Muckhart Community Plan

Muckhart: Clackmannanshire's Gateway to the Ochils A beautiful village, a sustainable community

September 2017

Our Vision for Muckhart

A vibrant, active, sustainable and connected community, contributing to an area of outstanding natural beauty.

Welcome to the Muckhart Community Plan (MCP) which has been produced by your Community Council to help identify, promote and deliver our community's priorities over the next five years. It describes what we wish to achieve in Muckhart, and its surrounding area, and details our Aims, Policies and Objectives, together with Action Plans.

The community's priorities within this Plan have been identified through extensive consultation, which took place during 2015 and 2016, and have been confirmed by the results obtained from our Community Questionnaire.

It is clear from the consultation that residents appreciate our beautiful village, which is set in stunning countryside, and value the active community spirit created by the many local organisations and clubs within our village, all of which contribute to a vibrant and dynamic community, which we enjoy here in Muckhart and which we wish to see protected, developed and promoted, hence, our Vision for Muckhart, above.

Your Community Council has developed a practical Community Plan which we believe is achievable within a small dynamic community - a Plan which stimulates ownership and the active involvement of our residents and which supports our local organisations. Our aims, we believe, can only be achieved if community organisations and individuals all work together to help deliver our Plan's objectives.

Our Community Plan is not set in 'tablets of stone' and will be reviewed on a regular basis and may change to meet differing priorities, as they arise from time to time.

Our Plan does not stand alone, as it recognises our role in supporting the Clackmannanshire Alliance's Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) which is a Clackmannanshire-wide agreement designed to meet the shared community planning outcomes of Clackmannanshire Council, FV NHS, our emergency services, other agencies and the voluntary sector.

We hope that you find our Plan to be interesting, as well as a practical method of helping to achieve our community's priorities, and that you will feel encouraged and motivated to support it.

This document is a summary of the full Muckhart Community Plan which can be accessed on the Muckhart Community Council website:

www.muckhart.org.uk

Muckhart Community Council Consultation

Open Public Meeting 18 Stakeholder Meetings 3 Community Workshops

Community Questionnaire: returning 115 responses from 210 households

Muckhart Area Profile

The name Muckhart is derived from the Gaelic, Muc-Àird, meaning "pig height", which could refer to a hill where wild boar roamed, to pig farming or, possibly, to the shape of Seamab Hill. Muckhart is a cluster of communities, located in the north east corner of Clackmannanshire, the largest of which is the attractive village of the Pool of Muckhart. It is surrounded by several smaller settlements which include: Yetts o' Muckhart; a group of houses around Naemoor farm; Upper Yetts; and a group of houses located close to the Muckhart Golf Club and along Golf Course Road, towards the Primary School. To the north, Muckhart is dominated by the higher ground of the Ochil hills and to the south is rolling farming countryside in the River Devon valley.

Local business is based on agriculture, and related services, as well as tourism and hospitality. There is a golf club, a pub, a tea / coffee shop and a few Bed and Breakfast facilities which cater for tourists and visitors. There are also well respected, local carpentry businesses and a number of small service companies are run out of private properties.

Muckhart has a large number of clubs and organisations which cater for all ages, including the: Amenity Society; Horticultural Society; Quilters; Muckhart Primary School Parent Council; Baby and Toddler Group; and Rural SWRI. Rainbows, Brownies and Guides meet in the village hall and there are Beaver, Cub and Scout sections located in Dollar (some 3 miles away).

Muckhart boasts an excellent Primary School, which forms an important and integral part of the local community, and for secondary education, our children travel to Alva Academy or to schools in Kinross or Auchterarder. Dollar Academy provides a private primary and secondary education service and further education services are available in Alloa, Stirling, Falkirk, Perth and Dunfermline.

The Coronation Hall, at the west end of the village, is used extensively to host meetings, parties and other events and is also used as a picture house. The Church, at the east end of the Pool, is very active and shares a minister in a linked charge with Dollar and Glendevon.

Behind the Church is a nature park, with a dipping pond and small open air theatre, which offers access to the Woodland Trust reserve, Geordie's Wood, and the wider Ochils. To the south of the village, there is a community woodland and there is an enclosed play park, at the western end of the village.

Assets for the community

- Muckhart Church and graveyard
- Coronation Hall
- Muckhart Primary School
- Playpark
- Muckhart Golf Club (27 holes)
- The Muckhart Inn
- Mona's of Muckhart

Buildings, memorials

- Conservation area (various listed buildings)
- Balliliesk House
- Arndean
- Old Manse
- Japanese Garden, Cowden House
- Muckhart Mill
- War Memorial
- BT Telephone box (listed)

Natural features

- Nature Park (with open air theatre)
- Geordie's Wood (Woodland Trust)
- Seamab Hill
- Community Woodlands
- River Devon
- Extensive foot and cycle paths
- Widely diverse natural environment

Image of the Village

To promote Muckhart as 'The Gateway to the Ochils': an attractive and welcoming conservation village, offering a wide range of facilities for residents and visitors.

The community consultation indicated significant support for initiatives designed to improve the appearance of Muckhart, and it's Conservation Area, for the benefit of residents and visitors.

There is support for Muckhart to continue to be recognised as a beautiful village, with well maintained gardens, footpaths and verges, for the placement of flower displays throughout the village and for the village to re-enter Scotland's 'Village in Bloom' competition.

There is also support for the improvement of the area located nearby the Church and that a small picnic area, including public information boards, should be provided for walkers and cyclists, together with a limited number of car parking spaces.

Finally, there is support for improving the area in front of the Coronation Hall, by developing the concept of a village square.



86% agree with developing the village's open spaces, in particular, around the Church

"Improvements to the open space would create a significant feature in the village"

Housing Development

To encourage the gradual and incremental growth of a balanced range of new homes, to sustain a dynamic community, in keeping with existing housing in the area.

The Community Council's long held view is that a gradual, incremental growth in new housing should be viewed positively and necessary to create a thriving, vibrant community. However, it is deemed important to have a good mix of house types within the area, including homes suitable for those wishing to purchase their first home or who wish to downsize.

Should the new housing development proceed, as outlined in the Local Development Plan, it is anticipated that the community will have the opportunity to discuss and agree with the developer the 'Planning Gain' for the community and there is wide support for the reinstatement of the original 'Pool' of Muckhart.

Support also exists for the gradual and incremental growth of housing in countryside around Muckhart but only where clusters of houses already exist.



88% agree that housing should only be allowed to grow gradually and incrementally "This is a small village... Its character will be lost if it is developed all at once"

Sustainability & Environment

To sustain and enhance the natural environment through the promotion of environmentally focussed initiatives, supporting Clackmannanshire Local Development Plan policies.

The recent community consultation confirmed that there is significant interest in the protection and promotion of local biodiversity within our community.

Opportunities exist to improve energy efficiency within our homes and the opportunity to consult objective, relevant and accurate information and to learn from the experience of others, from within our community, has great support.

There is support for extending the present Ochils Special Landscape Area (SLA) to include the attractive countryside to the east of Dollar and south of the A91, as far as the River Devon, and including within it, the conservation village of Muckhart, to ensure that our surrounding landscape is not damaged by inappropriate development.



88% support considering the impact of any new development on biodiversity and the environment

"The natural environment is one of the greatest assets of the area" "This would help protect the character of the village for the future"

Education

To support fully access to quality education, for all, and the continuation of Muckhart Primary School, as a core community asset.

The recent community consultation suggests strong support for ensuring that the Primary School should be retained within our local community and that there are clear, and demonstrable, close links between the school and our community.

A major concern raised by the community is the lack of safe parking places, at the school, however, there is also strong agreement that all arrangements possible should be put in place to support our children walking and cycling to and from the school, where this can be achieved.

89% agree the village school is a vital community asset which must be retained in the village

"It's key to the sustainability of the Muckhart population"

"The school is the heart of the community, it brings young families into the village"

"I love that lots of children can walk to the school through a safe path - away from roads"



Muckhart Community Plan

Business Development

To support and attract local businesses within the community, whilst driving improvements to the communication infrastructure and other support facilities, in the Muckhart area.

The recent community consultation confirms that a reliable, superfast digital broadband service is required to support successful business development, as well as residential leisure and recreational use, across the whole of the Muckhart area and that a wider, consistent and more reliable mobile telephone service is required to support successful business development, as well as residential use.

The small businesses within our area rely, greatly, on visitors and tourists and the recent consultation indicates support is required to help increase tourism, generally, within our area.

96% agree a faster broadband service is needed in the area

"Critical for my business"

"This would allow greater home working for residents and possibly reduce traffic"

"This would be assisted by improvements to tourist facilities in the area, such as, increased parking spaces and additional 'leisure' facilities, such as the proposed picnic area at the Church"

Active Community

To support and encourage the growth of a vibrant, active, inclusive and cohesive community.

There is clear support for the provision of a single, easily accessible, web-based platform which contains all available community information. This information resource should include a shared community diary of events, a list of community volunteers, and their skills, information on local organisations and groups, and their contacts, etc.

There is support, also, for a community-led, volunteer driver/car pool initiative, especially, to assist the less mobile members of our community in getting to and from hospital, to attend appointments or for visiting.

78% support the development of a list of volunteers together with skills they can offer

"Great idea - let's get connected and support each other"

"This would be wonderful"





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Infrastructure

To improve the overall safety of our roads and further develop our footpaths and cycle ways, throughout the Muckhart area, for all users.

There is wide community support for all roads, verges, pavements and paths in the Muckhart area to be well maintained and clear support exists for an integrated foot and cycle path network to connect all parts of Muckhart to nearby communities in Rumbling Bridge, Dollar and beyond. This will both support tourism and our local businesses, as well as fostering a healthy community.

It is also clear that speeding traffic and improved road safety is of great concern within the community. Further action is required, with more measures put in place, to improve the safety of all road and path users and to reduce the volume of speeding traffic throughout the Muckhart area.



84% support linking, and extending, local foot and cycle paths

"Yetts and Pool need to be joined up with the rest of the Clacks"

"It is vital that walkers, cyclists and all vehicles are safe in the village and its surrounds"

"A safe pedestrian crossing is required at the bus stop in Yetts. Consideration should be given to providing a safe pedestrian crossing at the end of Maudie's Loan"

Public Services

To have the Muckhart area well served by public services, in particular, public transport.

Clear supports exists for a more regular, affordable, public transport network to link Muckhart to other areas within Clackmannanshire, and beyond, and is essential to ensure a thriving and sustainable community.

Support for improvements, including the availability of public transport on a Sunday, covers the existing bus network; an extended Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service; and improved transport to, and from, Forth Valley Hospital, in Larbert.

82% agree that an improved bus service is needed to the Forth Valley Hospital

"More access to Dollar or Tillicoultry to connect to... services"

"I use the DRT and it is excellent but it would be useful to have it on a Sunday too"



To promote Muckhart as 'The Gateway to the Ochils': an attractive and welcoming conservation village, offering a wide range of facilities for residents and visitors.

Objective	To improve the attractiveness of Muckhart, by actively involving the community in preparing the village for an entry into Scotland's Village in Bloom competition.
Priority Actions	 Liaise with other organisation(s) to seek their support Establish Working Group (possibly led by another village organisation) Identify possible sources of funding and/or sponsorship and other partners Consult with members of community to generate interest and support
Led By	MCC member: Peter Wyatt
	To explore the introduction of an attractive visitor area on ground in the vicinity of the Church,
Objective	incorporating limited parking, picnic facilities, information and interpretation boards.
Priority Actions	 Liaise with Muckhart Church (and General Trustees of Church of Scotland) to seek their support for initiative Establish Working Group (led by Muckhart Church?) to assess viability of Project Consult interested parties and neighbours Identify possible sources of funding and seek other partners Appoint professional, as required, to undertake feasibility study, establish concept design and costs
Led By	MCC member: Matthew Pease
Objective	To undertake a feasibility study to determine what can be achieved to improve the area around the Coronation Hall, focussed on the concept of a village square.
Priority Actions	 Liaise with Coronation Hall Committee to seek support for initiative Establish Working Group (possibly led by Coronation Hall?) incl. appointment of professionals, if required Consult with members of community and neighbouring property owners to establish ideas and support Identify possible sources of funding and/or sponsorship, and other partners Complete feasibility study assessing viability of project and report to Coronation Hall Committee and MCC
Led By	MCC member: Matthew Pease

Note: the above Priority Actions are extracts from Action Plans within the Muckhart Community Plan

MCC Policies (2017)

The impact on the image and appearance of the village, and surrounding area, will continue to be considered in the assessment of all local planning applications.

Muckhart Community Council promotes supports and encourages:

- the maintenance and upkeep of the village conservation area and its surrounding area
- the enhancement of the beauty of the village with well-maintained gardens, pavements footpaths and verges
- the placement and upkeep of floral displays within our community (especially throughout the summer)
- the provision of improved information and interpretation boards throughout the village for visitors
- increasing and improving local facilities for visitors and tourists
- local businesses catering for visitors and tourists



To encourage the gradual and incremental growth of a balanced range of new homes, to sustain a dynamic community, in keeping with existing housing in the area.

Objective	To establish a clear set of policies against which all future housing developments and alterations will be measured.
Priority Actions	 Establish working group (probably the MCC Planning Sub-Group) Study and understand current Local Authority planning guidelines and policy and review MCC policies Propose set of appropriate policies for future planning decisions
Led By	MCC member: Stuart Dean
Objective	To investigate setting up a Muckhart Community Development Fund / Trust, to manage funds obtained through planning gain, development grants and any other suitable sources of funding, for the benefit of the village.
Priority Actions	 Identify local expertise and set up Working Group Seek relevant advice on setting up a Development Fund / Trust Identify the management process for controlling and managing funds Submit recommendations to Community Council for its approval Implement approved recommendations
Led By	MCC member. Patrick Thomson

Note: the above Priority Actions are extracts from Action Plans within the Muckhart Community Plan

MCC Policies (2017)

Any development of new homes must meet the needs of the local community and should be limited to gradual and incremental growth of housing, all as per the following:

- Any new homes proposed out with the existing settlement boundary will be the subject of detailed consideration
- Any new homes to be built on site H49, as detailed in the Local Development Plan, should number no more than 35
- New homes, or alterations to existing homes, within the village Conservation Area should be compliant with the relevant Local Authority Policy
- New homes within a housing development will be expected to incorporate:
 - Affordable starter homes for young families and homes for people who wish to downsize
- Consideration should be given to the inclusion of sheltered housing and housing for young single people
- Any development within the land to the south of the Pool of Muckhart should reconstitute the 'Pool', forming a safe, natural feature to sustain and encourage wild life
- Any new housing development should incorporate:

Landscaping to encourage wild life

- Networked foot and cycle paths
- 'Designing Streets' principles





To sustain and enhance the natural environment through the promotion of environmentally focussed initiatives, supporting Clackmannanshire Local Development Plan policies.

Objective	To develop a database of local biodiversity information to share with the wider community and to consider this information during the assessment of planning applications.
Priority Actions	 Form Biodiversity Group from interested members of the community Identify and agree Strategy for gathering, managing and sharing data and information Prepare input template for data upload and populate / complete database
Led By	MCC member: Philip Lord
Objective	To promote and share relevant information with the community on sustainable energy and energy efficiency schemes (for example: biomass, solar panels, community heating schemes, electric and hybrid cars).
Priority Actions	 Identify useful partners and seek advice on way forward. Consult interested parties and neighbours Consult community using a Questionnaire on sustainability, home energy and efficiency requirements Set up programme of speakers and workshops and identify priorities for sharing information
Led By	MCC member: Jon Jordan
Objective	To encourage a connection with nature within our community, by raising awareness of local biodiversity and sustainability with both adults and young people.
Priority Actions	 Identify champions of biodiversity and set up a group to promote biodiversity and sustainability within community Identify and agree Strategy for raising community awareness by sharing information Identify possible sources of funding and/or sponsorship and other partners Introduce Adult Biodiversity Workshop and establish linkage to Primary School Biodiversity projects
Led By	MCC member: Philip Lord

Note: the above Priority Actions are extracts from Action Plans within the Muckhart Community Plan

MCC Policies (2017)

- Muckhart Community Council will support initiatives which sustain, improve and enhance the environment
- The impact on biodiversity and the environment will be considered in the assessment of all local planning applications
- Muckhart Community Council supports the designation of the area to the south of the A91, over to the River Devon, as a Special Landscape Area (SLA)
- Muckhart Community Council encourages the creation and maintenance of community woodlands and other areas of biodiversity



To support fully access to quality education, for all, and the continuation of Muckhart Primary School, as a core community asset.

Objective	To increase the use of 'Safer Routes to School' through the provision of improved / additional parking at the Primary School and village centre, encouraging the use of safe and secure walking and cycle routes for all.
Priority Actions	 Set up MCC Working Group of interested persons from interested members of the community and partners Consult on specific issues where required and agree priorities for safer routes and parking with school and partners Agree an Implementation Plan for developing safer routes and additional parking with Community Council
Led By	MCC member: Val Whyte
Objective	To encourage volunteering at Muckhart Primary School and encourage the facilitation of afterschool clubs, etc. and the promotion of health and well-being of all the village's children.
Priority Actions	 Identify interested persons and organisations and set up Working Group (led by Parent Council?) Consult on specific issues and agree priorities for volunteering and clubs Agree an Implementation Plan for supporting the Primary School
Led By	MCC member: Val Whyte
Objective	To develop a Strategy to encourage strong local MSP, Council, MCC and community support for the local school, and for improving access to quality education for all.
Priority Actions	 Identify and involve other interested person and organisations (e.g. Parent Council) Identify areas of improvement in secondary, further and higher education to meet needs of wider community Prepare a Strategy and Implementation Plan to meet the perceived needs of education Maintain contact with School, Parent Council, MSPs and Councillors
Led By	MCC member: Val Whyte

Note: the above Priority Actions are extracts from Action Plans within the Muckhart Community Plan

MCC Policies (2017)

Muckhart Community Council strongly supports:

- Muckhart Primary school as a vital community asset within our village
- Initiatives which encourage children to cycle or walk to Muckhart Primary School
- Initiatives reducing the number of local vehicles arriving at the Muckhart Primary School
- Funds from planning gain (through a Community Development Fund) should be used to support the school (for example, by improving parking)
- Initiatives which encourage members of the community volunteering at the school
- Initiatives which further support afterschool clubs, pre-school toddler and nursery facilities
- Initiatives which improve the health and well-being of school children



To support and attract local businesses within the community, whilst driving improvements to the communication infrastructure and other support facilities, in the Muckhart area.

Objective	To drive for an area wide faster broadband infrastructure and significant improvements to cellular/ mobile services throughout the Muckhart area.
Priority Actions	 Identify interested persons and organisations Consult on specific issues where required and agree priorities and any action plan required Progress improvement actions
Led By	MCC member: Mike Wilson
	To create a 'skills register' of local trades people, professionals and organisations, with the services
Objective	they provide, to be accessed by the community using the Community Council web platform.
Objective Priority Actions	

Note: the above Priority Actions are extracts from Action Plans within the Muckhart Community Plan

MCC Policies (2017)

Muckhart Community Council supports:

- The development of local businesses
- The improvement of the broadband infrastructure
- The improvement of the cellular / mobile service
- Improved communication services for local businesses and organisations
- Improved public transport services for local businesses and organisations
- The promotion of local businesses within the local community





To support and encourage the growth of a vibrant, active, inclusive and cohesive community.

Objective	To establish an integrated 'community electronic communication infrastructure' (on MCC web platform), incorporating a community 'notice board' and events calendar, which is accessible to all community organisations, to promote their activities.
Priority Actions	 Identify interested persons and partners (NB identify local web skills) to support the initiative Discuss opportunities with specialists and relevant organisations Identify sources and funding Agree priorities and establish Action Plan
Led By	MCC member: Jonathan Bacon
Objective	To establish a list of volunteers (e.g. a volunteer driver initiative), together with the skills that they can offer, which would be accessed through the community web site.
Priority Actions	 Identify interested persons, organisations and partners and skills offered Discuss opportunities with specialists and relevant organisations (e.g. Certification? Insurance?) Agree priorities and Action Plan and progress with initiative
Led By	MCC member: Jonathan Bacon
Objective	To establish a list / database of local expertise to help identify, and apply for, suitable funding to benefit community organisations and projects, and feed the information to relevant organisations.
Priority Actions	 Identify interested persons, from the community, organisations and partners to support the initiative Discuss opportunities with specialists and relevant organisations Identify sources and funding Agree priorities and process for accessing / distributing information
Led By	MCC member: John Anderson

Note: the above Priority Actions are extracts from Action Plans within the Muckhart Community Plan

MCC Policies (2017)

Muckhart Community Council supports:

- Volunteering initiatives which will benefit the local community
- A web-based platform to share information with the community



To improve the overall safety of our roads and further develop our footpaths and cycle ways, throughout the Muckhart area, for all users.

Objective	To work with all agencies and other interested parties to develop a Strategy to improve overall road safety within our community.
Priority Actions	 Set up MCC Road Safety Working Group involving members of the community Prepare a suggested list of new measures and priorities and consult with community Consult on specific proposals with all relevant agencies and organisations (e.g. Council, Police, etc.) Prepare and agree Strategy and Implementation Plan for improving road safety and agree with MCC
Led By	MCC member: Mike Wilson
Objective	To develop a Strategy to improve, develop & extend foot & cycle paths, within the Muckhart area, for all users within the community, and to provide access to the wider network of neighbouring 'Active Routes' via new, connecting foot and cycle paths.
Priority Actions	 Set up MCC Working Group, including interested persons and partners (e.g. landowners, Paths for All (PfA) Consult on specific issues where required (Council (e.g. Core Paths), PfA, landowners, etc.) Agree priorities for foot and cycle path improvements and developments with MCC Prepare and agree Strategy and Implementation Plan for improving, developing and extending foot and cycle paths
Led By	MCC member: Mike Wilson

Note: the above Priority Actions are extracts from Action Plans within the Muckhart Community Plan

MCC Policies (2017)

Road safety:

- Improve traffic management measures (e.g. extend 30MPH speed limit across access points to Pool and Yetts)
- Introduce further safe pedestrian crossing areas throughout the Muckhart area
- Infrastructure serving housing developments shall incorporate:
 - "Designing Streets" concept
 - 20MPH vehicle speed limit
 - Networked foot and cycle paths

Paths, Pavements, Verges and Roads:

- IThe community strongly supports the improvement and development of the foot and cycle path, pavement and road infrastructure and requires that:
 - all paths, pavements and roads are well maintained with good surfaces
 - all paths, pavements, verges and roads are regularly maintained and kept clear of overgrown vegetation
 - all pavements, paths and cycle routes are extended and integrated to the wider network



To have Muckhart well served by Public Services, in particular, public transport.

Objective	To agree a Strategy to improve the overall availability of public transport, for all members of the community.
Priority Actions	 Set up MCC Transport Working Group Prepare a suggested list of options and priorities Consult on specific proposals with relevant agencies and organisations (e.g. Council, NHS, bus companies) Prepare a Strategy and review, update and submit Action Plan for consideration of MCC
Led By	MCC member: Philip Lord

Note: the above Priority Actions are extracts from Action Plans within the Muckhart Community Plan

MCC Policies (2017)

The community wishes to see an improvement to public transport, specifically in the following areas:

- Improved local transport on a Sunday (preference is to extend the DRT arrangements)
- Improved local transport to Forth Valley Hospital (preference is to extend the DRT arrangements)



Acknowledgements

Muckhart Community Council (MCC) would like to express its sincere thanks to each and every member of our community, all of our organisations, groups, and their representatives, as well as all of the guest speakers and subject matter experts, who have given their time to take part in the wide range of events, workshops, focus group sessions, and so forth, that have taken place over the last eighteen months.

In particular, we would like to thank all members of our community who took time out to undertake our Community Plan survey and submit a response to our Plan Questionnaire, the results of which have shaped and influenced our Community Plan significantly.

Our thanks also go to Teresa Geissler and Muckhart Golf Club for providing some of the photographs used in this publication.

MCC would also like to acknowledge the guidance and support provided by Lesley Baillie, from Clackmannanshire Council, in helping to put this Plan together.

Finally, sincere thanks goes to all members of the Muckhart Community Plan (MCP) Working Group - both past and present - for all of their time and effort spent in producing this Plan and to all members of the MCC who attended the workshops to participate in the final preparation and review of the Plan.

Now, with the help of you, our community, all of the MCC members look forward to putting this Plan into action, delivering results and reporting back to you on our successes, over the coming months and years!

John Anderson Chair - Muckhart Community Council



Contact

Mike Wilson Secretary - Muckhart Community Council

Email: sec.muckhart@gmail.com Telephone: 01259 781546

www.muckhart.org.uk