



Recover and Thrive

COVID-19 HAS ALREADY revealed much about us and our communities. It has shown us that, as people, we are all far more vulnerable than many of us would have liked to believe. However, it has also shown us that, in times of need, people are prepared to step up and offer support to others. We have seen examples of this in our own Community; from help with shopping, to dropping off wood for those who succumbed to the virus and had a spell of isolation.

As we move from emergency response to planning the 'new normal', how can we support and strengthen the kindness that has been shown in our Community, and how can we respond to the climate crisis?

In this newsletter we are highlighting some of the grant support available for residents. Our Young Person's grant scheme is designed to help tackle the issues of living rurally but can also support C-19 recovery by offering our people funding for educational activities, new hobbies, driving lessons and a host of other projects. Our young people have been heavily restricted for so long now so hopefully this funding can help them.

Additionally we are highlighting a new fund to help support residents to implement initiatives to adapt to new ways of working in the aftermath of C-19.

Finally our popular Household Grant scheme is well placed to support residents in reducing their household's carbon footprint.

As a Community we are extremely fortunate to have access to windfarm community benefit monies and we can use these to support some of our C-19 recovery measures and continue to become a more sustainable, self sufficient and connected community. As always we would love to hear your views, ideas and comments. CS

Community Council Report

THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETS on the first Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm, currently online. The meetings are open to any resident and you are very welcome to attend. Details are posted on Facebook a few days beforehand and also available by emailing cvdcc.sec@gmail.com.

Roads and gritting are current topics, with other ongoing features being - the state of parts of the C10 and side roads; junction signage and markings; gritting on both C10 and B818; local access, etc. We'll keep at Stirling Council to try to sort these Community issues out.

Remember to check soon that you are on the Electoral register for the Council elections in May.

Stirling Council has awarded our Community £1,500 from its Community Pride fund towards a fifth defibrillator. (see article later). DB

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Woodfuel Weekend

IT WAS A GREAT Community effort and a chance to get to know each other for those 18 volunteers who helped make sure wood fuel was split and delivered over the two days. Many hands definitely made light work. Weather was kind, equipment not so, but we got there in the end. The splitter broke down but lengths went out in replacement. A total of 50 loads were collected / delivered. Any feedback on how to improve things would be welcome as always.

Up-coming planned weekends are initially to start re-stocking with native broad leaved trees which will provide an ongoing resource for future community wood fuel. So, if we want this to be available in the future, now is your chance to come along and help the next generation of trees take root. There will be jobs to do to suit youngsters and not so youngsters.

- ◆ 10am to 3pm or as long as you can manage
- ◆ Meet at the cabin.
- ◆ Please wear appropriate clothing for getting messy plus wellies or boots.

Let me know if you are likely to come along as it helps in planning: dottietrees@gmail.com DB

VRG Chair's Report

THE NEW YEAR sees Valley Renewables Group launching a new initiative, pursuing options for expanding existing facilities, and carrying on delivering all the benefits which are available.

A new grant - 'New Steps' - is aimed at helping residents adapt to a post Covid-19 world, most particularly related to work practices. Additional windfarm operator Falck funds have enabled us to put this scheme together. The smoke alarm support grant is still available together with all our other grant supported schemes. Do check to see if you are eligible. The defibrillator network is being expanded with an additional two units arriving very soon. A number of events and volunteer days is set for a spring programme in the Community woodland and a working group is taking the Community meeting room proposal forward.

After a two year pandemic caused hiatus, we're looking to hold our ever popular Craigend Farm Open Day in late August; an opportunity to gather together as a Community and, hopefully, put the past two years' trials behind us. More information on many of these initiatives can be found elsewhere in the newsletter and on the VRG website. NS

Community Open Day 2022



YES, AFTER A GAP of two years, we hope to be back with our Community Open Day at Craigend Farm on Saturday 27th August from 12.00 to 4.00pm. We'll take a final decision in early May and, if the Covid regulations allow, we'll confirm we are good to go. There will be stalls, demonstrations, children's activities, entertainment and a BBQ - a fun day for all the family.

Evelyn Crawford is taking the lead in organising the day with support from Iain Macfarlane and Rob Ferguson. Evelyn has great ideas for making the day a big success. We would appreciate help from others in the Community who are willing to join the team. Please just email admin@valleyrenewables.co.uk and we'll get back to you. RF

So that's Sat 27th Aug, 12noon to 4pm.

Woodland Dates

Volunteer days

2022

March 19/20	Re-stocking 10am-3pm
April 9/10	Re-stocking 10am-3pm Plus bring your surplus cuttings (see separate article overleaf)
May 21	TBD
June 18	Summer in the woods day...
July 16	TBD
Aug 13	Produce swap, etc
17 Sept	Produce swap, etc
Oct 15	POMONA Apple Day & BBQ
Nov 19	TBD
Dec 10	Christmas Tree selecting, etc

There may well be other events at the Woodland so to find out more keep checking Carron Valley Connection Facebook page or:

communitywoodland@valleyrenewables.co.uk DB



North Third Spitfire Crash



ON 29TH JANUARY 1943 a Spitfire named 'Gibraltar' plummeted straight into the ground near the Bannock Burn at the south end of North Third. Its pilot, who was on a training flight, was killed. It is believed his oxygen supply froze. He was Henri Jeanne De La Bastita, a 37 year old Belgian pilot who had been captured by the Germans, sent to and then escaped from Colditz, when he came to fly with the RAF having made his way to Scotland. His body was recovered at the time but the plane was left in situ 20 feet below ground.

In 2000 an aviation enthusiast, Campbell Chesterman, arranged to excavate the site and remove the remains of the Spitfire. A patch of distinctive vegetation is all that remains. Recently another enthusiast, Ian McNeish, has conducted further research and has been in touch with Belgian authorities. In collaboration with Stirling Council archaeologist Murray Cook, it is proposed that there should be some recognition of the site and its history, and a memorial of some kind established.

On the 79th anniversary of the crash a small group, in a howling gale, met at the site with short presentations by Murray Cook and Ian McNeish, followed by one minute silence. It is felt that the sacrifice of the pilot should not go unrecognised by the Community, and the VRG and Community Council are supportive of a commemoration on the 80th anniversary and some kind of lasting memorial.

A Facebook group on the Spitfire Crash has been established. Here is the link—<https://www.facebook.com/North-Third-Spitfire-Crash-112675384649325>.

IM

'New Steps' Grant



A NEW GRANT is now available for all Caron Valley and District residents.

The grant is specifically aimed at helping people adapt to new work practices in a post C-19 world. This may be adapting your

home arrangements and facilities, starting or changing jobs, or embarking on a scheme improving self-reliance and self-sufficiency.

Valley Renewables Group is able to bring this opportunity thanks to windfarm operator Falck offering its communities resources through their Building Back Stronger Communities initiative. Falck made three awards across Scotland and VRG's proposal was successful. They want supporting projects to bring real benefits and, to this end, want to see awards made to projects that meet United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals. This may sound daunting but is no cause for concern as there are 17 to choose from and include helping with: good health and well-being; decent work and economic growth; responsible consumption and production; and sustainable communities. The VRG can give guidance and help with applications.

The scheme only runs for this calendar year and the fund is limited. It will be run on a first come and awarded - first served basis. Details can be found on VRG's website grants' page. NS

Weather—or Not!

WHETHER THE weather be fine, or whether the weather be not.....

Well, I think we'll all agree, it's the latter! But look on the bright side. In about 4-5 weeks time we'll be cutting the grass! That was the bright side. Wasn't it?



New Windfarm

AN APPLICATION by Force 9 Energy and EDF has been approved to build five wind turbines called Shelloch Windfarm on the east side of the Fintry Hills. The site lies to the north west of Easter Cringate.

Comment was made by the Community Council about the height of the turbines. Of the five, two will have a maximum tip height of 180m and have red aviation night-time lights attached; three will have a maximum tip height of 149.5m. These heights are quite a bit greater than originally proposed.

In their submission to Stirling Council's Planning and Regulation Panel, the applicant stated that around 30 jobs will be created during construction phase, and it is anticipated to have an overall generating capacity of up to 24MW.

Convenor of the Planning and Regulation Panel, Councillor Alasdair MacPherson, said: "As a Council, we are always looking at ways to diversify and expand renewable energy generation. The transformation needed to tackle the climate and nature crises, together with the impact of the pandemic, means supporting green investment is one of our key priorities for the coming years."

Vice Convenor, Councillor Graham Houston, said: "As well as reducing the carbon footprint of electricity and creating new jobs, this wind farm will see money re-invested in our local communities by the developer for the benefit of local people."

The Community Council's comments to the planning authority especially about the height, fell on deaf ears. However, although we may not like everything about it, the Community will benefit.



Could You Do This?

Foraging

Valley Renewables Group

Call for Volunteers

The VRG Board are always looking for skills from within the community to help us to serve you better

Could you help VRG with reviewing strategy?

Initially you would just attend a few meetings

HELP US TO ENSURE WINDFARM FUNDING IS PUT TO BEST USE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE WHOLE COMMUNITY



If you could offer a few hours help please get in touch via admin@valleyrenewables.co.uk

BACK IN SEPT '21, a survey of the Community Woodland was done and at least 19 species of plant were identified that are noted as being edible and being suitable for foraging. There will probably be a lot more.

We would like to increase the number species for foraging , eg. gooseberry, bilberry, elder, broom, gorse, wild garlic, water mint, bogbean, yellow flag iris..... to name but a few. So if you have any rooted cuttings or seedlings of these to donate, a home will be found in the woodland. Bring them along on the **April 9th-10th** volunteer weekend and they'll get planted out.

In (very) olden times, much use was made of various plants as food sources but also as remedies for all sorts of ailments and diseases. Sadly much of that information has been lost over the centuries, partly due to the fact that often the people who had that knowledge were condemned as witches. Only in relatively recent times has a better understanding of the value of plant remedies been gained, and often medicines which we now rely on are found to contain the same ingredients as the remedies of old.

Nowadays there is a growing interest in nature and how it sustains us, both physically and mentally. Not only are many of the plants to be found around us efficacious in some way, but they are also sources of valuable food-stuffs. With prices rocketing in supermarkets, who would turn down some free food?

If foraging is something you do or would like to, only pick the things that you can confidently recognise. Either be guided by an expert who knows what you are looking at, or consult one of the many books available - like 'Food for Free' by Richard Mabey. Hopefully some informative sessions will be organised at the Woodland in the future.

However, in the meantime, although many useful species have been identified, it wouldn't be very sustainable or fair to others, if we all went out foraging in the Community Woodland at once and gathered all we could find. Always leave some for others and don't destroy the source of the goodies. And of course you will all know local, or secret, places where you go foraging. We've all got our secret sloe picking sources!

The Pandemic

2 YEARS AGO our lives as we knew them changed beyond anything anyone could have predicted. C-19 and it's variants have not disappeared but protections are gradually being put in our hands to apply. Here is Scottish Government's programme towards the shift in responsibility.



Spring Tonics with Nettles!



AAAAGH! NETTLES are very nutritious and used to be made into spring tonics to cleanse the system after a winter diet with few fresh vegetables and fruit. There were no avocados from Peru or grapes from South Africa in the 18th century diet! 'Nettle Pudding' claims to be Britain's oldest recipe. Nettle fibre was also used to make cloth and dyes. They are also an essential food source for some caterpillars of small tortoise-shell and peacock butterflies, and birds enjoy the seeds in the autumn. Great excuse not to weed that corner of your garden! The good news is that they are still nutritious and free! Just be sure to pick them where there are no dogs or road pollution and wear gloves and long sleeves when picking!

CL

Nettle Cordial

This makes a delicious drink, to be diluted with water or sparkling water. Strangely, it turns out a pale peach colour.

- 200g freshly picked nettle tops
- 1kg granulated sugar
- 40g Citric Acid
- 500ml boiling water
- Sterilised bottles

Wash and dry the leaves. Combine the sugar, citric acid and water in a large saucepan. Heat and stir to dissolve the sugar. Remove the syrup from the heat, throw in the stinging nettles, and give them a thorough mix to ensure all the leaves get covered with the liquid. Cover and leave for a week, giving the mixture a good stir each day. After a week, strain the nettles and bottle in sterilised bottles.

It will keep for several weeks in the fridge. Dilute and drink. It's hard to define the taste, except a bit fruity.

For good measure, you can also make

Nettle Crisps

- 1 bowl fresh stinging nettles well washed
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper

You can also add some sesame seeds, cumin seeds or chilli flakes if you like it spicy.

Mix the oil, salt, pepper and the spices if you are using them.

Toss the nettle leaves in the mixture and lay out each leaf separately on a baking sheet, being careful not to touch the leaves yet as they will still sting you. Bake for about 25 minutes in a cool oven, turning once.

Enjoy!



Strategy 2023->

THE CURRENT STRATEGY the VRG is working to can be found at:

<https://www.valleyrenewables.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/VRG-Strategy-Document-2020.pdf>

It's pleasant bedtime reading! While there remain some objectives yet to be completed, much that was planned has been achieved as set out.

It is time, however, to look forward again and plan for the future. This is time for you to have your say and shape the strategy of the next phase in the Community's development. Accepting that windfarm community benefit money won't just be divided up equally between households as cash, the VRG board of trustees would really welcome hearing your ideas for its distribution. Please send your ideas to:

admin@valleyrenewables.com.

Aged 0 to 26?
Apply for the children & young person grant scheme today!

Grants of up to £250 are available to help with education, skills development or meeting the challenges of rural living.

Previous grants have been used for:

- Fees for a distance learning course or extra exam tuition
- Environmental projects such as materials to build a "hedgehog hotel"
- Buying smart clothes for a job interview
- Driving lessons
- To buy a musical instrument and for lessons
- Sports lessons
- We'd love to hear more options!

For more information visit
www.valleyrenewables.co.uk/grants/young-peoples-grants

Valley Renewables Group
Strategy 2019-22

Valley renewables group

Become part of our Community's Future
Come and join us... Get involved... Make it happen!
Contact Barbara Wilson: info@valleyrenewables.co.uk

www.valleyrenewables.co.uk
Valley Renewables Group, 2 Salsburgh, Salsburgh Bridge, Denby, Strathgordon, Scotland, PH8 5JZ
Registered in Scotland 18821, Scottish Charity 020294

Highway Code Changes

ALL THAT STUFF you thought you knew, well it's been updated! Rules for all types of road users have been updated in The Highway Code to improve the safety of people walking, cycling and riding horses. The changes were made to The Highway Code on **29th January 2022**. Here is a reminder of the 8 changes that you need to know about.



1. Hierarchy of road users
2. People crossing the road at junctions
3. Walking, cycling or riding in shared spaces
4. Positioning in the road when cycling
5. Overtaking when driving or cycling
6. People cycling at junctions
7. People cycling, riding a horse and driving horse-drawn vehicles on roundabouts
8. Parking, charging and leaving vehicles

You could buy the latest edition of the Code or here's where to find the details:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-highway-code-8-changes-you-need-to-know-from-29-january-2022>

Litter and Fly-tipping Strategy Consultation



LITTER AND FLY-TIPPING continue to be a growing issue in all our communities. This Scottish Government consultation, which was drafted in partnership with Zero Waste Scotland, Keep Scotland Beautiful and Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), is seeking views on the aims, objectives and actions that will sit under the new National

Litter and Fly-tipping Strategy for Scotland.

These proposed actions sit within three strategic themes that were agreed by stakeholders:

- > Behaviour change
- > Services and infrastructure
- > Enforcement

Evaluating the progress and effectiveness of the strategy is also acknowledged to be of vital importance. Data and research has been recognised as a cross-cutting theme and comprises an integral and essential part of the other three themes listed above.

Why your views matter? The responses to this consultation will help shape and deliver the final strategy which will be published in 2022. Engagement and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders is a crucial aspect of the new strategy development. To take part in the consultation before 31st March'22, see link below.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-litter-flytipping-consultation/>

What's in a Name?



EVERYTHING MIGHT not be quite in places as we now know them to be but, back in the period 1583-1619 when Pont made this map, mapping skills and technology were quite a bit more primitive. No aerial surveys then! Nevertheless, you will recognise quite a few names, and begin to realise that the roots of our Community are long established.

Hopefully in the next issue there will be an article about the meanings of some of the place names. Knowing about those enables us to have a much deeper insight into our area and what made it tick over the centuries.

More Defibrillators

THANKS TO SUPPORT from windfarm money via the VRG, we have taken delivery of 2 more defibrillators. These will most likely be located in the Buckieburn and Upper Sauchieburn areas. In addition, the Community Council has gained support for a 5th defibrillator from Stirling Council's Community Pride fund. No decision as yet, has been made about its location.



Part of your responsibility is to ensure you know what to do in the case of an emergency. In due course there will be some face to face training sessions organised. However, in the meantime, a First Aid booklet has been distributed to most households. Read it from time to time so that you are mentally prepared to deal with an emergency. In addition if you would like to watch a video to remind you, there are lots on YouTube. If you'd like to see it all explained, there are monthly online Zoom sessions give by Lucky to Be Here, which you are welcome to attend. Just contact: info@lucky2bhere.org for the link. The next one's Monday 7th March, usually early evening. Well worth it.

Remember the order of actions:

- > If you see someone collapse, immediately **call 999** and get the medics on the way.
- > If the casualty is unresponsive and not breathing, **start CPR**. [Don't do rescue breaths during the C-19 pandemic].
- > **Send someone** to get the nearest defibrillator while you **keep doing CPR**. [Have you got a list of neighbours' phone numbers you could ask for help?]
- > When the defib comes, **keep doing CPR** while the **pads are attached** next to the skin - one to the upper right chest area, one to the lower left outside chest.
- > **Follow** the defibrillator's spoken **instructions**.
- > **Keep doing CPR until** the casualty recovers or medical help arrives.
- > In the case of recovery, put the casualty in the **recovery position** [on their side with an open airway].

Investments Update

THE VALUE of the Investment Fund on 18th February was £416,765, which represents a 1.57% increase over the last 12 months.

The confrontation in Ukraine has resulted in uncertainties in world markets and has taken the edge off most shares. This is reflected in the current value of our fund which is down from a high of £443,600 in August. It's still doing a lot better than being in the bank. RF

Digital Newsletter



Want FTP?

INTEREST IS being gathered about how many households along the B818 would be keen to have Fibre Broadband to their premises.

Contact: info@valleyrenewables.co.uk.



YOU MAY NOT realise, but the Community Newsletter is now available in digital form. You can be sent it electronically and just flick through it with a quite click or tap of the finger. To receive it this way by preference, just email:

admin@valleyrenewables.co.uk

Of course you'll also be doing the planet a favour.

Our Elected Representatives

HERE'S HOW TO contact the folk who represent Carron Valley and District in the Scottish, UK and local governments. Don't let them think everything's fine for you, if it isn't. They can't guess what the problems are, so tell them. I'm sure they would like your ideas for improvements as well; even a pat on the back and a 'well done' wouldn't go amiss.

Evelyn Tweed MSP	evelyn.tweed.msp@parliament.scot	0131 348 5088
Alyn Smith MP	alyn.smith.mp@parliament.uk	0207 219 3000
CLlr Christine Simpson	simpsonc@stirling.gov.uk	01786 233 126
CLlr Scott Farmer	farmers@stirling.gov.uk	01786 233 131
CLlr Neil Benny	bennyn@stirling.gov.uk	01786 233 124

Easter Crafts for Kids



EASTER TREE DECORATING: Pop outside and find a few sturdy twigs or a suitable dead branch. Let it dry then stick it in a weighted vase. Decorate some hard-boiled eggs or use wee chocolate ones. (Use non-toxic children's washable felt tip pens if eggs are going to be eaten). Hang them from the twigs by sticking on ribbon or string with Sellotape. Other options might include felty butterflies or woolly rabbits (but you can't eat those).

CHOCOLATE EASTER NESTS: Shredded wheat or cornflakes, a big bar of chocolate (or a chocolate egg) and some mini chocolate eggs and you're good to go. Melt the chocolate, mix it in with the shredded wheat, pop a portion in a cupcake case and top with the mini eggs. Then leave it in the fridge to set.



EGG CARTON EASTER WREATH: Needed - egg cartons, scissors, paint, string, cardboard and PVA glue. Draw a circle on the cardboard using a large dinner plate. Inside that, using a smaller plate, draw another circle. Cut out the centre and now you have your wreath base. Cut up the cartons to make 'flower' shapes and paint in nice bright colours. Cut some cardboard leaf shapes and paint them green. Stick them around the outside and inside edges of the base. Using the glue, cover the whole base with egg-box 'flowers'. Create some small woolly or paper pom-poms and put one in the centre of each 'flower'. Attach a loop of string or ribbon to the back for hanging up your creation. Add any other decorations you like.

EASTER EGG LEAVES: Gather together lots of egg-shaped leaves and put them on a paper. Using paint pens, colour the surfaces of the leaves in a variety of different designs. String them up to make Easter egg leafy bunting, or use them to decorate the house.



ECO-FRIENDLY EASTER BUNNY GIFT BAG: If you give gifts at Easter, how about putting those in ordinary brown paper bags but make them extra-ordinary. Cut out some bunny ears at the top of the bag, drawing on a little bunny face, pop in your gift and then tie with some string. It's all re-cyclable.

Credits: Woodland Trust, iStock.com, Hannah Vickers, Nadya Bunanova

Small Grants

Financial year to date
1st July 2021 to 8th February 2022

- 28 x Household £14,931
- 5 x Student Bursaries £2,500
- 10 x Young Persons £1,387
- 23 x Fire Alarms £4,331
- 4 x Community Groups £1,291

Total = 70 grants - value £24,440

Contact Us

Get in touch for more info.
VRG Secy: Barbara Wilson

01324 822 717 (evenings)

info@valleyrenewables.co.uk

Visit us on the web at: -

www.valleyrenewables.co.uk

or [Carron Valley Connections](#)

Community Council Secy:

cvdcc.sec@gmail.com

Edited by: Margaret Porter

Colouring-in Competition

AND THE WINNERS WERE

In the Younger category — Hamish And in the Older category — Jessica



Well done both.

Enjoy your prizes



Next Issue

The deadline for receiving copy to go into the next issue of the newsletter is Friday 20th May. Please send articles or ideas for such to:

admin@valleyrenewables.co.uk

Alarming Reminder

ALTHOUGH THE DEADLINE has passed for making your house compliant with the Scottish regulations for fire and smoke alarms, help is still available. If the cost of doing it is a reason, the VRG has a grant scheme just for that. Go on to the website - <https://www.valleyrenewables.co.uk/interlinked-smoke-alarms-grant/> and find the form.....NOW! If you've got another reason we can help with, just let us know.

