



Congratulations

Duncan Mcadam & Lesley MacGregor were married in the Floral Hall in Inverness on 23th April, followed by a fabulous party at the Whitebridge Hotel. They would sincerely like to thank all their friends, family and colleagues for all the generous gifts and kind thoughts, and for joining them on their special day, making it very special!! And huge thanks to David & Sarah, the proprietors of the Whitebridge Hotel and all the staff, for working so hard, being so



accommodating, cooking amazing food and giving everyone such a wonderful evening! Xx

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Church Youth Activities

The **Friday Klub**, for primary 5 to primary 7 pupils, has had another successful year with about twelve children attending regularly on Friday evenings at Gorthleck Village Hall. It will finish for the season on Friday, 28th May, and will resume again in the autumn. Thanks are due to the helpers, Sandy & Ishbel McLure, Margaret Fraser, Paul Davidson (Inverness) and Fiona Bateman who regularly give of their time, energy and skill to make the Klub a success.

It is hoped to run another **Holiday Club**, as in previous years, from Monday 2nd to Friday 6th August at 2.00pm in Gorthleck Hall. The holiday club is for children in the primary 1-7 age-range and will involve outdoor games (weather permitting), craft activities and a story-time. Further details are available on 01456 486435.

Knitting B

Thank you to everyone who donated wool, patterns, knitting needles, books, their time and much more to our knitting bee in Foyers, especially Shona Macrae, Marion Firth, Janette Colville, Maureen Craven, and Sheila.

We will keep you updated with our progress.

Contact Sally on 486 606 if you want to join our bee or for any more information.



Elizabeth Mackenzie and Hugo Biermann

Congratulations to Elizabeth and Hugo who were married on the 15th May at St Andrew's Cathedral Inverness.

Some mothers may remember Elizabeth as one of the midwives and latterly health visitor when the nurses were based in the Foyers Medical Centre.



Letters to the Editor

The main reason for contacting you is, if possible through the Bulletin, we would like to thank all those friends and neighbours who support, care and help Anna Maclaren in so many ways.

Mother wishes to thank her immediate neighbours Sylvia, Bill and Rosie, and also Ruby, Sally, Tim & Aggie, Duncan & Chrissie Cameron, Sally, Ann Rose and Ann McMillan.

Our apologies if we have missed out anyone.

Frances, Hazel and Sheena her three daughters and her son Charles would also like to extend their sincere gratitude to those who keep a watch over Anna.

As I live in the very south of England it is very assuring to know mum is well supported by the people of Foyers.

Many sincere thanks.

Frances & Ken Foster

This letter was missed from the last two Bulletins I can only apologise to Anna as well as Frances and Ken Foster for this oversight. The Editor

Stratherrick Primary Parent Council

The Stratherrick Primary Parent Council would like to say a huge thank you to the local businesses that donated prizes for our bingo night. They are ~ The Whitebridge Hotel, Dores Inn, Craigdarroch Hotel, Lovat Arms Hotel, D J MacDougall Butchers (Fort Augustus), Foyers Shop and Ramada Jarvis (Inverness). Also thanks to Peggy our bingo caller and all the parents and families who donated prizes and supported us on the night. A great night was had by all.

Local Fire Brigade

We are always looking for old scrap cars to practice our extraction techniques and could collect them locally. Please contact Neil 486283 , Iain 01808 521226 or David 486761. Also if anyone is looking for a FREE home fire safety visit please contact any of the above No's or pick up a card in the Foyers shop.

Worst winter in ???

Many thanks for all the suggestions. A quick search of the various web sites (radio, newspaper Meteorological office or television) suggest that any answer, from 100 years ago to 1962 or even as recent as 1995, are possible. I suggest that it depends on just where you were as there seemed to be a large difference in snow and cold levels in the local area, and also what your memories are as to just what the answer should be.

Camping and Caravanning Site proposed for Lower Foyers

On Wednesday, 12th May 2010, Mr and Mrs Forbes of Foyers Mains held a public consultation at the Foyers Primary School regarding their plans to establish a campsite in Lower Foyers. This would be located adjacent to the mouth of the River Foyers, in the lower field situated between Riverside (to the north of the houses) and the loch.

The proposed development would include 100 pitches for touring caravans and tents as well as associated facilities including a shop and café.

At the time of printing of this issue of the Boleskine Bulletin, planning permission has not yet been obtained.

CHARITY TABLE TOP SALE RAISES FUNDS

The Charity Table Top Sale held in Stratherrick Public Hall on Saturday 29th May raised **£140.00** .

The organisers would like to thank everyone who hired a table and also those who joined them on the day to support the event.

Susan Brooman and Susan MacKay are taking part in “Cycle Vietnam” in November 2010 to raise money for Breakthrough Breast Cancer (SCO39058) and Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund (110325) and the monies raised from this event – from the hire of tables, teas and coffees and also from generous donations - will go to the above charities. Many thanks.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO EMILY & MACKENZIE BELL



One year on . . . & what a bonnie pair!

A belated congratulations to the Bell family of Whitebridge on the safe arrival of their twins, Emily & Mackenzie, born just over a year ago on 26th May 2009.

Local Hall Threatened With Closure

Stratherrick Public Hall was recently threatened with closure on Health & Safety grounds due to vandalism to the sewage system. Over the last few months the Management Committee have been experiencing many problems with blocked drains and overflowing effluent, and it was only recently with the involvement of Scottish Water and the Highland Council Environmental Health Department that the problem was finally traced to a vandalised outlet at the front of the Hall. A representative of the Hall Committee stated that "pieces of tree branches and fence posts had been hammered into an access pipe on the sewage outlet system, breaking the pipe, blocking the outlet and causing a sewage back-up to the rear of the building with extensive flooding around and underneath the Hall. I cannot understand the limited mentality of anyone who would carry out such a mindless and stupid act - the work involved in clearing the blockage and repairing the resulting damage is costing almost £2000.00, and this is money which the Hall can barely afford and which is now denied to the local community". This latest act of vandalism follows on from another serious event last year when 30 mature trees were cut down for no apparent reason on land behind the Hall car park. These events have been reported to the Police, and they have asked for help from any member of the public who might have information relating to these matters - they can be contacted at Fort Augustus on 01320.366400 or at Northern Constabulary Headquarters in Inverness on 01463.715555.

URGENT....VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Over the year Stratherrick Public Hall has been used for a variety of entertainment purposes - from outside speakers, shinty sales, dramatic productions, yoga, parents and toddler groups. to country dancing as well as for the bigger occasions of birthdays, weddings and New Year celebrations.

However the number of committee members looking after the hall is currently declining - fast. And this is bad news for the hall and its users.

If you can spare just **4** evenings a year to be on our committee we need to hear from you urgently.

If we cannot get more volunteers to join us then the hall may have to close. And then the whole community of Stratherrick would lose out.

So please - join our committee. Phone Hugh on 486350 for more information.

The future of your public hall is in your hands!

Fergus Fortune

Died at home (Phoenix, Errogie) on 1st March 2010

A year ago Fergus celebrated his 100th birthday – a landmark he was very grateful to have achieved.

Fergus was born in Melton Mowbray, then, when he was about 12, his family moved to Lairg where his father became postmaster. Fergus went on to study electrical engineering at Edinburgh University. He joined the Admiralty where he was particularly involved with underwater weapons and submarines and was based in Bath.

He married Elsie Taylor from Yorkshire and after his retirement they moved to Scotland where they bought Phoenix and settled there happily. Sadly Elsie was to become seriously ill and Fergus was grateful for the help she received from the local doctor and district nurse.

Thirty years ago, following Elsie's passing, he married the district nurse Rose and they enjoyed a happy time together, sharing their love of hill-walking and caravanning and enjoying the beauty and peacefulness of Stratherrick.

Fergus had musical talent and was organist in both Foyers and Boleskine Churches. He was very interested in computers and as he was still driving in his 90s was a regular visitor to PC World for upgrades!!

He was a man of many talents, a caring husband, a loyal friend and a good neighbour to many in the Strath.

ROY HALL

Died 10th April 2010

Roy lived in and loved this area for 32 years.

Originally from Birmingham, he spent about 13 years of his life in Kenya, originally in the RAF. He worked on the railway for much of his time there and learned to speak Swahili, which he could still converse in many years later. Whilst in Kenya, he married, and his son Kelvin was born there.

After returning from Africa, he lived in Kent and eventually came to Gorthleck in 1978. He worked at the Coylumbridge Hotel for about a year and then for Angus C. Fraser right up to his retirement. The job involved mainly driving and helping to maintain the whole area, of which he was very proud.

He was great friends with Ray and Joyce Munn and after Ray's death in 1980, Roy and Joyce remained friends and companions until his death recently on 10th April, aged 81 years.

Roy never wanted to leave his surroundings and in fact, only ever returned South twice, to his son Kelvin's wedding and later to his grand-daughter Kelly's wedding.

He had a great love of sport and played many sports including cricket and latterly badminton and bowls at Stratherrick Hall. Other hobbies included gardening and keeping Joyce under control!

His funeral on 16th April at Boleskine Church and Drumtemple cemetery was very well attended and the eulogy was read by his son Kelvin.

He will be greatly missed by many of us.

His gravestone will bear the words "Kwa heri ya kuonana" - Good-bye, until we meet gain.

Jill Cooper

George William Smurthwaite

1926 - 2010

George William Smurthwaite died unexpectedly in hospital on 18th March 2010. The funeral service was held at the Inverness Crematorium on Thursday 25th March. Bill and his wife Jenny, who were married for 63 years, lived and worked for many years in Elwick, Hartlepool, worshipping at St Peter's Church Elwick, where Bill served as a Church Warden. They moved to Scotland to be near their daughter Elaine and came to live at Larch View 3 years ago. We extend to the whole family our sincere sympathy.

ANN ROSE

Sincere condolences to the family and friends of Ann Rose of Suilven, Gorthleck who passed away peacefully on 27th May. She remained very brave and uncomplaining throughout her illness and will be deeply missed by all who loved and knew her.

New Clinical Computer Software for Medical Centre at Foyers

Our present computer software for recording clinical information and details about medication is going to be phased out so we have to change it. This means a lot of work during the change over period and a lot of training for all of us to get to know the new software.

The change over days will be on the 20th and 21st July and we will have fewer appointments on these days and ask if possible to book appointments for routine checks after these dates. We will be happy to see

anyone who cannot wait but dispensing medication will be slower and labels will be hand written.

The week prior to the change over, that is from Tuesday the 13th July till the 20th we cannot record anything on the old computer system and will have to keep a manual record so again routine check ups are best delayed till after the 23rd of July. Our dispenser would also appreciate it if requests for repeat medication are made before the 12th or after the 23rd July because of the difficulties the computer change over will cause.

We will have training days before and after installation but this should only be for one day at a time and mean only there will be fewer appointments available on that day but back to normal the next day. These will be the 11th June, 6th, 14th and 30th July and 5th October.

We are sorry for the disruption but after completion we should have better computer software to assist us providing medical care.

Drs Gregor and Lesley Mackintosh and staff

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Christian Comment – June 2010

Every one of us is a citizen of one nation or another – whether we prefer to be known as Scottish or British or any other nationality. Some people are able to choose where they live; others have to accept the situation in which they find themselves. Recently many of us have had the opportunity to vote for the kind of government we would like to have – a privilege denied to many people in the world.

The Christian finds herself or himself to be part of this arrangement of affairs, but also has to recognise another form of citizenship – we have chosen to be part of the Kingdom of God when we acknowledge that Jesus, the Messiah of the Jews, is our King. The Roman governor of Jerusalem, Pontius Pilate, early in the 1st Century had a notice fixed above the cross on which Jesus was crucified saying that Jesus of Nazareth was King of the Jews. Jesus had told his followers that he would die, and then come alive again, and after he had returned to Heaven, would send the Holy Spirit to empower them to be faithful members of his Kingdom, and to understand the teaching that he had given them about that Kingdom which is recorded in the four Gospels written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The Acts of the Apostles tells us how this message of the Kingdom of God spread throughout the Roman world of those days, and subsequent history records the spread of these truths around the entire world.

In the 21st Century the prayer that Jesus taught his followers still makes good sense for ourselves:

“Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven; forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil . . .”

Martyn Bateman

Christian Aid Week Thank you to those who distributed and collected Christian Aid envelopes, and to all who were generous with their donating for this most valuable work around the world.

Church Meetings

Church of Scotland

Sunday: Boleskine 10.00am, Dores 11.30am. Mr Ian King 01463 751 293

United Services for Boleskine and Dores are at 11.00 a.m. on the last Sunday of each month at alternate venues.

Episcopal Church – St Paul’s Strathnairn

Sunday: 11.00am. The Very Reverend Gerald Stranraer-Mull 01463 870986

Free Church

Sunday: 4.30pm Errogie. Mr S. McLure 01456 486435

Free Church Continuing

Sunday: 11.00am & 6.30pm Wednesday: 7.30pm. Dores Mr D. Fraser 01456 486408

Free Presbyterian Church

6.00pm Gorthleck, every 4th Sunday. Mrs E. Fraser 01456 486282

Roman Catholic Church

12.30 pm, alternate Sundays, Whitebridge. Mrs Therese Finley 01456 486678

Inter-denominational Bible Study Thursdays 7.30 pm Rev. Martyn Bateman 01456 486 273

Stratherrick Primary School Update for Boleskine Bulletin May 2010

Hi there!

We have had a very busy few months at school recently! Read on to find out all the latest news!

Cycling proficiency

The P6 and 7's did cycling proficiency. It was really fun and it helped us to be safe on the road. Cycling proficiency was taught by Rena Slater and Teresa Tweedlie. They taught us how to stop so a car would know. They also told us how to start safely. We learnt how to position our self for a right hand turn and we learnt different hand signals. We also learnt how to do a controlled stop.

By Chloe and Jasmine

Flybe

On Wednesday the 24th of March Isabel, Kyle, Ruben, Iona, Josh, Lewis, Owen and Ruari from Stratherrick went to a football match called Flybe and it was fun. Ruari was in goals; Owen was in defence with Iona and Isabel. Josh, Ruben and Kyle were up front.

We had lots of fun☺.

By Isabel and Kyle☺☺

Inter-school Sports

The schools inter-school sports will be on next Saturday. The primaries (4 – 7) have been practising since they're the ones attending. At after school club we've done high jump, long jump and relay races its going well. We hope to make our school proud at the Bught Park.

By LEWIS, KAYLEIGH AND MILLIE.

Rugby



We have been doing rugby for the last four weeks and on Wednesday the 26th we are going to a rugby festival. The teams are the Stratherrick All-stars and the Stratherrick Gladiators. We have been practising for a while and we are ready to **WIN!** We learnt how to score a try and how to touch tackle and how to play non contact rugby and it was really fun and we are all looking forward to the rugby festival.

By Phoebe, Kai and Ruari.

Swimming lessons

The parent council organised this. We split up into four groups and got taught by four different teachers. We did round about twelve lessons. We took a bus into town and went to the Aquadome. We learnt back crawl, front crawl, how to hold your breath and diving off a ledge. On one of the occasions the bus broke down in the middle of nowhere and Mrs. Bryant, Mrs. Kirkland and Mr. Graham had to rescue us. They were rewarded greatly for their bravery!☺

By Ruben, Abi and Hamish

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS – COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23rd FEBRUARY 2010

Members present: M. Houston (Chairman), E. Merther (Secretary), K. Grant (Treasurer), M. Bateman, K. Fraser, P. Higham, L. MacGregor, A. MacPherson, A. Sutherland

Also present: Cllr M. Davidson, Cllr H. Wood, Mr R. Evans (TEC Services), Mr G. Irwin (North British Windpower)

Apologies received: A. Nicol, Cllr H. Carmichael, Cllr D. Hendry

Update on Corriegarth Wind Farm

Mr Graham Irwin representing North British Windpower attended the meeting to present the latest information. Since the initial proposals four to five years ago, negotiations have been undertaken with Highland Council TEC Services to agree the various transport issues including principal access route; road upgrades; restoration of roads following completion of contract. It has been agreed to concentrate on a single access route from the A9 via Daviot and Croachy, with improvements to narrow sections and to the very sharp corner at Errogie, and improved signage at villages and schools. Planning consent has now been obtained for 20 turbines for a 25 year period. Mr Irwin was unable to give an exact timescale, but thought that construction would probably begin within three to four years. He indicated that refurbishment of the turbines at the end of the 25 year period was theoretically possible, and a further planning application would be required for that. However, his own belief was that alternative renewable sources would be available by then, in which case the turbines would almost certainly be removed. This would mean complete clearance of the site, with only the concrete bases remaining. Money for decommissioning is included in the costings. NBW is currently awaiting the grid connection offer, which will indicate the proposed route for connection to the National Grid. This aspect is under the control of the National Grid, and Mr Irwin confirmed that the Community Council will have an opportunity to express its views on the proposals.

Mr Irwin reported that community benefit from NBW and the landowner for this project would amount to £100,000 per year for the 25 year life of the scheme, paid direct to a suitable Community Trust. Mr Sutherland informed him that a Community Trust is already in place, handling benefits from the Glendoe hydro and River E schemes. Mr Sutherland also enquired about the feasibility of more community involvement in the form of purchase of one of the turbines. Mr Irwin confirmed that this was possible, and has been done on some other schemes. He felt that this would need to be agreed in the early stages of planning a scheme, and it would now be difficult to renegotiate agreements in order to make this part of the Corriegarth scheme. The problem was raised of fast traffic on local roads, particularly in relation to children walking to school. It was noted that this had been a problem during the Glendoe construction. Mr Irwin agreed that a suitable traffic management plan would need to be in place to control speed and other safety issues. Cllr. Wood also reported that he has raised the matter of prompt repairs being carried out to roads after construction, as there were problems with delays following the Glendoe scheme. The Chairman thanked Mr Irwin for attending and presenting the information.

Winter Gritting & Road Maintenance

Mr Richard Evans of TEC Services attended to discuss recent problems in relation to the winter conditions.

Members informed Mr Evans of major problems in clearing roads due to large numbers of fallen trees, and also trees and vegetation overhanging with snow. This meant that in many areas the snow plough/gritter was completely unable to gain access to clear roads. Mrs MacGregor reported that she had spent many hours on the telephone trying to arrange clearance of roads for medical and ambulance access, and also for some elderly residents who were without fuel. She had been unable to obtain any assistance. It was agreed that the problem of trees and vegetation too close to the road is a long-term problem which has been neglected over a number of years, despite CC requests for work to be done. Mr Evans reported that a press release had been published reminding landowners of their obligations to keep roadsides clear, and agreed that a programme of clearance is necessary. In many areas the landowner in question is Forestry Commission, and other landowners will need to be identified and contacted.

Members will compile a list of problem areas for Mr Evans, and try to indicate priorities. Another problem was reported in relation to blading of roads. It was felt that this has arisen because the contractor has to change his gritting load from salt to sand, depending on the priority of the roads being treated, meaning that he has to return to the depot to change loads when moving from salted to sanded routes. This has resulted in delays to lower priority routes being bladed. Mr Evans will look into this. The Chairman thanked Mr Evans for attending for discussion.

Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

(a) Key Worker/Affordable Housing

The Secretary has now received a reply from Albyn Housing about progress on the Gorthleck scheme. They now have information on the housing mix and numbers, and wish to present their proposals to the CC prior to submitting their planning application. It is hoped that Helen Mackie (Development Officer with Albyn) will attend the next meeting to present these proposals. Confirmation is awaited.

(b) Wade's Bridge at Whitebridge

Mr Sutherland reported that an application had been made to the Community Trust for £45,000 towards this project. Approaches had been made to the various landowners concerned, but none is prepared to make any contribution. The Trust felt that it would have difficulty in justifying a grant of this size for such a project. This information has been passed back to Mr Townshend, and it was felt that other funding sources or a cheaper scheme would have to be considered.

(c) Fraser Monument & Burial Ground at Foyers

The Secretary met with Craig Frew of Laing Traditional Masonry, who took photographs and measurements and inspected the Monument and burial ground. He now has all the information required to provide a survey and estimate for the work necessary.

An application was made to the Ward Discretionary Budget for the cost of the survey. A grant of £150 has been received and the CC will contribute a further £50. Another £212 is needed to meet the cost of the survey (£411.25p including VAT), and it was agreed that an application will be made to the Community Trust.

(d) Right of Way through Knockie Estate

Mr Sutherland is meeting with Mr Eastaugh to look at the proposed change of route, and the Chairman will post the information on the Community Web Site to request any feedback on the proposal.

(e) Dog Fouling - Children's Play Area, Lower Foyers

Mr Nicol was unable to attend so further information was not available. As suggested by a resident, the Secretary had arranged for each household in Riverside to receive a letter reminding them of their responsibilities in this matter.

Correspondence

Highland Council Correspondence

Notification of Planning Committee hearing on 26th March 2010 - Dunmaglass Wind Farm application; ePlanning News - February 2010; Notification of intention to re-site Christmas tree at Gorthleck; Oil paintings in public ownership

Other Correspondence & Circulars Received

Renewable Energy Systems - update on proposals for Dunmaglass Wind Farm; Minutes of Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust: Meeting 9th February 2010 & AGM 9th February 2010; Scottish & Southern Energy - Update on repair work starting at Glendoe (circulated); Scottish Natural Heritage - Knockie Lochs Review of SSSI

Letters Sent

Further enquiry to Albyn Housing about affordable housing in Gorthleck; Letter to Highland Council regarding negotiation of community benefit arising from green energy projects; Letter to TEC Services regarding cattle grid at Bochruben on B862; Letters to Riverside residents regarding dog fouling problem

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported account balances as follows: Project A/c - £5663.58

(A cheque for £1000 had been paid for management of the Community Project since the last meeting.)

Ordinary A/c - £786.70 (Including £150 grant for Fraser Monument and £11.73 held for Mr J. Campbell, Senior Citizens' Fund)

Planning Matters

Cllrs. Davidson and Wood took no part in discussion of planning matters.

Applications

Erection of house at West Drummond Cottage, Whitebridge; Erection of House and Garage - land 50m. W of Cairns Croft, Whitebridge. Site visits had been carried out and there were no objections.

House at land 170m SW of Upper Cultie, Gorthleck. (Mrs Grant declared an interest in this application.) Detailed plans received, a site visit having already been carried out. Members inspected the detailed plans and there were no objections.

New Applications

3 Houses at sites N of Wester Drummond, Whitebridge. A site visit will be carried out.

Other Planning Matters

A reply had been received from Mr David Polson in Planning in relation to the CC's request for guidance on a planning matter. Members felt that there are issues in his reply which require further discussion, and it was agreed to invite him to our next meeting.

Roads and Signage

(a) Outstanding Matters

A reply has been received regarding problems with the cattle grid adjacent to Bochruben Schoolhouse. The grid itself has been inspected and is in good order, but the problems were thought to have been due to 'frost heave', which has now subsided somewhat. However, there are proposals for future replacement of the grid and improvement of the adjacent road. Following further representations by Cllr. Davidson, the Council has agreed to provision of a bus shelter in Lower Foyers in the 2010/11 budget. The Secretary is meeting with Neil Young of TEC Services on 10th March to look at a suitable site.

(b) Bridge in Lower Foyers

Cllr. Davidson reported that the capital programme has been delayed, so there is still no news about the bridge. The importance of simply getting a new bridge onto the programme, even if it is not at the top of the list, was agreed.

The Secretary had looked at the proposals given to Cllr. Hendry for dealing with an emergency situation in the event of the bailey bridge being closed, and felt that these still leave a lot to be desired. The principal problem in the event of a serious fire or life threatening medical emergency is the time it will take to implement any of these proposals. She will contact Cllr. Hendry to obtain the name of the person responsible so that the CC can forward a detailed note of concerns.

Community Project - Gorthleck

A meeting had taken place with the Project Manager. She has been hard at work preparing grant applications, the largest of which will be to the Lottery Fund. Things are now slowly moving forward.

Renewable Energy and Community Benefit

A Planning hearing regarding the Dunmaglass Wind Farm proposal is to be held on 26th March.

Mr Sutherland reported that he has a meeting arranged with William Gilfinnan and representatives of Strathnairn and Strathdearn CCs to discuss community benefit which may arise from this project. He is also hopeful that arrangements will be made to produce a standard negotiating procedure for these situations, leading to more structured consistency.

Details will be published in the next Boleskine Bulletin of the first tranche of energy saving expenditure on houses already surveyed. The Trust wishes to encourage more householders to come forward.

A meeting is to take place with the Forestry Commission regarding the proposed hydro scheme on the River Farigaig, with a view to the possibility of community involvement.

Any Other Competent Business

(a) Mr Bateman presented the Community Trust Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 30th June 2009.

(b) It was noted that the large number of wind blown trees, and those brought down by the recent snow throughout the forestry plantations, pose a significant fire hazard.

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23rd MARCH 2010

Members present: M. Houston (Chairman), E. Merther (Secretary), K. Grant (Treasurer), M. Bateman, K. Fraser, A. Nicol, A. Sutherland

Also present: Police Constable A. Mathieson, Mr D. Polson, Highland Council Planning Department, Ms H. Mackie, Albyn Housing, Mr R. MacRae, HSCHT, Mr M. Williams, HRI Architects

Apologies received: P. Higham, L. MacGregor, A. MacPherson, Cllr M. Davidson, Cllr D. Hendry

Mr David Polson, Planning Department

Mr Polson had kindly agreed to provide the CC with information in response to several enquiries.

Rural planning: He explained that overall this is governed by the Highland Structure Plan and Local Plans. The tendency is to favour development within areas with existing settlement, taking advantage of existing facilities and services. This applies to rural development areas and 'fragile' communities, where the tendency is for a permissive development policy. The whole of our area comes under this policy. The CC had enquired specifically whether there was an overall plan for the Whitebridge area. Mr Polson said that Planning was aware of a large number of applications in this area, and they used the landscape assessment produced by Scottish Natural Heritage as a guide when considering applications. This assessment categorises different types of landscape, and offers guidance on siting appropriate development. It is, however, an advisory document, and they are not bound by it. Within Planning they now take a team approach to decisions, to try to ensure consistency and continuity. Around Inverness itself there is an area (extending almost to Dores on our side) where development is discouraged.

Land access: Mr Polson explained the rights of access as they apply to Planning Department officials. The CC will seek further information on the broader position from the HC Access Officer.

CC involvement in the planning process: Mr Polson's initial response to this enquiry was felt to have discouraged CC involvement. However, he said that this had not been his intention. Guidance now encourages CC input where large local schemes are proposed, but beyond this it is up to each CC to decide how much involvement is appropriate in its own situation.

Creation of hill tracks without planning permission: The CC felt that unsightly tracks are being created across the hills under the 'umbrella' of agricultural development, which does not require planning permission. Mr Polson advised that the legislation originally required a prior notification, but this had been removed before it was finalised. Moves are now afoot to change the current uncontrolled situation. However, even for agricultural development, there is currently a requirement for an environmental impact assessment to be carried out for tracks of 1 km. or more in length.

Notification to CCs of proposals for green energy schemes: The CC had expressed concern that delays in notifying communities of these proposals had prevented them being more involved - for example purchasing a share in a wind turbine. If all agreements have been finalised before communities know of a scheme, it is too late to request changes. Mr Polson advised that there is now a web site, updated monthly, which gives details of proposed schemes. However, such proposals will not be available on the web site until developers have given permission.

The Chairman thanked Mr Polson for attending our meeting, and for the valuable information he had given.

Gorthleck Affordable Housing Scheme

Representatives of Albyn Housing, the Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust, and the Architects presented an update on proposals for the scheme. The likely layout of housing, and drawings of some proposed house types were presented. There are ten plots designated for Albyn houses, to include various sizes of property and some amenity housing. There are a further eight serviced plots, provided by HSCHT. There is also a proposal to include some allotments around the perimeter of the site, which have proved very popular in other areas. According to demand, these would not necessarily be restricted to residents of the scheme.

The Albyn representative informed us that unfortunately their funding has been cut, which will mean a further delay in building, probably until next year. The CC agreed that it would use whatever pressure it can to try to speed things up. HSCHT may be able to go ahead with their plots sooner. With the current mortgage difficulties they are exploring various options that may allow them to provide housing more quickly.

The Chairman thanked all three representatives for their most interesting presentation.

Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

(a) Wade's Bridge at Whitebridge

Mr Bateman reported that it is intended to carry out temporary repairs this summer, and they hope to seek funding later in the year for more major work.

(b) Fraser Monument & Burial Ground at Foyers

The Secretary reported that grants have now been received to cover the cost of the necessary survey, report, and estimate for the Monument. The Ward Discretionary Budget has given £150, the Community Trust £212, and the CC will contribute the balance of £50. She will instruct Laing Traditional Masonry to go ahead with the report.

(c) Right of Way through Knockie Estate

Mr Sutherland had been with Mr Stewart Eastaugh (Access Officer) to look at the proposed diversion. They both felt there are significant problems with the proposed route, and will go back to the property owners for further discussion.

Correspondence

Highland Council Correspondence: Enquiry - bilingual path signs; Two circulars regarding digital TV switchover (circulated)
Other Correspondence & Circulars Received: Scottish Natural Heritage - Loch Ruthven SSSI Citation

Treasurer's Report

Balances remain unchanged as follows:

Project A/c - £5663.58

Ordinary A/c - £786.70 (Including £150 grant for Fraser Monument and £11.73 held for Mr J. Campbell, Senior Citizens' Fund. A further cheque for £212 grant for the Fraser Monument was passed to the Treasurer to be paid in to this A/c.)

Planning Matters

New applications: Erection of signs at Rohan, Gorthleck; New Auxiliary Fire Station, Gorthleck - detailed plans. There were no objections.

Policing Matters

It was reported at our January meeting that a theft of diesel oil had taken place. Constable Mathieson was able to report that this was now found to be incorrect, as the tank in question had not been filled.

Roads and Signage

(a) Outstanding Matters

The Secretary asked members to email to her details of any specific road items they wished passed on to Mr Richard Evans, following his attendance at our February meeting.

The Secretary reported that she met with Mr Neil Young of the Transport Section, and he had agreed that a new bus shelter will be provided for the stop adjacent to Riverside in Lower Foyers.

(b) Bridge in Lower Foyers

There is still no word of the new capital programme.

(c) Other Roads Items

TEC Services have provided warning signs for pedestrians on the road, but Mr Nicol is still concerned that there is no warning sign for children playing on the road. Further enquiries will be made.

Mr Nicol again raised the question of completion of the pavement from Glenlia to the School road in Foyers. He did not know whether the Glenlia Residents' Association had made a formal application for funding from the Safer Routes to School fund. Further enquiries will be made.

Mrs Grant reported that following the recent severe weather there is a deep, water filled ditch by the road in front of Lynemhor Lodge in Gorthleck. This is a considerable danger to children walking to and from school. The Secretary will contact TEC Services.

Community Project - Gorthleck

The Chairman reported that progress is being made.

Renewable Energy and Community Benefit

Mr Sutherland reported that further negotiations are to be carried out regarding community benefit from the Dunmaglass scheme. He also reported that the first phase of the energy saving measures agreed for the 51 houses assessed is due to start shortly.

Any Other Competent Business

(a) Mrs Grant had received a complaint about sewage leaking from behind the Hall in Gorthleck. Enquiries will be made.

(b) Mr John Rule attended the meeting to complain that he had not received a response to his earlier letter, and presented a further letter. An acknowledgment had been sent, and the Chairman informed Mr Rule that the CC is awaiting information in response to enquiries it has made relevant to his first letter. A full response will be sent when the information is received.

Mr Rule also had a complaint about a proposed forestry development at Ardoch, Whitebridge, and wished to know what involvement the CC had with this. He was informed that these schemes do not go through the usual planning process as far as the CC is concerned, and that we are not necessarily informed of them.

(c) Mr Nicol reported that a successful trial of equipment to accelerate broadband speed has taken place in Culloden and Dingwall. He will enquire when this is likely to be made more widely available, as broadband speeds for many households in this area are very poor indeed.

(d) The Secretary has received a letter from Mr John Forsyth regarding fire damage to a large noble fir tree on the Loch shore adjacent to the river walk in Lower Foyers. He requested that the CC pass his concerns on to the Hydro, who own the land, to see if measures can be taken to protect the tree. He had prepared a draft letter detailing his concerns. It was agreed to contact the Hydro with his concerns to see if some action can be taken.

Tashkent Charity Rally

The Challenge - 5500 miles in three weeks from Scotland through Europe, crossing the Ukraine, Russia and Kazakhstan ending in east Asia near the Chinese Border in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to raise money for various charities.

The rules - This rally is unsupported and en-route will cross ever changing terrain including a three day crossing of the Kazakhstan desert. The car must cost you less than £100.

Our Team

Alistair Cook - Alistair is a former student at Glasgow University and has recently returned from Bolivia where he volunteered for three months with one of the charities we are raising funds for, CEDESOL. Previously he spent six months in South Africa drilling wells with Engineers Without Borders UK who are another of our chosen charities. Alistair currently works for the REAL project at Inverness High School as a carbon emissions community worker.

Richard Scrieb - Richard studied Environmental Policy and Planning at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and spent two years in the American Peace Corps in Honduras working with local co-operatives. He has also spent time teaching English in Korea and also volunteered with CEDESOL in Bolivia, he is currently working on a volunteering project in Peru.

Our Charities

Engineers Without Borders UK are a UK student run international development organisation whose mission is to facilitate human development through engineering. The EWB-UK community works to promote access to appropriate technology engineers without borders uk and operates in multiple programme areas, including training, placements, research, outreach and education.

Centro de Desarrollo en Energia Solar (CEDESOL) have incorporated thousands of ecological and solar cookers into the Bolivian and southern Peruvian cultures. Their vision is the integrated use of efficient biomass, retained heat and solar cooking to enrich humanity and protect the environment by equipping people with social and technological tools that permit them to direct their own destinies.

The rally is run in support of the Voennno Antomovka (Bishkek) and Chernobyl orphanages.

Contact Alistair- Daytime: 07793956713 Evening: 01456486308 or email:

alistairpcook@googlemail.com or alistair@realproject.co.uk

Update

Due to the civil war and closed borders in Kyrgyzstan we will now be ending in Kazakhstan instead and leaving here on the 11th of July.

The editorial team would like to wish Alistair and Richard all the best for this epic test.



Thanks to Kennys Auto Repairs and Servicing in Inverness for their support in preparing the car for the event for free

INVERNESS - GORTHLECK SERVICE 303									
	SD	SH	MWF	TTH		MWF	TTH	SD	SH
Inshes Retail Park	-----	-----	1355D	1355D	Gorthleck	0932	0920	1504	1515
Raigmore Hospital	-----	-----	1400D	1400D	Stratherrick Pri- mary School	-----	-----	1520	-----
Inverness Bus Station	0810	0830	1410	1410	Upper Foyers	-----	0930	- -----	-----
Dores Post Office	-----	0845	1425	1425	Lower Foyers	-----	0934	-----	-----
Farr Shop	0825	-----	-----	-----	Inverfarigaig	-----	0941	-----	-----
The Steadings	0835	-----	-----	-----	Errogie Telephone Kiosk	0937	-----	1525	1525
Dumnaglass Road End	0845	-----	-----	-----	Torness	0947	-----	1535	1535
Abersky	0850	-----	-----	-----	Abersky	0952D	-----	1544	-----
Torness	0855	0900	1435	-----	Dumnaglass Road End	0957D	-----	1549	-----
Errogie Telephone Ki- osk	0905	0910	1445	-----	The Steadings	-----	-----	1559	-----
Inverfarigaig	-----	-----	-----	1442	Farr Shop	-----	-----	1610	1610
Lower Foyers	-----	-----	-----	1449	Dores Post Office	0957	0958	-----	1545
Upper Foyer	-----	-----	-----	1453	Inverness Bus Sta- tion	1012	1012	1624	1600
Stratherrick Primary School	0910	-----	-----	-----	Raigmore Hospital	1022D	1022D	-----	-----
Gorthleck	0920	0920	1451	1504	Inshes Retail Park	1025D	1025D	-----	-----
MWF - Monday, Wednesday & Friday.									
TTH - Tuesday & Thursday.									
SD - Monday - Friday when schools are open.									
SH - Monday - Friday when schools are closed.									
D - Operates via these points on request. Passengers must telephone 01463 222444 by 1700 on last working day before travel									

INVERNESS - WHITEBRIDGE SERVICE 301				FOYERS - INVERNESS SERVICE 302			
	Mon to Friday		Sat		Monday to Friday		Saturday
Knockie Lodge Road End	0730	1225	-----	1225	Upper Foyers	0755 0755 1310 1623	0900 1320
Whitebridge Bus Shelter	0735	1230	-----	1230	Lower Foyers	0800 0800 1315	----- 0905 1325
Gorthleck Old Shop	0745	1240	-----	1240	Inverfarigaig Ctgs	0807 0807 1322 1630	0912 1332
Errogie Telephone Kiosk	0749	1244	-----	1244	Dores Inn	0824 0824 1339 1647	0929 1349
Torness	0758	1253r	-----	1253r	Scaniport	0831 0831 1346 1654	0936 1356
Coulanour Junction	0803	1248	-----	1248	Royal Academy	0840	-----
Croachy	0815	1300 1815		1300	Holm Park Road End	0844 0835 1350 1658	0940 1400
Farr Post Office	0825	1310 1825		1310	Inverness Bus Station	0852 0845 1400 1708	0950 1410
Inverness Royal Academy	0840	1325 1840		1325	Inverness Bus Station	1215 1515 1515 1743	1230 1743
Inverness Bus Station	0850	1335 1850		1335	Holm Park Road End	1225 1525 1525 1753	1240 1753
Inverness Bus Station	1030	1515 1740		1725	Royal Academy	-----	----- 1535
Inverness Royal Academy	1040	1535 1750		1740	Scaniport	1229 1529 1544 1757	1244 1757
Farr School	1055	1550 1805		1750	Dores Inn	1236 1536 1551 1804	1251 1804
Croachy	1105	1600 1815		1800	Inverfarigaig Ctgs	1253 1553 1608 1821	1308 1821
Coulanour Junction	1117	1612	-----	1812	Lower Foyers	1300 1600 1615 1828	1315 1828
Torness	-----	1617B	-----	-----	Upper Foyers	1305 1605 1620 1833	1320 1833
Errogie Telephone Kiosk	1121	1616	-----	1816	The bus service only stops at the Royal Academy during term times and only school start and finish.		
Gorthleck Old Shop	1125	1620	-----	1820			
Whitebridge Bus Shelter	1135	1630	-----	1830			
Knockie Lodge Road End	1140	1635	-----	1835			

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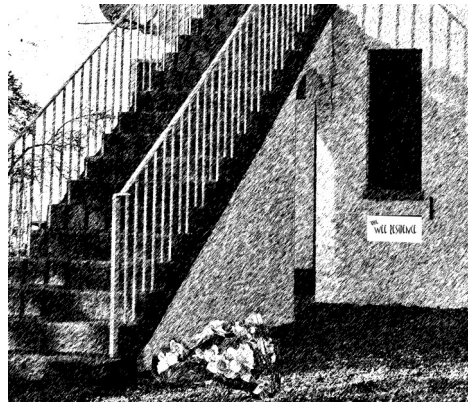
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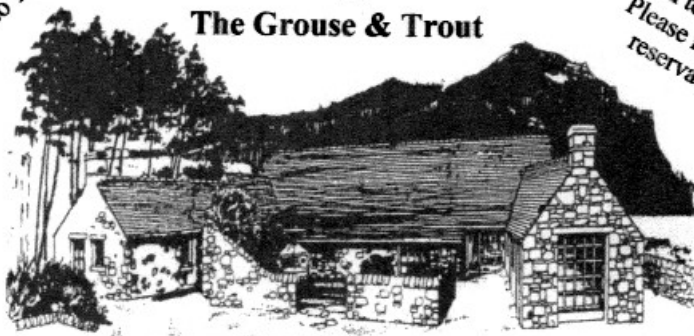
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(P.S. If anyone knows of the whereabouts of the 2 blue gym mats that were borrowed from the group, please inform the group or organise to have them returned. Thanks).

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