

# Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

## Draft Minutes - March 2004

*For Approval*

*(Copies of Agendas and Minutes of the Community Council are held at Fife Council's Local Office, St Mary's Place and the Town Library, Church Square. Those from mid-1998 on are online at <http://www.louisxiv.demon.co.uk/standrewscc/>)*

**Chair:** Donald Macgregor, Murdo Macdonald.

## 0. Young Citizen 2003 Awards

### Laura Sinclair

Laura has been selected as the Young St Andrews Citizen of the Year for her service to her school Madras College, and to the community of St Andrews, which is exemplified in the following:

- She is a volunteer at the Cosmos Centre Youth Club, whilst trying to complete a Youth Achievement Award (similar to a Duke of Edinburgh Award).
- She is a helper with the Special Needs Club which meets on Monday evenings at Madras Community Use Facility.
- She is a Corporal cadet in the Air Training Corps (2435 Squadron St Andrews) assisting in the training of younger cadets.
- She has been a great ambassador for the Squadron and St Andrews at various national sporting events competing with distinction in swimming and hockey.
- She helps with running of the girls football team at Madras, helping with the training sessions after school on Wednesdays.
- She works part time at Safeway Supermarkets.
- Laura has Hodgkin's Lymphoma and has undergone 12 chemotherapy treatments. As a way of showing her appreciation, for the help they have given her, she has been instrumental in raising at least £1500 for the Haematology Unit at Ninewells Hospital Dundee.
- Despite her illness she is leading a full and active life and is an inspiration to all who come in contact with her.

*Joseph A Peterson  
Chair of the selection panel.*

## 1. Attendance

**Community Councillors:** Laurel Aguilar, Ken Crichton, George Davidson, Richard Douglas, Kenneth Fraser, Ian Goudie, Ian Hamilton, Joe Lamb, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Murdo Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Joe Peterson, Frank Riddell, Ewen Sparks, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero, Penny Uprichard.

**Students Association:** Derek MacLeod.

**Fife Councillors:** Sheila Black, Jane Ann Liston, Frances Melville, Bill Sangster.

**Apologies:** Dennis Macdonald.

## 2. Minutes of February 2004

**Accepted**

## 3. Presentations

### 3.1. Police report

Two community constables, Janice Lister and Neil Todd attended; they hope to come along as regularly as their duty cycle permits.

Cllr Frances Melville asked if the Police were aware of problems at the Kinburn Tennis Club, which has suffered repeated vandalism since the start of the year. PC Lister answered that they are, and that the area is being targeted with increased foot patrols and other measures.

Ewen Sparks raised the perennial problem of night time cyclists without lights, asking if there has been any improvement in levels of offenders. PC Lister did not have figures to hand, but confirmed the police do take action. She confirmed that the scheme requiring offenders' attendance at the Police Station after the purchase of a set of lights is still in operation.

### 3.2. Clatto Landscape Protection Campaign

Greg Brown, who lives on Clatto Farm, spoke for the Campaign. A print out of a slide presentation was circulated. This is an informal group; it has no constitution. He claimed they are not opposed to renewable energy sources in general; just to this project in this place and this time.

Describing the proposed wind turbine units he said that the individual turbines blade tips reach a height of 93m; six times the height of nearby mature trees, three times the Hopetoun Monument or the height of the Statue of Liberty. He stated that this proposal represents an attempt to take wind farms from remote sites to areas of higher landscape value and closer to people than ever before. This wind farm would have no noticeable effect on generation capacity: 150 Clatto-sized wind farms would be needed to replace the generation capacity at Longannet (coal) power station – "imagine Scotland with windfarms all over". Prefer wave power as less intrusive. Suggested the reason for the current dash for onshore wind power generation is that it is the cheapest investment for the power companies.

Why not Clatto Hill? There are seven 7 households very close to the site who are at risk from potential health effects of low frequency noise, information about which, he claimed, was being suppressed. The area is a designated an Area of Great Landscape Value. Scottish Natural Heritage's landscape assessment suggests avoiding such exposed situations as Clatto Hill for wind farms. While it won't be seen from St Andrews it will be visible to most of central Fife; 5,000 people live within 3km. Criticism was levelled at Scottish Power's choice of visual assessment locations as being too far away to be relevant in most cases. A possible 10% reduction of tourism in the area was mentioned, without attribution, with the suggestion that this would affect St Andrews. Effects on wildlife were also suggested, particularly birds.

As well as concerns over the operation of the wind farm, should it be built, the construction phase was also mentioned. Serious doubts about the hydrological study have arisen as it contradicts what people in the area know. The level of construction traffic has safety implications for schools and roads. Four quarries are proposed to supply construction materials where a single one was refused permission relatively recently.

Turning to Fife Council's planning process he noted that the application contravenes planning policy in nine areas by the campaign's assessment. There will be a departure hearing in the early summer, probably June, and a decision by Fife Council's Development Committee a later in the summer.

Cllr Frances Melville added that the all-Fife development committee will come to East Area Development for its views but the decision will be a central one. There also will have to be a site visit to an equivalent wind farm.

After a brief discussion the matter was remitted to the planning committee.

## Planning

*Murdo Macdonald took the chair for items 3.3 and 6.1*

### 3.3. Loches

Several people commented on the suitability of Loches-en-Touraine for a more formal level of links ("twinning") with St Andrews. A number of documents were circulated before and during the discussion to illustrate or rebut various positions.

Mr Swankie reiterated the points made in his letter included in the agenda papers. Mr Black, a former member of the Loches Alliance, did not feel St Andrews had enough in common with Loches for twinning and also read out a number of questions on the history of twinning policy in St Andrews that he felt should be answered before any move towards twinning be made. Mrs Robertson said that Mr Matheson, Rector at Madras, indicated in a conversation with her husband that the school could no longer support the Loches Alliance's proposal (unfortunately since this Mr Matheson was involved in a road accident and is in hospital so pursuing him for clarification would be inappropriate). She rubbished the result of the Citizen poll in June 2003 saying that the 57% result specifically in favour of Loches could not be extrapolated across the community. She felt that with the opposition of the Merchants' Association and no specific support from the University or Madras indicated all the major forces in town to be against the proposal. She called for other links with Arlington, Kiel and Otawara to be supported, feeling these are more important than the Loches link. She had collected all the copies of a European grants booklet at the Fife Council Local Office[1] and invited community council to read it, saying that it would show no/little funding was available to twinning.

Virginia Fowler was the only person to speak in favour of the Loches link. She was the first secretary of the Loches Alliance. She cited the many productive sports, educational, and cultural (music, art) exchanges with Loches. On the suitability of Loches for a link with St Andrews she said it was very similar to St Andrews in terms of beauty, though in different way. She emphasised that the campaign for more formal links was not intended to disparage other friendships. The Alliance does not seek exclusivity. They sought support for twinning because the link has worked so well, for so many exchanges. Other UK towns of similar status to St Andrews have twinning links are happy with them and their effects.

From the public seats there were also a number of other comments most or all supporting the case against; obscure but doubtless witty remarks; and some personal attacks.

*Meeting agreed to continue directly with the formal consideration by community council of the proposed link at item 6.1.*

[1] Unused copies (all?) of which the Secretary returned to the Local Office.

## 4. Fife Councillors

### 4.1. Frances Melville (West)

**4.1.1. BT Payphones** Mike Robertson, Head of Local Services, has written to BT to oppose removal of phones from the Bruce Embankment and harbour areas on grounds of safety and that these are tourist areas. He also questions whether BT had properly approached community council, which they have not.

**4.1.2. A-boards** She has written to Keith Winter, Head of Development Services, regarding A-Boards. Jim Birrell is to prepare a response on A-boards in town centres in his rôle as of coordinating development control across Fife.

**4.1.3. TETRA** an Environmental Hazard Team has been set up to look into health concerns at Drumcarrow and possible links to the Tetra style mast. She is to be part of the panel.

Joe Peterson suggested other possible health hazards present in the environment should be taken into account, such as the effect of aviation kerosene exhaust fumes from Leuchars.

**4.1.4. Golf Course Planning Applications** These will be considered at the 30th March East Development committee.

**4.1.5. Southfield Development** Headon Developments have submitted an amended design. She

commented that there was something going wrong in the planning process when there is such a great difference between the submitted design and what people find acceptable.

**4.1.6. Local Plan** The collated results from the autumn consultation days will be available later this month. The next step will be a public meeting on 20 May.

**4.1.7. John Knox Rd** Ian Goudie reminded the Fife Councillors that the conditions on the successful appeal by the developers required ramp access to be determined before work begin. He called for them to ensure the plans to meet the minimum acceptable requirements for ramp access in Scottish Homes guidelines.

#### 4.2. Sheila Black (South)

**4.2.1. Recycling Centre** Negotiations between the District Valuer and Safeway's are at an "advanced stage". She takes this as a positive sign.

**4.2.2. Gregory Place** Road closure 22 March until July for building refurbishment at Kirkhill.

**4.2.3 Bassaguard Redevelopment** and upgrading to form an attractive small business park would take money to buy out existing leases that is difficult to find, but Economic Development will keep looking. Murdo Macdonald suggested private development could be a possibility if the site were sold.

**4.2.4. Younger Gardens Bus Service** Somewhat hampered because there is no turning circle, which was omitted from the development plan. It may be provided in next year's budget.

Ian Goudie reminded Cllr Black that the planning consent had required a turning circle. How and when did this get dropped in negotiations between the developers and the council. Who was responsible. This should have been provided by the developer at construction, but would now cost the public purse £40,000.

**4.2.5. Viaduct Walk** Joe Peterson reported the east, slope side fence to be broken down over a extensive length beyond the new fencing.

**4.2.6. Craigtoun Development** As well as the point about the turning circle Ian Goudie drew attention to a number of other issues:

The drainage attenuation area which was promoted as also serving for a kick-about recreational facility is in fact just a big hole in the ground of limited space and use in this respect. While the new landscape planting is very welcome there should be no trees or bushes added here to restrict space further.

The footpath on the east side of the distributor road should be pedestrian/cycle shared use. It should be marked as such before people start objecting to a 'change' later.

Substation is hideous, though such infrastructure does not need planning consent in this case it does very much need shielding shrubbery planted around it.

Landscape planting as currently exists has omitted a necessary gap for pedestrian access to the Craigtoun C area.

#### 4.3. Bill Sangster (Central)

**4.3.1. Park & Ride** He disagrees with the suggestion that the experimental Christmas service should not be repeated due to 'insufficient support'. He would rather have the reported 180 people using it than parking in town. Need to build on lessons of the trial regarding level of service and advertising. He also suggested that a parking/pick-up point is needed in the east to serve traffic from the East Neuk.

**4.3.2. Road Markings** He has drawn Transportation Service's attention to those in the centre which need repainted and in some cases realigned.

**4.3.3. Bins** Letters have been sent to offenders who do not take their bins in quickly enough.

#### 4.4. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

**4.4.1. Wheelie Bin Sizes** The small garden/kitchen waste (brown) bins that were previously impossible to source are now available and come marked NEFDC. She understands they have been in store since a trial in the days of the District Council and were recently rediscovered... Available for the asking from Roy Stewart, Environmental Service, as are the small grey bins. Regrettably the blue paper bins only come in the small size when that is the one of the three she needs to be bigger (or more frequently emptied) for the mountain of papers a councillor receives.

**4.4.2. Madras Pool Shocks** Fife Council was fined the maximum £5,000 and the sheriff's damning report strongly hinted it would have been more. There was no programme of electrical maintenance on the under floor heating system that was the cause and access panels had been covered over. It was quite horrific, she said.

Added to this a more recent electrical fault caused the heating to fail. She feels this all indicates the building is at the end of its life and needs replaced, before there are more serious problems. New provision should include a school in the Tay Bridge area.

Joe Lamb asked if responsibility for the pool incident could be fixed on any person or persons?

**4.4.3. Warrack Street Gas Mains** She noted the recent repair work needed. While, just like the water main damage in the same area recently, the damage may not be directly attributable to the 14 busses a day that pass along this small domestic road from Madras Kilrymont Road, she feels that the road is not suitable for this sort of traffic, reinforcing the case above for a new school.

**4.4.4. Area Transport Plan** This is on the Area Services agenda later in the month. Has paid attention to the consultation meetings before Christmas. Most noticeable item is the recommendation for 20mph areas around all primaries. Similar restrictions for Madras may come later but hearing Madras school board concerns about kids running across road she looks forward to seeing restrictions there.

**4.4.5. Homelessness** Local housing strategy: an application for pressured area status is under consideration, with local consultation set for June 2004. Though the legislation enabling this has been in place for one year, none has been established yet. Fife Council officials are confident of the case for St Andrews.

**4.4.6. Saint Andrew's Week** Outlined at some length a suggestion for linking Saint Andrew's Week, the Lammas Market and Edinburgh's Festival Fringe in national advertising, to the benefit of all.

#### 4.5. General

**4.5.1. Planning Applications** Ian Goudie expressed concern at a number of Fife Council planning applications appearing in the name of third parties to circumvent the procedures for proper scrutiny of planning applications by a planning authority. He cited the Petheram Bridge car park (application in the name of Scottish Enterprise Fife rather than Transportation Service) and cycle shelters in St Mary's Place (in the name of some unknown safety group rather than Transportation again). It may be legal, but is it ethical?

**4.5.2. Second Delivery** Ken Crichton asked if the loss of the second delivery had resulted in job losses, and what was Fife Council doing about it. It is not a Fife Council matter. Ewen Sparks suggested anyone concerned should write individually to the Post Office for maximum effect. Pete Lindsay pointed out the regular mailing received from the Postwatch consumer monitoring group on this and other issues that had been lying ignored in the correspondence files.

### 5. Planning Committee

Further minutes were circulated at the meeting:

#### 9.2.04

1 There was a brief discussion on the document by Scottish Natural Heritage, "Scotland's Future Landscapes", on which the Community Council is sending a brief letter of comment.

2. There was also a brief discussion on Scottish Natural Heritage's objection to Feddinch.

3. **12a Hope Street** – change of use from residential to Class 2 office. N.C.

4. **120 North Street** – extension to conservatory, internal alterations, install external flue. N.C.

5. **The Gateway** – change of use of museum/exhibition/conference/retail to education/conference/business and restaurant licensed uses. R.D. OBJ.

6. **72 North Street** – erect two flatted dwellings as part of terrace and form pedestrian gate. P.L. OBJ.

7. **1-3 Warrack Street** – erection of dwellinghouse. P.U. OBJ.

8. **The Roundel** – install internal ventilation and ducting.

9. **School 3, University of St. Andrews** – internal alterations including disabled toilet. N.C.

10. **Tetra Tower, Largo Road** R.D. OBJ.

11. **8 Kinnessburn Terr** – 4 terraced dwellinghouses with associated parking access. P.U. OBJ.

#### 23.2.04

1. **K.K. Electrics** – install security shutter, internal alterations and externally illuminated sign. R.D. OBJ.

2. **15 St. Mary Street** – change of use and alter, instal roof light, dormer extension and external alterations, alter dwellinghouse to form 2 flats as HMO (4 person upper, 3 person lower). To be discussed later.

3. **5 Letham Place** – rear dormer extension to dwellinghouse. N.C.

4. **27 Lawmill Gardens** – single storey rear extension. N.C.

5. **64 Boase Avenue** – install roof lights, erect garage, greenhouse and shed.

6. **St. Leonards School** – install steel gates, remove existing timber gates. N.C.

7. **5 Crail's Lane** – install satellite dish at first floor level of N.E. corner. N.C.

8. **81 Market Street** – (Fatface) display externally illuminated fascia and 2 projecting signs. Section of walling to be taken down.

9. **Southgait Hall** – install metal gates. N.C.

10. **76 St. Nicholas Street** – front and rear dormer extensions. N.C.

11. **34 Ruthven Place** – rear conservatory extension. N.C.

12. **135 South Street** – install ATM in window. N.C.

13. **15 Lawhead Road East** – extension to dwellinghouse. N.C.

14. **120 Leonard Drive** – extension to dwellinghouse. N.C.

15. **Southfield, Kinnessburn Road** – erect 10 flats, form access to public road, amend design to include pitched roofs. L.A. OBJ.

### 6. Matters Arising from previous meetings

#### 6.1. Links with Loches, France

Murdo Macdonald opened from the chair by recapping the position at February 03 when the Loches

Alliance were asked to come back in a year with indication of wider support in the community and town organisations.

Frank Riddell summarised his understanding of the grants and funding position based on further reading of the web sites Mr Swankie used. In summary, he'd confirmed that grants were available and had been awarded to towns similar to St Andrews. He rejected allegations that members of the Alliance stood to gain financially from twinning. He had used his own time and money in promoting the link and visits to Loches. The Alliance was providing a small grant of £10/head to Madras College pupils going on an exchange visit at Easter. He dismissed the story about the Madras rector's change of heart as hearsay – why hadn't he contacted anyone about it before the accident? He noted that a policy framework for links and existed as reported in appendix L, and believed that the criteria given there had been met: nearly 1000 people have exchanged, a widespread benefit to the community, the response to The Citizen poll was substantial in terms of a newspaper poll and could he felt be taken as a general indication of support.

Penny Uprichard felt twinning as described in the papers circulated by Mr Swankie and Dr Riddell intended to promote the EU not twinning itself.

Donald Macgregor felt it was arrogant to think, as some apparently do, that St Andrews is so great it cannot link with others. St Andrews would be no less 'unique' if it adopted one or more twinning link. He had received a supporting letter from John Purves MEP, who lives nearby, offering his help if the proposal goes forward. Regarding Madras College he merely noted the validity of the information rather depends what Mr Matheson had been told. On previous refusals to twin he pointed out the world has changed since eg 1980s and Otawara. There is no intention to be exclusive, the alliance just want to encourage and cement a successful relationship.

Ken Crichton felt the issues were money and political ends. He believed that twinning was intended to promote the EU and would result in a slippery slope toward adoption of the Euro and common fiscal policy. He accused supporters of wanting money to reciprocate foreign entertainment. Supporting the Loches proposal snubbed other links. Very few people he has spoken to support the proposal.

Chris Lesurf asked if Loches wants twinning so badly then do we want to twin with them?

Ian Goudie argued for consistency. He said that while it would be wrong to be bound unthinkingly by the past, a change in policy against explicit twinning (as opposed to less formal links), should be treated with caution. To change the support in town would have to be absolutely overwhelming, but while there was some support in town there is no evidence of a huge groundswell. He noted that times change – ten years ago the campaign was for Arlington. How many other approaches have there been since 1977?

Ewen Sparks took exception to the use of the word "arrogant", he preferred "proud" instead. The Merchants Association, which he chairs, feel it would be unfortunate to single out Loches as it could be taken as snubbing other places. No objection to Loches links continuing as is.

Meeting then voted on support for the Loches Alliance's request for backing for more formal links with Loches-en-Touraine.

For: 4, Against: 11, Abstained 2.

**No support**

*Meeting took a break, then continued at item 4. Donald Macgregor resumed the chair.*

## **6.2. Links with Tabor, Czech Republic**

Noted

## **6.3. Community Council Elections**

Suggest a date as soon as practical after the new register of electors published.

**Pete Lindsay to write**

## **6.4. St Andrews in Focus**

Meeting agreed to accept the offer. Publicity committee to prepare material for publication.

**Publicity**

## **6.5. Harbour Trust**

Donald Macgregor asked Joe Lamb to clarify whether he had contacted the Harbour Trust and Scottish Executive with his concerns and whether he had received replies? He had.

Cllr Frances Melville agreed that representation on the Harbour Trust was unsatisfactory for the present day and repeated yet again that this was why the Trust was being revised with the full knowledge and advice of the appropriate parts of the Scottish Executive. She also said that the matter of public meetings was on the agenda for the next Trust meeting and advice would be sought.

Meeting agreed to take no further action.

## **6.6. Accessible St Andrews**

Noted

## **6.7. Commendation to Whey Pat Tavern**

Noted

## **6.8. Bus Station Project**

Ken Fraser reported on the bus station meeting he'd attended earlier in the day. Several options were presented around two principle designs. The difference in the two main designs lies in different direction of access for various forms of traffic. New buildings are proposed, providing more cover from the weather.

It was proposed that they would remain open as long as staff were on duty, which should be as long as buses are running.

Public consultation on refined versions of the two designs will be in April. Cllr Melville added that it would be up to people of St Andrews to choose a suitable design.

## 7. New Business

### 7.1. European Election Hustings

Meeting decided against organising a hustings.

### 7.2. Bandstand Concerts

Murdo Macdonald will check if the Rotary Club will run the concerts themselves, and if so make the bookings.

He added that Cosmos Centre may not be able to store the chairs in future due to alterations to the buildings on construction of the new footpath outside.

### 7.3. Community Councils Showcase

Joe Peterson may be able to attend the steering group.

**Joe Peterson**

### 7.4. – 7.13.

Noted

## 8. Reports from Officers

### 8.1. Chair

### 8.2. Treasurer

Archie Strachan noted that the accounts close at the end of March and asked for expenses claims to be submitted as soon as possible before then.

### 8.3. Secretary

Noted

## 9. Reports

### 9.1. From Committees

#### 9.1.1. Recreation

- a) Joe Peterson reminded the meeting of the coffee morning in April and appealed for helpers, prizes, plants for sale etc
- b) £750 of floral enhancement grants have been awarded for St Andrews projects

### 9.2. From Representatives

## 10. Any Other Competent Business

### 10.1. 1 Greyfriars Garden

Bill Sangster reported that the lawyers for the owner have written with a contract for his continued maintenance of their garden and indicated that their client will consider an purchase offer from community council if the price is right. He will investigate this further.

## Papers circulated for Loches discussions

### 1. Questions to St Andrews Community Council on the principles of twinning with another town

Malcolm Black, 30 Buchanan Gardens.

1. Can the Council verify that
  - a. The former St Andrews Town Council had a policy not to promote or accept proposals to twin with other towns?
  - b. North East Fife District Council, the successor to St Andrews Town Council, continued this policy?
  - c. All the evidence is that Fife Council, the successor to North East Fife District Council in this regard, has done nothing to deviate from this policy?
  - d. If such a policy was not actually formulated, was it the prevailing convention to give the impression that abstention from town twinning was the practice and tradition of all those above statutory bodies with regard to St Andrews?
2. If a principle is involved in the policy, or conventions and practices, what consultation has taken place on (a) the principle and (b) the formulation of a policy on twinning with other towns?
3. How many Councillors have sought a mandate in the Community Council Elections to overturn this policy or these conventions and practices?
4. If the answer to 2 and 3 are in the negative, should the first step taken by the Community Council not

be a proper proposal for a policy on twinning with clear principles as to what this policy will seek to achieve?

5. If such a policy is agreed by the Community Council, should it not then be put to the Citizens of St Andrews either at an election or by a referendum?
6. Should not the Citizens of St Andrews, if they approve the principle of twinning, then be given the opportunity to suggest worthy towns with which to twin in accordance with the agreed principles and policies?
7. Would that not then be an appropriate point at which the Community Council could prioritise the proposed twin towns and make the necessary approaches to them?
8. Finally, would the Community Council not agree that this is a much more open approach than what has been happening in recent ad hoc proceedings?

## 2. Item 3.3/6.1 Additional Information (D.F. Macgregor)

(1) Yesterday I received a handwritten letter dated 28 February 2004 from Mr John Purvis, Member of the European Parliament, in which he urges that the relationship with Loches be continued. Mr Purvis points out that 'a very successful twinning between Inchture and a French counterpart has received funding from the European Union. This funding has been continued for 2004. I would be pleased to help you access these moneys, if this would be of interest. He concludes: 'I do believe that building up the contact between the people (young and old) of St Andrews and Loches could be of great mutual benefit and would help to cement a better understanding.'

(2) (re Appendix I) The documentation circulated by an objector contains various errors and doubtful assertions.

Point a – see EU website documentation circulated by Dr Riddell. Even a small amount of ET funding could in any case open the door to other funding.

Point b – It is not the case that I was CC chairman when 'that policy was inaugurated'. It was a policy taken over long before my time from the Town Council. In any case the CC has now moved on and changed its policy. It is up to those seeking to twin to reapply and make their case.

Madras College view: As of now (4.20 pm, Monday) I have not been contacted by Mr Matheson or anyone else at Madras in this regard. I went into school today at 4 pm and spoke (in Mr Matheson's absence in hospital) to his secretary about the matter. She knew nothing of any change of view, and of course the school is sending a group of 43 pupils to Loches at Easter, the visit being supported by a contribution of £450 from the Loches Alliance.

No member of the Loches Alliance, including those who are members of the CC, has any "material interest" in the towns being twinned. If it cannot be demonstrated what the 'material interest' is, the statement should be withdrawn.

The implication on the last page that members of the Alliance Committee or any 'dignitaries' seek, have sought or ever intend to seek 'free trips' is ridiculous. All Alliance members have always paid their way in visits to Loches and have offered hospitality here to French people at their own expense. In addition, the Alliance works hard to raise funds to encourage local connections with Loches.

Paper (part) circulated by Frank Riddell

## 3. To fellow members of the Community Council

You will have received a letter with some lengthy attachments from Ian Swankie. The purpose of those documents was to persuade you to vote against twinning with the French town of Loches. Mr Swankie copied documents to you from an EU web site. It is a pity that he didn't delve further into that web site. If he had he would have found examples where twinning has resulted in constructive funding from the EU for links between communities. I attach but two "star" examples from the 2002 funding round:

\* The first deals with a primary school exchange between Nuremburg (Germany) and their twin town Prague (Czech Republic), which involved 52 children.

\* The second deals with an exchange of people with disabilities between Bradford (England) and Hamm (Germany), which involved 24 disabled people from Hamm going to Bradford. "This twinning project is a good and concrete example of empowerment, fostering the active involvement of people with disabilities. Thanks to this event the 2003 twinning actions are not only targeted to people with disabilities, but also planned by them."

I also attach a list, from the same web site, showing the EU grants for 2003 to communities in the UK for meetings of citizens similar to those specified above. Members will note from this list that the EU awarded 54 twinning grants to communities in the UK, many of whom are similar in size or smaller than St Andrews, for amounts between €2,170 and €20,000.

As to the allegations that Donald Macgregor and myself have a material interest in the twinning, I find this unworthy of any member of our community. No material benefit of any sort has resulted to either of us, although substantial benefits to many citizens of St Andrews and Loches have arisen from the work of the Alliance. Indeed, it has cost both Donald and myself time and money to promote these links. To give but one example, our contributions to fund raising efforts have recently enabled the Alliance to give a grant of £10 per head to around 45 S3 pupils from Madras College to sweeten their visit to Loches this Easter.

All we seek from the Community Council is a blessing on this alliance and on our efforts to promote international understanding.

Frank Riddell

(29-02-04)

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