

Muckhart Community Plan 2017- 2022

Annual Progress Report

September 2020



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Muckhart Community Council (MCC) launched the Muckhart Community Plan in September 2017, its aim was to identify, promote and deliver the community's priorities throughout the following 5 years.

We are pleased to report the progress made during the last 12 months towards achieving the Community Plan's objectives, (under the Plan's 8 headings). These are being delivered through our 19 Community Council Action Plans (see Appendix 1 for an example of an Action Plan).

This year, the Covid pandemic, (and other time consuming matters in connection with responding to various planning issues and initiatives) has not made it easy to progress the various action plans as we would have liked, yet significant progress has been made and some outcomes have still been achieved.

1. Image of the village

Entry to Scotland in Bloom (V1)

Peter Wyatt has been leading a working group (which includes members of Amenity Society) to generate interest within the community to progress to a village entry to Scotland in Bloom where entries will be judged on the following;

- Horticultural Achievement
- Environmental Responsibility &
- Community Participation

A significant number of the community have already indicated their support and the immediate priority is to move forward with initiatives to stimulate and generate active interest within the village, and those could include;

- A Keep village tidy day to improve the appearance of the village.
- Nature Trail on school the path which will require obtaining appropriate funding.

Funding for the proposed Nature Trail was applied for from the Robertson Trust, however this application was unfortunately unsuccessful. Once the Covid 19 pandemic is over, the working group will meet again, to generate more funding applications, which if successful, would be a good start to driving forward the Muckhart Scotland in Bloom initiative.

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Image of the village – continued

It is also intended to liaise with the school on this initiative, especially since there may be some helpful links with the proposed external nursey, should that be established.

There are many advantages for the village in moving towards an entry into Scotland in Bloom and if you would like to be involved in this initiative, to improve the attractiveness of our village, please contact Peter Wyatt or the Muckhart Community Council via the website;
www.muckhart.org.uk/contact/

Attractive visitor area in the vicinity of the church, including parking (V2)

Muckhart Church supports this initiative and are now able to take a lead on it, now that the Church of Scotland General Trustees has given permission to progress with a feasibility study, which is focussed on their land.

Once the Covid 19 pandemic allows, people to come together a Working Group will be formed of interested persons from within the community to assess the viability of this project.

Matthew Pease (Architect) has drawn up a draft scheme for the working group to consider, which can assist in generating further ideas for consideration.

Feasibility Study into Improving the area adjacent to Coronation Hall (V3)

Whilst the Coronation Hall Committee, who own the majority of land in question, support improvement of the area in front of the Coronation Hall (possibly a Village Square) they wished a wider and strategic approach taken to any feasibility study, before they felt able to participate, (therefore, the feasibility study into the Village Square concept only, cannot be taken any further meantime).

For example, to take a more strategic view and include other potential projects, in order that they could all benefit from “Planning Gain” from the H49 site. For example, this could include the repositioning the playpark into H49 site, which would provide an opportunity of introducing a car park (with landowner's permission) into the ex-playpark area, thus, requiring only limited (disabled) parking in front of Coronation Hall. This could be considered along with a redesigned main street through the village, introducing a “street by design concept”.

It is anticipated that professional assistance would be required to deliver a more ‘strategic’ feasibility study, one hast could possibly benefit from a “Charrette Programme” where the viability of this initiative may depend on significant planning gain being available for this project, from the H49 development.

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2. Housing Development

Housing policies and development (H1)

The working group (which included members of the community) has completed its work in producing a set of policies for dealing with all planning applications, which were presented to Muckhart Community council for their consideration in January this year and they were approved.

In April 2020 Muckhart Community council submitted a response to the Local Authority's request for views and comments on their Main Issues Report(MIR), which is the community's opportunity to influence the forthcoming Local Development Plan (LDP) which guides local authority planning policy over the next 5 years.

H49 Housing Development

The Muckhart Community Plan (MCP) of 2017, (which clearly respected the current LDP that gave direction to Muckhart community councils own policy on planning matters, and the MCP states;

“Any new homes to be built on site H49, as detailed in the Local Development Plan, should number no more than 35.”

When Clackmannanshire Council Development Planning Service recommended the council should give consent to a housing development of 50 homes on this site, the community council (along with individual members of the community) had no option but to represent the Muckhart community in defending the LDP and the MCP, and object to the proposed development.

Fortunately the local authority councillors accepted the community's arguments and rejected the proposal on the grounds that it contravened the current Local Development Plan (LDP), however the developer appealed to the Scottish Government and this appeal is now being considered by the Reporter appointed by the Scottish Government.

This has resulted in extensive work by the MCC's planning group led by Stuart Dean and other members, who diligently prepared submissions to represent the community's view, (and also to counter the developer's own assertions) that the proposed development is at variance to the LDP, a plan that our local community were consulted on and positively contributed to in 2014.

Community Development Fund/Trust (H2)

A working group, which included several members of the community who brought significant experience into the discussion, completed their deliberations on what they consider to be the most suitable arrangement for our community with regard to a Development Trust, completed their report recommending a way forward, which was presented to the community Council for their consideration at a meeting in October 2019,

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The report, which was accepted by the Muckhart Community Council, concluded that there were no suitable projects or initiatives at present within our community which would warrant setting up of a Development Trust, however it recommended;

When the MCC determines there is a potential project, and where there is an advantage of managing it through a Development Trust;

- **A Development Trust is established, as a company limited by guarantee (registered at Companies House).**
- **Provisional membership of Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS) is applied early in the process.**

Our thanks to the Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS), have been very helpful by providing advice to the working group and who's representatives have attended two meetings within our community.

3. Sustainability

Database of Biodiversity (S1)

Promote and raise awareness of local Biodiversity (S3)

A Biodiversity Group of interested persons has been formed (covering both objectives). Work will be undertaken now to design a suitable database within the MCC community website.

Future work will involve the engagement of the school, and probably public events, to promote awareness within the community.

One of the priorities of the group is to raise awareness of Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed and explore actions which might be taken, working with specialists and landowners to facilitate removal of the species.

Sustainable Energy and Energy Efficiency (S2)

Community Sustainability events have been held every September for the previous 2 years where partner organisations presented various forms of renewable initiatives, and discussed benefits of electric cars, electric bikes and the grants & loans that are available to support them.

It is believed those initiatives are having a positive impact within the Muckhart Community where residents are taking advantage of the financial opportunities available, and there are now;

- 5 electric vehicles (EV), 2 plug in Hybrids (PHEV) & Several electric bikes.
- 3 homes heated by heat pumps and several have Photo voltaic panels (PVs) on roofs.

As a result of lobbying various sustainability partners, an electric charging point has now been installed outside the Coronation Hall.

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4. Education

Safer routes to School (E1)

Community Volunteers, After School Clubs, promoting health & well-being (E2)

Strong support for the school, and improved access to quality Education (E3)

The Community Plan recognises the vital contribution, which Muckhart Primary School makes within our local community and the primary school values the links and strong support from local community organisations and members of the community, who volunteer to provide assistance in our school.

The Parent Council are pro-actively leading on all those issues covered within the Community Plan, and MCC will fully support them in their actions, which includes working closely with the MCC Infrastructure Working Group to develop and maintain Safer Routes to School,

More parents now are walking their children to school, however parents feel the zebra crossing on the West approach to the village is still not safe! (as some cars do not stop) and the MCC are working with the Clackmannanshire Roads Services to ensure improvements are undertaken as soon as possible.

The MCC have assisted the Parent Council in securing 2 static policemen, which can be placed near the Zebra crossing, to assist in slowing up the traffic, during the times children are walking to and from the school.

The MCC Sustainability Working Group will be in contact with the school and the Parent Council, to discuss ways where they can assist in raising awareness on local biodiversity.

There is significant community volunteering at the school, for example recently volunteers helped tidy the school garden, however now that the school is back in operation, volunteers are no longer allowed to enter school premises due to current COVID 19 restrictions.

Recently in August 2020, the MCC were able to assist the Primary School Parent Council by working with the Council's Education Service and IT services to secure improvements in the broadband connectivity to the school. New equipment is on order and due to be installed this month.

Muckhart Primary School are leading on an outdoor learning initiative, and plans are now coming together for an outdoor learning nursery, although this dependant on available funding (the initiative may benefit from funding from the H49 site housing development) and this may not happen now until 2021.

Local authority councillors and MSP are regularly communicated with and involved in many issues in connection with the school and their assistance is greatly appreciated.

5. Business Development

Improvements to broadband and cellular/ mobile services (B1)

The Business Development working Group (BDWG) which includes members from local business organisations, have met on several occasions to address issues with local broadband and cellular services and to help in identifying potential alternative solutions.

For example, the BDWG group has been looking for alternative solutions to the traditional, fibre-based broadband services and those options, together with the associated voucher schemes, are regularly communicated to residents who suffer from reduced broadband connectivity. The BDWG continues to support issues raised by residents with local politicians and service providers.

Over the next year, the BDWG will be monitoring, and advising residents of progress related to, the roll-out of the Government's Reaching 100% programme (R100) which commits to providing superfast broadband to all homes by the end of 2021.

Creation of web-based skills register of local trades' people & professionals (B2)

The Community Council web platform now incorporates a Skills Register for local trades' persons, professionals and organisations in the form of a "Yellow Pages" where their details can be added by complete a simple on-line template.

Details of the service or trade those businesses offer can be found by accessing the web-site.

Local businesses are encouraged to register. The link for registering is as follows:

http://176.32.230.19/muckhart.org.uk/mcc-yellow-pages/?doing_wp_cron=1535897876.4916770458221435546875

6. Infrastructure

To develop a strategy to improve Road Safety within community (I1)

To develop a strategy to improve & develop foot and cycle paths for all (I2)

The Infrastructure Working Group (IWG) comprising of community council members and other interested persons from the community have been busy over the last 12 months driving the above Infrastructure objectives and making progress on the following initiatives;

Community Safety/Road Safety

The IWG has made significant progress in developing a set of Road Safety improvement plans which are being progressed with the local authority and other agencies.

The Working Group's proposals include:

Proposed New, Safer Crossings for pedestrians

It is proposed to arrange for safer crossings for pedestrians at the following locations within the village;

- Yetts / Naemoor Bus Stop (part of the safety audit / project agreed with the Council).
- Yetts / A91 Bus Stop – proposed.
- Maudie's Loan / A91 - (included in H49 housing development Proposals).
- Pool of Muckhart centre - (included in H49 housing development Proposals).

With the support of the school's Parent Council, and further to a safety audit undertaken by Clackmannanshire Council, the IWG agreed a range of proposals with the Council, which are intended to improve safety at the existing Zebra crossing at the play park. The IWG continues to work with the Council to have these features implemented.

Proposed Muckhart-wide Speed Limit Reduction & Other road safety Issues

- Completion of Pool of Muckhart gateway (Clackmannanshire Council – confirmed).
- Safety audit / project agreed for the Yetts junction (Clackmannanshire Council).
- Yetts to Pool of Muckhart 30mph speed limit restriction – on hold.
- No vehicular access signage at Beech Loan / Maudie's Loan (Clackmannanshire Council – confirmed)
- GCR Deer Warning signs – proposed.

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Path improvements

Significant progress has been achieved by the IWG in securing improvements to local footpaths all as detailed below;

- **Footpath from Muckhart Primary to A91**
funded by Enabling Projects in Clackmannanshire (EPIC)
- **Reinstatement of footpath along A91 to the west of the village**
undertaken and funded by Clackmannanshire Council.
- **Tidying up the footpath from Pool of Muckhart to the Yetts of Muckhart**
undertaken by Clackmannanshire Council.
- **Drumburn Road (including the installation of bollards to restrict vehicular traffic)**
This work has been undertaken by the Council and the owner of Drumburn Farm (Mr & Mrs Tim Allan) and the improvement to the track enables walkers golfers and visitors to walk safely and with ease from the village to the Golf Club and beyond, and has been very much appreciated by the local community.

Proposed Footpaths & Cycle paths

Significant progress has also been made in developing plans for new and improved foot and cycle paths and integrating these with the existing local and Clacks-wide path network. This has been done with reference to land ownership records, rights of way / access legislation, etc. and with significant cooperation from landowners, the local authority and other relevant groups and organisations.

The Working Group's proposals include:

- **Create new footpath from Naemoor to Yetts**
proposed funding by Clackmannanshire Council & Sustrans- TBC.
- **Proposed new footpath along Upper Hillfoot Road - Hillfoots Diamond Jubilee Way**
This is a much needed footpath which will run from the A91, past the Japanese Garden, and onward to Dollar. This project is currently "On Hold" pending permission from the local land owner.
Funded to be provided Enabling Projects in Clackmannanshire (EPIC)
- **Proposed new footpath from Yetts to Upper Yetts**
proposed funding by Clackmannanshire Council & Sustrans - TBC
- **Agree preferred foot/cycle path from Muckhart to Dollar**
proposed funding by Clackmannanshire Council & Sustrans - TBC

7 Active Community

Establish an integrated community Electronic Infrastructure on MCC web platform (A1)

Jonathan Bacon has made excellent progress in developing the Community Council's web-site into a community web platform which links with other community organisation's web-sites or provides a web page for them to promote their organisation.

The Web Platform now includes;

- A community diary for local events.
- A "Yellow Pages" section for businesses to promote their trade or services.
- A Welcome Pack for those new to the village.
- Latest community news and events.
- List of latest road closures or roadworks.
- Details of other community groups (including contact details).
- Helpful advice for completing an application for funding.

The number of businesses registering on the "yellow pages" has been increasing and any businesses wishing to register should access the registration form at the foot of the page on the following link; <http://176.32.230.19/muckhart.org.uk/mcc-yellow-pages/>

Also the community council's **Facebook** is well developed, and is frequently accessed, thanks to Marlene White for her efforts in maintaining this facility.

Please view the updated web-site via the following link: www.muckhart.org.uk

Establish a database of funding expertise and suitable funders to benefit community (A3)

CTSi (Clackmannanshire Third Sector interface) have been identified as the best local organisation within Clackmannanshire who can assist in supporting local organisations seeking funding advice.

They will:

- Consider proposed initiatives which require funding and provide advice on suitable funders.
- Provide a live and up-to-date database of funding organisations, which can be accessed by the public, via a computer terminal in CTSi office, Burgh Mews, Alloa, FK10 1HS.
- Provide support and advice on completing funding applications.

CTSi web site www.ctsi.org.uk

Email admin@ctsi.org.uk

Telephone 01259 213 840

Helpful advice for completing an application for funding can be found on the Muckhart Community Council website www.muckhart.org.uk

8 Public Service

Develop a strategy aimed at improving Public Transport for the local community (P1)

In August, the MCC successfully launched a local campaign, working with others and enlisting assistance from councillors, MPs & MSPs, in relation to the proposed 23 bus withdrawal, which resulted in Clackmannanshire Council proposing a new bus service to be operated by First Bus.

The proposal provides a regular bus service between Stirling and Kinross via Muckhart and Dollar. This is a welcome development and thanks to the Clackmannanshire Council Public Transport team in developing this helpful initiative.

MCC are also working with others to encourage the Direct Responsive Travel service to operate on a Sunday to link into Forth Valley hospital transport.

Philip Lord has been liaising with community groups trying to improve public transport services in the area (e.g. CCTA, Perth and Kinross Community Transport initiative) and is looking into setting up a local transport user group with others to work constructively with partners, to do everything possible to maintain and to promote the bus service and DRT service within our community.

Acknowledgements

Significant progress has been made towards delivering the Muckhart Community Plan throughout the last 12 months and thanks must go to the Leaders of each of the Actions Plans for their commitment and diligence in moving forward the various initiatives.

In particular, we would also like to thank all organisations and the many members of the community who have become involved in moving the Muckhart Community Plan forward. Without their support very little progress could have been made.

If you would like to comment on the Community Plan or would like to be involved or assist in helping the community achieve its objectives, please contact MCC via the web-site: www.muckhart.org.uk or contact the Mr Mike Wilson, MCC Secretary via Email: sec.muckhart@gmail.com or Telephone: 01259 781 546.

John Anderson
Chair
Muckhart Community Council

2nd September 2020

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Appendix 1

A sample of one of the Muckhart Community Council Action Plans is detailed below for information

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Action Plan 2017 - 2022

Objective No H – 1

Aim: 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, by the end of 2019

Ref	Key tasks & milestones	Time scale	Led by	Completed	Expected Outcomes
1	Lead: Stuart Dean		SD	May 17	
2	Establish Working Group	Nov 17		May 18	Working Group established (incl. Planning Sub-Group)
3	Discuss and agree draft set of principles and policies against which planning applications, Proposal of Application Notices (PANs), Main Issues Reports, draft Local Development Plans and other planning consultations can be assessed and representations made. Report to be finalised and submitted to MCC in autumn for their consideration, discussion and agreement	Jan 19 Oct 19			Principles and policies presented to MCC for discussion and approval
4	Liaise with other MCC groups on issues relevant to them within Main Issues Report (MIR)	Jan 20		Delayed by Clacks Council!	Other MCC groups consider relevant elements of MIR
5	Study and Respond to Main Issues Report - Undertake public consultation (public meeting?) - Submit proposed response to MIR to MCC for their approval	Mar 20			MCC response to MIR submitted to Clackmannanshire Council
6	Respond to Clackmannanshire Council Local Development Plan	TBC			MCC response to Local Development Plan submitted to Clackmannanshire Council
7	Consider MCC's response to new planning legislation at present before the Scottish Parliament in relation to both Development Planning and Development Management	TBC		Sep18	Achieve maximum influence over both Local Development Plans and Development Management decisions
Notes					
