



# Royal Four Towns Community Council

September 2015

## Community Council Elections

You have, hopefully, noticed this poster in your area. Community Council Elections take place on Thursday 22nd October in the RFT Hall, Hightae, from 11am to 8pm. We hope you will take the trouble to nominate more community councillors, and come along and vote on 22nd October.

The current list of Community Councillors is shown below. At present we have 8 Community Councillors (this includes our Junior Member who is not shown) but the maximum we are allowed is 11, so we have vacancies for 3 more. Note that 16 year-olds can now be Community Councillors and can vote—as long as they are on the Electoral Roll.

Meetings take place approximately every 6 weeks, with a break in the summer. CCs were set up by Local Councils to represent the local community and enable people to have their say in matters that they are concerned about.

As the poster says, the closing date for nominations is 25th September. Nomination papers are available from the RFT CC Returning Officer, Cllr. Stephen Thompson; DGC Customer Services; libraries, Information & Archives; DGC website - [www.dumgal.gov.uk/communitycouncils](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/communitycouncils). If there are no new nominations the election is 'uncontested'. Current CCs dissolve at 8pm and new CCs become established at 8 am the following day. The next election will be in 4 years time.

**Dates of future meetings are on Page 4**

**Become a Community Councillor**  
in Dumfries and Galloway

Are you age 16 years or older?  
Could you be a Community Councillor?  
You could be, if you appear on the Register of Electors and live in the Community Council area

**We need your nomination!**

**Closing date for nominations Friday 25 September 2015.**  
See our website for more details

**Further information and nomination form**  
[www.dumgal.gov.uk/communitycouncils](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/communitycouncils)  
[communitycouncils@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:communitycouncils@dumgal.gov.uk)  
 030 33 33 3000 (Contact Centre)

**Your chance to make a difference**

Dumfries & Galloway Council

Note that you do not need to be a Community Councillor to attend meetings, which are advertised on the notice boards in Greenhill and Hightae, and the bus shelter at the RFT Hall, Hightae.

Current Community Councillors			
<b>Chairman</b>	George Erskine	Mossgrove, Hightae	01387 810328
<b>Vice Chairman</b>	Ian Collison	2 Smallholm Steading, Smallholm.	01387 810668
<b>Secretary</b>	Freda Seddon	Hill-Bryde, Hightae	01387 811580
<b>Treasurer</b>	Graham Anderson	Newton, Low Road, Hightae	01387 810430
<b>Councillors</b>	Lisa Newbould	Myrtle Cottage, Hightae	01387 811575
	Stuart Campbell	Blackknowe, Hightae	01387 811118
	James Marshall	Nether Grange, Hightae	01387 810081

<b>Local Councillors</b>		
Peter Diggle	07825 633189	peter.diggle@dumgal.gov.uk
Gail MacGregor	07825 633186	gail.macgregor@dumgal.gov.uk
Stephen Thompson	07825 633151	stephen.thompson@dumgal.gov.uk
Graeme Tait	07825 633183	Graeme.Tait2@dumgal.gov.uk

**Local Councillors** attend our meetings and report on DGC meetings and policies, and also feed back any local issues to DGC.

**A Community Policeman** also attends our meetings, reporting on local crime and concerns that the police may have, and note any concerns that residents may have. They are always pleased to visit your home to give a security check and can provide Smart Water for you to mark anything of value that may be stolen. This makes the item identifiable and therefore unlikely to be stolen. For further details call at Lockerbie Police Station, come to a CC meeting or contact the Community Council Secretary.

### **RFT CC Welcome Pack**

This has been produced by the Community Council in an effort to let people, especially those moving into the area, know about their community council, other local services and organisations. When the pack is given to new residents it includes leaflets from local organisations.

The Welcome Pack is on the Royal Four Towns website—see below. We are keen to include local businesses so please have a look and let us know of any omissions.

If you hear of anyone moving into the area, please inform the Community Council via the Secretary, so that we can ensure that they receive a Welcome Pack.

**The Royal Four Towns Website** is always being updated, but we do need local groups to let us know what they would like to have displayed.

Have a look at what has been done so far -

**[www.royalfourtowns.com](http://www.royalfourtowns.com)**

- and let Graham Anderson or Lisa Newbould know of any updates or changes that you need for your section.

Dumfries and Galloway Council have a section for Community Councils on their website; [www.dumgal.gov.uk/communitycouncils](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/communitycouncils).

**The council website is a good source of information for any council department.**

## Home Security

We were very pleased to have a good attendance at our AGM in July, and all appreciated the talk on Home Security given by PCs Alan Wilson and Ian Brownrigg.

We were invited by the police to apply for a free Home Security Survey and several people signed up for this. We were also told about Smart Water, which is used to mark items of value so that they can be identified by the unique DNA marker, if stolen. People were able to sign up to have this delivered.

Home Security surveys and Smart Water are still available from the police. Either call at Lockerbie Police Station or let a Community Councillor know. The Home Security Survey takes about 30 minutes and is well worth the time taken. Smart Water only works once you have completed a form and registered your product.

## Access Group

We think it is time to explain to people about the Access Group.

The Access Group was formed ten years ago as a sub-group of RFT Community Council after the loss of a footpath which ran from near Greenhillhead to Castle Loch. The concern was that other traditional paths would be lost, so the Access Group organised local walks, about every 6 weeks, which took in the footpaths.

A leaflet with maps of the routes, still available, was printed, and there is a map of the paths in the Hightae bus shelter.

The walks were well attended at first, but numbers gradually diminished to the point where only a 'hard core' of four or five people attended and eventually the walks were discontinued.

It was then agreed that instead of walking the paths, they should be maintained by strimming etc. However, even this has not been taking place and it would seem that no local residents are interested in ensuring that these paths are not lost. Most can be kept open simply by walking them regularly, but others, like the one across Hightae Meadow, become overgrown in the summer, unless strimmed occasionally.

All the walks are ideal for walking the dog, as well as pleasant strolls through our lovely countryside, and it would be very sad to lose them completely. I am therefore appealing again for residents to form a group to walk and maintain the traditional paths. It should be noted that three have been lost:

- ◆ the old road from the 'European Bridge' on the road to Woodfoot Farm to Smallholmbank.
- ◆ this path then went through a plantation (owned by Kirkhill Estate) to Holmains and the Annandale Way.
- ◆ A path that used to run from the lane between Whinnyknowe and Smallholm to the B7020 between Woodlands and Smallholmburn.

**If you are concerned about these paths and would like to be involved with a new Group to help maintain them, please get in touch with the Secretary.**

## Local Grants

The Community Council is supported by an annual grant from DGC, and this helps with running costs (e.g. stationery, posters) and production of the newsletter.

We are also in the catchment areas for 2 Wind Farm Grants:-

### **Minsca Wind Farm Community Grant.**

DGC currently act as administrators and we do have to follow a set procedure, mainly involving form filling. The total grant each year is approximately £2,500. The Community Council uses some of this for annual payments for the website but the remainder can be applied for by local organisations to benefit residents.

### **Harestanes Wind Farm**

A company has been set up to administer the grant from the Harestanes Wind Farm, called the Annandale and Nithsdale Community Benefit Company (ANCBC). This company makes a payment annually to Community Councils to enable local groups to apply for up to £500.00. The annual payment made to community councils is up to £2,000, but this is just 'topped up' if it is not all used.

Local organisations can apply for larger amounts by going to the ANCBC website: [www.ancbc.co.uk](http://www.ancbc.co.uk).

## Resilience Plan

Back in 2010 DGC asked Community Councils to set up a Resilience Plan for their area. The idea was that people should manage without outside help for up to 5 days.

The Resilience Plan was not compulsory, but RFT CC did set up a 'loose' plan to cover major events, e.g. flooding. This stated where we could get help with tractors, generators and who had torches, gas heaters and cookers etc. DGC also sent to every household a copy of their 'HELP' - Household Emergency Life-saving Plan, and this is included in the Welcome Pack (see Page 2).

**We strongly recommend** that you are prepared for any winter emergency, with stores of food, torches and heating.

The Community Council is now in the process of updating their Resilience Plan. If you are interested in being part of this, or have ideas or can provide some sort of resource we would be pleased to hear from you - please contact the Secretary.

## The contact

for any suggestions, items or queries about this newsletter or the Royal Four Towns Community Council

Secretary:

Freda Seddon

Hill-Bryde

Hightae

Tel: 01387 811580

Email: [fredamargaret@hotmail.com](mailto:fredamargaret@hotmail.com).

If you have any anecdote or short article you would like to share with the Royal Four Towns Community in the next newsletter, please contact the secretary.

**We would love to hear from you.**

**And remember that anyone can attend the CC meetings.**

## Dates of RFT Community Council meetings:

**2015: October 29th, December 10th.**

**2016: January 21st, March 3rd, April 14th, May 26th, July 7th (AGM), September 8th.**