

IBGCC Chairman's report 2025

Personnel - During the year June 2024 to 2025 there have been a number of personnel and role changes in the Community Council. A new election process was introduced in September 2024 which prompted some of these changes. Regis Lechatelier did not seek re-election due to taking on a new job in the Middle East and his role as Treasurer was taken on by new member Chris Bath. Chris Lowe stood for election as Vice Chair, a new position, and handed his responsibility for disbursement of Midhill windfarm funding to Chris Bath also. Sue Blow joined as a newly elected member as Meetings Secretary, and Ross Provan was elected as Correspondence Secretary. Together with myself and Andy Dickson this brings the number of member to 6.

Local Place Plans - The CC is navigating its way through a new Scottish Government planning initiative known as "Local Place Plans" with the objective of bringing greater influence to the Councils Local Development Plans than has been the case in the past. Following public engagements at Glassel and Inchmarlo Halls, and at Inchmarlo Retirement Village, and the gathering of questionnaire information, a document was submitted to Aberdeenshire Council in January 2025. Amongst other things, this is being taken forward to address road safety issues described below. The document requires some further changes to comply with the Council's requirements, and will then form input to the next Local Development Plan. Key areas of future development that we will seek to influence are associated with the Inchmarlo Retirement Village, and with land to the north including the Lucallan hotel.

Hill of Fare windfarm proposal - A major project during the year continues to be the CC's response to the Hill of Fare windfarm proposal. This development, if it goes ahead, will have a major (visual) impact on the CC area. IBGCC worked closely with the 5 other councils surrounding the area and, reflecting resident's continued objection to the project, is actively involved in the ongoing Public Enquiry, where it has a formal role in proceedings.

Mid-hill windfarm fund - Disbursement of Mid-Hill windfarm funds continues to be an important function of the CC. During the year, Inchmarlo Community Hall finally received funding for "resilience equipment" so that it can act as a hub in the event of severe weather events, and the Inchmarlo Community Workshop continued to receive funding for equipment.

Paths – There has been little progress this year on the various paths plans, however Chris Low has now taken on responsibility for this topic and we hope to progress paths in and around the new housing on the Glassel Road, and to continue to promote the route from Banchory to Torphins via Glassel.

Road safety - The CC continues to push for speed reduction and associated safety measures, in particular on the A93. I have taken on responsibility for this aspect of our work, and have engaged with councillors and Aberdeenshire Council directly using the results of the Local Place Plan. Installation of "settlement signage" and pedestrian signs for Smiddy Park through to Bridge of Canny is one of the current topics of discussion.

Paul Herrington, Chairman, 11th June 2025