

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE
The kind of place we want Barrhill to be

This statement summarises the main views of local people and organisations, about what they want for Barrhill's future.

~ Barrhill ~
Thriving in the 21st century

We will achieve our aim by building on our strong community spirit, taking the best of the past while building a sustainable and resourceful community, well equipped to face the challenges of the future.

Our focus will be on:

- Providing first class community facilities;
- Establishing a lively range of activities and leisure opportunities for people of all ages;
- Welcoming new residents, visitors and tourists;
- Ensuring there is housing for all needs;
- Being a healthy community;
- Creating new opportunities for businesses, jobs and work;
- Developing a bright and welcoming village centre;
- Tackling positively the need to reduce energy use.

Our rural community is getting itself organised for action and we welcome residents and supporters to join us and help take Barrhill forward.

MAIN STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES

All the information that the Community Futures work brought forward - through the survey, the profile, the interviews and the Community Open Day - has helped to shape this action plan. In this section seven main development themes and priorities that the community is aiming for have been set down. We will move these forward both through our own efforts and in partnership with a range of agencies and supporters. The order in which they are set down is not significant but alphabetical; all of these are priorities!

Theme 1 - Community Facilities and Activities

With the community's ambition for Barrhill to be a thriving place once more, a great place to live and bring up a family, it is essential the existing community infrastructure is expanded and improved with more activities, for more people, and in better accommodation. This is about projects on the ground - like improvements to the the hall, park and play areas - and what is able to take place because of them: a wider range of facilities and activities for people of all ages, local residents and visitors.

Main Priorities

- Set up a refurbishing project for the Memorial Hall
- Improve play facilities and activities for young people of all ages
- Set up a community newsletter to complement the local website

Theme 2 - Energy conservation and generation

With rising fuel costs for homes as well as transport, the community is keen to explore both energy saving measures (especially for existing houses and public buildings) and ideas for small scale and community based energy generation from renewable sources. The surrounding forests represent a sustainable resource that is currently unexploited for local needs.

Main Priorities

- Develop a sustainable energy generation project
- Develop an energy saving project for homes and businesses
- Develop a sustainable energy project for community buildings

Theme 3 - Homes and housing

There is a lack of housing opportunity in and around the village - particularly for people with limited means and those not able to bring any equity from their existing housing situation. A key factor in the drive for local sustainability is the need to create more housing opportunities to both provide for local people and, attract new people and their energy to Barrhill.

- Develop affordable homes for rent and for purchase
- Develop accommodation appropriate for people of all abilities

Theme 4 - Improving the Look of Barrhill

There is a generally shared view that Barrhill is looking rather run down, with neglected derelict areas, too much litter and dog mess left lying, and a lack of community pride in the village environment. Some specific sites are particularly in need of revitalisation, and clear plans are being prepared for small-scale improvements. It is not yet clear whether the village centre will be designated a Conservation Area, and some residents are wary of the implications of this should it be put in place.

Main Priorities

- Encourage businesses to improve the appearance of their premises
- Improve the waste ground at the bridge in Main Street
- Set up a planting scheme for the village
- Regular roadside litter picking on approaches to village

Theme 5 - Local Economic Development

Barrhill earns its living in a wide variety of ways: from visitors and tourists, its environment, the landscape, farming the land, construction, public services, retail, hospitality and general services; from being employed and from self employment; people commute out and some travel in. The community's objective of greater sustainability in the future, allied to the high cost of travel and the distance from major centres, has led to the conclusion that an increased level of support for local enterprise is necessary. As a consequence, the village infrastructure needs to be strengthened and developed to provide more opportunity.

Main Priorities

- Re-open the public toilets - predominantly for visitors
- Encourage and support businesses - both new and existing ones
- Encourage tourism
- Improve access to jobs and employment

Theme 6 - Roads, Traffic, Transport and the Village Infrastructure

The A714 runs through the heart of the village, connecting Girvan and the A77 to Newton Stewart and the A75 trunk road. The forest timber is being felled and the frequent transit of HGVs and other traffic through the village is seen as a threat to personal safety and the general environment alike. The campaign for slower traffic has already been set up and will continue until proper support is offered for measures to reclaim the village spaces for pedestrians and cyclists.

The lack of car parks affects both safety and convenience. There are two main locations where parking needs have been identified: a village centre site to serve the hall and school, and some provision at the station.

In addition, there are issues about poor co-ordination of the bus timetables and the lack of any public transport connection to the station.

Main Priorities

- Build a car park at the station
- Slow traffic down through the village
- Create a car park between the school and Memorial Hall
- Campaign for public transport timetables to be better co-ordinated
- Provide transport connection between the station and the village
- Tackle the issues raised by timber transport on the roads

Theme 7 - Walking, paths and trails

Barrhill's potential as a fine village set in good walking country needs to be supported by developments on the ground. A good network of paths providing decent access to the countryside will serve residents, visitors and tourists alike. The focus is on two aspects of local tourism development - the need to serve existing visitors better by linking the caravan sites to the village, and the opportunity to route the proposed Carrick Way Long Distance Path through the village.

With the happy coincidence of its location in the hills and its station, Barrhill has significant potential as a hub for outdoor recreation in south west Scotland. These developments will not only bring small-scale economic benefits but will also go towards improving the health of the community.

Main Priorities

- Create an off-road or roadside path from the caravan sites to the village
- Follow up the Forestry Commission and the Peter Scott Report proposals for a network of paths
- Make sure the Carrick Way is routed through the village
- Improve the path to the Martyrs' Tomb
- Create a path through Lennie Wood

ACTIONS

Action steps will be tackled over the next 12 months - some by ourselves, and others in combination with our agency partners. Some of the projects are, however, on a longer time frame and may take longer to achieve. These steps include suggestions made in the surveys, stakeholder interviews and community events.

At the time of writing this action plan, the following was already taking place . . .

The Brake-4-Barrhill campaign is well under way and the petition presented, informal surveys of path routes started, a campaign to re-open the public toilets is in progress and a petition carried out, an outline feasibility study into local energy generation drawn up, contact made with Ayrshire Housing officials who have positively discussed support for a housing needs survey, good contacts built up with partner agencies, presentations made to MP and MSP, good working support from the three elected members for South Ayrshire Council

THEME 1 – COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

Priority 1 - Set up a refurbishing project for the Memorial Hall

Main actions

- Lobby South Ayrshire Council to complete the repairs to the roof
- Agree the details for an updated constitution for the Community Association
- Explore a range of ideas for the future use of the Hall and immediate surroundings
- Agree a brief for a Feasibility Study into the future of the Hall
- Invite tenders from consultant teams
- Explore sources of funding for the feasibility study and prepare applications for funding
- Commission the feasibility study

Action By

Community Association, Barrhill Development Association

Priority 2 - Improve play facilities and activities for young people of all ages

Main actions

- Call a meeting of young people, parents and other interested people from the community
- Prepare an audit of what takes place at present and where it takes place - in and around the community
- Draw up a list of community and youth facilities in the area
- Run a fun session to develop ideas for new activities
- Lobby South Ayrshire Council Community Learning and Development for support with this process
- Agree what is possible for Barrhill and explore access issues for other locations and facilities.

Action By

Parents and young people, Barrhill Development Association, school staff, South Ayrshire Council Community Learning and Development Youth Workers

Priority 3 - Support a community newsletter to complement the local website

Main actions

- Set up a Local Information Working Group
- Contact all local organisations for updated information, contact lists, community events calendar
- Seek funding from local organisations and others to cover production costs
- Publish and distribute a local newsletter

Action By

Barrhill Development Association, Barrhill Community Council, key individuals from the community.

THEME 2 – ENERGY CONSERVATION AND GENERATION

Priority 1 - Develop a sustainable energy generation project

Main actions

- Take forward the outline for a locally focused feasibility study already prepared by the Energy Working Group in association with the Energy Agency. The outline references small scale, wind turbines and hydro schemes, ground source heat pumps and bio-mass (wood) boilers

Action By

Energy Working Group, Barrhill Development Association, Energy Agency and Forestry Commission Scotland

Priority 2 - Develop an energy saving project for homes and businesses

Main actions

- Seek information and advice on community-wide energy saving measures - insulation, draught-proofing, household “habit-changing”
- Visit other communities to gain information about other parallel local programmes
- Set up an information promotion event and other publicity measures
- Seek support for energy auditing tools and techniques - e.g. Smart meters, thermal imaging and questionnaires
- Draw up a programme for installation priorities in Barrhill households
- Seek financial support for this last item

Action By

Residents and householders, Energy Working Group, Barrhill Development Association, Energy Agency

Priority 3 - Develop a sustainable energy project for community buildings

Main actions

- Ensure that the three public buildings in the village - school, hall, health centre - include energy generation and saving measures in any forward planning - e.g. the proposed Feasibility Study into the future of the Memorial Hall.
- In particular, create a focus on possible joint energy generation (for heating in the main) for the neighbouring hall and school buildings.

Action By

Energy Working Group, Barrhill Development Association, Energy Agency, Community Association, South Ayrshire Council

THEME 3 - HOMES AND HOUSING

Priority 1 - Develop affordable homes for rent and for purchase

Main actions

- Set up a Barrhill Housing Action Group
- Arrange a meeting in the village with the Development Officer from Ayrshire Housing
- Contact Rural Housing Service Scotland
- Organise a Housing Needs Analysis for people in the community who might like to participate
- Contact South Ayrshire Council planning officers to explore options for development sites in or around the village

Action By

Housing Action Group, Barrhill Development Association, Barrhill Community Council, South Ayrshire Council, Ayrshire Housing, Rural Housing Service Scotland, landowners and land managers

Priority 2 - Develop accommodation appropriate for people of all abilities

Main actions

- Ensure that the Housing Needs Analysis (referred to above) extends to include older, frail residents and local people with disabilities
- Subsequently, draw up proposals for appropriate housing or adaptations to meet these particular needs

Action By

Housing Action Group, Ayrshire Housing, South Ayrshire Council (Social Work), Rural Housing Service Scotland

THEME 4 - IMPROVING THE LOOK OF BARRHILL

Priority 1 - Improve the waste ground at the bridge in Main Street

Main actions

- Set up a Barrhill Environmental Improvements Working Group and volunteer team
- Draw up proposals for improving the site - drawings, rough costings
- Explore options for improving other sites and facilities - e.g. the bus shelters
- Seek donations in kind - e.g. plants, landscaping materials, seats and benches
- Seek funding for materials not likely to be donated
- Seek support from the local authority - materials, labour, advice
- Carry out the work
- Set up a maintenance schedule

Action By

Barrhill Environmental Improvements Working Group and volunteer team, Gardening Club, South Ayrshire Council

Priority 2 - Encourage businesses to improve the appearance of their premises

Main actions

- Make informal approaches to business owners to discuss what might be possible and to offer support

Action By

Barrhill Environmental Improvements Working Group, Barrhill Development Association, local business operators

Priority 3 - Set up a planting scheme for the village

Main actions

- Call a meeting to discuss options and identify sites that could be included
- Contact other communities where planting schemes have been successfully undertaken for advice and information
- Draw up proposals and prepare a schedule of capital and maintenance costs
- Make applications for funding
- Develop a volunteer support team

Action By

Barrhill Environmental Improvements Working Group, Gardening Club, South Ayrshire Council (Environmental Services), Scotland in Bloom

Priority 4 - Regular roadside litter picking on approaches to village

Main actions

- Continue the "whole community" annual event already established
- Lobby the local authority for more litter bins and regular service collection of contents

Action By

Local school children of all ages, local residents, South Ayrshire Council (Environmental Services), Keep Britain Tidy

THEME 5 - LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Priority 1 - Re-open the public toilets

Main actions

- Extend the petition already begun in support of this
- Present the petition to the local authority - in a *publicity-rich* manner
- Liaise with other communities similarly affected and plan joint campaign for publicity and reinstatement
- Investigate the cost of repairing the existing building or replacing with a new facility
- Investigate costs of ongoing servicing and maintenance
- Approach SNH and other agencies about alternative facilities if South Ayrshire Council maintain their unpopular decision to not provide this service

Action By

Barrhill Community Council and neighbouring and other community councils, local businesses, South Ayrshire councillors, MP and MSP

Priority 2 - Encourage and support businesses - both new and existing ones

Main Actions

- Prepare a list of local businesses to include local self-employed and micro businesses as well as the more visible manufacturing, retail and hospitality operators
- Undertake a survey of those businesses to include service needs relating to premises, financial expertise, marketing, communications systems and technology
- Investigate good practice of other decentralised rural businesses elsewhere in the UK and further afield
- Work with the local authority planning department to identify potential local sites for small scale workspace provision appropriate for a rural area

Action By

Barrhill Development Association, South Ayrshire Council (Economic Development section), South Ayrshire Council Rural Development Officer

Priority 3 - Encourage tourism

Main actions

- Contact the local authority Tourism Development Officer
- Contact the Carrick Way promoters and responsible officers from the local authority
- Explore options for developments with public and private forestry operators

Action By

Barrhill Development Association, local tourism and hospitality businesses, SNH, South Ayrshire Council (various departments), Forestry Commission Scotland, commercial forestry operators, Ailsa Horizons.

Priority 4 - Improve access to jobs and employment

Main actions

- Set up a local meeting in the village to bring together Job Centre Plus, Transport operators, Business Gateway and South Ayrshire Council (Economic Development) to explore barriers hindering access to jobs by local people
- Explore solutions promoted in other remote rural communities - e.g. support for gaining driving licences in the Machars, ICT (computer) training.

Action By

Barrhill Development Association, local workers, South Ayrshire Council, Travel Connections, Ayr College South, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Business Gateway, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

THEME 6 - ROADS, TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT AND VILLAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

Priority 1 - Build a car park at the station

Main actions

- Prepare a range of options for the provision of a new car park
- Draw up technical proposals and obtain costings
- Explore options for implementing the project

Action By

Barrhill Community Council, Network Rail, property owner of former goods yard, SAYLSA, Scotrail

Priority 2 - Slow traffic down through the village

Main actions

- Maintain the pressure engendered by the Brake-4-Barrhill campaign and petition
- Continue to lobby for improvements
- Build on the information gathered in the traffic survey already undertaken
- Maintain momentum and cyclical maintenance of sight lines and signage

Action By

Brake-4-Barrhill, School, Parents' Council, Barrhill Community Council, South Ayrshire Council, Police, Scottish Government

Priority 3 - Create a car park between the school and the Memorial Hall

Main actions

- Continue negotiations with site owners (SAC) to determine how best to take forward this vital public benefit project
- Explore options for community ownership or very long (indefinite term) lease on favourable terms
- Draw up proposals for design of car park - optimally as part of the Memorial Hall feasibility study and the energy generation and conservation project for the public buildings in the village

Action By

Community Association, Barrhill Development Association, Barrhill Community Council, School, Parents' Council, South Ayrshire Council, former land owner who sold the site for community benefit

Priority 4 - Campaign for public transport timetables to be better co-ordinated

Main actions

- Arrange a meeting to bring together all relevant transport operators, regulatory bodies and local community representatives
- Explore options for improvements

Action By

Barrhill Community Council, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, Scotrail, bus operators

Priority 5 - Provide transport connection between the station and the village

Main actions

- Commission a study into options for addressing this issue

Action By

Barrhill Development Association, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, Scotrail, South Ayrshire Council, SAYLSA

Priority 6 - Tackle the issues raised by timber transport on the public roads

Main actions

- Call a meeting to explore options for alternative transport solutions, including an update briefing on the use of the railway and terms and conditions for using forestry tracks where possible

Action By

Barrhill Community Council, Forestry Commission Scotland, RailTrack, commercial forestry operators, Timber Transport Group

THEME 7 - WALKING, PATHS AND TRAILS

Priority 1 - Create an off-road or roadside path from the caravan sites to the village

Main actions

- Contact council officials in the department responsible for roads and access to arrange a visit to the site to begin plotting a route for the path.
- Request that the council includes the path in its future capital works programme
- Find out how best the local community groups can support this project idea - e.g. volunteering assistance, raising money

Action By

Barrhill Walks and Trails Working Group, Barrhill Community Council, South Ayrshire Council

Priority 2 - Follow up the Forestry Commission and Peter Scott Report proposals for a network of paths

Main actions

- Investigate potential pathways and report
- Identify and meet landowners
- Consult with Access Officer and windfarm developers.
- Agree and plan pathway construction

Action By

Barrhill Walks and Trails Working Group, South Ayrshire Council Access Officer, ScottishPower Renewables and Force9Energy

Priority 3 - Make sure the Carrick Way is routed through the village

Main actions

- Find out the current thinking about this amongst the promoters of the Carrick Way
- Identify routes that benefit Barrhill
- Contact landowners affected
- Take next appropriate steps

Action By

Barrhill Walks and Trails Working Group, Barrhill Community Council, Barrhill Development Association, South Ayrshire Council Access Officer, Carrick Way Development Group

Priority 4 - Improve the path to the Martyrs' Tomb

Main Actions

- Investigate technical and economic feasibility of an easy access walk to the tomb
- Specify and cost bridge renovation
- Identify funding sources

Action By

Landowner, Barrhill Walks and Trails Working Group, Barrhill Development Association, South Ayrshire Council Access Officer

Priority 5 - Create a path through Lennie Wood

Main actions

- Contact the landowner to arrange a meeting to discuss the project
- Agree broad principles for its development
- Build on the survey already undertaken to develop costed proposals
- Identify appropriate sources and make applications for funds
- Seek support in kind to assist with implementation - machinery, labour

Action By

Landowner, Barrhill Walks and Trails Working Group, Barrhill Development Association, South Ayrshire Council Access Officer, Forestry Commission Scotland