

# STRATHERRICK & FOYERS NEWSLETTER

Feb 2025 Issue Number: 54

## WILDSIDE WEDNESDAY IS BACK!

We are pleased to announce that Wildside Wednesday is returning! Initially it will be held on the first Wednesday of the month for the next three months to gauge interest.

Please join us to:

- Visit the Mobile Library – 11am to 11.30am. Existing membership not required
- Buy some local produce – Jane from Lyne Mhor croft will be selling meat and Jinty will be selling her jams
- Meet our new CEO – Jewels Lang, the Trust's new CEO, will be available to answer your questions and chat to members of the community
- Relax and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea and some cake

The Wildside Centre will be open between 9.30am and 12.30pm on Wednesdays 5th February, 5th March and 2nd April, so please pop in if you can!

## WELCOMING OUR NEW CEO!

Hello to you, I am the new Chief Executive Officer of Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust. I am really excited to take on this role and eager to understand how I can contribute to the community we represent. I have moved into the area and, despite the baptism by snow in my first week, can appreciate what a fantastic location this is. Community development has been the mainstream of my career for many years and I look forward to meeting you all as I get to understand what you want us, as the Trust, to deliver to support and enhance your community. To this end we will be organising some local community events in the Spring which you will hear more about in this newsletter and I will engage with groups as we develop and deliver our projects.

In the meantime, you can contact me via my email address: [ceo@sfctrust.org.uk](mailto:ceo@sfctrust.org.uk)

Jewels Lang  
SFCT



*The deadline for content for the Spring Magazine is **Friday 25th April 2025.***

*Please email [marketingofficer@sfctrust.org.uk](mailto:marketingofficer@sfctrust.org.uk) with your articles including your name and a picture!*

THE PATHWAYS GROUP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENT  
THE INVITATION  
DISCOVER, CONNECT, SHAPE

Join us on Saturday 8th February 2025,  
1.30 -5.30pm  
Wildside Centre, Whitebridge

The Pathways Group invites you to a community event that explores the potential development of a pathways based app.

This is your opportunity to help shape an app which will provide the community with a tool to help enhance the wellbeing and health of our community and also grow the local economy through more sustainable tourism.

## WHAT'S IN STORE?

Arrive for walk – 1.15pm

1.30pm: The walk, led by members of the Pathways Group, will head out from Whitebridge towards Foyers. Hear about biodiversity, heritage and the work the group has done on improvements to this route, and explore how a pathways-based app will help to enhance awareness of our local heritage, culture and biodiversity. Walk length – 3 miles in total out and back.

3pm - 4pm: Enjoy tea and cake while chatting with members of the Pathways Group and Angus Turner from Zudu, our app development partner. Take the opportunity to browse the work of the Pathways Group and how the idea of an app was conceived.

And then...

4pm – 5.30pm: Take part in an informative and interactive session led by Graeme and Angus in an idea-sharing session that will help to shape the design and features of the app

# THE VISION – WHY THIS EVENT MATTERS

***"Paths are not just means of traversing space, but also of feeling, knowing, and thinking."*** Robert Macfarlane, *The Old Ways*.

For the past three years the Pathways Group has been working hard to promote and improve the local path network, paths that lead through rich landscapes, historical sites, and biodiversity hotspots. These paths are more than just routes; they are threads that weave the story of our community, connecting people to nature and each other.

So why an app? A community path based app will:

- Provide a detailed guide to our many local paths
- Celebrate our Heritage: Help share the rich history of our local area
- Celebrate our Culture: Record the stories and legends of our area
- Celebrate our Biodiversity: Raise awareness of our flora and fauna and conservation initiatives
- Help grow the local economy through more sustainable tourism
- Serve as a platform for community engagement, education, enterprise and health and wellbeing

The app will create an inclusive digital space in which there is information that we can all use for our benefit.

You can find out more about the event by following the dedicated Pathways Group Community Engagement event page on Facebook, which can be found via Trust's Facebook page.

The Pathways Group



*Path improvement between Foyers and Inverfarigaig*



*Path improvement between Foyers and Whitebridge*

# WHO ARE THE PATHWAYS GROUP?

The Pathways group was set up in 2021 on the back of the Community Action Plan (CAP), which identified the importance to the community of maintaining and developing our path network based on the knowledge that our paths are part of our outdoor infrastructure.

As per the CAP, the first task undertaken was to undertake an audit of the paths and trails in the Stratherrick & Foyers area identifying the main users, level of use, landowners, and general state of requirement for



maintenance. To date 27 have been audited but there are more to be done...

Two key strands of work emerged from this audit, namely, the maintenance and development of key sections of our path network and the marketing and promotion of our paths. To help with the marketing and promotion, the group have a dedicated page

on the Community website called 'Walk the Walk' ([www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/walk-the-walks](http://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/walk-the-walks)), and these will feed into the app being developed, as discussed on the previous pages. Three of the walks listed on this website are detailed below. If you have a favourite walk you would like to share, please email [sharon@sfctrust.org.uk](mailto:sharon@sfctrust.org.uk)

## Walk 1

Drummond Plantation circular  
1.76m. Easy.

### Description

Take the track off the B852 mid way between West Drummond Cottages and Wester Drummond. Park in the open area beyond the two white houses. Go through the large gate and follow the forestry road, keeping to the right at the first junction. The road goes gently downhill. Just before the end, there is an older forestry road. Turn left here and walk towards the Loch, looking out for the Crannog.

In places the track is a bit muddy but as you head uphill away from the loch the track improves again. Cross a large open area and continue on the track to your left. Loch Knockie comes into view again as you

continue on this track back to the start.  
<https://explore.osmaps.com/route/24028444/drummond-plantation-circular>



## Walk 2

Inverfarigaig Viewpoint Circuit. 2 miles.

This is a short, circular woodland walk taking in a viewpoint over Loch Ness. It has a steep uphill start and then more gradual inclines on broad easy tracks. Easy to moderate.

### Description

Start from the visitor's car park in Inverfarigaig and head steeply uphill on a rough path for a short distance then take the first track on the right following it up and round until you come to a view point with a bench. Carry on past this and keeping to the track which curves back and forth before taking you downhill to join the main track that you turned off. Turn right and follow this main track which is now on a much more gradual incline. Ignore any signposts and way marks and you will arrive at a junction with a large unmarked track on the right which you take to descend gradually, passing two houses on your right before reaching the road. Turn right and follow the road a short distance to the junction signposted Errogie and turn right here to arrive back at the visitor's car park.

<https://explore.osmaps.com/route/20052162/inverfarigaig-viewpoint-circuit>



## Walk 3

Wester Aberchaldar to Garthbeg.

7 miles - out and return. Easy flat walking on a small section of road, gravel track then grassy track along the south east side of Loch Mhor. The walk follows a small section of the Trail of the Seven Lochs.

### Description

Parking is very limited at the start of the walk. Please choose a spot where you will not restrict access for either residents or farm vehicles.

From the farmyard at Wester Aberchaldar, follow the tarred road to your right. After a short distance this changes to a gravel track all the way to Migovie. At Migovie, keep to the left of the house and look out for a Trail of the Seven Lochs marker post. Follow this grassy track all the way to Garthbeg or for as long as you want before retracing your steps back to your car. Enjoy the views across Loch Mhor to Gorthleck and if you are fortunate, you may see red kites flying above. If you are interested in archaeology, there are a number of hut circles close to the route.

<https://explore.osmaps.com/route/19155488/wester-aberchaldar-to-garthbeg>

If you have an interest in the work the group are doing, you can read more on the dedicated Pathways Project page - [www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/projects/Pathways/](http://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/projects/Pathways/) - and we would love to see you at the community engagement event on the 8th February!

# SING YOUR WAY HOME

Join Monadhliath, a local singing group, for this fabulous event on Sunday 27th April at Stratherrick Hall! If you are a singing group or would like to take part as an individual, please register your interest by emailing [info@inspiration-scotland.com](mailto:info@inspiration-scotland.com) by the 31st March.

If you are not a singer, you can still join us! Monadhliath invites everyone to our concert after the workshops on the 27th, from 3.30-4.30 pm at Stratherrick Public Hall. Entry is free but donations to Highland Hospice are welcome!

Christiane Morley

**Monadhliath**  
invites singing groups and individuals  
who love singing to the event:  
**Sing Your Way Home**

**Sunday 27th April, 2025**  
Stratherrick Public Hall,  
Gorthleck IV2 6UJ  
10.30am - 4.30pm

**10.30 - 11.00:**  
**Coffee and cake**

**11.00 - 12.30:**  
**Warm up. Each group to teach the others a song of their choice**

**12.30 - 1.30:**  
**Shared lunch - everyone bring a small plate of food to share**

**1.30 - 3.00:**  
**Work together on 'Home' (song will be sent out in advance to participants)**

**3.00 - 3.30:**  
**Break / set up for performance**

**3.30 - 4.30:**  
**Performance - each group sing 1 or 2 songs (depending on number of groups), then all sing 'Home' together**

Donations for Highland Hospice  
To join us please write an email by 31/03/2025 to  
[info@inspiration-scotland.com](mailto:info@inspiration-scotland.com)

It is a free event. We ask for donations for Highland Hospice. You can also attend as a singer without being part of a group. We invite guests who attend the performance also to donate to Highland Hospice.

Highland Hospice is a registered Scottish charity no. SC011227

## BOLESKINE CHURCH NEWS

Coming to the end of January, December seems like months ago. Not surprisingly the wintery weather meant that we had to cancel one of our Sunday services in early December. However, we had a great time later in the month with the church full for the Carol service and the extra children at the services always makes the time extra special,

also dropping the average age of the congregation dramatically! The carols and readings remind us of the wonder of Jesus' birth and God's limitless love for us all. Thank you to everyone who read, sang, played instruments and to everyone for joining in with gusto. Also all those who came along to help decorate the church for Christmas and take them down on a cold January morning (which turned into a great time as many hands made light work, the coffee and left over

chocolate warmed us up) and just being together helped to fend off the cold and dark of a January morning.

There is always a very warm welcome to anyone who would like to come along at 10.30am on a Sunday. Whether it is once a year, once a month or once a week.

If you would like any further information please do contact Fiona King (Church of Scotland Lay Reader) 07484 106435.

# WINTER FESTIVAL SUCCESS!

Last December saw the first community Winter Festival take place, with a wide range of events and initiatives happening across various venues throughout the community. In the main, the Festival was a success, with something available for everyone in the community. As it was our first year, there are definitely lessons learnt, and things we can improve for next time, but highlights included:

The Christmas Market and Light Switch on at The Wildside Centre was extremely well-attended, and it was great to see so many familiar faces and visitors alike.

The Community Christmas lunch was fully booked, and a great time was had by all!

Reverse Calendar – in total 290 items were donated by members of the community, collected at The Hub, Stratherrick Hall and The Wildside Centre, and delivered to The Highland Foodbank in time for Christmas!

Thank you to all community members involved for your hard work in making the festival happen!

Winter Festival Event Team



## 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/](http://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/join-the-trust/)

# FOYERS FIRE BRIGADE RECRUITMENT



Foyers Community Fire Station has a competent crew of 7 personnel, but we are in real need of new recruits, to keep the station sustainable and operational. If you interested please come along to Foyers Community Fire Station, The Vennel, Gorthleck, IV2 6YB at 18:30 on a Monday night, which is our training night, and have a chat. You can also email [stewart.macpherson@firescotland.gov.uk](mailto:stewart.macpherson@firescotland.gov.uk) to find out more.

Stewart Macpherson

## ESSENTIAL UPGRADES TO DISABLED AND LADIES TOILETS AT THE WILDSIDE CENTRE

Following many months of work behind the scenes we are pleased to be able to share with you that work on upgrading the ladies toilets and creating a larger disabled toilet that meets all the current disability regulations will begin in

February. This work has come about due to concerns raised by regular Wildside users about the functionality of the disabled toilets and accessibility of the ladies toilet cubicles, and by working with a local contractor, we have developed a plan that will address both of these issues.

The project is part funded by The Highland Council Regeneration Fund, following our successful application in 2024. This provides match-funding to the amount provided by Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust.

The focus of these upgrades will be on sustainability and energy efficiency as well as making the facilities more user-friendly.

Where possible, we will keep disruption to a minimum and will provide regular updates on our website and social media channels, but please be aware of the ongoing works when using the building. There will be toilet provision at all times, as the male toilets will still be operational, and additional portable facilities will be provided for the duration of the works.

## 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.

