



COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

2017-2022

Strathard

Strathard Community Action Plan 2017-2022

This Community Action Plan (CAP) is our third Action Plan, and represents the views, needs and wants of the Strathard Community.

It was compiled by the CAP Steering Group with the assistance of The Community Partnership. This CAP revises and replaces the previous 2008-2011 Community Action Plan.

Thanks are extended to both the Steering Group and the Community Partnership for their hard work and dedication in developing and producing this document.



The second Strathard Community Action Plan (2008-2011) helped support several successful local projects, including:

- ➔ Community owned and managed garage and fuel service in Aberfoyle;
- ➔ The Strathard-wide flood management plan, which is now in progress.
- ➔ Local resilience and school flood plans;
- ➔ Speed limit extensions in Aberfoyle;
- ➔ Phase 1 of Aberfoyle Play Park;
- ➔ The completion of the Historic Route from Aberfoyle to Inversnaid;
- ➔ Improvements to the local path network;
- ➔ Provision of disabled access where possible;
- ➔ Supporting the National Park By-Laws to combat anti-social behaviour and irresponsible wild camping;





Our Community Our Voice

The Action Plan was prepared following an extensive consultation with the community between September 2016 and March 2017. This comprised:

The distribution of 600 surveys across the community to identify likes, dislikes, needs and wants. Of these 54 Primary School surveys were returned; 36 household surveys; 17 were completed through Survey Monkey; 2 young person surveys and 15 stakeholder surveys. This comprised 20% of the community.

Two focus group meetings were held with 6 businesses from across Strathard.

An Open Day was held to encourage the community to engage with the priorities identified through the consultation. This was attended by 54 people.

The Shaping Strathard Roadshow, which visited several locations and encouraged people to vote for the priorities to be included in the Action Plan, was attended by 35 people.



20%
SURVEYS RETURNED
FROM OUR COMMUNITY

54



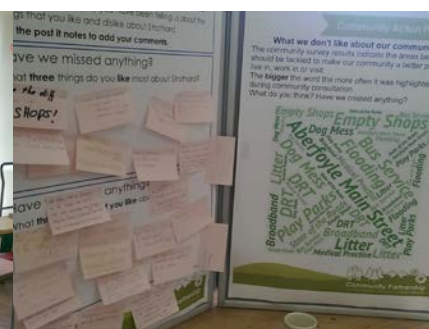
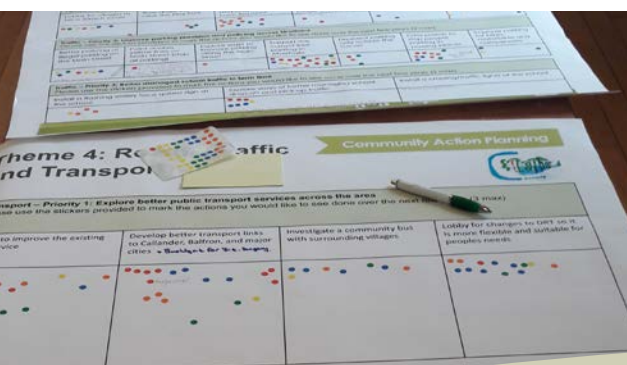
**PEOPLE ATTENDED
THE COMMUNITY OPEN DAY**



2

**FOCUS GROUP
MEETINGS
WITH 6 BUSINESSES**

Thanks to everyone who participated



Our Community Now

The following section provides an overview of the Strathard Community at the time the Action Plan was compiled. It provides a summary of the Location, Population, Housing, Employment and Economy, Education, Health and Social Care, Community Facilities and Activities, Environment, Outdoor Recreation, and Heritage.

Location

Strathard is located in the stunning landscape of the Trossachs and covers an area of c100km². It runs from Braeval in the south-east to Inversnaid in the north-west, and comprises the villages and communities of Aberfoyle, Kinlochard, Stronachlachar and Inversnaid. Aberfoyle, the most populous village, is located 26 miles north of Glasgow, and 20 miles north-west of Stirling.

Population

At the time of the 2011 census the population of Strathard was 1382, an increase of 30 since the 2001 census. Although the current demographics are comparable to the Scottish average, there have been some changes since 2001. The under 16s and over 64s have both seen an increase, by 0.8% and 2% respectively, while the working age group (16-64) have seen a decrease of 3%. As with many rural areas across Scotland, the percentage of older people is slightly higher than average, 19% compared to 18% at the time of the last CAP. Local residents suggest there are more permanent residents and young families living locally.

Housing

The majority of houses across Strathard are owner-occupied, comprising 76% of the housing stock; significantly higher than the Scottish average of 62%. Since the 2001 census there has been a small rise in social housing from 16% to 18%. This is still well below the national average of 24%. Housing in Kinlochard is generally cheaper to buy and rent, encouraging younger families to move into the area. A significant proportion of the housing stock is holiday accommodation or second homes, especially in Inversnaid and Stronachlachar. There are not enough affordable houses for residents.

Local Employment and Economy

The 2011 census shows employment in Strathard is higher than the national average, with 48% of people in full-time employment, compared to 40%. A higher proportion of people are self-employed, 13% compared to 7%. Although the retired population is below the national average (13% versus 15%), there are local differences, with a higher proportion of retirees in Kinlochard (16%) than Aberfoyle (11%).

The main employers in Strathard are tourism (23%) and health and social care (13%). Other major industries include education, public administration, transport services and retail; traditional industries, forestry and agriculture, comprise 3%.

Many businesses are aimed at the tourist market, focusing on outdoor pursuits; visitor accommodation; inns and restaurants; and gift and craft shops. The opening of the Pier Tearoom at Stronachlachar has been an economic boost. Nevertheless, a dearth of visitor accommodation, the lack of superfast Broadband, and suitable childcare inhibit small businesses.

Education

Since Inversnaid Primary School closed in 2011, Aberfoyle Primary School has provided primary education for all of Strathard. Its current role call is 72. It provides nursery care for pre-school aged children; however, no after-school care is available. Some children attend Balfon Primary.

The majority of high school aged children travel to McLaren High in Callander, with a minority attending Balfon High or independent schools.



Health and Social Care

Significant changes have occurred to Aberfoyle Medical Centre since the opening of the local pharmacy in 2014. The practice no longer has a dispensary, surgery hours were reduced to five half-days per week, clinics were reduced, and the drop-in service was removed. Regular health and well-being classes have also been cancelled. Residents are able to attend Buchlyvie Medical Centre, however the lack of public transport makes it difficult to reach. Buchlyvie residents have found it more difficult to obtain appointments.

Other GP, optometry and dental services can be found in Callander and Balfon.

Community Facilities and Activities

There are a variety of community facilities across Strathard. Kinlochard and Aberfoyle have play parks and Village Halls. A Community Orchard, shops, Post Office, community owned garage, public toilets and churches are located in Aberfoyle. The local magazine, Strathard News, provides information for the whole area. Swimming and sports facilities are at McLaren Leisure Centre in Callander.

Strathard is an active community with several clubs and activities, including the Aberfoyle Village People, Aberfoyle Walking Group, Karate Club, Country Dancing Class, ABTRAD, Toddler Group, Pilates, Lochside Yoga, Kinlochard Book Group, and Loch Ard History Group. Annual events include the Kinlochard Gala, a Christmas Fair and Apple Day.

Outdoor Recreation

There is a plethora of outdoor activities available across Strathard. The landscape lends itself to hill and mountain walking, which is well catered for by numerous paths and trails. The FCS centre at David Marshall Lodge provides trails for differing abilities, activities for children and a Go Ape. The area has become popular for mountain biking, with many trails and development of the popular Aberfoyle Bike Park. Several national and international events have taken place. The National Cycle Network Route 7 and the Rob Roy Way both pass through the area. A golf club is located in Aberfoyle, and fishing is available on Loch Ard, Loch Chon and Loch Arklet. Go Country in Kinlochard offer water sports and other outdoor pursuits.

Environment

Strathard provides some of the most spectacular scenery in the Trossachs, comprising stunning mountains and lochs; it is cherished by the locals. Much of the area is managed by Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS), local estates, and the RSPB reserve at Inversnaid. A significant proportion of the Great Trossachs Forest is situated here, and there are a number of SSSI's and designated Ancient Forests.

Heritage

Strathard has a long and fascinating history, from prehistory to today. Prehistoric rock art, Iron Age crannogs, medieval iron bloomeries, and Dundochil the island castle of Duke Murdoch, can be found at Loch Ard. The Garrison at Inversnaid, the McGregors of Glengyle burial ground and Duchray Castle are important post-medieval sites. More recent heritage includes the important Victorian engineering works at Loch Katrine, and the slate quarry and bogey line near Aberfoyle. Remains of old farming townships litter the glens, many cleared for sheep during the C18th and C19th. During the C19th era the area became a popular tourist destination for wealthy Victorians, while FCS had a significant impact on local folk heritage during the early C20th. Important historical figures include the infamous Rob Roy MacGregor, and the Reverend Robert Kirk, who translated the Book of Psalms into Gaelic and wrote about fairies. He is associated with the famous Aberfoyle 'Fairy Tree'.



Community Views Survey Likes



What we said about our top likes.

"Beautiful scenery! And we need to keep it that way"

"The friendliness of everyone in the community – in the shops, in the pub, in the visitor centre."

"Ability to change things [and] affect change when we put our minds to it and act as a community"

"Peace and quiet. Rurality, a great place to raise a family and retire"



Community Views Survey

Dislikes

22%

Untidy and
unclean
nature of
the area



6%



Lack of information
and communication

8%



Lack of community
activities and events

13%

State of play
facilities in
Aberfoyle &
Kinlochard



Flooding and
mis-managed environment

10%



6%



Lack of community
drive, cohesion and
economic strategy

11%



Range and
maintenance of
community facilities
and services



State of the roads,
congestion and
public transport

24%

What we said about our dislikes.

"If we want to do anything we have to
travel at least 20 minutes"

"Stop people from putting chewing
gum on things like walls instead of
putting in the bin"

"Need for a 'vision' – what kind of
village do we want and how are we
going to achieve it?"

"Council Tax discount for roads which
damage our vehicles!"



Strathard vision statement

Over the next five years the communities of Strathard will work together, utilising our existing strengths, to build a vibrant and successful community for all by developing:

- ➔ **An active and engaged community that supports and celebrates our culture, heritage and people; working together to develop an inclusive and resilient community for all;**
- ➔ **A clean and green environment, actively supporting and encouraging locals and visitors to respect and value our beautiful area;**
- ➔ **A vibrant and sustainable economy, where the local community and businesses can develop, reviving and boosting our social and economic development;**
- ➔ **A modern, well-linked community through the provision of up-to-date telecommunications;**
- ➔ **Well-managed roads and traffic, and the development of a good, flexible and suitable public transport system.**

To achieve this vision we will work with various organisations and groups across the National Park, including the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority, Forestry Commission Scotland, RSPB, Stirling Council, Scottish Natural Heritage, SEPA, Historic Environment Scotland, and the Community Partnership.

Main Themes and Priorities

These are the main themes and priorities the community will focus on over the next 5 years, in partnership with public agencies and other supporters.

THEME 1: Community

THEME 2: Environment

THEME 3: Outdoor Recreation and Economic Development

THEME 4: Roads, Traffic and Transport

THEME 5: Engagement and Communications

TOP TEN PRIORITIES AS IDENTIFIED BY THE COMMUNITY THROUGH CONSULTATION

- ➡ Better use of natural assets to make Strathard a 'destination'
- ➡ Improve support and assistance for local businesses
- ➡ Engaging events and activities for all
- ➡ Better understanding and care of the local environment
- ➡ Promote and celebrate local heritage and buildings
- ➡ Better road and roadside maintenance
- ➡ Explore better public transport services
- ➡ Upgrade facilities for children and young people
- ➡ Develop trails and a cycle 'hub'
- ➡ Improve resilience and services across the community

Theme 1: Community

Through the provision of great events and activities, celebrating our fascinating heritage, and providing superb facilities and services, we will have a vibrant, resilient and active community for everyone.



A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 12 months and into next 5 years...

PRIORITY 1:

Engaging events and activities for all

- ➔ Establish a support group for older people, those with dementia and their carers
- ➔ Investigate activities and/or youth club for teenagers
- ➔ Develop festivals and events to bring the community together
- ➔ Establish environmental projects that brings the community together
- ➔ Establish sports and outdoor activities clubs
- ➔ Use community halls to hold regular get-togethers for older people and carers
- ➔ Arrange day trips for older people

Community Champions:

Walking Group, churches, Callander Youth Project, Aberfoyle Village People, Primary School, outdoor learning providers, Forestry Commission Scotland, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority (National Park Authority), Strathard Initiative, village hall committees, Community Trust

PRIORITY 2:

Promote and celebrate Strathard's heritage and buildings

- ➔ Establish heritage trails for locals and tourists
- ➔ Develop a Strathard Heritage Centre in Aberfoyle
- ➔ Engage in more community archaeology
- ➔ Modernise and promote the Memorial Hall for a variety of uses

Community Champions:

Tourist Information Centre, Loch Ard History Group, Strathard Heritage Group, village hall committees, Community Trust

PRIORITY 3:

Upgrade facilities for children and young people

- ➔ Develop an outdoor classroom in the forest behind the school
- ➔ Look into buying and developing the old School House for a nursery, and pre and after-school care
- ➔ Install more seats and picnic benches in the play parks
- ➔ Install new and upgrade equipment in both play parks
- ➔ Develop a toddler play area in Aberfoyle
- ➔ Adult fitness equipment

Community Champions:

Primary school, Parent Partnership, Community Trust, Community Council

PRIORITY 4:

Improved access and maintenance of local facilities

- ➔ Investigate whether Forest Hills/other local providers would be willing to allow local rates and access to their facilities
- ➔ Better maintenance of local and tourist facilities, especially the public toilets
- ➔ Install a cycle rack in the village
- ➔ Reinststate low-level maintained path beside the school

Community Champions:

Community Council, Aberfoyle Village People, Parent Partnership, Community Trust

PRIORITY 5:

Improve resilience and services across the community

- ➔ Review the local impact of the reduced hours of the surgery
- ➔ Make sure that the Resilience Plan is communicated across the community
- ➔ Support Friends of Buchlyvie and Aberfoyle Surgery
- ➔ Develop and First Responders Team outside Aberfoyle

Community Champions:

Stirling Council, NHS Forth Valley, Community Council, Aberfoyle Village People, Strathard News, Aberfoyle First Responders, Trossachs Search and Rescue



Theme 2: Environment

By improving and maintaining our villages, and promoting a better understanding and respect for our environment, Strathard will remain a beautiful, clean and sustainable place to live in and visit.



A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 12 months and into next 5 years...

PRIORITY 1:

Better understanding and care for the local environment

- ➔ Support the completion of the flood action plan, and encourage environmentally sustainable solutions
- ➔ Better policing of environmental crime
- ➔ Deal effectively with non-native invasive plants
- ➔ Encourage local conservation measures
- ➔ Assess the environmental impact of the goat cull
- ➔ Better links between the community and Forestry Commission Scotland for information

Community Champions:

Community Council, Aberfoyle Village People, Strathard Initiative, National Park Authority, Forestry Commission Scotland, local landowners, SEPA, Scottish Natural Heritage, Stirling Council, RSPB

PRIORITY 2:

Improve the appearance and maintain public areas

- ➔ Upgrade properties and general appearance of Aberfoyle Main Street
- ➔ Upgrade and regularly maintain the Riverside Path
- ➔ Plant more flowers and hanging baskets across Aberfoyle

Community Champions:

Local businesses, local residents, Community Council, Stirling Council, Aberfoyle Village People, National Park Authority

PRIORITY 3:

Reduce litter and dog fouling

- ➔ Campaign to encourage people to dispose of their litter and dog-mess properly
- ➔ Lobby for more public bins, dog-mess bins and litter collections
- ➔ Lobby Stirling Council to follow through with dog-fouling fines

Community Champions:

Aberfoyle Village People, Stirling Council, National Park Authority, Community Council, Primary School



Theme 3: Outdoor Recreation and Economic Development

By sustainably using our natural assets, and supporting local businesses to develop responsibly, Strathard can establish a thriving and resilient economy fit for the 21st century.



A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 12 months and into next 5 years...

PRIORITY 1:

Develop trails and a cycling 'hub'

- ➔ Develop a cycle path from the village centre to the school
- ➔ Investigate the development a Mountain Biking Centre and promote Strathard as a 'cycling hub'
- ➔ Investigate more mountain bike and multi-use trails
- ➔ Lobby FCS to complete the Inversnaid Cycle Path
- ➔ Establish more mountain bike and cycling events
- ➔ Better signs, interpretation, maps and leaflets for all paths and trails

Community Champions:

Aberfoyle Village People, National Park Authority, Community Council, Bike Trossachs, landowners, Forestry Commission Scotland, Community Trust

PRIORITY 2:

Better use of natural assets to make Strathard a 'destination'

- ➔ Promote Strathard as a wild-swimming destination
- ➔ Investigate the area for Dark Sky status
- ➔ Encourage new and existing businesses and groups to utilise the natural assets of the outdoors, heritage and uniqueness of the area as selling points
- ➔ Upgrade the aesthetics of Aberfoyle Main Street
- ➔ Clean the River Forth so it is navigable for recreational activities

Community Champions:

Community Council, National Park Authority, Stirling Council, Strathard Initiative, local businesses, Community Trust, local groups, Strathard Heritage Group

PRIORITY 3:

Improve support and assistance for local businesses

- ➔ Better broadband to encourage new businesses and home working
- ➔ Reduce retail rents to encourage more SME's and social enterprises
- ➔ Encourage local businesses to offer internships/work experience to young people
- ➔ Encourage a wider variety of businesses
- ➔ More flexibility in business leases and reduced/subsidised rates to encourage seasonal/pop-up shops
- ➔ Start-up assistance for aspiring enterprises

Community Champions:

Community Council, Stirling Council, Open Reach, local businesses, Callander Youth Project, National Park Authority, SEPA, Forestry Commission Scotland, Community Trust

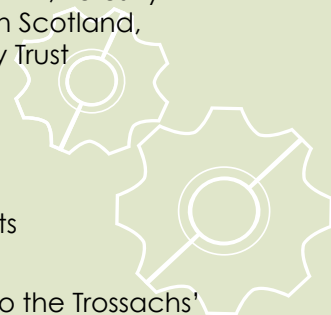
PRIORITY 4:

Develop a holistic, year-round tourism and economic strategy

- ➔ Develop a tourism and economic vision based on eco-tourism and natural assets
- ➔ Upgrade public areas and facilities
- ➔ Develop a good marketing strategy/brand to promote Strathard as 'Gateway to the Trossachs'

Community Champions:

Local businesses, conservation bodies, Stirling Council, Community Council, Aberfoyle Village People, National Park Authority, Community Trust



Theme 4: Roads, Traffic and Transport

Introduction: by lobbying to improve our roads, to manage and police traffic and parking better, and improve our public transport services, Strathard can have a flexible road and transport system suitable for a vibrant and modern rural area.



A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 12 months and into next 5 years...

PRIORITY 1:

Better road and roadside maintenance

- ➔ Upgrade Loch Ard Road with minimal local disruption
- ➔ Lobby for better roadside-drain maintenance
- ➔ Investigate Manse Road bridge upgrade or installing a pedestrian bridge
- ➔ Upgrade Aberfoyle Main Street road surface
- ➔ Lobby for better verge maintenance

Community Champions:
Community Council, Stirling Council

PRIORITY 2:

Better management of traffic

- ➔ Restrict log lorries and coaches on Loch Ard Road
- ➔ Lobby for villages to be 20mph zones
- ➔ Clampdown on speeding on Loch Ard Road
- ➔ Explore ways of managing school drop-off and pick-up better

Community Champions:
Community Council, Stirling Council, Primary School

PRIORITY 3:

Improve parking and policing

- ➔ Support the current free parking in Aberfoyle for residents
- ➔ Extra patrol cars/rangers to stop people parking in passing-places
- ➔ Better policing of illegal parking on the Main Street
- ➔ Re-design parking to work better for all, and improve parking signage

Community Champions:
Community Council, Stirling Council, Community Trust

PRIORITY 4:

Explore better public transport provision

- ➔ Develop better transport links to Callander, Balfour, Stirling and the cities
- ➔ Lobby for changes to DRT so it is more flexible and suits people's needs
- ➔ Lobby to improve the existing bus service
- ➔ Investigate a community bus with surrounding villages

Community Champions:
Community Council, Stirling Council, Community Trust



Theme 5: Engagement and Communications

Through good local networks, up-to-date broadband and mobile signal, and harnessing existing enthusiasm and action, Strathard can become a fully engaged and connected community.



A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 12 months and into next 5 years...

PRIORITY 1:

Improve local and wider information networks

- ➔ Support and promote the Strathard News and village noticeboards
- ➔ Update the local phonebook
- ➔ Create a central internet 'hub' where all groups and organisations can feed into

Community Champions:

Strathard News, local residents, Community Council, Aberfoyle Village People, Community Trust

PRIORITY 2:

Good broadband and mobile signal

- ➔ Improve mobile phone signal in Kinlochard and to outlying areas
- ➔ Lobby for Superfast Broadband across Strathard

Community Champions:

Stirling Council Broadband Development Group, Community Broadband Scotland, Community Trust, Community Council

PRIORITY 3:

Harness enthusiasm to increase community cohesion and action

- ➔ Capitalise on current events and willingness to get things done and investigate more ways to bring people together
- ➔ Employ a development officer to help initiate and support activities and projects
- ➔ Support Kinlochard Cottages right-to-buy initiative

Community Champions:

Aberfoyle Village People, Community Trust, Community Partnership, Kinlochard Cottages Residents Association



Making It Happen

The priorities in this action plan will be taken forward by the nominated Community Champions, supported by the Strathard Community Trust and the Strathard Community Council. The Action Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.

An annual Delivery plan has been developed and will be used to guide the delivery and assist the monitoring of a number of priorities each year. Copies of the current delivery plan are available from the Community Partnership website: **www.thecommunitypartnership.org.uk/people**

If you would like to get involved with any of these initiatives or for further information please contact the lead organisations for each theme as shown below:

Theme 1: Community

Strathard Community Trust
www.strathardct.org.uk

Theme 2: Environment

Aberfoyle Village People
Email: alisonboa@gmail.com

Theme 3: Outdoor Recreation and Economic Development

Strathard Community Trust
www.strathardct.org.uk

Theme 4: Roads, Traffic and Transport

Strathard Community Council
Email: cc@strathard.org.uk

Theme 5: Engagement and Communications

Aberfoyle Village People
Email: alisonboa@gmail.com

For general information contact:

Strathard Community Trust

Name: Ros Dingwall
Web: www.strathardct.org.uk
Tel: 01877 382668

Community Partnership

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Tel: 01389 722639

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Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Area
www.thecommunitypartnership.org.uk
Tel: 01389 722639



Loch Lomond & The Trossachs
National Park Authority
www.lochlomond-trossachs.org
Tel: 01389 722600

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