

... And here is the news

Welcome to the new look SCD NEWS. As part of our obligation to consult and inform the community, Strathdearn Community Developments Co. will publish a detailed progress report in every Newsletter and if anything particularly urgent or newsworthy comes up in between, we will email or post additional updates to our members. These reports will also be published on the community website to form a permanent searchable record.

These are exciting times in Strathdearn. We are making good progress on many of the projects identified by the Cadispa survey - better medical services, a path through the village and improved broadband. Two other items on the list - a cafe and public toilets - will be incorporated into the new community hub which has been prioritised due to the condemning of our old hall. In addition, SCD has taken over running our local shop.

These changes will affect all of us for a long time to come so SCD needs to be confident it has your support. Two way communication is the key - you need to know what we're planning and we need to know what you think about it. We'll do our bit through SCD NEWS and the website and then it's up to you to make your voice heard and your opinions known.

You'll find out elsewhere in this bulletin how to get more involved, but you can start right now by considering as you read this first SCD NEWS how it can be improved. If you have any thoughts or suggestions regarding the style, layout or content, we'd like to hear them.

Introducing F.A.Q.

Who are MAKAR?
What happened to the path?
Why will the hub cost so much?

SCD admin staff have created a FAQ to answer these and other Frequently Asked Questions. You will find it in the SCD section of the community website under menu item "Local Info"



DTAS Scottish Government Funding

An annual review has taken place with DTAS, for grant funding for the Administration team. Last financial year 2016/17 SCD received £43000 which included £3k for capital equipment and we are delighted that the grant objectives have been reviewed and objectives met. It is with great pleasure that the board can announce, that SCD will receive the grant funding for the Admin team for another year. This will be £40k for the year 2017/18. The recommendation from DTAS is that a third year of funding would be recommended, should it be needed.





Paths Project

The SCD board continues to review the additional requirements imposed by the roads department to meet the conditions of planning. Local councillors have been encouraged to coordinate a meeting to see if we can reach a compromise and Mark Clough of Highland Council is consulting with engineers on options for a green verge (not kerbed) with occasional drain 'offlets' and alternative re surfacing (currently bitmac is specified) reducing the amount of retaining wall needed. However, if alternatives are found then it will probably mean applying for a formal variation to the conditions – more time and possibly more upfront cost if technical drawings are needed, but would result in a reduction in capital cost. We hope to have a response from Highland Council soon and will keep everyone updated.

Website

Don't forget to check Strathdearn Community Website for local news, useful information, SCD and Community Council documents, photo gallery, and much more.



Communications

The community website has several new features. The online booking system is ready to use you can now check availability, book a room or sports facility, and pay for it by cheque, BACS or credit card. (You do not have to use the new system, you can continue to book and pay the same way you have always done). To attract more bookings from outside our area, we are working on an enhanced website description of the hall facilities together with a promotional leaflet. Take a stroll down memory lane - the redesigned photo gallery features pictures of Strathdearn people and places spanning over a century (more contributions welcome).

Glenkirk Woodland

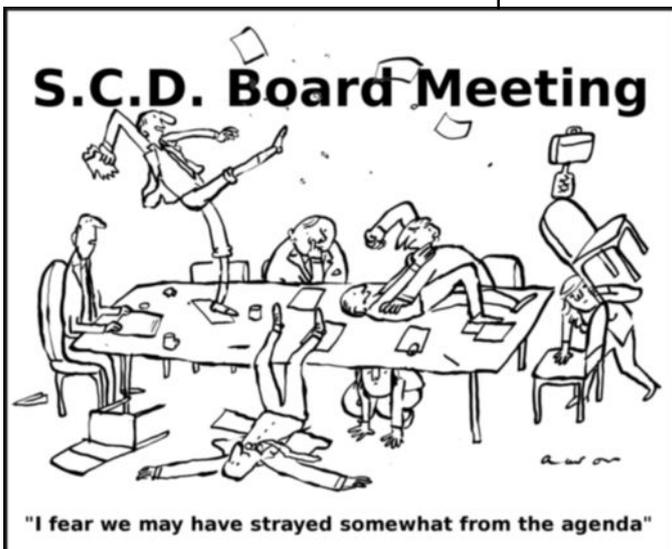
An expression of community interest in Glenkirk was submitted to the Forestry Commission under the Community Asset Transfer programme. However, when the SCD Ltd board discussed possible acquisition at the board meeting of the 23 March 2017 it was decided to withdraw our interest.

The principle reasons being concerns over Glenkirk becoming a viable community asset given access issues and distance from the village. SCD Ltd also has major commitments with the shop and community hub projects, especially to win funding. A letter has been sent explaining this decision to the chair of the Community Council Mrs V Roden. It is important to note that the Board was keen to investigate further woodland opportunities in Strathdearn as part of a package of future projects.

New Appointment

We regret to announce we are losing a valuable member of the administration team, but delighted to announce we have found a great replacement.

The SCD board and team would like to thank Fiona Fraser for her most valuable contribution and wish her every success in the future. The White River Trading admin post was advertised, interviews held and we are delighted to welcome Joan MacQueen who will start the position in May. The post is funded by Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS).



SCD Membership

We encourage you to become a member of Strathdearn Community Developments Company. Benefits include the right to attend SCD meetings, stand for election as a company director and vote in elections. You can find an online membership form in the SCD section of the website, or you can request a printed form from the Company Secretary, Strathdearn Hall, IV13 7YN.

The next two SCD meetings are scheduled for May 25 and June 29. We meet in Strathdearn Hall at 7.30pm.

