

# THE BRIGS

WINTER EDITION 2012/13



Photograph: John Rutherford

## Your Community Council Newsletter Covering the Bridge of Don and Danestone

### Forward from the Chair...

Welcome to the first edition of our brand new newsletter "The Brig". We hope you will find it useful, informative and entertaining.

It has been another busy year for the Community Council during 2012, with planning issues and local bus services top of the list again. This year commenced with the discovery of a controversial proposal to construct a Traveller site for twenty or so caravans on an inappropriate site, without any consultation with the residents of Bridge of Don or the Community Council.

Community Council elections were held in October and the first meeting of the new Bridge of Don Community Council was held in November. Names and contact details for the new Office Bearers can be found on our website [www.thebrigonline.com](http://www.thebrigonline.com) along with future meeting dates, Agendas and Minutes of past meetings.

We also have a facebook page, so if you are on facebook, look us up under Bridge of Don Community Council and say hello. We look forward to hearing from you - or if you prefer, come along to one of our meetings at Scotstown School and have your say.

Sheila Young.

### Bridge of Don Welcomes First Responder Service



Image of First Responders courtesy of Evening Express

We are a fairly new service, having gone live at the end of September 2012, operating in the Bridge of Don, Danestone and surrounding areas in collaboration with the Scottish Ambulance Service. We replicate many First Responder schemes around the UK providing an additional *first response* resource in Bridge of Don, Danestone and the surrounding area.

The role of the First Responder is to attend life threatening emergency 999 calls from their own home.

The First Responder is alerted at the same time as the Ambulance Services and so, given the locality of the responder to the address of the call, they will be able to attend more quickly. The First Responder will provide the patient with life saving emergency aid until the Ambulance crew arrives and takes over their care.

All of the training for volunteers is provided by the Scottish Ambulance Service to a high standard. We do also undertake regular training within our own organisation. The only requirements for becoming one of our responders are that you live in the Bridge of Don or Danestone and that you have a vehicle which is suitable for responding to emergency calls. We currently have seven trained members with two more awaiting their initial training from Scottish Ambulance Service

We would like to thank the residents of Bridge of Don and Danestone for voting for us with their green tokens as their winner at ASDA Bridge of Don in December.

The money raised will go towards essential life saving equipment which as a charity we are raising funds for. If you would like to learn more about the First Responder Service in Bridge of Don please contact the Service Co-ordinator Richard Walker by e-mail:

[Richard.walker@bddfrs.org.uk](mailto:Richard.walker@bddfrs.org.uk)

First Responder is a Registered Charity in Scotland No SC043319



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# The Bridge of Don Association Community Centre

Following changes by the local authority in 2011 to the running of Community Centres, a local management committee was formed for Bridge of Don Community Centre with the core objective of identifying the wishes and interests of the local community and establishing the most effective means of making these objectives materialise. Although some groups did find other venues during the inevitable transition period, the Bridge of Don Community Centre can offer a wide variety of interests and activities for the community. The ever increasing array of activities at the Centre includes:

## HANDSS (Helping Additional Needs Develop Social Skills)

HANDSS is a weekly club for children who receive support for learning or have additional support needs such as autism spectrum disorder or ADHD. It offers various sports' activities, games, arts and crafts. Parents stay, giving them the opportunity to join in games, have a cuppa and chat with other parents. It meets on Tuesdays from 6.15pm to 7.30pm.

## Short Mat Bowling

Meets on Tuesday and Friday evenings from 7.00pm to 9.00pm. The Short Mat Bowling is an established group.

## Youth Club

Wednesday evenings have been reserved for a potential Youth Club. Discussions are taking

place to determine the venue and structure of an evening service for the young people of the Bridge of Don.

## The Discussion Group

Meets on Thursday afternoons from 1.30pm to 3.00pm. This is a longstanding and active group.

## Computer Course

A beginners' computer course was held on Thursday evenings from 7.00pm to 9.00pm. We hope to continue with computer classes.

## Badminton Class

Local residents contacted the management committee to discuss the possibility of a badminton class. This class meets on Saturday mornings from 10.00 am to 12 noon. This class is open to all ages but youngsters who are under the age of 16 years must be accompanied by an adult.

## The Youth Forum

The Youth Forum held a Showcase Night on 13th November. Despite considerable planning and advertising, the event was not as well attended as hoped. There had been a career based Youth Showcase at the Exhibition Centre during the day. We had been unaware of this when we set our date. That said the youth organisations, who provided stalls, found the networking useful.

In conjunction with the Bridge of Don Academy pupils and staff and Jayne Buchan of Aberdeen City Council, we are embarking on a very interesting intergenerational project using a software programme called "MyLife".

This programme is used in reminiscing and other exercises with older people and seeks to share the experiences and values of different generations. The young people will provide the confident technical assistance. This unique and invaluable programme is in its early stages, however, all concerned with this project are enthusiastic.

In the New Year we hope to have tasters in "Painting with Water Colours" and Yoga.

The badminton class presents a good example of Community Centre development where inspiration has come from members of the community.

We would be pleased to welcome you to the Community Centre to discuss any ideas you may have or if you would like to be involved on the management committee. Equally, if any of the programmes appeal to you, do not hesitate to get involved.

The Community Centre team can be contacted on telephone number is 701160 Monday to Saturday 9am to 5pm.

Catherine Mason

## It's Senior Citizens Party Time Again!

This year's Senior Citizen Party will be held on the afternoon of the 11<sup>th</sup> April at the British Legion, Balgownie Road.

There is a warm welcome awaiting any senior citizen resident in Bridge of Don or Danestone who would like to attend.

We were delighted that so many were in attendance to enjoy the event last year. The Ladies of the British Legion provided

delicious catering which the band "Sounds Familiar" complimented with first class entertainment. Afternoon tea, excellent music and dancing were the order of the day.

Last year's guests of honour were the Lord and Lady Provost.

A good time was had by one and all of the eighty or so guests that attended.

If you would like to come along and partake in the enjoyment please contact – Jane Adam on 703210 or Isobyl McLeod on 703230 or e-mail bodccsec@btinternet.com.

Transport can be arranged in advance on request.

We hope to see you there!



The Local Councillor Shadowing Award program offers a chance to experience leadership directly from the point of view of an elected politician

Over the last few months Becky Christie and Chris Cromar have been shadowing one of the local councillors – Muriel Jaffrey.

They both thoroughly enjoyed the experience and learnt a lot about the workings of local politics. They both said they now know more about what happens within the Council and realised the importance of voting.

A minimum of ten hours is required to complete the scheme, but both Becky and Chris far exceeded the ten hours due to their interest in what goes on.

As well as attending Council committee meetings they had the opportunity to attend site meetings

– for planning judgements and official engagements to name but a few.

During the shadowing process there is a fairly detailed log book to be completed which once completed is sent to the British Youth Council for verification.

Becky and Chris were the only two taking part in the scheme in Aberdeen.

On 15<sup>th</sup> May they were awarded their certificates from the British Youth Council at the Community Council meeting.

The Community Council feel they would like to give two more youngsters this opportunity. If you would like to find out more about the scheme please contact the Community Council secretary on 703230 or e-mail at bodccsec@btinternet.com

## Local Councillor Shadowing



## Reports from your Local Councillors

Eight Councillors are regularly invited to Bridge of Don Community Council meetings. Since Danestone is covered by the Bridge of Don Community Council, in addition to Councillors Muriel Jaffrey, Sandy Stuart, Willie Young and John Reynolds, who serve Bridge of Don, Councillors Barney Crockett, Graham Lawrence, Neil MacGregor and Gill Samarai are also invited as their ward is Bucksburn Danestone and Dyce. All Councillors were invited to submit an article.

### Councillor Sandy Stuart

First and foremost I'd like to take the opportunity to wish everyone a happy and prosperous new year.

On the run up to the festive season, as usual, there were plenty of invites going around, but the only one I managed to attend was Braehead Primary school Concert. It was great fun. Everybody deserves credit for what was an excellent production by the staff and the children not just parents who helped out, but all parents who allowed their children to participate.

Before the Christmas celebrations, of course, was bonfire night which was also a great success. Full marks to all the organisers in what was a true community spectacle.

I would like to take this opportunity of wishing Daphne McWilliam all the best in her new role as head of Bridge of Don Academy. The job is perfect for her and she is perfect for the job. Thanks go to Mr Harland for his contribution to Bridge of Don Academy and all the best in his retirement. That's it folks, have a great 2013.

Cllr Sandy Stuart, Bridge of Don

### Councillor Neil Mac Gregor

The European-funded, Aberdeen-led SURF (Sustainable Urban Fringes) project centred on the Don celebrates the river. Leisure is a significant business; wise cities capitalise on their rivers and attract people who enjoy strolling to cafes and restaurants, museums and galleries. Yet we lack elementary connectivity.

This is obvious to anyone who lives north of the Don. Traffic Congestion induces poor use of time, energy and money as well as potentially discouraging business investment in the area.

Time is money: communities suffer where links are absent.

From Aberdeen airport, we can rapidly reach important European destinations including France, Denmark, Germany, Norway, The Netherlands and, yes, England. Potential investors need easy access to city centre and residential districts from airports. The rational approach is to complete the new Don crossing and AWPR *before* the Haudagain upgrade, otherwise journey times will very likely exponentially increase.

Better use of existing infrastructure could certainly be achieved if more car drivers used public transport. This could be achieved if the service was of a comparable standard: quick, comfortable and convenient. Interestingly this could present a perpetually positive cycle, more car drivers using buses would reduce congestion, which would reduce travel times and costs which in turn would encourage more use public transport.

In order to fund the services our citizens need, making Aberdeen more attractive for residents and visitors it is essential that our infrastructure needs to improve. Our long-term success depends on effective investment in it.

Cllr Neil Mac Gregor,  
Bucksburn, Danestone & Dyce.

### Councillor Muriel Jaffrey

Firstly, I would like to wish all readers a very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2013.

When I was the Councillor for Donmouth all Councillors had a dedicated ward budget.

I paid for 28 hanging baskets attached to lamp posts on the Bridge of Don to accommodate flowers in the summer and Christmas lights in winter. The annual maintenance costs £2000.

After the demise of Ward budgets the Community Council invited firms in Bridge of Don to contribute to the upkeep of the

baskets. Only one small local business and Royal Aberdeen Golf course responded positively.

The floral baskets enhance the visual appearance of the entrance to Bridge of Don for residents and visitors alike. In 2011 I persuaded a businessman from West Aberdeenshire to make a contribution for a sizeable proportion of the sum required.

In 2012 there was no money at all, hence no baskets!!

My Ward budget also financed the first Christmas lights on Bridge of Don. Now the Bridge of Don Community Council pays for the upkeep of the lights from their limited grant. Disappointingly, the Don bridge lights were operational much later than anticipated and the Community Council budget was insufficient to provide for a full compliment of Christmas lights for Persley bridge.

It is disappointing given some of the large, well financed companies in Bridge of Don that contributions to the appearance of the entrance of the Bridge of Don are so poorly supported whilst companies in the south of the city have paid for the lovely flowers situated along the river Dee and roundabout by the King George VI bridge.

It is hoped that this disparity will change for the better in 2013.

One achievement I was most satisfied with in 2012 was to help a lady who had been homeless since August to get accommodation. The lady and her dogs had been sleeping outdoors in temperatures as low as minus five degrees.

Cllr Muriel Jaffrey, Bridge of Don

## Councillor Barney Crockett

My report may be shorter than usual as I am recovering, like so many others, from the winter vomiting illness! It should teach me to count my blessings.

Certainly I had a great Christmas which allowed time to reflect on a busy time as leader of the City Council.

Readers in the Bridge of Don will be particularly interested in the business developments looming such as the Core business park. Most will welcome the jobs and facilities on our doorstep though of course individual concerns will be watched carefully by the community council and addressed through the planning system.

I was especially pleased to launch the first work on the long awaited AWPR. This has enormous importance for the Bridge of Don and is the key to improving transport for the area.

A great encouragement to the whole city was the Community Stars event at the Town House. One of my two nominated stars was Lyndsay Johnstone for her work at Danestone Community Centre. She had to come to the reception straight from her march down Union Street as an elf!

The whole event showed Aberdeen in a good light, foregrounding the great contribution made by volunteers in our community.

One challenge of Danestone is that it throws up the biggest variety of casework of any part of the city. So next time I will cover some of those issues.

Cllr Barney Crockett, Bucksburn, Danestone & Dyce.

## Councillor Gill Samarai

New Year is a perfect time for reflection, to celebrate our accomplishments, reflect on our past actions and to plan how to continue propelling forward in the forthcoming year.

So looking forward to the forthcoming year, I was delighted to be included by the Danestone Primary Parent Council at Danestone Primary School along with my fellow Councillors regarding their fundraising activities for their new library. Several meetings have taken place and my colleagues and I hope to visit with the School early in the New Year.

I would also take this opportunity of congratulating the Danestone Primary School Parents who participated in the Tesco Bag Packing fundraising which took place over the festive period and which I understand raised around £700 towards the library fund.

I am also pleased to report that the Bridge of Don Community Council have also pledged to make a donation towards the fund.

As an elected Councillor for the Dyce, Bucksburn and Danestone Ward, I have had the pleasure of meeting the members of all three Community Councils. As one might expect they all comprise of dedicated, hardworking and passionate people.

It is my firm belief that a good understanding of local issues is an essential and integral part of making positive contributions towards the Local Community of which the Community Council form a good point of focus.

Cllr Gill Samarai, Bucksburn, Danestone & Dyce.

### A word of Thanks from the Editor

It's been a pleasure putting this first edition of The Brigs together. I hope you have enjoyed the newsletter.

I'd like to thank the following people for their invaluable support: Lesley Glasser from the Bucksburn News, John and Suzanne Rutherford for their kind permission to use their photographs, McKenzie Print, my colleagues in the Bridge of Don Community Council and, of course, all contributors, supporters and patrons.

The Bridge of Don Community Council works hard to promote a stronger sense of community in Bridge of Don and we'd be pleased to see you get involved. Whether you might like to attend and contribute to meetings or perhaps prepare an article for The Brigs. Articles should be two hundred words or so, and in line with other Community publications, publishing is at the discretion of the editor.

If you have any comments, suggestions or would like to get in touch regarding "The Brigs", you can contact the team at [TheBrigsEditor@gmail.com](mailto:TheBrigsEditor@gmail.com)

See you next time. Ed.

