

Longstone Community Council

Secretary's report for 2022–23

Membership

Although we started the year with 9 members, on 14 Jun 2022, Jean Marr resigned (she was suffering from dementia) and on 11 Oct 2022, Ros Lennie resigned (she attended the Zoom meetings but, when we reverted to physical meetings, she didn't want to drive in the dark). Then on 5 Dec 2022, Lily Campbell resigned due to her dementia. That meant the membership fell below the minimum and we called for new members. As a result two new members were co-opted on 13 March 2023: Ray Donnelly and Euan Robertson. We are now unable to co-opt any more members. Membership remains at 8 (the minimum is 7).

Meetings

Following the easing of the Covid-19 restrictions, meetings returned to in-person for the 2022 AGM and no further Zoom meetings have been held. All meetings have been held in the Session Room of Slateford/Longstone Church. Including the 2022 AGM, we held 8 meetings during the year. Apart from an AGM, the minimum number of meetings required is 6.

Police

Although we received a crime report in April 22 and one for the June 22 meeting, and PC Cory attended the Nov 2022 meeting, we have received neither reports nor apologies from Police since.

CEC Councillors

During the year, the following CEC Councillors attended one or more of our meetings: Heap, Dixon, Cowdy, McKenzie, Walker.

AGM

The 2022 AGM was held on 13 June 2022, at which the following were reappointed: DL as Chair; JA as Vice-chair; SC as Secretary and AG as Treasurer. It was also agreed to reappoint Crofton Palmer as auditor.

Planning and development

Several planning issues have continued unresolved. The redevelopment of the former Booker site in Inglis Green Road still awaits assessment despite a recent redesign. Although the T7 Active Travel Route has been re-routed to go through the development rather than around it, no progress has been made on a bridge to carry the Route across the river to Mart Road. The proposed building of student flats in Inglis Green Gate still awaits assessment. In March an application was made to redevelop the site of the Longstone Inn as 23 flats and a commercial unit. We submitted a comment on this application on 5 April. We still don't know who removed 'The Burnside' nameplate.

The conversion of Slateford House continued with completion sometime in the spring. All the flats there are now to let, but we remain concerned about the protection required to the memorial plaque. Despite the owner of The (New) Kingsknowe having permission to demolish it

and redevelop the site for housing, nothing has happened and the pub continues to function. Staff inform us that nothing will change. The redevelopment of the Westside Motors site in Slateford as student flats has shown little progress but work is expected to start soon.

Environment

We have continued in vain to get a response from CEC on the future of the Redhall Grove traffic control scheme. There has been little change to the cycle lanes and parking arrangements on Lanark Road, but installation of a controlled pedestrian by the junction with Kingsknowe Park is promised for later this year. Lately we hear that new street lighting is required. Outstanding issues are the need for lighting to the main path crossing Hailes Quarry Park to Murrayburn Drive and the need to raise part of that path to avoid flooding. The bridge at The Burnside remains officially closed although accessible with care while we wait for CEC to appoint engineers to rebuild it (despite not knowing its owner). Two other sites in our area appear to have no known owner: The Tunnel path and the bridge in Redhall Bank Road over the WoL Walkway. CEC's Estates department is trying to get these properties adopted by the King's and Lord's Treasurer's Remembrancer (they deal with unclaimed property in Scotland) for transfer to CEC ownership. Graffiti has been an ongoing problem with which both SC and WS have tried to deal. WS has a CEC graffiti kit for trial.

Memorial

As usual we held a Remembrance Ceremony, laying our wreath, at the War Memorial on 13 November 2022. 15 people attended.

After School and Breakfast Club

Kirsty Swain and Alison Acosta of the After School and Breakfast Club at Longstone Primary School attended our September meeting, wishing to explain their funding problem. Later I attended the Club's AGM in The Kingsknowe, where it was clear that the Club may have to close (it will close in August). We have since heard that the provision will continue with a different provider.

Bridges in Colinton Dell

During the year we were regularly updated about progress in getting two bridges repaired so that they could be reopened to the public. Still not complete but progress is expected shortly. Only part of the main bridge by the weir is in our area.

Outdoor classroom at the school and DC Award

While the classroom was made safe and has been used by the School, our memorial plaque still lies buried in banked soil. We wait to get the plaque retrieved and mounted somewhere else on the classroom structure. The Award was made on 28 June 2022, when DL presented a £50 book token to the winner.

The long stone

Last autumn, a work party cleared a large part of this stone lying just beside the bridge to the west. In February we noted that CEC's Archaeologist had taken an interest in the stone and was arranging a survey. Its future lies with him.

Other matters

Closure of Sainsbury's café; Brian Farrell's concern for the state of Kingsknowe Place where his mother lives; the telephone kiosk; location of defibrillators; notice board problem and the repair of the bridges in Colinton Dell.

SC/10jun23