

Convenor's Report **Patrick M. Trust**

There was no Newsletter last year as we were without a Community Council owing to insufficient members standing to form a new Community Council after the elections. I am grateful to the folk who were able to put their names forward for the repeat election and thus enable the new Community Council to be formally elected and meet again. We are still short of our permitted number and we would welcome anyone who would wish to join as a co-opted member until the next round of elections.

I am grateful to my predecessor Tony Davey for all the hard work he has done for many years in keeping the Community Council involved in local decision making, and note that we are also fortunate with our three local councillors for Lomond South Ward who regularly attend our meetings.

I believe the main task for the Community Council is to watch how our village develops and to maintain the character and pleasant environment for all our local residents. We are well served with local amenities and the Pharmacy, Co-operative food store, Newsagent, Post Office and General Store, together with the splendid Library, Hairdressers and 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. It is striking how the high streets in our towns have so many empty shops.

The main A814 is a busy road, and 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 have 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 attend our meetings and give a short report at the start to allow officers to attend to their normal duties. There have been problems with youths arriving by train who meet to drink alcohol. The police and Transport Police are aware of this and are monitoring the station, especially at weekends if the weather is fine. When under the influence of alcohol there has been vandalism in the village park and elsewhere and this is unacceptable to local residents. If you do need to report concerns to police, and it is not an emergency, phone 101 or email: helensburghandlomondsouthcommunitypolicingteam@strathclyde.pnn.police.uk

The Cycle Path between Dumbarton and Helensburgh is in the news again. This remains incomplete after 20 years of pushing for progress so let us hope the latest consultation bears fruit and we get a complete track and avoid the main road which is not a safe place for bicycles.

Last year the village rose to the occasion marking the 100 years since the end of hostilities in the First World War. The 0600 piper was clearly heard at the War Memorial and the parade and service were well attended. Many thanks to the local people who contributed to the display of memorabilia in Geilston Hall with especial thanks to Michael and Rosemary Wilson for allowing their respective father's medals to be shown. Nancy Gray also showed how the collection in the village has grown over the years and continues to raise large sums for Poppy Scotland.

Many thanks to those elected Community Councillors who attend the meetings and work away in the background with minutes, planning scrutiny and finances.

Planning

The main planning issue during the year has been the ongoing proposal by Avant Homes to build 158 houses on land north of Cardross Primary School, together with the associated access arrangements. Planning permission for this development, subject to various conditions regarding access, was granted in January 2017. In June 2018, the developer submitted a further application claiming that some of these conditions were infeasible, and proposing instead that the main access to the development should be via Barrs Road, rather than Darleith Road as in the original application.

An emergency meeting of the Community Council on 17 July 2018 to discuss this revised proposal attracted 137 members of

the public, and over 150 letters of objection were lodged with the planning authority, including a letter of concern from the Community Council itself. A meeting of the area Planning Committee to consider the proposal was due to take place on 31 October 2018, but at the last minute the developer asked for a postponement. There was some local astonishment when, in February 2019, the developer submitted an appeal to Scottish ministers on the grounds of 'non-determination'. A site visit by the Reporter appointed to consider the case took place on 1 April 2019. Despite initial indications that a verdict would be given in early May 2019, the outcome is not now expected until the end of June.

Health

Anxiety about local services remains and we continue to support the retention of services at the Vale of Leven Hospital. Evening provision of General Practitioner Service at the hospital has failed on many occasions over the last year with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde unable to provide cover. This is in stark contrast to the overnight service which is provided by local and Glasgow doctors and has allowed the Minor Injuries and Medical Assessment Units to remain open for over 10 years without interruption. It is

noteworthy that the Community Midwife Unit has been relieved and has a bright future. In addition new imaging equipment for Mammography and CT scans is to be installed at the hospital.

The Helensburgh and Lomond Community Health and Social Work Partnership is still in its infancy but the budget is woefully inadequate for the tasks it has to fulfill. We remain concerned for the future provision of local services and will continue to monitor the provision from NHS Highland and NHS Glasgow & Clyde.

Roads & Transport

TRAINS: The number of complaints about poor punctuality and station 'skipping' appear to have reduced, although late-running and cancellations still occur. Cardross Station ticket office continues to operate from a temporary Portakabin following a minor fire 18 months ago. In the meantime parking places have been reduced and local residents have had to put up with generator noise.

CYCLE TRACK: Progress with the long-overdue Cardross to Helensburgh Cycle Track has been limited to the new track from Ferry Road to the Railway Station and a planned extension of the track through the park to the Geilston Burn. However, we still are unable to cycle on a dedicated track beyond the village boundary. A firm of consultants has been engaged by Argyll & Bute Council

to determine the best route for a complete cycle track from Helensburgh to Dumbarton. Cardross residents were invited to express their views by written questionnaire or online and at a drop-in event at Geilston Hall. We must expect further delay in progress while Argyll & Bute Council and the consultants analyse the results and consider the way forward.

DARLEITH ROAD: Concern has been expressed by residents of Darleith Road and by local walkers and cyclists about the high number of large tanker vehicles carrying waste sludge to Cairniedrourth Farm. SEPA have given assurances that the waste matter is not hazardous, but there is no doubt of the damage being done to roadside grass verges and to the road surface.

Rural & Environment

SAWMILL: Following multiple complaints from village residents regarding noise from Cardross Sawmill, a noise monitoring exercise was undertaken in August 2018 by Argyll and Bute's Department of Environmental Health. As a consequence, the Sawmill was deemed to constitute a statutory noise nuisance, and a Section 80 abatement notice under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 was served in November 2018 requiring Ridings Sawmills to abate the noise nuisance by 8th March 2019.

Further noise monitoring took place in April and May 2019, which showed a reduction in noise levels as compared to previous readings. The Sawmill were therefore deemed to have complied with the Section 80 notice. There is considerable scepticism among residents regarding this outcome, and at the time of writing an attempt is being made to ascertain exactly what in the way of noise reduction measures have in fact been implemented.

SCOTRAIL: Excessive noise from train horns continues from 6.00am until midnight every day. A new system is presently being tested which will provide a local audible warning at level-crossings

and should reduce the necessity for train horns to be sounded. We do not expect an abatement in noise any time soon.

BEACH CLEAN: Huge thanks to all who came along to join us on Saturday 13th April. Around forty supporters came out to help, including a number of enthusiastic youngsters and a contingent from the Scouts. Around fifty bags of assorted rubbish were collected – most of it plastic. Some money that was found amongst the litter was handed over to the organisers and Cardross Community Council will put this to good use for the community.

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

Litter continues to blight footpaths and roadsides within the village and beyond and we would urge everyone in our community 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 continues to provide facilities for local groups to meet. The After School Club and Breakfast Club are open during school term and provide a valuable service for parents who work full time. The Guides, Brownies and Rainbows meet weekly and various fitness classes have come and gone. The Saunders School of Dance continues with twice weekly classes and Orions Archers meet weekly.

Three new Trustees are helping the Management Committee with advice on how to raise the funds we require to reroof the hall

so that it can continue to be used for the next 130 years. The Primary 6 Class at the school undertook a project on Charles Rennie Mackintosh for the 150th Anniversary of his birth in June 2018 and many people visited their poster display. The school also added a poppy display to our event celebrating the end of the First World War on 11th November.

The Hall is owned by the people of Cardross and if you would be interested in advising or helping the Management Committee the AGM will be held in late August and is open to all.

Your Community Council

Dr Patrick M. Trust, *Convenor*

Mike Crowe, *Vice Convenor*

Duncan Stirling, *Secretary*

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 a complement of 16 members, of which 10 positions are currently held. We would welcome expressions of interest from any adults in the village who might join us by standing for election. We would also welcome two or three youth representatives.

Meetings of the Community Council take place in Geilston Hall at 8.00pm on the third Monday of every month, except July and December. Meetings are open to the public and members of the community are welcome to come along and share their views.

Cardross Community Council can be contacted by email:

Convenor (drpmtrust@btinternet.com)

Secretary (duncan_stirling@yahoo.co.uk)