



COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

2015-2020

Buchanan

Buchanan Community Action Plan 2015 - 2020

This Community Action Plan (CAP) is an independent document, developed by the Buchanan CAP Steering Group consisting of 3 Community Councillors and representatives of each small residential area in Buchanan, chaired by Kevin Lilburn. We were helped by Community Agent (CA) Emma Kemp and Tom Wallace, Community Partnership Development Officer.

It recognises the achievements and outstanding items of the previous 2007-2010 Action Plan and builds on this with new ideas needed to be developed to support the Community over the next 5 years. This Action Plan represents the status, views and aspirations of the community in 2014. It sets out what the community aims to achieve across a number of priority areas.

This well-developed CAP will help drive positive action within the community, provide direction and focus for community based organisations and support grant applications. CAPs are recognised by funders, local government and policy makers as a representative view of our community's opinions and are used regularly to support and influence decision making.

The CAP belongs to our community as a whole and is available for any individual, club, group, school, business, trust etc within the community to use to support their activities as well as being used a guiding document by the Community Council and Development Trust (Buchanan Community Partnership).





PAST ACHIEVEMENTS

Community Action Plans bring about positive change within communities and Buchanan is no different with a number of significant achievements being made by the community, in conjunction with public bodies, including:

Visitor Management – The community took over the leadership of the East Loch Lomond Visitor Management Group which played a major role in bringing about the introduction of alcohol and camping byelaws which, combined with continuing policing efforts via Operation Ironworks, have resulted in significant improvements the area for residents and visitors alike, including an enormous reduction in litter and anti-social behaviour incidents.

Improving Local Road – Robust police enforcement of the Clearway on the C6, requested and supported by the community, has greatly reduced inappropriate parking north of Balmaha. Continuous pressure has also been applied to Stirling Council to maintain and improve the road surface and roadside verges and ditches. Safety for school children has also been improved with the introduction of 20mph speed limit signs.

Development, Housing & Planning – The 2004 Housing Needs Survey was updated and an Affordable Housing Steering Group was established, which is working with the Rural Stirling Housing Association to develop and deliver a plan for 10 affordable houses in Balmaha.

Improving Community Facilities and Activities – The Buchanan Memorial Hall Committee have made improvements to the hall including repainting, heating, lighting and curtains.

OUR COMMUNITY OUR VOICE

To ensure that this Action Plan represented the views of the whole Buchanan community a range of consultation methods were used. These included household and school surveys, stakeholder interviews and an open public meeting. We would like to thank our Community Agent, Emma Kemp, for her support and the community for their input without which this plan would not have been developed.

36 
**SURVEYS
RETURNED
FROM OUR 245
HOUSEHOLDS**

52 
**OPEN MEETING
IN BUCHANAN
MEMORIAL
HALL**

24 
INTERVIEWS

16 
**STAKEHOLDER
MEETINGS**

Thanks to everyone who participated

Our Community Now

The information below summarises the main facts and figures from the Community Profile.

LOCATION

Buchanan lies in a very special part of the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park on the east shore of Loch Lomond, in the extreme west of Stirlingshire. Buchanan Community Council area connects a number of communities; Rowardennan in the north of the community with Balmaha, Milton of Buchanan, Buchanan Smithy and Buchanan Castle Estate to the south. The topography of Buchanan includes; forest, lowland grazing, high grazing, moorland, mountain terrain, pebbled and sandy foreshores, marshland, many burns and the loch. The Loch Lomond islands of Clairinsh, Keppinish, Inchcailloch and Inchfad also lie in the Community Council area.

POPULATION

Buchanan has had a stable population for a number of years with a population of 621 in 1991 and a population of 630 in 2001. Buchanan has a higher proportion of the 44-64 age range than the National Park as a whole or Stirling Council. The school roll fell dramatically in the late 1990 but is now rising slowly.

EDUCATION

Primary Education is provided at Buchanan Primary School in Milton of Buchanan. The current school role is 22 which has fallen from 30 in 2006/07 and is well below the high 50's of years gone by. High School education is provided at Balfron High School. There are no preschool facilities in Buchanan. The closest nursery is in Croftamie and the closest play group is in Drymen.

HOUSING

There are 245 house-holds with residents in Buchanan, with 73% of these being owner occupied. Only 6% of houses are homes for social rent compared to a Scottish average of 24%. The remaining 21% of properties include a mixture of privately rented or 'tied' houses. Census data, backed up by local knowledge shows that there has been an increase in the number of second homes and holidays homes in Buchanan.



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EMPLOYMENT AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Based on 2011 census data 75% of people aged 16 to 74 in Buchanan are economically active, with 34% in full time employment, 12% part time and 22% self-employed. Buchanan has three times as many self-employed people when compared to the Stirling area or the national average. The main employment within Buchanan comes from tourism, Glasgow University (who have a research facility at Rowardennan) and the National Park. Agriculture plays a role, but to a much lesser degree than historically. Whilst many people are employed to work within Buchanan not all are living in Buchanan. The tourist industry employs a mix of domiciled residents, residential economic migrants, and workers from outwith the area. The National Park also employs a mix of permanent and seasonal workers with a percentage being local to the area and the rest from outside Buchanan.

ROADS

The B837, which becomes the C6 beyond Balmaha, connects the different Buchanan settlements between Drymen and Rowardennan. As the only route in and out of the area it is under intense pressure at certain times. The C6 is a clearway therefore parking and stopping is not allowed. Although there have been some improvements to both roads, since the 2007 CAP the road surface and verges remain in an extremely poor condition.

TRANSPORT

The only routine bus service to/from Balmaha is the 309 which leaves every 90 minutes (approximately) terminating in Alexandria, via Drymen and Balloch where it connects with trains to Glasgow which run every 30 minutes, although this involves a walk of about 400 metres in Balloch. The 309 service is not coordinated at all with bus connection from Drymen to Glasgow. On school days only, there is an additional morning run to Balfron (Drymen in the afternoon) which is mainly used by the Balfron High School students, however the public can travel on the service as well. There is no land based public transport north of Balmaha. There is no community transport as such. There is a scheduled water bus service in the summer, which operated on the following routes to/from Buchanan in 2014: Balmaha – Luss – Balmaha; Rowardennan – Luss – Rowardennan; Tarbet – Rowardennan – Tarbet; and an 'on demand' service between Balmaha – Inchcailloch - Balmaha. The closest taxi service is in Drymen. The closest train stations are at Balloch and Milngavie.

COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS AND FACILITIES

Thriving Community organisations and facilities that make Buchanan special include:

Buchanan Community Council; Buchanan Community Partnership; the School Board; Memorial Hall committee; Flower Show; The Communicator community newsletter, a fortnightly mobile library service and a library in Drymen; play areas in Buchanan Smithy, Milton of Buchanan and Playscape, natural play area, in Balmaha.; Buchanan Castle Golf Club. The nearest fuel services are over 10 miles away in Buchlyvie, Gartocharn and Balfron. There is a small but well stocked grocery shop in Balmaha, and the nearest Post Office is in Drymen. There are two formal campsites at Milarrochy and Cashel which both take caravans, and a managed "wild camping" site at Sallochay Car Park.

HEALTH AND CARE SERVICES

Drymen Health Centre provides primary GP cover, along with various clinics, a Community Nurse and a visiting chiropodist. An NHS dentist and a dispensing pharmacy can also be found in Drymen. Major hospitals are located in Larbert and Glasgow and there are smaller hospitals in Alexandria and Stirling.

ENVIRONMENT

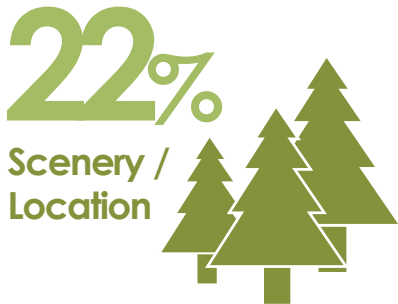
Buchanan forms an important part of a larger area encompassing and surrounding Loch Lomond which has been designated a National Scenic Area. It is notable for a range of specially designated sites: Loch Lomond National Nature Reserve has been recognised as a Special Area of Conservation for its woodland and lampreys; The River Endrick mouth area has been designated a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site for the protection of the white fronted goose and other notable species; the East Loch Lomond Oak woodlands are also designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

HERITAGE

There are scheduled Ancient monuments listed by Historic Scotland in the area, for example: Crannogs off of the shore of Mill of Ross, 'The Kitchen' which lies to the south of Inchcailloch island and the church on Inchcailloch. Whilst none of the Buchanan settlements have conservation status there are a large number of individual buildings listed by Historic Scotland including Buchanan Church and Buchanan Castle. The old school house in Milton of Buchanan is also listed along with the Mill House which was the original grain mill for the area. Buchanan Community Council produced a book called "Buchanan Remembered". Published in May 2007 and available locally, the book documents various long term residents' memories of the area and its people.

Community Views Survey

Likes



Range of services & facilities



Events and Activities



What the community likes.

Friendships and bonds with other members of the community.

Handy for Glasgow and Stirling but with all the benefits of living in the country.

I love the countryside and the scope that there is for roaming on the land and on the loch.

It's a close-knit community that is friendly, cares about and is proud of the area we live in.

The fact that Buchanan still has its own school and church.

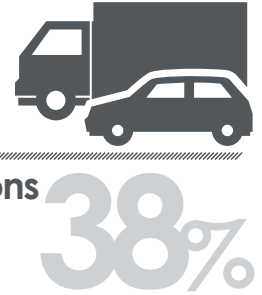
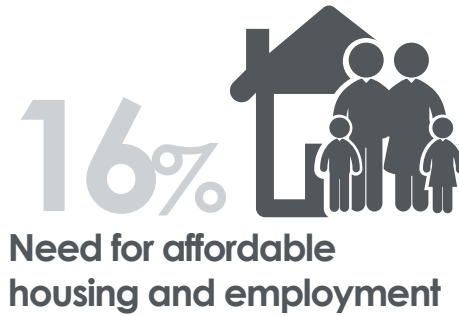
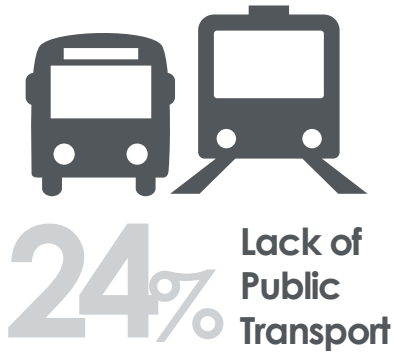
I love community events like the flower show which bring people together

A beautiful place.

The strong community spirit that exists here.



Community Views Survey Dislikes



What the community dislikes.

Balmaha is almost a village without children as more houses become holiday houses or hotel rooms.

Very slow broadband.

State of the road surface and verges.

Lack of public transport from Rowardennan to Balmaha.

Lack of local employment opportunities.

Lack of forward planning for summer hotspot.

More linked in and joined up with other organisations and give tourists a better visitor experience, especially at Rowardennan.



Buchanan

Our vision for the future

The type of place we want Buchanan to be:

A place where visitors are welcome and are considerate of the lives and livelihoods of local people.

A welcoming community, proud of its heritage with a first class range of facilities for visitors that are appropriate to the scale and setting of the villages and their surroundings, with attractive, un-littered natural areas, where agreement has been reached between local people, visitors and those responsible for visitors about the way the area should be used and managed.

A good community in which to bring up a family with a good range of housing for all, a safe environment, especially in relation to traffic, excellent community facilities for sports, play, youth and social activities, with a lively, active community working together to improve and sustain itself.

An enterprising, connected community with a healthy mixed economy, where local businesses are encouraged to set up and develop, with good access to employment opportunities and training, and with good transport networks for local people and networks alike.

A community in charge of its own future where the people living and working in the area are closely involved in, and have greater control over the way it develops.



Main Themes and Priorities

These are the main themes and priorities the community will focus on over the next five years, in partnership with public agencies and other supporters.

Sustainable Travel & Recreation

Road Improvements, Management & Safety

Visitor Management & Facilities

Housing & Community Development

Community Facilities & Events

TOP PRIORITIES AS IDENTIFIED BY THE COMMUNITY:

- ➔ Better Public Transport Provision
- ➔ Improved Cycle Ways & Water Access
- ➔ Improved Recreational Paths
- ➔ Maintenance and improvements to B837 and C6
- ➔ Road Safety
- ➔ Vegetation Clearance and Drainage
- ➔ Improve Visitor Experience
- ➔ More and Better Managed Parking
- ➔ Improved Public Amenities
- ➔ Better access to affordable housing and flexible business space
- ➔ Strengthen our local economy
- ➔ Community Development Opportunities
- ➔ Improve and make better use of the Memorial Hall
- ➔ Better recreation activities for young people and visitors
- ➔ Year round events and activities for the community

Sustainable Travel & Recreation



A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 12 months and beyond...



ACTION POINT

Better Public Transport Provision

- ➔ Lobby for more regular bus services to Glasgow and Stirling.
- ➔ Work with local authority and service providers to ensure existing services connect; Bus – Boat – Train.
- ➔ Work with surrounding communities to develop a shuttle bus service from Drymen to Rowardenan. Could include Park & Ride.
- ➔ Increase regularity or water bus service and lobby for faster crossings to act as commuter service.



ACTION POINT

Improved Water Access

- ➔ Improve public access to and refurbish piers to a functioning standard.

ACTION POINT

Improved Recreational Paths

- ➔ Link existing paths and roads to make a network for walkers, runners, cyclists and horse riders.
- ➔ Improve waymarking or existing and future path networks in the area.
- ➔ Work with FCS and other local land owners to improve maintenance and connectivity of paths within Balmaha Forest and surrounding area.
- ➔ Work with neighbouring communities to develop and implement better cycle paths linking all Buchanan settlements.

Buchanan is a linear, fragmented community which covers a large geographic area yet is constrained by the physical nature of the land and water to it's East and West. For the community to function effectively, both for those who live or work here as well as those who visit, it is necessary to improve the transport connectivity within the area. Due to the limited road infrastructure and increasing pressures of tourist traffic a focus on sustainable transport options is preferred, with improvements in public transport and enhancements to the walking and cycling offering making Buchanan a better connected, healthier community.



Could you be Buchanan's next Community Champion?

To find out how you could help deliver these actions go to page 15

Road Improvements, Management & Safety



The main road through Buchanan is the B837/C6 between Drymen and Rowardennan. This road provides the only vehicular access to East Loch Lomond and has reasonable levels of traffic year round, but can be exceptionally busy with cars during the summer months.

Parts of the West Highland Way also run along the C6 itself, which can lead to significant pedestrian traffic on the road. Unfortunately the B837 and particularly the C6 have suffered from a woeful lack of maintenance investment for decades, leading to severe levels of encroaching vegetation, blocked drains and ditches, and a road surface that is simply not fit for purpose over significant lengths. Following intense lobbying by the Community Council and other community members there has been some progress in recent years, but there is an enormous amount still to be done.

A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 12 months and beyond...



ACTION POINT

Maintenance and improvements to B837

- ➔ Develop, agree and implement a coordinated road and footpath improvement plan for entire length of B837 & C6. Include better coordination of road closures for repairs.
- ➔ Review quality and signage of passing places and implement changes where required.
- ➔ Improve gritting of roads in winter months.

ACTION POINT

Road Safety

- ➔ Develop and implement traffic calming plan for Buchanan Smithy, Balmaha & Milton of Buchanan to include extended 20mph areas.
- ➔ Stirling Council & NPA to improve lighting within Balmaha Car Park. Could be delivered alongside community development of former toilet block site.

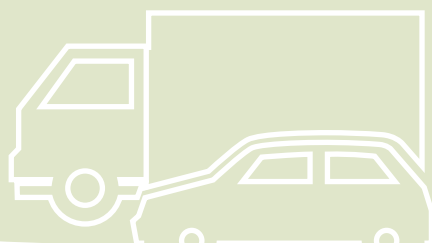
ACTION POINT

Vegetation Clearance and Drainage

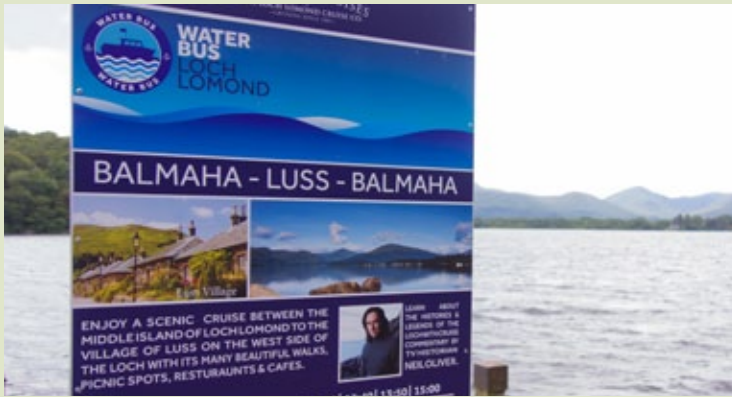
- ➔ Encourage land owners to regularly cut back overhanging vegetation on roadsides.
- ➔ Maintain, upgrade and improve roadside ditches to alleviate flooding.
- ➔ Hold a Community / Volunteer event to tackle areas of overgrown vegetation at key roadside beauty spots.

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Visitor Management & Facilities



There is a significant year round visitor presence in Buchanan, with significant peaks at weekends, during school holidays, and in particular, during dry sunny periods in summer months. Visitors are drawn to the area by the scenery and recreation opportunities, both land and water based, afforded by Ben Lomond, the East Loch Lomond corridor and the West Highland Way.

Overnight accommodation is available in a range of holiday lodges and cottages, bed and breakfasts, bunkhouses, formal and informal, but actively managed, campsites and two inns/hotels.

Parking and public toilet provision is currently inadequate for the peak numbers of visitors who come to the area.

The introduction of byelaws restricting camping and the consumption of alcohol in public places has dramatically improved levels of litter and anti-social behaviour caused by visitors but there is still room for improvement, particularly with regard to litter.

A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 12 months and beyond...



ACTION POINT

Improve Visitor Experience

- ➔ Improve visitor signage and interpretation throughout area.
- ➔ Improve planning between agencies to tackle summer hotspots.
- ➔ Identify opportunities for wet weather activities within the area

ACTION POINT

More and Better Managed Parking

- ➔ Work with external agencies to further reduce unsafe and illegal parking throughout the community area.
- ➔ Restrict parking at entrance to Balmaha Car Park to allow safer lines of sight.
- ➔ Consider Community management of Balmaha car park to generate income for community projects.

ACTION POINT

Improved Visitor Amenities

- ➔ Improve access to public toilets within Balmaha.
- ➔ Improve quality of picnic areas throughout the community.
- ➔ Work with neighbouring communities to ensure health care provision for the area is maintained.

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Housing & Community Development



As tourism and recreation have grown in Buchanan, a significant proportion of available housing stock has been converted to visitor accommodation, in the form of both holiday cottages and B&Bs. The majority of recent development, both completed, and approved but not completed, has been for the provision of additional visitor accommodation.

There is a general view that future development should be more focused on the provision of additional housing, particularly in the "affordable" category, and aimed at long term residents. There is also an aspiration for flexible workspaces to enable and support local enterprise and provide year round employment. Community bodies are currently progressing affordable housing and amenity land enhancement projects in Balmaha. Identifying and sustaining adequate sources of funding is an ongoing challenge for all community projects and activities.



A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 12 months and beyond...



ACTION POINT

Better access to affordable housing and flexible business space

- ➔ Continue to progress and implement proposals to develop affordable housing within the Balmaha area, including the sale of services plots for self build.
- ➔ Review the availability and demand for flexible office space / business units within the area and identify preferred location should demand be adequate.

ACTION POINT

Strengthen our local economy

- ➔ Retain or attract young people and families to live and work in the area.
- ➔ Work with local agencies to identify opportunities for employment creation not just in tourism industries to ensure sustainability.
- ➔ Work to attract a more diverse range of businesses to the local area providing work outwith the tourist season.

ACTION POINT

Community Development Opportunities

- ➔ Complete the land transfer of the former toilet block site and implement village enhancement plans.
- ➔ Work with NPA planning department to ensure a balance is achieved between development opportunities, visitor activities and infrastructure requirements.
- ➔ Improve access to broadband throughout the community.

Could you be Buchanan's next Community Champion?

To find out how you could help deliver these actions go to page 15

Community Facilities & Events



A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 12 months and beyond...



ACTION POINT

Improve and make better use of the Memorial Hall

- Consult the community on the preferred improvements to the Memorial Hall & develop affordable proposals to be implemented.
- Raise awareness of activities within the Memorial Hall.
- Consult local community on additional activities that could be offered by the Memorial Hall.

ACTION POINT

Better recreation activities for young people and visitors

- Carry out a review of play provision within the area and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Consult local residents and visitors on recreational activities which could be improved within the area such as mountain biking, ball sports or horse riding.



The Buchanan Memorial Hall is the current location for most indoor community events and activities. The age, condition and tenure of this building present a number of ongoing practical and financial challenges, however solutions are being sought. There is a clear appetite for a greater number, and wider variety, of events and activities being made available, both in the Hall, and in the wider area.

ACTION POINT

Year round events and activities for the community

- Develop a community Arts group to help promote activities such as a music or film festival.
- Create a programme of activities throughout the year celebrating local and nationally significant events such as the Commonwealth Games.
- Carry out a number of fund raising activities to support community events and activities as well as to contribute to improvements to the Memorial Hall.



Making It Happen

This Community Action Plan belongs to the Buchanan Community as a whole and will need the community to work together with local and national stakeholders to achieve its full potential. Within Buchanan two lead organisations exist to support the delivery of community activities, the Buchanan Community Council and the Buchanan Community Partnership. However there are many other organisations and individuals who may choose to take on the role of Community Champion in tackling the issues set out in this plan. These organisations will act as the catalyst for positive community action and should be your first port of call when considering tackling an issue within this document.

In addition to local Champions, this document will be shared with local, regional and national stakeholders such as the National Park Authority, Stirling Council, Police Scotland and Transport Scotland to help direct their investments locally.

Could you be Buchanan's next Community Champion?

If you have a passion to help tackle any of the actions within this Plan get in touch via the contact details below and become Buchanan's next Community Champion!

If you would like to be part of making this Action Plan a reality, contact

Buchanan Community Partnership:

Name: Kevin Lilburn

E-mail: kev2011@yahoo.com

or

Buchanan Community Council:

Name: Buchanan Community Council Secretary

E-mail: buchanancclochlomond@gmail.com

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Loch Lomond & The Trossachs
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