

QDCC Report – GMcK – Sep’17

Community feedback

QC Opening

- Bridge walks extremely well received and ran very smoothly. Much positive feedback towards QDCC for negotiating and facilitating the extra walks on the Sun and Tues. Great atmosphere on these walks especially the Tues where many neighbours, friends, families, etc. thanked and commented to us on sharing a lovely relaxed walk having previously disappointingly lost out in the ballot.
- Complaints related to lack of public notice on the QC light show, lack of ‘event’ in Queensferry itself and obviously the traffic issues once open.

There is a danger that TS’ approach of avoiding an influx by not advertising the light show is an early indicator of a ‘closed for business’ attitude towards Queensferry where major events are now concerned.

This really does bring the issues of traffic management and parking in Queensferry to the forefront. There have been calls by residents to address these issues, questioning the traffic monitoring process in place (or not) following the QC opening. It has been questioned what QDCC’s engagement in traffic monitoring has been.

Queensferry Crossing roundabout is the focus of complaint relating to blocking of east/west running traffic by north bound slip road queues. Yellow boxes and traffic lights (Newton side) being suggested as solutions.

Hopetoun crossroads has been mentioned as a dangerous pinch point with parking on both sides. This was exasperated by the Farquhar Terrace road works and additional traffic flow post QC open.

Builyeon Rd traffic volume and queues has drawn attention to the future proposal taking this road through the new development.

Bo’ness Rd has been a focal point for traffic volume, speed and thus unsafe crossing. A petition has been started by local parents, residents and the Echline school crossing patrol calling for an urgent review of speed reduction, traffic calming and crossing points.

Discussion points:

1. Whilst it is still early days after the QC opening to go accurately suggesting what adjustments need made, it is clear that there is concern about the effectiveness or even existence of traffic monitoring processes. This needs clarified to restore some public confidence.
2. The wider issue of traffic flow and parking in Queensferry needs considerable focus now. We previously briefly discussed the possibility of land allocation for parking from areas such as the Dalmeny Estate. This needs further discussion and investigation. The B924 approach from the east is by far the most desirable route in to Queensferry, negating the need to unnecessarily load all the problem roads. We need to look at maximising the use of that route.
3. We now have public calls for safe crossings on The Loan, Ferrymuir and Bo’ness Rd. An ‘either or’ is of no use, the importance of all three needs fought for.

QHS Planning Submission

Independent community access, six lane pool, sauna, steam room, theatre, fitness suite, games hall, cinema facility all well received by the community as expected. The discussion about shared access during school hours remains to be had down the line. As it stands QHS would appear to be resistant to this concept on child protection grounds despite the successful Lasswade model about to be emulated in the Newbattle build. One for another day nearer the time.

Youth Engagement

The Youth Engagement group met with Scott Donkin & Isla Anderson on 1st Sep to receive an overview of the Youth Talk project aimed to engage our young community in discussion and draw feedback on issues and desires from a young perspective. A follow up meeting with Isla is scheduled for 5th Oct to build some practical structure to the project implementation. We have brought in a couple of Kirkliston based people including the chair of the QHS Parent Council to facilitate inclusion and KCC has also been asked to nominate a member.

Our relationship with QHS management continues to grow positively and constructively. Neil and I were asked to help facilitate some community based work experience for S6 pupils as part of their curriculum. We met the pupils and brought along, Isla, Bruce Nisbet from the Fire Service and Iwan Thomas, park ranger. Session went very well and as a result Neil has already set them on a program working with GreenFerry, CleanFerry and Friends of Ferry Glen, first sessions going impressively. Much more we can and will offer on this program to mutual benefit.

I also attended the QHS S1 parents' induction sessions which Neil runs along with Amy Campbell (Careers Coach) introducing the parents to the excellent support facilities that Neil delivers for QHS pupils by way of mentoring, mock interviews, career discussion and general prep for the real world. Neil also discussed the parents' role in encouraging the pupils' engagement in local clubs, groups, sports and facilities and the potholes it helps them to avoid in the ensuing years. I hope to continue supporting Neil with this very worthy and externally under recognised cause.

We are also due to meet Natalie Honeyford early Oct to discuss the QHS pupil councils' progress.

This all forms part of QDCC's overall objective to positively and constructively engage our younger residents in the community issues, ideas, decisions and development.

Our intention is for the Youth Engagement Group to be a constantly evolving body rather than a static board. Whilst we aim to keep a core membership of maybe 3 or 4, we expect parents, residents, group or facility organisers, etc. to dip in and out. Please let us know if you are interested in becoming involved in this highly important and forward thinking project.

Others

Defibrillators

We helped boost a mini campaign on the registration of defibrillators with the Scottish Ambulance Service. Anne Marie Appleby had started this but I managed to get the info on existing units and registrations within Queensferry and Dalmeny which stands at 3 registered out of at least 11 identified in the area. These unregistered units are effectively invisible to emergency services. Good response from the public but we will find out next month if we have managed to get any more custodians to register the units.

Tesco trolleys

CleanFerry members unhappy about Tesco's response on trolley control. I have requested a meeting with John Thompson (Tesco Manager) along with David Hutcheson to establish Tesco's objection to either border limiters (magnetic wheel locks) or coin control.

Tesco Bags Of Help Scheme

This is a great scheme which we need to encourage more local groups to apply for. Christmas in Queensferry is already streaking ahead for the up to £4k first award (although not seen how it compares in the D.Mains and Parkgrove stores yet).

Scouts

Neil and I met with Jonathan Clarkson who is working with the Scouts. They urgently need a voluntary Caretaker (two hours per week) and Scout Leaders (full training given).

VAT Run

Attended their AGM. They need additional skill sets on the committee, particularly fundraisers, organisers, marketing person and someone to drive it and bring new ideas. Iwan will continue working on it on a purely voluntary basis as his new role in CEC does not involve this project so his hours allocated will not be as abundant as previously.

Communication

Local Directory Live

Second edition of Community Council News to go out in LDL October/Nov Issue at start of Oct. All content has been submitted. Could do with some feedback from offline residents on the value of this to establish whether we continue beyond the end of the year. Anything you can gather after it is distributed by way of qualitative and quantitative feedback would be appreciated.

LDL have increased the print by 1000 to 7500 for this run and they have two Perspex floor standing dispensers to home. I have made enquiries with Scotmid on The Loan who are on board subject to clearance from Head Office. Tesco has been suggested but may be more difficult to cut through the red tape, however the Doctors' surgery take loose bundles already so will likely take a stand. Bear in mind we are predominantly aiming to reach the offline community members with this.

Internal Communication within QDCC

Finally, just putting this one out there for consideration (or not)...

We are all aware of the QDCC email traffic that occurs when we are in busy periods or where interaction/reply is requested, the bridge walk being a recent extreme example for many of us that became impossible to capture everything. I personally could not have facilitated the 775 people walking the bridge through 31 leaders (and the subsequent additional 150 through another 6 leaders that Grant took on) in that timescale purely by email. I set up a Facebook group for the leaders and this instantly made the process manageable with shared information and files accessible to all without duplication and clear visibility allowing leaders to interact, swap vacancies, information and support each other.

I know most but not all QDCC members have access to a Facebook profile. My recommendation would be to set up a QDCC Facebook group purely for QDCC members. A closed group would mean the public could see members' names but no content. A secret group would mean no one apart from the members invited to join would see anything or even know it existed.

This would make online interaction between members far easier, more efficient and effective than the current often lengthy email trails. It would also make historical publications and subsequent discussions far easier to find. The QDCC sub-groups could set up their own messenger group for quick communication and discussion. Terry, Diane, Grant and I have used such a messenger facility for several months now to great effect and I use it with all the admin team members of the respective groups I manage.

I respect that possibly some members not on Facebook may not wish to change that situation but I am happy to support anyone in setting up a profile that protects their identity and address any issues they may have with it. I am also happy to take on the transfer of incoming emails to the Facebook group as and when required.

Just a suggestion, let me know your views on Monday night.

END OF REPORT

Graeme McKinley