



CRIEFFMatters

All the Action from the Crieff Community Action Plan and more!

Spring 2015

As Year 2 of the Crieff Community Action Plan passes there has been good progress in some areas and less in others. However, Rome wasn't built in a day! It is a 5 year plan and we are all committed to helping Crieff be the best it can be. In this issue read about:

- developments with the Drummond Arms and Crieff's town centre
- the latest on the Crieff Succeeds BID
- what's happening with the Crieff to Comrie path
- the launch of the new improved Crieff community website: crieff.org
- improved bus service around Crieff
- goals for improving service to and from Gleneagles Railway Station



The Crieff Succeeds BID Steering Group continues to work hard with Project Leader Alan Rankin and Perth & Kinross Council towards forming a Business Improvement District for Crieff which would provide the resources to help improve the business environment for our local traders.

After another well attended Open Meeting in January, feedback was taken and fed into the Business Plan. The BID then sent a draft Activity Plan and draft budgets, seeking further feedback, to over 300 business property owners.

On 12th March the 98 day notification letter was lodged with PKC, Scottish Government and BID Scotland. The letter and Business Proposal outline BID plans, budget, activities and arrangements for the ballot. PKC have 28 days from that date to comment or veto the Proposal. If we get the green light we then progress to the Ballot that will take place between 7th May and 18th June. This is when the business plan and ballot paper are posted to qualifying businesses for them to read and decide whether to vote yes or no.

Many thanks to all the local business people who have attended the Open Meetings, fed into the plan and helped to shape the Crieff Succeeds BID.

For more information or to get in touch visit: www.crieffsucceeds.com
or contact Alan on 07785 722936 or email alan.crieffsucceeds@gmail.com

Crieff town centre: what next?

Do you want to make your town centre better? Come and help us work out how.

We'll be building on recent initiatives to decide future priorities and action.

Young and old, residents and businesses: **everyone** is welcome!

bring
an
idea!

Saturday 18th April
Deciding the agenda:
ambitions & priorities

Saturday 2nd May
Making it happen:
from ideas to action

2pm sharp to 4pm
Strathearn Artspace
Comrie Street, Crieff



More details:
Nick Wright
07900 334110

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE DONE IN CRIEFF'S TOWN CENTRE?

Crieff Community Council, CCT and CUSP are working with Perth & Kinross Council and the Scottish Government to put in place a vision and plan of action to improve the town centre. Be a part of it! Come to this important workshop to say what you think. **For more information phone 07900 3344110**

Crieff 2018: A united community reclaiming our heritage as the proud and vibrant heart of Strathearn.

TOWN CENTRE Sorting out Crieff's town centre is not a simple task to be sure. It would be easy to give up or just sit by and moan but then where would that get us? Unlike some towns, Crieff is lucky that its three main community groups [and hopefully the BID in June] are committed to working together to see that Crieff's town centre is thriving once again.



DRUMMOND ARMS

In October of last year CCT received the great news from the Scottish Government that it had successfully registered its Community Right To Buy of the derelict former Drummond Arms Hotel in the centre of Crieff. Unfortunately, the following month, CCT learned that RBS had sold its portion of the building to Strathfare.

On Friday 5th December representatives of Crieff Community Trust met with Perth & Kinross Council and Strathfare Ltd, the current owner of Crieff's former Drummond Arms Hotel and previous RBS branch.

Present were Graham Donaldson (CCT Board), Barry Hargrave (CCT Town Centre Group Lead), Fergus Purdie (CCT Town Centre Group), Isabel Butt (PKC Vacant Property Development Officer), Dave Howie (PKC Community Economic Development Advisor), Ranjeet Singh (Strathfare Director), Sohan Singh (former owner) and Angus MacDonald (Arduthie House).

The purpose of the meeting was for CCT to find out what plans the current owners have for the building, as its present poor condition continues to be a cause of concern to the Crieff community. It was also hoped that the meeting might establish if there was any way in which the owners and CCT could work together to resolve the situation.

It was confirmed by the owners that they intend to go out to tender in Jan 2015, for the work required to make the building wind, watertight and structurally safe, with

the work being completed by the end of April 2015. The owners suggested they would be happy to include local contractors and tradesmen in the process.

The owners commissioned an independent survey of the building and determined that the building is internally sound with no major causes of concern. CCT has had access to a survey conducted by RBS in early 2012, which suggests a different conclusion. PKC suggested that the owners share their independent survey with PKC Building Control, who have major concerns about the building's condition.

The building is not currently for sale nor being marketed as the owners feel that, in the present property market, it is unlikely to achieve the amount they feel the building is worth.

A Community Right to Buy is in place over the building and, were that process to be activated, the owners would receive only its current market value, as determined independently by the Scottish Government.

CCT explored the possibility of working with Strathfare to develop the property for mutual benefit, but this was not possible as the owners were not keen to settle on a valuation of the building anywhere near its current market value.

The owners made it clear that, for now, they did not intend to do anything that would trigger the CRTB, as they would be looking to achieve significantly greater than its current market value, and they would be happy to retain the property for years, until the property market had improved.

THREE MONTHS LATER

CCT can confirm Strathfare has not commissioned work to secure the building and make it wind, watertight and structurally safe as they said they would. However, the owner has recently viewed the property with a Glasgow firm to look at the roof.

CCT has asked PKC Vacant Property Development Officer Isobel Butt to write to Strathfare to request evidence of sufficient liability insurance for the Drummond Arms as well as a copy of the survey which has not been provided as agreed at the meeting.

TOWN CENTRE FUTURE

Since the meeting on 5th December PKC and the Scottish Government have arranged for a town centre study to be done for Crieff. Crieff is one of three towns in Perthshire to be given this opportunity. This is building on the numerous studies and consultation done by CUSP, CCC and CCT. Things have moved on a bit in Crieff's town centre since the launch of the Crieff Community Action Plan in February 2013: Strathearn Artspace has been set up and steps towards a Business Improvement District made.

The question is: what should be the priorities for the next decade? Two interactive workshops are being held to get your answers to this question to develop a strategy and plan of action.

DECIDING THE AGENDA: ideas, ambitions and priorities

Saturday 18th April: 2pm sharp to 4pm
Strathearn Artspace, Comrie Street

We'll use this first workshop to take stock of where the town centre is, decide future priorities, and set long term ambitions.

MAKING IT HAPPEN: from ideas to action

Saturday 2nd May: 2pm sharp to 4pm
Strathearn Artspace, Comrie Street

At this second workshop, we'll take the priorities that were agreed at the first meeting, develop them into a package of proposals, and decide how to take things forward.

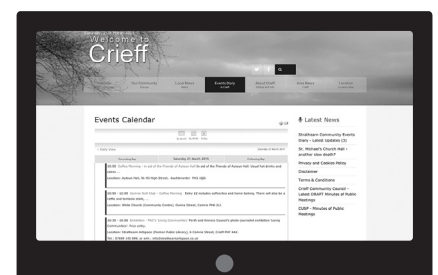
Residents young and old, businesses, artists, community groups and the Council: everyone is welcome!

Bring your ideas! We will listen and help everyone imagine how Crieff's town centre could look in the future. Your input will help to produce an illustrated report which together with the Crieff Community Action Plan will strengthen Crieff and PKC's applications for funding and, ultimately, make things happen for our town.

Come along and be a part of it!

CRIEFF.ORG IS LIVE!

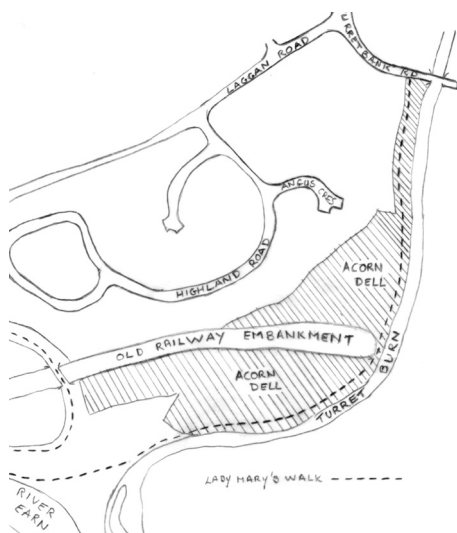
Please visit Crieff's new and improved community website **crieff.org** and let us know what you think.



Wishing is not enough; we must do. – Johann Von Goethe

PATHS

ACORN DELL: WHAT & WHERE?



Acorn Dell is the land which comprises the first section of Lady Mary's Walk running from Turretbank Road, along the Turret Burn to the point where the track rises above the burn to bypass an area which was washed away around 10 years ago. Many residents of Crieff will remember the old kissing gate that stood here. Acorn Dell extends away from the burn as far as the end of the gardens on Highland Road.

In 2012 this land was purchased for the people of Crieff by a working group under the auspices of CUSP and is now held in trust by Crieff Community Initiative.

WHY?

One of the main reasons for buying this land was so that the community could repair and upgrade this section of the path, making this very popular walk more accessible and pleasant to walk on. At the moment it is eroded, liable to flooding and inaccessible to wheelchair users, cyclists and prams.

A group of local residents have got together to address these problems and this group was brought under the umbrella of CCT to help them achieve their goals.

The path through Acorn Dell is part of the Crieff to Comrie designated Core Path and, in the long run, will become part of the Pilgrim's Way – a long-distance path running from Iona to St Andrews. It must therefore be reliably accessible to all.

PROBLEMS

The situation is complicated by the condition of the next section of the path running from the end of Acorn Dell to The Sands, along the River Earn. This part of the path is seriously eroded and completely impassible when the Earn is in spate.

The Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) have indicated that they would not permit any major engineering works along this section of the River Earn so an improved path all the way from Turretbank Road to the section of Lady Mary's Walk past The Sands would have to take an alternative route.

ACTION

This will be a long and complex project requiring many stages in its completion. An application for funding is underway to enable improvements to the first, relatively uncomplicated, section of the path.

The group are also looking for funding to finance a study to look at possible alternative routes, bypassing the difficult section along the Earn, and to develop a plan for improving and managing the woodland and meadows at Acorn Dell.



STROWAN TO COMRIE

Meanwhile work continues towards upgrading this much needed route to link Crieff and Comrie with a safe, off-road path accessible to all. For most of its length it will follow the path of the old railway line linking the two towns.

In the past few months, we have been delighted to receive funding from the Gannochy Trust and Scottish Natural Heritage to carry out a survey and feasibility study for this important section of the Core Path. These grants provide match-funding for money already received by PKC from Sustrans for this work.

The study will concentrate on identifying the costs involved in improving the path – including building and repairing bridges. It will also look at how concerns raised by landowners on the route can be addressed.

The results of this feasibility study will be made available to the public later in the Spring. Currently, PKC are in negotiations with landowners along the route.

TRANSPORT

CRIEFF TOWN BUS SERVICE



The new Crieff Town Bus timetable started operating in January, and, already it is reported that the number of people using this service has increased. Considering the bad weather we experienced during the early days of its operation which might have kept many people at home, this is very encouraging. Perth and Kinross Council are conducting a survey on the route and the route will be reviewed soon. **It is hoped a timetable will be distributed to every home in the town but copies are available on www.crieffcommunitytrust.org.uk and information centres.**

PERTH - CRIEFF - COMRIE BUS SERVICE

We hope to work with PKC and local communities towards funding an improved half-hourly timetable on Service 15. This would be of great benefit to all the communities on the route.

GLENEAGLES RAIL STATION

Work is being done to improve the rail service to Gleneagles Train Station so that there will be more trains and lower fares. A community rail partnership with other communities affected has been formed. A draft submission to the Scottish Government for the recognition of the Strathallan Community Rail Partnership comprised of Auchterarder, Dunning, Crieff, Bridge of Allan, Braco/Greenloaning, Dunblane, Blackford and Muthill is being prepared and will be ready by the end of May.

CRIEFF - STIRLING BUS SERVICE

There is concern about the inadequacy of Service 47: Crieff – Stirling. Included in the plans for the improvement of the rail service through Gleneagles Station is the operation of a bus service between Crieff and Gleneagles Station to connect with the rail service. This will not only improve the bus service through Muthill but give a better public transport link between Crieff and Stirling and better late evening provision.



CRIEFFCOMMUNITYTRUST

'Crieff Matters' is produced and distributed voluntarily by the communications team of the Crieff Community Trust and its Board.

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We're social! 'Like' Crieff Community Trust on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check out our 'pins' on Pinterest for more updates.



GETTING IN TOUCH

Here are contact details of the three groups working together to make things happen from the Crieff Community Action Plan.

Crieff Community Trust

Chair: Ailsa Campbell
Secretary: Emmy Hargrave
Email: crieffcommunitytrust@gmail.com
CCT meets the 3rd Thursday of the month

Crieff Community Council

Chair: Stephen Leckie
Secretary: Jean Ann Scott Miller
Email: crieffcommunitycouncil@pkc.gov.uk
CCC meets the 1st Monday of the month at 7:30pm in the Strathearn Community Campus

Crieff & Upper Strathearn Partnership

Chair: Angus MacDonald
Secretary: John Champion
Email: crieffpartnership@gmail.com
CUSP meets the 3rd Monday of each month in Strathearn Community Campus at 7:30pm

CRIEFF COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS

Meetings are still occupied by discussion on:

- T in the Park at Strathallan
- dangers on Broich Road, and other road and traffic problems
- the derelict former Community Hall and its neglected graveyard
- Penny Lane

This has been not just an extremely busy, but a very productive period.

The Community Council now has 12 members, with only one vacancy – a very healthy contrast to the situation just a few years ago when it was on the verge of collapse. Sheilanne Smith has been attending our meetings for nearly 18 months as Crieff High School's Youth Ambassador. As soon as she was eligible, she put herself forward for co-option, and at 18 is certainly our youngest Councillor, and must be one of the youngest in Scotland. Andrew Snowball brings us a wealth of business experience, and they are both committed to working for Crieff as part of our very lively team.

Volunteers for our First Response Team will start training in April, and the next stage will be to find funding to start up and then maintain the programme.

The Crieff Succeeds BID is moving into its final pre-ballot stage, and the Business Plan will shortly be issued.

Our meetings continue to attract a growing public attendance – a trend which we warmly welcome.

CRIEFF COMMUNITY GARDEN

Winter months are generally the quietest for gardeners, but this has not been the case for Crieff Community Garden.

Throughout January and February, dozens of people from the Community Payback Team cleared sections of overgrown shrubbery, cleared litter from the site, and reduced the height of some hedging which neighbours in Ochil Place had been concerned about for some time.

The same team has also started work on a drystone feature with bench, using stone from the dyke which ran along Broich Road. Soil will be laid around this and sown with wildflower seed.

strathearn artspace

STRATHEARN ARTSPACE

Over the past eighteen months Strathearn Artspace has become a vibrant addition to Crieff's community, presenting music of all kinds, theatre, comedy, cinema, exhibitions and educational classes. Planning consent has now been granted and so we can now develop the building as a multi-purpose community arts centre with a versatile performance/exhibition/educational space.

We have just received our cinema licence and it is hoped that the cinema system will be installed within the next four months. This will be the first time since 1983 that Crieff will have its own cinema! In the next three months we have an exciting programme including:

- **Concerts:** Blues, Classical, Traditional, Rock and Brass
- **Drama:** "Whisky Galore" by National Theatre of Scotland and "Forgotten Voices of WW1" by Crieff Drama Group
- **Classes:** yoga, dressmaking, life drawing, paper sculpture
- **Exhibitions**
- **And lots more...**

For full information, please visit www.strathearnartspace.co.uk and join us on Facebook

CCT MEMBERSHIP

CCT membership now stands at 458. Support CCT's efforts for the community; keep up to date on our projects; have a say in Crieff's future and maybe volunteer some time or expertise by becoming a member. Membership is FREE. Join online at www.crieffcommunitytrust.org.uk