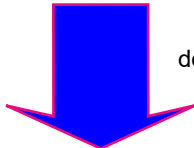
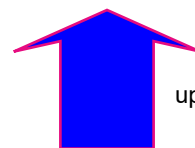


## The Future of the Villages ?



down



up



### Editorial

We have in the past opined that the next few years are likely to be ones of great potential change in the villages. Change perhaps not welcomed by all but changes which despite opposition seem likely to happen. The application by Elie Estates for substantial development of the fields at the Grange and Wadeslea has already been the subject of much debate. It seems likely that it will be dealt with at the end of June by the North East Fife Planning Committee. The information about the meetings can be found at <https://www.fifedirect.org.uk/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=publication.pop&pubid=C1FC5A4D-A0A2-5995-2E1B98518C53A74E>.

#### The Charrette

The draft Charrette Report was considered by the Community Council on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June. The experts from PAS have drawn up a report in response to the consultation exercise and the Community Council are seeking to make some changes to the final version. It is obviously just a snap shot of collected ideas and pipe dreams most of which were published in the emails and newsletters disseminated shortly after the workshops. and further reading of the full and final report will be necessary if there is any enthusiasm for change. It must not be forgotten that the team were merely instructed to solicit the views of the Elie and Earlsferry people as to what they would like to see done in the villages. What must not be lost sight of is just that -- this was all they did -- distil some 20 hours of discussions with villagers. Their report and suggestions are merely those of the villagers and they have not plucked ideas out of thin air for their own edification. So the final report whenever it becomes available (said to be late July) will reflect the views of the villagers. That does not mean to say that these ideas or any of them are necessary - some are no doubt fanciful (like a dry ski slope at Largo Law! We thought this was a joke but it may be serious).

#### Is there a need or even an appetite for change?

Elie and Earlsferry have evolved as time has gone on by natural and in some cases structural change to meet the demands of a modern community but essentially we are a holiday village and as such we have to be attractive to those who wish to spend leisure time here with us. What makes a place desirable to have a holiday, leaving aside the weather? Range of facilities catering for all ages and abilities is obviously

one, a place where there is a degree of safety, facilities are easily accessed, where children especially can roam relatively freely in contrast to conurbations where they cannot? We have a beach, golf courses for all ages and abilities, tennis and bowls, good catering establishments and relatively safe access with superb walks...what more do we really want?














#### The Measure of success

What is the measure, we wonder, of the success of a village such as ours? There are probably many but perhaps the foremost is the desirability of living and holidaying there. The best barometer may be the price that people are prepared to pay to buy a property or rent one for the holiday period. We are no strangers here to the high price of property and the cost of renting a house for a two week holiday. We may be the most expensive holiday destination in Scotland. Does that not say that we are doing something right? Is not the environment of the villages ideal for the family holiday maker? Fine - we certainly could do with some more social type rented housing to boost the resident population and a few minor tweaks relating to accessibility but is not one of the charms of the villages the lack of modern soulless buildings (recent proposals excepted), the lack of litter (most of the time), the tranquil surroundings of the beach and even the golf course, its accessibility, its affability and comparative safety.

#### Elie Estates Developments

Comments about the proposed developments of Elie Estates are noticeably absent from the Charrette discussions but as we have said before this may be that the public funding could not be seen as financing a protest against the proposals. We have to say that we think another chance here has been missed to gauge and inform public opinion about these proposals. In April 2017 this newspaper carried out a lengthy and instructive interview with Elie Estates to try to bring the proposals more into the public limelight to enable meaningful and timeous discussion. The Community Council under whose control this publication was at that time refused permission for it to be published. Our view then and now was



-  Enhanced Village Gateways
-  Update Road Markings and Signage
-  Traffic Calming (see project sheet B)
-  Green Approach with potential street tree planting along western edge of Park Place
-  Improved Signage and Streetscape for One-way System (see project sheet A) / New One-Way System linking Pav to Ferry Road
-  Consider Updating Road marking and On-street Parking Restrictions along the Toft
-  Potential for Seasonal Closure to Vehicular Traffic Along Admiral Close
-  Focused for Junction / Public Realm Improvement
-  Potential New Link Road to Ruby Bay Car Park
-  Key Points of Interest
-  Fife Coastal Path

-  New Pedestrian Crossing
-  Improved Access to Beach
-  New Footpath
-  Existing Public Toilets
-  New / Upgraded Public Toilets
-  New Cycle Parking
-  Key Wayfinding Points
-  Potential Bike Hire
-  Existing Parking Area
-  Electric Car Charging Point
-  Bus Stops
-  Existing Recycling Facilities
-  New Recycling Facilities

Introduce directional and interpretative signage along three walking routes to draw attention to the area's history and natural beauty.

-  'Colting Heritage' Walk
-  'Historic High Street' Walk
-  'Beachfront' Walk

 Series of sites for new car parking in the village, enhancing the visitor's arrival into the village with potential to incorporate community facilities.

- 1. Earlsferry Car Park** - Potential to incorporate recycling facilities and cycle racks with new wayfinding signage and paths Chain Walk, Chapel Green, beach and Earlsferry High Street.
- 2. Park Place Car Park** - New wayfinding and footpath provision on to a new green approach to Elie High Street along Park Place.
- 3. Expanded provision at Ruby Bay Car Park** - Potential to upgrade toilets and recycling facilities and introduce new wayfinding directing visitors to the Harbour via a potential link across the edge of Ruby Bay.

that this was a missed opportunity to bring the whole thing into the public domain earlier for fuller discussion before the application was lodged. Different and, some might say, wiser counsel prevailed.

## The Plan

The Community Plan is expected to address four issues. **Connectivity** (enhancing communications and access), **Local Economy** (issues which might increase the economic vitality of the place) **Recreation and Leisure** (enhancing and adding to the current leisure facilities) and **Community** (how to foster - physically and organisationally community integration).

### Action Plan (see previous page)

This summarises the various suggestions and proposals which could enhance the *Elie Experience*. Some are certainly achievable without too much investment but some are not. Many of the suggestions have been looked at before and usually for lack of finance been incapable of being implemented. Whether these proposals now have the authority of a Charrette and thereby attract money is another matter.

## Connectivity

The first sub heading is improving traffic management – a laudable concept for a period of six weeks each year when parking space is at a premium. One of the principle complaints, at least during peak periods, is the lack of parking availability but there seems also to be an anxiety in relation to the safety of crossing the High Street and traffic congestion at the Ship Inn and harbour areas. One possible solution is to develop a new road connection to Ruby Bay Car Park and extend its boundaries. The idea would be to incorporate into Elie Estates' plans for Wadeslea a direct access road from the east of the village to Ruby Bay. Not a new idea but one which will require considerable change to the infrastructure in and around Wadeslea but of course that would reduce the number of vehicles going up Wadeslea passing the surgery and the dangerous junction onto the High Street. Is there some way of getting easily from the Ruby Bay Car Park to the harbour via a walkway along the sea side of Ruby Bay joining the harbour road? Some seem to think so.



### Golf and Sports Clubs Access



But more fundamental is the idea that the present access to the Golf Club and Sports club via Golf Club Lane should be made one way and a road built alongside the 18<sup>th</sup> Fairway joining onto Ferry Road. There is something rather quirky about the single carriageway to the golf course and it would in our view be a shame to destroy the familiar and often travelled path from the Sports club to Earlsferry. This is where we learnt to ride a bike after all.

### Wadeslea By pass

An even more radical idea, again not new, is to create a bypass by putting a road in the old railway line behind Woodside so traffic could by pass the village centre and join the main road at North Street. Can't think the gardeners and vegetable growers of Woodside would be too happy about that but come on guys its progress – or is it?

### Traffic Calming

Traffic calming measures in Park Place and entering from St. Monans have been on the agenda of the community council for many years but Fife Council refuse to acknowledge the need either for a 20 mph speed limit, or speed signs and even traffic calming by raising the level of the crossing at the school a la Lundin Links. Does there have to be accidents/fatalities before measures are acknowledged as being necessary? Fife Council

refuse to listen to the Community Council so why should they listen to anyone else. It is here that the Charrette might have some influence. It is said that because the road through Elie is a main road it is not possible to make it 20 mph unless there is overwhelming community support for it...we think the Charrette may well do this.

## Cyclepaths



Less radical perhaps is the suggestion that a cycle path should be made along the old railway line from St. Monans and into the village. (We'll need to circumvent Nairn's glamcamp) This would be a link up to the pathway (multi-purpose) currently being mooted from St. Andrews all the way round to Lundin Links some of which is already in place. Time will tell whether the initiative of the cycle lobby is justified by its use. And anecdotally there seems to be some doubt about the level of use the present pathways are achieving.

### One Way System - Earlsferry

The feeling is that the one way system in Earlsferry is not signed clearly enough. In addition the space at the top of Glovers Wynd could be utilised by making a pedestrianised area with limited access for vehicles to chapel Green.



## Gateways to the Village

Criticism has been levelled at the lack of structured and attractive gateways into the villages from the three entrances. They are not very welcoming. The Elie and Earlsferry Environmental Action Group (EEAG henceforth) have plans to improve the areas of entry to the villages. New signs are being discussed with Fife Council (hopefully to correct the error in the current signs) and the EEAG could

enhance the appearance of these new signs.



The maintenance of these areas and welcoming flower arrangements take time and money. The EEAG have been fortunate in obtaining grants from Elie Fayre Day committee and voluntary donations and the recent coffee morning raised over £500. It is short of person power to do

some of the actual hard work. But the view is that we are improving things. There are donation boxes in various venues and if you want to help contact us at the email address at the end of this edition.

The main concern is of course parking in the summer time. On a nice day at the week end car parking along the main road is inconsiderate at the best and down right criminal at worst so is there any alternative off street parking spaces that could be created. There **are** areas of ground which could be used - the field to the south of the 6<sup>th</sup> fairway for example, the field to the south of the telephone exchange, increasing the size of Ruby Bay and making it pay to park to enable its upkeep. There is also Nairn Park. All these suggestions require co-operation of the landowners of the various spots

and whilst again these proposals have been mooted in the past there has been little enthusiasm from the owners of the ground. Our view - great in principle but can we do it ? Doubtful.

### Village entry speeds

The speed of vehicles entering the village has been a constant concern. See above – there was a putative scheme for residents at Park Place to get speed gun training from the police - not sure what happened to that ! We tried to get the 30 mph sign at the St Monans entrance moved much further back but were told it could not be done because there would have to be an extension of the street light in the same direction. Again cost. One proposal is that there be signage and road configurations reducing the speed of traffic entering the village. This would be welcomed but no doubt we would be met by Fife Council saying that they had no budget for this.

### Toll Green

There is a view that Toll Green could be enhanced or improved. The first concern is the jackdaws and the resultant mess. The EEAG have looked at this and the options seem to be live with them, pollard the trees which provide nesting security for them or remove them (that's the trees) altogether and replace with ornamental trees which are less likely to be conducive to nest building. Views are divided. There are those who say that there have always been trees there and they should be kept as they are. Those who say that pollarding will only last a short period of time (best estimates are 10 years before they become nesting attractive again). Those that say remove the trees and replace with ornamental and therefore smaller trees which change the topology of toll green. We think something needs to be done about the birds but since the trees are in a conservation area we need permission to pollard them assuming we can afford it. We suggest that the Community Council actively pursue this alternative now to enable permission to be in place by October/November which is the preferred time.

More radical is the suggestion that Toll Green be realigned and there are three suggestions  
**Option 1** Minimal intervention – declutter the signage, remove the railing to give better access, leave the trees and put in a pedestrian crossing to encourage more use of the open space.

#### Option 2

Some intervention and change - remove and replant trees to discourage nesters. Make it into a community garden, widen the area to reduce the road width



and provide traffic calming measures, pedestrianise the road between the telephone box and Stenton Row for walking and cycling.

#### Option 3

Radical realignment - Realign the main through carriage way so that the traffic passing through goes via a widened area between the telephone box and Stenton Row. Thereafter make the area from the adjusted toll green to the street and houses pedestrian precinct and a redesign of the resulting open space. The last two schemes will need considerable investment but they would enhance the Toll

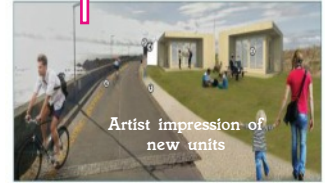


Green experience and make it much more of a convenient focal point for Elie.

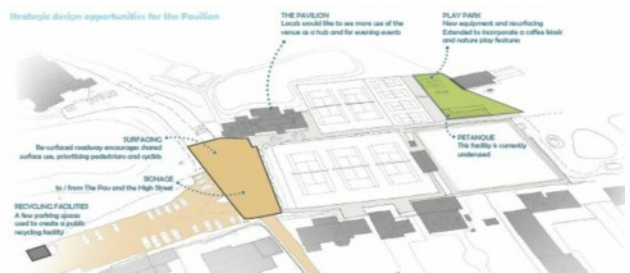


### Harbour area

Some views were expressed that more could be made of the harbour area as a tourist destination – assuming access is sorted ! There is an area between the water sports centre and beyond the toilet block which could be developed. Suggestions are that there could be cafes, meeting rooms, view point balconies, artists’ studios and even a small sports centre and an upgrade of the toilet facilities. There would be an expansion of the water sports centre with better facilities for changing rooms, showers toilets and boat storage etc.



### Pavilion and Sports Club Area



Leaving aside the suggestion of a road from Ferry Road to the Pavilion along the pathways, the view seems to be that this space could be considerably enhanced to make it more attractive to visitors. The consequence of such a scheme would be a reduction in the number of available car parking



spaces but extending the car park westwards could compensate. Thoughts are that the Pavilion and Sports Club could be used more in the evening and could form a type of community hub (it does already in some respects). An artist’s mock up of the space occupied by the car park envisages street furniture and even a small children’s play area. The entrance at the top of the lane could look like this (the old man and dog are merely illustrative and not related to anyone or dog living or dead).

### Local Economy

There is a view that things could be done to enhance the local economy by attracting more visitors to the area, especially off peak. The promotion of golf and the history of the golf course, its pioneers and golf club makers of Earlsferry is one idea. A Golf Heritage centre based perhaps initially on

the life of James Braid but extending to all the pioneers of the game with connection to Elie. Perhaps the Golf House Club whose views seemed not to be represented at the charrette could take up this initiative. The hosting of week end festivals like some of the other ones in the East Neuk. Perhaps a creative writing or literary festival (already in pipeline apparently). Make more of the historical nature of the place with history tours and promotions. One aspect of this would be to encourage more people to visit the villages off peak and take house rental for week ends.

## Recreation and Leisure

Allied to the local economy is the section dealing with Recreation and Leisure which, we suggest, is the primary function of this place. An ice rink over the winter at the pavilion sounds attractive.

One main thought is the provision of an indoor sports centre with swimming pool and gym facilities. This could be at the harbour (access difficult) or possibly in the new Wadeslea development area. Earlsferry Town Hall if it is to survive could be used for various sporting activities. Come to think of it what's happened with the plans for community buy out - things seem to have gone quiet, There are not many other ideas suggesting that the Recreation and Leisure here is just about right?

## Community

In the Community Section perhaps the most significant suggestion is that a community development trust could be established to access funding, build community skills and organise events. This has been already considered by the Community Council and at the time the council took the view that whilst such an organisation would be helpful it would require voluntary commitment by interested persons to take forward. Comparison with St. Monans and Pittenweem were considered but it was felt that since the majority of the population in the villages was transient (either week enders or holiday makers) their input into local affairs was likely to be minimal. However if any of the schemes suggested in this exercise were to be feasible then a community development trust would certainly be the way forward provided we had people prepared to devote the time.

## Opinion

This is obviously just a snap shot of collected ideas and pipe dreams which were published in the emails and newsletters disseminated shortly after the workshops, and further reading of the full and final report will be necessary if there is any enthusiasm for change. The rationale for this exercise was to add authority to ideas of development and thereby validate any application for funding by outside agencies. The Scottish Government gave us £25,000 to carry out this exercise and we wonder whether this wealthy mecca should benefit when many other communities are in dire need of assistance – would it not have been better donating this money to the food bank in Anstruther or the like?

### Will this have been a worthwhile exercise ?

The involvement of local residents was encouraging but despite one of the consulting days being when there would have been many week end visitors this did not seem to attract them. The second homeowners and visiting families either do not want to be involved in shaping the future or are at best apathetic. Provided what attracted them to holiday and week end Elie in the first place remains unchanged then they would likely be happy. With the plans of Elie Estate that section of the community must be concerned about the future of what they believe is the main attraction of Elie and Earlsferry. It is going to change - for the good? Probably not - but let us hope at least that the changes proposed by Elie Estates are manageable and do not encroach too much on what makes this place so unique.

We believe we do not need radical change - we are providing a good holiday any major likely to dilute holidaying here.



## OTHER NEWS

### Prosecution

The prosecution of the owner of the ground at Chapel Green where the trees were felled did not proceed in April, we assume because the owner of the ground replanted a number of trees in the place of those removed in the face of the regulations of a conservation area.

### Chapel Green House

We see that planning permission was granted for this dramatic change in the skyline. It was suggested that, as a condition of permission, the wall be retained. That may well be but that condition does not appear in the grant of permission so we must assume it has been tacitly accepted by the planners.



### Easter

The weather over the Easter week end was exceptional and it brought with it an exceptional number of people seeking to enjoy the fresh air



### Flag flying



Our reliable flag hoister Ian Kenny is leaving the village and we are on the look out for a new flag hoister. Many thanks Ian for your service.

### Planters and Flowers

It is lovely to see so many residents of Earlsferry putting out planters and window boxes in the High Street - it really does make a huge difference and we would encourage everyone to put out a planter or two for the summer and make it a riot of colour. We would really like to progress from Silver Gilt to a higher award in Beautiful Fife competition.



to a higher award in Beautiful Judging on 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

## Easter Surprises



A philanthropic local resident who wishes to remain anonymous spent Easter distributing Easter eggs to local children and the maternity unit at Victoria Hospital - what a nice idea and many thanks to our anonymous bunny.

## History Society

We are always happy to arrange a walk of Elie or Earlsferry or both for any number of people - just contact us at [gjeliehistory@btinternet.com](mailto:gjeliehistory@btinternet.com) - they are free.

## Visitor from Canada



We had a visit a few weeks ago from Ian Sunter who lives in Calgary Canada - he was researching his family tree. His grandfather James Maclean Sunter was the first appointed professional golfer of Elie Golf club in 1921 and we were able to acquire from him a photo of his relative outside his shop. He later moved to Bruntsfield in Edinburgh.

## Scarecrow Festival

The first week end in May hosted the Scarecrow Festival and what a success it was. For each of the days there were crowds of people especially in family groups moving from one exhibit to another all obviously enjoying the experience. At the end of the day three exhibits were prizewinners.

Mr. McGregor's Garden



Nae room in the toon



Keep on Crowing



Huge congratulations to the exhibitors whose ingenuity surpassed last year's and especially the organisers whose hard work certainly paid off...more power to your elbows.

## Whats on App

While we are at it Elie Fayre Day have produced an app of what's on and we are encouraged to contact the organisers with our event [eliefayreday19@gmail.com](mailto:eliefayreday19@gmail.com) but we are asked to scan a bar code and that takes us to the app - its not down loadable so far as we can see in the normal way but once you link to it and save the logo on your phone it will take you to it..



## Crime in Elie



According to the local police there have been a couple of thefts in Elie - the benches at the 19<sup>th</sup> Hole disappeared....they are on the case. It is suggested as in the past if you have any "intel" (technical word) about suspicious behaviour advise police at 101. There was such at the Pavilion on 31<sup>st</sup> May between 2200 and 2230 hours (continuing the parlance) when a silver ford focus was observed stopping there and someone came out and photographed the inside of the building...odd - any intel 101. And there is a plan to use the speed gun more often in the approaches to the village so boy racers beware.....spotted them on Sunday. And another thing - if you have a crunch or minor accident then although you may not want police involved advise them so that you appear as a statistic - it is the statistics that are used to monitor road safety and the adequacy of the infrastructure.

## Things to look forward to:

Sports club Tennis and Golf Camps July see <http://www.eliesportsclub.co.uk/golf-tennis-camps/>

26 -30 June East Neuk Festival most sold out but returns available from 19<sup>th</sup> June see Hub Tickets google it.

Ship Inn Cricket 9<sup>th</sup>,22<sup>nd</sup>,June 7<sup>th</sup>,20<sup>th</sup>,26<sup>th</sup> July



Earlsferry Cinema 23rd June Green Book

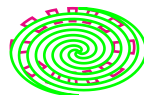
Fayre Day Toll Green 1-4 pm Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July



Doors Open Day 1<sup>st</sup> September Earlsferry History Walks 10 - 3 Town Hall Steps

## Scarecrowslive

We could not leave this year's exhibition without mention of the live scarecrows who took up post at the War Memorial and caused much hilarity. Well done folks.



## New Development ?

...and finally we've received advance notice that someone is seeking to build four houses in the ground to the north of the telephone exchange - may get ringing endorsement but you can find out more Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June 3-7 Church Hall

The **Elie Herald** welcomes feedback constructive or destructive and we can be contacted at [info@grahamjohnston.scot](mailto:info@grahamjohnston.scot) or if you want to look at previous editions <http://www.elieandearlsferry.net>