

Arrochar & Tarbet Community Development Trust
Update for Helensburgh & Lomond Area Community Planning Group May 2021 Meeting

Development Trust Directors held a monthly Board meeting recently at which a range of matters were covered, as they continue to oversee **recovery of the 3 Villages Hall and Community Café, following year-long closure**, with no income from commercial lets or club hire. Fortunately with Government and Council Business Support, the buildings have been secured, maintained and actions taken to create a new Business Plan, when Covid restrictions will allow re-opening and return of group meetings inside our facilities.

Throughout lockdown we've been able to host a **mobile Post Office Service** which has been operating successfully on Mondays and a good relationship has been established with the Crianlarich Postmistress. We're now looking to arrange this service for two mornings a week, Monday and Friday, which will commence soon for the Summer months and then reviewed for continuation over the winter.

Many villagers in Arrochar, Tarbet and surrounding Lochside areas have attended **Coronavirus Vaccination clinics** in the 3V Community Hall, organised by Dr Troup's Arrochar Surgery Team, who have been able to use the vacant main Hall, with rigorous cleaning and hygiene measures throughout and following the clinics.

As a consequence of lockdown, The Trust have overseen a change in their **Community Café & PO** with the Manager/Postmistress and long-term Trust Director, Melanie Tonks retiring from her front line role and the future of the building reassessed. This resulted in an approach from a local business couple who proposed to lease the building and invest in it's complete refurbishment, with a view to future operation and integration with Community Hall events and activities. A business plan and legal agreements were drawn up to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Café refurbishment has progressed apace through lockdown closure and is soon to be opened as the **"Cu Mara" Bistro and Takeaway**. The new Tenants, made great progress with the kitchen and food preparation area able to provide freshly baked scones and Pizzas for a great turnout of volunteers for a large Hall Recovery Group working day on **Sunday 18th April**.

This event was organised by the interim Hall Management group, who are now inviting members of the community to an **Introductory Meeting on Monday 26th April at 7:00pm** in the main 3V Hall.
(with alternative arrangements for those uncomfortable or unable to attend).



Volunteers working on 3 Villages Hall Maintenance – inside and out

Trust Directors were briefed on a successful funding application to Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) for **Adapt & Thrive** assistance, with the Campus recovery plan that had been prepared with help from **Just Enterprise** and **InspirAlba**, who had helped with a Community Survey last summer. Our Trust Secretary, Jen Little, being the inspiration and driving force behind a comprehensive and detailed submission, that received significant funding to address the following intended to improve future prospects and sustainable operations on the Community Campus, when we'll be allowed to fully re-open for club activities and events.

- **Café:** replace existing entrance porch with new entrance to improve disabled /pram friendly access and provide a covered, secure cycle parking shelter ;
- **Hall Gym** refurbishment;
- Introduction of a **Wellness / Treatment Room**;
- Creating a **Business Hub** with fibre fast comms and facilities
- **Improved AV system** for main hall
- **Enhanced function and wedding facilities**
- Creation of specific **3VH website** for targeted marketing and promotion of events
- Funding for a **Volunteer Co-ordinator** for a further 6 months
- Support for **general hall operations** to re-open, to re-start groups and community activities
- Introducing **Energy Efficiency Measures** throughout future operations

Unfortunately Jen's application did not receive funding for Seedcorn funding to assist in creating and launching **new Community Groups and activities**. However, to receive full funding for the other elements was a credit to the hard work and effort involved, in pulling together the detailed application.

3V Hall Marketing & Promotion work is progressing for re-opening with a new commercial website in place : (www.threevillageshall.scot)

West Loch Lomond - Stakeholder consultations and action plans

Along with Argyll & Bute Councillors, LL&T NPA representatives and Community Councillors, the Development Trust have participated and responded to LL&T NPA Stakeholder review meetings concerning Covid lockdown, that saw extreme behaviour and local Car Parks overwhelmed.

From this LL&T NPA have produced an information pack and video outlining plans by the National Park Authority and other partners, to better manage visitor pressures this season.

[Our advice for visitors to the National Park | Respect Protect Enjoy - Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park \(lochlomond-trossachs.org\)](http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org)

One of the actions was for a number of **Stakeholder "Destination" groups** to be formed to progress some of the positive suggestions and recommendations that emerged during the review process.

The Trust were invited initially to join the **West Loch Lomond group** and then another smaller business-led sub-group was established to specifically focus on **Arrochar and Tarbet projects**, chaired by Neil Wells of Lochs and Glens Holidays.

In addition to this involvement the Development Trust have aligned with the **Friends of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs** (FoLL&T) to progress a **Two Lochs Visitor Management Project** that emerged from above stakeholder discussions, on a partnership basis with local community representatives, tourism business groups, with support of landowners and the agencies to help address problems of excessive toileting and littering, and to promote more responsible tourism at the busy hotspot locations at Duck Bay, Arrochar and Loch Lomondside Lay-bys from Arden to Tarbet.

The Friends (FoLL&T) have experience of supporting Car Park, Steamship Café, Toilets and visitor amenity improvements at Trossachs Pier along with Sir Walter Scott Steamship operation on Loch Katrine, having secured **Rural Tourism Infrastructure Funding (RTIF)** for Visitor Management Projects. One involves the restoration of the **Trossachs Trail** with information Boards and signage, Loch Katrine, Trossachs Pier and Stronachlachar Car Park improvements and path construction to a visitor viewpoint – Rhoderick Dhu. They are also assisting infrastructure improvements at the Lake and Port of Menteith.

With this capacity the Friends developed a submission to Nature Scot for **Better Places Green Recovery - phase 2 fast recovery fund**. If successful this will take the form of the following :

FoLL&T - Two Lochs Green Recovery with support of Arrochar & Tarbet Community Development Trust, together with a business- led Arrochar & Tarbet Working Group, and Luss Estates.

1. Temporary toilets at the edge of Arrochar car park at a site identified by Argyll & Bute Council and agreed with Luss Estates. Another pod to be located at the 3 Villages Hall. This arrangement is linked with what is being planned for Duck Bay with a local sponsor in support. Their funding contribution being used as leverage to help secure provision at Arrochar. Emptying and waste removal included for all locations.
2. Visitor Services Wardens – 2 Seasonal posts to tackle litter, to try and keep the Head of Loch Long tidier, and to regularly clean the temporary toilets. Strong support for this from the community.
3. Info/map orientation boards at up to 15 sites including bus shelters and the railway station and other locations not requiring planning consent.
4. A 6 month A82 Layby Litter Bin Project from Arden to Tarbet, including procurement, installation and weekly uplift. This is with support of Argyll & Bute Council and the LL&T NPA to evaluate the levels of waste and benefits derived from the pilot project.

This Note is for H&L ACPG info only at present, as the funding application has still to be considered and may not be successful in full or part. A full press release will be circulated by the Friends of Loch Lomond and Trossachs (FoLL&T) if and when any funding approval is awarded.

A future **Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF)** application is also being considered by the A&T Destination Sub-Group that will look to more permanent and longer term improvements for the community.

Other Matters : A83 Railway Bridge Upgrade

Transport Scotland, Neil Macfarlane advised at the previously mentioned stakeholder meeting that plans were being considered with Network Rail for a structural upgrade to the West Highland Railbridge between Tarbet and Arrochar on A83. It was suggested that the Development Trust contact Sustrans to enquire about community support for improved cycle/walkway passage in any reconstructed bridge. Following a number of exchanges with LL&T NPA and other access groups, contact was made with **Sustrans** and a helpful link was established that identified '**Places for Everyone fund**' to help create safe, attractive, healthier places by increasing the number of trips made by walking, cycling, and wheeling for everyday journeys. The fund is presently closed however it was hoped it would re-open again in September 2021.

The Development Trust is working with others and looking to take advantage of this scheme and explore a safe inter-village walking/cycling corridor, possibly separate from the busy A83.

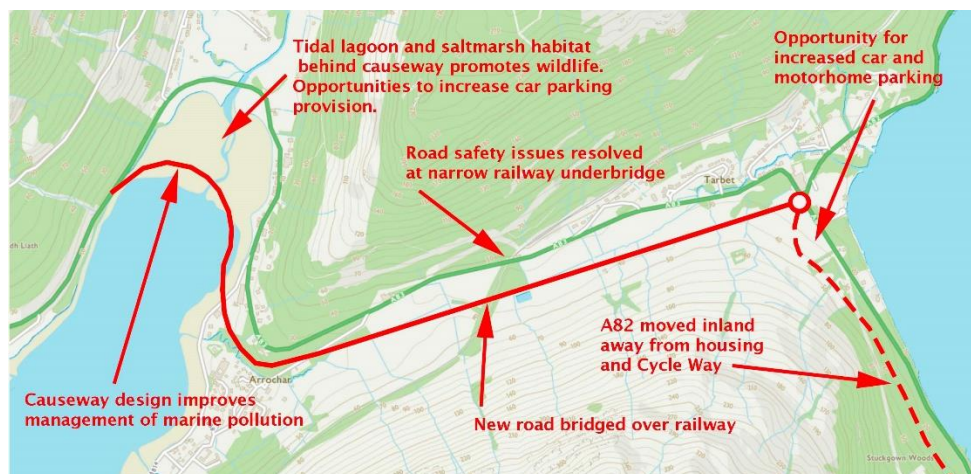
Planning Application 2021/0011/ADV

The Development Trust commended the stance taken by the Arrochar, Tarbet and Ardlui Community Council and the Friends of Loch Lomond and Trossachs and other local objectors in relation to the **introduction of signage and parking charges at Tarbet Pier** and decided to submit a further formal objection to the Planning panel for further consideration.

Access to Argyll and Bute (A83)

The Development Trust having submitted comments on the preferred corridor through Glen Croe would also like to take a view on the **5 coloured possible Route options** in the recommended preferred route corridor and would be swayed by the technical merits from those with expertise and knowledge, as various factors will influence identification, including land ownership, construction cost, duration of building programme and disruption to normal trunk road traffic flow, and maintenance of recreation and links to leisure hospitality and the community at Lochgoilhead.

The Trust would however advocate that a holistic view of upgrading and improving safety on the A83 from Tarbet, through Arrochar and the approach to Glen Croe, as well as the renovation of the A82 North of Tarbet that also needs to be taken into account for short and longer term community benefit.



A suggested by-pass strategy for Tarbet and Arrochar if major improvement at RABT is to progress

Walkers bridge above Arrochar on 3 Lochs Way beside Arrochar Community Hydro Turbine House

A new walkers/cyclists bridge crossing has been completed on the An t-Sreang above Tighness that provides a safe all-weather crossing of the burn that avoids unauthorised use of the Scottish Water Pipebridge. This has been a great benefit and attraction during lockdown and opens up great views on the 3 Lochs Way track to Glen Douglas, which has also had some drainage improvement work, following small landslides and blocked culverts that caused flooding damage on a much smaller scale to that in Glen Croe.

A replacement **pedestrian bridge at Succoth**, as part of LL&T NPA Core Paths for walkers and cyclists is being built over the Loin water funded by the National Park that connects Arrochar and Succoth, and leads to recreation routes in upper Glen Loin and the Argyll forest.

Duncan MacLachlan (Chair)

Arrochar & Tarbet Community Development Trust

22nd. April 2021

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