



## FRAW News- November 2020

We hope that all our members and supporters are keeping fit, healthy, safe and in good spirits. The Walkway together with all Edinburgh's paths and Greenspaces continues to be busy; a very good thing in the present circumstances and this has surely led to a much greater appreciation of their importance. We in Barnton/Cramond are particularly blessed. Our council

is under great financial strain currently and the Parks and Greenspaces service, which has been hollowed out in recent years, can easily be considered a target for further reductions. This would be a shame as the public benefits of exercise to mental and physical health and general wellbeing are more and more widely understood and public usage of our facilities is likely to increase even further.

### DOWIES MILL WEIR



The Cramond Brig is a beautiful and historical feature of the River Almond. Its surrounding extensive mill pond is not only important for its setting but for its structural integrity. As part of a larger scheme to improve fish passage the Council's and Forth Rivers Trust's preferred option has been to remove about three-quarters of the mill pond downstream. This we have constructively opposed by proposing instead that the Dowies weir be retained and adapted suitably and at an estimated lower cost too. Agreement was reached towards the end of 2019 to commission a review of this other option

and

we understand that this is currently taking place. We hope that a solution that receives local support will be arrived at and that work can then proceed. It is important to improve fish passage at Dowies as considerable expense has occurred further up the Almond on other adaptations such as at Kirkton Weir [picture].



### SALVESEN STEPS REPLACEMENT

A protracted eight year process to design and cost a route around the rock-face was concluded in March this year when a cost in excess of three times the one originally estimated was revealed. There are a number of variables than can be challenged in this costing but it cannot be denied that this particular scheme is outside existing available

funding. This is very disappointing indeed. The council now propose that as the current temporary scaffolding steps are expensive and unsatisfactory they should commission a costing study into replacing them with a more permanent flight of steps using some of the money retained for a larger project in case this is lost. They state in principle that they remain committed to a disability compliant structure but of course the Walkway in its entirety would remain inaccessible to many until such a time as a solution was found.

FRAW and our partner local organisations have responded saying that although it hurts it would not be responsible to oppose this proposal but that the quest for a proper solution should be promoted. To process this it is necessary to know what is being proposed and how much it would cost. We have proposed that a new study be commissioned to examine all the possible options – not just what has been looked at previously but new options too. It may seem contentious to commission yet more consultants but much material has already been assembled and paid for. At the time of writing we await the council's response. Please take time to take a look at our full paper on the news section in our website [www.friendsoftheriveralmondwalkway.org.uk/our-news/](http://www.friendsoftheriveralmondwalkway.org.uk/our-news/).

## MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING THE WALKWAY



In the present circumstances regular work parties have been difficult to organise. Some regular maintenance has been accomplished by one, sometimes two, of your committee. This includes brush-cutting around the trees in the community woodland. Excellent work has also been contributed by one of our highly valued members in sorting out tree-guards and stakes there. If you have not taken a look at the Woodland recently it is looking very good and well worth a visit. To give you an

idea we show an October picture.

On November 18 we organised our first formal work party since lockdown. Five stalwarts continued the task of brightening up and making the entrance to the Walkway at Cramond more welcoming. The path was widened considerably by shovelling away large amounts of leaf mould and enormous piles of 'brash' were consumed in a large bonfire.

