

South Knapdale Community Council Meeting

Held at Kilberry 1821 (The Kilberry Church)

9th September 2026 at 7.30pm

Minutes

1. Housekeeping

- a. Apologies for absence
- b. Record attendees
- c. Establish any Declarations of Interest
- d. Minutes of last meeting

a. Apologies from - Peter Minshall, Duncan Byatt, Lorne Byatt.

b. Attendees: C. Wolfe, B. Weir, K. Weir, P. Russell, A. Wilkie, M. Ray, K. Paschalides, A. McArthur, Ward Cllrs. A. Horn and Cllr. J. Brown, Community Cllrs, J Campbell, B. Steven. L. Stolton, K. Paschalides, E. Tyler and C. Spink.

c. There were no declarations of interest.

d. The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

Cllr. Horn gave an update on matters she had been pursuing on behalf of residents. These including getting potholes fixed on the B8024. She invited us to share any concerns / issues etc (20mph signposting and note of section of road with particularly bad potholes etc) with Cllr Horn. This was welcomed.

2. Planning for Land at Loch Stornaway Hill update

The Chair outlined the background: that A and B Council had refused the application and the applicant had subsequently asked for that decision to be reviewed by the Local Review Body. The first hearing was due to take place on Monday 7 September, but the meeting couldn't go ahead because there were not enough members present to form a quorum, so the case wasn't considered and has been adjourned to a future date. The original refusal therefore remains in place while the review is ongoing.

3. Brenfield Windfarm update

The Chair reported that there had been no material update on High Brenfield since May. As of 31 August, the application remains with the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit and is still formally listed as 'Consultation'; no decision, inquiry or further consultation has yet been announced. There are currently no published dates or deadlines for SKCC to respond to.

4. Scottish Broadband Voucher Scheme & R100 update

The R100 programme and related broadband funding schemes are intended to improve connectivity for properties that have been left behind by normal commercial broadband rollout.

The Chair reported that the latest Argyll and Bute Council Connectivity Report, published in June 2026, shows that the Ormsary exchange currently has only around 25% full-fibre coverage — in other words, only about one in four properties served by that exchange have the necessary full-fibre infrastructure available to order in the first place.

Ormsary also does not appear on the published list of exchange areas identified for Openreach build activity during either 2026 or 2027.

SKCC had largely been relying on broadband providers to indicate which properties in South Knapdale were likely to be covered by future rollout and which might still be eligible for alternative support, but their responses have not been sufficiently clear or consistent.

So, SKCC has therefore written to the Scottish Government's Digital Connectivity team, on 31st August, copying in Openreach and Argyll and Bute Council, to ask for a definitive breakdown of exactly where South Knapdale sits within the current broadband rollout; also, how many properties remain below 30 Megabits per second, how many are included within R100 or Project Gigabit and how many currently have no funded or commercial solution planned. Their response should give us a much clearer picture of which properties are covered, which are not, and what route is available for those that currently seem to be falling through the gaps.

Until clarification is received, it appears that the properties identified on the eligibility list provided by Voove, the rural internet solutions partner, remain eligible for support through the broadband voucher scheme.

But there appear to be gaps in the list. That is one of the reasons why the Council has gone directly to the Scottish Government's Digital Connectivity team and Openreach

5. Scottish Water activity at the Kilberry water supply

The Chair reported that Scottish Water had hoped to install new permanent storage tanks this calendar year, but they are now nearing the end of their current investment period and there is no funding available to progress the project at this stage.

Scottish Water said the project has not been abandoned and that it hoped to secure funding early in their next investment period, which begins in early 2027.

In the meantime, tanker visits have been reduced to once every seven days, with the expectation that this could reduce further to around once every ten days over the winter.

6. Discussion on the Results of Community Survey

Cm Cllr. Liza Stolton led the discussion.

Earlier this year, SKCC circulated a short questionnaire across the South Knapdale area to better understand what people value about living here, what issues affect daily life, and what improvements they would like to see. The Council received 39 responses, with replies from across the eight local areas represented in the draft report.

She handed out a draft report on the survey. She asked those present if they felt the number of responses represented a full enough picture of the community's views in order for the Council to start the first steps towards preparing a Community Action Plan - bearing in mind that in August 2026 the electoral roll sat at 194.

Agnes Wilkie responded that she felt it was a fair representation and that the Council would be unlikely to receive any more responses if it kept the survey open. She and all others present endorsed the position that SKCC should now progress to use the returns received as representative and to proceed to the next stage on that basis. This was agreed.

7. Community Action Plan

Liza explained that the purpose of a Community Action Plan was to turn what people said in the survey into a practical set of priorities for SKCC. The draft report grouped the survey responses into six broad themes. (see appendix 2), and those themes would give the Council a basis for deciding what could be realistically done next. This is not being presented today as a finished CAP. It is an early look at the survey results and the direction of travel.

8. Introduction to newly elected councillors as of 01/10

The new term will run from 1st October 2026 until the next full Community Council elections in 2030.

Jarl, our Treasurer, will be stepping down at the end of the current term after 7 years in post. A big thank you from the SKCC to Jarl. Looking forward

A new member joining us as part of the new election period, Mary Ray, thank you, Mary we look forward to welcoming you.

On 1st October, Argyll and Bute Council's Community Councils Liaison team will hold a meeting with the SKCC to formally constitute the new Community Council and appoint the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

9. Police report

- Across Mid Argyll and Kintyre, there were 300 calls and 164 recorded crimes during July.

- In LB42, which includes South Knapdale, there were 91 calls and 61 crimes.
- Police recorded 58 road traffic offences, including 6 speeding, 5 careless driving, 3 dangerous driving, 2 drink driving and 2 drug driving offences.
- There were 16 acquisitive crimes, including 9 thefts and several fraud cases. Locally, fuel was stolen from the Craig Murrail substation north of Lochgilphead, and there was an attempted housebreaking in Ardrishaig.
- Police also recorded 17 drug seizures during the month, including Class A, B and C drugs, with a number of incidents linked to vehicle stops on the A83 and surrounding roads.
- There were 53 violent crimes reported across the wider area, including 25 threatening and abusive behaviour offences and 14 assaults.
- The report also includes reminders around scam awareness and water safety as more people spend time around lochs and sea in warmer temperatures.
- Police have also issued a reminder about livestock worrying, particularly relevant in our rural area. Dog owners are asked to keep dogs under control and on leads around livestock. Police highlight that even chasing livestock can cause injury and, in pregnant animals, miscarriage.
- There is no specific update on the B8024 in the July report.
- Full report will be included in the minutes on the SKCC website

10. Forestry consultations

3 ongoing – see appendix for details

11. Road conditions

On the B8024, around £110,000 was spent this year on resurfacing works at Tiretigan and west of Dunmore School House, with those sections completed in July.

Looking ahead, Argyll and Bute Council has already agreed funding for a further roads reconstruction programme in 2027/28, as part of its wider £24 million two-year investment in roads.

The Council will be consulting local elected members on priorities for that programme between October and December this year, so SKCC will be feeding into that process before the programme is finalised.

Archie McArthur suggested saving money on verge-cutting by just cutting back the branches on the corners for visibility – otherwise leaving the straight sections uncut. The money saved could then be spent on road repairs.

12. Any other business

Defibrillator at the Kilberry Church.

This was brought to SKCC by Amanda Minshall, who raised the question of relocating the existing defibrillator from Kilberry Church and bringing it back into use and the future maintenance under the Community Council.

Before agreeing to take this on, we wanted to understand the proper cost of relocating it, housing it safely, and maintaining it going forward. Once those costings were gathered, we applied to Argyll and Bute Council's Supporting Communities Fund.

The application was successful, and SKCC has been awarded £1,460 towards the project. The plan is to use the Ardpatrik telephone box as the permanent home for the defibrillator, making it publicly accessible and helping improve emergency cover across the area. SKCC thanks Amanda for bringing this matter to us in the first place.

SKCC wishes to record the sad loss of Andrew Russell, a much valued member of the community.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Next meeting at Ormsary on a date in November held both in-person and online using a video-conferencing platform such as Teams or Zoom.

ACTIONS

For Ward councillors

See if SKCC could be involved in the drawing up of a Road Management Plan for the B8024.

Raise A. McArthur's suggestion re. road verge cutting (item 11) and report back.

For SKCC

Close the community survey, look at the six themes, invite further comments, and then build them into a clear action structure for the next **6, 12 and 18 months**. Some actions will need Council or partner involvement, but others may be simple things that SKCC can begin with quickly, such as producing a directory.

Identify the remaining sections of the B8024 that are in the poorest condition and write formally to Roads, and to Cllrs. Horn and Brown, asking that those sections are considered for inclusion in the 2027/28 programme (two so far: the road from the B8024 to Ellary, and the stretch of the B8024 between Kilberry and Coulaghailtro). Also write reiterating our previous request for 20 mph signposting.

Respond to the Felling Application at Torinturk (see appendix).

For the Community

Regarding our bid for road section improvements: any other areas you think should be prioritised, please email us so we can include those in our submission.

Appendix 1 – Forestry Consultations.

Airigh Long Term Forest Plan.

At the last meeting we discussed both the Airigh Long Term Forest Plan and the Carse Complex proposals, and it was agreed that SKCC would submit responses to both consultations. Those responses were subsequently made. Since then, there have been further forestry consultations and updates, including revised information for Airigh, the continuing Forestry and Land Scotland South Knapdale Land Management Plan, and now a separate felling permission application for Torinturk (TOR-in-turk).

This is the privately owned forest belonging to Brian Leigh-Bramwell, with RDS Forestry acting as the forestry agent and Scottish Forestry considering the plan.

The original consultation closed on 7 June, and SKCC submitted a response. Our main concerns were around timber traffic on the B8024, monitoring and protection of the road, coordination with other forestry operations, and environmental protection as discussed in the last meeting.

Revised information was then submitted and we were given until 24 August to make any supplementary comments.

Our follow-up focuses on the remaining practical points, including advance notice of harvesting, road-condition surveys, confirmation of the FLS haul-road arrangements, protection of watercourses, archaeology and the historic Airigh hut, and appropriate riparian buffers.

Carse Complex.

This is being managed by Scottish Woodlands, with Paul Clavey as our contact, and covers South and West Carse, Cuildrynoch and Racadal).

That consultation closed on 26 May, and SKCC submitted a response.

Again, our main points were around timber traffic on the B8024, protection of the road, the cumulative impact of forestry traffic from several forests, and environmental protections.

There's nothing further for us to do on that consultation at the moment, so we'll continue to monitor it as it progresses.

Forestry and Land Scotland South Knapdale Land Management Plan,

Covering Torinturk, Coulaghailtro and Meall Mhor).

On 3 July, SKCC wrote to FLS seeking clarification before making a formal response. Again, SKCC questions centred on the B8024 haulage route, traffic management, road monitoring and repairs, and maintaining public access.

FLS confirmed that timber from Torinturk and Coulaghaitro would use the internal forest network before joining approximately 4.6 miles of the B8024 to the A83. They also confirmed that specific traffic-management arrangements would be agreed before operations begin and that they intend to coordinate with the other forestry operators using the area.

Between meetings a further consultation opportunity was received – this time relating to **a specific felling permission application for Torinturk, reference FPA-13657.**

FLS is applying to clear-fell approximately 70 hectares, representing around 29,300 cubic metres of timber. Scottish Forestry has formally consulted SKCC, and the deadline for our comments is 14 September.

It was decided at our meeting that SKCC should respond in such a way that builds on issues already raised.

We will ask that the B8024 safeguards discussed with FLS are applied to this operation, including appropriate road monitoring and arrangements for repairs. We will also ask for coordination of haulage with Airigh, Carse and other forestry operations, and reasonable advance notice of significant timber movements.

Clarification on the quarry and haul-road improvement works associated with this application will be sought, and how this specific felling permission relates to the wider South Knapdale Land Management Plan which is still progressing.

Finally, we will ask for clarification on how deer numbers and movements will be monitored and managed as the felling and restocking programme progresses, and how this will be coordinated with neighbouring landowners, especially in the light of anticipated displacement into neighbouring land.

Across all of these consultations, our position has therefore been fairly consistent: protecting the B8024, managing and coordinating timber traffic, considering the cumulative impact of several forestry operations, ensuring good communication, and protecting the local environment.

Cllr. Tyler asked Cllrs Brown and Horn if they knew about a Timber Haulage Road Management Group overseen by A and B Council that SKCC could be represented on. They responded that they were aware of Road Management Plans and would help us in our efforts.

Appendix 2

Response themes

1. Roads & traffic

Roads were by far the most common mention on around 80% of responses. Potholes and eroded edges with deteriorating passing places are the cause of most issues, and the need for proper repairs to these rather than temporary patching.

The impact of large vehicles on these is mentioned.

Along with some drivers such as work vans, the tourist driving is a common theme, with suggestions including signage of what could be to improve this.

The other common mention is the speed along the road and the need to put something formal in place to help this. Particular areas being mentioned are Torinturk, Kilberry and Achahoish.

2. Community Connection (communication, events, space (cafe, hub, arts, culture))

The responses suggest that while we love the area and the community we can often feel dispersed or fragmented. There were many great suggestions for more regular events and more activities at different times (ie for pensioners, people who work, off season).

There was general appreciation for the Kilberry road Whatsapp group - but a suggestion that better notice boards, and better use of the SKCC website, and emails about activities/events (including local school events) would also be appreciated.

A number of people mentioned how a 'Community Hub' would be appreciated (while acknowledging that this could be difficult due to the geography of our area). This Hub could include a shop, cafe, meeting space, gallery- and could have facilities for arts activities, classes, music, book groups, and family-friendly events etc.

3. Broadband, mobile signal & digital connectivity

Responses raised a low, patchy or unequal broadband, with poor mobile signal and weak data coverage. This impacts the ability to work from home, and can also impact education, access to services, resilience and social connection.

4. Amenities, transport, services & practical local support/access

On the survey people mentioned limited access to groceries (both fresh locally supplied, and the lack of large supermarkets nearby), fuel and medical care. This is not helped by the local bus service especially outside school term times when it becomes even more difficult, especially for people who are reliant on public transport who then must rely on lifts from others.

It was also noted that deliveries were difficult to the area, and there is a general lack of 'local services'.

It was suggested that a local database/directory of services, trades, skills, and useful contacts would be useful- this could be on the CC website.

In this section we can also add in how generally resilient we are as a community as we tend to be well prepared for bad weather, power cuts, water shortages etc- but we must be mindful of the vulnerable and our aging population who may need both practical help (lifts, wood etc) and company to prevent isolation.

5. Environment

People in the community strongly value our wonderful area. They love the landscape, the wildlife, and the access we have to this. The passion the community has really comes across in the survey- and the practical suggestions are a fantastic starting point for bringing people together, meeting, socialising, and helping the environment.

6. Younger families, school, employment and housing

A few of the responses raised concerns about the demographics of SK. The population is aging and becoming less economically active, and the area is seeming less viable for younger families. There is a lack of local jobs, and a large amount of second homes and holiday homes (though many people in these homes do play an active part in the community). There is concern about the lack of housing, and if the school will remain sustainable.

Concerns were also raised about land control by large landowners.