

ARDGAY & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL – CHAIRMAN’S REPORT FOR 2011 AGM

As you know this has been a very busy year for us with lots of changes being thrust upon us.

The most significant being the sad loss due to standing down from ill health of Tony Gibbs, last year’s elected Chair. I never thought that when I agreed to shadow Tony as Chair for two years that I would be taking on his workload so soon. I would like to have my thanks, and I hope yours to Tony for all his work for Ardgay & District Communities.

We have worked hard for the communities in our care – most particularly in dealing with the major budget effects on local government and the huge increase in wind farm proposals for our area.

These have generated more work for everyone and have led to the formation of the Kyle of Sutherland Initiative Development Trust, one of the joint projects we participate in. Lynsey Mailer’s appointment will have long term benefits for all of us, provided we support her in the Development Officer role. We continue to work closely with Creich and Lairg communities through the Achany Windfarm Panel, and more recently in the forming of the Steven Mouat Memorial Fund for Migdale Hospital. We will be working more closely with Ardross and Edderton communities on wind farms in our mutual areas.

Our newsletter, hopefully keeps the community informed of our achievements, and sometimes frustrations. The Community Council wishes to thank to all those who help by providing details of groups and their activities, information and links, distribution and feedback. My personal thanks go to Phil Olson who provided and maintains our excellent website - pushing our boundaries into the wider world.

Many of our hopes and desires to improve the visual impact for visitors and residents in Ardgay remain, and hopefully will evolve with the Development Trust.

Members of the Community Council represent Ardgay & District at Ward Forums, participating in action for Sutherland, keep in touch with other communities through the Association of Scottish Communities, influence Highland Council policies and decisions, where possible with the help of our three Councillors, Linda, Robbie and George and Ward Manager Andy, serve on wind farm panels and consultation groups, Citizens Advice Bureau Board, Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust Board, Voluntary Groups-East Sutherland Board, Scottish Youth Hostels Association Council and a wide range of other working parties and forums, which seem such an essential part of community life ensuring the best possible participation for us.

Doreen Gibbs is standing down after able and appreciated service as our Secretary and I am very grateful that Doreen has agreed to remain as a Community Councillor until November, when the restructuring of Community Councils takes effect and we will have elections.

As Tony said last year, “A successful Community Council relies on the, loyalty and hard work of its members, who unreservedly give of their time”. I would like to say that they also depend on the support of the communities that they work for and we must be doing a good job – because we are still here.

Finally, thanks to everyone who has done so much to help me through this year. That is all of the Community Councillors, Jeannie Sparling, Newsletter Distributors and all residents of Ardgay & District Community Council area who do so much that is often unrecognised but is very much appreciated.

David Hannah – Chair - April 2011