

Helensburgh Community Council Update

The dust has settled on our community council election process and, unlike other less fortunate community councils in Argyll & Bute, we ended up with a full house of candidates to fill our 20 vacancies. Because we filled the exact total there was no need to go through an election process and it did ensure that those who had volunteered their services were not disappointed. We now sit with a finely balanced male and female membership from across the town. Our inaugural meeting will be held on Thursday 27 October at the Civic Centre Annex.

There are a number of local issues affecting the town that can be continued now that the electoral process has been completed and it would be great to continue to receive community support as we start to reconcile these issues for the benefit of the town.

The completion and operation of the new leisure centre is a major boost to sport and recreation for the town and the Lomond area. Once the demolition of the old swimming pool is complete, the area it encloses will be left unfinished with a surface layer of Type 1 rock aggregate, until a decision is made regarding the development of the site. There is a difference of opinion between the Council and the community as to whether the site should be used predominantly for retail development, or the community view that it should be retained as leisure, recreation and tourism space. We will be taking action to ensure our views are heard and taken account of and we would appreciate continued community engagement with this position as the situation develops.

The community input to our surveys in past years and the culmination of these into the exhibition in March this year as the 'Visions for Helensburgh', underpins everything we do and we are committed to realizing community wishes for the town. The litter bin survey we recently conducted has yet to be actioned; the refurbishment and replanting of the Memorial Garden in Hermitage Park remains a work in progress; the saga of the Helensburgh to Dumbarton cycleway continues and there is the positive development of a future role for the town pier. These are just a sample of our concerns for the town. We shall continue our maintenance of the shrub beds in the square and of course our monthly beach cleans remain a feature, in conjunction with Plastic Free Helensburgh. We owe an enormous vote of thanks to our many volunteers who help out on both activities on a regular basis.

We also hope to re-instate the 'Show and Tell' day which nosedived previously due to COVID. This will be an opportunity for all clubs and societies in the town to advertise their particular interests and encourage membership growth. Hopefully it will also provide information on outlets for the youth of the town to channel their energies.