

St Fillans Community Council

Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday 16th July 2025
Sandison Hall, St Fillans

Welcome: Chair Donna Littler welcomed 16 villagers, David Fettes, Councillor Stewart Donaldson, Baillie Rhona Brock, James Gardener PKC, Heather Gordon PKC.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Jim O'Donnell, Richard Graham, Barry Fisher, Andrea Hudspeth, Jim Brierley, Ruth Graham, Stewart Gavigan, Harry Burnett, Johnston Brown, Victoria Gell, Graham Price

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 30th April 2025 were proposed as a true record by Russell Cunningham and seconded by Isobel Howell.

3. Police Update

No Police Report received. Disappointment was noted on the lack of attendance and engagement with Community Council this year after strong attendance in the past. It was noted that the CC would continue to try and get attendance at meetings or at least an update.

4. Matters Arising

- a. Following the meeting with Stuart Mearns and Bob Cook from Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Planning in October 2024, the Community Council have received sample Conservation Area PDR Guidance flow charts for residents to review. The village can feedback on these or ask questions to be fed back to the planning dept. If anyone would like a copy of the charts, please contact the CC.
- b. Work for the village 20mph speed limit has started with poles for signage being installed at both ends of the village, the new 20mph speed is expected to be implemented by 21st July.
- c. Work on Bus Stop 3 has started, the wooden bus stop at Station Road is still hoped to happen but may not be in this financial year.
- d. Weir update – SSE have painted the structure green which has helped make it less noticeable. A site meeting is being organised to discuss the planting mitigation and tree pruning, it's hoped this will be end of July or the beginning of August. The fencing on the South Shore Road is moving through the procurement stage and SSE will advise a start date when they have it. There is a long lead time on the fencing so they anticipate it will be towards the end of September. Ongoing discussions regarding land ownership.

- e. Update from Ian Woodcock of Transport Scotland, the drainage gullies have been cleared and the A85 drainage investigations to analyse the root cause of village flooding are planned for the end of July.
- f. There have been meetings with Foundation Scotland, who are an independent body, to define how Low Carbon might distribute any community benefits. They have met with all local Community Councils, but nothing has been agreed or finalised. The next meeting is in Killin in September.

Windfarm applications, Loch Lomond & Trossachs have put in an objection to the Glentarken Wind Farm because of the impact on Ben Vorlich views and surrounding hills and Munros.

There have only been a few responses from consultees to the Low Carbon application to date, the opportunity for comments is open to 21st July 2025 but it is expected that this timescale might be extended.

One of the biggest challenges for Low Carbon appears to be access to the site.

- g. Planning for the Dundurn Walk development has still not been finalised, sixteen months after the planning committee meeting.

No developer has been appointed, and there are still issues with the waste pump in Dundurn. Scottish Water have said the pump will need to be replaced, it is now monitored, and SW have taken over the electric bills as of June 25.

5. Planning applications

Loch Lomond & Trossachs Planning

2025/0115/HAE

Proposal: Erect a single storey extension to south elevation

Location: Station House, Station Road, St Fillans

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Tom and Zoe Green, Station House, Station Road, St Fillans, PH6 2NE

2025/0160/TRE

Proposal: Tree works in a conservation area - removal to ground level of 4 no. Leyland Cypress

Location: Clach-Na-Ba, St Fillans

Applicant: Mrs Cathy Moncrieff, Clach-Na-Ba, St Fillans, PH6 2NQ

2025/0184/HAE

Proposal: External alterations to dwellinghouse

Location: Earngrove Cottage, St Fillans

Applicant: Mr Gary Loudon, Earngrove Cottage, St Fillans, PH6 2ND

Perth and Kinross Planning

25/00899/ECU36

Proposal: Construction of 19 Wind Turbines and associated infrastructure ECU00004966

Location: 4.8km North of St Serfs Church, Comrie, Crieff PH6 2EA

Applicant: Scottish Government, Rebecca Hindson, 5 Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow, G2 8LU

6. Village Working Groups

a. Garden Group

No report

b. Paths Group

New people counters have been installed on the railway path.

The power brush training is waiting for a new date.

Funding has been achieved for another small section of the path to be completed.

Any issues with the path, please contact Geoff Hardman-Carter.

Value of funds required to complete the next section of the railway path are £253,000.

c. Festive Committee

The Festive weekend is on the 15th to 17th August, tickets can be purchased by bank transfer or cash, please contact one of the committee members to let them know what tickets are required, details have been distributed on the posters.

The committee are looking for volunteers to help with the weekend organisation, there have been some offers, but more would be useful.

There will be a tombola on the Saturday plus a raffle and auction on the Sunday.

If anyone wants to make a prize donation for the weekend, these can be left in the front porch at Lochearnside.

d. Play Park Group

The group have approached Tayside Contracts for support, for the replacement wood for some parts of the park, their foundation has a mechanism to support this activity and conversations are ongoing.

e. Cultural Heritage Group

The group have been very busy since their first formal meeting on the 5th January 2025.

In connection with an equipment funding application, the group were asked for in kind volunteer hours, these had a monetary value of £9800 in total.

Activities include:

Meeting with Gordon Graham, Environmental Preservation Officer from P & K to discuss the preservation of Dundurn Cemetery. Information still being collated.

Meeting with Ruth Brown at the Dunkeld Heritage Hall which was very useful with advice on databases, fund raising and other aspects of storing heritage information.

The group are researching different databases for information storage.

Five villagers took part in Heritage Walk Training and Assessment and have passed the course.

Two of the group attended a photo indexing course in July.

One member attended a National Library of Scotland Workshop for the researching the history of houses.

Two of the group will attend a digitisation course in August.

Carol Graham and Helen Galvin had a meeting with the custodian of the village archives on the 14th July, regarding the group and its way forward. They were advised that he required the Heritage Group to be a standalone group with its own constitution, charity status and bank account, reporting back to the Community Council. It was advised that until this was in place, from his perspective the archive is classed as closed. The Heritage group had hoped to become a sub-group of the Sandison Hall, given that the building to store the archive will be adjacent to the hall, the hall has charity status, a bank account and a long-term stable asset of the village.

Discussion took place regarding what should happen with the archive, it was felt that it would make sense for the archive to be attributed to an existing village asset such as the Sandison Hall, especially for the long-term security of the archive. The heritage group had been advised that the archive was gifted to the community. The CC will attempt to try and understand the reasons behind this stance which was causing confusion and concern around the community members present at the meeting.

f. **Community Bus Group**

The group will be distributing another leaflet requesting volunteers for driving a community bus or car.

The group are preparing a business plan for PKC, to demonstrate that the transport running costs can be supported.

The group can use the Trust Constitution and bank account for funding, although the Trust will not be involved with the day to day running of the transport.

Villagers would need to be a member to use the service, and the group are looking to set up two WhatsApp Groups one for users and one for drivers.

The group still require some help for advertising from someone with social media and IT admin skills. They are also looking for funding opportunities to cover insurance and running costs.

The group are planning to prepare a board for the festive weekend explaining the plans for the Community Transport.

g. Climate Change and Energy group

In response to the publication of our place plan and the inclusion of climate change and energy as a key priority, the group formed earlier in the year with the remit to take forward the actions as set out in the plan.

The group developed a strategy with three areas of action:

1. Climate Adaptation - with an urgent focus on vulnerability to extreme weather events and associated interruptions to services. Developing a community emergency plan is our initial priority.
2. Landscape and Climate Change - a longer-term focus on a more resilient landscape and freshwater system. A reduction in land-based emissions from leaky systems such as degraded peat and new habitat such as native woodlands, will in turn increase our community's vulnerability by building a healthier, less flashy system.
3. Energy Transition - also a longer-term plan to explore opportunities to move towards greater efficiency and renewables, in particular building a better understanding of our options across all buildings - old and new.

With ten villagers involved, the group hit the ground running by submitting a response to Scottish Government re the SSE wind farm development. This resulted in a meeting with SSE where the group was able to offer support along with some polite pushback on the inevitable trade-offs between renewable energy and a climate resilient landscape. We also supported a funding application made by Aquila CIC to build on the natural narratives project, incorporating the climate conversation into a renewed and wider programme.

7. AOB

- a. James Gardener from PKC gave a presentation regarding Perth and Kinross Councils plans to restructure their multiple funding schemes with similar criteria, into a single process for multi-stream funding. Formally known as their "Community Investment Fund", it would be re-named "Fairer Communities for All". James and Heather Gordon distributed forms for local groups to list their project ideas and submit to PKC. They are engaging with groups from all areas until the 8th August 2025. There have been 25 responses from the Strathearn area to date.

If your group has a project and you don't have a copy of the form, or would like more information, please contact the CC who have spare copies. Submissions for

funding applications would be 22nd September to 3rd October with results between 24th November and 29th November and payments made week commencing 1st December.

James and Heather will be available to offer support for writing funding applications if required.

b. Councillors Updates.

No updates from Baillie Rhona Brock.

Councillor Stewart Donald discussed the Visitor Levy proposals. The Levy is in the consultation phase currently and there are a series of local drop-in events being held, St Fillans nearest event is at Strathearn Arts, Crieff on the 21st August 2025 4pm to 7pm. The council are keen to hear villagers' views.

If a Levy is introduced, the money raised would be used to improve facilities, infrastructure and services used by the leisure and business visitors, Area promotion and marketing, development of new tourism products, attracting events and festivals, improvements that enhance the overall Perth and Kinross visitor experience.

Public consultation will be until 30th September 2025, the results of the consultation will be analysed and if it is proposed to introduce a levy then this will be put to the full council in December 2025 for a final decision on whether to introduce a levy and at what rate it should be set. If a levy is agreed, the earliest it could be implemented is Autumn 2027.

There is a legal challenge to the levy in Edinburgh, Stewart Donaldson will investigate how this might affect other areas in Scotland.

- c. Jim O'Donnell has requested that the CC contact the current owner of the Drummond to request that the front dry-stone wall, which is collapsing on to the pavement, is repaired and request a tidy up of their external areas.

- d. The annual register of household electors begins by email in July.

- e. The Community Council are approaching the end of their three-year session. Elections will be in October. Graham Price (Treasurer) and Tom Green are standing again but Donna Littler (Chair) and Audrey Gavigan (Secretary) will be standing down.

It is hugely important that we find replacements for Chair and Secretary so that the Community Council can continue. The minimum we can operate at is Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. There are many implications for the village if the CC ceases to continue. We would not receive the PKC grant which supports the website, playpark and village insurances. The grant also pays the rent for the playpark.

If anyone is interested in taking up a position on the council, please contact Donna Littler or Audrey Gavigan. Nomination period starts on Thursday 28th August 2025.

8. Date and time of the next Community Council meeting and AGM

Wednesday 8th October 2025 at 7:30pm in the Sandison Hall, St Fillans