

BLANE VALLEY BULLETIN

The Strathblane Community Council News Sheet February 2014 No.19

Contaminated Land Issue Hits the Headlines!

And, GREAT NEWS, the Pressure is Working at Last !

Treasury Comes up with £255.000

London Meeting— Martin McGougan, one of the affected residents, took the case to Westminster on January 22nd seeking some way to avoid landfill tax which makes up 50% the costs. The meeting with Nicky Morgan, MP (Economic Secretary to The Treasury) was led by Stirling MP Anne McGuire, who once again spelt out the plight of the 13 households and the unfairness of the current legislation. Martin spoke on a much more personal level about his situation and that of his neighbours and highlighted both the unfairness of applying landfill tax in this case and the inability of residents to pay the costs, including the knock-on effects of garden reinstatement and financial blight! He gave examples of individual cases of hardship and the effect this is having on general health and people's inability to plan ahead. The Minister was very sympathetic and has instructed her officials to investigate further and a quote in last Thursday's Herald is the most encouraging yet: "A Treasury spokesman said that they were sympathetic to the residents' concerns but no decisions had been made yet as the situation is still ongoing." — the first time there has not been a simple 'No'!

National Media Coverage— Following on from this meeting the issue has gained high profile media coverage. Last Thursday's coverage in The Herald (was followed on Monday 17th by pieces in the Daily Record (and the Stirling Observer, and most significantly on Tuesday by a piece, featuring Martin McGougan and Fiona Murray (and local historian Murray O'Donnell), on The One Show on BBC1 (available on iplayer).

And, finally, RESULT!! Tonight (Tuesday) a Treasury Press Release said:

The (UK) government has announced today that it will help Blanefield residents with the cost of removing contamination from their land.... The UK government has committed to providing an additional £255,000 to Scotland, which will be ring-fenced, to help with the cost of removing this contamination.

It is hoped that the Scottish government will match the contribution from the UK government, so this work can get underway.

Economic Secretary to the Treasury Nicky Morgan said, 'I am delighted that we are able to help the residents of Blanefield with a proportion of the cost of removing this contamination.'

Out of a total cost of over £600,000 Stirling Council have committed £125,000, the Treasury £255,000 and its now over to the Scottish Government to come up with the balance to allow work to get underway.

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Would you like to write the life story of one of the men from our community who was killed during the First World War? Or could you help design and lay out a book recording these life stories? If



so, the Strathblane First World War Group would like to hear from you. Last year the project won a £3,700 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the work is already well under way. The group has gathered biographical information about the lives and war service of all 27 men whose names appear on the Strathblane War Memorial, as well as more than a dozen others with local connections. Around 12 of the biographies have now been written up, generating some poignant and fascinating material, but to complete the project in time to coincide with the centenary of the outbreak of hostilities in August, the group needs volunteers to help with writing and presentation. No professional or academic qualifications are required, just enthusiasm. So, come on you budding writers and designers. Here's something for your CV.

The group is also keen to hear from any descendants of the local men who died. Please contact Pat Davy (email: pmd2010@live.co.uk)

We are pleased to acknowledge the sponsorship of this issue by a village resident.

Why not join the growing number of local businesses and individuals who SPONSOR issues of the Bulletin?

Businesses can contact every household in the village with an advertising insert, but we are happy to preserve the anonymity of public spirited individuals. Contact cc@strathblane.org.uk for more details.

Please send all late-March & April events for the Calendar and other items to cc@strathblane.org.uk by March 17th

The Community Council in February

Here we focus on the major issues discussed at the February 3rd meeting of the SCC. Some are dealt with in more detail elsewhere in this issue, and the full minute will be available as usual on the website and the village noticeboards.

Scottish Water Project — Stewart Smolarek of SW gave a presentation on progress with the project. One Turbine House was almost complete and the foundations laid for the second. The turbines would arrive in two weeks and heavy construction would be complete by the end of March. designs for the power line were incomplete and the timescale uncertain. Further disruption would ensue. Issues relating to heavy traffic rule infringement were raised. It was agreed that signage would be improved. SW would make good the site entrance are remove the car park & reinstate the field at the end of the project. Some 'community benefit' from a resurfaced track and a new path linking the existing tarred track with the Gowk Stane track met with a favourable response from Stewart Smolarek. Discussions would continue with the Path Development Group.

Police Report — David McNally highlighted a break-in at the Carbeth Inn, an attempted house-breaking and the theft of a small quantity of metal at the Queens View Radio mast - which may have affected mobile phone reception. Three arrests had been made and the man who stole all the rolls for the Coop at 8am on the January 26th and was captured on CCTV is still to be identified.

Priority Based Budgeting — Although the CC had received few community comments before sending off its consultation response a significant number of community members attended the meeting and they and CC members debated a range of concerns — especially over threats to the 2 weekly grey bin collection and to music and PE teaching and one-to-one instrumental tuition at the Primary School; over the need for Social Services to work with GG Health Board as well as Forth Valley Health Board; and over the problem of the limited lifespan of the Library building.

Campsie Road Housing Development — The latest version of the development plan was presented. The proposal is for 28 houses, 14 of which would be 'affordable housing'. Along with the traffic, footpath and bin collection issues raised at the Community Panel meeting with Cala in January the separation of the affordable and private housing on the site and the lack of a publicly adopted road to the affordable houses were highlighted - although it seemed that both resulted from constraints of space and site topography — along with the lack of a master plan for the area including the cemetery extension. A particular concern was express from the Chair over Cala's intention to submit a planning application without presenting its plans first to the Community Council.

Volunteering — It was reported that five volunteers had come forward following last month's BVB article and a proposal was mooted for a meeting under the auspices of the CC, the SCDT for all voluntary groups to inform and to encourage volunteer involvement.

Please report any faults or problems which you find directly to Stirling Council using the links shown below.

MAKING CONTACT with the SCC Email us at cc@strathblanefield.org.uk

Get in touch with your Community Councillors

Blanefield Ward

Margaret Vass 770131

Avril Keen 07799261297

Willie Oswald 770497

Julie Hutchison 770791

Strathblane Ward

Alan Hutton 770537

Marian Lever 770536

Elsbeth Posnett 770113

Sue Rand 770630

Mugdock Ward

Richard Arnold 770006

Philip Graves 0141 9561954

and

TWO VACANCIES

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.

March Community Council Meeting

The SCC meets on Monday March 3rd at 7.30pm in Strathblane Primary School when we will have speakers from Cala Homes and Rural Stirling Housing Association to discuss the Campsie Road development. Come along and give us your views.

Campsie Road Housing Development - Cala Homes Submit Planning Application

Things are moving on quickly in the Campsie Road Housing development site as Cala Homes have now submitted a planning application - based largely on the proposal which was discussed with them at the last Community Panel meeting and which remains on display in Strathblane Library and on the village website. The proposals have many positive features but a set of concerns have also been raised. These include the lack of an adopted road to the affordable houses on the site and a range of issues about road safety traffic management and the development of footways along Campsie Road. Since this is the only significant housing development scheduled for our community in the LDP it is vital that we get it as 'right' as we can. All our concerns must be registered, collectively and individually with the planners.

So please check the plans in the Library or, better still, go to the SC planning website ([Development of 14 private and 14 affordable housing units with associated landscaping, roads and drainage infrastructure - Land South Of 5, 7 And 12 Campsie Road Strathblane](#)), and come along to the next Community Council meeting on March 3rd at 7.30pm in the School representatives of Cala and the RSHA will attend to explain the plans. We need as wide a range of views as possible for the CC to represent the community on this development. If you are unable to come to the meeting you can email us your comments at strathblanefield.org.uk, and you can comment directly to the planners by registering at the web address given above.

Again we should stress that in order to ensure that we get the mix of housing that we need, anyone potentially interested in renting an affordable home on this site should register their interest with Rural Stirling Housing Association.

Community Conversation

Thank you to those who have volunteered since the last issue. (Unfortunately the contact details for the couple who have been in the village for 7 years have been mislaid). We are keen to keep up a conversation with you about how you can get involved and support local activities — this issue of the BVB highlights further volunteering opportunities. We will be inviting all groups in the village to take part in this conversation to share difficulties and experience. **It is up to us— do we aspire to be a true rural community rather than a dormitory suburb?**

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

STRATHBLANEFIELD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Path Development Group—Members of the Path Development Group have met with the Scottish Water Project Manager, Stewart Smolarek, to discuss the footpath improvements that SW may leave for the community when the construction work finally does end in the late Spring. SW are committed to leaving the path from the Allotments entrance to Park Place with a good surface throughout and are favourably disposed towards completing a new high quality walking and cycling route up the hill from the Allotments entrance to the Gowk Stane Road. That new path can then form part of the new John Muir Trail a cross-country long distance path to be opened in April and which will

pass through Strathblane. A site visit is to be arranged to discuss the details.

Greenheart—efforts continue to raise resources to put down an all weather surface on the kick-about area and to drain the ground from the school right through to the football park.

In the first half of 2014 the Trust aims to increase membership and expand the set of active groups with community projects that operate under its auspices. Life membership costs only £5. For more information on membership & Gift Aid contact cdt@strathblanefield.org.uk

A Plea to Use Village Diary

To try to avoid the sort of clash in the timing of events that occurred this Friday, a Community Diary is held in the Library (with an electronic version on the village website at strathblanefield.org.uk). If possible secretaries of clubs and organisations should check the diary before finalising a date for their event—and then enter it in the Diary for others to see.

SC Priority Based Budgeting Outcomes

By the time you read this Stirling Council will have made its decision on the 2014/15 Budget. It is likely to confirm the officials proposed budget which emerged from a Priority Based Budget consultation exercise involving hundreds of members of the public (mostly those holding representative positions in communities and local organisations). That budget has excluded all the proposed cuts which raised most concern. So— no move to 3 or 4 week grey bin collection, no road end collection, and the brown bin collection remains: music and PE teaching and tuition are unaffected; as are bus service subsidies; and no cuts to Library services. This is only Year 1, however. These proposals will not go away and we move almost immediately into the process of considering decisions for 2015/16. Details may be found on the Stirling Council Website.

Have Your Say on Coop Future

On balance our new Coop shop has proved a major benefit for the village – although some issues remain to be resolved, most notably the parking problem. The Coop Group nationally has had more significant problems in recent times and has now launched consultation on the direction this mutual member-based organisation should take. One possibility, which is of great interest to the CC, is that some of the dividend made in local shops is ploughed back into the local community. If you are a Coop member we encourage you to go to the website and have your say at: <http://www.haveyoursay.coop>

Funeral Announcements

Recently a number of community members have expressed sadness that they were unable to pay their respects because they had been unaware of local deaths or funeral arrangements. To help inform people Louis Miller of Strathblane Pharmacy is happy to post notices of funeral arrangements in the shop. If families wishing to take advantage of this should contact Louis at 01360 770731.

Renewable Open Doors at Fintry Sports Club on March 12th at 7.30pm is open to anyone interested in learning more about 'micro renewables. It deals with the benefits and the practical issues including what financial assistance is available. Book via *Eventbrite* or contact info@fintrydt.org.uk.

Strathendrick Pipe Band is Recruiting!

The band is on the lookout for new players and will welcome anyone who wishes to join, regardless of ability. Being teaching and development orientated, we can offer world class teaching in both pipes and drums. The band is very keen to recruit drummers for the forthcoming piping season, and is looking to bolster its piping and drumming ranks for future seasons.

Pipe Major Colin Johnson, who has won every major championship in the juvenile grades and has a wealth of piping knowledge, provides superb leadership for the band. So this is an excellent opportunity for younger players to join a pipe band and learn pipes or drums. Of course older players are also very welcome. The band practices on Monday and Thursday evenings in the Edmonstone Hall.

For enquiries contact Colin ASAP on 07914801466, email the band strathendrick@outlook.com or check out the website www.strathendrickpipeband.weebly.com

Allander Rail Halt Campaign Group

The Community Council has been invited by N Bearsden CC to join a campaign group for a new rail halt with significant car parking between Milngavie & Hillfoot. We are keen to get a representative who is a Glasgow commuter and who uses, or wishes to use, the train. Anyone interested please contact: cc@strathblanefield.org.uk.

Mary's Meals

Margaret McIntyre wishes to say a big thank you to everyone who contributed to filling backpacks for Mary's Meals, which were shipped to Malawi in December. With your help we filled 24 backpacks and included backpack extra items. Often these are the first gifts the children will have received. With your support it would be good to continue with this project.

New Yoga Class for Thursday Afternoons?

Gillian Lester of Lochside Yoga would like to gauge the level of interest in a Yoga Class in the Village Club on Thursdays in the early afternoon.

Could anyone interested please contact Gillian at 01877 387201 or 07738 225996

www.lochsideyoga.com www.facebook.com/lochsideyoga

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

FRI 28th	6.15pm	Fish Supper and Film Night in the Kirk Rooms - Please book in advance—Adults £7.50, Children Half Price Disney Film — contact Isabel (449062) or Karan (770979)
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MARCH

MON 3rd	7.30pm	Strathblane Community Council in Strathblane Primary School. All welcome.
TUES 4th	7.30pm	Senior Citizen's—Bob Sharp - Slides on Canada in the Edmonstone Hall
FRI 7th	1.30pm	Storytime for 3 to 5 year-olds.
FRI 7th	4.30-6.30	Messy Church in the Kirk Rooms
SAT 8th	12 - 2pm	Spring Sale in Scout Hall. Donations of 'surplus stuff' to the hall - 7-9pm on Thurs 6th or Fri 7th or on the morning of the sale. All proceeds to local Scouts, Cubs and Beavers
SAT 8th	7.30pm	Strathblane Tennis Club Ceilidh in Edmonstone Hall Ian Thomson Scottish Dance Band. £10 BYOB. Tickets & info 01360 771031 or 771571
TUES 11th	7.30pm	Strathblane Kirk Congregation AGM in the Kirk Rooms
WED 12th	7.30pm	Renewable Open Doors - Fintry Sports Club (See Page 3 for more details)
WED 12th	7.30pm	Dr A Durie - 'The Scottish Sabbath - the 'Dos' & 'Do Nots' in St Mary's Church, Aberfoyle Tickets £8 Bookings: Mark Seymour (01786 870710 or email concerts0310@yahoo.co.uk.
Wed 12th	7.30pm	Heritage Society - Twenty Years of the Heritage Society in the Village Club
FRI 14th	7.00pm	Ethiopia Evening - Hear Richard Begg on his recent trip to Ethiopia & the projects he visited.
TUES 18th	7.30pm	Senior Citizen's—Bill Stewart - Accordion & Guitar in the Edmonstone Hall
WED 19th	2 - 2.15pm	Baby Bookbug - Rhymes and songs especially for babies up to one year old
WED 19th	2.30pm	Bookbug - Bouncing rhymes and stories for children aged four and under
WED 19th	7.30pm	Heritage Society - Pat Thomson 'Who do you think you are?' in the Village Club
FRI 21st	1.15pm	Pre-school Craft & Storytime for 3 to 5 year olds. Book a place in the Library
FRI 28th	7pm	Film Night in the Kirk Rooms
SUN 30th	7.30pm	North Atlantic Trio Concert/Album Launch (harp, dobro & esoteric percussion—Scots, Irish, Appalachian, Bluegrass crossover) in the Village Club. £10 at the door.
MON 31st	for a week	Cancer Research UK House to House Collection — ends April 6th

APRIL

FRI 4th	7.30pm	Blane Valley Burns Club AGM followed by a Quiz (at 8pm) in Village Club. Tickets from George Eastcroft 770390.
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EDENKILN SURGERY

can be contacted at 01360 770340 For a range of healthcare information go to the practice website www.edenkilnsurgery.com
In January Ray Wright retired after 10 years working at the surgery. We would like to wish her a happy retirement.

The Village Club is available for club activities & private parties. Contact Elspeth Posnett (07714756810), Keith Vass (770131).

Strathblane Library News

GAELIC MONTH — One week left —The library will be showcasing its lending collection of Gaelic children's and adult books throughout February.

TASTE IT—Classes for February & March are fully booked but anyone interested can add their name to the waiting list.

Police Surgery Times for March at the Office in Strathblane Primary School (crime permitting)
These will be displayed on the Village Website and on Facebook later this week

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