**Heart 200 Meeting with Community Representatives**

**Monday, 15 July 2019**

**The Reading Room, Kenmore**

In attendance: Fiona Ballantyne (Fearnan Village Association); Shirley Shearer (Kenmore & District CC); Jenny Penfold; Sue Dolan-Betney (Glen Lyon & Loch Tay CC); Jim Valentine, Alan Graham (PKC).

The discussion covered a range of topics and concerns regarding Heart 200 and also wider issues related to tourism and infrastructure in Highland Perthshire including:

Communications

The community representatives were particularly concerned about the lack of consultation and communication on Heart 200, either by the Heart 200 promoter or the Council, and the local community and businesses had found out about the proposal by accident. It was agreed that communications and engagement had not been effective. This would be relayed again to Robbie Cairns and it was proposed that the Visit Aberfeldy group would be an effective means to facilitate a local meeting.

Rationale

There were concerns that the business case for Heart 200 wasn’t sufficiently strong particularly given the apparent references to a decline in tourism and the interpretation of statistics to support this point.

Identity

The representatives felt that if the original identity of Heart of Scotland Touring Routes had been adhered to that would have been more palatable. They remain deeply concerned that “Heart 200” gives the wrong impression and may encourage inappropriate driving – particularly by those seeking to complete the route in a given time. There was also criticism of the quality of the website information and content presently and that it didn’t do anything particularly to encourage “slow tourism”.

Inappropriate Development

Concerns were expressed regarding approvals of variations on planning consent for accommodation developments in the area i.e. increases in capacity which could result in increased traffic movements but without the commensurate investment in pedestrian infrastructure (a specific example in Kenmore was cited).

Roads & Infrastructure

There was a broad discussion on matters related to the roads network in the area and the challenges posed by existing traffic volumes and the impact of larger coaches, motorhomes, motorbikes etc. In particular, the A827 was referenced as having specific pinch points. It was felt that any increased volumes as a consequence of Heart 200 could have a serious impact, bearing in mind the different types of road users and that visitors are unfamiliar with the roads and how to conduct themselves, particularly on single track roads. Jim Valentine referenced that certain rural roads in Perth and Kinross are designated as “Green Routes” with reduced speed limits and signage to support their use by cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians. This could be looked at in the context of Highland Perthshire. He also referred to the fact that enforcement of speed limits and compliance with road traffic regulations is a roads policing matter. He advised that there was active policing of the A93 through Glenshee as a consequence of speeding and he would raise their concerns with the Chief Superintendent. (JV and AG were advised that a meeting with PKC Roads representatives and Cllr Williamson was scheduled). The general view of the representatives was that more signage and more passing places (e.g. in Glen Lyon) were required.

Actions

Visit Aberfeldy to be approached regarding facilitating a meeting on Heart 200

JV to speak with Traffic and Network Management regarding scope for remedial actions including Green Routes, increased signage etc

JV to speak with Chief Superintendent regarding roads policing matters especially with regards to A827 and speeding issues