

Chair's Report 2019

This has been a year of anticipation, expectation and maybe forlorn hope!
Would the Wave Garden finally receive planning permission?
Would the traffic lights be installed at the Dalmahoy Junction?
Would building commence on the Uniroyal site?
Would the Public Park at Craigpark ever be finally completed as planned?
Would Taylor Wimpey receive planning permission in Ratho Station?
Would Edinburgh Airport ever agree its new flight routes?
Would Piggery Bends ever be widened?
Would the wall at Piggery Bends ever be repaired?
Would we keep our bank in Newbridge?
Would the safety barriers ever be installed at Hallcroft?
Would a site be found for the new High School in the North West for Hillwood PS pupils?
Would work on the City Plan 2030 ever begin?
Would the Council find money to extend/refurbish Balerno HS?
Would parking ever improve in Newbridge?
Would there be a direct bus route from Ratho to the centre of Edinburgh?
Would we be able to park at Ingliston P&R?
Would building start at the IBG site?
Would the roads in The Moorings be adopted and more Dog Poo bins be installed?
Would the bridge over the Canal linking the Public Park and the EICA be ever built?
Would a planning application be submitted for 1200 houses at Hatton Mains?
Would the new lampposts in Main Street actually get lights?
and
Would Pop-Up Bob solve our speeding problems?

We had so many dreams at the beginning of the year that things would improve. While it feels as if little has actually come to fruition there is a lot that should be happening within the next six months.

Successes first: Hallcroft Safety Barriers were installed earlier this year, some 3 years after first being mooted. We still have a bank in Newbridge, greatly envied by Currie, Balerno and Juniper Green. The roads in The Moorings have now been adopted by the Council and more litter bins along the canal have been promised.

We have been told that various things should be progressed in the next few months - the traffic lights at Dalmahoy Junction, first requested in 1986; a Planning application for a bridge across the Canal linking the Public Park and the EICA is due to be submitted in the next 2 months; the City Plan 2030 due to commence consultation in February 2019, is being held up by the Scottish Ministers. When anything firm is published we will hold a Public meeting to ascertain your thoughts. There has been a public consultation and planning application submitted for the Uniroyal site by H2S and McTaggart and Meikle and building should begin once the application is agreed, the original application being submitted in 2005. The Planning permission for the legal agreement for the Wave Garden is almost there, so the Council says, although the Public Park may take longer to be finished.

With regard to our local buses we had a positive meeting with the Public Transport Manager and his team at the Council. We were asked to ascertain the views of the community and you replied very promptly and positively - you wanted a direct service to the City Centre especially in the evening. We were able to ask for a bus service going through Newbridge village. We also held a consultation regarding the 20mph speed limit, which it was felt was not adhered to, not enforced and was therefore a waste of money. This information was submitted to the Council.

The position regarding our High Schools is less clear; we understand the new North West High School will be built in Kirkliston, but the actual site is to be confirmed. The upgrade to Balerno High School will not take place until the new Currie High School is built, so that is some time off.

We have held meetings, lobbied officials and Councillors regarding parking in Newbridge, Ratho and around the local primary schools to no good effect. Equally Pop-Up Bob has only a limited period of success, but was wonderful while in situ!

The Council are considering the planning application for the International Business Gateway (IBG) and we keep pressing for more parking at Ingliston P&R, just a question of money as are the repairs to the wall at Piggery Bends, owned by the Waste Services department of the Council.

Some things take longer - the new flight paths for the airport, the Taylor Wimpey development at Ratho Station, the Hatton Mains Village development, and, of course, the perennial question of widening the road at Piggery Bends.

Over the year we have met with council officers, developers and numerous other organisations to represent the views of our area and lobby for better services and improvements in our environment. In the wider community we have participated in the Pentland Hills and Almond Neighbourhood Partnerships and the successor Locality groups, the South West Forum for Planning, the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils, the Canal Delivery Board, the Canal Community Action Group, the Edinburgh Airport Consultative Committee and the Edinburgh Airport Noise Advisory Board.

We would like to thank our Community Police from Balerno and Queensferry for their ongoing support together with the North West and South West Council officers. A special thank you to our 8 local councillors, 2 MSP's and our MP. I personally would like to thank all our Community Councillors for their support over the year and especially the other office bearers for their hard work.

It has been a great privilege to serve our community over the year and I hope that when the elections come in the autumn some of you will consider joining us - you would be most welcome.

Judy Wightman
Chair
Ratho and District Community Council