



### **Chair's Report 2021/2022**

In presenting my report I am fortunate in having a good team around me so I thank my colleagues, especially Secretary Russell Leaper and Carol Anne Campbell, Treasurer and KCN Editor, who have the main workload.

Perhaps we are now beginning to emerge from Covid and this AGM is our first meeting in the Community Centre since February 2020.

Our traditional community council activities over this last year have mostly been in the following areas:

- Pursuing local issues including, noise nuisance, dumping complaints and road safety;
- Noise complaints at Annat have lessened but we were disappointed that the proposed community liaison group was stopped on appeal by the applicant;
- We commended the A830 Group for the work they did in identifying trunk road concerns and we took these forward with Transport Scotland and BEAR, though some items are still outstanding, such as village gateway signs and the trunk road speed review. We hope that the noisy gullies and ironwork will have been solved with the recent resurfacing in Corpach;
- We are pleased about 30mph repeater stickers for wheelie bins, though usage could be greater. We hope to have these on the 20mph restricted through routes too, such as Banavie and Camaghael;
- There is likely to be a variation in the speed limit on the A830, subject to consultation and the 20mph limit on side roads is likely to become permanent;
- Dumping at Mount Alexander has increased again but we aim to have a clear up there in the Autumn and expect SEPA to enforce as necessary;
- Responding to Highland Council Planning on proposals that will affect us. Commenting on STPR2 and a private members bill on fly-tipping in the Scottish Parliament;
- Communication and engagement with the community via:
  - Newsletters, website, Twitter and Facebook, our noticeboards and suggestion boxes. The website has been replaced and making changes is now within our control. Email hosting has changed too;
  - Kilmallie Community News, which is justifiably a source of pride for us; 1,000 copies are produced and delivered free of charge to every home and business in Kilmallie. The editorial team of Carol Anne and Ann as well as the distributors deserve our thanks. We now have annual sponsorship pledges and can be confident of its future; thank you. While we were disappointed with the demise of Printsmith, the Oban Times introduced us to J Thomson Colour Printers, for which we are grateful.

Projects have been difficult to take forward owing to Covid as much of our activity has been online, however I must mention the Hardship Fund, the Helpline and the Community Cupboard which evolved into the Community Fridge which is a very significant facility. This celebrates its anniversary in August and Carol Anne and her team of volunteers deserve our appreciation. Most importantly, thanks are due to those businesses and individuals who donate items daily, without whom there would be no stock at all! This facility is for us all, even if we can afford to buy food; it's about minimising waste and we can all play our part in that. We don't want items to go to the community fridge only to be dumped.

We are pleased that Highland E-Bikes now have a Corpach base but are disappointed that Banavie was dropped.

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**KILMALLIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

We now have a standing agenda item to encourage ideas that will lessen the effect of our lifestyles on climate change. There was interest in allotments for a time and we hope that can be taken forward with the Highland Council, which has a responsibility under the Community Empowerment Act 2015 to encourage these.

The community's thanks are due to the Kilmallie Community Company, particularly Roddy Mainland and Dougie Dykes, for erecting the handrail at the War Memorial. Colin Woods is our nominee to the Community Company.

Our community councillors have attended other meetings: the Active Travel Group, the Transport Forum, the Blàr Mòr Community Liaison Group and the new Belford Hospital project, or more properly Lochaber Health and Social Care Redesign since there are broader issues than a new hospital building. We also attend the Linnhe Community Alliance which has done well to open up Fort William 2040 and get places on its Transport Working Group and the new Community Stakeholders' Group.

We are not fully happy with the Blàr Mòr Community Liaison Group as it is choosing to restrict itself to housing matters. There are concerns about the proposed primary school, cycle routes, vehicle charging points, the bus link from the Health Centre, the delay in house occupation and the 'superstore' sign.

Our annual grant from the Highland Council remained stable this year although we have taken advantage of some Covid-related funding opportunities.

Our other thanks are due to many people:

- our supportive Highland Councillors, Allan Henderson, Ben Thompson and Denis Rixson who had a good record of attending our meetings. We have three new members in Liz Siggers, Andrew Baldrey and John Grafton. We wish them well and hope they will be able to set aside their political differences for the benefit of Kilmallie and Ward 11;
- Police officers Paige Macdonald and Leigh Brown;
- Joy Biggin, who again did the annual inspection of our accounts;
- Mark Entwistle and Fiona Scott of the Lochaber Times who regularly report our activities;
- the public who attend our meetings; our business must be done in the eyes of the Community.

It can be very rewarding to serve on a community council. Kilmallie remains the biggest development area in Lochaber with the new Belford, the West Highland College UHI STEM Centre and houses on the Blàr Mòr, together with the Marina and always changes at Annat. We should all be glad that we have a Community Council; some places don't have and you have shown that you support us when it's critical. We are looking at co-opting, partly in order to prepare for the November 2023 CC elections.

I hope that I have covered our activities and concerns adequately.

Thank you all.

**John C Hutchison**

**Chair**

**27 June 2022**

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