

## Longstone Community Council Secretary's report to 2018 AGM

This is a review of most activities during the year but is not exhaustive.

### *Planning applications and development:*

The main planning issue during the year has been the application by 'Lanark Road Living Ltd', an unregistered company, to build student flats in Slateford on the site of Westside Motors (application December 2016). In September 2017, as statutory consultees, we were invited by the planning officer to comment on a modified application and this we did on 28 September. In short, we stood by our original (6 page) objection dated 1 February 2017. Since September, there has been little contact with the planning department, although it is known that SEPA has now withdrawn its objection regarding flooding. The application is still being assessed and we await a decision.

Flats for Hillcrest Housing Association on the site of the former Longstone Centre (69 Inglis Green Road) were completed and handed over (March 2018). The development is now known by Hillcrest as 'Graysknowe', the name of the street from which it is accessed.

In August 2017, the new nursery school in the grounds of the primary school was completed and handed over.

Historic Environment Scotland listed the primary school, together with its boundary wall and gates on 14 November 2016. During 2017, the older buildings of Lothian Buses depot were listed.

There has been no development of the site in Inglis Green Gait.

In December we heard about Bike Park Project on land adjacent to the Prison, next to the development there by Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association. Work on that development started during the year, but none of the buildings are on our ground.

### *Environment:*

Scottish Canals eventually installed a channel to catch water leaking from the canal onto the pavement beside Inglis Green Road. This is ducted to the kerbside. However water still occasionally floods that pavement from a leak beside the structure of the (Network Rail) viaduct. This has (again) been drawn to the attention of CEC, who may be trying to get NW take responsibility.

Graffiti continued to be existential problem but I have kept up pressure on the owners of the properties involved and had some success at removing the tags. Some private owners will cooperate in removing graffiti, but CEC seems reluctant to do anything. It is also now difficult to get CEC to remove fly-tipped material.

It is sad to note that the new wetland in Hailes Quarry Park is also completely dried out. This is because it has no water supply except rain.

In May 2017, I pointed out that the overhead electricity power line, that used to run from near the allotments in Saughton to behind an industrial estate south of Murrayburn Road, had been removed (2015). It had been replaced an underground connection.

### *School prize*

In May 2017, it was suggested that, out of our surplus funds, we fund a prize for pupils at Longstone Primary School and we sought the opinion of the school and parents. The idea was welcomed and we suggested that a prize be instituted in memory of Duncan Colquhoun, who was already remembered in the outdoor classroom built with the remnant funds of the now closed Duncan Colquhoun Memorial Trust in 2007. It also commemorated the 50th anniversary of opening of the school in 1957. Subsequently LCC paid for a trophy shield in Duncan's name, which would be inscribed with the winners' names. LCC also agreed to fund a £20 book token prize to go with the award. The problem of what to do about the deteriorating outdoor classroom was not resolved. Meanwhile LCC began to examine the cost of refurbishing it. The trophy shield was presented to Head Teacher Angela

Pearston at our March meeting.

### *Edinburgh Council election*

This took place on 4 May 2017, resulting in one new councillor for ward 7 (Ashley Graczyk, Tory). She has yet to attend one of our meetings, although she did turn up for the one meeting that could not be held (14 May). The election coincided with ward boundary changes that put our south area (mainly Kingsknowe) into ward 9 (Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart). Consequently residents south of the railway are now represented by three new councillors (Gavin Corbett, Green; Andrew Johnston, Tory; David Key, SNP). None has so far attended any of our meetings, but one meeting was attended by MEP Gordon Lindhurst. Cllrs Dixon and Wilson, representing ward 7, have occasionally attend our meetings during the year.

### *Data control and records*

In March I reported that, bowing to pressure from CEC, we registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. However, we have not changed our communication methods.

During the year I disposed of old printed copies of LCC minutes by depositing them with CEC's archives. Minutes since 2013 are on our website, which I maintain.

### *Remembrance Ceremony:*

Because it had been decided no longer to organise a religious ceremony at the war memorial, a secular ceremony was held there on Remembrance Sunday, 12 November 2017, conducted by the Chair of LCC.

### *Buses:*

Changes to bus services in April brought a new one: the 36 service through Longstone from Morningside to the Gyle. The 34 and the 20 continue to service our community.

### *Other committees*

On LCC's behalf, Des Loughney has attended the South West Neighbourhood Partnership and the Hailes Quarry Park Steering Group meetings. John Allan has attended meetings of the Canal Community Action Group.

### *LCC membership*

In December 2017, Lily Campbell resigned from LCC, leaving us with the minimum membership of 7. We have not been successful in finding any new members. In June 2017, local minister Mike Free, a nominated representative on LCC, retired and left our area. No new minister has been appointed.

Steuart Campbell

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