

## QDCC Communications Report - May 2018

Having spent an average of 4 hours per day on each of the first three cruise ship visits observing and engaging with operators, CEC officials, guides, local business owners and visitors, more feedback has been face to face rather than social media this month.

### Social media

**Environment** - Complaint about the **litter bin** on the Priory church grounds by The Binks overflowing and not fit for purpose due to open top. Also suggestion to engage with local takeaway outlets on the use of polystyrene containers.

Complaint about **Hawes Toilets** being locked from 5:45pm on Saturday of Bank Holiday weekend (Sat 26<sup>th</sup> May) and still locked until 2:30pm Sunday afternoon without explanation. Town busy, causing major issues.

Complaint about management of the **new synthetic pitch** at the Hub. I spoke with Allan Carson, and we published some ground rules. Many issues with litter, non-payers giving cheek. Operationally causes problems as only one staff on duty which means locking in gym users, etc. whilst the issue is dealt with on the pitch.

**Cable ties** reported found along beach by CleanFerry and Cub Scouts. Suspect from Corex parking restriction sign removals post liner days so relevant dept in CEC has been notified and promised preventative action if theirs.

**Transport** – complaint from a Lothian Bus driver about **Burgess Rd parking**, suggesting a one way system around QPS and various suggestions on yellow line improvements around the town which Grant has details of.

**First Bus** proposing to drop 22a service which affects the options for Queensferry direct to St Johns Hospital, Livingston. Consultation link posted on our Facebook page.

Complaint about the **High St pinch point traffic** lock ups particularly at weekends and coaches aggravating the situation.

Two complaints (same person, two occasions) over multiple **QHS construction traffic** not adhering to agreed route and using Rosebery Ave. Spoke with Jerram and appears to be resolved so far, not heard further complaint since.

### 'Place' workshop information

The main message was better public engagement, systems, information access and reporting by CEC. A traffic study is currently being led by Dave Sinclair and a Transport Strategy for Edinburgh is being led by Will Garrett for reporting by Spring 2019. A90 corridor issue recognised by all and radical solutions required.

Information from this event, CEC has £10m+ of unused s75 funds sitting waiting to be apportioned to a list of projects and improvements they were originally assigned to. Theoretical risk of developers recalling these unused funds beyond the agreed period.

## Cruise Ship visits

**Day 1** – An experience! I will spare the details but various spats with the private operator who occupied the Lothian Bus bays with 4 large hired coaches and refused to move. Whole situation that ensued was highly unprofessional and not great for passengers or Queensferry, Edinburgh or Scotland. Aside from that the x99 was extremely popular and buses well filled. Promenade coach park was full in the morning but empty by around 10:30am, partially re-filling around 12 to 2pm., then empty again by 2:30 pm until drop offs at 6pm.

**Day 2** – Lothian got one space in the assigned bays (RNLI bays), operator had reduced to a total of 2 coaches. Tempers flared even more than day 1. Again highly unprofessional.

**Day 3** – No private operator, Lothian x99 operating as intended. TTRO enforced by warden allowing easier turn for x99.

By day 3 the real issues were more visible:

- Lack of an 'Event Manager', PFSO getting drawn in to everything - traffic spats, taxi queuing, coach turning issues, TTRO breaches, etc. All with no remit or authority.
- Lothian need to streamline the ticket selling to load passengers more quickly as queues were blocking the through way on the pavement. An alternative queue line may also need to be agreed on the next visit (wed 30<sup>th</sup> May).
- Regularly three but up to four x99's queued at the Hawes – no need for more than the two for which bays are assigned under the TTRO..
- Promenade parking area can be used far more efficiently with a dynamic TTRO that reduces down the restricted area as the day progresses. There are a number of suggested ways this can be done and we have requested the future coach schedule from Intercruises to establish feasibility prior to a stakeholder meeting in June.
- Lack of currency exchange or an ATM within proximity is a significant issue, most of our local businesses are not of a mind to take foreign currency.
- Hawes toilets are heavily requested but an embarrassment at the gateway to Queensferry, Edinburgh and Scotland.
- Tour operator reps reporting a hostile environment towards them from some local businesses, even though they can spend significant money themselves let alone recommend to passengers.
- Signage promoting Queensferry High St is poor to non-existent. Many passengers alighting coaches mid day heading straight back to the ship. No "wow I need to go there" pictures of the High St or even promotional information signs. The QA signs are weathered, small print, historic info rather than promotional and rarely viewed by passing visitors on the way to the ship or coach.
- Contrary to popular belief there are significant numbers of passengers trawling the High St. However there is a lack of 'theatre' in my opinion, Caledonia Scotia and the shop next to it in the Bikers Cove area are the only businesses I witnessed creating 'event' by using simple gazebos and stock outside their shops. This is something we will hopefully pick up with the local businesses.