

Ratho & District Community Council Review for the year ended 31 March 2015

At times this year it has seemed that all the Community Council has discussed are the buses and the doctors, but never forgetting the ever present problem of dog fouling.

On 30 May 2014 the Edinburgh Trams came into service and we lost the 12 bus, our direct bus service to the centre of Edinburgh, which was replaced by the 20, going to Gyle, Edinburgh Park Tram and Rail links, terminating at Slateford. We were promised a review after 6 months and therefore in October the Community Council held a public meeting to discuss our concerns. This meeting was attended by Cllr Lesley Hinds, chair of the Council's Environmental and Transport sub committee. These concerns were taken back to the Council officials. We understand that there will be a review of the subsidised bus services shortly. We will keep you advised.

Since 2013 it has been recognised that we need a replacement Doctors surgery for our current substandard and too small facilities. Discussions and negotiations as to requirements and location have continued throughout the year, with an RDCC representative on the NHS sub-committee and in March a planning application for the new surgery was submitted. We hope this will mean that we will have the new surgery by the end of 2016. However there have also been concerns for much of the year over the adequate provision of cover by doctors at the surgery. In December the Community Council held a public meeting to discuss these concerns with NHS representatives attending. We continue to monitor the position and ensure that current information is readily available.

On a more pleasant note in January the Community Council had a visit from Andrew Thin, the non executive chairman of Scottish Canals, which was well attended, informative and I think Andrew learnt as much as we did!

Throughout the year we have continued to monitor planning applications commenting when relevant, raising enforcement enquiries, reported potholes, discussed road repairs funded by Cala, sought the resurfacing of Main Street, the Canal towpath and the improvement of the Newbridge roundabout, monitored the new waste collection system, commented on the new 20mph traffic areas, reported dog fouling - many of these will appear every year but we will keep striving to improve our environment and the infrastructure of our area.

We continue to work at improving our community engagement. There are now community notice boards in the 3 villages, we have our web site and Google group, we have posted comments on Facebook and sent tweets as well as put notices in as many places as we can think of but next year we will try to find even more ways of engaging with the whole community.

On a wider horizon we have representatives on the Airport Users committee, the South West Communities Forum, a planning group for the Pentland Ward, the Edinburgh Canal Delivery Board, the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils, The Pentland Neighbourhood Partnership's Safety action group, Environmental, Infrastructure and Transport action group, the Area Board and Funding Panel, as well as the Almond and Pentland Neighbourhood Partnerships. All of these groups raised the profile of the Community and the Community Council and our influence in our wider Community as well as giving us funding for local organisations such as the Craigpark Playpark, Ratho Rainbows, the Scout Group as well as access to Council officials to chivvy and definitely a much higher profile with the Environmental Wardens!

None of this is possible without the hard work of the whole Community Council and I would like to thank them on behalf of the whole Community. I would like especially to thank John Longstaff and Judi Sansom for their work over the past years and Jan Couper for her sterling work as Minutes Secretary for more years than either of us would care to remember but she has agreed to stay on as an ordinary member. Thank you all.

Judy Wightman, Chair