

Dunblane Community Council

Rachael Rennert
Secretary

Anna Jarchow-MacDonald
Chair

cc@dunblane.info

cc@dunblane.info

Minutes of the Dunblane Community Council held on Wednesday, 4 February, 2026, at 7 p.m. in the High School, Dunblane.

Present: Anna Jarchow-MacDonald (Chair), Rachael Rennert (Secretary), Jonathan Failes, Annelise Bakri, Calum Thomson, Peter Swindon, Rachel Nelson, Karen Jenkins, Anthony Delleur.

In attendance: Mairi Santolini and Adrian Davidson (Parent Council, Dunblane High School), Julie Wilson (Community Ranger, for the University of Edinburgh's Forest and Peatland Programme), Ann Hale and Margaret MacFarlane from Kinbuck, Bridget Clark, Councillors Alasdair Tollemache, Robin Kleinman and David Wilson, Margaret Bragg (Minutes Secretary), various residents, and pupils and members of staff of Dunblane High School.

1. Apologies

Apologies have been received from Caroline McArthur, Stewart Corbett, Alan Booth and, as there was no internet available at the High School, Councillor Thomas Heald.

2. Conflicts of interest and Chair's remarks

There were no stated conflicts of interest. The Chair introduced herself and welcomed everyone to this meeting which is being held in the High School to make the work of the community council more widely known to pupils.

The Chair noted the recent death of Bill Inglis whom she commended as the author of books covering the history of Dunblane.

3. Adoption of minutes of 3 December 2025

These were approved, proposed by Annelise Bakri and seconded by Calum Thomson. The Chair clarified the minute of the November 2025 meeting with reference to the Cricket Club and the pitch in the Laighhills. The Cricket Club was in contact with Stirling Council throughout and their agreement with the Council is that the Council determines the method of reinstatement of the pitch and is responsible for its repair.

4. Environment/Sustainability

The Chair explained that, as part of the Local Place Plan, the community council is looking at how Dunblane could look in the future. As part of this, the community council's agenda has reflected the agendas of the Leadership Academy groups at the High School to help develop a mutually informed relationship.

Sustainability Group

This group was set up at the school three years ago, and a PowerPoint presentation was given by Susan Evans, Annelise Bakri and a pupil explaining its focus on three main areas: Reduce, Recycle, and Nature. The aim is to reduce the environmental impact of the school while supporting social equity and inclusion. The Scottish Government has set a target of sustainability being embedded in every part of school life by 2030, although no resources or funding is provided.

Reducing the use of disposables in the canteen Since the pandemic, the use of disposables in the canteen has increased. An attempt to encourage pupils to bring their own container to be filled had a low uptake. Pupils are being encouraged not to buy plastic water bottles and to use reusable bottles for filling at the water points in school. A link has also been made with the annual Dunblane EcoFest with its focus on water use.

Reuse A windfarm grant was used to set up a dedicated space for second-hand uniforms, including 'lost and found' clothing. This is being publicised in the primary schools to help with the high cost of new blazers. Clothing in the Christmas Dance Clothes Closet was also popular, providing formal clothes for dances.

Nature Annelise Bakri reported on the school garden which includes a polytunnel and raised beds. Over the last three years, it has been brought back from a state of neglect to producing vegetables, fruit and flowers. Volunteers have been instrumental in supporting a group of pupils meeting at lunchtime, but she was now pleased to report that a teacher has been allocated for this and period 5 on a Friday has also been set aside for pupils to work on the garden. It is important to embed this in the long term with the school being responsible for running it. The garden attracts those pupils who do not engage with other aspects of school.

An outline of the Sustainability Plan for 2025-26 was given by a pupil:

1. Reduce environmental impact - clothing swaps.
2. Changing attitudes. A photography competition is going to be held under the heading 'Nature versus Neglect'.
3. Achieving long term aims. An attempt is being made to collect compostable waste, separate from food waste, by installing dedicated bins. A suggestion was made to set up a wormery.

In summary, the group has found it difficult to change many things. In response to a question, it was accepted that it was mainly S6 pupils that have shown interest. Annelise Bakri agreed that other years should be

invited to think more about Sustainability to provide continuity as the S6 pupils leave. This should also be widened to include P6 and P7 pupils. The Sustainability Group will be leading one of the school assemblies later in the year to highlight its work.

Community gardens and orchards

The Chair reported that a pruning session of the fruit trees in the community orchards will be held on 21 February. Volunteers are welcome both for pruning and maintenance work.

Alan Booth has sent in a brief report about the Scouring Burn (see Minutes December 2025). He had a site visit with a representative from Forth Rivers Trust, and no objections were raised to the plan to enhance wetland and renew the seating area, as long as work is carried out at the appropriate time.

The Chair commented that there are many topics relating to the Laighhills - the development of the pavilion, the proposal for an orienteering course, Blossom Day, Apple Day - and encouraged anyone to help in setting up a Friends of the Laighhills group.

Drumrae Drumrae is part of the University of Edinburgh's Forest and Peatland programme to plant trees to sequester unavoidable carbon emissions. Julie Wilson, Community Ranger, gave an update with a PowerPoint presentation. The University's budget of £50 million represents a significant commitment to this project. Drumrae covers 431 hectares and is one of three sites purchased by the University to create woodland. Most of the half-a-million trees planted at Drumrae are native broadleaf. Deer fences have been erected to protect the plants, and bracken has been kept down. Habitats for wildflowers, and ponds and scrapes have been introduced. Signage and interpretation boards have been erected.

There are many volunteering opportunities for local residents and groups, such as Forth Valley Orienteering, the Trails Association. Residents can take part in archaeological digs as well as planting and monitoring trees. She encouraged everyone over the age of 16 to get involved. Anyone under 16 would have to be accompanied by someone older.

There have already been school visits and Julie noted the importance of nature-based learning, with the University funding transport costs. There is a planning application submitted for a learning facility at Cocksburn Woods, comprising a shelter, a small classroom, and a composting toilet, hopefully to be completed by this autumn. This facility will be made available to community groups. Although the University has funds for the building, additional funds need to be raised for developing adjacent paths and for habitat improvements.

Bridget Clark commented on the access restrictions caused by the tree planting and necessary deer fences in a previously very open area. In

response to her question on the long term plan for Drumbrae, Julie Wilson confirmed that this is a 50 year project by the University, whose students and researchers will make use of it in their studies. Drumbrae is also part of the University of Stirling's Forth Climate Forest project, whose aim is to plant 16 million trees in the Forth Valley area by 2033.

In reply to a question from Councillor Wilson, Julie Wilson said that the trees are monitored and replanting takes place when some die. This is not a commercial woodland and will not be clear cut. The emphasis is on enhancing the environment and bio-diversity.

5. Community

Schools

Safe Routes to school project Adrian Davidson gave a brief presentation. Using postcode data, he has mapped the home addresses of the 853 pupils and was surprised to find that about 10% lived in the wider Stirling area. Councillor Tollemache, however, said that, with falling school rolls, the school accepts placing requests from outside its catchment area in order to make the school more viable. On a simple 'hands up' survey of pupils, it was found that 55% walked to school, while 23% were driven. Over the secondary school career of a pupil, approximately 2 million journeys are undertaken to and from school. The question is how to reduce the number of cars in the vicinity of the school. He gave three suggestions: a radar speed sign on the Doune Road to prompt drivers to drive more slowly; changing the school roundabout, improving signage and improving pedestrian barriers; a one-way system with a drop-off point and improved pavements. Councillor Wilson has asked Council officers for a feasibility study on these ideas some of which would require wider consultation. Adrian Davidson thought a small bus could be organised, to reduce the number of car journeys. Bridget Clark reminded the meeting that the issue of pedestrian barriers at the High School has been raised before (see Minutes September 2022), and agreed to send him details. **Action: Bridget Clark.** She also reported that the Primary School is organising a Walk and Cycle to School Week and suggested the High School could copy this initiative. It was noted that only two pupils cycled. Further consultation is needed to find out if any of the suggestions would be supported by pupils and parents.

Rights Respecting Schools Award (See Minutes March 2025) Nathan Nelson, an SLA, is leader of this group and was pleased to report that the school has been given the Silver Award from UNICEF UK and will now work towards the Gold Award. A culture day is being organised for Tuesday, 16 June, covering different backgrounds, culture and heritage. Reflecting the diverse range of backgrounds of the students in the school, there will be different stalls, and food available. On the last two periods of the day, it will be open to the community. The Chair suggested that collaborating with the Leighton Library and Dunblane Library would be useful. By the time of Culture Day, the S6 pupils will have left, and Nathan Nelson asked for volunteers to help. Mairi Santolini suggested that, if funding is required, applications can be made to Stirling University or to the Dunblane Development Trust's small

community grants fund. The Chair agreed to pass on Nathan Nelson's address to anyone interested in helping and to post updates on the agenda of the community council. A pupil commented that when something is pupil-led, it is more likely to be followed and supported by other pupils.

Community facilities and Dunblane.info and calendar

It was noted that the 30th anniversary of the Dunblane tragedy is coming up and, for the next meeting, community councillors should think about how to commemorate it. Councillor Tollemache stressed the importance of putting the wishes of the affected families first and to do nothing without consulting them. The Chair asked that the community council be included in any meeting organised by the Council. Peter Swindon commented that a standard reply to the press needs to be agreed upon, and he also pointed out that the various memorials need cleaned. Councillor Tollemache agreed to ask for an update on all the sites. **Action: Councillor Tollemache.**

Co-opting new members The Chair proposed that the community council co-opt three members and all the councillors agreed. The deadline for applications is 27 February. At the next meeting of the community council on 4 March, the co-option process will be facilitated with the presence of the Council's Chief Executive, Brian Roberts.

5. Reports

Police Report: No report has been submitted.

Operations Report: See attached.

Terence O'Byrne was thanked for his detailed monthly report.

Kinbuck Bridge Councillor Tollemache has requested that a camera be installed to provide information on drivers damaging the bridge. In a discussion with Council officers on how to protect the bridge, the advice given was that drivers would be more cautious if measures were not put in place to make it easier to cross. Mark Russell MSP has written to the Scottish Transport Secretary pointing out the problems caused by traffic being diverted when the A9 is closed, as happened in August 2025. After the community meeting at Kinbuck, Councillor Tollemache requested that HGV restrictions be put in place. The Council has agreed to this for the next financial year; Councillor Tollemache has asked for this to be expedited.

Skatepark Councillor Tollemache reported that drainage has improved and a suitable cover on the drain has now been securely installed.

Condition of the pedestrian bridge at the station Councillor Tollemache reported that a resident is willing to head up a campaign to have this dealt with, and has spoken with Terence O'Byrne. He noted that the bridge is structurally sound, and is going to meet with a representative of NetworkRail.

Gritting issues It was noted that, when the footpath gritting tractor had not worked correctly in January, the Council had addressed the problem quickly.
Vehicle activated sign on the Perth Road This has now been installed, after a long campaign headed by Jennifer Ward, a resident of Perth Road, who was thanked for her efforts.

Parking issues on Hillside Avenue Councillor Tollemache has been liaising with the church, and the Council has decided to instal double yellow lines on one side. The Traffic Regulation Order has not yet been published.

Site at top of Beech Road Work done on the site has led to footway blockages and traffic delays. The fence is not fully secured. The Planning Manager has written to the developer to ensure the site is secured and a traffic management plan is put in place.

Allanbank Road, Kinbuck The Chair led a community meeting held in Kinbuck on 15 December, 2025, a minute of which has been circulated. The Chair, Calum Thomson, Alan Booth, Councillor Tollemache and about 40 residents attended. It was an important opportunity for residents to engage, to hear everyone's views and to iron out misunderstandings. It gave the community council an opportunity to explain the process and to expedite engagement with Stirling Council. A three-point compromise solution was suggested and submitted; the deadline for any objection to the proposed double yellow lines was 7 January 2026. Councillor Tollemache has not been updated yet by Stirling Council officers regarding the outcome of the TRO public consultation and agreed to keep the community council informed.
Action: Councillor Tollemache.

Elected members

Councillor Wilson reported on the difficulties and delays people are having in getting assistance with elderly, disabled, including dementia and autism or ADHD diagnosis. Clackmannanshire Council paid their contribution for the overspend as a loan for the period 2024/25. The Integration Joint Board for 2025/26 has an overspend of £15.496 million, Stirling and Clackmannanshire Council in previous years pay 25% each and Forth Valley Health Board 50% of any overspend . This issue has been highlighted by Councillor Wilson over the past year at community council meetings. The Scottish Government introduced the Real Living Wage in previous years but is no longer funding the full cost to pay Real Living Wage. This may entail increased costs for local authorities but will also affect external care providers if the Council do not step in. Stirling is setting its budget later this month and is facing hard choices between increasing council tax and cutting services, with real consequences for people already struggling.

The Chair has contacted the Citizen Advice Bureau, the Dunblane Centre and the High School with a view to organising hub sessions for people to go for advice and help in applying for available support.

7. Internal

Correspondence, communication and document storage The Chair reported that the additional papers relating to the Minutes of meetings will be posted on the community council page on dunblane.info.

Treasurer's Report This has been delayed.

8. AOCB

Speedwatch The Speedwatch group thanked the community council for the offer to use its bank account in the interim until they had their own bank account. However, they have been successful in opening their own bank account and did not need to make use of this offer. (See Minutes December 2025.)

9. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Dunblane community council will be held on Wednesday, 4 March, 2026, at 7 p.m. in Dunblane library.

The meeting ended at 9.30 p.m.

This is a true representation of the meeting.

Anna Jarchow-MacDonald Date
.....
Chair

Rachael Rennert Date
.....
Secretary