

Killlearn Community Council Annual report 2015-2016

The regular business of the Community Council involved commenting on planning applications, reporting road problems and contributing to Stirling Council's Priority Based Budget process. As in other villages in West Stirlingshire, closure of local shops and businesses was a real concern. Several of the vacant units will have a new function, the village Post Office will re-open in the Co-op in due course and Punch Taverns are advertising for a new tenant for the Killlearn Hotel. We have written to the owners of the Spar and to the Bank of Scotland to enquire about their intentions for those buildings.

The arrival of Next Generation Broadband in Killlearn and proposed new housing developments were major items of business. The merging of health and social care will have an impact on local services, and road repairs and improvements took up a great deal of our attention.

- Killlearn Broadband Group was formed in June 2015 under the chairmanship of Doug Ashworth. Other members are Euan Shaw of iLomond and Andrew Donaldson, Margery Burdon and Margaret Harrison from KCC, and we are grateful for the expertise and advice of this group. The Community Council organized a Broadband Open Day, which was attended by over 200 people on 24 October 2015, and Doug and Andrew manned a technical help desk to give advice to residents and local businesses. Broadband updates are published monthly on KCC web site. Doug will represent all the Community Councils in the rural South West area on Stirling Council's Broadband Delivery Group. Further broadband cabinets are proposed over the next three years, to improve coverage in Killlearn.
- Mactaggart and Mickel were appointed builders for Blaressan site and arranged a public consultation on their plans on 29 March 2016. Detailed comments from members of the public were passed to the builder, Stirling Council planners and elected Councillors. The comments may be viewed in full on KCC web site. Access via a roundabout from Station Road was a major concern for many people, and also the 'Designing streets' concept in which roads within the estate are shared by pedestrians and vehicles. This design has been used locally in Balfron, Strathblane and Kippen and appears to be favoured by the Scottish Government and by planners. Mactaggart and Mickel are now in discussion with Stirling Council planners and roads department to devise a site development plan and road layout and further consultation will follow.
- A public consultation on plans for the former Killlearn Hospital site took place on 16 May 2016. The plans are similar to those described at the meeting in Killlearn Kirk several years ago, and comprise a large number of houses: 58 house plots plus 38 affordable houses in the form of 2 bedroomed cottage flats plus 7 live/ work units for those working from home. In addition to the houses small commercial units are envisaged. Detailed comments on the proposals have been sent to the developer, SC planners and elected Councillors, and may be viewed on KCC web site.

- A Community Pilot Project with Balfron and Strathblane will focus on Strathendrick Care Home and the need for respite care and rehabilitation in the rural South West area. The Home may be developed as a local Care Hub in the new merged environment of health and social care.
- Road safety. A no waiting area at the top of Station Road has been agreed with Stirling Council, a 40 mph buffer zone has been created on Station Road between Napier and Lampson Roads and a 20 mph speed limit imposed on all roads in the Trees estate. Motorists driving at excessive speed through the village remains a serious problem and Police speed checks are regularly carried out.
- Road repairs in Killearn are included in Stirling Council's projects for 2016-2017: passing places on Ballochruin Road, and repairs to pavements on Balfron Road from the Kirk to the Buchanan Monument. Drainage was installed on the turnip field to eliminate flooding of the pavement and road at the new section of Birch Road. It remains to be seen whether this has solved the problem.

I must express my thanks to all members of Killearn Community Council for their hard work throughout the year, and thanks also to our excellent Minutes Secretary, Christine Bauwens. We still have several vacancies, so if you are interested in contributing to our work for the duration of the present Community Council, until October 2017, please be in touch via our web site www.killearncc.org.uk or speak to one of our members.

Margaret Harrison, Chair, Killearn Community Council

June 2016