



WINTER NEWSLETTER 2024

An experiment

East Dunbartonshire Council (EDC) has made an Order to introduce a part-time prohibition of driving near Craighead Primary School in the interests of road safety and traffic management (<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/experimental-traffic-regulation-order-vicinity-schools>). According to the EDC website the Order will be experimental and will remain initially in operation until 20 December 2024. No project plan is available, so we do not know how the experiment will be evaluated. There was no consultation with the Community Council before the experiment started.

How's it going?

Parents have told us that they had no opportunity to prepare for the experiment, so they were not able to change their arrangements for taking children to school and collecting them until the Order started. If they still have to use a vehicle, they have to park somewhere.



The car park at Milton Cross usually has only a few free spaces, and in any case it is not possible to cross Birdston Road safely at that location without long delays because of the continuous flow of traffic. The crossing patrol for Birdston Road is near to St Paul's Church.

Parents who take children to school by car have started using the route which involves walking from Lochiel Drive to Craighead Road. The congestion at times of drop-off and collection has therefore moved from Craighead Road to Lochiel Drive. To enable traffic to pass in both directions, people park on the pavement. This will soon be illegal, which will exacerbate the problem unless Lochiel Drive is made one-way (using the loop with Lochalsh Crescent). Unfortunately the stairs in the pathway between Lochiel Drive and Craighead Road are falling apart, making them less safe. As one resident said "it looks as if EDC designed this experiment to fail!"



Steps from Lochiel Drive

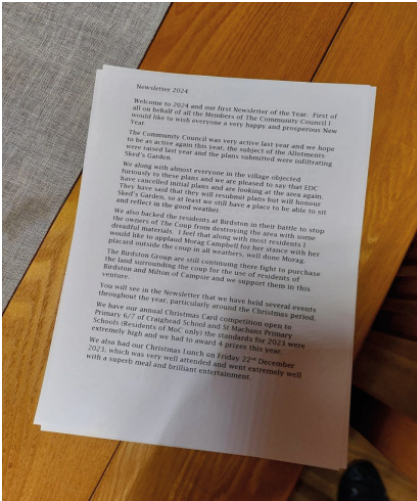
What should be done?

The aims of the project should be communicated to everyone who will be affected, so that people can weigh up the benefits and suggest ways to achieve the aims. The Community Council and the school should be consulted. It has been proposed that there should be a more systematic project to improve road safety in the village centre, which should include the traffic lights, regulation of vehicle access near the

school and design of parking spaces.

EDC has already announced a plan to install traffic lights with pedestrian crossings at Milton cross.

Report by Alex Buist, Chair of MoC Community Council



Welcome to 2024 and our first Newsletter of the year. First of all on behalf of all the members of the Community Council, I would like to wish everyone a very happy and prosperous New Year.

The Community Council was very active last year and we hope to be as active this year. The subject of the allotments were raised last year and the plans submitted were infiltrating Sked's Garden. We along with almost everyone in the village objected furiously to these plans and we were

pleased to say that EDC have cancelled the initial plans and are looking at the area again. They have said that they will resubmit plans but will honour Sked's Garden, so at least we still have a place to sit and reflect in the good weather.

We also backed and supported the residents of Birdston in their battle to stop the owners of the Coup from destroying the area with dubious materials. I feel that along with everyone else, I would like to applaud Morag Campbell for her stance with her placard outside the Coup in all weathers, well done Morag.

The Birdston Group are still continuing their fight to purchase the land surrounding the Coup for the use of the residents of Birdston and Milton of Campsie and we will continue to support them in this venture.

You will see in this Newsletter that we have held several events throughout the year, particularly around the Christmas period.

We had our annual Christmas Card competition open to P6/P7 pupils of Craighead and St Machan's Primary Schools. No one from St Machan's participated this year, however the standard from Craighead was extremely high, so high in fact that there were 4 winners chosen. They were presented with their prizes before Christmas however Lisa was unable to attend the presentation.

We also had our Christmas lunch on Friday 22nd December and it was another resounding success with a very good attendance. Entertainment was first class with several of the attendees entertaining with their lovely singing and they didn't want payment which was great, although they deserved it. The meal was again first class and thanks goes to Alex Graham Caterers.

I would also like to thank everyone who donated towards our raffle prizes, the gifts were first class and again I would like to thank you all. A big thanks should go also to Councillor Colette McDiarmid for assisting with the raffle draw and also for drawing my winning ticket. (It wasn't a fix, honest).

A big thanks also goes to all who turned out for the Remembrance Day Parade, the attendance was first class. I would also like to thank the Brothers Craigie for their superb piping skills.

Thanks also goes to young Hannah McIvor who switched on our Christmas Lights.

We would like to issue invitations to anyone who would like to attend our meetings to put over their points of view or complaints. We meet in the Village Hall on the 3rd Monday of the month, meetings scheduled for the first part of the year are as follows: Monday 19th February, Monday 18th March, Monday 15th April, Monday 20th May and Monday 17th June. Villagers are most welcome to attend as I said if you have complaints you would like us to pursue or ideas to enhance the village generally.

I hope that we may see some of you during the year and that the Village has a successful year.

Alex Buist
Chairman, Milton of Campsie Community Council

Access to Antermoney Loch

A resident wrote to the Community Council about access to Antermoney Loch at the junction of the entrance to Alton Holdings, stating that the sight-lines are very poor and may be unsafe, requesting a risk assessment. Turning onto Antermoney Road with a vehicle is very difficult. After discussion at its meeting in May, the Community Council wrote to EDC.

The road to Antermoney Loch is the route of one of East Dunbartonshire's Core Paths, but access without a vehicle is difficult because of the lack of footpath along parts of Antermoney Road. This also makes it difficult for residents around Alton and Lochmill to access public transport.



Antermoney Loch junction with Antermoney Road

Cllr. Ferretti assisted a resident to raise this with EDC and the response was *"...the property is situated on a historically rural road which has never had a specific footway. I have included a link to the Highway Code and although this does not mention rural roads it does outline how pedestrians should travel safely on roads with no designated pavements.*

<https://www.highwaycodeuk.co.uk/rules-for-pedestrians.html>

The resident mentions walking to the bus stop and by our assessment the nearest stop is approximately 1.6km away from the property with Milton of Campsie approximately 1.7km walking distance. Typically a new footway cost around £108 per metre so the installation of a new footway would be cost prohibitive and not deemed a priority."

A Defining Year Ahead for the Former Birdston Coup

The Birdston Regeneration Group SCIO (BRG) was formed in February 2023 to coordinate a community response to the deteriorating state of the land at the former Birdston Coup.

Following a public meeting held in July, BRG developed an ambitious and exciting vision for the future of the site, creating a sustainable, biodiverse resource that will bring many benefits to our community. This vision was included in a Part 2 Community Right to Buy (CRtB) application to the Scottish Government Land Team. This application was supported with 400 signatures from our community – a fantastic response. Thanks go to Louise Nixon and her team of helpers for this achievement.



Current status of entrance to the site

Community Right to Buy – what happens next?

If the BRG application is approved by Ministers, the current owners of the site will not be able to sell the land to a third party and this will open the door to negotiations between BRG and the owners. BRG is optimistic that it can secure the funding to purchase the site and move forward to implement its vision for the future. BRG is keen to build more community interest in and support for the project. The BRG

annual general meeting is being held in the village hall at **7.30pm on Monday 25th March.**

Everyone is invited. BRG will be electing a new Board of Trustees to take the project forward – are you interested in helping with the project? If you would like to learn more about the BRG vision for the future of the site, contact birdstonregenerationgroup@gmail.com.

Are similar projects successful?

There are other examples of community owned and developed land within easy reach. These include the 'Park on the Hill' in Royston and 'Malls Mire Community Woodland' in Toryglen. BRG hopes to have first-hand accounts of these projects at the AGM.

Meanwhile, what's happening at Birdston?

Whilst all this activity has been taking place there has been no work on the site for months following the involvement of SEPA. The owners cannot recommence work without seeking new planning approval and, to date, no planning application has been submitted. Vehicle access to the site is blocked as is access to the recognised footpath. However, the site is far from secure as there is no barrier to prevent people, including children, from walking on to the site at the north-west corner. The site comprises large earth bunds surrounding a slurry-filled crater that contains potentially hazardous chemicals. Some months ago, there was fly tipping and much of the site is inundated with Japanese knotweed. The site is now a barren wasteland with no commercial future.

With the continuing support of the community 2024 will be a defining year for the project.

Graham Beastall (BRG Secretary)



www.miltonofcampsiecc.co.uk

Instagram: [miltonofcampsiecc](https://www.instagram.com/miltonofcampsiecc)

Facebook: [miltonofcampsiecc](https://www.facebook.com/miltonofcampsiecc)

Councillor Paul Ferretti



I hope that you all had an excellent Christmas and I wish you a Happy New Year.

Times are tough right now for everyone, with high food prices, mortgage rates increasing and energy costs remaining high.

*I was pleased that the Council agreed to continue its extensive Cost of Living Support programme this year. The full details of this programme can be found here: **<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/residents/cost-living/cost-living-support>**.*

I would encourage anyone who is needing some support to get in touch with the Citizens Advice Bureau, who do amazing work in helping people with welfare advice.

Over the past year I have assisted several constituents in the village with a variety of issues, ranging from road conditions, greenspace issues, housing repairs and anti-social behaviour.

After it being initially raised by the Community Council; I pressed the Council to agree to put dog poo bags in the library, which brings this the village in line with other areas and should play a small part in tackling dog fouling, which is a constant issue across the entire ward.

I was pleased that the Planning Department took cognisance of the numerous objections raised by locals about the proposed allotments, and the retention of Sked's Garden, which will now remained untouched.

*I would like to thank the Community Council for the work they do in the village, and if you have any issues you would like to raise, please contact me via **paul.ferretti@eastdunbarton.gov.uk**.*

Remembrance 2023

A service of remembrance took place on 12th November 2023



Contact the Community Council

The community council is contactable via the email address secretary.moccc@outlook.com or via Facebook messenger on the Facebook page @miltonofcampsiecc. Our meetings are the third Monday of each month at 7:30pm. We are in the Milton of Campsie Village Hall, in the large hall. This is located on Craighead Road. All residents of Milton of Campsie and Birdston are welcome to attend.

It would be excellent to see as many members of the public with us each month as it gives us better insight into what the villagers think we should be concentrating on getting sorted. The agenda and minutes of meetings are posted on the notice board at the cross and are available on the website at <https://www.miltonofcampsiecc.co.uk/>.

Heating Our Homes Without Gas

In order to meet the UK's commitments under the Paris agreement of 2015, we must continue reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. Newly-built houses will not be permitted to install gas boilers from next year (2025). The supply of gas for heating our homes will eventually have to cease if we are to achieve Net Zero emissions. Some dwellings to the east of the village have never had a gas supply. Some residents use oil, which will also have to cease to achieve Net Zero.

What are the alternatives for Milton of Campsie?

Three main options may be available:

- direct use of electricity to provide heating;
- heat pumps;
- heat networks.

Direct use of electricity is currently more expensive than gas and is less efficient than the other options. The Scottish Government supports the development of heat networks in urban areas, but this is unlikely to include our village.

Some residents of Milton of Campsie already use heat pumps, and we invited two to share their experience.

Residents' experience of installing an air-source heat pump...

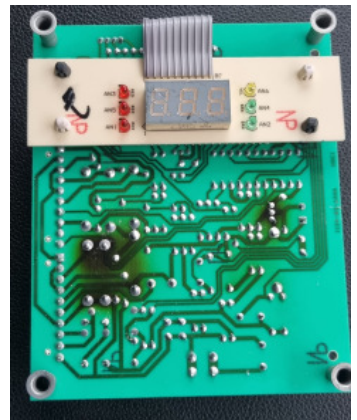
"I had a heat pump installed in the autumn of 2022, so have now gone through a complete year of experiencing what it can do. It is fine for my needs. There is efficient warmth, and plentiful hot water on demand. I am told that energy expenditure over that time is comparable to what I would have spent if I had carried on using dual fuel as before, so that is encouraging. There was a Scottish government grant towards the cost of the installation; and knowledge, expertise and technical improvements in the renewable energy sector are increasing all the time, so costs will continue to fall.

My energy supplier was unhelpful and obstructive about removing the gas meter and cancelling the standing charge for gas once the gas appliances had gone. Fortunately, Stuart McDonald MP and the Energy Ombudsman both helped to get this resolved, but it took time, so my advice to anyone planning to make the move away from gas would be to switch first to a supplier who is renewables-friendly!"

...and a ground-source heat pump.

"We installed a ground-source heat pump to replace a decrepit oil-fired boiler in 2004. I did not know in 2004 about the need to stop using fossil fuels, I was more concerned about the fluctuating price of oil. The equipment runs reliably, and the only attention it needed until recently was to check the pressure of fluid in the ground-loop periodically.

After nearly 19 years of continuous use, it failed in August 2023. A local specialist engineer diagnosed the fault, which required a replacement Printed Circuit Board. This was not available in the UK. Luckily, I was able to find a supplier in Ireland, and the engineer was able to install it just before the cold weather started. The only problem we previously had was due to the power supply having a very low voltage. Eventually a new power line was installed."



How long does the Government expect the gas supply to continue?

Energy supply is the responsibility of the UK government at Westminster. In response to a request by a constituent, our member of parliament, Stuart McDonald MP, wrote to the government minister to ask when the supply of gas will cease. The reply did not answer the question, so Mr McDonald asked a parliamentary written question about it, but still received an evasive response.

Who can provide impartial advice?

Organisations such as Home Energy Scotland (dealing with domestic heating) and Local Energy Scotland (advising on and funding wider community projects) are supported by the Scottish Government. But there is a gap between these national organisations and the decisions to be made by each household. It would be good to see a linked network of local authority energy advice services across Scotland, to put every community in touch with local businesses working to make the energy transition happen.

For example, Locohome (<https://locohome.coop>) is a co-operative retrofit specialist business based in Glasgow. They offer an advice service to help home-owners fully understand their retrofitting options, to broaden the technical knowledge of the whole community, and to help local professionals gain the requisite knowledge and customer leads to move into the energy-efficient retrofit sector. Lenzie

Community Council invited this group to speak a few weeks ago. Locohome is already very busy and potentially over-stretched by ever-increasing demand for its expertise, so this would be an appropriate time for each local council in the country to encourage the establishment of something similar in its own area.

What are your views?

Milton of Campsie Community Council welcomes your comments, especially if you have experience of moving away from fossil fuels to heat your home.

Winterfest

Milton of Campsie Festivals Association again presented a free Art Show and a superb variety of free musical performances in Milton of Campsie Village Hall. There were 70 original paintings and a good number were sold. Live Folk and Baroque music was enjoyed for two hours at the Exhibition opening. The varied and exciting paintings were viewed and refreshments appreciated. The '78 record show' was a success with people bringing their old records to play on four antique wind-up machines. The folk concert organised by Stan Quirk was a tremendous success with the hall packed! The grand finale was a fine chamber concert given by Milngavie Strings with two additional woodwind. Donations of £735.50 were collected for Milton of Campsie Village Hall.

John Hinton (Co-ordinator, Campsie Festivals Association)



Winter festive events supported by the CC



Christmas Lights Switch On



Santa's Grotto



Christmas Lunch at the Village Hall



50 people attended the festive meal provided by the Community Council on 22nd December 2023 for all residents of Milton of Campsie and Birdston who would be spending Christmas alone. Seasonal music was played and sung by the Kemp family, greatly appreciated by the diners.



Christmas Card Competition

The Weir on the Glazert – a resident's story

I walk alongside the Glazert from Milton of Campsie to Kirkintilloch at least twice every week. One day during the summer just gone, I noticed from a distance that there was a roadworks sign next to the footpath close to the weir below Kincaid Field; and as I approached I saw that a part of the river bank was blocked off with barriers. There was no sign explaining why, and there was nobody working there, but there was machinery on the opposite bank and there were many bags of ballast standing in the river itself.

Over the following weeks I saw a number of changes at the site but never found anybody at work, so that I began to wonder if the work was being done during the night. Actually, I think it was simply that each phase of work was only for a few hours at a time, and just happened not to coincide with any of my visits. Whenever I met other walkers near to the weir, I asked if they knew what was happening. They never did for certain, but we enjoyed exchanging conjectures about it.



I had seen a description of a project to monitor water flow in the Glazert on a website belonging to SEPA, so I sent them an email saying I was interested and asking them for information, about whether this was their work project, and what they aimed to achieve with it. I had heard and

read from various sources that river management is important, for the sake of protection of banks from erosion and flooding, and wildlife from destruction of habitat and so on, and wanted to know if this was being investigated in this case. My email didn't receive a reply.

At last I timed my arrival at the weir when a work team was taking a lunch break, and they informed me that they weren't monitoring currents, or planning to introduce new bends to mitigate climate change - they were merely repairing the concrete of the weir, which had worn down, it was just a restoration, including replacing the steps down to the river from the observation hut on the far bank. Eventually, they seem to have completed this, and the new structure has evidently successfully coped with recent extra high water levels and fierce currents.

An important and interesting project, which SEPA might have found the local community to be interested in if they had chosen to engage us - but not the exciting, visionary, future-proofing enhancement of the riverine environment that I had for a short while allowed myself to dream about.



Works Completed

General Election 2024

The Prime Minister has said that his working assumption is that there will be a General Election in the autumn of 2024. Make sure that you are able to cast your vote! The Elections Act 2022 introduced a requirement for voters to show photo identification before voting in person in a polling station in UK General elections.

Alternatively, apply for a Postal Vote. You can ask for a postal vote just because you want to; no reason needs to be given. Your ballot paper will be delivered to an address of your choice. You complete the ballot paper and return it by post by the close of poll on polling day. You can find more information at <https://www.saa.gov.uk/dab-vjb/electoral-registration/absent-postal/>.

Local Development Plan - 3

East Dunbartonshire Council is currently holding an evidence-gathering consultation on its third Local Development Plan (LDP3) - to take part before the 31st January end-date, visit www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/LDP3

Local Community Youth Groups

Girl Guiding:

<https://www.facebook.com/GirlGuidingKirkintillochdiv/>

For all sections of Guiding contact Margaret Boyle, Campsie District Commissioner: Mboyle88@aol.com 01360 310996

Scouts:

16th Glasgow Milton of Campsie Scout Groups

For Beaver Scouts contact Jen Gilchrist: Jen.gilchrist@btinternet.com

For Cub Scouts and Scouts contact Iona Gilchrist: ionagilchrist@btinternet.com

Boys Brigade: <https://www.mocpc.org.uk/2nd-campsie-boys-brigade/>

Contact Jackie Scott, Officer in Charge: 2campsie@boys-brigade.org.uk