

Valley renewables group



The Development Trust for Carron Valley Community

Valley Renewables Group Newsletter

Issue 10: May 2014

High Speed Broadband

VRG and the Community Council have been collaborating in exploring ways of bringing high speed Broadband right across the Community Council area. Stirling Council in concert with the Government's programme for extending high speed Broadband and BT, have plans that may bring high speeds in the foreseeable future to some parts on the fringes of our area, but the rest will need some form of home grown initiative. A joint VRG / Community Council sub group together with Shaun Marley of Community Broadband Scotland have been working to commission a feasibility study into options. Community Broadband Scotland will fund the study but the first stage required a scoping document, prepared by Barbara Wilson, based partly on the survey which VRG undertook last year. The next stage was to create a tender document to potential consultants to undertake the technical study. This contract is due to be awarded mid June.

Satellite Broadband

At present, as a basic package, satellite Broadband providers are offering download speeds of up to 10 or 20Mb and data allowances of between 6 and 10Gb for £25/month. VRG is also offering a grant to cover up to £50 of installation costs of satellite Broadband. You choose which satellite Broadband package works best for you, and send us the receipts when you've got the dish installed - just use the small grant form.

"It'll be just brilliant if faster Broadband can be achieved. Then we'll be able to join the rest of the civilised world....."

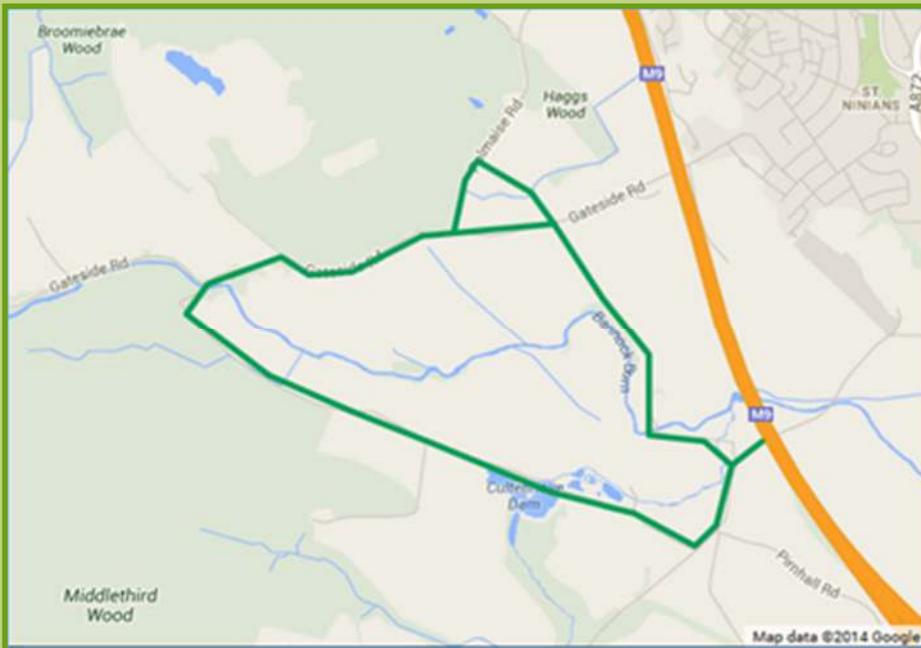
- A local slow Broadband user



In This Issue

- Broadband plans
- New Heritage Trail
- Windfarm Update
- Open Day
- Bulk Oil
- Small Grants Scheme
- Board Matters

Getting Connected



Tinkers' Loan / Swans' Water Trail

New Heritage Trail

Borestone Community Council has been awarded £1800 by the Earlsburn 1 fund for a Heritage Trail, a significant part of which, and some might say the best part, lies in our Community Council Area. Here are the details of our part provided by Tricia Cooke of Borestone Brae, who has been instrumental in planning the trail.

It will start in Chartershall at the motorway, and proceed west, taking the first right turn down to Chartershall farm, then left between the farm buildings into Tinkers Loan, passing the gates of Chartershall House. Then over the burn and up Tinkers loan with lovely trees on the left and overgrown hedges with brambles, wild roses and hawthorn on the right and usually lovely looking cattle in the neighbouring fields. Wonderful wild flowers in the verges in summer as the path flattens out. At the junction of Tinkers' Loan and Gateside Road this leads the trail back to Cultrenhove, There will be an interpretation board that the grant has paid for. The rest of the money will be used to print a bigger run of leaflets as this may be one of the most used of the 7 trails being planned for Stirling

Local Carron Valley residents then have two options to extend into their own territory.

1. Turn left into Gateside road uphill, to meet the head of Polmaise Road. Walk down past Graystale Farm and quarry entrance to the bridge and ford at the burn. Turn left here onto the farm road that leads along the foot of the Sauchie Crags passed the Swans' Water ponds and fishery, passed two old mills now converted into prestigious houses, to the multi road junction as you meet the tar-mac. Turn left back to Chartershall.

2. Really just an extension of this by continuing beyond Gateside Road along Tinkers' Loan - passing convoluted trees that were probably once, in the dim and distant past, hedged to cause these contortions. Walk on to meet up with Polmaise Road at the entrance to Gillies Hill - more walking opportunities here. Then turn left up Polmaise road and continue on the main road past Graystale Farm as before.

At a recent meeting on Community Benefits arising from the Earlsburn 2 windfarm there was talk of developing a network of trails, and there may be scope for linking up our area with the new John Muir trail, a suggestion that VRG may consider for the future.

Open Day

Our Open Day will take place at the Carronbridge Hotel on Saturday, August 30th from 12-4.00 p.m.

There will be a wide range of stalls, including an end of season Plant Swap, a free BBQ, a programme of talks, and for the children a bouncy castle. Each year the attendance has increased so put the date in your diary now. Further details in due course.

If you would like to have a stall free of charge selling local produce, crafts etc., please email: ibmacfarlane@gmail.com



Bog Cotton



Peacock Butterfly

Heating Oil Bulk Purchasing Scheme

Our bulk heating oil purchasing scheme has been saving local residents money for a couple of years now. The scheme has bedded in now and works best for folks who time their purchase once per year and top up their tanks in mid-September or late November prior to the winter. If you wish to join the scheme use this link to get to the form.

The VRG will not buy oil on your behalf - you have to make your own arrangements with the cheapest supplier. See our website for details:

<http://www.valleyrenewables.co.uk/community/bulk-buying-fuel/bulk-oil/>

Administrative Opportunity

VRG will be looking for someone to undertake occasional paid administrative work to ease the burden on Board members. Initially this will involve secretarial support, but also with the opportunity to undertake developmental work in support of our strategic objectives at a later stage. If you are interested please contact our Chair, Margaret Porter:-

vrq@sauchieburn.plus.com



Small Grant ideas

Small Grants Scheme

What is it? It's up to £250 to spend on any measure that saves or generates energy. Many home insulation works are eligible from loft insulation, draught excluders and secondary glazing.

How do I get it? You can download the application form from the VRG website:

<http://www.valleyrenewables.co.uk/grant-application/small-grant-application-form/>

There's an explanation on the website of what is eligible. Basically do some research on what your measure will cost, get a quote - or send us some screenshots from the web — then send us the application. The Directors can usually approve the straight forward things within a month, we then give you the ok to proceed. Send us the receipts when you're done and the cheque will be in the post.

How many times can I re-apply? You can only use it once per measure, for example for getting one double glazed window or multiple replacements installed. But you can apply for a grant as many times in a year as you like; so, having sorted the window if you were to install draught proofing for the door, you could apply for a grant again.

When the wind blows the.....

Spittalhill & Craigton

The planning application for this proposed windfarm was rejected recently by Stirling Council under delegated powers. The developer, Force 9, is understood to be planning a re-submission.



Earlsburn 2

This extension to the Earlsburn windfarm, sometimes called Earlsburn North or Kingsburn, was approved some time ago but construction was delayed for air traffic reasons. It is now proceeding and consultation is taking place with local communities about the community benefit, the management of the construction phase, and its local impact. Six communities - ours, Denny, Cambusbarron, Gargunock, Kippen and Fintry, met with the developers last October, when proposals were tabled by the latter and Falck Renewables, on the financial amount of community benefit arising over 25 years of the development. A further meeting, without Falck, took place on 22nd April under the auspices of Foundation Scotland, who currently administer the community benefit fund for the original windfarm.

The Earlsburn extension consists of 9 turbines, one of which is designated a 'community turbine' and it contributes substantially to the calculation of the community benefit. There is widespread feeling among the 6 communities involved that the proposed financial benefit is not what was expected or justified, and there are to be further meetings on this and other issues. VRG are not a party to these negotiations which directly involve our Community Council, but we have an interest in how funds coming into the community from windfarm developments are distributed and administered.

Board Matters

Changes

Mary Gallagher who represented the Community Council on our Board and vice versa, has resigned and we would like to thank her for her considerable and much appreciated contribution to the work of Valley Renewables. In the meantime Margaret Porter our Chair, who is also a community councillor, will do that role for the time being. Also as Frank Kelly our Treasurer is stepping down from the Board at our next AGM, we are keen to hear from anyone who might be interested in joining the Board. Information and contact details on our website www.valleyrenewables.co.uk

Future VRG Strategy

At the end of May the VRG Board is holding a strategy meeting to review progress to date on our objectives, and to establish priorities for the next few years. We are anxious to hear from any of you about what you think VRG should be doing or funding over the next few years. Suggestions must be in accord with our Memorandum and Articles which can be found on our website as are the contact details for our Secretary.

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information:

Secretary:
Barbara Wilson

01324 822 717

bwilsonscotland@yahoo.com

Visit us on the web at:- <http://www.valleyrenewables.co.uk>

Edited by: Margaret Porter

