



DRAFT
Minutes of Cullen and Deskford Community Council
7 pm 16 September 2025

Present:

Colin Burch (Chair)

Bruce Edelsten (Secretary)

Phil Lovegrove (Treasurer)

Les Tarr

Councillor Donald Gatt

Councillor Tracy Colyer

Councillor Theresa Coull

Colin Taylor, Chair, Deskford and District Community Association

Andrew Castles, representing Sauna at the Kings (see 13d)

1. Welcome and introductions

Noted that the CDCC sent commiserations to Laura (Ritchie) Powell's family following their bereavement.

Welcome to the penultimate CDCC meeting of the current session.

Hopefully the higher emphasis and publication of CDCC activities, historical as well as current, that has been done recently has brought a greater understanding of the role and efforts that the Community Council makes in the local area.

Thanks to Les for the effort he has put into the upcoming 'elections'. Hopefully the efforts will help bring a realisation to the Cullen & Deskford Community area the importance of having an active Community Council can bring positive outcomes for the area as a whole. It is also hoped that local groups will understand better the benefits to all of having a working relationship with CDCC.

2. Apologies

Lyra Wilson

John Jappy, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Jill Sowden, Community Development Officer

3. Outside Agencies Reports

a. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

John Jappy submitted his report: Apologies for nonattendance. Not much happening on our front. Recruitment ongoing and seasonal safety topics will be displayed on station social media pages.

b. Police Scotland

Introductory E-mail received from the new Buckie police sergeant Steven Borzoni. E-mail with a general invite to attend CDCC meets in response.

4. Minutes of previous meeting held on 19 August 2025

- a. Corrections – Noted that Colin Taylor’s name was misspelt.
 - b. Approval – proposed by Les Taylor, seconded by Colin Burch
 - c. Matters arising not on agenda - none
5. Chair’s report
As usual, the chair’s report is largely contained in the rest of the agenda items below.
6. Treasurer’s Report
Phil Lovegrove reported
- Admin has £198.53
Spending this last month has been £0.99 for iCloud DD and £30 to DDCA for Hall use last month
- Fundraising has £16212.31
Spending this month was £49.91 to Millennium Garden for mosaic repair materials (reimbursed John Wilson). This came out of the Town Centre Regeneration Fund
- So, we’ve £13430.01 allocated and £2782.30 unallocated.
Allocated made up of:
- Town centre regeneration fund £1528.70
 - Community lunches £2168.93
 - Cullen connected £805.77
 - SSE resilience £8961.61
7. Secretary’s Report
Report in text below
8. Planning Officer’s report
Reference 25/01126/LBC
Address The Bellcot, Cullen House, Cullen, Buckie, Moray AB56 4XW
Proposal Replace 2no existing rooflights with 2 new double-glazed conservation rooflights
9. Councillor’s reports
Donald Gatt reported: At the start of month a couple of constituents from Cullen complained about York Place being used as a rat run. He notified the police who, next day, were out in Cullen and he is led to believe they had some educational words with a couple of people; apart from that normal committees in full swing; first education committee on 16 September; recruitment is ongoing; otherwise, usual run of the mill stuff. Theresa Coull reported: as well as the usual, a couple of workshops were attended.
10. Community Development Officer’s report
Three Kings Cullen Association – minutes.
None have been received in the recent past.

CDO Update 16 September 2025

Centre Capital Works

We were advised this week that our application for funding to the Moray Local Action Fund, to refurbish the main hall after completion of the heating system installation, has been

approved. This work will include fitting of insulated wall (comb) panels on one side of the room, fitting of acoustic panels and repainting the entire room and will be undertaken before 31 March 2026. Still struggling to obtain quotes for the main works but applications for funding from CARES and HIE being completed.

Growing at the Centre – Little Sprouts

Our application for funding to the Moray Climate Action Fund has been approved which will allow the Little Sprouts project to commence. The project will involve the toddlers and parents/guardians who use The Haven and will be part of the wider community growing project. Funding will cover weed suppressant, planters, compost, storage bench and tools together with plants and seeds.

CHAT – Cullen Helping and Thriving

Reminder: A date has been set for “Cullen: Helping and Thriving” (Cullen CHAT) for representatives of all the volunteer groups and interested individuals of Thursday 2nd October 7pm at the Community Centre. Posters and Facebook posts going out this week. My hope is that the output from these sessions will help inform the forthcoming Local Community Plan.

Motorhome Site

Motorhome Site direction signage: The two new signs have been installed. For a trial period we have installed a small general waste bin within our chemical toilet compound which is being filled every day. We have noticed all waste has been put into it so we are taking the recyclables over to the Recycling Centre and putting what's left into the Council trade waste bins. We will be putting up signs tomorrow to encourage site users to separate off their waste and dispose of accordingly.

Water outlets – Scottish Water

Work due to commence by the Sea School/Recycling Centre and will be ongoing for 6-8 weeks. Interesting to see if the security system set up there is helping reduce the littering/dumping problems in the area given a loud voice advises that CCTV is in operation!

TSI Food Community Growing Network came to Cullen on 22nd August and visited the Allotments and the Centre. Over 30 attended and were unanimously impressed by the allotments!

European Rural Parliament will be visiting the Centre on 22 October to look at the environmental improvement works and hear the future plans for the Centre and proposed projects as identified by the community.

Indoor Boot Sale – this year's event will be held on Sunday 19 October at 10am at The Centre.

11. Deskford and District Community Association – minutes

Colin Taylor reported: not many events recently but things now starting to pick up; the Big Blue Mobile Pantry (<https://www.morayfoodplus.org.uk/community-projects/>) visits on Thursdays and is well attended; the small hall has been painted inside and outside; SSEN

have extended their contract to use the Jubilee Hall till 2026; the money from the contract is being used to lay a new floor in the kitchen of the big hall; the Deskford Sessions (music) start on Thursday 18 September; the first funeral for a while takes place in the small hall; another quiz soon; an engagement party in October; maybe an October Fest (beer sampling); about to buy furniture (seating) for the big hall; then try and get the toilets revamped; into November there some local events and maybe a Tractor Run; AGM on 14 October. Still trying out to sort better usage of the electricity from the solar panels.

12. Current Business

a. Community Council Elections 2025

<https://www.cullendeskford.org/cullen-and-deskford-community-council/election-25/>

Nominations open on 6 October and close on 21 October.

CDCC advertising has been done in the Cullen Connected newsletter, social media as well as on the website. The stats for the website will hopefully show an increase on that particular page as well as an overall increase in the visits as the coming weeks arrive.

Les Tarr adds: At present, a total of five people are committed to standing for the coming session, with three additional people interested in the Cullen section of the Community Councils ward. Les would like to gather those people together prior to the start of the new session.

If we do have more than six, then this will lead to an election for the Cullen seats.

An election might not be a bad thing for CDCC as it will focus interest a good bit and will be a high-profile event. It may put some of those interested off I fear, but it's a wait and see thing just now.

Les still plans to go ahead with the CDCC stall at the library during October till the closing nominations date. Due every Thursday afternoon for 3 weeks.

Paper copies of the application form need to be available.

b. Community Council web site and e-mail

See attached report below.

The weekly summary, eNewsletter, is proving popular.

The meeting agreed to continue with the web site.

The new session may want to make use of the e-mail system.

c. Community Engagement

As mentioned above, there was a large CDCC presence in the CullenConnected newsletter with dedicated front page pointing to the centre page article as well as a specific insert. With the key dates now known, we can do a local poster campaign with a 'countdown' type theme. Les will investigate a Facebook advert.

d. Islands on A98 going out of Cullen to Portsoy

Colin Burch sent an E-mail to the roads department with photos requesting an update on when the temporary signage will be replaced with permanent ones. He received a reply confirming this will be chased up as it should been done at the same time at the same time as the resurfacing.

e. Traffic obstructions on A98

Colin Burch went to the Buckie police office after the last CDCC meeting and spoke directly with a police officer and was told that they would get back to him but didn't. Since then, contact has been made with Steve Borzoni, the new Sergeant at Buckie Police Station. He is currently looking into the issue.

- f. Millennium Garden Mosaic Repair
Now completed. Thanks to James Wilson for his restoration works and to Donna Thorpe for her bringing this to CDCC attention. CDCC have supported the renovation works with a refund of materials to the sum of £49.91.
- g. Outfall Repairs
CDCC received notification on proposed works on seaward side of (sewage?) outfall between sea school and motor home stopover site. Details have been posted on the web site and on social media. Potentially, this could cause disruption to access to the stopover site and access along the foreshore, so CDCC needs to keep an eye on the process. See also Jill Souden's report.
- h. Cullen Primary School – Defibrillator
Chair managed to speak directly with Gordon from Kieran's legacy. Gordon confirmed that new defibrillator installations undertaken by them incur an annual fee of £130 to cover regular checks and replacement as required. CDCC agreed to provide a one-off of £50 to the school to support the annual fee.
- i. Cullen Recycling Centre
See last month's minutes. There are ongoing abuses of usage at the site. Various posters have been put up as well as information on the website and social media. Agreed to re-laminate the existing posters. Four people have volunteered to open up and lock up. If another four people volunteer there will be enough for a rota.
- j. Kronach Twinning Association
The group are moving forward with the exchange programme (a visit to Germany in 2026). Numbers and participants to be confirmed in the coming weeks, with deposits being due soon afterwards. CDCC have offered support with printing of posters and website presence. Dr Kay Gauld is the lead person for further information.
- k. Joint Community Councils
The JCC advertised the community council election in a Moray-wide advert in the Spotlight magazine as well as visited various shows in Moray. The Buckie Car show on Sunday 31 August was the event in the East of Moray with representatives from various Community Councils from the east area being represented. CDCC thanked Debra Duke for her efforts in attending these events and the background work involved

13. AOCB

- a. Remembrance Day wreaths. The meeting agreed to inform the guides and brownies that CDCC will refund the cost of wreaths and order CDCC wreaths for Cullen and Deskford.
- b. Community Lunch funds will be transferred to the TKCA once CDCC been assured the monies will be ring fenced.
- c. Moray's new Tourism Strategy

SCOTO Consulting is pleased to be working with Moray Council and partners to co-create a new Tourism Strategy for the region. There is a survey which is open to all residents, businesses and community groups — anyone with a stake in Moray's tourism future. Please take the time to complete it, and we would greatly appreciate your help in circulating the link : <https://www.scoto.co.uk/scoto-consulting/moray-tourism-strategy/>

Over late September and early October, we are holding seven SCOTO Press Pause® workshops in locations across Moray, creating space for inclusive conversations that ask: What is and isn't working just now? What could be done better or differently? the locations and times here:

<https://www.scoto.co.uk/scoto-consulting/moray-tourism-strategy/>

Early in November, we'll host six online focus groups, each exploring different themes relating to tourism. These sessions will reflect on survey results and workshop discussions so far and help identify what the strategy should prioritise. If you would like to take part in these events, please go to:

<https://www.scoto.co.uk/scoto-consulting/moray-tourism-strategy/>

David McCubbin has offered to attend and provide feedback to CDCC

- d. Sauna at the Kings
Have received papers from Moray Council for a planning assessment for which Sauna at the Kings will have to pay a fee. The ward councillors offered to investigate.
- e. Pet's Ceremony
Les Tarr reported a member of the public has been observed burying a pet despite the cemetery being officially closed.
- f. Tracy Colyer thanked all those involved in the community council and wished all the best of luck in the future.

14. Dates for the calendar

Wednesday 24th September: Community Benefits Portal Launch

The portal will allow you, community organisations, to post requests for support, such as volunteer time, materials, or professional expertise which suppliers working with the council can then choose to deliver. This will help to ensure that investment and spending have a positive and meaningful impact on communities in Moray.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-identified-benefits-portal-launch-tickets-1700874755179?aff=oddtcreator>

Thursday 25 September, 1300Hrs: Fishermen's Hall, Buckie, - Moray Tourism strategy. See above. Pre-registration required.

Thursday 2 October, 1900Hrs, Cullen Community Centre - Cullen CHAT inaugural meeting.

15. Dates of next meetings

21 October: Last meeting of the current session - Cullen Community Centre

18 November: Inaugural meeting of the 2025 - 2029 session - Cullen Community Centre

Meeting closed at 20.41

End of Pilot report for CDCC web site for the 16th September

Introduction:

When the web site launched in April 2025 it was agreed to run for an initial 6-month pilot period to assess interest and viability.

I've collated some statistics on visitor and page usage which is listed below, along with a set of options for the future.

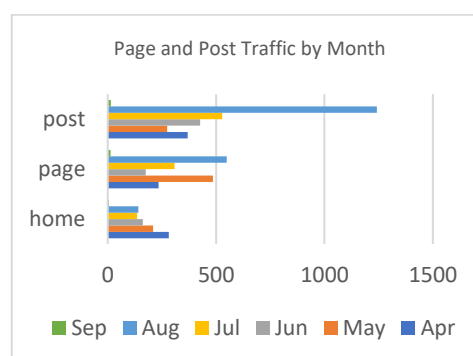
Site Statistics:

We have the free version of the WP Statistics plugin, so data is limited, but still useful to show volumes and trends.

Page and Post hits

Hit Type by Month

Type	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total
Home	282	209	162	136	141	6	936
Pages	235	485	176	308	549	13	1766
Posts	369	274	426	528	1241	14	2852
Total*	918	977	784	982	1948	33	5642



The site has three types of page content.

- Home – is the home page of www.cullendesford.org
- Pages – Static holding pages that form the landing pages for the main sections
 - About CDCC
 - Engagement
 - Election '25
 - Planning
 - Resilience
 - News
 - Contact us
- Posts relate to the content that sits below the category scheme within the site and drops content into pages.
 - *There are some other types of content that 'WP Statistics reports' but there are technical data and are minimal.

Posts are content elements that are used to populate the sections and are driven by categories.

Post hits over the pilot period are shown below.

Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total
Post Hits	369	274	426	528	1241	14	2852

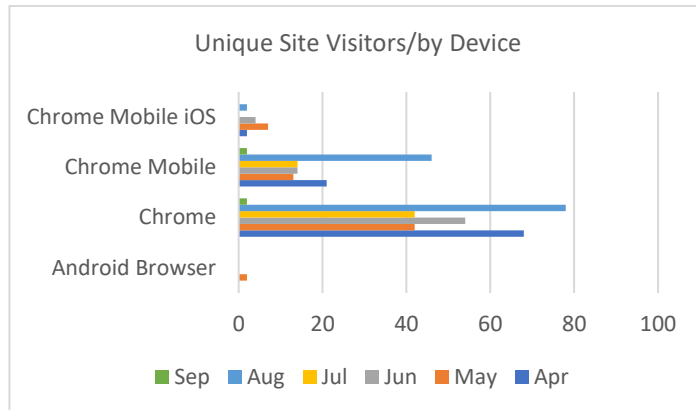
At the beginning of September there are 141 posts that have been added to the site

Visitor Figures

Unique Site Visitors/by Device

Device	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total
Desktop	109	114	130	125	199	5	682
Phablet	78	83	97	135	384	5	782
Smartphone	217	206	216	216	604	5	1464

Tablet	81	83	66	97	202	1	530
Total	485	487	511	573	1391	16	3463



Although the site has had over 5000 hits, there is a unique number of visitors, bearing in mind Cullen and Deskford has 1239 residents' last count.

The audience is spread wider than Cullen.

Phablets are smartphones with large display screens

Visitor Source	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total
Android Browser	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Chrome	68	42	54	42	78	2	286
Chrome Mobile	21	13	14	14	46	2	110
Chrome Mobile iOS	2	7	4	0	2	0	15
Chrome WebView	1	0	0	0	9	0	10
DuckDuckGo Privacy Browser	0	1	0	0	3	0	4
Ecosia	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Facebook	268	232	249	315	974	6	2044
Facebook Lite	3	0	1	2	14	0	20
Fennec	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Firefox	10	22	18	17	21	1	89
Firefox Mobile	1	0	1	1	2	0	5
Firefox Mobile iOS	1	0	6	5	5	0	17
Galeon	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Google Search App	0	1	2	3	4	0	10
Headless Chrome	7	3	2	3	5	0	20
Microsoft Bing	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Microsoft Edge	42	68	54	54	68	0	286
Mobile Safari	42	57	71	75	87	3	335
Mobile Silk	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Opera	1	1	2	0	1	0	5
Safari	16	30	28	36	54	2	166
Samsung Browser	1	7	4	5	15	0	32
Total	485	487	511	573	1391	16	3463

The numbers of unique visitors s reasonably good for this type of site, and the sources they are getting to the site from indicate that the majority are finding pages through Facebook.

Our content is advertised on the C.D.C.C Facebook page also Cullen Past and Present and Cullen Chat, with 2044 visitors finding us through social media. 1419 are coming through search engines, which is a good number.

Anecdotal Information

There is not a huge amount of information through comments, but a survey/poll has been launched to gather some information, and suggestions should the site continue. That will be reported in October.

Options Appraisal:

The options for the web site pilot are:

1. Close the site
2. Continue for another 6 months, as the contract with Heart Internet has 6 months to run
3. Continue permanent basis.

Recommendation would be subject to survey results

Option 2: Continue for another 6 months, as the contract with Heart Internet has 6 months to run

There would be no cost implication of extending the Pilot run till April 2026. The costs after that would be:

1. Hosting renewal April 2026-2027 £48.00
2. URL registration of address 2027-2028 £13.00 per year

Conclusion:

Extending the pilot to run for a full year with the decision to renew being made in March 2026 would seem the best option. It gives a chance to see beyond the initial impact the site had.

Also, we have the hosting paid till March 2026 anyway.

The engagement value so far has been significant and can only continue to be a benefit to the community council. For the new cohort training would be available to allow for more content creators and it would be useful to pursue a younger individual to manage the site.

With the hosting we also have 10 mailboxes and should for the coming cohort try to make more use of these.

A survey is out to get residents feedback, and the final results will be reported in October. So far, the limited responses are good