

## **Ratho & District Community Council**

### **Chair's Report 2020 -2021**

Since our last AGM in October 2020 Covid has continued to disrupt our lives. Thanks to our Secretary, Kate Watt, we have continued to hold our monthly meetings online and now we are beginning to come out of lockdown we hope it won't be too long before we can meet in person.

This doesn't mean we have been doing nothing! Last October we anticipated that the final version of the next Local Development Plan, City Plan 2030, would be published in December 2020. However there have been delays and the current anticipated date is August 2021. In the meantime, we have been approached by developers who would like to have their residential projects included in the final City Plan or alternatively may propose them as an objection to the plan. To enable the Community Council to represent the views of the Community we would normally hold public meetings. This may not be possible and the alternative is to carry out a survey, ensuring that we can reach the entire Community. A decision will be made in the coming weeks.

Our area has not at present been included in any Spaces for People proposals but temporary bus lanes along the A8 and A89 were proposed under the Covid-19 Bus Priority Rapid Deployment Fund. The Community Council objected to this on environmental grounds for both Ratho Station and Ratho. However, the bus lanes were installed. We wait to see when an application will be made to make these temporary measures permanent. The changes to the A8/Gogarstone Road junction have not been resolved. As these were instigated by the Active Travel Team we understand that they are fully occupied by the Spaces for People Initiatives but we will keep reminding them of our concerns.

In February the Community Council received a presentation from Andrew Easson, the Road Safety and Active Travel Manager at City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) proposing a signalised pedestrian crossing at the Dalmahoy Junction. The original petition presented in September 2014 to the Petitions Committee of CEC requested a Signalised Junction for both vehicular traffic as well as pedestrians. This was accepted in 2015 subject to detailed plans so Andrew Easson's proposals were an unwelcome shock to everyone and the Dalmahoy Community in particular. The proposal will go before the Transport and Environment Committee in June and the Community Council will be asking for a fully signalised junction.

So what of other planning and similar applications outstanding last October? The application for 5 houses at the west end of West Croft was approved and the site is now up for sale. However the application for 12 houses at Kirklands House is still under consideration, as is the new access road to Edinburgh Airport. Meanwhile the application for the development of the Crosswinds site at Edinburgh Airport was withdrawn and referred direct to the Scottish Ministers. Taylor Wimpey finally got planning permission, subject to a legal agreement and numerous other conditions, to build at Ratho Station.

So how have other developments progressed? Mainly due to the pandemic there has been no work commenced at the Bridge Inn, the former Continental Tyre site in Newbridge and the International Business Gateway, while work at the Wave Garden is, at present, due to commence later in the summer. Despite planning permission being granted to the Education department of CEC for a new Early Years Centre and Library to be opened in August 2022, no building work has commenced despite the Library being closed in October 2020, nor has any date for the promised mobile library service been given to us.

On a wider note, Kate Watt represents our Community on the Edinburgh Airport Consultative Committee and Ray Godfree on Edinburgh Airport Noise Advisory Board – we thank them for their hard work. I have been involved with both the Almond and Pentland Hills Neighbourhood Networks which feed into their local Locality Community Planning Partnerships and then the Edinburgh Partnership. While this represents our route to express our views on the strategic planning for Edinburgh there is still work required to ensure adequate representation of our views and therefore local democracy.

We must congratulate Cllr Sue Webber on her election as an MSP. We will miss her wise words and once again I must thank our local Councillors and the whole Community Council for their hard work and support over the period and in particular the office bearers.

Judy Wightman  
Chair  
Ratho and District Community Council