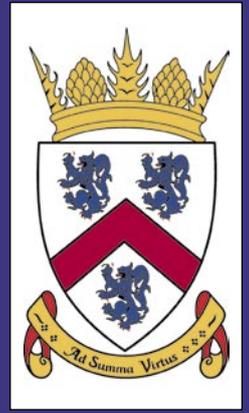


MAYBOLE PATHFINDER

Autumn 2011 Newsletter



TOWN ON A MISSION TO REVIVE ITS FORTUNES

Plans for community
to run its own
leisure facilities

THE town of Maybole is
boldly going where no
town has gone before.

Its mission is to take control of
all the leisure facilities in the
community and run them for the
benefit of the people.

The unique project has been
named *Maybole Pathfinder*
and could eventually see the
townspeople in charge of
running the swimming pool,
golf course, bowling green,
football and rugby pitches, the
skatepark and even the town
hall.

If successful, the project could
be copied in communities
throughout Ayrshire and the rest
of Scotland.

The facilities are currently
owned and run by South
Ayrshire Council, but the
Pathfinder project could see
these transferred to some sort of
community trust, to be managed
and run by local people.

Over the past 18 months, a
steering group has been talking
to more than 30 community
groups in the town to discuss
their ideas for the future and to

listen to their thoughts.

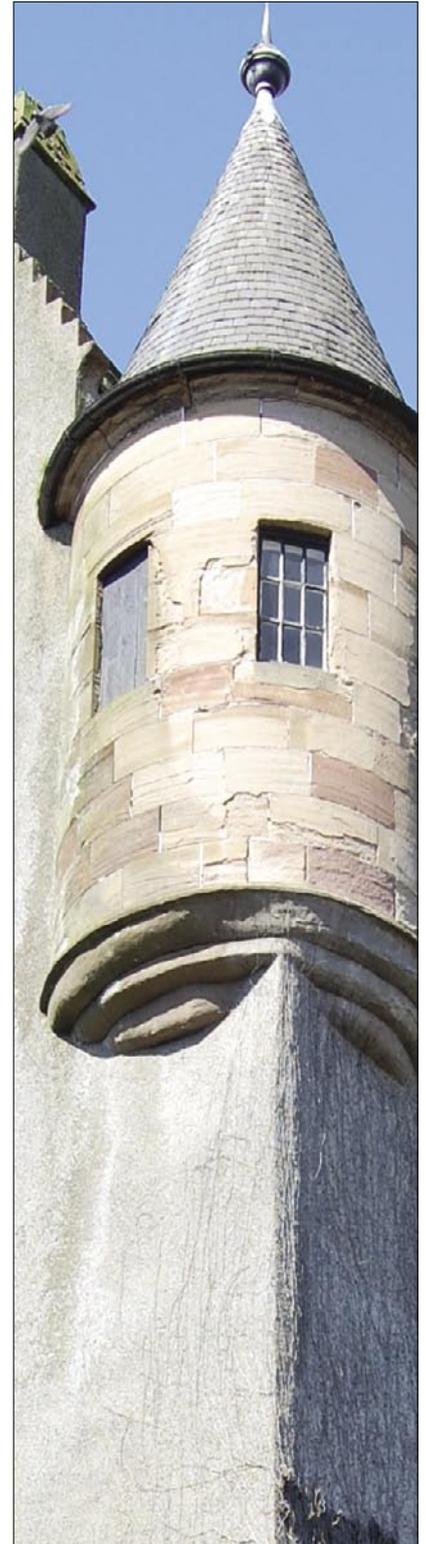
David Kiltie, chairman of the
steering group, explained: "The
overwhelming majority of the
groups we spoke to indicated
their strong support for the
plans and encouraged us to
continue our work to prepare a
business plan and come up with
detailed proposals."

Following approval of funding
by *South Ayrshire Council* and
*Ayrshire LEADER Local Action
Group (LAG)*, the steering group
are now set to begin the next
phase of the journey.

David said: "Politicians
are forever talking about
local people "owning" their
communities. Pathfinder could
eventually make that vision a
reality.

"Taking on responsibility for all
the facilities in the town would
present the people of Maybole
with a unique opportunity to
show the rest of Scotland that
with enthusiasm, energy and
good business sense a small
community really can revive its
fortunes.

"After all, we are the people
who live and work here and
who have pride in Maybole.
Who better to ensure that the
local facilities are well managed,
well used and developed for
future generations?"



FIND OUT INSIDE HOW THE VISION FOR MAYBOLE IS SHAPING UP

What's Pathfinder all about?

A WIDE range of leisure facilities in Maybole are currently owned by South Ayrshire Council.

These are:

Maybole Town Hall

Maybole Swimming Pool

All grass and all-weather football and rugby pitches at Carrick Academy

Maybole Golf Course and clubhouse

Maybole Memorial Park Bowling Green and clubhouse

Football pitches and changing facility at Glebe Park

Ladywell Stadium

The Skateboard Park



Over the past two years, a steering group has been looking at proposals to transfer the management and development of all of these facilities to a local charitable body, perhaps called Maybole Sports and Leisure Community Development Trust, to be formed sometime in the future and made up of members and elected trustees from local sports organisations, community groups and the council.

The steering group had the task of assessing the condition of all the facilities, determining how often these facilities were used and producing a total profit and loss account for the portfolio of facilities.

It was discovered that the facilities are used more than 100,000 times each year, generating an income for South Ayrshire Council of just over £200,000. The expenditure on the facilities, however, totalled almost £600,000 for the same period, resulting in a subsidy of almost £400,000 per year.

Long-term financial viability is therefore one of the greatest challenges facing the community.

David Kiltie, however, is optimistic.

"Part of the next phase of the process will be to agree how the council will continue to financially support the initiative and I'm confident

this will be amicably sorted. The whole project is based on the strong partnerships we can build between the community, its sports organisations and the council.

"I believe that we have the people with the expertise, enthusiasm and ideas to develop the facilities, provide additional activities and generate additional income.

"We have a vision of thriving clubs and organisations intent on improving the way these facilities are run, putting on more events and getting more local people involved on a regular basis.

David, who is also chairman of

the Community Council, added: "Already the golf club members are talking about extending the course and setting up a golf academy for young people. Our consultations with locals have also suggested that the town hall could be far better used, with more weddings, shows and functions.

"The possibilities for improvements are endless. We as a community just have to grasp the nettle and take the opportunity to show that it can be done. If we do, we can produce lasting benefits for the health and wealth of thousands of people, old and young alike."

Royal tribute to the spirit of Maybole

MAYBOLE'S history of community spirit stretches back decades and indeed centuries.

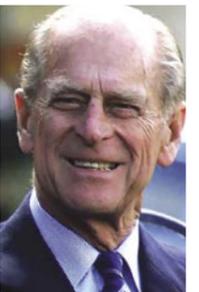
A poignant reminder of this came from no less a person than Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. On March 1, 1949 he received the Freedom of the City in the Usher Hall, Edinburgh, and he had this to say about our town...

"There are in this world hundreds of things which are right but which cannot be legislated for - things which will never be done unless someone is prepared to do them for no reward except possibly a clear conscience.

"Once upon a time it was a relatively easy matter to clear one's conscience by contributing money to various charities and organisations which set out to do the right thing. This method as you all know is not so easy now, and yet there is just as much to do. It will be fatal for us if we ever come to think that merely by passing laws we can get out of our responsibilities towards our fellow men.

"There is the case of Ladywell playing field at Maybole in Ayrshire, which was laid out, levelled and turfed almost entirely by voluntary labour, and then, not content, they built themselves a grandstand and changing rooms.

"To achieve this, the craftsmen gave their services and others helped with their hands. Unselfish service was freely given, and I refuse to believe that the glow in the hearts of those who took part is not the brighter for what they have done."



The possibilities are endless

PATHFINDER NEWSLETTER LOOKS AT THE FACILITIES THAT COULD GROW AND PROSPER UNDER COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT



Maybole Town Hall

Built in 1887, Maybole Town Hall has occupied its commanding position on the High Street and at the heart of the community for more than 120 years.

The survey by consultants deemed the town hall in a "fair" condition and figures show that it accounts for about 24,000 "usages" – the number of people using the facilities – each year. That's 22 percent of the total usages of all the amenities in the town.

It is believed that this figure could increase dramatically through further use for weddings, functions and shows.



Maybole Memorial Park Bowling Green and clubhouse

After the First World War the people of Maybole purchased farmland that was laid out as a memorial park for those who died during the war. The park is home to the war memorial, swimming pool, golf course and the

bowling green.

The bowling club is long established and has produced many fine men and women bowlers. During the summer season there are open competitions as well as those limited to members only.

Maybole Golf Course and clubhouse

Maybole is a nine-hole course offering splendid views over surrounding countryside and providing an enjoyable test of golf for all levels of player.

Player numbers have been difficult to assess but it is envisaged that the enthusiastic members of the golf club will provide positive input on its future development.



Ladywell Stadium and Skateboard Park

Ladywell Stadium was the town's "Welcome Home" present for its servicemen returning from the Second World War.

Maybole Juniors FC was formed in 1946 and the stadium has been their home ground ever since.

THE Boag Skateboard Park next to the stadium opened in spring 2004 following a lot of work by *Maybole Youth Action Group* and funding from *South Ayrshire Council* and the *Community Council*. The facility has provided a novel outlet for the energies of Maybole youngsters and a recent facelift and improvements have been widely welcomed.

Maybole Swimming Pool

Opened in 1975, the pool is situated at Memorial Park next to the golf course and the bowling green.

Home to Maybole Amateur Swimming Club, it has four lanes and a small spectator area. Organised activities include aqua trim, pool discos and fun sessions, plus a full programme of instruction, competitions and life saving.

The swimming pool accounts for 35,000 usages per year and was deemed to be in the best condition of all the amenities inspected by the consultants. It also scored well in terms of energy efficiency.

Opening times vary and an extension of opening hours is just one area that could be examined to increase the number of people using the pool.

Football pitches and changing facility at Glebe Park

The Glebe Park is home to Maybole Amateurs and Carrick Colts as well as being the venue for the town's annual gala. The changing facilities did not fair too well, however, when assessed on condition by the steering group's consultants.

All grass and all-weather football and rugby pitches at Carrick Academy

The pitches provide a valuable asset for sporting activity, including pupils of Carrick Academy and local football and rugby teams.

The facilities are in good condition and account for more than 40,000 usages per year. The all-weather pitch, built at a cost of £500,000, is currently available for hire through the council but there is potential to encourage an increase in the figures.

What we've done and what you think

The transfer of responsibility for Maybole's sporting and community facilities to a local organisation would be pointless without the support of the local community.

That's why the steering group made sure that those with an interest in the *Pathfinder* plans were told about the idea and asked what they thought about it.

More than 30 face-to-face meetings were held during 2010 with a wide variety of individuals, clubs and organisations to collect vital information about the facilities and to assess the level of support for the project.

There was overwhelming support for the following:

- The idea of the community taking on management and eventual ownership of the facilities.

- A Stage 2 study should go ahead to answer all the issues already raised.

Of those who expressed an opinion about what kind of organisation should take control and how the ownership of the facilities should be handled, the majority wanted to see:

- A democratically elected community trust/company with community representation as a majority (as opposed to council or external majority ownership).

- A strong representation of business experts to ensure access to investment, a co-ordinated marketing strategy and development of facilities to increase usage and reduce the



WHO WE SPOKE TO ABOUT PATHFINDER

Maybole Community Council	Maybole Community Association	Maybole Indoor Bowls
Maybole Sports Association	Maybole Memorial Park Bowling Club	Maybole Men's Golf Club
Maybole Amateurs	Maybole Amateur Swimming Club	Maybole Ladies Golf Club
Maybole Juniors	Carrick Rugby Club	Maybole Men's Health Forum
Carrick Colts		May-Tag Ltd

existing income and expenditure gap.

- The new community group focus on development and guidance, rather than pursue an immediate transfer of assets from the council.

- Individual community groups maintaining their independence.

- Realistic timescales and expectations.

The strongest reservation related

to financial viability and it was the opinion of the vast majority of those involved that the project would require significant assistance in its early years in terms of finance, organisation and training

The steering group would like to thank everyone who took part in those discussions and who contributed a variety of innovative ideas and raised pertinent issues that will require to be addressed.

Community-run services work best says Lottery Fund

COMMUNITIES which own their own assets are better placed to develop and manage services to meet the needs of local people, new research has revealed.

The Big Lottery Fund research also indicates that community owned buildings or equipment are valued by communities themselves, leading to a decrease in vandalism and other related antisocial behaviour.

The survey of Growing Community Assets (GCA) projects funded by the Lottery found that community ownership provided increased confidence, autonomy and a legacy for the future.

According to Jackie Killeen, the Scotland director of the Big Lottery Fund, community ownership helped community social enterprises earn stronger balance sheets, putting them in a better position to secure other funding and to diversify their income.

It also permitted them to increase their operational capacity and heightened their sense of security.

Where do we go from here?

There seems to be quite a bit of support for the *Pathfinder* idea.

There is much work still to be done, however, particularly when it comes to ironing out all the legal framework and processes that will be required to take the project forward.

David Kiltie explains: "The opinions expressed during our first round of consultations have been taken into account and a plan of action will now be formulated that will form the basis of the framework for taking control."

It is generally accepted that the new body should be a charitable organisation, in the format of a sports or community development Trust, e.g. Maybole Sports and Leisure Community Development Trust.

Membership of the Trust will be open to all residents in the town and surrounding district, as well as organised sports, community and leisure groups.

It is recommended that trustees will be elected from within the membership with 60 percent coming from sports and leisure groups, 20 percent from other community representatives (e.g. community council members) and 20 percent from South Ayrshire Council.

The Trust should be responsible for the strategic organisation required to attract investment and develop the sports and leisure facilities within Maybole.

It has been agreed that any capital receipts shall only be re-invested within the objectives of the sports and leisure Trust.

It is also envisaged that South Ayrshire Council will require legal "step-in" rights and that asset ownership should be held by the Trust only where local ownership is not permissible or required.

It may also be necessary to form a wholly owned subsidiary enterprise to carry out any commercial activities within the project.

Creating community centres of excellence

It's all happening in Maybole!

While *Pathfinder* gains momentum, there are already two other major projects heading towards becoming reality – the redevelopment of Maybole Castle and the building of the new Carrick Centre.

With the help of the local community, members of Maybole Castle Community Trust believe that the historic building can be fully restored and renovated to provide a fantastic community resource.



The building could provide office space, meeting and function rooms, training and employment opportunities

and even provide a centre for genealogical research, helping locals to trace the history of the town and their ancestors.

Following extensive consultation, funding was provided for a feasibility study and structural survey by *Ayrshire LEADER*, *South Ayrshire Council* and the *Architectural Heritage Fund*.

There is much within the Castle project that will complement Maybole *Pathfinder* and developing such a much-needed



Work is progressing well on the new Carrick Centre... both outside and in!

community resource will encourage further economic regeneration.

For more information, on the castle project contact Peter Mason on 01655 882660 or email petermckmason@aol.com

● The Carrick Centre is yet another exciting project that will bring lasting benefits for the community.

The centre is being built by the Church of Scotland but will be taken over and operated by a local charitable company – The Carrick Centre Ltd - members of which will come from the town.

Funding for the Carrick Centre Ltd has come from the *Ayrshire LEADER* programme £66,117, *Maybole Parish Church* (£49,000), *South Ayrshire Council* (£10,000) and in-kind work from local volunteers worth £21,760.

Due for completion in 2012, the centre will provide a range of modern facilities which will



be used for the benefit of the community and help to spark a regeneration of social and economic activity in the town.

Plans for activities at the Carrick Centre include a soft-play area and a range of other things to interest both young and old. The centre will host functions, parties, concerts and will have a café and tourist information service.

The *LEADER* funding has been used to employ three part-time staff to develop plans for the future seek funding to carry out the plans and ensure that each member of the community has an opportunity to get involved.

For more information or to make comments about Carrick Centre project, please contact Alan Murray on 01655 883222 or email or visit the website at www.carrickcentre.co.uk or call into the Development Office at 6/8 School Vennel, Maybole.

THIS PROJECT IS BEING PART-FINANCED BY THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AYRSHIRE LEADER 2007-2013 PROGRAMME

