

BLANE VALLEY BULLETIN

The Strathblane Community Council News Sheet November 2013 No.17

The future of Stirling Council's services is in our hands!

A number of factors have led Stirling council to change the way it operates.

- Stirling Council has to save £15M over the 3 years from 14/15 to 16/17 and significantly more beyond as council tax is still frozen.
- External factors including cuts from Central Government, increased national insurance, auto enrolment in pension schemes and wage rises means that local authorities will have to make significant savings over the next 5 years.
- The Council is consulting and working with residents to help them prioritise the right services and plan for the future.

To achieve these savings, Stirling Council is introducing **Priority Based Budgeting** (PBB), a method of business planning intended to help save money and prioritise services. This will involve a different approach to financial decision making and planning over a 5 year period, and will involve US. The council believes that this will allow them to work better with communities. The success of this approach will depend on how well they communicate with us and others. They genuinely want to hear from us about our priorities, what could be changed or done differently or any ideas we have. They have now produced their draft PBB report, outlining a series of options to achieve proposals for the next five years.

Changes are coming and we need to be clear about what is important to us. Do we want the roads maintained better and pay for this by moving to 4 weekly bin collections? If there are 4 weekly bin collections what would make this work for us? Bigger bins and improved recycling? How do we maintain budgets for our schools? Should roadside verge cutting be replaced by wild flowers? Should we maintain some of our open spaces? Should our halls still get a revenue grant? How would we cope if that stopped? The draft Report, Working with you to shape Stirling's future, will be in the library and can be viewed or downloaded at http://www.stirling.gov.uk/_documents/temporary-uploads/chief-executives-office/priority-based-budgeting-leaflet.pdf

Despite the tight time-scale we are assured that **no decisions have been made** for next year's budget Discussions will begin in April for the 2014/15 year's budget. Public consultations will take place over the next two months for 2014/15.

This is important. We have cancelled the Community Council meeting on the 2nd December so that people to attend the local consultation session in Balfron High from 7 to 8.30pm to hear first hand what it means for us. We strongly encourage you to go along to these consultations and make your views heard, and to complete the Council's online survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SC-PBB-E>. Responses will be treated in strict confidence.

This issue is sponsored by **Strathblane Country House Hotel**
BUY ONE GET ONE FREE on 3 course Festive Lunch & Dinner.
December 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, & 23. 1 drink/person must be bought. By reservation ONLY (770491). T&Cs apply. Management reserve all rights.

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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
Julie Hutchison	770791
Alan Hutton	770537
Avril Keen	07799261297
Marian Lever	770536
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

A New Community Council in November

Here we focus on the major issues discussed at the inaugural meeting of the new council on November 22nd. The full minute will be available as usual on the website and the village noticeboards.

Our November meeting departed in many respects from the norm. It began with the formalities of inaugurating the new Community Council Chaired by an official from Stirling Council. Offices & Portfolios were filled as follows:

Chair: Margaret Vass; *Vice-Chair:* Alan Hutton;
Secretary: Dick Arnold; *Treasurer:* Sue Rand; and
Planning: Avril Keen; *Environment:* Elspeth Posnett;
Roads: Willie Oswald; *BVB Editor:* Alan Hutton;
Healthcare & Social Issues: Marian Lever

There was some discussion of the need for 'succession planning' and the need to file the two remaining vacancies on the council. A number of these positions will be 'shadowed'.

It was agreed that the CC would meet on the first Monday of the month throughout 2014 with the exceptions of May (going forward a week to avoid the public holiday) and July (when there is no meeting).

The normal business was much shorter than usual as PC McNally and our local Councillors could not attend and there were no new planning issues. Discussion focussed on the **Campsie Road housing development** and the **Landfill Tax Petition** (both covered elsewhere on this page).

PC McNally's written report highlighted on a number of housebreakings thought to be part of a wider national pattern.

Following the formal agenda Roxana Bacian of SNOOK (*a Service Design & Social Innovation Agency*) introduced the *Stirling Makes* initiative. Working with SC's Community Engagement Team (CET) the aim is to develop innovative approaches to the challenges faced by Community Councils. Strathblane CC has been chosen because of its active engagement in the community. The major element in the project will be a 'Co-design- session' on December 12th involving SCC and the CET and service managers from SC..

January Community Council — Our next meeting is on Monday January 6th at 7.30pm in the School. High on the Agenda will be our inputs into SC's Budgeting exercise.

There will be one more **BROWN BIN COLLECTION** this year— in the week beginning November 25th. See:

<http://www.stirling.gov.uk/services/planning-and-the-environment/waste-and-recycling/waste-disruptions/brown-bin-collections>

Community Council Elections in February

High on our agenda is the need to fill the two remaining CC vacancies in the ill-named Mugdock Ward which also covers most of Strathblane. A further set of elections will take place in February so, if you live in that Ward please consider joining us in what can be very rewarding work for the good of the village. Contact Chair, Margaret Vass, (770131) for more information or go to <http://www.stirling.gov.uk/services/council-and-government>

Sign the Petition to First Minister Alex Salmond

"We call on you to amend Landfill Tax Law to exempt no fault owners."

Such a change which could come into effect in 2015 when Scottish Government takes over responsibility for this tax, could have important benefits for our community members who, through no fault of their own, currently face horrendous bills to rectify contamination—of which up to 79% will be tax. The issue is urgent, the legislation is being processed this week. Please go to: https://secure.avaaz.org/en/petition/Dont_tax_residents_on_fixing_a_nightmare_Fix_a_bad_law/?kKBQOdb and add your name.

As of Thursday there are 770 signatories
Help make it 1,000 !

Campsie Road Housing Development

At its second meeting, last week, Community Panel for this development—convened by Rural Stirling Housing Association and made up of Community Councillors and local residents were able to see outline proposals for the site from potential developers, Cala Homes. The proposal is for 24 houses of which (following SC's planning rules) 12 would be affordable. The developer seems keen to progress the development and RSHA is reasonably confident of the availability of funding for the affordable houses by 2015.

RSHA proposes a mix of: 4 one-bed cottage flats; 2 two-bed cottage flats; 1 one-bed bungalow; 1 two-bed, three person bungalow; 3 two-bed houses; and 1 three-bed house.

At the Panel's next meeting we hope to have more detailed plans - after the response of the planners to the initial outline, and to be able to talk directly with representatives from the developer.

Once 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 RSHA—more information on the village website.

Ways to give us your views or alert us to an issue:

contact one of your Community Councillors directly. (phone nos. on Page 1), email the Community Council at cc@strathblanefield.org.uk or come along to Community Council meetings.

Scout Christmas Post

Once again the Scouts will be providing a Christmas Card delivery service within the villages. Stamps cost 20p and are available from Pestle & Mortar and the library. Post boxes are also in the Library, both churches and the Kirk rooms. Last post is 20th Dec and delivery will be on 21st Dec.

Join us for the

Christmas Tree Lights Switch-On

in the Village Club on **December 10 at 7pm.**
Music by the Dunbartonshire Wind Ensemble & the Church Choir conductor Robert Baxter.
Mulled Wine & Mince Pies.

The **Village Club** is available for club activities and private parties. Contact Elspeth Posnett (Tel: 770113) or Keith Vass (Tel: 770131) .

STRATHBLANEFIELD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST AGM

At the **SCDT AGM** on October 23rd Chair Robert Davy reported on a very successful year. Here we summarise the work of seven Groups within the Trust, and highlight the other major points from the meeting

Greenheart Group — Has made further additions to the playpark, including mini climbing frame, story teller's chair and public seating, and plans to improve the drainage and surface of the kickabout area for young people.

Path Development Group — Has upgraded a section of path between the bridge at Park Place and the playpark (Grant from Paths-forAll); has completed a Street Audit training course auditing Station Rd & a section of Glasgow Road; and has undertaken (with LEADER funding) a feasibility Study of the track along the old railway line as far as Station Road. The next major task is to raise the funding to do the work.

The 'Walks Around Strathblane Leaflet' — Has been published with support from the Big Lottery Fund. Free copies were distributed to every family with primary or nursery age children and are for sale at shops and attractions throughout the area.

Property Group — Has been working with Stirling Council to assume Trust ownership of the old Gravedigger's Bothy in the churchyard for community benefit. When the details are complete there will be a community consultation on its best use.

Youth Services Group — Following the success of Music for young people the Group has worked on proposals to engage teenagers in aspects of music, art and culture. Despite local government cuts there is optimism about the possibilities.

Allotments Group — after years of tireless work members are

reaping the fruits of their efforts (see enclosed leaflet).

First World War Group — Set up to research, and produce a booklet on, those men from the villages who died in WW1 and who are named on the War Memorial. Other events are planned and since the AGM we have heard that a Heritage Lottery Fund grant application has been successful.

The AGM approved an updated **Business Plan** for 2013/14 which embodies targets for each member Group.

Fundraising — One of the SCDT targets is to produce an income stream to help with more projects to enhance the life of our community. This year the The Big Vern concert produced a surplus for community projects. Trusts elsewhere have set up gift-aided donations schemes. We hope that community members here might be willing to set up such donations. (see contact details below).

Elections to the Board — The three Directors eligible for re-election (Ian Hamilton, Dai Hutchinson & Alan Hutton) were unanimously endorsed and one new Director, Rev. Richard Begg, was elected. Richard comes with a wealth of experience of work on Trusts and other organisations.

Membership remains steady but a membership drive is planned. **Life membership costs £5.**

For further information on membership and Gift Aid contact cdt@strathblanefield.org.uk

Police Surgery Times for December at the Office in

Strathblane Primary School (crime permitting)

Monday 2nd 6 - 7pm Tuesday 17th 11am - Noon

Sunday 8th 4pm - 5pm Monday 23rd 6 - 7pm

Monday 30th 7 - 8pm

RAILWAY PATH UPGRADE VOLUNTEER DAYS

As part of our feasibility funding we are committed to doing some preparatory work along the old railway track. This will take place on Saturday November 30th from 10 til 3pm and on Thursday December 5th from 1 to 4pm. If you can spare an hour or two to help please contact Calum Craig: 07974781281

Blanefield Thistle Football Club Sponsorship — The club are pleased to announce that The Kirkhouse Inn will be our strip sponsor for the 2014 season of the Forth and Endrick League campaign. The club provides the opportunity for the youth of the village to be active in sport, through playing football during the summer evenings. The financial requirements on the club in maintaining an ageing pavilion in addition to the on-going annual running costs are considerable and we are very grateful to The Kirkhouse Inn for their financial support.

We would also like to take this opportunity to invite anyone, individual or business, who would like to sponsor other aspects of the club's requirements such as corner flags, balls, kit bags, tracksuits, or indeed help with our building refurbishment project to get in touch with James Hutchinson on 07725 984 976 to discuss further.

Strathblane Scout Group - Help Required

Once again, the local scout group needs help. We need help to organise and run the evenings for Beavers (5-8 years) and Cubs (8-10 years). You don't have to be a relative of the children, nor do you have to become a leader - there are lots of other ways you can help. We are also currently without a committee so if you want to help, but not deal with the boys then we would love to hear from you - particularly with fundraising. Please contact Avril Sandilands on 771082, Alan Campbell on 07799 794560, email cubs@strathblanefield.org.uk, pop along to the Scout Hall any Monday 6:30pm or come to our AGM Wed 4th Dec 7:30 in the Scout hall.

EDENKILN SURGERY NEWS

The surgery is closed for the public holidays on December 25 & 26 and January 1 & 2. We can be contacted at 01360 770340

For a range of healthcare information go to the practice website at www.edenkilnsurgery.com

Strathblane Parish Church - Further Events

Early Morning Services: Mon Dec 2 & Jan 6 at 7am

Quiet Space in the Church: Fri Dec 6, 4.30-6.30pm;

Thurs Dec 19 & Thurs Jan 2, 6 - 7pm.

Messy Church - Fri Dec 6 4.30-6.30 in Kirk Rooms

Film Night - Fri Dec 13 in the Kirk Rooms

Afternoon of Clowning Around with Gordon Roy, followed by family meal in Kirk Rooms- Sat Dec 14 2pm

Christmas Morning Service: Dec 25 10.30am

Reflection on the year that was: Sun Dec 29
4pm in Kirk Rooms.

The Big Promise: Sat Feb 8 at 5.15pm

Guild: Mondays 7.30pm in Kirk Rooms:

Dec 2: Guild Project - 'Out of Africa - into Malta' David McRoberts

Dec 16th: Christmas Celebration

Jan 13th: Scottish Islands - Mrs Heather Willmot

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

MON 25th	10am	Handover of Village Defibrillator by Di Hodgkinson at the Edmonstone Hall
WED 27th	7.30pm	Heritage Society David Carson on The Clydebank Blitz in the Village Club. All welcome
THUR 28th	1.30-2.45	Childrens' Activity & Story Session for 5 - 8 year olds. in Strathblane Library. Please book in advance places are limited.
SAT 30th	7.30pm	Strathblane Lawn Tennis Club St Andrew's Night Quiz in the Village Club. Tickets £30 per table (max 6 per table) BYOB, Raffle. Tickets from 771031, 771571, or the Library
SAT 30th	10 - 3pm	Path Volunteer Day - work on the Railway Path. Contact Calum Craig 07974781281

DECEMBER

MON 2nd	7-8.30pm	Consultation on Stirling Council Priority Based Budgeting in Balfroon High School
TUES 3rd	4.30 - 6.30	Senior Citizens - Prize Draw & Marion's Christmas Quiz in Edmonstone Hall
TUES 3rd	11.30am	Juice PLUS+ — Talk on healthy living and weight management in the Village Club
WED 4th	7.30pm	Scout Group AGM in the Scout Hall
THURS 5th	1 - 4pm	Path Volunteer Day - work on the Railway Path. Contact Calum Craig 07974781281
FRI 6th	7.30pm	Dunbartonshire Wind Ensemble Christmas Concert in Bearsden Academy .Adults £6
SAT 7th	7.30pm	An Evening of Music in the Kirkhouse Inn for the Scottish Association of Mental Health Tickets £5 in advance from the Kirkhouse Inn or at the door. Raffle and auction.
SAT 7th	7.30pm	Milngavie Choir Christmas Concert Cairns Church - Refreshments. Tickets £10. £8 concessions, £5 students & under 16s Call 0141 334 6949 or contact Mary Brailey 771613
TUES 10th	7pm	Christmas Tree Lights Switch-On in the Village Club with music by the Dunbartonshire Wind Ensemble & the Church Choir conducted by Robert Baxter. Mulled Wine & Mince Pies.
WED 11th	2.30pm	Special Christmas Songs & Rhymes for babies & toddlers. In Strathblane Library
FRI 13th	1.30pm	Pre-school Story & Craft Time. Please call Strathblane Library if you wish to be included.
SUN 15th	6.30pm	Service of Lessons and Carols in Strathblane Parish Church
TUES 17th	7.30pm	Book Group Christmas Edition! In Strathblane Library
TUES 24th	4pm	All Age Christingle Service in Strathblane Parish Church.
TUES 24th	11.30pm	Watchnight Service in Strathblane Parish Church. Community singing from 11.15pm

JANUARY

FRI 3rd	4 for 4.15	Senior Citizens -Pantomime (Peter Pan) & Meal. Contact: Lorna Young - 771705
MON 6th	7.30pm	Strathblane Community Council Meeting in the Primary School. All welcome
SAT 18th	7.30pm	Blane Valley Burns Club Burns Supper in the Edmonstone Hall. Tickets George Eastcroft 770390 and committee members from beginning of January
TUES 21st	7.30pm	Senior Citizens — Murray O'Donnell & Friends in the Edmonstone Hall

There is no December issue. Please send all late-January & February events for the Calendar and other items to cc@strathblanefield.org.uk by Monday January 20th Why not sponsor an issue of the BVB? Local businesses can contact every household in the village with an advertising insert.

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