

Craiglockhart Community Council

Minutes of the Public Meeting

Time: 7pm

Date: 20 November 2023

Venue: Online via Microsoft Teams & In person at Craiglockhart Campus Room 1/08

Chair: John Corbett

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

Apologies:

Community Councillors - Peter Mavor, Neena Agarwal, Anni McLeod **

City of Edinburgh Councillors - Christopher Cowdy, David Key

Chair of the Greenbank Village East Residents Association - Paul Pia

Chair of the Greenbank Village West Residents Association - Ian Watson

In Attendance:

Community Councillors - John Corbett (chair), Hilda Henderson, Kevin McKay, Bryce Morrison*,

Alex Schweitzer-Thompson, Eleanor Young, Nick Stewart

City of Edinburgh Councillor - Val Walker

Residents - circa 12 (Online and in person)

* Water of Leith Conservation Trust representative and 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 18 September 2023 was proposed by Nick Stewart (NS) and seconded by Eleanor Young (EY).

3. Community Police Report

3.1 Ward Forum

NS confirmed there were no items of concern raised by Police Scotland Edinburgh Division South West at the first quarterly Ward Meeting (Ward 8 & 9) on Friday 10 November 2023, at Fairmilehead Parish Church. An overview of the Ward Meeting was provided by NS. A more complete record of the meeting follows.

Attendees

- Police Scotland - Chief Inspector Paul Gillespie (Local Area Commander for South West Edinburgh), Sergeant Mark Coull (Community Policing Team) and Inspector Keith Forrester
- Elected Officials - Val Walker (Ward 9), Scott Arthur (Ward 8), Gordon MacDonald (MSP), Sue Webber (MSP)
- Community Councils - Colin Anderson (Fairmilehead), Iain Doig (Merchiston), Nick Stewart (Craiglockhart)

Police Priorities

Five priorities for the Edinburgh Division SW were confirmed as follows: Antisocial Behaviour; Road Safety; Drugs; Violence; and Housebreak-ins and crimes of theft & dishonesty

The Quarterly newsletter will provide an update on 'Antisocial Behaviour' each quarter, with an update on one of the four remaining priorities given each quarter. Consistent with previous police reports, data in the newsletter will only be provided at Ward level.

Contact options: reminder to call 101 if in need of advice or to report a crime, or 999 if it is an emergency. Alternatively email EdinburghCPTSouthWest@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Topics Raised

Resource Limitations & Attending Crimes: Low likelihood that police resources will be increased in the short term. Current resource constraints for Edinburgh SW division are evident by the following: at any one time there are 2 Community officers on duty (i.e. preventative role) and 9 Response officers on duty (i.e. effect role), supported by 5 Special Police Constables and 3 School Link officers.

There is a commitment to investigate every crime reported to the team - when and how are the two key variables. A physical police presence cannot be guaranteed in every instance. Trend analysis and regular risk assessments are undertaken to prioritise and allocate available police resources.

Speeding Vehicles: Irresponsible drivers, e-bikers/scooters and food delivery cyclists appears to be a common feature raised by residents across Ward 8 & 9.

Any instances of speeding or nuisance vehicles should be notified to Sergeant Mark Coull by email (i.e. EdinburghCPTSouthWest@scotland.pnn.police.uk). The deployment of officers trained in the use of mobile speed cameras is available. It was noted that the continued mothballing of speed cameras is under review by the 'Speed Camera Partnership'. A justification process to reinstate speed cameras is currently in progress, taking account of any evidence of speeding and the risk of threat to life.

School parking patrols have also been rolled out on a round robin basis. When deployed changed driver behaviour has been noticeable. A possible deterrent role, performed by the community (e.g. community councillors or volunteers) is being looked at by the Division.

Home Break-ins: Statistically this has dropped as a crime over the last quarter. Motivation for this crime has shifted to car theft rather than the theft of personal belongings or cash/valuables. Perpetrators of this crime tend to be few but are known to police. Typically when convictions are secured there is a dramatic drop in reported home break-ins.

Recommendation made for households to fit anti-snapping bolts to main doors. Also keeping car keys in a Faraday bag, pouch or box serves to block electromagnetic fields, such as those emitted by keyless entry systems.

Canal Towpath: Antisocial behaviour on the canal towpath is a regular topic. A high visibility police presence along the canal is only a short term fix. Identifying the person(s) who perpetrate antisocial behaviour is the focus of the Community Policing Team.

There seems to be a core of around 20-30 youths in the Ward who in turn influence others. Working with 3rd sector organisations and other agencies is the strategy to support those individuals identified.

Pedestrian Risk & Western Approach Road: Not raised at the meeting but email sent to EdinburghCPTSouthWest@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Post meeting response: We do get calls about pedestrians on the road way at the Western Approach Road and I agree that it is not ideal. I will speak to Road Safety to see if anything can be raised with them but I would definitely recommend raising it with the Council too.

Legality of Bikes and Pavement use: Not raised at the meeting but email sent to EdinburghCPTSouthWest@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Post meeting response: Pedal cycles should not be cycled on the pavement and can result in a fine, although this is rare. It is far more likely that we would give corrective advice particularly if they are cycling too fast. I would also say that children are unlikely to be stopped as it is likely to be safer for them on the pavement than the road.

3.2 Student Parking on Colinton Road & Adjacent Roads

Based on feedback from an impacted local resident(s), Chris Cowdy (CC) has established with both the University and the Planning Department that there is an obligation on the University to charge for parking

as part of their 2002 planning permission. Therefore action by Napier University to modify on-campus parking is constrained by this point.

Police Scotland recently visited the University to discuss parking. The security team advised that they would cascade a reminder to all students to only use areas of road with unrestricted parking. The security team will also advise students/staff that police (i.e. Roads Policing unit) will be conducting patrols of the area, and the offence of stopping their vehicle in the area of the crossing indicated by white zig-zag lines carries a £100 fine along with 3 penalty points.

4. Engagement Update

NS confirmed that there was no activity to report subsequent to the 18 September 2023 public meeting.

Post Meeting:

- Focus for NS is to finalise the theme for the Community Engagement Event in May 2024.
- The outcome of the CEC Councillor/Chief Executive Ward visit on 3 November 2023 will be shared..

5. Planning Update

No planning matters were raised by John Corbett (JC) at the meeting.

For information JC confirmed that Margiotta will be occupying one of the three new retail units at Happy Valley.

6. Water of Leith - Update

Pipeline Bridge - Val Walker (VW) confirmed that getting tenders from firms is proving to be problematic. Remedial work to stabilise the site is in progress. End December/ early January is the modified timescale to award the project to a contractor.

7. Union Canals

JC welcomed Rebecca Smith (CEC Canal Officer) to the meeting. Apologies were received from Tricia Hill (Scottish Canals).

Rebecca confirmed that her role has come about due to the 2023 Edinburgh canal partnership between CEC and Scottish Canals. A consultation and community engagement exercise to gather views on opportunities to develop the Union Canal in Edinburgh is in progress. People were encouraged to email any comments they may have about the Union Canal in Edinburgh to union.canal@edinburgh.gov.uk

The conflict between cyclists and pedestrians on the canal towpath is the prime issue dominating her attention. Based on the experiences of people at the meeting, it was evident that a minority of towpath users (i.e. cyclists and pedestrians) were the cause of peoples frustration.

Three options being investigated to mitigate the issue include: path widening, improved signage; and re-routing users. Improved signage directed at influencing peoples behaviour (i.e. how to act) was seen as an important development.

Although not bespoke to the Union Canal in Edinburgh, the meeting noted that a Scottish Canals "Towpath Code of Conduct" does exist - please click on the attached link - <https://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/visit/visitor-policies/towpath-code-of-conduct>.

Additional guidance which reinforces the common sense people should follow:

- Spokes leaflet with helpful suggestions for towpath use
http://www.spokes.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/1210-Topics_for-web_SpWeb.pdf
- CEC leaflet titled "Edinburgh off-road paths Code of Conduct"
http://www.spokes.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/1805-CEC-Paths_Code_of_Conduct_leaflet.pdf

'Problem' stretches on the canal towpath were highlighted, especially the stretch between Meggetland and Boroughmuir High School. The option of installing surveillance cameras to cover this and other hotspots was a suggestion put forwards at the meeting.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Scottish Water Colinton Road Site

CEC has permitted the long-term occupation of container units on Colinton Road due to a lack of suitable space for them to be sited on the private land owned by Scottish Water.

This arrangement requires a Temporary Traffic Order whereby Scottish Water should ensure that both the site compound and its supporting traffic management is regularly attended to ensure its safety to the street scene - this has not been happening recently.

CEC has asked one of its inspectors to attend and take the matter up with the applicant, reminding them of their responsibilities. The works were scheduled to complete on 17/11/2023.

VW reminded the meeting that the CEC plan to approach the Scottish Government to be given the authority to fine utility companies in instances where works are not completed on time.

8.2 Travelling Safely / SW20

Possible meeting with SW20 is moving forward - ACTION: JC to follow up.

8.3 Dog Fouling at Meggetland - Update

Appears to be a problems linked to weekend events hosted at Meggetland Sports Complex.
ACTION: VW to follow up with CEC.

8.4 Graffiti - Update on the details of £3m CEC Waste Cleaning budget

It appears that the graffiti crews are currently concentrating on the City Centre area before moving out from there. A list published by CEC does not mention Craiglockhart but includes Fountainbridge.

Despite this unexplained omission, Craiglockhart residents are asked to draw up a list of places where graffiti is an issue. This should be shared with the Community Council who in turn will notify VW/CC and, ultimately, the Transport and Environment Committee.

An incident concerning the bus stop on Colinton Road, at the top of Craiglockhart Road was mentioned.
ACTION: VW to follow up with CEC.

8.5 Covid 19 Inquiry Scotland

Derek Beattie drew the meeting's attention to the Inquiry in light of a paper he had formally submitted.

Up until 20/12/2023 there is an opportunity for anyone to submit or share their own individual or group experience with the Inquiry. Please refer to the 'Lets Be Heard' section on <https://lbh.covid19inquiry.scot/>

9. Date of Next Public Meeting

Date: TBC

Time: 7pm

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

JC thanked all attendees and the meeting was closed.