

STRATHERRICK & FOYERS NEWSLETTER

Feb 2024 Issue Number: 48

CHAIR'S BULLETIN

Welcome to the first SFCT newsletter of 2024 – and my first as Chair. I hope that the Board of Directors and our staff team can make it another positive and exciting year for our community. It's always good to start the year with positive news.

In early December 2023, another successful Winter Wonderland was held at the Wildside Centre. Thanks to the hard work of our staff members and volunteers the place looked magical and created a wonderful atmosphere for everyone who came along. Almost 100 gifts were given to local children and over £1000 was raised by local groups.

Also in December, SFCT granted Cost of Living grants to 60 families which will hopefully have given some relief in these difficult times. Wood has also been purchased for distribution to residents so look out for dates and further details in our social media/web posts.

The Trust has been awarded funds of approx. £227,000 from the Scottish Government for two houses for affordable rent at Inverfarigaig. We are working with the Communities Housing Trust on this and hope to progress soon.

For those who missed it we have been awarded nearly £20,000 for a Nature Restoration Grant which will support work at Inverfarigaig, Erroglie and Whitebridge; a Transport grant; and funding to enable childminding training in the area.

We now have two tenders on the table for Foyers Bay and the first Steering Group Meeting held in early January was well-attended and very positive.

The suggested landscaping designs for Riverside Field as discussed between the local residents group, architect and landscaper have been available at the Wildside Centre and the Hub for viewing as well as online here www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk It is hoped a Steering Group will be set up in February to progress these. The biggest news is that the Trust offered £1 to purchase the land for car parking at Riverside and consequently the Local Authority agreed and have offered the whole play park area within that price.

However not everything is plain sailing and there are always difficult situations to deal with and important decisions to take. I hope that you will give the Board time and space to deal with these appropriately and, in consultation with you, make the correct choices for the future of our community.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2024.

Catriona Fraser
Chair, SFCT

*The deadline for content for the Spring magazine is **Friday 15th March 2024.***

Please email communications@sfctrust.org.uk with your articles including your name and a picture!

Photo by Robbie Burn

PULSE SURVEY

The Pulse Survey is conducted every 12 months and is to assess the impact work volunteers do across the Stratherrick and Foyers area on behalf of the community.

The people who filled out the Pulse Survey in 2023 were roughly in the same age range as

last year, same male/female gender split (36%/61%/4% prefer not to say) and a slight variation in location with a greater number from Gorthleck and Torness and less from Whitebridge (29% Foyers, 32% Gorthleck, 9% Whitebridge, 16% Errogie, 9% from Inverfarigaig and 5% Torness).

This survey was promoted over 16 days via email, website, social media and word

of mouth. With 338 occupied households in the area over 15% of households are represented, and therefore this gives us a high degree of accuracy that these results reflect the thoughts of the community as a whole. The number of participants was up on last year and eight people chose to remain anonymous compared to four people last year. As last year, we have kept those responses in the results.

Developed in association with SCDC (Scottish Community Development Centre) we've seen some improvements and areas to work on.

Thank you to those who filled in the survey. We know we can always do better, and will aim to do so, but the results are below.

Tony Foster,
Trust Manager

	2023 AGREE	2023 AGREE/ DISAGREE	2023 DISAGREE	2022 AGREE	2022 DISAGREE
COMMUNICATION FROM THE TRUST <i>Although down from a staggering 81% last year this remains strong and far better than three years ago. Communication can be quite labour intensive. Thanks to external funding we have two marketing and communications staff for the next three years.</i>	75%	19%	6%	81%	2%
DECISION MAKING TRANSPARENT <i>We now have the Community Action Plan and Place Plan to determine the Board's future actions. Despite weekly project updates, our minutes being available to members and the annual report being distributed to most households last year we still have an issue with transparency. The CAP and Place Plan will link what the majority of the people wanted us to develop locally to the decisions made or considered but moving to charitable status and some open meetings may help.</i>	34%	30%	36%	42%	27.5%
GOOD IDEA WHAT TRUST SUPPORTS <i>Again this is fairly equal to the previous year, which reflects the information around the Community Action Plan and Place Plan. The 'Trust' supports what the community wants, as reflected in the CAP and Place Plan. Far better than three years ago.</i>	63%	25%	12%	65.5%	8.5%
KNOW HOW TO GET INVOLVED WITH TRUST <i>Again most people know how to get involved with the Trust but this could do with some more targeted work and information for new people to the area.</i>	70%	23%	7%	82%	4%
TRUST IS ACCOUNTABLE ON DECISIONS <i>This year we continued empowering groups to make decisions to help advise the Board on their projects. We also attended Community Council and reported on all projects and where they were in planning.</i>	57%	16%	27%	57.5%	20%
WORKING TO MAKE A BETTER PLACE FOR ALL <i>Working to make a better place remains roughly the same as last year, which is encouraging.</i>	64%	20%	16%	64.5%	15.5%
FAMILY HAS BENEFITTED <i>Slightly down on last year. With the work on providing wood last year, grants for food and fuel and maintaining sport, study, group grants and providing buildings for free use it would have been nice to see some improvement here. However this has only increased in the 'those in need' categories.</i>	47%	27%	26%	51%	26.5%
COMMUNITY HAS BENEFITTED <i>The community has benefitted remains roughly the same as last year. Again whilst high we would have liked to see some movement here.</i>	64%	25%	11%	63.5%	8.5%

	2023 AGREE	2023 AGREE/ DISAGRE	2023 DISAGREE	2022 AGREE	2022 DISAGREE
SUPPORTS VOLUNTARY SECTOR <i>A slight increase here, perhaps largely to do with the support we give groups from funding, raising external funds and staff support. Very similar to previous years.</i>	75%	21%	4%	73.5%	4.5%
EMPOWERED PEOPLE <i>We continue to get more people involved in actioning projects and decision making. Again we'd like to see this improve over time but this year remains the same.</i>	55%	34%	11%	57.5%	13.5%
CONSERVING THE ENVIRONMENT <i>A strong theme in the CAP and one that underlines everything we do. People are moving out of the undecided area to agree or disagree. Again far stronger than three years ago.</i>	45%	32%	23%	40%	13.5%
LAND MANAGEMENT & LAND USE <i>Up 7% which may reflect your view being reflected in the Place Plan but after a drop last year this is moving in a positive direction this year.</i>	36%	43%	21%	29%	24.5%
MAINTAIN RURAL ID <i>One of the pillars in the CAP, along with conserving the environment, and reflected in our approach here. This has improved slightly as we attempt to make changes for the better but maintain the rural identity. Again more positive than three years ago.</i>	45%	36%	19%	36.5%	17.5%
CREATING JOBS <i>We are creating more jobs in the local area. This is all positive and has improved on last year and better than three years ago.</i>	55%	31%	14%	49%	13%
RETAIN YOUNG PEOPLE <i>Broadly the same but work is being done in this area, particularly regarding housing for young people. Again better than three years ago.</i>	34%	39%	27%	31%	24.5%
ATTRACT WORKING FAMILIES <i>Broadly the same but work is being done in this area, including development of the after school project at the primary school.</i>	25%	46%	29%	24.5%	22%
CREATE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM <i>A slight difference as we create facilities, hope to sustain pathways and encourage and promote local businesses when we can, thus helping support local employment. There is a balance to be achieved here that whilst conserving the environment and maintaining our rural identity, we have the infrastructure and facilities other communities enjoy</i>	29%	45%	26%	31%	20%
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL <i>Slightly up but very similar to three years ago.</i>	35%	43%	23%	33.5%	34.5%
THOSE IN NEED <i>A big jump this year and over the last three years which may be reflected in our support during the cost of living crisis with funds for fuel/food and wood. Although this help ends this year it was provided when it was needed the most.</i>	70%	23%	7%	62%	8.5%
HEALTH & WELL BEING <i>Again a big jump here with support we have given alongside partners.</i>	61%	29%	10%	55.5%	13.5%
COLLABORATION EXTERNALLY <i>Broadly similar and something we need to promote more as we work with other stakeholders and agencies on CAP and Place Plan outcomes. This eases the burden on our own resources but still maintains outcomes</i>	50%	39%	11%	49%	8.5%
AWARE I CAN GET ACTIVELY INVOLVED <i>Broadly similar, but shows an inclusive community. Thanks for filling out the survey</i>	84%	14%	2%	86.5%	4%

SCORE OUT OF 10 2022: 6.5

SCORE OUT OF 10 2023: 6.6

COMMUNICATIONS 2024!

We are making a few improvements in the way we communicate information to the community in 2024. The SFCT Board and communications team have made the decision to adjust our newsletter and magazine deadlines and hope to make these documents more accessible to everyone in the community.

We will be moving to an A5 format for both the newsletters and magazines to save money and make them easier to read. This will then allow us to post out our newsletters and magazines to everybody in the community. To make sure you receive your copy please email admin@sfctrust.org.uk if you don't think you are on our current mailing list.

Our newsletters will change as well, so they are more inclusive of articles outwith SFCT updates. We will publish the deadlines dates on the front of the magazine and newsletters to keep you informed on when to have your information sent to us. This will hopefully make some updates more time relevant. Also remember we can share your information on the website at any time so please email communications@sfctrust.org.uk if you would like something shared.

The deadline dates for 2024 are as follows:

SPRING MAGAZINE	Fri 15th Mar
JUNE NEWSLETTER	Fri 24th May
AUGUST NEWSLETTER	Fri 16th Aug
AUTUMN MAGAZINE	Fri 27th Sept
DECEMBER NEWSLETTER	Fri 8th Nov

We are also in the process of adding a photo gallery to the website. Here, we can showcase the amazing photos which have been submitted for the photography

competitions as well as having a community life section where we can store all the photos from community events, classes and activities in and around the strath. So, keep an eye out for that!

Another addition is a page to store videos! They can be lost on social media after a time and now we will have a simple go-to page that you can all check out when you have time.

On the back of these, and other changes we have made to the website, we will be sending out a survey on how you find the website works for you. Is it easy to navigate? Do you spot any glitches? Any suggestions for improvements or things you like? This will help us develop a better and user-friendly website for our community.

COMMUNITY VAN



Make use of the community van

Book the van and driver
Flat rate - £10

Flat rate of £10 and then £1 per mile once 10 miles have been exceeded.
Terms and conditions can be found on the booking form.

BOOKING AVAILABLE SOON
FREE OF CHARGE TO COMMUNITY GROUPS

SFCT
Scottish Fisheries & Trout Conservation

admin@sfctrust.org.uk

07464 394276

WARM WEDNESDAY

Like previous years during Wintertime, we are delighted to bring back Warm Wednesday at The Wildside Centre, running from 17th Jan – 27th March - (Weather Dependent), between 9.00am – 2.00pm.

Everyone is welcome to pop by and make use out of the space which will include:

- TEA & COFFEE FACILITIES, for a small donation.
- FREE WI-FI.
- PRINTER.
- QUIET AREA TO WORK OR RELAX.
- SPACE TO CATCH UP with friends or family.

We look forward to welcoming you at Wildside on a cold winter day, a space to gather and keep warm.



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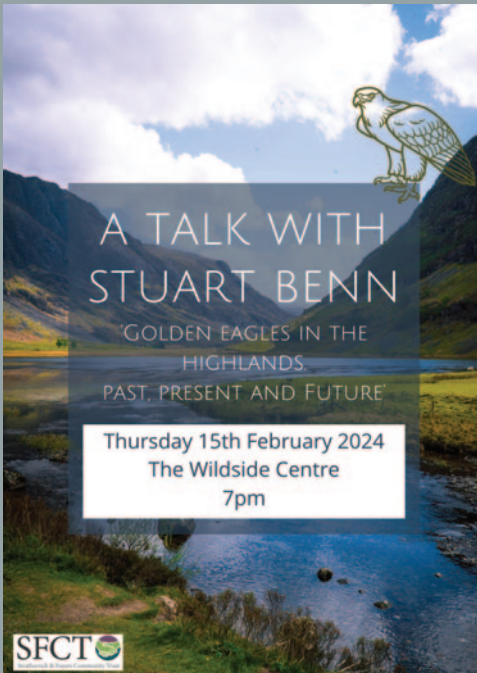

Running until March 27th

Available to you

- + Tea & Coffee
- + Quiet area to work or relax
- + Space to catch up with friends or family
- + Free Wi-fi & printing facilities

JOIN US
WEDNESDAY
FROM 17TH JAN
THE WILDSIDE CENTRE


Contact Us
07464 334278
communications@sfctrust.org.uk



A TALK WITH
STUART BENN

GOLDEN EAGLES IN THE
HIGHLANDS
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Thursday 15th February 2024
The Wildside Centre
7pm



'GOLDEN EAGLES IN THE HIGHLANDS, PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE'

The Biodiversity Group have organised an evening with Stuart Benn, where he will present a talk about 'Golden Eagles within the Highlands, Past Present & Future'.

This talk is free and will take place on the 15th February at The Wildside Centre at 7pm. More events like this one are being organised by the group and will be announced soon.

OPEN BOOT LOCAL PRODUCE DAY

Jane of Lyne Mhor Croft will be back this year on the first Wednesday of each month at The Wildside Centre from 11am-12:30pm selling fresh local produce straight from the croft! There are lots of different things each month from pork burgers to rolled joints, ribs, sausages, eggs and lots more! So pop down and support local in 2024!

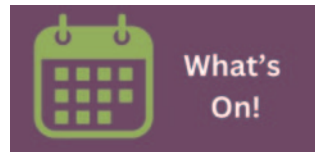
7TH FEBRUARY
6TH MARCH
3RD APRIL
1ST MAY
5TH JUNE
3RD JULY
7TH AUGUST
4TH SEPTEMBER
2ND OCTOBER
6TH NOVEMBER



HELP KEEP OUR CALENDAR UP TO DATE!

We are updating our 'What's On' Calendar for the start of 2024!

Do you have a class running in the community? An event? Something people might want to get involved in? Then please email your information to communications@sfctrust.org.uk and we will get you included.



JOIN THE TRUST

If you would like to become a member of the Trust then please go to.

www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/join-the-trust/

MANY THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS

This newsletter is made possible by community benefit funding from SSE Renewables, Greencoat and Green Highland Allt Luaidhe (228) Limited.

