



Newsletter No.3

Summer 2021

Recruitment issue

Why Torphins needs a Community Council

Your community council is a group of volunteers, elected by the community, to represent the interests of the community on various issues. The monthly meetings, to which all are welcome, are attended by Aberdeenshire councillors so that issues of concern can be discussed and addressed.

In the interest of creating and maintaining services, facilities and amenities that facilitate the environment that we all enjoy and appreciate, the community is best served by a community council made up of people with a mix of interests and involvement with other groups within the community.

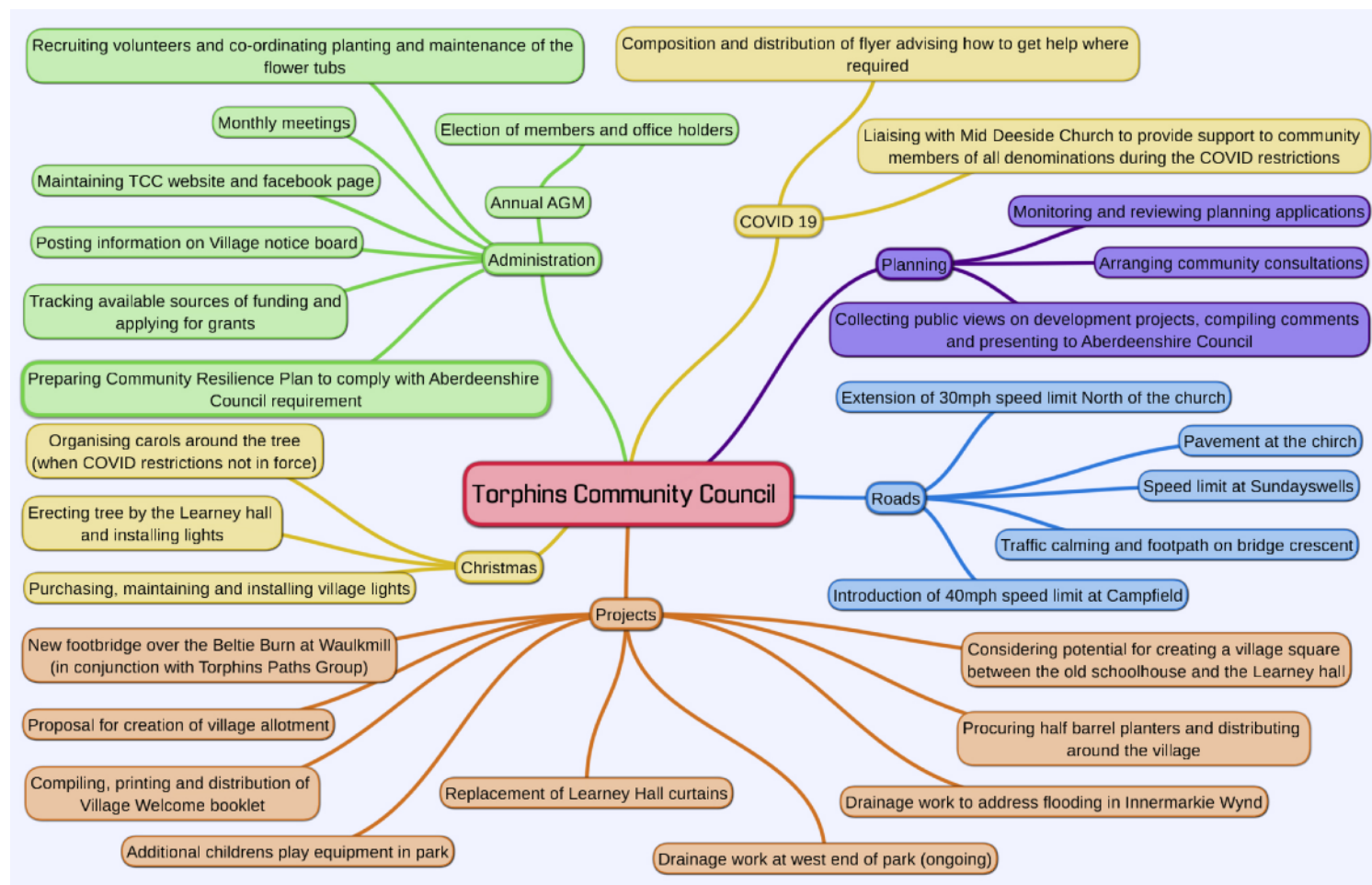
General information about community councils can be found on the Aberdeenshire Council (AC) website: aberdeenshire.gov.uk/communities-and-events/community-councils

Torphins Community Council (TCC)

A maximum of 12 community members can be elected to TCC with 5 being the minimum requirement. Currently TCC comprises 7 members. The offices of Chairperson, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary are then selected from the elected members. **Details of TCC members can be found on the website torphins.net, on the facebook page and on the notice board in the centre of the village.**

What does your Community Council do?

The mind map illustrates the range of activities currently engaging TCC



It's the getting together that is really the key to a successful Community Council as this allows members to exchange information and views regarding matters of concern in the community. Ideas on how we can improve facilities and services for the benefit of the members of the community are constantly under discussion as are the opportunities available to fund any projects identified.

A major function of a Community Council is liaison with the local authority (in our case Aberdeenshire Council). TCC is a formal "Consultee" in respect of Planning Applications submitted to Aberdeenshire Council. Any comments submitted by TCC must be taken into account when Aberdeenshire Council considers such

applications, thereby affording the community the opportunity to add additional weight, through TCC, should any such Planning Applications be of concern. TCC's direct link to Aberdeenshire Council is vitally important and provides us with a strong community voice.

Torphins Community Council needs YOU!

A number of Community Councils have recently collapsed due to a lack of community support, the result being that communities are left with no collective representation available to act on their behalf. Don't allow this to happen to Torphins Community Council! The answer lies directly in the hands of the members of our community. At the recent AGM two standing members resigned, having given many years of service, and the remaining seven all (some reluctantly) agreed to continue in their previous positions on TCC.

If you enjoy living in the Torphins, Tornaveen and Campfield area and appreciate the importance of the role of the community council please consider whether you are able to contribute a little time to ensure its continuing existence. Holding a position on the community council while being involved with another organisation could well prove mutually beneficial.

We all know that finding the time in a busy schedule of looking after a family and holding down a demanding job doesn't afford much leeway for additional involvements, but the time commitment of being a member of a Community Council is really down to what each individual is prepared, or able, to give.

Please come along to a TCC meeting which are once again being held in the Learney Hall (following many months of zooming). If you then feel that **you can help**, please get in touch through the TCC website or Facebook page, or speak to any of the TCC members.

Help Available

Do you or someone you know need help?

The Torphins Community Council is aware 2020 and 2021 came with not only COVID 19 but financial challenges for many in our community as well as social and emotional challenges. Therefore, we wanted to share with you many of the resources available to folks living in and around Torphins. The following is a list of resources, each offering completely confidential services.

Food and Toiletries Help:

TCC Hardship fund offers financial assistance to struggling families in Torphins. The grant can be used at both the Scotmid and Platform 22. To apply please contact admin@torphins.net or (Minister Holly at the Manse) 013398 82915.

Mid Deeside Church offers a little food pantry in the northside car park next to the church. The pantry is stocked full on a weekly basis and contains all of your essential items as well as toiletries such a toilet roll and nappies. The pantry is completely free to use and available 24 hours a day. Feel free to help yourself.

Aberdeenshire South Food Bank in Banchory offers three days food parcels to people in need. These can be delivered but do require a referral which can be obtained from social agencies in our area and from Rev. Holly at the church. You can email Holly at hollyreeneasmith@gmail.com or phone as above.

Heating and Other Emergency Help:

Home Energy Scotland (HES) advisors offer free and impartial advice on grants and schemes which are available. The advisors will assess your situation to see what you are eligible for and advise you about the next steps.

COVID-19: New funding has been made available for householders struggling to afford their fuel bills during the coronavirus pandemic, including emergency top-ups for prepayment meters. To find out about financial support that may be available to you, please call Home Energy Scotland at **Scarf** on freephone 0808 808 2282.

Mid Deeside Church Hardship Fund:

If you are struggling with an immediate financial need, you can also contact Rev. Holly to receive help from the church. You do not need to be a member of the church to receive help.

Social Service Help:

If you have current and persistent thoughts of suicide and you have a plan in place, call:

NHS24 on 111 our Out of Hours Emergency Service on 0345 608 1206 to speak to a specialist Mental Health Social Worker at night, at the weekend or on a bank holiday.

If you have attempted suicide and need immediate emergency help, call 999.

Support and help is available in times of crisis, you can contact:

Samaritans – if you want to talk to someone in confidence, you do not have to be suicidal. Call 116 123 for free 24/7

Aberdeenshire 1st Response – provides support if you feel at crisis point. Call 0800 135 7950, Text 07818 457223

Domestic Violence: If you are experiencing Domestic Violence, please contact Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline by phone, email or webchat 24 hours a day. Call 0800 027 1234.

Keep our community tidy

Thomas is one of the younger members of our community and he has written the following article which should be an inspiration to us all to keep our environment litter free.....

Hi my name is Thomas Truby and I started the Rubbish Club.

Picking up litter isn't my hobby, I do it because I care. I care about where I live and I care a lot about the wildlife that litter can harm.

I started the Rubbish club when I was out on a walk with my mum, I saw heaps of rubbish... that was in February 2018. It made me sad to think that people didn't care about the environment , so I started the rubbish club. Anyone can join all you need to do is don't throw litter away and if you can, pick up some around where you live.

Every time I go litter picking, I find there is always more litter to collect, it seems to never go away. A lot of people praise

me and say, "well done Thomas" and this really encourages me to keep going with what I'm doing.

I normally get ¼ of a bag when I go for a wander around our village. Like all villages we have our hot spots mainly around the shop and the park.

I get very frustrated seeing litter at the roadside, that people have throw out of their car, because I can't get to it safely. It's not safe for anyone to go litter picking on our country roads. I always wonder if the people who chuck litter from their cars ever think about who is going to pick it up?

I don't just pick up litter in Torphins, I often go to hotspots all over the shire to litter pick with my mum and dad. I like to drive to lay-boys and pick up litter because I find that people litter there most. The amount of bags we collect depends on the type of litter.



**Sadly I'm finding more and more disposable face masks. It's not nice picking them up but I wear a glove and only use my litter pickers very careful....
it's a bit like finding dog poo but that's another problem!**

Thomas has the support of TCC and we fully endorse the sentiment expressed in his letter. In particular one has to wonder at the mentality and laziness of those who litter the roadside. As any local walker or cyclist can confirm, the number of discarded sandwich packets, wine bottles, drinks cans, general waste and even white goods is a disappointing reflection on what is probably a very small number of inconsiderate people.

Please dispose of rubbish responsibly in receptacles provided or by visiting 'Banchory Household Waste Recycling Centre'. Access to the recycling centre is free of charge but must be booked in advance online or by calling the council's Wasteline on 03456 081207.

Torphins Community Resilience Plan

The Scottish Government is encouraging communities and individuals to plan for emergency situations. On an individual basis an example is to have an evacuation plan for your house in the event of a fire. In order to address this issue in relation to the community as a whole TCC have generated the Torphins Community Resilience Plan.

The plan is described in a document that can be accessed on the TCC website and details the process to be followed in the event of an emergency that cannot, for any reason, be immediately attended and managed by the emergency services or appropriate public service agencies. Community actions are intended to provide assistance, security and safety to affected people until the appropriate public service agency is able to take over, and where appropriate, to provide ongoing assistance for as long as is required.

The Plan is based on a risk assessment of events that could have an impact on the community and individuals within the community. Please look at the Plan and contact any member of TCC if you experience an emergency situation for which you are unable to get help through normal means.

Village centre parking

Concern has been raised about the potential for a road accident to occur in the village due to poor parking practices. The main focus of attention is around the cross roads in the centre of Torphins and is primarily associated with parking for visits to Scotmid. The white line in the road extending around the corner from St Marnan Road on to Craigour Road is to remind motorists, that as stated in the Highway Code, the closest that a vehicle can be parked from a junction is 10m (32ft). The obvious reason for this is to give vehicles arriving at the junction from St Marnan Road a clear view of the main road. It has also been noticed that vehicles are frequently parked across the Mobility Pad identified by raised 'dots' which provides a blind person and those with mobility issues a clear area with lowered kerbs, allowing them to cross when it is safe to do so. Aberdeenshire Council have agreed to highlight this area in some fashion to alert drivers of the need to keep this area clear. A similar pad exists on the South side pavement outside Scotmid, but there is less chance of this section being violated because of its position.

Similar examples of poor and potentially dangerous parking have been noticed on the corner of St Marnan Road and William Street.

For the safety of our community and courtesy to other road users and pedestrians please park safely when visiting the village. Nowhere in the village is far from the centre and there are parking places by the Learney Hall and by the park which would only involve a short walk to the centre.

Projects

Village Square

TCC are exploring the feasibility of creating a community space in the centre of our village utilising the small parcel of land, left over from the sale of the old School House, to form a new Village Square. With more people working from home, local gathering, entertainment and strolling spaces will become ever more important. The site is roughly the size of the north half of Ballater's square and could involve; renovating the public toilets; hard landscaping for small events; planting and maybe a community garden. The project is in the early yet exciting stages and anyone wishing to comment or assist can email admin@torphins.net



Village Tubs

The planted tubs that you see are looking great and add much colour to our village. The tubs have been provided by TCC but we have to thank a number of volunteers who have adopted a tub and taken on the planting and maintenance. *Please contact TCC if you would like to adopt a tub or have a suggestion for locations of additional tubs.*

Torphins Allotments

Interest has been expressed in having an allotment in the village area. Some preliminary meetings have been held but now discontinued due to the difficulty of identifying a suitable site and lack of support. Any information regarding potential sites or expressions of interest, support and enthusiasm for resuming this project can be expressed through the TCC website.

Village News

The Learney Arms Indian

As one of the service businesses in the centre of Torphins the Learney Indian provides an important focal point offering a licensed bar, restaurant and take-away food. Unfortunately recent antisocial behaviour occurring around the Learney Indian has attracted the attention of the police and licensing authority. Given the amount of attention closing the Learney Arms Hotel attracted in the past it is evident that the presence of a bar and restaurant in the village is important to many of us, so it would be disappointing to lose this facility due to inconsiderate behaviour of a minority of people. Please adhere to the social distancing advice and be respectful if reminded of rules that are current.

A2B dial-a-bus

Aberdeenshire Passenger Transport Unit has announced the introduction of a Lumphanan - Torphins - Banchory A2B dial-a-bus service. The free service is open to everybody in Torphins and Lumphanan and must be pre-booked at least one day before travel. Drivers can only provide limited assistance, please ask at the time of booking if you require any help.

Dial-a-bus services can only be provided between school times, and this trial is open to suggestions including other potential times.

Please phone 01467 535333 for further information or to make your booking.

Tuesday / Wednesday service only			
Lumphanan	1000	Banchory	1200
Torphins	1015	Torphins	1220
Banchory	1040	Lumphanan	1240

Village Welcome Booklet

A Village Welcome Booklet containing a short history and local information including details of facilities, services and businesses has been produced. The document is regularly updated and TCC is happy to receive edits and additions. Hard copies of the booklet are available in P22 and Scotmid with a downloadable copy on this link:

bit.ly/TCC_WelcomePack_V02



Torphins Paths Group is closely linked with, and represented on TCC. During the past year TPG volunteers have maintained activity, with operations tailored to progress within the terms of current COVID restrictions and our consequent risk assessments.

The **Woodland Wonderland** illuminations were a highly successful new venture, enabled by a fantastic community funding response and business donations, bolstered by Foundation Scotland Response Recovery and Resilience

Fund. We received 490 group guest registrations for well over 1500 visitors, and lots of recognition for providing some light in the darkness.

Path Maintenance and Development activities were pursued when possible. Vegetation on woodland paths and the railway line path was cut back in late autumn. In March we were able to complete the new fenced bypass path at Waulkmill Farm, with the assistance of Waulkmill Farm, timber donation from Learney Estate, and substantial partial funding from Aberdeenshire Council. Most recently we are refurbishing the popular Monboddo to West Lodge path, which was damaged in heavy rains and will be better protected now by drainage improvements by the landowners.

For the proposed **Banchory Path** we have maintained close cooperation with the landowner who has planning approval to develop a car park and access path at the river restoration site. Having engaged necessary professional surveys TPG recently obtained planning permission for the path and bridge from Easter Beltie through Dam Wood to Glassel road (APP/2021/0470). We are now seeking the substantial funding required for construction. The **Lumphanan Path** proposal by TPG is strongly supported by Lumphanan Paths Group who we meet with regularly. We will complete the red line map survey soon and are pursuing additional grant funding to complete the planning application including Beltie bridge design.

Many thanks for community and volunteer support. For information, joining, donating please go to: www.torphinspathsgroup.org

Sale of Schoolhouse

The old schoolhouse has now been sold by Aberdeenshire Council but at the time of printing the identity of the new owner has not been revealed.

40mph speed limit

Following months of campaigning the 40mph speed limit at Campfield has now been extended to the west and now starts before the Glassel turn off when heading east from Torphins.

Learney Hall Reopening

The Learney Hall is now open for COVID safe activities. Contact townhalls@aberdeenshire.gov.uk for bookings.

Following years of effort by TCC to get the hall curtains refurbished Aberdeenshire Council have now agreed to supply and install vertical black-out blinds in both halls and roller blinds in the kitchen.

Finally

If you have questions or comments on articles in this newsletter or anything else relating to TCC please address them by email to admin@torphins.net or come along to one of our monthly meetings. (If COVID restrictions still apply then the code for attending our zoom meetings can also be obtained by email).