

## **DAMHEAD AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL AGM, 10 May 2017**

### **Secretary's Report: Ailsa Carlisle and Jo Gillies**

The secretary's role mainly consists of ensuring that everything is well organised and runs smoothly. This means being organised for meetings and ensuring everyone knows when and where these are taking place. The main way in which we communicate this information across the community is by email. We have a database of email addresses, which is held securely by the Secretary and Chair, and which we use to send out information about DDCC elections and meetings, issues of interest and other useful dates for your diary. Other information includes updates relating to significant planning matters, such as the film studio and realignment of the A701, or information relating to community events, such as litter picks and the summer gathering. This is the quickest and easiest way to ensure everyone is kept informed. If residents would like to receive this type of information from us, then please pass your email address to us at a meeting, or send an email to [ddcc@mfcc.info](mailto:ddcc@mfcc.info) Email addresses collated for this purpose are not shared with anyone else.

A significant amount of useful information is also available on the DDCC website which can be found at [www.damheadcc.org.uk](http://www.damheadcc.org.uk) John Marsh has modernised the website and ensures it is kept up to date, with the minutes of meetings, information about relevant planning applications, and a wide range of other information that might be of interest across the community.

A new DDCC noticeboard has also been procured (with a significant contribution made towards costs by the MFCC) to provide an additional mechanism for sharing information, and this will be erected in the near future at Old Pentland Graveyard.

Although good communication and organisation is important, an effective community council relies on the efforts of all residents across the community, including the DDCC councillors. This ensures that the community council is run by members of the community for and on behalf of all members of the community. DDCC meetings are more productive when members of the community raise issues that are important to them, contribute their views, and play their role in taking forward matters. This might involve contributing your views to the discussion at meetings, or emailing comments to the DDCC councillors, or taking forward your own action on issues that are important to you, such as contributing some refreshments to the Summer Gathering get-together, or submitting your own comments to Midlothian Council on planning applications of interest. Getting involved in this way helps ensure the Community Council is representing all members of the community, and has a stronger voice on issues of community-wide importance. We will continue to make sure that meetings dates are agreed well in advance, and that opportunities are provided for issues raised by residents to be discussed at these meetings. The DDCC can also support issues that are being taken forward by individuals in the DDCC area, so let us know if there are issues or activities that would benefit from this.

### **Specific activities this year**

Six meetings have taken place since the last AGM. For each of these the secretary role has been to arrange dates, invite Midlothian Councillors and residents, liaise with Police Scotland to ensure their presentation of the regular crime and traffic report, collate agenda items, and ensure minutes are accurate and distributed promptly, etc. As well as the Police Scotland report, agenda items regularly focus on planning and development issues, as well as a wide range of other issues, ranging from consideration of fly tipping to

deer control within the locality to road safety through to climate change implications. We are keen to ensure that information from the meetings is circulated as far as possible across the community. As well as emailing residents, minutes are also shared with Midlothian Council Councillors and Liaison Officer, as well as a copy being made available at Loanhead Library.

In addition to the regular DDCC meetings, Ailsa and John Marsh have regularly attended the monthly MFCC meetings to represent the DDCC area and interests, and to feed back information to DDCC and residents as appropriate.

The Secretary role also involves ensuring that the requirements of the Midlothian Scheme of Community Councils and the DDCC Constitution are met, including for example that meetings are quorate.

Following publication of the Midlothian Scheme for Community Councils in June 2014, Community Councils were obliged to update their constitutions to ensure they aligned with new requirements. This had to be completed within three years, or by the following election of community councillors, whichever was soonest. The DDCC therefore recently reviewed and updated the constitution and this was ratified at the DDCC meeting in September 2016, and then by Midlothian Council in advance of the November 2016 meeting. A copy of the new constitution is available on the DDCC website at [www.damheadcc.org.uk](http://www.damheadcc.org.uk). One of the new commitments of the Midlothian Scheme is to provide a Secretary's Report at each AGM; and this is the first of these reports.

**Jo Gillies**  
**DDCC**  
**May 2017**