



BALLOCH COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

EDITORIAL

Well another summer has come and gone and I suppose we are all looking forward to Christmas. No statistics this time, just some wee thoughts about our community.

What is a community and what does it mean to people to live in a community? I have lived in a variety of these and they have ranged from what many would call 'close knit' to those that seem like dormitories. I think the best kinds are those that have 'life'. The kinds where people don't just exist but live. Where the residents play an active part and contribute something, in whatever small way, to the benefit of the community as a whole. I can see some of you reading this saying, 'He means do-gooders and busybodies interfering with other people's business'. Not at all. We all have a right to live our lives in peace and have privacy and choose how we want to live, but of course with that right comes responsibility. Part of that responsibility is a respect for our neighbours and our environment. All this builds a sense of community. I believe we are very fortunate in Balloch to have a balance that is just about right; we have those who want to keep themselves to themselves, those who quite happily spectate and many others who involve themselves in a whole range of activities.

Talking of activities the Balloch Bowling & Social Club have played a major role in providing functions throughout the year and no doubt will have another excellent Christmas Dance. Susan Van Der Vlies and other Community Councillors will be hosting a Youth night in the Village Hall on 22nd January 2005, with live music. Helpers are always welcome. We had a successful Village Fete and again we must thank the Bowling & Social Club for leading on this.

Ian Thompson and Margaret MacMillan have continued to represent the Community on the Norbord Community Forum, and Margaret has also been active on our behalf on the Inverness Community Councils Forum. George Riddell has worked with the Primary School Board and our local Councillor Bob Wynd to get a 20 mph zone established near the school. Laura MacGowan has done an excellent job as Secretary to the Community Council and Janice Walker, Alex Bennett and Ann Crew have dealt with some difficult planning issues.

On behalf of all the Community Councillors I would like to thank you for your support and hope you all have a really good Christmas

Ian Williams, Chairman.



The
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Balloch Community Newsletter

Councillors Report

I am happy to report improvement to the public transport service, we now have a Sunday Bus Service from Balloch to Raigmore Hospital. A Timetable is on the Community Council notice board at Balloch Stores. This service will be for a trial period of six months and the usage monitored, as the service has been requested by the community, I hope take up will be such that it can become a permanent service.

It is anticipated further traffic calming measures incorporating a 20mph zone will be implemented in Balloch soon, particularly around the Balloch School area, the outcome of joint efforts of the Balloch School Board the Community Council and Councillor.

It has been noted that although the reinstatement of the pavement and road surface has been carried out to the required standard. A resurfacing of both pavements and roadway will be required in the near future, and will be an item on the next years programme of works.

For all those who traverse the A96 for work related or other reasons on the 26th of October 2004 the Minister of Transport Mr. Nicol Stephen MSP agreed to work with the Inverness & Nairn Local Economic Forum to fast track a study to identify road and public transport improvements on the Inverness to Inverness Airport corridor. As Chairman of INLEF, I can advise this study is now underway.

In conclusion I wish all my constituents a Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year and I am sure all the children will soon be sending their letters to Santa.

Regards

Cllr. Bob Wynd

Councillor Robert Wynd M.C.M.I., M.Inst., T.A.

Balloch Ward

27 Cherry Park, Balloch, Inverness IV2 7HG Tel: (01463) 794573 Fax: (01463) 794625

Balloch Playgroup

Balloch Playgroup meet in the community hall
Monday - Thursday from 9.30 - 12.00 (school terms)

We cater for 3 - 4 year old children, offering a wide
range of different activities, covering various themes.

This term we have been learning about autumn, hibernation,
light and dark and of course Christmas.

The children sing some of the songs they learn at the end of term party
to which their parents and grandparents are invited.

There is a committed team of staff who
help to make the children's time at play group
fun and educational.

There are spaces for enrolment for 2004/2005.
Contact Gail Black 794565.



LIVE BAND NIGHT



22nd JANUARY 2005 - BALLOCH VILLAGE HALL

Any bands that would like to perform should get in
touch with Susan Van Der Vlies. Band members
should be between 13 and 19 years old.

Look out for posters on the Community Council
noticeboard and in Culloden Academy.

Contact Susan on 790815 or susanvdv2@hotmail.com

Police Report.

Motorcycles/Quad Bikes in Balloch Woods.

It is an offence under the Road Traffic Act 1988, Section 34(1) for any person, who is without lawful authority, to drive/ride a mechanically propelled vehicle onto or upon land not being part or forming part of a road.

In other words, any person driving/riding a car, motorcycle, quad bike etc. on any land other than a road, without the permission of the land's owners, can and will be reported by the police.

In respect of the above problem, please inform the police of any instances at the time of happening, so that officers can attend and attempt to catch/identify offenders

Local Prohibition of Drinking in Public Places.

It is an offence in the Balloch area for anybody to consume alcoholic liquor, under Byelaw 2 of the Byelaws for Prohibiting the Consumption of Alcoholic Drink in Designated Places 1990, and the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 Sections 201, 202, 203.

Basically, any person being found consuming alcohol in a public place by the police will be reported accordingly, and their alcohol will be confiscated. Again please report any instances to the police at the time.

Basic Crime Prevention

With the dark nights now here, please ensure that all loose items of property in gardens etc. are either secured or safely locked away.

Also ensure that all doors, windows etc. at your home are securely locked whilst property is vacant, and should you be going away on holiday, please inform the police accordingly so that your house can be placed on the vacant property register

Minor Instances of Disorder in Public Places

It is requested that should any such incidents such as noise, drunken behaviour etc. be witnessed, then said incidents be reported to the police at the time.

The police need witnesses to be able to report such incidents, as it is quite often the case that the culprit(s) have left the area prior to police arrival.

PC Norman Kinnaird
Community Constable
Culloden Police Station



794550

Christmas is coming

Quads and motorbikes appear to be a popular gift this year.

Please give the following some consideration before making your purchase

Have you a large enough area to use it?

Do you have the landowner's permission for ground to use it?

Can you use it without being a nuisance or danger to others?

Can you get to and from the area without it being used on public roads or footpaths?

Will it require to be taxed and insured?

Have you sufficient insurance cover?

Are you prepared to travel to designated areas where they can be used?

Do you know where these designated areas are?

Will you always wear the recommended safety equipment?

It Could Be You

Surveys of traffic and average speed have been held in the village and although average speeds have fallen we still need to be cautious and not speed in Balloch. Many new cars have cruise control and this could help keep your speed to the limit.

We don't know when the police will be measuring speeds in the village again so be sure its not you who is caught.

The area around the school is to be designated 20mph soon so please be vigilant.

We will have a turn of the mobile speed sign from Highland Council early in the New Year and this should help reduce speeds too.

Balloch Bowling & Social Club

Project News

At our AGM our name was changed and a new committee were formed. This group are still working very hard to find sufficient funding to complete the project although outwardly it may appear that nothing much is happening.

We are currently considering how best to proceed with the project for the benefit of all.

Following the conversion of membership to the limited company we have established an email distribution list to enable us to keep in contact more often. If you have not given us your email address please send it to Susan Van Der Vlies, 20 Macleod Road, Balloch or by email to susanvdlv2@hotmail.com

Charitable Status has been obtained and we can now apply to charitable funding bodies for assistance.

The next deadline we have to achieve is to reapply for funding by the 1st March 2005.

In the period running up to this we have a mountain of work to do and if you have any skills that you feel could be useful could you please contact George Riddell, 12 Edgemoor Park, Balloch, IV2 7RB Tel: (01463) 791990 or email to george.riddell@freeuk.co.uk

Feedback

It would be nice if members and non members would communicate with us a give us their views, ideas, opinions and offers of help to enable us to continue moving forward with the project.

Social News

We have had a mixed response to the social events held during 2004. Some were very successful, some not so and some we had to cancel due to lack of advance ticket sales. We need your support for each and every event organised.

The village fete was a successful event again and we thank all those groups who participated and everyone who helped in any way. We hope to get a group together early next year to organise this event. Please contact Lorna Condie if you can help or if your group would like to participate.

The next events planned are the Christmas Dance on 4th December and the Hogmanay Party on 31st December. These are 2 of our more popular and successful events. Tickets are still available at present. Please buy your tickets now from Lorna Condie, 46 Wellside Road, Balloch Tel:(01463) 794609

We are again trying to raise funds with Yellow Moon – A supplier of gifts who pay us a commission on your orders. You may find it convenient to process your order on the internet at www.yellowmoon.org.uk Please quote our source code SBA1537 on your order

Raffle Tickets are being circulated at present for the draw being made at the Hogmanay Party. Please return the counterfoils and the monies as soon as possible. If we sell all the tickets printed we will raise £2500.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Safer Routes to School

Many residents will be aware of the national Safer Routes to School initiative which aims to improve safety of children travelling to and from school and to promote walking and cycling. With these aims in mind parents on the School Board of Balloch Primary developed a school travel plan. This was based on responses to a travel survey of all Balloch Primary parents, which had highlighted local areas of concern:

1. Traffic speed especially on Culloden Road.
2. No pavement at Balloch Stores
3. Dangers at crossing points
4. School car park

Solutions suggested in the travel plan were:

1. Reduce speed on Culloden Road
2. Provide a pavement at the shop
3. Graduated gates at school exits
4. Crossing in school lane
5. Promote cycling and walking

These were discussed with and modified by the Council Road Safety Officer and a final proposal was submitted for funding.

Speed surveys had shown that more than half of cars travelling up and down Culloden Road were speeding but we were not permitted to have traffic calming measures. The Community Council were very supportive of our efforts to tackle this problem.

There is a Scottish Executive decision to have part time 20mph zones around all schools, so this will be implemented in Balloch in due course, along Cherry Park and on Culloden Road, below the Vet's.

The bid for funding was successful for the following measures: additional signage, barriers at school exits and a flat top speed hump on school access road and Balloch Primary School has been allocated £8,970 to improve safety of children travelling to and from school.

CAROL SINGING - BALLOCH SCHOOL PTA

The Choir and P7 pupils from Balloch Primary will be Carol singing in the local area on December 14th, 15th and 16th from 6.30-7.30pm.

We hope you enjoy the singing and you are invited to contribute to the charity collection

Tuesday, December 14th - Balloch-left hand side going up the hill

Wednesday, December 15th - Wellside

Thursday, December 16th - Balloch-right hand side going up the hill.



The Norbord Page

Anyone passing the factory entrance at Morayhill on a regular basis will probably be aware that our name has changed a number of times over the years. You could be forgiven for maybe visualising a history of hostile takeovers, bankruptcies, management buy-outs and so on. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The factory opened in 1985, as Highland Forest Products PLC. The manufacture of Oriented Strand Board (OSB) was new to Europe, brought over from America by a US entrepreneur called John Godfrey and established with the help of UK venture capital and local grants. It remained an independent company until 1988, by which time it was beginning to establish a UK and European market for its boards.

In 1988 it was bought over by Norbord - a Canadian forest products company and part of Noranda Inc., with mining, energy, smelting, forestry and paper interests. Norbord continued to successfully develop the European market, and looked for ways to expand. In 1994, a second production line was opened at Inverness, but to continue its expansion Norbord entered into a joint venture in 1995 with Glunz of Germany who owned the UK particleboard, MDF, and furniture operations of Caberboard Ltd. at Cowie (Stirling) and South Molton (Devon). The UK company then became CSC Forest Products.

Noranda split off its forest products sector, and that became known as Nexfor in Canada, comprising Norbord (the Canadian OSB mills), Fraser Papers (the Canadian paper-making mills), and CSC in the UK. Nexfor bought out Glunz's share of the UK business, and CSC Forest Products became Nexfor UK. So the sign at the end of the road changed again.

Nexfor expanded heavily into the US, and eventually decided to concentrate on board products. So Fraser Papers were divested, and the whole company became Norbord. Norbord's latest acquisition is an OSB and particleboard mill in Belgium

Strangely enough, with the building of the Inverness mill, OSB in some ways came full circle. Although it was invented and developed in America, it was the brainchild of a Scotsman - James D'Arcy Clark. He was looking for ways to utilise the wood cores left over from plywood manufacture, and came up with the idea of chopping them into 'wafers' and sticking them together. Originally the board was just a random thickness of wafers known as waferboard, but eventually the technology developed to make longer and narrower 'strands', and orient them during manufacture so that the natural strength given by the wood grain is best utilised. OSB has come a long way since those early days, and developments in glue chemistry and processing technology mean that the Inverness site has increased its output from a design of 65000 m³ per year in 1985, to the current 315000 m³, with the addition of just one extra production line.