

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 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