



Dunoon Community Council

Meeting of the Dunoon Community Council held in Queen's Hall, Dunoon on Monday 08th September 2025.

Community Councillors Present:

Gill Robertson (GR) (Convener)
Debz Wright (DR)
Lindsey McPhail (LM)

Tom McCowan (TMc) (Secretary)
David Clough (DC)
John Jameson (JJ)

Via Teams:

ABC Councillors Attending:

Councillor Ross Moreland (RM)

Dunoon Observer:

Chris Martin (CM)

Police Scotland:

Not in attendance

Guest Speakers:

Members of the public:

Dan Wilshaw (DW)

Frauke Thornton (FT)

Apologies

Tom Warren (TW) (Vice Convener)

Paul Graysmark (PG)

Yvonne Love (YL)

Audrey Forrest (AF)

Tim Moss (TM) (Treasurer)

Abigail Apps (AA)

Daniel Hampsay (DH)

1. Gill Robertson (Convener) opened the meeting at 1900hrs and welcomed everyone to the meeting. The convener told those in attendance that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of taking the minutes and the recording would be destroyed after the meeting scheduled for Monday 13th October 2025 and the minutes have been approved. She invited anyone not happy with being recorded to leave the room or remain silent. She reminded everyone that questions should be directed to herself and not to talk over people.

2. **Recording of members attending and apologies received.**

As Above:

3. **Declaration of Interest.**

As listed at Annual General Meeting.

DC was presented a box of chocolates for attending a meeting at Cragroy

4. **Minutes of previous meeting were discussed.** No issues were raised with the minutes from the last meeting held on 11th August 2025.

Proposal. Dunoon Community Council accepts the minutes of the meeting held on 11th August 2025 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

Proposed: DC

Seconded: DW

For (4)

Against (0)

Abstained (2)

Result: Passed.

5. **Appointments/Resignations/New Members.**

Bobby Good has submitted his resignation with immediate effect

The convener thanked Bobby for his time on Dunoon Community Council and wished him all the best for the future.

The secretary said that he has sent emails to Meghan Smith regarding being co-opted onto Dunoon Community Council but has yet to hear anything back. DW requested to follow up. FT commented and asked why TW has not submitted his apologies for this meeting and

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mentioned that he had not turned up last month either. It was pointed out that TW did in fact attend last months meeting and he always submits his apologies in advance of a meeting.

6. **Presentations** – No presentations were given this month. It was agreed that Gordon Ross from Western Ferries will give a presentation to Dunoon Community Council at the next meeting on 13th October 2025. DC suggested that one member from each Community Council be invited, and they could then report back to their respective members. Members also discussed a closed-door meeting with members from Cowal Community Energy. There was a lengthy discussion where some members expressed their concern regarding holding a closed-door meeting. It was agreed to request more details from TW at the next meeting.
7. **Police Report** – Police report was sent to all members via email. It was noted that there was a decrease in the number of assaults on Police this reporting period, however there is still an alarming number of drink driving offences. DC Said that he had spoken to PC Cunningham and requested number of incidents Involving alcohol or violence during the Cowal Highland Gathering be made available.
8. **Action points and updates from previous meetings.**
 - a. **West Bay Play Park** – The secretary said that he had Looked into the wording of the just giving page money could be used on and confirmed that The money could be used to improve the communal areas in the play park the secretary said that he had also spoken to Hugh O'Neill from Argyll and Bute Council, and informed him that there was £1107.62 raised and this could be used to purchase equipment for the communal area in the park. Hugh O'Neil confirmed that this could be used to purchase a couple of seats or a bench. The Secretary will liaise with Hugh to arrange the transfer of money.

Proposal. Dunoon Community Council transfers the sum of £1107.62 held in our saving account to Argyll and Bute Council for use in the West Bay Play Park improvements.

Proposed: TM

Seconded: GR

For (5)

Against (0)

Abstained (1)

Result: Passed.

- b. **Highland Mary Railings** – In the absence of PG the convener deemed it inappropriate to discuss this matter further and requests that PG provides a full and detailed plan along with full costings to be put to members for a vote. She said that this matter had been reoccurring for far to long and needed to be resolved next month.

9. **Monthly Reports.** There were monthly reports from the secretary and the transport member. These were distributed to members by email and are available at Annex A to these minutes

In addition to the monthly reports there were discussions held on the following subjects.

- a. **Secretary** - The secretary informed members that he would not be available at the next meeting, He said he would liaise with Live Argyll to set the room up at lunchtime. DC agreed to take responsibility for all equipment at the conclusion of the meeting. He will provide his laptop to continue team's link.
The secretary spoke about the upcoming Poppy Appeal. He informed members of a public meeting on 12th September and gave a brief overview of this year's appeal. The secretary confirmed the diary and reminded all members that if they are attending a meeting, they need to inform the secretary who can then put it into the diary.
- b. **Treasurer** – In the absence of the treasurer, there was no financial report. DC pointed out that there has not been a financial report for some months. The secretary will contact the treasurer to ensure that there is an up-to-date report available on the shared drive.
- c. **Transport** - The Transport member he recently attended a wash up meeting for the 2025 Argyll Rally. The only change that affects Dunoon is the rally will start earlier next year. Members discussed the Tarsan Dam section and its impact on residents and those traveling to Dunoon. DC will take our concerns back to the organisers. DC said that he planned to have a meeting with Mull Car Club to go through the negative feedback received by Dunoon residents in our recent survey. DC said that the majority of residents from Kilfinan who responded to our survey were in favour of the rally returning in 2026, however Kilfinan Community Council are still opposed to the rally.
DC also updated members that the expression of Interest has now been submitted regarding the ferries. This is now live on the Scottish and UK government websites. FT spoke about the recent landslides and asked if Western Ferries would be able to operate a priority system for local resident who had urgent appointments. DC said this was very unlikely as Gordon Ross has a strict first come, first served basis. FT is welcome to challenge Gordon Ross on this matter next month. DW said that he had to use the ferry on the day of the landslides and complimented Western Ferries in the speed in which they cleared the traffic backlog.
The convener wanted to express her thanks on behalf of all members to DC for the extra ordinary amount of work he has been doing regarding the ferries.

10. **New Business:**

- a. **Cowal Highland Gathering** - The secretary said he wanted to thank Dunoon Presents and The Cowal Highland Gathering Committee for purchasing and putting up the bunting. He said he first mentioned this nearly two years ago when on the BID

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Board and more recently at the beginning of the year following lots of complaints from residents about the lack of bunting. This was not a cheap undertaking by Dunoon Presents/Cowal Highland Gathering.

The secretary also spoke about the need for Argyll Street to be closed all day on Cowal Games Saturday. He said there have been numerous complaints regarding the closure. This is impacting local businesses and residents going about their normal business. The days of Argyll Street being congested with pedestrians has long gone. There is now nothing on Argyll Street during the day that would warrant the closure as footfall has significantly dropped over the years. There was a discussion amongst members, it was decided that the secretary would contact The Cowal Highland Gathering to find out the reason for the closure and to see if there is anything that can be done to have something in Argyll Street to draw the crowds. He would also speak with the BID manager to find out the practicalities of having the market run along Argyll Street rather than in Argyll Gardens.

- b. Social Media Platforms – The secretary talked about managing our social media platforms and the fact we have a Facebook “group” and a Facebook “page” he is recommending that the “group” be closed with all our information coming from our website and our page. He also pointed out that when posting on the “page” it posts as Dunoon Community Council and therefore giving the author a degree of anonymity and protection. It was agreed amongst members that the “group” would close on 01 January 2026.

11. Updates from Argyll and Bute Councillors:

- a. Councillor Moreland said since the last meeting he held a meeting with Council officers regarding the parking at the War Memorial, parking bollards have now been installed.

Councillor Moreland also attended a meeting in Toward at the proposed data farm. He pointed out there had been local rumours that this was going to be a 180-acre site, it is a 75m x 25m site.

Following on from previous meetings, £65k has now been allocated to public improvements. He also said if the community regeneration fund gets signed, this could be another £1m to be spent on Dunoon. This could mean something getting done with the fire site on Argyll Street.

Councillor Moreland said he was still investigating the 4-bed property on Queen Street that should be getting refurbished for Key to allow respite for families with disabled adults.

Councillor Moreland said money had been allocated to Struan Lodge for refurbishments to be carried out.

12. Questions to Argyll and Bute Councillors.

- a. The convener asked if the disabled parking bay outside the Queens Hall is for three cars, and if it is, can it please be repainted. Councillor Moreland will pass this on to the Road Dept.

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- b. DC asked why two lanes have been blocked off at the Dunoon Ferry Terminal. DC said that he has been told that this is due to the public toilets getting replaced and asked if Councillor Moreland could confirm this. Councillor Moreland confirmed that this was correct and would get more details for DC.
- c. CM spoke about their being no mention of essential maintenance being required in the recent care inspectorate report and asked what the essential maintenance is, and why was it not mentioned in the report. Councillor Moreland said it was part of the Commercial services, and the building has substantial works that needs to be completed in order to stay open.
- d. CM said he has raised the issue of Milton Road before and asked if anything is going to be done before someone is seriously hurt or worse. Councillor Moreland explained that as a resident of Milton Road, he is unable to get involved, he said that Councillor Hampsey is dealing with, and he will ask him to provide CM with an update.
- e. DC said that he has been speaking to a board member from the DYFL who pointed out that there is very little for the youth (Under 20's) of Dunoon to do. DC mentioned that the Cowal Golf Club have recently started up a program aimed at our younger population and so far, has attracted nearly 100 plus junior members. He said that this proves that there is an interest in sporting activities for younger people, the issue raised was that when the DYFL try to organise anything the costs from the Council are prohibitive and are stopping the stadium and other facilities being used. He used the recent Highland Gathering as an example, Years gone by, there used to be stalls and small rides in the Jane Villa car park (in addition to the fun fair) but now there is nothing, it's all centred around the stadium. Councillor Moreland said that there are ongoing discussions with local groups to source funding streams to allow these events to go ahead. DC said that during the discussion, it was mentioned that if there is to be a new leisure complex at the stadium, then the whole site should be looked at, including the astro turf pitches and the athletics track. It was pointed out that the conferencing facilities would remain in the Queens Hall if this new leisure complex goes ahead. LM said that a proper club house is needed for the local sports team, this should include functions rooms etc. CM pointed out that there are no senior sports teams left in Dunoon. The secretary suggested that if there were decent facilities, then maybe the rugby club and football clubs could reform and expand. DC said that the stadium complex needs to be used, but the costs need to be looked at.
- f. DC suggested that Dunoon Presents should look at using the stadium for other smaller events and different activities. He gave an example of hosting a motorcycle meet where bikers could come around by road, stop at the stadium before moving onto Western Ferries, Vintage car meets, and regular car boot sales were also mentioned. He said that the BID has recently come under some criticism from people in the local paper. He said that the BID manager had put an article in the local paper recently but not once was any town centre activities mentioned. CM said that there would be a statement from the BID Manager and Councillor Moreland in this week's paper where a lot of the questions and criticism will be addressed.

- g. LM raised a recent post on social media regarding the state of the astro turf pitches, apparently there is an issue with people having fires on the pitches and a lot of dogs being allowed on them and leaving a mess. Is there anything the Council can do to stop this. Councillor Moreland said he thought the pitches were locked but would look into this issue. He said he is in regular contact with the DYFL and for example, the broken flood lighting was repaired.

13. Any other business:

14. Questions from the Public:

There were no questions from the public.

The Convener thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 20300hrs. The next meeting will be held on Monday the 13th October 2025, in the Argyll room, the Queen's Hall, Dunoon.

Signed by:

{Original Signed}

T McCowan

Secretary Dunoon Community Council

Distribution:

All DCC Councillors

Cllr Moreland

Cllr Forrest

Cllr Hampsey

Melissa Stewart

Police Scotland

Chris Martin (Observer)

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Queens Hall Reception

Library

DCC Facebook page

DCC Website

Approved

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**Dunoon Community Council
Transport Report September 2025**

Tasks that have been undertaken since the last meeting.

1. Attended Cowal Transport forum on 11th August.
2. Rally CC liaison - meeting held at ColGlen CC for all CC's and Mull Car Club on 18th August for feedback. ColGlen, Kilfinan and Strachur represented in addition to DCC. Note that Mull Car Club are now refusing to speak with the KCC Secretary.
3. Rally route proposals circulated to all DCC members 26th August.
4. Continue to lobby Transport Scotland for clear plan for replacement ferries.
5. Continue to make 'noise' with MSP's about possibly worst ferry service in Europe.
6. Response back from Jim Fairlie, Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity to recent letter from DRC (see Appendix at end of report).
7. Emma Roddick has provided a cop of CalMac's response to her letter regarding the Gourock Dunoon Service (8th August) following DRC lobbying (see Appendix at end of report).
8. EOI for tendering the Gourock / Dunoon ferry service should be issued before our meeting on 8th September by the CGTL under the umbrella of the Dunoon Community Development Trust.
9. Response to formal complaint to CalMac about the actions of their member of staff at Gourock waiting room on the evening of Saturday 26th July received – "human error". DRC has challenged CalMac ref the actions required to compensate those passengers affected.
10. Further information obtained by office of Lib Dem MSP Jamie Greene (Mark Stewart) ref CalMac cancellations Jan 23 to April 25. (see Appendix at end of report).

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11. No response from RMT Glasgow to seek support / input from them on theory that TS are deliberately running down the Gourock – Dunoon service.
12. Spoken to Gordon Ross who would like to come to our October meeting to update DCC on WF including deployment of 2 new ferries.

Items requiring discussion/approval from members.

1. Rally route proposals. The route though Dunoon remains unaltered but will start 30 minutes earlier allowing earlier access to closed roads. I doubt there is little concern amongst our residents given the result of the July survey. There may be some concern though about the closure of the Tarsan Dam route on Saturday morning as this will prevent free flow of traffic over that route, e.g. people coming into Dunoon for Saturday shopping.

Also note that Kilfinan CC have suggested some Rally route criteria through their CC area - (see Appendix at end of report).

Mull CC have asked for CC responses by 14th September.

2. Endorsement of tasks undertaken since last meeting.
3. Invitation to Gordon Ross to our October meeting (should we also invite 1 representative from each of the Cowal CC's to allow WF to update them too?)

Items requiring further action by Transport Lead member.

1. Organise Teams meeting with Mull Car Club to go through negative comments made by Dunoon residents to see what can be done to address any issues.
2. Update distribution workbook with latest updates from volunteers in readiness for 2026 (o/s from last report x 2)
3. Continue to lobby 16 x MSP's and Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity re ferries.
4. Further work on proposal from WCM for revised 907 service adding in passenger revenue models (o/s from last report).
5. Continue to lobby Transport Scotland for clear plan for replacement ferries.
6. Continue to make 'noise' with MSP's about possibly worst ferry service in Europe.
7. Contacting known candidates for Cowal / Highlands in next year's Holyrood elections to bring them up to speed with the state of the ferry service.

Report compiled By: David Clough

Date: 3rd September 2025

Appendix

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Letter from CalMac to Emma Roddick

Dear Emma,

Thank you for your email (Case Ref: ER11545) on behalf of your constituents regarding the Dunoon – Gourock service.

CalMac have been in regular contact with Dunoon Community Council and the Cowal Transport Forum throughout the process of the decision by the Minister to remove three sailings from the route and are fully aware of their views.

We completely understand the Community Council's position, and we believe that we have a good relationship with them and with Cowal Transport Forum. The collaborative work on the reduction in timetables was an example of how we were able to implement a change - in this case a reduction - in sailings but ensure that community needs were still being met. The proposal was discussed jointly, and we agreed which sailings were most important to the community, ensuring that we maximised connection to Scotrail at the Gourock side and the bus timetables on the Cowal peninsula.

The Community Council were quite clear with us that they would continue to lobby the Minister on the decision, and we understand they are continuing to do so. The community council did provide approval of the timetable changes, although noted they would still continue to argue for the decision to be changed on the back of the Community Needs Assessment process.

We apologise for the absence of MV Argyll Flyer, which is having extensive work done on her exhaust system at the moment. However, I can assure you and your constituents that we fully intend to return to a two-vessel service on the route once work on MV Argyll Flyer's exhaust system is complete.

Regards,

Stewart

Further information obtained by office of Jamie Greene on Gourock – Dunoon cancellations.

Mark - many thanks.

A quick bit of analysis of the figures for the period Jan 23 to April 25 gives the following totals.

Scheduled	Operated	Cancelled	Weather Cancellations	Technical Cancellations	Other Cancellations
42504	35799	6735	2686	2381	1668

Remember that a significant proportion of the weather cancellations would be due to the vessels not being fit for purpose.

Letter from Jim Fairlie to DCC 1st September 2025

Our Reference: 202500478839

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Your Reference: Gourock- Dunoon Ferry route

1 September 2025

Dear David Clough,

Thank you for your email dated 04 August 2025 regarding the Gourock-Dunoon ferry service, and for sight of your update to MSPs on the same date.

As you will be aware through engagement between CalMac and the Cowal Transport Forum, CalMac removed MV Argyll Flyer from service earlier this year, following a technical issue. The vessel is currently scheduled to return to service on 22 September 2025. This is a delay to that previously communicated. I understand this is due to the delivery of components which are required for modifications to the vessel's exhaust system. CalMac have been liaising with the supplier but have been unable to improve the lead time for delivery.

I have previously recognised the poor reliability experienced on this route, and how this is a key issue for passengers. I regret the inconvenience caused by this current outage and look forward to the positive impacts MV Argyll Flyer's return will have on the service in terms of reliability and resilience.

You will also be aware that I accepted a recommendation from Transport Scotland (TS) to remove three return sailings per day on the Gourock-Dunoon route. This was necessary in order to address identified overprovision on this route.

Following that decision, CalMac worked with communities to agree changes to the timetable. I appreciate the role that Dunoon Community Council, and you personally, have played in this. It is acknowledged that passengers rely on this service for commuting to work, school etc. which is why the identified sailings were recommended, as they fall out with peak times when demand is comparatively low.

I have now approved the proposed timetable changes, as set out in my recent letter to the Cowal Transport Forum and Dunoon Community Council.

However, I understand your concerns around the delivery of new vessels. There is no further update as yet beyond what I said in my answer to the Parliamentary Question referred to in your email. The relevant programme team within TS provided you with an update on 02 May in response to your email dated 22 April. This update referred to work that is ongoing as part of the Outline Business Case - more information will be shared with communities and stakeholders as soon as possible. The planned introduction of new vessels will improve reliability, resilience and the delivery of services more generally and communities will be able to discuss this during future public engagement events.

As I am sure you will appreciate, CalMac's vessels have very different characteristics compared to those operated by Western Ferries. Given Storm Floris brought significant wind speeds, the decision was taken by the Master to cancel sailings for the safety of crew and passengers.

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I welcome the contribution to Cowal transport connectivity made by Western Ferries' frequent and reliable vehicle and passenger service. The current Gourock-Dunoon passenger ferry service, including vessel provision, results largely from the single-route procurement exercise which concluded in 2011; the route was then brought back into the Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Services (CHFS) network in 2019. The current policy position regarding unbundling of the CHFS network was clearly expressed in the Cabinet Secretary for Transport's statement to parliament on 16 November 2023, when she confirmed that the Scottish Government had no plans to split up the network.

I have written to the Chair of the Cowal Transport Forum and copied to the Chair of Dunoon Community Council detailing my decision on changes to timetabled services. I am committed to open and ongoing engagement and would of course be happy to meet with local stakeholders in the future.

Yours sincerely,



Kilfinan CC suggested Rally route criteria.

We have considered the issues raised about the 2025 rally and developed a set of criteria which we think reflect the feedback we have received. Our aim is to balance the positive and negative impacts of the rally in the Kilfinan CC area. Our suggested criteria are that routes should: -

- Minimise the impact on businesses and avoid the closure of any business.

Enable spectator access, particularly, where this provides gain for local businesses.

- Avoid any road closure of more than half a day, minimising the disruption to our residents affected by those closures.
- Avoid impacting on access for tourists.
- Not include racing after 22.00 hours.

We also heard about the disruption caused by the recce and suggest that this should be managed with time slots to ensure smaller groups of cars