



DARVEL

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

2014 - 2019

Darvel Community Action Plan Steering Group

**DARVEL & DISTRICT
COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY
ACTION PLAN**

2014-2019

January 2020



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THEME 1 TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION AND TRAFFIC

January 2020

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 1.1: Renovate/remove derelict buildings in Main Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish working group to tackle Main Street regeneration • Decide on course of action and desired options for the buildings and sites • Engage with owners and other stakeholders • Feasibility study for development and best use of buildings/sites • Take action to implement feasibility study recommendations <p>Action taken by: Community Council, Darvel Improvement Group, Darvel Music Company, East Ayrshire Council, Historic Scotland</p>	<p>DDCC has taken the lead in tackling Main Street regeneration liaising with EAC initially with working group.</p> <p>DDCC has continued to pressure EAC to deal with derelict coop building and make representation to Historic Environment Scotland over the period of the Action Plan. In January 2019 confirmation received that steps in hand to move to demolition anticipated to take place in May/June 2019. Demolition was carried out in September 2019.</p> <p>An earlier poll of future use of Co-op site will be repeated. There is almost unanimous support for the provision of a market and garden facility with initial funding of £200K secured from the Town Regeneration Budget. In November 2019 the site was transferred to the newly established charitable organisation (DART) with a 10 year lease at the cost of £1 per annum.</p> <p>Meetings have taken place regarding demolition of properties at 85/87 East Main Street in Jan 2019. Alternative uses for the site considered and preferred option of DDCC is for new build, possibly through sale and development of site. Submission made to EAC Housing. It is clear that the site is likely to remain grassed with some shrubbery once demolition has taken place.</p> <p>The houses in Hastings Square have been painted in pastel shades and this has met with great enthusiasm by residents. It is hoped that properties in 81/87 East Main Street will receive similar attention when 85/87 has been demolished.</p> <p>A participative budgeting exercise has been conducted by East Ayrshire Housing and plans have been agreed to renovate the small square opposite 81/83 East Main St.</p> <p>Darvel Music Company and a private individual were interested in acquiring and redeveloping the Turf Hotel, however, the condition of building and required costs of redevelopment put off the prospective buyers. The Turf is part of a property portfolio of a company based in England. The company has so far shown absolutely no inclination to do anything about the building despite repeat prodding from EAC and the Community Council.</p> <p>Concern remains about other distress buildings/derelict sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turf Hotel • Derelict factory buildings, Jamieson Road • Kirkland House <p>Further representation to EAC to be undertaken.</p>

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 1.2: Village Enhancement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the ongoing work of the Darvel Improvement Group (DIG) <p>Action taken by – Darvel Improvement Group, local residents, local businesses, East Ayrshire Council, Keeping Scotland Beautiful</p>	<p>DIG has been very active in enhancing the appearance and environment of Darvel</p> <p>The following is a list and description of initiatives/improvements which have been made during the period of the Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main street planters with names of well known residents and characters in the town have been put in place along the Main St and hanging baskets also decorate the Main Street Community gardens have been established at the east end and west end A71 entry to Darvel. In particular, the West End garden is commented on favourably by both residents and visitors to the town Morton Park Rose Garden – established through a renewable energy grant combined with local fund raising and sponsorship. The garden has been leased to Darvel Improvement Group for a 10 year period asset transfer from EAC . The renovation of the rose garden is regarded as a tremendous achievement. Rarely a day goes by without residents and visitors spending time in the garden – reading the information and memorial plaques. The design of the garden is based on two aspects of Darvel’s heritage – the lace industry and Sir Alexander Fleming Additional Christmas lights have been acquired and were in place for 2018. There remains scope to further enhance Christmas decorations and this may be pursued when the Main St Market is in place. Plans are in progress to replace the existing Sir Alexander Fleming memorial in Hastings Square with a completely new design and the old ground level flower beds have been replaced by metal planters. A metal railing has been placed around the war memorial in the square following concerns about it misuse by local people. EAC Housing, as part of the Participative Budgeting exercise have agreed to repair the opposite side of the square from the memorial. Dig continues to hold a number of events – the biennial gala day, the café in the square and the Christmas Fair Darvel events (café, gala day etc) The annual clean up continues to be an important part of DIG’s annual calendar and is always a welcome “yellow jacket” sight in the town.

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 1.3: Improve parking and develop safe routes to school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage walking to school • Better signage of exiting car parks • Consider car parking as one part of the possible use of derelict building sites <p>Action by – DDCC, Darvel Primary School, Police Scotland, East Ayrshire Council</p>	<p>The implementation of improvements here is very much dependent on the involvement of East Ayrshire Council and Ayrshire Roads Alliance, combined with local initiatives. However a range of improvements and activity has been put in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The primary school has organised a regular walk to school day and this seems to be well supported (includes scooters and bikes). • The car park at the school has been refurbished and entrance and exit clearly marked. • There is a School Crossing Person on duty at the primary school morning and afternoon. This is a welcome safety feature. • EAC and Roads Alliance responsible for car parks and their perennial excuse for failing to mark parking spaces in our car park at Ranoldcoup Road is lack of funds. • Parking along whole length of Main Street has resulted in restricted road width and consequent speed reduction which is a good thing. This is offset somewhat by encouraging cars/vans etc to park right up to entrances to side streets. This has been brought to the attention of EAC and Roads Alliance on many occasions. This will continue to be pursued by the Community Council.

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 1.4: Improve traffic flow and reduce HGVs through the village</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor traffic flow and HGV use of the village • Work with traffic police and local authority to explore how traffic flow can be improved and how the impact of HGVs can be reduced 	<p>This particular issue remains an important one for resident in the town. What has of course to be remembered is that the A71 is a major route linked central Scotland with the Ayrshire coast and therefore it is inevitable that it will be heavily used by heavy traffic. It is also recognised that many HGV drivers respect the need to drive carefully through our busy town, but it remains a concern for many. The general view that there has been an increase of HGV traffic over the period of the action plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic calming measures have been laid in some streets as a response to some complaints and the primary school has them on all feeder roads. Motorists do still speed between the humps and it is difficult to prevent this from occurring. If persistent speeding is identified the Police Traffic Department or locally trained officers do set up traps and haul in a substantial number of offenders. A71 at East entrance to Priestland is a hot spot and regular covered. • Although there is some evidence of drivers being warned regarding speeding in the Darvel/Priestland area there are limited examples of the issue of fixed penalty tickets or prosecutions. The reported policy of the Kilmarnock Procurator Fiscal to not accept speeding offences within a 30mph zone unless the speed reaches or exceeds 40mph does if correct limit the actions available to the Police. • Most recently traffic officers have had a speed restriction initiative along various stretches of the A71, including Priestland and Darvel. These activities which cover the length of the Irvine Valley are primarily the result of serious injury or fatal road crashes. While Darvel and Priestland have benefitted from them to some extent we have not seen the same gains as those areas where the incidents occurred, for example Galston with an extended 40 mph zone. • Traffic calming measures have been put in place through Darvell by Ayrshire Roads Alliance) eg peninsula features at bus stops. Speed warning lights have been located in Priestland and at eastern section of A71 in Darvel. The new peninsula style bus stops while having some traffic calming effect are primarily there to improve the passenger experience and to counter the ongoing issue of parking within the original designated bus stop areas. The most noticeable gain may be the eventual removal of old bus bays thus providing additional Main St parking. • Speed bump located at junction of Jamieson Road and East Donnington Street and speed bumps are to be located in Burn Road and West Donnington St reflecting concerns about speeding car and HGV traffic on Burn Road. • There is now fairly regular police presence in Priestland for speed monitoring and enforcement.



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THEME 2 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

December 2019

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 2.1: Retain and improve community facilities, e.g. Town Hall, Library and Sports Hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign to retain these important facilities • Develop plans for improvements to and additional roles for the Town Hall, Library and Sports Centre • Take action to implement plans <p>Action taken by: Local community groups and users, DDCC, East Ayrshire Council, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust</p>	<p>As is the case in a number of towns in East Ayrshire, there has been a continuing concern about the lost of services and facilities which contribute to the life and spirit of the town. The loss is local banks has been but one example of loss of services within the town.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Council has continued to work on behalf of the town to retain facilities. The town hall is one obvious example, with the local library provision. Earlier in 2019 a social media campaign was put in place to bring to the attention of residents the need to support our local library and this met with success with a significant number of users. • Darvel was in the very serious position of losing the leisure centre until Sports Darvel (the charitable Darvel Community Trust) intervened in June 2017, and through their hard work has seen the centre not only survive but thrive. Prior to sports Darvel stepping in the centre was barely surviving on an annual income of roughly £5k, now thankfully the annual income is somewhere in the region of £40k and rising and is getting to an achievable point of break even. • On the plus side the centre has very ambitious plans for moving forward , culminating in an ambitious revamp for the centre. These will include moving the gym upstairs to increase the capacity available, a new outside gym, a cafe zone being added for the community use with the possibility of turning it over at the weekend for a youth club to be run from it and hopefully a focus on mental health issues within the community and men’s welfare (walking football, wellness clinics and other initiatives). • There is of course a tension between the continued development of the Sports Centre and the usage of the town hall since both often compete for the same activities. This is a matter which will be carefully considered during the period of the next community action plan.

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 2.2: Upgrade Recreation Park, Pavilion and Skatepark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop proposals for a package of improvements including better power supply for the pavilion, resurfacing the car park, completing fencing • Lighting for the skate park <p>Action taken by – Local sports club, Darvel Skateboard Group, East Ayrshire Council, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust</p>	<p>Significant improvements have been taken forward by Darvel Juniors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall the last five years have been a fairly successful period for Darvel Juniors culminating in promotion to the super 1st division in season 2016/17. That success has been maintained in the past two seasons and is continuing in 2019-2020. • The management committee has been revamped and with renewed enthusiasm Recreation park has seen a facelift with the introduction of new bar facilities, food stalls and a general tidy up. The juniors have also seen an upturn in match day attendances and are now very well supported through advertising boards and a monthly lottery draw with a £500 prize. • The juniors have a firm plan in place with a new pitch being laid, new toilet block being built and changing rooms being upgraded, on the park they have also brought in a new management team and have very high hopes of promotion. This would take them to the pinnacle of junior football and can only be a healthy thing for our community as playing against the better teams would mean more travelling fans visiting our town. Hopefully more engagement with the juniors could also lead to possibly summer football camps for our local children and have a more community feel around our local team.

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 2.3: Youth Club and Café</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with young people to develop proposals for additional activities like a youth club or youth café <p>Action taken by – Local young people, schools, DDCC, East Ayrshire Council</p>	<p>Unfortunately, this specific improvement of the creation of a youth café has not been able to be progressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, there does continue to be active organisations in the town – beavers, cubs and scouts; brownies and girl guides. Numbers continue to be healthy and Darvel Lottery funding of £5,600 has recently been allocated to the Scouts organisation in order to carry out some emergency repairs of the roof of the Scout Hall. • In addition, voluntary activity in the Crossroads hub with gaming activity offers a new possibility for young people interested in gaming generally.

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 2.4: Develop Community Arts and Music Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at examples from other communities eg Sanquhar, New Galloway, Peebles • Develop proposals for a local centre – linked to wider plans to develop Darvel as a music town <p>Action taken by – Darvel Music Company, East Ayrshire Council, Creative Scotland</p>	<p>Darvel has set its aspiration as a community arts and music centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an active range of local people involved in the arts world generally. There is a significant number of local artists who make good use Darvel and the surrounding area as their source of inspiration. There is also an internationally famous who has recently moved into the area. • There has been a growing interest in photography. During the past year the Dawn to Dusk project has been introduced to great acclaim and to such an extent that local people wish it to be continued on a regular basis: “A Day in the Life” in June 2019 has been repeated in the autumn and also in January 2020. • There is a significant number of local crafts folk and several craft clubs have now been set up adding the reputation of the town. • The Darvel Music Company has become established locally, nationally and even internationally. A separate entry for the Music Company and the music festival is included in Priority 3.1.



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THEME 3

LOCAL ECONOMY AND TOURISM

December 2019

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 3.1: Develop Darvel as a Music Town</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a town wide initiative to build on the work of the Darvel Music Company • Develop feasibility study and business plan for “theming” Darvel as a music town – to include how could it be done, what facilities, resources, events, activities and education should be developed and how they should be best organised and run • Take joint action to take proposals and priorities forward <p>Action taken by Darvel Music Company, DDCC, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust, East Ayrshire Council, local businesses</p>	<p>The establishment of the Darvel Music Company has seen the town become established of a national and indeed internationally recognised music venue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The music festival since its inception has proved very valuable to our community and the last 5 years have proved no different, with some bands choosing to make the festival their only UK date. This of course is down to the hard work of the committee members of the festival but also the mood and buzz being created and is not going unnoticed in the music world, with fans coming from far and wide to our community. • This of course has a strong economic impact not only for our community but also the wider area with many hotels as far as Kilmarnock being fully booked up for some events. • What began as a few days of the festival, has grown into a year round series of events. • Going forward the organisers plan to continue in the same vein and try to attract the best bands that they can, this of course like everything else requires funding, with booking fees and hall and equipment hire being a premium. • As a community the music festival is something that should be encouraged and should be advertised and promoted as much as we can as it’s not only our local community that the events attend but musicians from far and wide which all add to a better footfall within Darvel for local businesses. We should all be ready to support and help in any fundraising activity.

<p>Note: For priority 3.2: Promote existing environment and heritage assets, see Theme 4 Priority 3.</p>	
Priority	Review
<p>Priority 3.3: Develop and promote local amenities (eg public toilets), parking and facilities for visitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and assess the current gaps in the visitor experience in Darvel – what is needed to encourage visitors to stop, stay and enjoy their time in Darvel? Work to implement and promote priority projects to fill gaps <p>Action taken by – DDCC, local businesses, East Ayrshire Council</p>	<p>This priority has proved to be most difficult in securing some forms of improvement.</p> <p>The toilet provision in Morton Park has been closed for a number of years and finances would at present preclude their renovation. This is likely to remain an issue to be pursued in the 2020-2025 Community Action Plan. During the course of 2019 there was some suggestion that the community might take this on. However, concerns surround not only the necessary financing but also the continued maintenance of the toilets.</p> <p>The creation of the charitable organisation at the tail end of 2019 (DART – Darvel Area Regeneration Team) might provide a vehicle to secure funding for this and other projects that are aimed at developing local amenities.</p>

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 3,4: Support for existing and new small businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the role of existing businesses in the community e.g. small business directory, local business forum • Lobby for improvements to Broadband • Involve local businesses in taking action on other priorities in this theme <p>Action taken by – DDCC, Darvel Improvement Group, local businesses, East Ayrshire Council.</p>	<p>As in 3.3 this priority has had limited success. There has been some turnover in local shops, but several premises remain closed or are for sale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OpenReach have implemented changes which have led to improvements in the Broadband • There is a need through the next Community Action Plan to involve local businesses in a shop local campaign and a local business forum.



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**THEME 4
ENVIRONMENT AND
HERITAGE**

December 2019

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 4.1: Improve Morton Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how other communities have developed their Parks e.g. using the Parks For People Fund run by the Heritage Lottery Fund, through establishing “Friends of Groups” and working closely with the local authority (EAC) • Raise funds and commission master plan for the regeneration of the park • Make funding applications for the development of the park in line with master plan <p>Action to be taken by DDCC, Darvel Improvement Group, East Ayrshire Council, Heritage Lottery Fund</p>	<p>Darvel’s Morton Park is recognised as a tremendous facility in the town, but which has been neglected over the years, in part because of budget cuts to Council services and in part because of its abuse by some residents.</p> <p>Having set this context there has been some significant success in the past three years in improving the Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most notable of course has been the complete renovation of the rose garden, which had fallen into complete disrepair and was simply a focus for anti-social behaviour – drinking and vandalism. Step in the Darvel Improvement Group (as indicated in Priority 1.2: • Established through a renewable energy grant combined with local fund raising and sponsorship. The garden has been leased to Darvel Improvement Group for a 10 year period asset transfer from EAC. The rose garden was formally opened in June 2017. The renovation of the rose garden is regarded as a tremendous achievement. Rarely a day goes by without residents and visitors spending time in the garden – reading the information and memorial plaques. The design of the garden is based on two aspects of Darvel’s heritage – the lace industry and Sir Alexander Fleming. • The children’s play area has been upgraded with replacement of all the equipment very well received by families and young people.

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 4.2: Improve, develop and promote the paths network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the ongoing work of Darvel Improvement Group and the Irvine Valley Regeneration Trust to maintain and develop the path network • As an immediate priority improve the path to Loudoun Hill • Support the development of longer walking and cycling routes into and through the valley. This should include how Darvel encourages cyclists to the area and requirements for facilities and services to support this • Support the promotion of the network through local signage, parking, noticeboards, paths, leaflets and website – making a strong connection between the local economy and amenities and the network e.g. parking and interpretation in the heart of Darvel, use of the Town Hall Library as Information Centre etc. <p>Action to be taken by – Darvel Improvement Group, Irvine Valley Regeneration Partnership, other Irvine Valley communities, East Ayrshire Council, Sustrans</p>	<p>The area around Darvel has a number of well known, and well used, countryside paths. In addition, the five mile and Lanfine estate walks are very popular.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Council has had meetings with East Ayrshire Leisure Trust, which manages the path network (in conjunction with Whitelees (the Weaver’s Trail) and Ayrshire Roads Alliance) to discuss improving the network • Funding has been identified to improve the path to Loudoun Hill and a contractor identified to carry out the work. However, discussions with landowners along the route are taking time but hopefully work will commence in the near future. • Weavers Trail – this is being managed by Whitelees. Our most recent information indicates that Forestry and Land Scotland as the landowner, had agreed to enter in discussions with Whitelees to have the improvements done. Unfortunately, this can be a slow process between solicitors (similar to what’s happening with the Loudoun Hill path). • It is quite clear that the involvement of landowners, different organisations and solicitors will inevitably slow down the process of path improvement. • While there have been no obvious examples of steps encouraging cyclists to the area, it is anticipated that this will feature in the 2020-2025 Community Action Plan with the establishment of the Main St Market

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 4.3: Develop and promote local heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop proposals and recommendations for further interpretation of Sir Alexander Fleming's role in modern medicine, and Darvel's lace making past. • Take action to develop facilities, interpretation, information based on recommendations. <p>Action to be taken by: Darvel Improvement Group, Irvine Valley Regeneration Partnership. DDCC, local businesses, other Irvine Valley communities, East Ayrshire Council</p>	<p>Darvel has a strong heritage primarily based around the former lace industry and Sir Alexander Fleming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As indicated in other priorities Alexander Fleming's role in modern medicine and the lace industry are celebrated in the renovated rose garden in Morton Park • Plans have been developed by Darvel Improvement Group for the complete revamp of the Sir Alexander Fleming memorial in Hastings Square. This will also feature as a priority within the 2020-2025 Community Action Plan • The Darvel Heritage Museum, located in the Town Hall entrance, continues to attract numbers of visitors throughout the year. Concern remains however about the extent to which the community is aware of this facility. Its existence beyond the town is likely to be unknown and therefore potential visitors will not be attracted by the history of the town. • The annual Walkfest (the Irvine Valley Walking Festival) includes one heritage walk around Darvel



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THEME 5 COMMUNITY SAFETY, CARE AND TRANSPORT

December 2019

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 5.1: Reduce anti-social behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint discussions with community, local authority housing and social work departments and local police on problems of anti-social behaviour and its links to housing allocation policy • Joint initiative to reduce and resolve problems identified <p>Action to be taken by – DDCC, East Ayrshire Council, Police Scotland</p>	<p>.....</p> <p>There has been a continued focus by local police on reduction in anti social behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of police reports available over the past five years indicate that anti social behaviour has increased slightly until 2019 when there was a reduction in the activity • Theft, housebreaking and shoplifting has decreased since a high of 2015/16. The remaining crime categories have remained at a fairly static level. • It has to be emphasised that this is a fairly crude analysis since it is based only on crime statistics available to the Community Council and may not reflect the fuller picture • Darvel has a high number of one bed flats both in the social housing and private rented sector and this does lead to a fairly transient population of tenants within the town. This can lead to the community feeling that there is a ‘problem’ with single person occupancy properties. • Youths drinking and leaving litter behind does appear to be a problem – although it is difficult to say that this is more of a problem than for previous generations of youths or whether social media plays a part in highlighting the issue.

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 5.2: Develop day care and befriending services for the elderly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore needs further and how other communities have developed services • Introduce additional services and activities as required. <p>Action to be taken by – DDCC, East Ayrshire Council, Darvel Parish Church</p>	<p>The proportion of older people within the area continues to increase and it is recognised that isolation within the community can be a very significant factor in determining the quality of life of older people. The initial priority set in 2014 was to develop day care and befriending services for older people within the community. The short answer would be that this hasn't really been met although additional housing for older people has been provided in West Donnington St adjacent to the surgery.</p> <p>However, the wider and significantly more positive picture is one of a compassionate, responsive community which has recognised need within different sectors of the population and responded to this in many interesting and creative ways.</p> <p>Examples of some of the groups and activities which run in the town and are of benefit to not only the older population but also people experiencing mental health issues, those who are isolated (of any age), young mums, youths (who are often the felt and expressed protagonists of anti-social behaviour) include the following (It should be noted that a full list of these activities is available as a separate Appendix:</p> <p>The One O'Clock Gang, the monthly Supper Club and the Darvel Pensioners Club which also meets on a monthly basis. The TWALK group organises regular walks around the area and Mothers & Toddlers group which meets weekly</p> <p>Darvel Parish Church offers Pastoral care 'Friendship' lunch and a coffee morning on a monthly basis. Pastoral home visits are also provided and recently a community lunch for parents & children has been introduced</p> <p>Darvel Crossroads Community Hub organises a number of groups run under the umbrella of the Community Hub (Mums & Bubbs; Ladies Mental Health Support Group; Games night; CHAT group; Fibromyalgia support group</p> <p>Sports Darvel provides a range of activities including breakfast club, Youth club, After school club – identified interest hoping to start in July, dance classes, tai chi and yoga.</p> <p>There has been a significant increase in the level of voluntary support for older people in the town. This has included annual Christmas dinners for pensioners and the introduction of activities aimed at reducing isolation amongst the aged. Darvel Dinner Ladies organise a community ceilidh and a Xmas lunch</p>

Priority	Review
<p>Priority 5.3: Improve public transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop proposal for improved routes and advantages of a direct link to Glasgow, and routes to Strathaven and Hamilton “that don’t require three changes” • Lobby for reduced costs of transport • Encourage buses to allow BMX bikes so that it is easier for young people outwith Darvel to access the skatepark • Negotiate with bus providers and passenger transport authority with support from the local authority <p>Action to be taken by – DDCC, Stagecoach, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport/Transport Scotland, East Ayrshire Council</p>	<p>Darvel relies heavily upon public transport. There have been several important developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An early morning bus, with return from Glasgow @ 5pm has been introduced from Priestland. It is not clear how well used this service is. • In 2017 Stagecoach reduced the level of service on the Kilmarnock to Priestland route from 4 buses per hour to 3, with an inconvenient 15/15/30 minute timetable. There was considerable concern raised by the community. • The matter was raised as a matter of urgency by the Community Council and meetings were subsequently arranged to discuss the revised timetable, cost of bus travel to Kilmarnock and the possibility of a service to Strathaven. • The timetable was revised in July 2019 and the previous 4 buses per hour service reinstated. • At the same time Stagecoach had acknowledged that the cost of bus travel on the route was higher per mile than other services in Ayrshire (and the community would contend, anywhere else in Scotland!) and a reduction in fares was implemented. • Stagecoach was not convinced that a regular service between Darvel and Strathaven (or Kilmarnock and Strathaven) would be economically viable and therefore indicated they would proceed with that possible route suggesting instead that a small scale local service might be an alternative option. The previous Darvel to Strathaven route was ended in early 2003 when it was concluded that poor use made the service non viable.