



# Cromarty and District Community Council

## Chairwoman's Report 2024

A little over 4 years ago I decided to join the Community Council. Little did I know then I would be sitting writing my 4th report as chair!

Now that the Community Council elections have taken place, we said goodbye to a long serving face who I must mention personally. Peter Ratcliffe was a long serving member of the Community Council who went above and beyond for his community. From organising the gritting rotas to ensuring the town bins were always emptied to leading the litter picking group, Peter has done it all. He was a tremendous asset to the Community Council, and we thank him very much for his service to the town.

We also welcomed some new faces to the fold in the form of Alan Rycroft. Alan has slotted well into the team and has given some valuable contributions so far. Thanks so much to Alan for joining the team.

To say it has been business as usual for the Community Council would sell us massively short. With large Highland Council budget cuts there is more pressure on communities to fill the void. We have a very good relationship with our 3 local community councillors Sarah, Lyndsey and Morven-May who are always willing to listen to our views and offer support and advice where possible.

Maintenance around the town has been a hot topic and we are actively working with The Highland Council to address these issues. We have also been working on the Black Isle Place Plan. Cromarty and the other Community Councils (Black Isle Community Councils) worked hard to form a governance proposal that would fit the plan. Not all Community Councils agreed with the proposal, but the majority view was put forward and since then the plan has been submitted and we await a reply from The Highland Council.

The Freeport Bid remains a hot topic within the town but at the moment not a huge amount of information has been shared. We remain vigilant for more updates. The Inner Moray Firth document is due out in the Autumn, and we will endeavour to engage with this to our fullest capacity.

This year also saw the launch of our new and improved Cromarty Live Website which has been a huge hit. It was a labour of love for some of our members, but we are pleased with the launch and new design. I would like to thank Alan, Viv, Claire, and Andy for all their hard work on this.

I was absolutely delighted to receive the news that The Youth Cafe has received a £20k grant from the 'National Lottery Awards for All' to cover a 2-year period ending 31st March 2026. This grant combined with other funds (including those from the Middleton Trust) will help to fund 20 hours a week of paid Youth Worker time until the same date. The Youth Cafe has had another busy year with an exciting summer program to follow. Massive thank you to Wanda, Fraser, and Michelle for all their continued hard work.

Cromarty is so very fortunate to have the volunteer pool it has. We have lots of amazing groups all pushing for the betterment of the town. Volunteers are in short supply but we always welcome new members and continue to encourage people along to our meetings. They are held face to face and can be available online for those that may not make it to The Victoria Hall. All members of the public are welcome to join.

Once again, I must thank my incredible team and the Community Councils around me. Knowledge in abundance, patience and encouraging. You are all an asset to this place, and we are one heck of a team. Thank you would never be enough, but I am grateful for each one of you.

Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much" – **Helen Keller**

Paige, Chairwoman for the C&DCC