

# FORT, SEAFIELD AND WALLACETOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**Chairman: J Norman McLean**  
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## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT : May 2015 – APRIL 2016

This has been yet again a year of activities throughout our town and in keeping with last year, we have had a busy year with well attended meetings and plenty of discussion. The dedicated attendance of Councillors Kirsty Darwent, Bill Grant and Allan Dorans was greatly appreciated with their input to our meetings being vital. Chris Campbell, our Link Officer is another regular attendee whose diligent and helpful contributions to our Council is greatly appreciated. Another welcomed visitor on a regular basis is Sarah Hilley of the Ayrshire Post who reports faithfully to the wider public of our deliberations. We welcome our new members, Phil Martin (previously co-opted) and Scott McIntosh both representing Seafield Sub Ward. Resignations were received at our year end from Margaret Anderson (Wallacetown) and Pat Ferguson (Seafield) but we welcome Eileen Munro to the Seafield sub-ward. Our thanks to Margaret and Pat for their valuable contribution over the years. We now have a full complement in Fort and Seafield Sub Wards but still need all 4 additional Councillors for Wallacetown.

Ayr Town Centre Renaissance moves forward apace and acquisitions at the bottom of the High Street (Riverside block) have now come to fruition, although still in an undeveloped stage. Work is expected on site by the end of the year once the development stages and planning consents have been achieved, An additional welcomed development now in the planning stage is the redevelopment of the Winton Buildings in High Street to become an enclosed market with upper floor offices etc. The Christmas shop window display competition was again successfully held under our auspices albeit with an unusual twist at the end..

The Kyle Centre is now on track for a major refurbishment with multi cinemas and hospitality uses now with Planning approval. It now begs the question of the Odeon cinema (whose owners may take over the management of the new cinemas) and Burns House which will be demolished when the new Council offices are completed. The new Ayr Academy building at Craigie is now under way with the proposal to relocate Ayr Grammar School in the Academy site.

Belleisle Park now is moving forward at great pace and tangible results are there for all to see. The new play park has been greeted with great acclaim and is now being enjoyed by countless children (and their parents). The Conservatory is close to completion and will open in early summer. The golf clubhouse opens this month and will be a great asset to the Estate. The hotel project still sits in a state of limbo despite SAC having been very supportive of this project. The stable block is at the design stage and the rockery in the walled garden is complete. New fencing to the Queen Elizabeth Jubilee Deer Park is scheduled for renewal with quotations to hand. All in all things are very encouraging with well over 2500 well wishers on Facebook.

A lack of Police presence at our meetings has continued to be a disturbing element in our function however a new policing policy has been outlined to us and improvements in Police attendance is awaited.

The planning application for the vacant site in Fort Street earmarked for flats for those of learning disabilities is due. A virtual tour of St John's Tower is available and our thanks are due to Peter McCall for his efforts. Ayrshire Litter Volunteer Network is again up and running and any support that it can get will be most welcomed. The Scottish International Airshow was again an outstanding success and we look forward to this year's Show extended to three days. Doug Maclean from the team gave us a very comprehensive summary of the proposals and we were able to suggest areas where funding could be augmented. Safe-Ayr – Street Pastors have been most successful on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights in reducing street incidents in the town centre.

South Ayrshire Council, in line with other council, have had to make swingeing cuts to their budget but have in our view conducted this in a careful way avoiding any unwanted redundancies. One outcome was the closing in the evenings of County Buildings thus having to relocate our council meetings to Ayr Town Hall.

We now have a Community Council web site and our thanks are due to Forbes Watson for his company's sponsorship.

The lunch-time Town Hall organ recitals continue to be organised by Michael Hitchon MBE on our behalf and is greatly appreciated by the ever growing number of attendees. The continuation is now assured for the eighth year with a growing programme. This gives regular playing of the much admired old Lewis organ. Temporary arrangements were in place during the annual maintenance of the organ by the use of St. Columba's Church organ earlier in the year.

We were able to donate yet again to three charities, the Belleisle Conservatory Ltd, The Ark, and the Salvation Army from our modest resources this year and again wish them success.

Once again, I must thank our Community Councillors for the exceptionally well attended meetings and unstinting support of Fort, Seafield and Wallacetown Community Council in the last year.

J Norman McLean  
Chairman  
3 May 2016