



# QUEENSFERRY and DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL



**CELEBRATING 31 YEARS 1986-2017**

## CORRESPONDENCE SECRETARY ANNUAL REPORT – 2016/2017

The role of the Community Council Correspondence Secretary is never a dull one. The Secretary is generally the initial point of contact for anyone wishing to talk to QDCC, be it local residents, the general public, elected members of CEC, Holyrood & Westminster, CEC officials, press journalists and even on the odd occasion tv and radio.

The main methods of communication tend to be email and phone for official correspondence and social media (Facebook). We do offer up a “Contact Us” facility through the Community Council website which averages 4 or 5 touches a month.

The past year has been dominated by both Community Council elections and more recently City of Edinburgh Council elections. The Community Council election took place across September/October, and once again QDCC barely received enough nominations to allow the Community Council to function. Suffice to say there was no need for an “actual election”

Just recently the City of Edinburgh Council elections were held. In a change from the previous election, Almond Ward now hosts 4 Ward Councillors. QDCC sends our thanks and appreciation to ex Councillors Paterson and Shields who decided against standing for re-election. We welcome back Councillor Work and extend a warm hand to Councillors Graham Hutchison, Kevin Lang and Louise Young. We look forward to a fruitful and mutually beneficial relationship.

The Community Council mailbox typically will contain a real mixed bag of topics, many of which are covered in more detail by my colleagues looking after planning, housing, transport, community safety and environmental matters.

Planning developments, schools, transport – both public and private, social housing, roads & pavements, domestic waste, dog fouling, noise complaints as well as issues such as Policing, City of Edinburgh Council (provision of services in general), requests to advertise community group, business or City of Edinburgh Council meetings/events, requests for help and assistance, road closures, speed limits, anti-social behaviour and so the list goes on.

From time to time we have dialogue with adjoining Community Councils (Cramond, Kirkliston) on shared matters of interest such as City of Edinburgh Council Transformation process or planning developments.

Occasionally mail intended for Queensferry Community Council in Flintshire, North Wales arrives in our in-box. We recently received an invitation to The Lord Mayors Ball!

We also receive and send information through social media – Facebook. We currently have over 2200 followers. Requests for help, assistance or information on Facebook are broadly similar to those received by e-mail

The Community Council website is also quite popular – although it is not visited as widely as Facebook. It is updated at least monthly to contain business meeting agendas and minutes as well as reports from office bearers and sub-committee convenors, as well as any other relevant information such as planning consultations. We also will post specific requests such as those received from Police Scotland on any current hot topics.

As the Community Council Secretary I am quite often contacted by newspapers to provide a comment or a position statement for topical issues.

I have spoken over the past few months to various journalists on planning and housing developments, school provision, withdrawal of Stagecoach bus service, closure of the Clydesdale Bank in the High Street, delay in the opening of Queensferry Crossing, house prices across the town, High Street congestion, Network Rail plans for a walking experience on the Forth Bridge and many other topics.

Not all contacts end up in print, or indeed sometimes only selective parts are used.

However more and more we are seeing journalists pulling information from our Facebook pages and these ending up in articles.

Terry Airlie

Vice Chair & Correspondence Secretary – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017