

# **GAVINTON, FOGO & POLWARTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**AGM: Gavinton Village Hall - 7.30 pm Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

### **CC Membership**

There have been significant changes in your Community Council during the past year. Our former Chair, John Marjoribanks and Treasurer, Pete Gibbens resigned from both the CC and their posts after six years' and eight years' service respectively. Margaret Bishop a longstanding member and former Chair of the CC also resigned. I would like to record the CC's thanks to all three for their valuable contribution over many years. It has been much appreciated.

In October 2014 I took on the role of Chair, Jean Coleman that of Vice Chair (and Resilient Communities Co-ordinator with Ellen Curran), Kerry Renton that of Treasurer, and Lorraine Tait that of minutes Secretary.

Tim Jackson (who continues to lead on planning matters) and Kirsten Arthur were voted onto the CC in September following a change in the Constitution that resulted in sub-areas within our CC area being abolished so that all CC members represent the whole CC area.

Finally a new member, Carole Wright, joined us in December 2014 as a co-opted member pending elections next September. I would like to thank all members of the CC for their continued support.

### **Meetings held**

This year the CC has met eight times - June, August, September, October, November, December January and March. Our three councillors, Frances Renton (LD), Donald Moffat (SNP) and John Greenwell (C) have attended many of our meetings and provided helpful guidance as well as useful contribution to our discussions. Minutes of all our meetings are available on our website <http://www.gavinton.net/> ) and made available to the press.

### **2014-15 Annual Planning Summary - (1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015)**

The CC has been requested to submit observations on only four new planning applications during the year, all for building development. Works comprised alterations to two existing buildings, both since approved, and a new house at Polwarth (submitted twice). Following objections, the house application at Polwarth was withdrawn, and a new application is pending.

There were eight applications pending at the start of the year, with two new houses approved during the year, one at Caldra Farm, and the other in Hardens Road (plot 1), both near Duns. The West Gavinton application for 54 houses was still pending at the end of the reporting period, but has since been approved and reported on our website.

Five of last year's applications have now been pending for 17 to 64 months since initial submission. These comprise a wind turbine (25m), Black Rig windfarm (14 turbines, 132m), two new houses at Hardens Hall and Hardens Road (Langton Field), both near Duns, and renovation of a derelict cottage at Langton Lees Farm.

During 2015-16, applications are expected to be submitted for the Black Rig windfarm and two adjacent windfarms located in Gordon & Westruther (GWCC) comprising a total of 43 turbines with heights from 115m-132m to tip. The CC is consulting with neighbouring CCs regarding a coordinated response to these proposals. I would like to record our thanks to Tim Jackson for his efforts in this area over the past year.

## Community Resilience Scheme

Jean Coleman and Ellen Curran have done a great job in progressing our Resilient Communities Plan. Over this period they have edited the plan, contacted community our volunteers and, with the help of John Robertson, created a web site (<http://www.gavinton.net/rcp/index.htm>). We now have a plan in place, stores and equipment have been delivered and are now held at various locations throughout the CC area and all co-ordinators have signed up to **SB Alerts**. We are still looking for more helpers so please contact Jean or Ellen if you would like to get involved.

## Consultations

We continue to represent the views of the community on a wide variety of topics both directly to SBC and other statutory bodies, and indirectly through the Berwickshire Area Forum and Scottish Borders Community Councils Network. Recent examples have included:

- Constitutions of CCs
- NHS Out of Hours policy
- Health & Social Care Integration

## Website

We had over 70,000 hits this year, about 10% up on last year. As in the past a large majority of these lasted less than a minute. Over 32,000 visits were by search engine robots updating their indexes. The most popular pages visited were:

- |                               |      |             |
|-------------------------------|------|-------------|
| • Homepage                    | with | 10,763 hits |
| • Langton Church              | with | 1,710 hits  |
| • Richard Hillary             | with | 1,696 hits  |
| • Village hall                | with | 1,454 hits  |
| • Cinema programme            | with | 1,231 hits  |
| • Coat of arms                | with | 1,211 hits  |
| • Cinema home page            | with | 1,187 hits  |
| • Community council home page | with | 1,037 hits  |

Google returns the site as the top result for a search for 'Gavinton' and the site is well represented in the first 50 image results. I would once again like to thank our Webmaster, John Robertson, for the quick and effective way he gets new material onto the site.

## Jim Clark Rally

Following the tragedy at last years' Jim Clark Rally, the local authority ruled that the rally can't be held on the Berwickshire roads in 2015. The promoters of the 45th running of the rally have however announced that it will take place over the weekend of 30/31 May, in the Kielder forest instead with a base at Kelso.

**Keith Dickinson**

**Chair**

**Gavinton, Fogo & Polwarth CC**

**3<sup>rd</sup> May 2015**