



Chairperson's Report AGM. 9th January 2024


Welcome to the fifth AGM of Stoneyburn and Bents Future Vision Group SCIO. Our accounting period runs from August to August, and as such, this report will cover the period between August 2022, until August 2023.


Allow me to thank the Board of Trustees of SBFVG SCIO, for all their hard work, determination, effort, teamwork and commitment throughout the year; to our Project Development Officer, for all her hard work and dedication; to our newly appointed Project Officer, who took up the post in July 2023, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Village Primary Schools' staff and pupils; both Primary Schools' PTAs; the Community Centre Staff and Management Committee; West Lothian Council; our local Councillors; WLC NET's Services; the numerous Village organisations, groups and local businesses; WLC Regeneration Officers; The Woodland Trust; Paths for All; West Calder and Harburn Community Development Trust; Voluntary Sector Gateway; Development Trust Association Scotland; the Stoneyburn and Bents Community Council; and of course, the residents of our village.


This period, from August 2022 to August 2023, saw many events take place within the Village, and saw the Group undertake new challenges to help deliver for our village in light of the recent cost of living crisis:

- We continued our Village improvements and clear-ups.
- Our annual Burns event and afternoon tea events with Billy.
- Our annual Santa Parade went ahead in December 2022, marking its 10 year anniversary.
- We brought the joy of Panto to the village as part of our 10-year anniversary.
- We continued to build our Social Media presence to highlight the work of the group within the community.
- We ran our Amigos club, and our Summer of Fun returned for this year, taking trips to many different places during the summer holidays.
- This year saw the return of the Annual Fulshie Fun Run.
- We started our Fulshie Film Club.
- Our Youngat Heart project for our older residents continued to grow and thrive.
- We re-opened our Larder and Warm Hub Service, where it has a new home beside our office in the Stoneyburn Workshops.
- We celebrated the King's Coronation.
- We entered a float into the Galaday and won 2nd prize in the decorated float category.
- We saw a new programme of Care for Carers.
- We helped in the setup of the new Toddlers Group taking place in the centre.
- Our new Project Coordinator took up the role in July 2023.

We continue to work with the support of the Community Council, to help push the village's need for footpaths out of the village. The Group has worked tirelessly to try and make this a reality, which will be a great asset for the village. Sandy has been a real driving force behind this issue. The group has met with Councillors, representatives from Sustrans, WLC Officers, Paths for All, the various landowners throughout the village, and other interested stakeholders. This has been something that the Group has been determined to achieve for a long time and is progressing well despite challenges along the way.

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The group has continued to work in partnership with the Woodland Trust, who maintain the walks, paths and the forest around the Fulshie. New paths have been laid, and are also being maintained, with trees being cut back to allow easier access to the paths. The Woodland Trust has further work planned to upgrade and widen the paths throughout the woods further in the coming years.


Laura continued the great work that she started in February 2022. During this time, our Project Development Officer, hit the ground running and has built on the foundations laid by the Group, Laura has continued to source funding to help meet the 5-year Strategic Plan that the Group had set up, in order to best meet the needs of our Village. Although not all applications were successful, Laura has endeavoured to ensure that all applications and projects were given the same attention, time and effort. Laura has been actively involved in the many projects that we have currently running, and has been leading many new projects in the village, as well as liaising with other groups, building capacity and relationships with other groups and organisations.


Our Blether Service, which aims to provide a check-in service, or a chat to help combat loneliness of our elderly residents, went from strength to strength. We were able to help lots


of individuals with many different aspects of their lives as we had built up a relationship with them in the past through our service. We continue to run this service remotely, and our dedicated volunteer can conduct this service from the safety of her own home. We continue to provide our volunteer with additional training and equipment in order to ensure their safety whilst conducting calls, and the ability to handle certain situations that may arise on these calls, and give them the confidence to know what services the individuals on the calls may require – thanks to the dedication of Mary (even calling residents on Christmas morning), and the low cost nature of this service, we will continue the delivery of this service.

In December 2022, we celebrated our Annual Santa Parade's 10-year anniversary. Children were able to visit Santa in the afternoon, before he went out and toured our village, and everyone was able to enjoy our indoor stalls and games in the community centre – we were even joined by some special guests during the day, including Olaf, our own snowman, and a surprise visit from our very own Grinch who tried his best to disrupt the event. Santa took to the streets, supported by his elves. It was another great success and Villagers of all ages thoroughly enjoyed the whole day. A huge thanks to those who stepped in to support when we were let down by the carriage company. We also brought the fun of the Panto to our village again, where villagers were able to enjoy Cinderella at the community centre. To mark the 10 year anniversary, we also hosted a Christmas Film Night, Kids Film, and a kids' Christmas Disco.

We continued our 'Young at Heart' club, which saw us host several events throughout the year, which aimed to get our older residents out, and meeting up with each other. These events were a great success, and as such many more were planned by our Project Development Officer throughout the year, with additional funding that she secured. We continued our partnership with Opal to deliver additional Young at Heart events.

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The summer saw the return of our Amigos Club, which was greatly received, and well attended. We had many games and fun throughout the summer. This summer also saw the continuation of our Summer of Fun, where we received funding from West Lothian Council. This allowed us to take our villagers on trips throughout the summer, as well as bringing in some activities for people to attend. We went to Edinburgh Castle, Glasgow Science Centre, we had a visit from a local author Scott Fleming, we had a pottery session hosted by Potter Around, Studio 44 who put our kids through their paces, we then topped the summer off with a party for the kids.

This year we continued our support to provide breakfasts for children during all the school holidays, with packs available to anyone requiring them from the Larder free of charge. During the summer clubs, additional packs were handed out to support the 7-week break.


We started our new programme of Care for Carers, which sees those who care for others take some time for themselves in a safe environment, and engage with others who share their lived experience with wellbeing sessions and craft sessions. Packs for those unable to attend in person have also been delivered. The group also hosts a book club.


Jackie joined us as our Project Officer in July, taking on the responsibility of running our Larder and our Warm Hub.

I would like to thank Raymond for his dedication in keeping the village looking its best, to Jean for continuing to support our new planters, and planted areas throughout the village, to the Walking Group who litter pick the Fulshie on their walks. And also for all our volunteers who keep our village looking great.

This has been a challenging year for the group – I look forward to the next year and I would like to thank you all for your time and commitment in making Stoneyburn and Bents Future Vision Group SCIO, an effective Group, leading and supporting new developments, and being at the very heart of our Community.

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