



# West Linton Community Council

## **Chairman's Report 2007**

The year 2007 provided the Community Council with a number of issues to address over-and-above the usual agenda items.

The first came in December 2006 with the Glenrath Farms proposal to erect a huge free range laying bird unit at Blyth Bank Farm. Although not in the WLCC area, it would have an impact on West Linton. The unit would house 250 000 hens in ten sheds, needless to say residents in the surrounding area were alarmed by the possible adverse impact on the environment. The CC convened an Open Meeting inviting both the applicant and the Blyth Bank Action Group to put their case. The applicant declined but the CC allowed the Action group to put their information on the proposal to the meeting. As this years report is being prepared no decision has been taken on the application.

In February 2007 came the news that the Planning Committee of SBC had agreed a road layout to serve the last tranche of houses to be built on the allocated land at Robinsland. This Community Council had commented on a road layout contained in the Development brief of September 2006. The layout passed at the March 2007 meeting of the Planning Committee was that shown in a second Development Brief which was not made available for comment by West Linton Community Council. An official complaint was made to SBC by the Community Council stating that it has a statutory right to be consulted on such material changes as shown in the second Brief. After much protest the Community Council was given the chance to respond and have done so.

The new proposed layout has engendered deep and genuine concern throughout the village. This Community Council has echoed this concern by way of letters on the subject. In order to clarify the situation an Open Meeting was convened by the Community Council; SBC officials and the Tweeddale West Councillors attended. Over 100 residents listened to the Council reasoning behind the development plans and stated their case. At the conclusion of the meeting the Officials and Councillors were left in no doubt as to the strength and validity of the objections to this flawed road layout. The number of letters received by SBC on this matter will bear testimony to the outcome of the meeting. It is fervently hoped that the rational and genuine opinions of the residents will be heeded and Broomlee Crescent and Robinsland Drive will not be used as vehicular links to the development proposed for Robinsland.

My report last year alluded to the fact that the industrial land at Robinsland had not been developed in spite of there being a demand. It is with dismay that the Reporters Recommendation contained in the Local Plan modifications is for it to be de-allocated and zoned for more housing. Where now for our local small businesses seeking premises? This Community Council will certainly make further representation to retain the status.

April 2007 saw the setting up of a Community Council sub-committee to look into funding and professional assistance in undertaking a survey to assess the needs from the community in relation to provision of a new village hall; this sub-committee comprises the Community



Council members plus five residents. The Scottish Community Action Research Fund (SCARF) has paid for a mentor to assist and advise. At present a request for funding to conduct the initial research, i.e. setting out of questionnaires and the analysis of the returns, is being processed.

At long last there has been a positive move on the easing of traffic congestion on Main Street: a Road Traffic Regulation Order has been sent for consultation. The Order covers the lowest part of Main Street and involves a loading only area outside the Co-op, operational between 7am and 10am and a 'No Parking' zone in front of the property *Oxengates*. If approved it will make a difference – if it is respected. A Traffic Warden will visit the village to ensure compliance with these and other road traffic issues.

During the year 37 planning applications were commented on. The remaining 6 affordable houses on Robinsland adjacent to Deanfoot Road have been completed as named St Mungos Place.

On the environmental front we are in the process of securing funding for the permanent path and drainage work on the Lower Green, west, across the river. The path will link the new footbridge to the ford footbridge and provide an accessible, all-weather surface enabling year-round usage. Slowly but surely we are achieving some very worthwhile amenity improvements.

The new street signs embellished with the West Linton Coat of Arms are splendid.

The Rumbling Tam area, which is part of the Heritage Trail, has been cleared of overhanging trees and a memorial seat placed on the banking together with ground cover shrub planting: a great improvement. Thanks to SBLocal for their prompt response to this Community Council request.

The village was again placed 2<sup>nd</sup> to Melrose in the Floral Gateway Competition. In spite of the wet summer the village looked beautiful. Thanks must go to Linton in Bloom and SBC for all the floral displays and to all residents who take such a pride in their gardens which add so much to the appearance of the village. Thanks to SBC also for the cleaning and remedial work carried out on the War Memorial, a great improvement and much appreciated.

The Community Council is seeking funding to purchase a new Christmas lighting display. The long strings of bulbs are being replaced by individual displays fixed to wall brackets. They will provide a superior decoration to the village along Main Street.

The Lothian & Borders Police Peebles Sector monthly newsletter is well received. It provides the community with up-to-date information on initiatives and crime as well as good and valuable advice.

The Community Council has responded to most of the consultations received during the year. However, some contain questions we simply do not have the subject knowledge of but we do our best!

A new member, Kenny Love, was co-opted onto the Community Council in January and took his place at the February 2007 meeting. This co-option was necessary to bring the number of councillors to the 9 required.



## *West Linton Community Council*

West Linton is now served by 3 Tweeddale West Councillors. The majority of our meetings are attended by all three, helped by the fact that two reside here. Thanks go to the Councillors for their attendance and help. My thanks too go to the Community Councillors for their excellent attendance at meetings, their enthusiasm and effort throughout the year. I must single out our Secretary, Graham Tulloch, who tackles quite an onerous workload with true professionalism and dedication, we are extremely grateful. Thank you also to our Treasurer, Derek Lawson, who, although not now a Community Council member carries out his task so well, his involvement with the Christmas lights project is much appreciated.

Thank you too to the Vice-Chairman, Eric Small, who is there right behind me when needed in spite of his more than full working life.

Thank you to the Minutes Secretary, Tommy Davidson, so important in relaying the accurate account and a valuable office-bearer to the workings of the Community Council.

I have mentioned the issues uppermost this past year but there are many more day-to-day occurrences which require Community Council attention.

The new school is a frequent topic of conversation. It is now to be 2011 before we see it built and at present there are no plans to view, we trust they will be produced in the near future. The general feeling is that it is all a bit up in the air.

I will close by wishing the Community Council and all village residents Good Health and Happiness for 2008!

*Margaret Harrison*

Chairman, West Linton Community Council.