

## Kilmacolm Community Council

### Chair's Annual Report

This year has been another year of steady progress with the continuation of earlier initiatives by us and others.

The following on from the successful visit by St Columba's pupils to Merignies the village hosted a visit from the French school children in what turned out to be a weekend of typical weather for Kilmacolm. The children took part a number of different activities and I am sure that they returned to France with some fond memories of Kilmacolm.

Colourful Kilmacolm, which now has over 125 members, continues to brighten up the village with the display boxes in the village piazza and Byrkmyre Park. This year it also tackled the Pullman Carpark slope and has been very successful in not only tidying it up but also in planting it with lots of ground cover plants.

The ongoing saga with the parking wardens continues. New Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) have been put in place that has resulted in the on street parking bays being part of a new Disc Zone. The new regulations have raised the waiting times from 30 minutes to 2 hours on Monday to Friday but we have not received any extra off street parking.

Work began on the Old Institute Building early in the year but progress has been very patchy. Soon after the demolition of the Old Building started, work came to a standstill due to the injuries to one of the workers. All work was halted pending a Health and Safety Executive investigation. The demolition was finally completed and work commenced to level the site. The work again came to a halt when it was discovered that the foundations of the remaining buildings in St James Terrace were unstable. This appears to be a fault of the original builders in Victorian times and work was halted pending a decision for the shoring up of the existing buildings. This has been resolved and work continues albeit several months late.

In last years' report there was mention of the application for the windfarm on Corlic Hill which was refused by Inverclyde Planning following an objection from us. The developers appealed to the Scottish Government and we have heard that the appeal was successful and that the windfarm will go ahead.

This year has seen changes to the way that Police Scotland operate especially in regard to Community Policing. The Police still attend our monthly meetings and give us feedback on crimes committed within our area but we seem to have a different team at each meeting and the quality of the reports has declined.

Jim Wood came to the council during the year with a proposal to set up a Heritage Centre. The council were very supportive of his proposal but were unable to commit any funding at the time as the proposals were quite vague. He has since set up the Kilmacolm Heritage Centre Company and we wish him the best of luck with it and look forward to hearing from him with his plans.

A major event that caused great uproar in the village was the closure of the last remaining bank. The Royal Bank of Scotland Branch in Kilmacolm was closed in November with very little notice. It has been replaced with a mobile van three days per week for 2.75 hours in total. A lot of activity was conducted around the re-siting of the ATM and after several meetings and site visits it was decided to leave it where it is for the time being.

Kilmacolm has been chosen as one of ten communities in the United Kingdom to receive superfast broadband from Virgin Media. In all there were 4 communities in Scotland including Kirknewton, Bridge of Weir and Houston. We hope that this will enable us to fulfil our initiative to provide a free internet WIFI access for the village centre.

Christmas was celebrated in Kilmacolm with the usual festivities centred on the switching on of the lights and we again sponsored a shop window competition and draw for a Christmas hamper. We received so many donations for the hamper that we were able to give away three hampers and some other prizes. There was appalling weather on the night of the light switch and we moved the festivities into the Kilmacolm New Community Centre. There was a very good turn out and we sold a large number of raffle tickets which gave us a healthy £185.00 profit which was donated to Ardgowan Hospice.

Following the elections in October last year we lost three members and gained two new ones. We also co-opted another associate member to represent the youth of the village. I would like to thank all those who have served over the past year for their commitment and contribution to the work of the Community Council and wish them all success for the coming year.