

## **Bridge of Don Community Council Chair's Report for 2023 AGM**

This is a time to look back on what this group of volunteers have achieved as members of the Bridge of Don, Community Council.

The past year saw the reintroduction of some activities, some new activities and more involvement with groups and individuals within the Bridge of Don after a turbulent couple of years.

In planning, Cloverhill looks like it has approximately a fifth of the houses built, however there are many drivers who are not adhering to the reduced speed limit on Ellon Road which will continue and reduce further at school times when the scheme is occupied. This concern was flagged numerous times by this community council. We hope that appropriate measures are put in place as we have suggested to stop this. No movement on Starbucks yet, one to watch. As for the LDP, areas deemed undesirable remains that way for this time around. As there were Councillor Elections last year, we took the opportunity to write to the party leaders to express our concern on the lack of representation for Bridge of Don on the planning committee, as we know there is now a Bridge of Don Councillor on that committee now.

There have been 000's of bulbs planted throughout the community, some from ACC and some from the Rotary, all of which will bring some lovely colour to the area, as usual this caused some interest, with local residents, with some stopping for a chat at our planting sessions. Delighted to say that the Enhance Provision Pupils from Bridge of Don Academy have been involved too, the session was a really good, and the children are looking forward to a further session, planting the Queens Canopy trees later this year. The planters added more colour throughout the area, with a new one provided by the Community Council to the Ashwood and Woodcroft Green Spaces group who are recently formed. Tom's community garden continues to go from strength to strength. The flower baskets on the bridge were particularly pretty, we received some lovely comments via social media, unfortunately there were also some feedback on the state of the lamp posts themselves, something we have been pursuing with the council. A sterling job completed on all the benches in the area, with the needed repairs organised before they got a fresh lick of paint. We did have some disappointing news about the living Christmas tree purchased from and planted by ACC in Westfield Park. The tree was pulled out and left lying on the ground, even with the great care and attention given to try and bring it back to life, it did not survive.

There has been a lot of discussion and work on Scotstown Moor to stop the decline of the rare species that exists there, it is these species that make the moor a site of special scientific interest. The rangers have indicated this could involve some tree felling, drainage and planting of new trees, they are currently working with consultants to move this forward. The issue about a new sign for the moor goes on! There was some excellent work completed on the River Don Our Heritage Trail, with Ian Talboys spending some of his retirement to get this finished, with the consensus being well worth a look.

The Health Partnership meetings kicked off again, this is such an important topic, which we need to have an input to, these can be frustrating sometime as not much emphasis given to our area. We have supported some university students with queries on the Bridge of Don area, which will be used as part of their course work.

The Bridge of Don Garden Competition was reintroduced, with a flyer being produced and circulated to many groups and with a few encouraging chats we had some entries including

Middleton Park School. Terry the chair of the Aberdeen RHS, came along and did the judging, he was very impressed. Let's see what this year brings.

A new activity for the Community Council was registering for Its Your Neighbourhood, a lot of work went into pulling all the needed information together, and taking the adjudicators around the area to prove things were in place. Fantastic result for our first year when we were awarded a Level 4 (thriving). Tom's community garden also received a certificate of recognition.

The newsletter was reintroduced again last year, with a Summer & Christmas edition being posted online. There were lots of groups within the area who submitted an item, definitely a good read, they both gave lots of information to the community of what was going on and forthcoming events.

Many of the Community Council are involved with the Friends of Westfield Park, there are lots of exciting things happening there which will be great for the community.

Last year the A Better Bridge of Don, became a subgroup within the Community Council, with a remit being agreed, the group consists of 17 members from 12 different groups within the area. Last year a Jubilee picnic in June was arranged in Westfield Park, with a visit from Mr Whippy. A second Christmas Event went ahead, with some more activities including photo boards made by the Mens Shed which were very popular. The event was very well attended.

As a group of 12, what we have achieved last year was fantastic, thank you, thank you for all that you do for our community. I appreciate your passion and determination to get things done. I know that there are situations that arise that frustrate us, the lack of response to queries we raise with the Council our Councillors and external bodies, which often appear to go down a big black hole and elongate matters or in some instances are never resolved. Let us hope that this year will be different and that we are successful in a recruitment drive to increase our members. Bridge of Don is a huge area and there is just so much we can do. Thank you all again.



