

# Annual Report by Gwen Crew, Chair Denholm & District Community Council

20<sup>th</sup> April 2016

The last year has been an extremely busy time for the officials and members of the CC.

March 2015 saw the signs of a reduced bus service through the village, and alarm was raised at one point that the service might be lost completely. Over the forthcoming months letters were sent to SBC with our concerns and in September 2015 a petition was drawn up and presented jointly to the Council by representatives from Denholm, Hawick, and Jedburgh. Since then a reduced bus service has operated through the village and hopefully will be maintained in the future.

Following on from our joint efforts with Jedburgh in the Border Walking Festival, a mini weekend of walks was scheduled for early May. Despite the appalling weather, it was very well supported and enjoyed by the walkers who came from far and wide. All monies that were surplus following the event were split between Denholm and Jedburgh. Our CC donated money to several local organisations that were gratefully received and put to good use. The remaining monies are placed in a 'Project Account' for future use.

Provision of a good quality broadband was raised many times and I am pleased to report that this month, Denholm has been upgraded to a better faster connection. Hopefully as it becomes more efficient, other areas will also feel the benefit.

The Village continues to grow with new developments in the Croft Field and Jedward Terrace and hopefully any further developments will be in character with the whole village, yet maintain the support and need for new housing in all categories. The CC also discussed and commented on planning applications within our area. Discussions also followed regarding the planning information being received electronically rather than by paper copies.

We received funding through the Small Grants Scheme for several projects. A new picnic table was placed near the swing park and painting was also done to the equipment there.

The Resilient Scheme was first suggested last year, and unfortunately not pursued due to poor interest. However following a missing person's search in the Bedrule area and flash flooding in the village, the idea was reviewed again and hopefully will be implemented later this year.

Windfarms continue to have an effect to our countryside and as new developments are proposed the impact of them increase. As Denholm is suggested as the primary route to most of these new projects, the CC will continue to monitor this very carefully.

Because of the worrying cumulative effects of these turbines in our local and adjoining areas, Denholm CC has joined up with other local CC's to share information and show a united front. As we are also Consultees to some of these new developments we will maintain dialogue to hopefully ensure the countryside is preserved for future generations.

For the last year, we have also been fighting the proposals to review and change our boundaries and ratio of Councillors. This would result in our CC moving from the Hawick area and linking us instead to a Jedburgh super ward. It is a fight not yet won! The final decision will rest with the new Scottish Government Minister in May.

The Community Council does have a voice within local government. We have an excellent working relationship with our 3 SBC councillors, Alistair Cranston, Stuart Marshall, and Watson Mcateer. They are involved with our whole CC area and are always supportive when things need attention. Our thanks go to them for all they do.

We also have a representative on the Area Forum, the Borders Network of Community Councils, and Langhope Rig Liaison Group. Members are encouraged to try to attend other meetings as required.

The Hustings hosted by the Community Council recently was a great success, and showed that people out there are interested in local politics and what can affect them in their own community.

I would also like to thank my fellow CC members for their commitment and interest and hopefully they will continue at least for the next session. There will be more work to do. The suggestion for a new Border National Park, changes proposed by the Boundary Commission, new housing developments and more windfarms in the area will be a few of the challenges in the next year.

Gwen Crew