



Westhill & Elrick
Community Council

Westhill & Elrick Community Council 11th March 2021 Meeting - Key Points Report

Clearing/Gritting Side Roads—Last month a resident queried how the Council prioritises the work of the additional snow ploughs (mainly tractors) that are used to clear secondary/side roads across the town. It appears that they leave it to the discretion of the driver/operators themselves, which may not be unreasonable in the average winter. However this winter with prolonged snowfalls and freezing conditions; causing accumulations of snow and sheet ice, there are good arguments to be made for a more targeted approach., especially on those what-might-be-called “primary roads and streets” (mainly through routes) that enable access to secondary ones. WECC will discuss the issue with the Westhill Winter Resilience Group to see how a sustainable improvement might be negotiated with the Council. One suggestion already made is to see how feasible it would be to classify and highlight these “primary roads” for prioritisation.

Health and Wellbeing Group

Our newly formed Health and Well-Being Group (HWBG) has held its inaugural meeting, at which the following remit was agreed.

The HWBG will seek to:

- Understand and raise awareness of health and well-being issues relevant to WECC area
- Make links with the Health and Social Care Partnership, service providers, and 3rd sector organisations and clubs.
- Engage in the Health and Social Care Partnership Locality Planning process.
- Set a programme of topics, speakers, articles etc. relevant to the identified health and wellbeing issues.

This meeting coincided with the first article on Mental Health in the spring edition of the Westhill Bulletin. This was written by Elrick resident Julie Moffat and our thanks to her for such an interesting and informative piece. Julie is a highly experienced Occupational Psychologist and has kindly offered to provide a number of follow up articles linked to Mental Health, in coming editions of the Bulletin.

Those of you with a deeper interest in Health and Wellbeing in Westhill and many other facets of life in this community may want to take a look at the Westhill Strategic Needs Assessment (link below). This is a big document but it is very readable and good to dip in and out for specifics. Page 9 and a few following pages are particularly interesting, in terms of health issues relevant to Westhill.

<https://www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Westhill-Strategic-Needs-Assessment.pdf>

Planning and Development

At the time of our meeting on 11th March, Application APP/2020/2249 – erection of 63 affordable dwelling at the old block works in Elrick remains as yet undecided. The full application, documentation and comments are available to view on <https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications>

Elsewhere in Westhill, there are no current Applications that appear to raise significant concerns or comments.

Antisocial behaviour – This month’s Police Report highlights a welcome improvement with a 50% reduction in antisocial behaviour, with incidents down from 20 to 10, of which 8 were Covid related with 2 of the 10 incidents concerning adults having friends around for drinks. The remainder all involved youths.

Elsewhere a resident has written in to highlight their concerns about unruly youths who regularly congregate in their vicinity, creating noise, ringing doorbells etc., but they are reluctant to tackle the youths themselves for fear of reprisals. WECC recommend that residents in such distressing situations ring the police on their non-emergency number 101. This is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When you dial 101, the system will determine your location and connect you to the service centre covering your area. Based on their reports, the police in Westhill have a good record on dealing with this type of behaviour that is classed as “Youth Annoyance” As they say in their report “We will continue to take robust action to target these individuals” so there is no need to suffer in silence.

Walk and Cycle Orbital Trail – With the snow and ice now gone, our volunteer squad have been busy, clearing dead wood, litter picking,, clearing stones, digging drainage ditches and brush cutting. Elsewhere our paths contractor has been busy completing the new access points at Carnie Woods, both of which are designed to allow easy passage for pushchairs and wheelchairs.

We are currently on target for an “unofficial” opening at Easter. Unofficial because we still have to install some way-marker posts. When these are installed we will then have an Official Opening – probably in early summer.

Litter Picking – We have decided not to restart our organised Litter Picks in March, as it is still not clear that the COVID Restrictions will be lifted. Consultation with The Rotary Club Litter Picking Group has established that they are of the same mind. In effect, our organised picks will remain on hold until we get an “all clear” to continue safely.

WECC Membership – I’m delighted to report that we have had some noted interests from persons considering joining WECC. Applications for co-opted status will be considered at our next meeting.

Mervyn Barr
WECC Chairperson