

RHU & SHANDON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

CONVENOR'S REPORT FOR AGM, 13 JUNE 2018

I am pleased to report that the Rhu & Shandon Community Council has been active throughout the past year dealing with a number of issues on behalf of the local residents.

During the year R&S CC has continued to make representations to Argyll & Bute Council (A&BC) for improvements to roads and drainage around the villages. Active interest continued in the control of Japanese Knotweed along the lochside with encouragement of local organisations, including A&BC, Luss Estates, the MOD and Rhu Marina Developments Ltd to spray and clear infestations.

Faster Broadband, which it was hoped would be delivered throughout the community by the end of 2016, appeared for some residents in August 2017, however others are still wrestling with slow speeds.

Planning applications are a key part of the CC's work and several of a minor nature have been discussed. Meaningful feedback from Argyll & Bute Council about restricting unapproved work at the Peace Camp has not appeared however, information via Councillor Morgan provides some of the history but action has yet to be seen to happen. As in previous years the bottom line is that there has been no meaningful change on the ground. The inability of A&BC to deal satisfactorily with this issue is a source of disappointment to the CC.

There has been no apparent progress with further developments at Rhu Marina. However the CC is aware that the RNCYC are in negotiation with a Developer and Crown Estates on a possible move to the Marina with consequential development of the current RNCYC club house and grounds.

The Bowling Club continues to deteriorate but it is pleasing to report that a local resident, Kevin Johnstone, has formed a group intent on taking over and developing the former Bowling Club as a social centre.

It is understood that the application by the Navy/MOD to convert the Ardenconnel rugby pitch to a 3G surface and to install floodlights and fencing, which was approved by the A&BC Planning Committee, remains on hold, although it is our understanding that this option is unlikely to be pursued.

An application for two wind turbines at Laigh Balernock Farm to which, after careful consideration, the CC submitted an objection, went to a Public Hearing at which the CC was represented. In the event the PPLSC of Argyll & Bute Council approved the application.

The Persimmon application to build 78 houses on the former Dobbies site was approved after a Public Hearing despite objections from both Helensburgh CC and ourselves.

The CC continues to encourage A&BC to have a metal container removed from Ardenconnel Woods.

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Plans were submitted to fell various areas of trees in Highlandman's Woods and were approved by the PPSLC. The CC had a useful meeting with the forestry company involved and sent in several comments, mainly to do with the plan for transporting the felled trees away via Pier Road. Preparation work has begun on this job although no timber has yet been shipped,

Members of the CC have assisted with Beach Cleans and maintenance of the Barge Memorial Garden. A grant from "Seachange" was used to buy banners and tools to support beach cleans.

With no progress with a Conservation Area Appraisal for Rhu village by A&BC, whose responsibility it is, the sub-committee applied for and received a grant towards the cost of employing a consultant to do the work. Sources have been sought for the balance of the funds required but proved elusive. There was a generous offer from Fiona Baker to provide some of the input required but the timing on the grant ran out and a decision on whether to extend or not goes to the H&L Area Committee in the next month or so

A draft Key Environmental Features document was prepared and circulated for comment. A postponed discussion was eventually held with A&BC Planners who provided some useful guidance and a suggestion to make the document more "map-based". To date progress with re-working this has been slow.

The Rhu Post Office continued to provide a service until the arrangement between the owner of the building, the Post Office and the acting Post-Master broke down in May 2018 since when the PO has been closed. The CC will continue to monitor the plans for the local office.

The R&S CC website, which is an excellent source of local news and information, has continued to show improvement within the past year due undoubtedly to the dedicated work of our secretary and the small sub-group dealing with communications.

As Convenor my role has been made much easier by the tremendous support and work done by all members of the Community Council. It is appreciated that everyone is a volunteer and gives freely of their time to serve the community but without the energy and commitment given by the individual members we would achieve much less. A big thank you to everyone including, of course, those Members who chose not to stand again at the term elections held in April 2018.

Jack Rudram, Convenor
Rhu & Shandon Community Council
9 June 2018