

GRANGE PRESTONFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL
16 October 2013

CHAIR'S REPORT to AGM

This is my last report as a member and Chair of the Community Council. I have reluctantly decided that I need to cut back on my commitments and so did not stand again to be a member. I thank all those members, residents, Councillors and officials who have been with us as we have grown and established this new Community Council since 2007. I personally have found it a very valuable experience and have grown in confidence with your support, to enable the Community Council effectively to represent the residents of our area.

I also thank the other office bearers. Vice-Chair, Tony Harris, has ably stood in at times when I have not been available as well as doing all the Planning work and representing us on the EACC and NP groups. Sue Tritton, Secretary, does a power of work keeping all our processes right, as well as ably representing us in a number of forums and Treasurer, Andreas Grothey, has kept our books accurately. Others have stepped in this year as well, particularly Mike Hunter in representing us over community safety matters and organising the production of our newsletter.

You will see from the reports of other office-bearers and interest groups the range of issues we have been involved with. I report here on the subjects in which I specifically have been involved.

Community Council Membership

During the year we lost John Fulford, Leyla Usmani and Mansour Ahmadian, but we were able to co-opt Janet Sidaway and Transition Edinburgh South joined us as a local interest group. A number of members have undergone serious operations but have recovered well to continue to play active roles in the Community Council.

Roads

The year was again dominated by roads issues.

Residents' Priority Parking

We were pleased to see City of Edinburgh Council come forward in August 2012 with an informal consultation on extending the RPP scheme to Blackford / Nether Liberton. The results showed that residents to the west of Mayfield Road did not consider a scheme necessary, but those to the east supported a scheme.

We also lobbied hard with CEC to propose a scheme for Priestfield. In March 2013 they put out an informal consultation on a scheme which we helped publicise. There was a large body of opinion in favour of it.

CEC decided to progress both schemes together, but have to date been unable to produce the necessary detailed drawings which would allow residents to see exactly what is proposed and comment accordingly. We have been pressing for this to happen in a public meeting before the statutory consultation process gets under way, but have had no news to date.

20 mph Limit

This pilot scheme was introduced across much of the area in March 2012. We were in regular contact with residents, CEC officials and the Police about how it was being monitored and enforced.

We were pleased to note that CEC did large scale surveys of residents before it was introduced and then during the summer of 2013. They also recorded before and after speeds on affected roads. The overall impact was positive and this was reported comprehensively to the CEC Transport and Environment Committee in August 2013. We were pleased to add our voice in support of the continuation of the scheme and indeed for similar schemes to be rolled out across other residential areas of the city.

Quality Bicycle Corridor

We were pleased to note the completion of this scheme through the area. We have also worked with traders in Ratcliffe Terrace and CEC Roads officials to ensure there is sufficient loading and unloading space for them.

While we think the re-design of the entrance to the King's Buildings at the junction of Mayfield Road and West Mains Road is an improvement, we recognise that the routing of the motor traffic is more controversial and perhaps does not work as well as had been hoped.

Dalkeith Road Pharmacy

We supported the renewed application for a Primary Care Contract by the Elixir Group to reopen a pharmacy on Dalkeith Road. Although the application was again turned down, as was the subsequent appeal, we have noted with pleasure that the Chair of the National Appeal Panel has decided NHS Lothian should re-hear the application.

Minto Street Surgery

We noted, perhaps with some disappointment, the decision of the Practice to close this branch surgery and transfer all their patients to their main surgery in Gilmerton.

Dalkeith Road

We were pleased to host Bill Elliott from Scottish Water to listen to issues raised by shopkeepers on Dalkeith Road about flooding of their premises. He subsequently acted very quickly to resolve the most immediate issues and has since been having the main drain surveyed to ensure it is operating satisfactorily. He also inspected the powered screen on the Pow Burn to ensure there is no flooding into the Lady Road allotments.

Members and residents have a number of times raised concerns about the state of the shop at the bottom of the parade and the fact that the owner has no interest in maintaining it. We have asked CEC to consider undertaking statutory repairs.

Newsletter

We circulated a newsletter in the summer to all households in the area keeping them up-to-date with the discussions and work of the Community Council.

Scheme for Community Councils

We responded to consultations on the Scheme for Community Councils and were pleased that many of our recommendations have now been incorporated in the new Scheme.

John Palmer
Chair