to welcoming you. See you soon!



EXCITING PLANS FOR THE CRAIGDARROCH HOTEL

Firstly, we'd like to thank everyone in the community who has supported us during our first year. It was a challenging but hugely successful season. And because of the hard work and commitment of our team and local tradespeople we've achieved a huge amount. Refurbishment works are now well ahead of schedule, we've managed to get a lot more done than we planned. You may have seen things start to change. Not only are we investing significantly in the property, we're also re-positioning the business. We now cease to refer to the Craigdarroch as the village pub, placing more emphasis on both the hotel and the dining experiences. We're proud to champion local produce on our menus featuring freshly prepared dishes.

We're open for dinner from 5.30pm until 8pm every day except Sunday and for Sunday Lunch from 12.30pm until 6pm every week. Lunch is available from 12.30pm – 2.30pm just on Friday &

Saturday until the season starts to pick up when it will be offered daily. Advance reservations for evening dining and Sunday lunch are essential to avoid disappointment.

Our goal, as we introduce a new hotel and dining concept to the south side of Loch Ness, is to delight visitors and locals alike and we look forward to welcoming you soon.



FOYERS STORE - SUPPLYING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE THE 1890'S

FOYERS STORE, WATERFALL CAFÉ & GIFT SHOP

Trading since the 1890's and still going strong, with a few changes along the way.

Open daily. Shop & Post Office: 9.00am – 5.30pm
 Café & Gift Shop: 10.00am – 3.00pm
 Telephone: 01456 486233

COMMUNITY BUSINESS DIRECTORY - ARE YOU LISTED?

We are pleased to announce that our online Business Directory is now live!

If you run a business in the Stratherrick and Foyers area, and you would like a listing, please contact Steven on clo@sfctrust.org.uk for more information. And please visit the Directory and support our local businesses! Directory | Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust (www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk)

TIME IS NEARLY UP ON SOME OLD COINS AND BANK NOTES



Maybe you have a bag packed ready in case you have to go to hospital with some cash in it?

Maybe you have an old purse in the car or a biscuit tin with a £20 note in it – just in case of emergencies?

Old style paper Bank of England £20 and £50 notes will expire this autumn, so it is best to spend any you have lying around, stashed under the floor and in cracks in the wall!

The plastic type of note, known as a polymer bank note, will also replace £20 and £50 notes from Scottish Banks. Shops are expected to stop accepting any of the old paper notes after September. There is a difference between the situation as regards Bank of England notes which expire, so you really should use them or pay them into a bank account soon. On

the other hand, notes issued by the Scottish Banks don't expire, but can be exchanged at the banks after this date.

New Bank of England Twenty Pound Notes feature a portrait of artist JMW Turner with an image of the former naval vessel HMS Temeraire on the way to the Beatsons' Yard at Rotherhide. These will be the only valid Bank of England £20 notes after September this year.

Here is an extract from the Royal Bank of Scotland website.

Can I change old notes/coins for new ones?

Yes, as a Royal Bank of Scotland Bank customer you can swap, or deposit into your account, out of circulation coins/notes and replace them with new ones.

All Royal Bank of Scotland and Ulster banknotes (as with all Scottish and Northern Irish banknotes) remain legal currency, will not be withdrawn from circulation in the same way as the Bank of England notes, and have no end date for acceptance.



HIRE THE WILDSIDE CENTRE FOR YOUR SPECIAL EVENTS & GROUP MEETINGS

2 EVENT ROOMS

Each can hold up to 84 people, one with kitchen access

1 MEETING/TRAINING ROOM

For up to 29 people



CONTACT admin@sfctrust.org.uk

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/>

CAP ACTION GROUP MEETINGS - DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

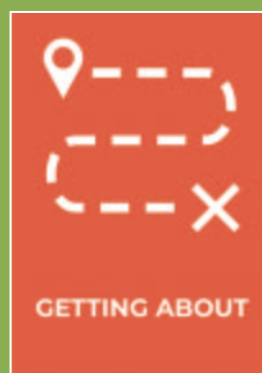
9TH MARCH	COMMUNITY LIFE
10TH MARCH	OUTDOORS & NATURE
16TH MARCH	GETTING ABOUT
21ST MARCH	OUR HOMES
23RD MARCH	ORGANISING OURSELVES

The Group meetings will be an **HOUR LONG** and will take place on **ZOOM**.

We will present the form on how to apply for funds, and the 'next steps document' will be discussed and actioned.

Further information about each meeting will be circulated in due course.

If you feel you can add to any of these groups and have not yet done so, please complete our Community Volunteer and skills audit - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SFCSkillsSurvey>



MANY THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS... AND PHOTOGRAPHER

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