

BLANE VALLEY BULLETIN

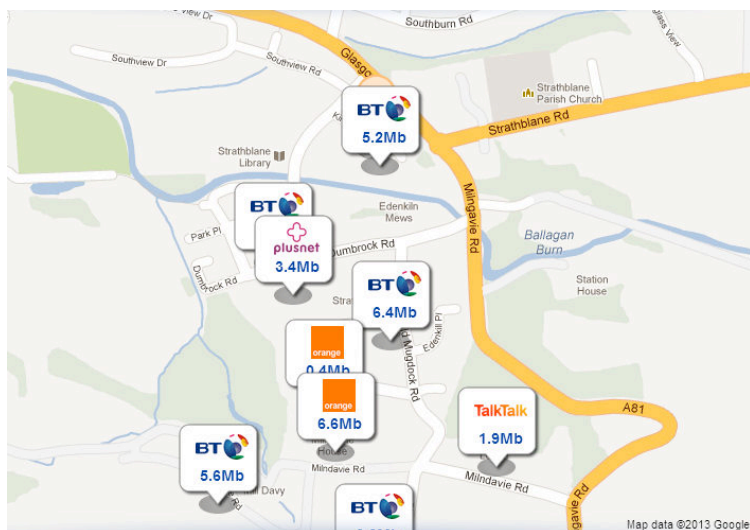
The Strathblane Community Council News Sheet January 2013 No. 8

Stirling Targets Broadband Speed Improvements

John Gray writes: How important is internet speed to you? Are we well served in our community? Does government need to intervene to ensure rural residents and businesses are not left behind? I recently represented the SCC at a workshop organised by Stirling Council. Stirling has adopted improving broadband access and speed as one of its 18 “key priorities”, with particular concern for the rural areas. As the map shows, most of us are getting “decent” download speeds of a few megabits per second, and this reaches outside the village centre too. Many smaller communities in the area have little or no broadband access, so we are luckier than these neighbours. Meanwhile, people in urban areas are enjoying “superfast broadband” with speeds of 20, 40, 60 Mbps or more, and with a choice of networks (BT, Virgin) leading to more competitive pricing. Also, upload speeds become increasingly a problem, especially for businesses & home-workers.

The Scottish Government has established a programme “Step Change 2015” with funding for intervention to ensure that that 85% of households have superfast broadband by 2015 (download speeds of 40-80 Mbps), or the “best possible” service if not. Stirling has allocated additional funding for particular problems in its area. The Community Council would like to be well informed what’s available in the community, and how well it’s working. We’ll keep you informed as the government initiatives bear fruit.

Are you suffering with low broadband speeds? Are you already getting ‘superfast’ speeds in this community (one resident has measured a download speed of over 17Mbps! Most get around 4-6Mbps). Can you run the iPlayer reliably? Can you even watch HD movies streaming? If you want to test your speed, there are many websites you can go to, for example <http://www.uswitch.com/broadband/speedtest> makes the test easy. (Make sure no thing else is using the connection while you run the test.)



We are pleased to acknowledge the generosity of a village resident in sponsoring this issue of the Bulletin.

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MAKING CONTACT

Email the SCC at

cc@strathblanefield.org.uk

Get in touch with your Community Councillors

Margaret Vass	770131
Richard Arnold	770006
Philip Graves	0141 9561954
John Gray	771031
Julie Hutchison	770791
Alan Hutton	770537
Marian Lever	770536
Mike McNulty	770076
Susan Morgan	771747
Willie Oswald	770497
Elsbeth Posnett	770113
Sue Rand	770630

INFORMATION SOURCES

Strathblanefield website at

www.strathblanefield.org.uk

Library; Noticeboards; Shops;
Local weekly press; and the
Facebook Strathblanefield Group

Current & past issues of the Bulletin can be downloaded from the village website

STIRLING COUNCIL

Councillors’ Surgeries are usually at 7pm on SCC meeting nights in the Primary School

Report faults at

info@stirling.gov.uk

or ring 0845 2777000

Join *My Stirling* at

www.stirling.gov.uk for updates

SCC in December and January

In this brief report we highlight major items dealt with at the December and January Community Council meetings. Some of these are followed up elsewhere in the Bulletin. Full minutes are available on the village website and noticeboards.

Emergency Response. The spell of bad weather at the end of November brought a good initial response from SC but the subsequent thaw and days of ice build-up exposed failures in grit supply and location in a situation where our Emergency Plan was not triggered. A series of emails has produced a meeting with the emergency planning officer and a helpful response to our concerns. (see minutes for more)

New Police Office Delay In January PC David McNally report that although the fabric of the new police office in the Primary school had been ready for some months he had so far been unable to use it because it still had no phone and computer connections. Chair Margaret Vass has now written to the Chief Constable in an effort to get things moving.

SC Roads Dept. has indicated that the Kirkburn Rd/Dumbrock Rd work is now virtually complete; that vegetation encroaching on pavements will be cut back and that they will liaise with Scottish Water over their construction traffic.

The Pavements 'Fit for Purpose Petition has been submitted to Stirling Council. We opted to have the Petitions Committee visit the villages and that will take place on February 7th 2 - 4pm in the Village Club.

Defibrillator. In January the SCC was approached by Trossachs Search and Rescue Team to ask if Strathblane & Blanefield would be interested in the provision of a public defibrillator within the villages (at a cost of £2000). Given the importance of an 8 minute first response in the case of a heart attack the desirability of such a provision is not in doubt. On the basis of a very informative and helpful contribution from the floor by local resident and rescue expert Martin McCallum serious questions were raised as to whether this was the best way to establish such a facility in the community. The SCC will follow up all the options over the next few weeks.

Scottish Water representatives attended the December meeting providing a further opportunity for us to press community concerns both about site traffic during the months of work on the proposed Turbine insulation plan and the possible noise of the Turbines in operation. (For a detailed account of discussions see the minutes).

Coop Renovation. As readers will know the planned work on upgrading the Coop shop has now begun. It is likely to be completed in May, though no definite re-opening date has been given yet. In the meantime the Post Office and a very limited shop service will be maintained.

February Community Council Meeting

Our next meeting is on Monday 4th February at 7.30pm in the school. Please come along and give us your views.

Damage to Railway Track Paths

This week serious damage, apparently made by four wheeled motor vehicles, has appeared on the edges of two sections of our old railway track paths - from the allotments entrance westwards and from the Manse end towards Lennoxtown. We would be grateful if anyone with more information about these incidents could contact us at cc@strathblane.org.uk

Christmas Tree Switch on and Community Carols



The Christmas Tree lights Switch On - by Fraser Canna - and the Community Carol singing led by Robert Baxter and the Dumbar-tonshire Wind Ensemble proved even more successful than in 2011. Thanks to them, to SCC and SCDT members, and to the Coop, Pestle & Mortar, the Kirk-house Inn and the Blane Valley Inn who provided the wine, mulling syrup and mince pies.



Sponsor an issue of the Blane Valley Bulletin?

We are very grateful to those local individuals and businesses who have already offered to sponsor an issue of the Bulletin. We need a few more to see us through 2013.

Business sponsors would get a banner acknowledgement across the bottom of the front page of a news sheet which goes to every household in the community.

"(W)e had an excellent response to our flyer included (in the)...November Blane Valley Bulletin. ...would be happy to do this again and can recommend this form of sponsorship to other local businesses." (David & Gillian, Arduan Farm)

To find out more email cc@strathblane.org.uk

STRATHBLANEFIELD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

The end of 2012 saw several projects bearing fruit for the Community. Robert Davy has now taken over as Trust Chair but thanks must go to retiring Chairman Gordon Ash for his hard work in helping to achieve these results. Here is a quick Activity Update for January

MEMBERSHIP Our membership continues to grow following the inclusion of an application form with the previous edition of the BVB. Further application forms are available in the Library – the current lifetime subscription is £5.00 per family. Most villages now have CDTs and with the Scottish Government seeking to empower communities it is essential that, if we seek to receive an appropriate share of ever decreasing budgets, Strathblanefield is seen to be among the strongest CDTs with a high percentage of the population being members.

RAILWAY PATH IMPROVEMENT FEASIBILITY STUDY Building on the work of George Thom the Path Development Group (Chaired by Alan Hutton) has obtained a grant from Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER to undertake a feasibility study for the upgrade of 600 metres of the railway track path from Station Road - an important section of the village path structure. It is hoped that a successful feasibility study will be followed up with by further funding applications which might see the work starting later in the year.

NOW AND THEN' BOOK Sales receipts have been coming in steadily due to the efforts of Anne, Martin and their team of tireless helpers Alistair and Margaret Smith, Jim Neill and the stockists. The Group's target from the outset was to make any surplus available for further Heritage based projects and the Trust has been able to provide seed funding for the Heritage Society book "Strathblane 1870-1970 : A Century of Change " and in addition is proposing to fund the "Walks around Strathblane" leaflet which Jude Gregor and her team are now finalising.

SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL AND PIPE BAND SCDT has made donations to the Primary School Fundraisers and the Strathendrick Pipe Band whose workload over the Jubilee Year has been incredible.

GREENHEART The next phase which will provide a climbing frame is in preparation and it is hoped that a Grant application combined with local fundraising will allow it to proceed. Further phases are also planned for the future.

MUSIC FOR YOUNG PEOPLE The final session of the ten week programme (tuition, playing, writing music) took place on Thursday 13 December at the Tollbooth, Stirling, where two groups of 11 to 14 year olds recorded their own instrumental compilations and CDs and website access will be available mid/late January. Due to the success of this project more Music for Young People events could be included in a Youth Services Programme (Arts, Music, Culture, Sport) being investigated by the SCDT for possible commencement in March/April this year.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The SCDT wishes to engage with people who have a track record in volunteering or an interest in becoming involved with a **community youth services programme**. Contact Gordon Ash on 01360 771044 or Franqui Ritchie on 07796 404023

The Path Development Group is hoping to form a **Path Maintenance Group** to undertake occasional work on our local path network. Anyone interested please contact Alan Hutton (01360 770537 or alanhutton@gmail.com)

Strathblane Library's great collection of local history materials is not yet catalogued. Anyone interested in volunteering for what should be a valuable and fascinating piece of work please contact Lynne James at the library.

MORE NEW BOOKS BY STRATHBLANE AND BLANEFIELD AUTHORS

Following the big success of the two local history volumes readers may be interested in three other recently published books by local authors.

First. Bob Sharp's *Search and Rescue Dogs* which, with a liberal sprinkling of anecdotes, stories, poems and cartoons, describes how dogs are trained and qualified to search for missing people and how dog teams are integrated into major searches. Copies are available direct from Bob (770431 or lomondbob@gmail.com) or through the Library.

Second, Alf Young (with son Ewan) and Carol Craig have each written volumes in a new series *Postcards from Scotland* edited by Carol.

Alf and Ewan's *The New Road* reports a journey they took around Scotland recording new inspirational community projects and organisations. Carol's *The Great Takeover* examines the ways materialism has come to dominate our lives. For further details and to buy these brief and reasonably priced volumes go to www.postcardsfromscotland.co.uk.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

JANUARY

MON 21st	7.30pm	Guild - Jordanhill Handbell Ringers in the Kirk Rooms
TUES 22nd	until SUN Feb 24th	The Affordable Art Show at The Smithy Art Gallery , Blainfield. All work priced at under £500. Open 11am - 5pm Tuesday to Saturday (1pm - 5pm on Sundays).
SAT 26th	7pm	Burns Club - Burns Supper in the Edmonstone Hall. Tickets: George Eastcroft 770390
TUES 29th	7.30pm	Senior Citizens' Club - Murray and Friends in the Edmontone Hall
THURS 31st	11am - 12	Community Walk - meet in car park opposite the Church (Contact Mary 07849919847)

FEBRUARY

SAT 2nd	1 - 5pm	COMEDY NIGHT - fundraiser in The Village Club. The Fun Hut (Strathblane Mother & Toddler Group) in association with 'THE STAND' Comedy Club - Tickets £10. Buffet included in ticket price. Licensed Bar. Limited seats - first come, first served. A sure way to get rid of those 'January Blues'!!!!
MON 4th	7.30pm	Strathblane Community Council - Monthly Meeting in the School. All welcome
MON 4th	7.30pm	Guild - Childrens' Hospice Association, Scotland in the Kirk Rooms
WED 6th	1.30pm	Craft & Storytime for Pre-schools (age 3-5) in Strathblane Library
FRI 8th	6.30pm	Film Night - Brave in the Kirk Rooms
TUES 12th	7.30pm	Senior Citizens' Club - Bob Sharp on Mountain Rescue Dogs in the Edmontone Hall
MON 18th	7.30pm	Guild - Rev Alec MacPherson on the Church in S Korea in the Kirk Rooms
TUES 19th	7.30pm	Reading Group in Strathblane Library
WED 20th	2.30pm	Bookbug in Strathblane Library
WED 20th	7.30pm	Heritage Society - Alan McBride on 'Our Area Formation' in the Village Club
SAT 23rd	7.30pm	Strathblane Tennis Club Ceilidh in Edmonstone Hall. Ianb Thomson Scottish Dance Band, BYPB. Tickets £10 from 01360 771031 - order 8 and we reserve you a table.
TUES 26th	7.30pm	Senior Citizens Club - AGM & Music Night with Felix Lennon in the Edmontone Hall

Please send us all late-February & March events for the next Bulletin to cc@strathblanefield.org.uk

STATHBLANE GUIDES AND SCOUTS would like to thank the Co-operative shop for giving us the opportunity to **bag pack** over the festive period and a huge thanks to all the customers who donated so generously. £226 was raised for the two organisations which will let us provide some more fun activities!

Also thanks go to all who supported the **Scout Christmas Post** which raised £73 for Scout Funds. A repeat is planned for next year so please look out for notices nearer the time.

EDENKILN SURGERY NEWS

Happy New Year to Everyone,
and thanks for the lovely gifts and cards sent to the surgery.
The surgery will be closed for training Tuesday 26th February at 12.30pm, and for public holidays. For help contact NHS24 at 0845 4242424
The surgery can be contacted at 01360 770340 for details or online at www.edenkilnsurgery.com

The Village Club available for club activities and private parties. Contact Elspeth Posnett (Tel: 700113) or Keith Vass (Tel: 770131) for availability.

The Blane Valley Bulletin is published monthly (with the exceptions of July and December) by Strathblane Community Council and distributed to all households in our community council area. It is produced and distributed by a group of volunteers led by Alan Hutton and accountable to the Community Council. Contact us at cc@strathblanefield.org.uk