

Craiglockhart Community Council

Minutes of the Public Meeting & AGM

Time: 7pm

Date: 18 November 2024

Venue: Online via Microsoft Teams & In person at Craiglockhart Campus Room 1/09

Chair: Nick Stewart

1. Welcome, apologies for absence and any declarations of interest

Apologies:

Community Councillor - John Corbett, Hilda Henderson, Neena Agarwal, Bryce Morrison*

City of Edinburgh Councillor - David Key

Police Scotland - Community Police Team

Chair of the Greenbank Village West Residents Association - tbc

Chair of the Greenbank Village East Residents Association - Paul Pia

In Attendance:

Community Councillors - Nick Stewart (chair), Kevin McKay, Eleanor Young, Anni McLeod **

City of Edinburgh Councillor - Christopher Cowdy, Val Walker

Residents - circa 10 (in person & online)

* Friends of Easter Craiglockhart Hill representative

** Friends of Wester Craiglockhart Hill and Greenbank Community Woodland representative

Declarations of interest:

None

2. Minutes from previous meeting

Approval of the minutes from the public meeting held on 16 September 2024 was proposed by Eleanor Young (EY) and seconded by Kevin McKay (KMCK).

Nick Stewart (NS) advised that the action points from the last meeting would be covered by the agenda items for this meeting.

3. Police Scotland Crime Prevention Team - Darker Night Campaign

NS welcomed Samantha Campbell (SC) of Police Scotland, Crime Prevention Unit, West End Police Station. SC drew peoples attention to a range of leaflets that provide useful prevention hints and tips covering:

- Vehicle and Motorcycle Security
- Property Security
- Edinburgh Trusted Trader
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Keep Calm and Hang Up (i.e. how to recognise scam calls)

A copy of each leaflet is available to view/download on the Craiglockhart Community Council (CCC) website <https://www.craiglockhart.org/>

A number of common sense, preventative, measures were highlighted by SC at the meeting. These measures could be characterised as: physical (locks, bolts, etc.); habits and behaviours (car keys not visible, alarms on, etc.); and neighbourliness (look out for others).

A powerpoint presentation on our website also re-states a number of the measures mentioned by SC at the meeting. For the sake of brevity these measures are not repeated here - please refer to the CCC website.

Following on from a question from a resident, SC indicated that it was very difficult to establish crime trends within Edinburgh and measure the success of police crime prevention measures. Nevertheless it is clear that thieving is a continuous, background, issue in Edinburgh.

The key message reinforced by SC was to make the act of stealing slow, noisy and difficult. If residents would like any further information or advice specific to them SC would be willing to help. People can email samantha.campbell@scotland.pnn.police.uk or Edinburghpreventandintervent@scotland.pnn.police.uk

4. Community Police - Ward Forum De-brief

NS attended the Ward Forum meeting with Police Scotland on Wednesday 2 October. A summary of the meeting is available on the CCC website. Three points from the meeting highlighted by NS included:

- Resource Limitations: not restricted to purely funding constraints. Staff turnover (e.g. about 40% of the force currently has up to 5 years service) and the expanding scope of police services (e.g. bridging the gap when mental health agencies close their doors at 3pm Friday and the weekend) are conspiring to exacerbate the issue of available police resources.
- Risk Based Response: in light of above resource limitations resident expectations need to be calibrated to take into account the fact that any police response is a judgement after assessing the relative risk posed by the call, and placing the individual needs of the victim at the centre of their decision making.
- Contact Options: for non-emergency issues the option exists to make use of the [Contact Us form](#) on the Police Scotland website (<http://www.scotland.police.uk>) as well as the 101 phone line.

Christopher Cowdy (CC) shared his experience of spending time on a night shift with Police Scotland. His experience reinforced the demands placed on them, including people with mental health issues. CC said he was encouraging MSPs to spend time with the force to see for themselves the range and volume of police operational demands.

5. Planning - Update

No planning applications were advised by John Corbett (JC) prior to the meeting.

6. Engagement - Update

Kevin Mckay (KMck) confirmed that planning for a "Health & Wellbeing" event in June 2025 was underway. The event is likely to be geared towards vulnerable adults and the elderly. Tentative enquiries have been made to potential participants (e.g. University of the Third Age whose aims are the education and stimulation of mainly retired members of the community — those in their third 'age' of life).

External funding options for the event are also being explored (e.g. SW Edinburgh Community Grants Fund, Edinburgh University Micro-grant Scheme, etc.).

7. Friends of Easter Craiglockhart Hill (FECH) - Update

On behalf of Bryce Morrison, NS summarised the following.

FECH work squads continue to run twice a month on Sunday afternoons, tidying and planting. A delivery date for the central sanctuary island for the pond is still awaited. A well attended geology walk took place on the 3rd November. An Autumn newsletter has been issued to members.

The collapsed ramp leading to the Meadowspot path has been reinstated by the Council. The solid structure looks as if should serve for decades.

The demolition phase of the pontoons at the South end of the pond took place on schedule. Unfortunately the rebuild is on hold pending the delivery of larch wood. This is evidently in short supply and the Council have been let down. Larch is the appropriate wood for the rebuild because of its durability. It is denser, harder and more durable than pine with its water resistance properties limiting rot and decay. The rebuild will take some weeks once the wood arrives.

Joining FECH is free and can be done through the website using the Join button to go to <https://www.eastercraiglockharthill.org/membership/>

8. Issues & Actions

8.1 Fireworks - Antisocial Behaviour and Firework Control Zone (FCZ)

In her capacity as a Greenbank resident Anni McLeod (AMcL) sought views from people regarding stricter firework controls because of two concerns:

1. Stress caused by firework noise disruption, affecting animals and people
2. Firework-related violence, damage and injuries

Well published incidents in Edinburgh include the sad death of a red panda cub at Edinburgh Zoo and firework-related violence in Niddrie, Sighthill and elsewhere.

AMcL shared her own negative experience this year: very narrowly missed injury from a firework and endured serious noise disturbance (personally as well as neighbours and pets). Youths, without the permission of the landowner, held a private firework display on a private greenspace next to Greenbank Village, with very noisy fireworks. Although police officers came quickly when contacted by residents they seemed powerless to take any action.

AMcL has shared the above with all three elected councillors and has received supportive replies. To address the above concerns the following options were suggested by AMcL.

- **All fireworks only allowed under licence** - covering possession, sale and use. Fireworks limited to organised firework displays was a natural progression for this option. This would deal with both concerns above. Although this option presents practical challenges, it has been done elsewhere.
- **Very quiet fireworks** (e.g. non industrial) - strict regulations on the noise made by fireworks, with penalties for selling, owning or letting off noisy fireworks. This would mitigate noise disruption without depriving people of the pleasure of watching fireworks, and reduce firework-related violence due to the low appeal of these fireworks to some.
- **FCZ** - introduced for Craiglockhart and Fountainhead (and also Firrhill) as a stop-gap measure. (note: a FCZ cannot be imposed by the Council - they need to be requested)
- **Police powers** - given the police strengthened (e.g. dispersal) to stop a firework display being held in a green space without the owner's permission.

Discussion at the meeting considered the above options and how to strike the right balance between the responsible use and enjoyment of fireworks on the one hand, and mitigating antisocial noise and behaviour on the other.

Christopher Cowdy (CC) and Val Walker (VW) confirmed that a review of what worked and didn't in 2024 would be conducted by the Council and considered by the Culture & Community Committee and the Policy & Sustainability Committee.

8.2 Lockhartons Parking Issue - Update

On behalf of Hilda Henderson, NS shared the following update.

Since the last public meeting residents had a meeting with Council Officers to identify ways to accelerate the process to implement the Priority Parking Area (PPA) for the Lockhartons before the end of 2025.

The Council Officers asked if residents could establish the number of cars in the Lockharton area and the number of permits that might be required, and the number of restricted spaces required divided between restricted and unrestricted. With this information the Council Officers hope to complete their design by the end of 2024 and commence their consultation process in early 2025.

To support the above request residents have drafted information on the PPA and prepared a survey which is in the process of being shared with households, door to door.

Further updates will be provided to CCC.

8.3 Katesmill Walkway Bridge (known locally as the Pipe Bridge)

The route remains closed and progress has stalled since the contractor's material supplier has failed to deliver to promised schedules. It is hoped that these supply issues will be addressed and the route re-opened by Christmas. A further update should be expected by early December - refer to the CCC website.

8.4 Paties Pavillion Car Park Lighting - Katesmill Road

Negotiations by City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) to lease the neighbouring Paties Road Pavilion to another organisation are ongoing. Part of these negotiations will propose that the car park becomes the responsibility of the tenants on the site in totality. CCC will continue to monitor any developments.

8.5 Blind Junction - Craiglockhart Gardens & Craiglockhart Avenue

Due to road works on Craiglockhart Avenue a new mirror has not installed at the junction of Craiglockhart Gardens and Craiglockhart Avenue. Contact will be made (again) with CEC to install a replacement mirror.

8.6 Clearance of Leaves

Merchiston Community Council (MCC) has organised an annual leaf clearing project since 2021. NS has met with a member of MCC to gather information as to the approach and lessons they have learned. The rigour and project planning performed by MCC was impressive. NS will use their experiences to identify the actions for CCC in advance of Autumn 2025.

9. CCC Meeting Dates for 2025

The following dates for 2025 were confirmed: Monday 17 February 2025 @ 7pm, 17 March, 19 May, 21 July, 15 September and 17 November 2025.

10. AOCB

10.1 Community Council Elections - 2025

NS advised the meeting that nominations for community council members will open from 6 February 2025 and close on 27 February 2025. The current community council term will end on 27 March 2025.

Council officers are currently working on ways to promote community councils and the forthcoming elections. A briefing note detailing the process for community council elections, including information on nominations and instances of contested election will be issued in due course.

Council officers will submit their next report to the Culture and Community Committee on 5 December 2024. Subsequent to this date CCC would be better placed to know what needs to be done.

10.2 Edinburgh South Suburban Railway - Proposal to reopen

Three 5th-year master's students at Heriot-Watt University introduced their project to reopen Edinburgh's South Suburban ('South Sub') railway line as a tram-train service (i.e. operates on both tram and train lines as an extension of Edinburgh Trams) that aims to:

- Expand the city's transport network;
- Improve connections to underserved areas like Craigmillar and Niddrie; and
- Support urban regeneration while reducing car dependency.

Unfortunately time pressures prevented any meaningful feedback to the students at the meeting.

NS gave the commitment to the students (Caitlin Cummins, Yuen Fong Hoo and Chang Xun Tan) that access to the on-line survey seeking feedback for The South Sub project would be available via the CCC website and circulated to residents using the CCC email distribution list.

Additionally NS would explore the possibility of a bespoke community meeting to provide 'organic feedback' on The South Sub project.

Date of Next Public Meeting

Date: 17 February **2025**

Time: 7pm

Venue: Online via Microsoft Teams & In person at Craiglockhart Campus.

NS thanked all attendees.

The meeting was closed.