



Chairperson's Report

AGM. 22nd April 2025

Welcome to the sixth AGM of Stoneyburn and Bents Future Vision Group SCIO. Our accounting period runs from August to August, and as such, this report covers the period between August 2023 and July 2024.

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 her dedication; and to our Project Coordinator. 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, Voluntary Sector Gateway, Development Trust Association Scotland, the University of Stirling, Mining Landscapes, School Bank West Lothian, and of course, the residents of our village.

This period saw many events take place within the village and brought new challenges as the Group continued to support the community amid the ongoing cost of living crisis:

- Continued village improvements and village clear-ups.
- Our annual Burns event and afternoon tea events.
- Our annual Santa Parade went ahead, marking its 12-year anniversary.
- The joy of Panto returned to the village as part of our ongoing celebrations.
- Expanded our social media presence to highlight the Group's work.

- Ran our Amigos club, and delivered the Summer of Fun programme, providing family trips and activities.
- Another successful day at our Annual Fulshie Fun Run.
- The relocation of our Fulshie Film Club.
- The Young at Heart project for older residents continued to thrive after more successful funding.
- We took trips down memory lane with Tom Purdie.
- Our Larder and Warm Hub Service continue to be well used.
- Entered into the Galaday, winning prizes for our arch, and for Laura's fancy dress.
- Our Care for Carers group continued to thrive.
- Supported continuation of the Toddlers Group at the community centre.
- We hosted our first OPAL & Xcite Games.
- We opened up our School Clothing Bank thanks to the School Bank West Lothian.
- We unveiled our new Miners' Memorial.

Sandy has been a driving force behind the paths projects, with meetings involving Councillors, SUSTRANs, WLC Officers, Paths for All, landowners, and other stakeholders. Despite challenges, progress is still being made.

The Group has worked closely with the Woodland Trust to maintain the walks, paths, and forest around the Fulshie. Path upgrades and tree management continue, with further improvements planned.

Laura has continued her vital work, securing funding to support the Group's five-year Strategic Plan. She has led many projects, forged partnerships, and strengthened community links.

Our Blether Service has gone from strength to strength, providing essential social contact for isolated elderly residents. Thanks to Mary's dedication, and the cost-effective nature of the service, we plan to continue its delivery.

Our annual Santa Parade celebrated its 12-year anniversary with festive activities, stalls, and surprise guest, the Grinch. Santa toured the village with his elves, creating another memorable event. We also brought the fun of Panto back to the community centre with a Beauty and the Beast performance. To mark the occasion, we hosted a Christmas Film Night, Kids' Film Screening, and a children's Christmas Disco.

The Young at Heart club delivered multiple events designed to bring older residents together. Thanks to additional funding secured by our Project Development Officer, we were able to expand the programme further in partnership with Opal.

The Amigos Club returned for another successful summer, packed with games and activities. Our Summer of Fun programme, funded by West Lothian Council, provided trips to Edinburgh Castle and Glasgow Science Centre, along with guest speakers, pottery sessions, fitness workshops, and a grand summer party for the kids.

Throughout the school holidays, we continued our support to provide breakfasts for children, with packs available from the Larder free of charge. Additional packs were handed out during the summer clubs to assist families over the seven-week break.

Our Care for Carers programme helped those with caring responsibilities take time for themselves, offering wellbeing sessions, craft activities, and a book club. Packs were also delivered to those unable to attend in person.

I would like to thank Raymond for his dedication in keeping the village looking its best, Jean for maintaining our planted areas, and the Walking Group for litter-picking the Fulshie. A special thanks also to all our volunteers who continue to support our community.

We also took the time to gather to honour and remember the miners who played a vital role in shaping the history and spirit of our community. The new Miners' Memorial stands as a symbol of our collective memory and shared history. It stands as a testament to the strength, perseverance, and sacrifice of the miners who toiled tirelessly beneath the earth, enduring immense hardships to provide for their families and the sacrifices their families made too. The memorial would not have been possible without the help and support of so many, and I would like to take the time to thank them all for their contribution to such a fitting tribute.

This has been another challenging year for the Group, but I look forward to the next and extend my sincere gratitude to everyone involved in making Stoneyburn and Bents Future Vision Group SCIO a vital force at the heart of our community.

Iain MacIntyre
Chairperson