

Convenor's Report Patrick M. Trust

There has been no Newsletter since June 2019 and it is a year since the last 'real' meeting of the Community Council on 16th March in the Geilston Hall. At that meeting for the first time the hall was set up with 2 metres between chairs and the microphone was wiped before passing on to another speaker. The major topic was the response as a community to the coronavirus epidemic which was just emerging as a serious life threatening illness.

A new group called Cardross Cares was set up with enormous assistance from many members of the community, but in particular I would like to acknowledge Rev. Maggie Macarthur, Morag Elliot, Judy Wilson, Elspeth Gibb and Stella Kinloch who set up a database and closed Facebook page to coordinate volunteers able to help people who were having to self-isolate or who had to shield and remain at home. Many thanks to elected members and other volunteers who placed postcards with information at every household to raise awareness of the new group. CardrossCares is still operating but the need has decreased with many home delivery services now available. If you know of anyone who has unmet needs in the village please email cardrosscares@gmail.com or call me (841387) or Rev Maggie Macarthur (849329).

The main task for the Community Council is to allow comments from every resident on how our village is developing, trying to maintain the character and pleasant environment for all our residents. We are well served with local amenities and the Chemist, Co-op, Newsagent, Post Office and General Store, excepting our splendid Library, which is sadly closed due to covid, have all done a great job during lockdown. Our two nurseries and hairdressers

plus a takeaway shop mean we do not have to go far for all our needs. It is important to remember to patronize our local shops or we will lose them and it is striking how the high streets in nearby towns have empty shops. I should like to thank our local shopkeepers, nurseries and the Cardross Inn for all their assistance to the community during the lockdowns over the last year.

The main A814 has been noticeably quieter but traffic flow and speeding are a constant concern. We work closely with the Police who understand our worries and recently they have increased their presence in the village and issued speeding tickets. There is an unmarked police car in the area so local motorists need to be careful and watch their speed. The Police usually attend our monthly meeting in Geilston Hall and give a short report at the start to allow officers to return to their normal duties. We receive written reports during lockdown Zoom meetings as the Police are not allowed to make use of Zoom. If you need to report concerns to police, and it is not an emergency, send an email but the address is very long – it took me three goes to type it out with no mistakes! helensburghandlmondsouthcommunitypolicingteam@strathclyde.pnn.police.uk

Many thanks to those elected Community Councillors who attend the meetings and work away in the background with minutes, planning scrutiny and finances. I would also like to thank David Kinniburgh and Richard Trail for their regular attendance at our Zoom meetings and we noted with regret the sad death in 2020 of Councillor Ellen Morton, who had served Cardross residents well for many years.

Planning

There is ongoing uncertainty over the intentions of Avant Homes in respect of planning permission granted for the construction of 158 new homes on land north of Cardross Primary School. In summer 2019, the Scottish Government reporter confirmed that the project could proceed only with the main access via Darleith Road, and subject to stringent conditions. Planning permission remains in force until July 2022, but the Community Council has no information as to whether Avant intends to proceed with this development.

In summer 2020 a local contractor proposed the construction of a storage building and enclosed yard on wooded land close to Darleith House. The Community Council and a large number of

local residents lodged objections to this application, which was subsequently refused by the Council. Prior to submitting his plans, the applicant had illegally felled a number of mature trees on the site, resulting in the issue of a restoration order by Forestry Scotland. No restoration appears to have been undertaken as yet.

Following the controversial decision by the Scottish Reporter to permit development at a site on the main road adjacent to Shira Lodge, the red sandstone wall was partially demolished and has become an eyesore. As this was a listed structure, Historic Environment Scotland were contacted for advice, but their response was that the wall no longer has listed status. The original applicant has withdrawn interest in the site, which is now for sale.

Health

We remain concerned about our local hospital services but are delighted to note that our local General Practitioners (GPs) have just taken over the management of provision for weekend and evening out of hours GP cover. The Health Board have failed to provide full cover for several years and this vastly improved service is a credit to our local GPs who are to be thanked for their superb organization. This is in addition to their cover for Minor Injuries from 9pm overnight and weekends. So the hospital services are all operational over 24 hours which means fewer patients have to

travel to Glasgow or Paisley.

We are impressed with the local response from our NHS with the delivery of the covid vaccinations to all our elderly population and no doubt this will continue as the lower age ranges are offered the vaccine. It will be really important that we all take up the offer of the vaccine in the summer as even the young, healthy folk need to help protect us older Grannies and Grandpas next winter. Let us hope the new vaccination will allow us all to return to a normal life for the latter half of 2021.

Roads & Transport

CYCLE TRACK: Progress on the long-delayed cycle track remains painfully slow. Following a public consultation which showed a preference for the route to be realigned adjacent to the railway, landowners are being contacted regarding land acquisition and route surveying is currently under way. Work on the footpath and proposed bridge over the Geilston Burn has been delayed by poor weather and to avoid disturbance during the fish breeding season.

DARLEITH ROAD/RED ROAD: There is local concern about a large hole that has been excavated on Darleith Road which has been left open for many months and is now filled with water. Argyll & Bute Council seem appear unprepared to tackle the problem,

which is a risk to road users, until the landowner repairs the drainage system on the adjacent field.

Elsewhere on Red Road and Darleith Road, poor drainage causes flooding, which can make the road impassable to walkers. During the winter it also freezes, causing an ice hazard to road users.

PAVEMENT PARKING: Parking on pavements, while not yet illegal, causes inconvenience to pedestrians and forces wheelchair users and parents with push-chairs and toddlers on to the road. Car owners are urged to avoid parking on the pavement.

Pavements can also be obstructed by overgrown hedges and residents are requested to keep hedges trimmed to prevent this.

Rural & Environment

NOISE NUISANCE: Excessive noise from Cardross Sawmill and from train horns continues to be a subject of complaint from local residents, particularly as the noise can be heard from early morning until late at night. The disturbance caused is considerable and has been referred on multiple occasions to Argyll & Bute Council and to the Scottish Parliament in an attempt to have the noise levels and times reduced, but without success.

BEACH CLEAN: There was no Spring Beach Clean in 2020, but we were able to organise a very successful event in October when around thirty volunteers came along, including parents with young children all keen to do their bit. Rubbish bags, gloves and hand sanitiser were made available and people knew how to maintain the regulatory 2-metre space. We picked up a depressing amount

of plastic bottles, cans and fast-food wrappers, along with a variety of other rubbish. However, the total amount of rubbish collected was less than expected and we suspect that some other public-spirited locals go along the shore to pick up stuff. Well done whoever you are. Look out for the next Beach Clean during 2021!

LITTER AND DOG FOULING: Some thoughtless dog-owners persist in allowing their dogs to foul the village pavements without bothering to pick up the mess. Dog poo bags are widely available and when used can be placed in any waste bin.

Litter is a blight on our pavements and roadsides and we urge everyone to take litter home or to use the waste bins provided.

To report dog fouling, fly tipping, or an abandoned car contact 01546 605514 or use the Argyll & Bute Council web site.

Geilston Hall

The Hall provide facilities for local groups to meet. However, use of the hall for all activities has been suspended owing to coronavirus restrictions. The Hall is owned by the people of

Cardross and if you would be interested in using the hall, or helping the Management Committee, please email Patrick Trust. The AGM will be held in late August and is open to all.

Cardross CAN

Cardross Climate Action Network started in October 2020 at the Beach Clean, when a group of residents discussed our concerns about the crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. We conducted a survey on attitudes in Cardross in December, and of 139 responses, 89% said they were worried to some extent about climate change, and 85% about biodiversity loss.

We are creating a network to share knowledge and experience of ways to take better care of this beautiful planet, and looking for practical ways to help each other to do so. In lockdown we are using Facebook and YouTube, and conversations are starting about

electric cars, heat pumps, red squirrels, active travel, and more.

A petition to speed up progress on the cycle path was signed by over 1600 people and submitted to the Council. We ran a Hustings-by-YouTube for the by-election in March, when candidates gave a short video of their views about how to mitigate the problems. Cardross resident George King will answer our recycling queries on Zoom. As restrictions lift, we hope to partner with Keep Scotland Beautiful to arrange more informative talks and engaging events, and together to create a vision for a zero-carbon Cardross in 2045.

Your Community Council

Dr Patrick M. Trust, *Convenor* (drpmtrust@btinternet.com)

Mike Crowe, *Vice Convenor*

Duncan Stirling, *Secretary* (duncan_stirling@yahoo.co.uk)

Brian Craven, *Treasurer*

Rob Irving, *Planning*

Bob Murray, *Rural & Environment*

Bobby Beggs

Mike Brown

Josephine Cameron

Alasdair MacCuish

The Accounts Examiner is Margaret Calder

The Community Council has 10 members, from a full complement of 16. Expressions of interest would be welcomed from any adults in the village who might wish to join us by standing for election. We would also welcome two or three youth representatives.

Meetings of the Community Council normally take place in Geilston Hall at 8.00pm on the third Monday of every month, except July and December, and are open to the public. At present all meetings are conducted by Zoom but we hope to resume meeting at Geilston Hall soon, in combination with Zoom.

Cardross Community Council can be contacted by email at the addresses shown on left.