

Secretary's report

The office of Secretary provides a very varied list of issues that require attention and liaison with other bodies. Much of the effort involves liaising with councillors and council officers on various matters of concern to our residents, or advising residents whom they should contact to deal with their queries and concerns.

A number of issues requiring such liaison were reported over the year including:

- Dust cloud from Bonnington Quarry spreading over the village. A resident, who posted a photo, was advised to contact SEPA, and a complaint was also lodged by us. I submitted a Planning Enforcement Enquiry about the dust. Contact was established with the quarry manager and two of us subsequently met the manager of Bonnington Quarry to go through their protocol regarding protected species, about which a separate concern had been raised.
- Reports earlier in the year of the 20 bus service being late at night, causing passengers to miss connections and having to wait for almost an hour at Ratho Station. First Bus were made aware of this and other issues, and officers from CEC Supported Bus Service team took the matter up with First Bus as part of the contract management meetings. There were also day time gaps in the service, particularly during semi-lockdown periods, but these were eventually resolved.
- Residents were concerned about the lack of grass cutting, particularly round the headstones in Ratho Cemetery. This was attended to fairly soon thereafter.
- Road flooding was reported following stormy weather and a number of gullies were cleared and some road edges swept clear of leaf debris. Significant flooding at gullies in North Street needed special attention, which did happen after intervention by Cllr Gardiner. There were choked gullies at other locations so residents were advised how to report these directly.
- A resident asked us to have the re-insulation and re-cladding of houses in Ratho stopped to avoid disturbance during the swift nesting season. CEC's housing section was unaware of this programme, but contact was made with the contractors who were aware of the issues around nesting swifts and organised their programme to take account of this.
- Residents reported a recent significant increase in speeding traffic, especially 4x4s and other large cars. This supports the case for speed monitoring and we have liaised with councillors and Roads Services on this.
- A Ratho Station resident had ongoing concerns about a potential vermin problem at the recycling bins in Scotmid car park. This was eventually resolved.
- Diversion signs suddenly appeared in Ratho over the Christmas period in connection with overnight resurfacing works on Cliftonhall Road. We asked to be informed of such works in advance in future and the engineer now keeps us well-informed of significant works in the area.

After most restrictions on freedom were lifted, I contacted Waste Services to ascertain if they had resumed supporting litter picking, which they had, albeit in a different way from previously. Our adult litter picking volunteers have now been able to resume their work on the approaches to the village on an individual basis – they do a splendid job and our thanks go to them.

I continue to attend the Canal Community Action Group via Zoom. Much of the agenda has been about the bicentenary of the opening of the canal. Fortunately restrictions have been lifted in time to allow a Flotilla Event which will stop overnight in Ratho on Friday 20 May. Different groups including the Seagull Trust have been liaising, the Gala Committee

is putting up bunting early in celebration, and the School Glee Club will be performing on the Saturday morning as the barges depart. Official scheduled monument consent was given by Historic Environment Scotland to affix plaques designating our canal bridge *Rusack's Bridge*. Other matters of concern to the group and to residents have included the increased usage of the towpath, litter, and sharing the space between walkers and cyclists. These issues were raised by the group with Scottish Canals.

I also represent the Community Council on the Edinburgh Airport Consultative Committee and have reported back, albeit a slightly gloomier picture than normal, at Community Council meetings.

All the issues raised by residents provide an interesting and varied life!

Kate Watt
May 2022