

MINUTES OF MEETING
ROAD SAFETY CAMPAIGN - RESIDENTS ACTION GROUP
Wednesday 27th January 2016 – Kirkton Village Hall, Durris

1.0	INTRODUCTIONS
1.1	<p>Mark Ansell (MA) of Crathes, Drumoak and Durris Community Council (CDDCC) chaired the meeting and introduced guests:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sgt Neil McHattie (NM) - Police Scotland • Philip Leiper (PL) - Roads Manager, Formartine, Garioch and Kincardine & Mearns • Ed Bushnell (EB) – South Marr Area Community Safety • Mike Taylor (MT) - CDDCC
2.0	INITIAL STATEMENTS
2.1	<p>MA gave a summary of the Road Safety Survey that was carried out in 2015. He highlighted the numbers who participated and the breakdown into the 3 key areas of concern:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive speeding and Restriction Zones. • Road Signage. • Pedestrian crossings and school access. <p>He also gave a few examples of the points of concern raised, in our 3 community areas.</p>
2.2	<p>Marion McNeil (MM) (CDDCC) gave a summary of the current status of events relating to the access to the new Drumoak Primary School:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approved plan consists of an extension to the footpath on the east side of Sunnyside Drive, with 2 zebra crossings; one just north of School Brae and the other to the north of the existing school. • Work on this scheme has recently been started by contractors working for Stewart Milne Homes. • Following discussion within CDDCC, alternative proposals for school access were raised at the School Council Meeting on 12 January, which was attended by representatives of Aberdeenshire Council. These involved creating a footpath on the west side of Sunnyside Drive with a single crossing and access via the farm track to the south of the Church. • Aberdeenshire Council undertook to revert on the alternative proposals and report back to the next School Council Meeting on 9 February. <p>MM’s summary was followed by open discussion, during which the following points were made:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic on Sunnyside Drive and James Gregory Road has been chaotic recently due to the combination of heavy plant and cars dropping / picking up children at school. • The construction of the extended footpath on the east side of Sunnyside Drive has been halted due to problems with electricity cables. • It was thought that potential access to the new school around the cemetery has issues with levels. • PL advised that Aberdeenshire Council had sought a better solution to the 2 crossings proposal. They are now speaking with the Contractor. PL said he supported the proposal for a footpath on the west side of Sunnyside Drive, with a reduction in road width to curb traffic speed.
2.3	<p>NM opened by saying that he wanted to encourage open and honest discussion between all parties at the meeting.</p> <p>Having read the Road Safety Survey results, he advised that the comments within the survey were a mixture of good, aspirational and fantasy. He advised that people should be realistic about what could be achieved.</p> <p>At a pre-meeting between MA and NM, about 3 issues had been identified as being “possible”. These included extending speed restriction zones, school transport collection/drop-off locations, and the logical solution for Drumoak School.</p>
2.4	<p>PL said that his aim was to make the roads as safe as possible within the budgets available and that hopefully this meeting would identify some quick wins.</p> <p>Although he represents only a part of the local area, he promised to pass on any points raised at the</p>

	meeting to his colleagues in the relevant areas.
2.5	<p>EB made the following points:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All those in the Safety Community are volunteers • There is only a small budget, which will be prioritized towards safety scopes • The Safety Community are responsible for other issues besides road safety, eg drug abuse etc • They work with various local groups • They offer any help that they can
3.0	Q&A SESSION
3.1	Following the initial statements above, there followed a lively Q&A session.
3.2	<p>Q. Could Community Speed Watch signs be deployed?</p> <p>A. Speed guns could be given to CDDCC but what would happen to the information obtained?</p>
3.3	<p>Q. What would be the usefulness of the above?</p> <p>A. There would be many implications, including personal safety, equipment etc.</p>
3.4	<p>Q. Could average speed cameras be deployed? On one stretch of the South Deeside Road, motorbikes had been recorded unofficially at speeds up to 180 mph.</p> <p>A. There was sympathy for this, but there are insufficient resources.</p>
3.5	There was some debate about the failings of the judicial system and that there was a lack of deterrent.
3.6	<p>Q. At the planning stage, why wasn't access provided from the south of the new Drumoak School into the village? Apparently there was an objection.</p> <p>A. The reason was that there was concern over farm traffic on the access road to the south of the Church.</p>
3.7	<p>Q. What can be done to get farmers to clear ditches to prevent water flowing from fields onto the road?</p> <p>A. Aberdeenshire Council are already discussing this with the farming community. However, the Council is under an embargo by SEPA from taking and disposing of material from ditches as it may be contaminated. The Roads Dept is trying to resolve this with SEPA. In addition, Roads Teams have been instructed to clear ditches if it would alleviate the effects of Storm Frank.</p> <p>A number of places were noted where large flooded areas of road occur. The Police praised the Council for its fast response during the floods. In turn, the Council praised the public for reporting issues.</p> <p>A number of potholes were now appearing and temporary repairs would be made if circumstances prevented permanent repairs.</p>
3.8	It was noted that although speeding was an issue, other forms of bad behaviour by drivers, eg driving without lights in bad conditions, should be targeted.
3.9	It was thought that it would be feasible to employ Marksman or Archer technology (ie 2 wires fixed across the road) to record speeds of vehicles. The data from this could be used by the Police to identify areas and times where there was a particular problem. If appropriate, speed cameras could then be deployed. This can be repeated despite previous exercises in a particular area (e.g. Kirkton)
4.0	GROUP DISCUSSIONS
4.1	<p>The meeting broke into groups to discuss the 3 main areas of concern, namely:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive speeding and Restriction Zones. • Road Signage. • Pedestrian crossings and school access. <p>The results of each group's discussions were then summarised by a spokesperson.</p>
4.2	<p>Excessive speeding and Restriction Zones.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can Community Speed Watch signs be erected? (See above) • There is concern over the 50 mph speed limit through Durriss. This issue was closed in 2013, but there was a wish to resurrect it.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PL advised he was willing to perform speed monitoring again. A figure of 85% of the measured top speed would be used for reference purposes. • PL advised that the 2 new houses in Kirkton of Durris may be sufficient to warrant a reduction in the speed limit. It was advised that “New Speed Limit Ahead” signs would be deployed if this was the case.
4.3	<p>Road Signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the villages have long straight sections of road leading into them. • There are new, inexpensive, signs which can log the speed and total number of vehicles. They are also programmable (250 different messages) so they can be changed frequently to help stop drivers becoming too familiar and ignoring them. These are currently being assessed by the council, and will become available to each community area. • It was felt that a smiley face icon would catch the eye. • It was suggested that moving the existing 30/40/50 mph signs further out of the villages would help to slow down vehicles when they get to the village boundaries. • There was discussion on the workings of new speed cameras. • There was concern over cats eyes and white lines being missing or in poor condition. PL advised that they try to ensure they are maintained properly on bends with double white lines but conceded that may not be the case on straight sections of roads. • It was noted that some road signs are very dirty or overgrown by vegetation. PL advised that there was regular inspection and maintenance. They are trialling a video system, similar to Google Street View, to record the inspections.
4.4	<p>Pedestrian crossings and (Drumoak) school access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was suggested that children should be channelled through a permanent barrier system, with a single Pelican crossing. The grass verge in front of the Church should be paved and further permanent barriers built. PL added that the system should have a low maintenance burden. • There was concern over the constant leakage of water at the top of Sunnyside Drive, which recently froze. It was advised that the Roads Dept had raised a Work Order to clear the gullies and to investigate the source of the running water. • An issue raised by a local resident concerned the number of lorries now using Couper’s Road as a short cut. This road runs between the A93 (close to Anderson's Smithy) and the junction with the B9125 at Flora's café/restaurant is. The number of lorries using this road increased during construction work in Drumoak, and although some of the companies involved have reduced their usage of the road, others have not. Using this road avoids the need to go via Banchory or Malcolm Road (which is itself unsuitable to turn on to and out of). The problems caused are not just the road width and difficulty in passing, but also the damage to the road edges and adjacent verges, bushes, etc. • There was a concern that James Gregory Road was being used as a turning point for lorries and buses. • There is an issue with Woodlands of Durris estate. PL advised that he would extend the 20 mph zone, applicable at school access times, towards Clune Wood, to cater for the estate’s main entrance/exit.
5.0	VOLUNTEERS
5.1	<p>The following people volunteered to take matters forward:-</p> <p>Pedestrian crossings and school access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campbell Crockatt (Lead) • Steven Cowie (Support) <p>Excessive speeding and Restriction Zones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Howard Scholey (Lead) (Kirkton of Durris) • Angela MacKinnon (Support)

6.0	FINAL COMMENTS
6.1	<p>At the end of the meeting, various parties made some final comments:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PL has taken note of various actions which he will feed back through MA.• NM will raise the issue of speeding through Durris with the Stonehaven Police office. He was hopeful of having the speed limit reduced to 40 mph.• Peter Bellarby (Cllr for Stonehaven and Lower Deeside) leant his support to the Residents Action Group initiative.