



Longstone Community Council Secretary's Report for 2025/26

Membership

We began the year with the following eight residents as elected members of LCC. Des Loughney, Alan Gordon, Ray Donnelly, Will Sturgeon, Euan Robertson, Anastasia Muri, Mary Hill and John Allan. Sonia Nemec was already co-opted as a member, and at the March meeting Hannah Doughty was also co-opted as a member, bringing our membership to ten.

Meetings

Our regular monthly meetings have been held in the Session Room of Slateford/Longstone Church. Including the 2025 AGM, we held 9 meetings during the year. Apart from an AGM, the minimum number of meetings required is 6. Grateful to the support of the Church team for accomodating our meetings this year. It's been pleasing to see attendance at our meetings rising and we've had some great questions from residents, many of which local Councillors present were able to take on and resolve.

Police

Despite the pressure on police resources, the community police team have attended our meetings when able, as well as hosting quarterly ward forums which members from different community councils can attend to discuss or raise matters. The SW police team also issue a quarterly newsletter covering activities and initiatives in the locality. The community team engage well with us via email when we raise concerns with them.

CEC Councillors / MSP / MP

We continue to enjoy the support of our local councillors who attend meetings when able, and who often pursue matters on our behalf with council officers, speak on matters at CEC committee meetings, and back the community council's deputations. We are grateful for their support and the traction they have brought to local matters on our behalf.

Following the sudden death of much liked Labour Councillor, Val Walker, a by-election was held in June 2025 in the Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart ward at which Kevin McKay won the seat for the Liberal Democrats.

Cllr Ross McKenzie served as an Independent until 08/12/2025, when he joined the Green Group as a Green Aligned Independent.

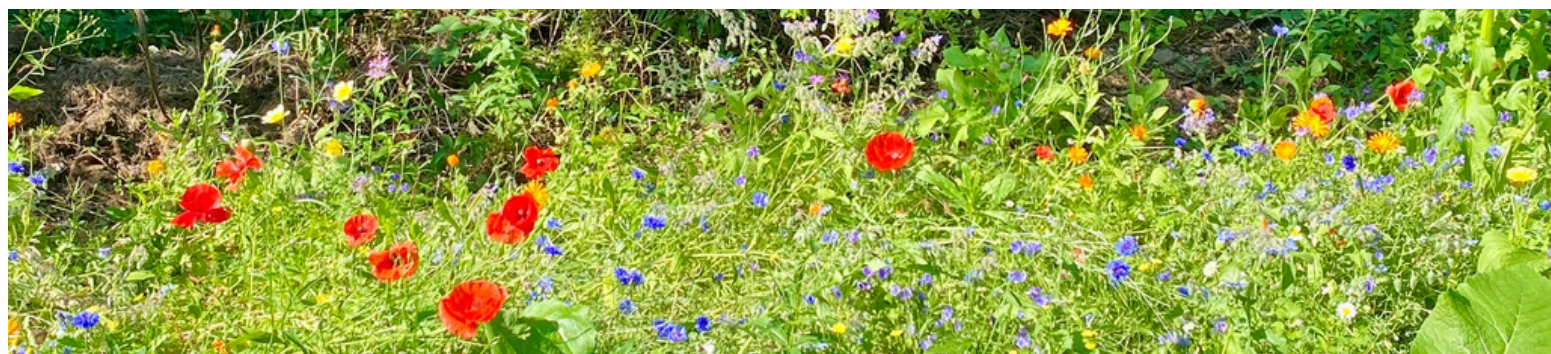
We have enjoyed working with MP Scott Arthur and his office team which has helped us deliver improvements locally.

We wish Gordon MacDonald well following his decision to step down as MSP at the Scottish Parliamentary elections in May 2026 and thank him for his support over the years. Gordon was replaced by Simita Kumar, who won the seat for the SNP. We look forward to meeting her.

We are also represented in the Scottish Parliament by seven list MSPs for Edinburgh and Lothians East - Kate Nevens (Green), Q Manivannan (Green), Kayleigh Kinross-O'Neill (Green), Irshad Ahmed (Labour), Katherine Sangster (Labour), Miles Briggs (Con), & Angela Ross (Reform).

2025 AGM

It was held on 09/06/25, at which the following were appointed: Des Loughney as Chair, Mary Hill as Vice-chair, Alan Gordon as Secretary, Ray Donnelly as Treasurer, and Will Sturgeon as Engagement & Diversity Officer.





Planning & Development

22/02233/FUL - The former Booker site (22 Inglis Green Road) was granted planning permission on 13/06/2024 for a mixed-use residential and commercial development with associated landscape, parking, and infrastructure. As part of the Section 75 agreement the developer has agreed to contribute £168,000 toward a new bridge crossing (Longstone Link – see later in report) towards New Mart Road from the development. Construction of the development has yet to commence. Planning permission expires 13/06/2027.

25/00249/FUL - A renewed application was made on 17/01/2025 for the proposed development on the site of the former Longstone Inn for 21 flats and a commercial unit. The site has fallen into a dreadful state of disrepair, is unsecure and a prime vandalism target. Opinions were mixed on the ‘stage 1’ development proposal, but most accepted this site is an eyesore now and if the development can be improved visually then would be an improvement. We await the planning decision following revised drawing being submitted in Dec 2025.

18/04268/FUL - Despite the owner of ‘The Kingsknowe’ having permission to demolish it and redevelop the site for housing, nothing has changed, and we’re pleased to see the pub continuing to function well. Planning permission expired during August 2025.

19/03380/FUL - The redevelopment of the Westside Motors site in Slateford (35 Lanark Road) as purpose-built student accommodation had shown no further progress, other than its demolition which counted as ‘initiation of development’.

A new developer has since taken on the development and on 17/12/25 a non-material variation application (19/03380/VARY) was made, along with an application for a new sub-station to serve the development. These were accepted on 05/03/26. Other than site clearance, no further works have progressed yet.

18/08232/FUL – Bridgeview Apartments housing development at 1 Lanark Road. Many residents contacted us to ask why a block of residential units remains empty during a declared housing emergency. In May 2022 an application was made to modify clause 3 of the planning obligation the within the Section 75 legal agreement, to provide affordable housing withing the development. The developer claimed it could no longer afford to build it (despite it being complete). This was rejected at the DM Sub Planning committee, and again on appeal to the Scottish Government Reporter on 17/09/24. Since then, the units have remained empty. On 10/05/26 a new request to modify planning obligations was made following terms being agreed between Abbotswell Developments Ltd and Merchant Company Endowment Trust to acquire 38 units within the development in partnership with LAR Housing Trust, with the intention to let the properties to means tested tenants as affordable housing. It is envisaged that all 38 units would be let at or below Local Housing Allowance (LHA) mid-market rents. A decision on this is awaited.





Community Projects / Events

Kingsknowe Masterplan

Following on from last year's engagement with residents, Councillors, and Council Officers, Atkins Realis were given a brief to engage with residents on what they liked/didn't like about living Kingsknowe Court, Kingsknowe Place and Longstone Street. Atkins took the information away, prepared possible design solutions, and returned to engage with residents to further refine the designs. In June a RIBA Stage 2 Design report was shared with LCC along with a cost estimate for the works, with a forecast for delivery to be spread over 2 financial years 27/28 and 28/29, dependent on how quickly the project gets through the planning system and the complexities of the design through the RIBA 3 and 4 process.

Hailes Quarry Junior Parkrun Launch

It was a real joy to see this officially launch on the 07/09/25. After 38 events we've had:

- 657 participants completing 2677 runs between them.
- 180 volunteers supporting the event.
- 582 personal bests with an average finish time of 14m:14s.
- 14 primary schools signed up as 'Parkrun Primaries' as partners with our event.

A truly multi-generational event bringing together families from all over the Southwest, from all walks of life, from our local MP Scott Arthur who volunteers each week, Duke of Edinburgh volunteers, to school staff, grandparents, carers, and parents of hundreds of children. It's a life affirming weekly event. Get involved and sign up - <https://www.parkrun.org.uk/hailesquarry-juniors/> It's always free and the emphasis is fun, fun, fun.

Longstone Living Memories

LCC member Mary Hill has been leading on pulling together a local history project to capture memories from our long-term residents, many of whom have great stories to tell. In March a group of four members and residents received training on interviewing people and capturing their recollections, from the Living Memory Association down at their unit in Ocean Terminal. We have also purchased four recording devices with the aid of a small community grant from the City of Edinburgh Council, who also covered the cost of the training. We're discussing key themes and expect to commence the interviews very soon. If you've got good memories of our area to share with us, please get in touch.



Community Parks (Redhall / Dovecot / Hailes Quarry)

In November 25 LCC teamed up with Friends of Redhall Park to plant another section of spring bulbs on the embankment beneath the war memorial which looked fabulous this spring. LCC member Euan Robertson arranged for 120 saplings to be delivered from the Woodland Trust which were planted up near the war memorial. Support of the CEC Parks team much appreciated. Also received many supportive comments from residents on the flower beds, wildflowers, and improvements that our Treasurer Ray has led on with Friends of Redhall Park. It's looked lovely this year and provides a real welcome to our community when arriving from the canal tow path.

LCC raised the poor state of the path from Redhall Drive down to Redhall Park, and up to the canal after a resident was recently thrown from her mobility scooter after it caught a wheel caught in bad section. This has been assessed by the Parks team and funding options to make the needed improvements are being considered.

LCC were pleased to support and see the installation of the first Disc Golf course in the City at Hailes Quarry Park in the spring by Edinburgh Disc Golf Association. They meet every Tuesday evening for a community session for anyone wanting to give it go. It's a lot of fun.

Duncan Colquhoun Award

Our Chair Des attended Longstone Primary and presented a £50 book token to a pupil who had been growing herbs, like chives for use in community cookery.

Firework Control Zone

Following the general success of the zone in 2025, LCC were invited to make another application. If agreed at the Culture and Communities Committee on 08/06/26, a zone will be created for November 2026 and again in November 2027 covering our area.

Land behind Longstone Inn next to Saughton Prison

LCC instigated a meeting with Places for People and Water of Leith Conservation Trust to explore whether the mounds in front of the prison could be planted up with trees. Following this meeting it was agreed by all parties the planting could proceed. WOLCT sprang into action with their volunteers and planted up the first mound with 200 saplings. Further mounds will be planted up later in 2026. A great result.

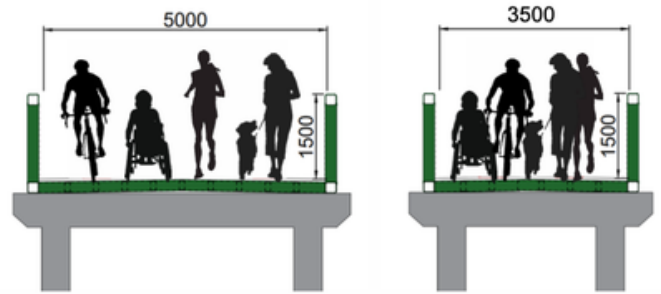
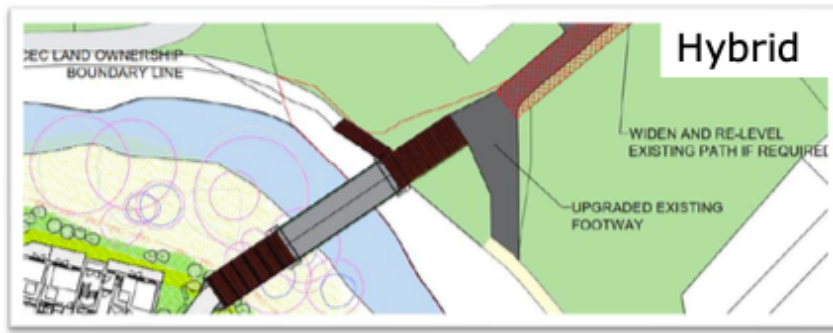
Remembrance Service at War Memorial

We joined the remembrance ceremony on Saturday 8th November, led by Chaplain to the Forces, Rev. Bob Henderson. Thanks to LCC member Ray Donnelly for laying our wreath, alongside local councillors, and veterans.

Colin

We were saddened to hear of Colin's recent passing. He was well known and liked within our community, with many people looking out for him. It says something good about our community that people treated him with respect, compassion, and gathered together in the Dell where he slept, for a memorial to honour his memory. Rest in peace Colin.





Environment

Safer School Streets

During February works were completed on a raised table, speed reducing crossing point at the junction of Kingsknowe Road North and Redhall Road. This has worked well to slow driver speeds on this key route to school. Works were also completed at the school entrance to improve safety with a raised crossing point, additional bollards, and pedestrian priority. Good accessibility improvements for residents were designed into these elements.

Longstone Link Bridge

At our September meeting LCC received a thorough presentation from a Council officer on work completed to date and next steps. Feasibility analysis completed in early 2025 considered different bridge alignments/types which opens a new travel corridor to Gorgie in the SW. Two alignments were ruled out due to flooding risks with the more direct option linking to New Mart Rd being acceptable. The favoured design therefore is the 'hybrid' option. The deck width for a shared crossing mandated by Transport Scotland's 'Cycling by Design' is 5 metres to reduce interactions between different users. Discussions have been held with Accessibility groups, Water of Leith Conservation Trust, Living Streets, and LCC to gauge thoughts on how to proceed. Some concerns of visual impact of wider bridge, but accessibility groups welcome designing for a better future than replicating existing poor local bridge widths.

LCC received a briefing note in April with funding options, timescales, and the following key gateways (subject to change):

- Procurement of design consultant – June 2026
- Completion of RIBA Stage 2 – Concept Design – January 2027
- Completion of RIBA Stage 3 – Developed Design – April 2027
- Completion of Planning process – September 2027
- Completion of RIBA Stage 4 – Technical Design – January 2028
- Completion of RIBA Stage 5 – Construction – August 2028

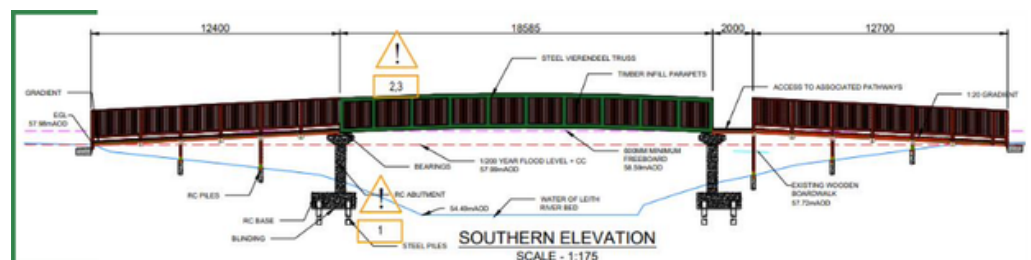
Next steps:

- Should the ATIF Tier 2 funding bid be successful, the funding would be used to appoint a consultant to continue design work through RIBA Stages 2 and 3 during financial year 2026/27. Should the bid be unsuccessful, consideration will be given to progressing this work utilising other appropriate internal or external funding sources.
- Design of the project will resume in June 2026 following the procurement of a design consultant.
- Liaison will continue with the developer to seek to ascertain their projected timescales for commencing work on and building out the development.

Officers will continue to explore the potential to secure further developers' funding contributions from any other sites in the area that might come forward.

Burnside Path Sinkhole

After it was established that CEC are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the flood defence wall protecting the path, repair works were completed during Nov/Dec 25. It's been good to see CEC make good on their commitment to maintain the grass and brambles along the length of the path.





Kingsknowe Station bridge and Level Crossing

MP Dr Scott Arthur initiated an engagement exercise following feedback from residents about the length of time barriers remained down at the crossing. This particularly inconvenienced residents living on the south side of crossing as they often missed city bound trains due to the barriers remaining down. Was a new footbridge possible? A site meeting with Network Rail was organised by Scott's office which our secretary attended. At this we learnt that the level crossing was of a high safety standard with minimal issues. Due to rightly high modern accessibility standards a new bridge to the east of the crossing was ruled out. To the west could be possible but the cost of doing so would likely be prohibitively expensive. We explored safety issues in the areas approaching the crossing although these would be CECs responsibility. Scott's office arranged an online meeting with residents, Network Rail and a Council officer. At this meeting it was confirmed issues raised under LCCs Local Traffic Improvement Programme could be progressed (see below section). The issue of missing signage on bus stops on Kingsknowe Road North allowing drivers to use the bus stops as free parking will be addressed by the Council team responsible. The correct signage will allow enforcement, meaning buses being able to pull up parallel to the kerb greatly improving accessibility for residents using the #20 bus service.

Local Traffic Improvement Programme 27/28

At the April Transport and Environment Committee it was agreed safety improvements would be made at the following junctions after LCC made a successful application following feedback from the community on pedestrian safety, excessive driver speeds, and concerns for pupil safety on this key route to Longstone Primary, Slateford/Longstone Church, Hailes Quarry Park, and local businesses.

- Tighten Kingsknowe Road South / Kingsknowe Drive to reduce junction width.
- Tighten Kingsknowe Road North / Longstone Grove to reduce junction width.
- Tighten Kingsknowe Road North / Redhall Gardens to reduce junction width.
- Buildouts at the minor arm of Kingsknowe Road North / Longstone Street to reduce junction width.

Lanark Road Pedestrian Crossing

Currently expected to be installed between 07/09/2026 & 15/09/2026. Approx. outside 293 and 298 Lanark Road, at junction with Kingsknowe Park.

West ETROs

The experimental traffic road orders covering Lanark Rd, Longstone Rd and Inglis Green Road were made permanent at a meeting of the Traffic Regulation Orders Sub-Committee on 04/09/25.

Katesmill and Bogsmill Bridges

Following continued pressure from LCC regarding safety on these bridges, badly damaged during a previous storm, we were pleased to see Katesmill bridge upgraded, and Bogsmill masonry repair works currently being progressed. Vital links to our neighbouring communities and key to enjoyable, circular walking routes.



Roads/Pavements

LCC reported many bad potholes locally, both in the road, pavement, and cycle lanes. All the category 1 & 2 holes were filled within a few days of reporting which was encouraging, and others have been filled as the year has progressed.

Sizable sections of Redhall Drive were paid a visit by the 'pothole killing' machine to make the carriageway used for 'bikeability' training by Longstone Primary pupils safer, which also benefits residents living there.

Pavements on Kingsknowe Road North, Kingsknowe Crescent, and Longstone Street were given slurry treatments which is intended to prolong their life.

Arnett Gardens was patched and surface treated which is expected to prolong the lifespan of the road. A section of Kingsknowe Road North (we expect the section by the Church) is due to be properly resurfaced as part of the 26/27 Capital Delivery Programme.

Clean Streets #Our Edinburgh CEC Initiative – Ward 7

Following requests from residents LCC requested CEC attend to the following streets. Kingsknowe Court, Kingsknowe Place, Longstone Grove, Redhall Crescent, Redhall Avenue, Redhall Road, Redhall Drive, area in front of Longstone Inn, and graffiti on the pavilion in Redhall Park. All these apart from Redhall Drive had been cleared off weeds, rubbish, and graffiti during November. Feedback from residents was very positive.

Graffiti

LCC had some graffiti removal success with much of it removed from the pavilion in Redhall Park as part of the 'Clean Streets #Our Edinburgh' CEC initiative.

