



## Newsletter

Once again we bring you a summary of the activities and discussions that have taken place over the last year. For more detail on everything here plus more please visit our website: <https://balfroncc.org.uk>



### Balfron Active Places

This major project to improve the environment of the village has been under way, in partnership with Stirling Council, since 2015. The ambition is to develop Balfron as 'a space for living' — a space that is safe, green, accessible and attractive, facilitates social interaction, respects Balfron's history as a rural village, supports economic activity, and promotes positive behavioural change for the benefit of all who live, work, study and play in Balfron.

Through an extensive planning process including a range of public consultations at

which both positive and negative reactions from within both the community and the village businesses have been taken into account, this has been distilled to five key projects.

By the time this newsletter is circulated, we hope to have final confirmation of the funding for the proposals to improve the amenity of the village at The Clachan, and to resolve parking and speeding issues at Printers Row. There will be a separate communication as soon as the information is available.

The full plans and responses to them can be seen at

<https://balfronactiveplacesproposals.commonplace.is>

or through the link on the Balfron Community Council website: <https://balfroncc.org.uk>



**The Community Council** had been in discussion with Stirling Council for proper signposting of the public toilets in the village, and this has now been installed. At the same time Lachlan Cameron kindly decided to paint the outside of the public toilets, with some funding help from the Community Council. Our thanks to Lachlan for his initiative.



And there's more .....

Lachie also became aware of the state of disrepair of the bus stop at the Surgery and asked Stirling Council who was responsible for its upkeep. To our surprise it seems that it is owned by the Community Council. With costs met by the Community Pride Fund Lachie has volunteered to undertake the work – once the weather is amenable. If anyone wishes to help Lachie in this work, please contact the Community Council and we'll pass on your details.

**Millenium Benches:** Peter Craig (with help from Lachie ... again) has volunteered to refurbish all the community benches. As has been noted on social media the newly refurbished bench at the Co-op bus stop has been met with approval. We are reviewing the siting of some of the benches to ensure they are in the most useful places around the village.



Our thanks to Stirling Council's Community Pride Fund for a donation towards the costs.

#### **Car parking:**

Space in the public car park remains a challenge, and there are plans afoot to rethink the layout and improve the space available. We are delighted that a £55,000 grant was received for the installation of two electric car charging points, which are now operational.



**There have been a number of interesting proposals for the telephone box** in Dunmore Street which is now owned by the Community Council. The proposal to “yarn-bomb” the box was subject to objections so there will now be a weekend devoted to painting the box in the Spring. Look out for more information.

**A local resilience plan** was developed towards the end of 2018 and is available on the CC website. There is a **Balfroon Community Resilience** Facebook group to find the latest news in the event of a major incident that affects the village and this is continually updated. Please “like” and share it!

A major incident is defined as

- an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in Balfroon
- an event or situation which threatens serious damage to the environment in Balfroon

This plan does not remove the emergency services as being the first point of contact for incidents - its aim is to provide a communication and response strategy when a major incident occurs.



**A new piece of play equipment**, with improved safety matting, was installed in the small play area in Donaldson Way – this seems to be extremely popular. Having received the long-awaited Section 75 funding, plans are underway to replace some of the equipment in the small playpark in Donaldson Park. Negotiations are ongoing with Stirling Council to advance this project in the Summer period; the surrounding fence will also be replaced.

The Community Council continues to support and promote **The Mulberry Bush Montessori Balfroon 10k**. The road race will be held this year on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, and once again is aspiring to be the ‘greenest’ race in Scotland, as well as one of the most popular. Over the years the 10k has contributed significant funds to the High School and local charities. The committee are always looking for more volunteers — you can contact them through their website or through the Community Council.

**Planning:** Any planning issues relating to the village are discussed at our meetings. One successful application approved which we supported was for the proposed Balfron Business Hub on the site of the former Stirling Council depot. There was significant discussion about a proposal for a development at the top of Ballochruin Road which did not meet with wholesale approval. The Community Council supported the 9 objectors to the proposal at the planning panel meeting at which, however, the plan was approved. There continues to be discussion with landowners and Stirling Council about public access between Endrick Gardens and Buchanan Street. After prolonged pressure by the Community Council the road to Balfron Station was partially upgraded and we would expect this to be completed in the coming months.

The Community Council is represented at the **Neighbourhood of Care Reference Group**. This meets every couple of months to discuss matters relating to health and social care issues affecting our residents. During the year we have heard about improvements to Dementia Services, further development of MECS in the area (the impact of the recent involvement of Trossachs Search and Rescue in MECS delivery cannot be underestimated), legal services available to the elderly from the Solicitors for the Elderly organisation (for example free advice on Will provision and Power of Attorney), and the Handy Persons service promoted by Stirling Council.

The NCR Group was initially set up in 2014 to lobby for the continuation of care services at Strathendrick Care Home. You may be aware that once again the future of the Care Home is in some doubt. The Community Council and local councillors are actively seeking a positive resolution culminating in a continuation of respite services within the village. We have been informed that no final decision has been made with regard to final model of care, despite a substantial sum have been set aside for its refurbishment.

We welcomed a number of guests at our monthly meetings last year:

- Loch Lomond Fisheries Trust initiating a project to eradicate evasive plant species from the area.
- Rural Stirling Housing Association about their allocation policies.
- Drymen-based sustainability group, HubG63 – see their Facebook page for information of their activities and their Neighbourhood Food delivery scheme.
- Representatives of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service reported on Retained Fire Services and commended the continued excellent commitment and professionalism of the Balfron Crew.
- Balfron Community Mental Health project which is being established by Stirling-based charity, Action in Mind – for more information contact Katie Heslop at Action in Mind.
- Town Break Dementia Support Services, whose Lesley Milne introduced her role as Befriender Co-ordinator for Town Break, which works with dementia patients in a variety of ways across Stirlingshire. Full details can be found at [www.townbreakstirling.org](http://www.townbreakstirling.org). A Friendship group meets in Killlearn on the first Tuesday of the month.

Throughout the year we have welcomed questions from residents about areas of concern such as dog fouling (this year at the school and in response to our requests Bellrock have installed signage), bus services (and we endorse the commitment of Jim Burns to the sustainability of the local depot and to the maintenance and development of routes serving the village), speeding throughout the village, cycling safety and parking limits outside the Library.



The Community Council continues to support the volunteers of **Balfron in Bloom** who do sterling work around the village. As always, they do need help in maintaining the beds and planters. If you feel that you have some time to help, Janet Rutherford will be happy to hear from you. If you don't know Janet personally, you can contact her via the Community Council. Volunteers to help with the annual coffee morning and plant sale (on the first Saturday in May) would also be welcome.

At each meeting we receive a report on matters relating to Stirling Council from our elected representatives. They are Graham Lambie, Alistair Berrill and Rob Davies. The items raised and information provided by the councillors can be viewed in the minutes of our meetings, which are posted on the noticeboards and the Balfron Community Council website.

**PC Steven Graham and PC Gary Martin** are the Ward Officers for the Forth and Endrick area. They report monthly and attend as many meetings as their work schedules allow. They are based at Balfron Police Office and can be contacted there, on 101, or at [ForthEndrickCPT@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:ForthEndrickCPT@scotland.pnn.police.uk). It is recommended that this email address is used by the local community for email contact. The Police Service regularly publishes useful information and updates on social media, including appeals for information, updates about road closures and crime prevention advice. Their Facebook and Twitter pages can be found at:

[www.facebook.com/forthvalleypolicedivision](http://www.facebook.com/forthvalleypolicedivision)  
[www.twitter.com/stirlingpol](http://www.twitter.com/stirlingpol)

[www.facebook.com/policescotland](http://www.facebook.com/policescotland)  
[www.twitter.com/policescotland](http://www.twitter.com/policescotland)

### Community Council Members

Colin Cameron, Chair

Robert Young, Vice-Chair

Bill Noblett, Treasurer

Christine Wilson, Secretary

John Nicholson, Planning

Fraser Allan

Laura Elder

Alison Lamont Chalmers

David McGowan

Luci Rooney

Our Minute-taker is Carsten Mandt.

There remains one vacancy on the Community Council so if you would like to be part of shaping the way forward for our village please get in touch with Colin at [hello@balfroncc.org.uk](mailto:hello@balfroncc.org.uk).

**Keeping in Touch:** There are two Community Council notice boards in the village – one outside Doyle's café, and the other by the car park at the Co-op. On these notice boards you'll find the Minutes of the last meeting; the date, location and agenda for the next meeting; and other information affecting the community. Minutes and other correspondence are also available in Balfron Library.

We can be contacted by email at [hello@balfroncc.org.uk](mailto:hello@balfroncc.org.uk); or through messaging the [BCC Facebook page](#). Our website is [www.balfroncc.org.uk](http://www.balfroncc.org.uk). Residents are very welcome to attend and contribute to Community Council meetings, held in the High School at 7.30 pm on the first Thursday of each month (exc January and July) - April and August meetings in the McIntock Hall.