

St Fillans Community Council. Chairman's Annual report 2017.

St Fillans community council has had four meetings since the last AGM with a moderate turn out at all of their meetings. Your new community council, with four new members, has worked well together over the past year. Steve Howell stayed on briefly to ensure a smooth transition and my thanks to him for doing so. More news on our structure at the community council meeting to follow.

My thanks to all of our village volunteers once again. As I mentioned last year, several community councils no longer exist as they could not reach the required amount of councillors and few have the active, enthusiastic individuals and groups that we are so lucky to have in this village. This volunteer section within the village, who continue to maintain and upgrade it, make it a much more pleasant place to live and they all have my thanks. I will now outline some of the key achievements of the past year.

National Park Bye Laws.

These were implemented for the first time in March this year, with 28 permanent wardens and 50 seasonal wardens to implement them. Already there is a much more pleasant atmosphere around the loch side. Picnicking families and genuine fisherman have returned and that, combined with cleaner less congested lay byes are all indicators of bye law success. However, we are early in the season and there have already been some minor problems, but overall it is a positive start and when word gets around about the much improved visitor environment, I am sure that the loch side will once again be bustling, but for the right reasons.

Loch Earn Railway Path.

I am sure many of you will have enjoyed, as I have, phase two of the LERP from Station Road to Comrie. To be able to walk or cycle away from that busy main road is indeed a blessing. There was a successful opening event in August with a good turnout of riders and walkers as the path was formally opened by Lady Jane. As you will have seen and heard, phase three is underway, continuing the path along the rear of the village, finishing this section at the power station. My thanks as always to both Geoff Hardman-Carter and the paths team and Johnston Brown and the Community Trust for all their hard work in making this happen.

Paths group.

Under the leadership of Geoff Hardman-Carter, they have once again been very busy. Their main focus has of course been the continuation of the LERP, but they have also been busy installing signage and finger posts, both within the village and on the hillsides. New paths have also been added to the village website and the Community payback team helped to clear a section of the goat's path. All this work is of significant benefit to both villagers and visitors alike and I am very grateful for all the hard work.

Gardening Group.

Under the now formalised leadership of Eric Kenelly, this group has as always, been hard at work. The maintenance of tubs and the mowing rota for the East end of the village makes a delightful entrance into our wee village. There have been litter picking parties and of course the war memorial has been cleaned and maintained with the unsightly hedge at the rear being removed. They have also replanted the Field of Hope in Station road. Soil was obtained from LERP 2 and has subsequently been planted with daffodils, which should make the tree area much tidier. Many thanks to all those who have volunteered.

Festive Committee.

The Festive committee once again put on a very successful Festive weekend, with a BBQ and family games on Saturday afternoon and a very successful disco and games night in the evening. This was followed by a Sunday buffet lunch, where we were well entertained by Tarnybacle. Thanks to the committee and all those who helped erect marquees, lay flooring and take it all down at the end.

We also had a very well attended Bonfire Night and fireworks. Again this night is cost free to the villagers and is a great social gathering. Thanks to all those who helped in any way.

Great Loch Earn Boat Race.

Again there were a small number of entrants, with only eight boats being taken. However, the weather was good and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. St Fillans entered two boats, the Gents team named the Austrian Halfwits and the ladies team named the Pink Ladies. The gents team won the event and the ladies beat their best time and won a prize for their fancy dress. Significant funds were raised by the gents for Cornhill hospice and by the ladies for Chest, heart and stroke Scotland. Many thanks to all those who sponsored us, for Brad at the Achray for providing the finish line entertainment and to

Russell and Liz for their annual BBQ. There may be a change of organiser for next year!

Neighbourhood Watch.

A number of people have commented on the lack of recent "Hints and Tips" being circulated. I am delighted to say that this is because we have been crime free for some time. They will continue, but only if there is something worth reporting. I'd also like to take the opportunity to thank David Birkmyre for all his work with NW over the years, both as Chair and subsequently as my deputy. I wish both him and Margo a happy life in their new home in Crieff.

Poppy Scotland.

The Poppy Scotland appeal made £139.18 in the village last year. This is not a bad sum, but is significantly down on the previous year (£176). I am unsure why this is, but I may have something to do with the newer ceramic style poppy's which can be re-used. I will make a concerted effort next year!

Other groups that have been active this year are the music group, the Scottish country dance group and the ladies lunch club. Unfortunately, the bowling group has ceased, but hopefully it will be revived at some point in the future. The ladies and gent's supper clubs have also been very active and my thanks to Isobel Howell and Don Forrester for organising them. These groups are of great benefit to our village, especially during the winter months. Please continue to support them.

In support of the golf club a social group now plays on Thursday mornings, if anyone would care to come along, please let me know. The golf club needs our support!

I would like to take the opportunity to remember those of our community who are no longer with us – they are missed. To those who have left the village and moved on, we wish you well and look forward to seeing you again. To those who have recently moved to our village, it is great to have you living with us, please become as active a member as those I have mentioned earlier.

For me personally, my sincere thanks to all those residents and volunteers who make this great wee village the wonderful place that it is to live and visit. I would also like to thank my fellow Community Councillors for all their hard work.

To conclude. We, your Community Council, wish you all a happy, healthy and prosperous year

Richard Graham.
Chairman,
St Fillans Community Council.
10th May 2017.