

Firrhill Community Council

'Nec Aspera Terrent'
(Undaunted by Adversity)

Minute of the Meeting held on Monday 27 January 2014
At Lochan View Community Business Centre, 12 Firrhill Neuk

Attendance and Apologies:

Members: J Burt; F Gosney; H Levy; L Linn; J Napier; V Garden; P Wright.

Visitors: G McDonald, MSP; Cllr Aitken; Cllr Rust; PC Sandbach & PC MacFarlane, Oxfangs Police Stn, N Tinlin, Fairmilehead CC; D & L Williams, Oxfangs Broadway, P Valentine, OCRA

Apologies: Cllr R Lewis; S Duffy; P Podd;

Non Attendance: G Duncan (Sec to contact re attendance)

H Levy in the Chair. The meeting started at 2.30pm approx. In noting that there were a number of new faces round the table the Chair asked for each person to introduce themselves to the meeting.

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

The draft minutes for meeting held on 2 December 2013 were reviewed. There being no corrections the minutes were moved for approval by PW, seconded by FG and agreed.

Action: *Minutes Secretary to post the approved minute on website.*

Matters Arising:

Approval and Adoption of the Constitution

Secretary reported that the returned signed documentation had been acknowledged by Eileen Hewitt, CEC Liaison Officer.

Operations Cypher

Some members did not receive a copy of the report, Chair to re-circulate.

Action: *Chair to re-send report*

Flood Defence Work:

Secretary wrote to the CEC asking for a warning notice to be placed at the top of the path, beside Colinton Mains Drive bridge, to follow the CEC's recommendation that people should use the alternative route of Colinton Mains Rd when there is inclement weather. CEC have agreed – see under Correspondence item 38.

Oxfangs Police Station

Secretary has written to Inspector Duthie re the possibility of setting up a police surgery before FCC meeting. We are still waiting on a response.

Action: *PC Sandbach undertook to raise with the Inspector and report back*

Referendum: Scotland's Future - Your Guide to an Independent Scotland

Secretary reported no action on this matter.

Chair reported that she has provisionally booked the hall at Pentland Community Centre but was waiting on a response from St Mark's School as its location was thought to be the better option.

Confirmed date as the 24th March at 7.30 pm. It had been agreed to invite a spokesperson from each political party but agreed at this meeting that the number of invited speakers on the referendum should be restricted to four – two to speak in favour of independence and two against in order to present a balanced debate.

The local elected councillors offered to be available to cover any local issues that were raised.

Discussion took place on the purchase of a PA system by the Community Council for use at this and future events. Acknowledged that Pentland Community Centre have a PA system, which should be adequate for use in their premises.

Action: Chair and Secretary to follow this up.

Chair to cost the purchase of a PA system suitable for use by the Community Council.

PNP EIT Aims and Priorities:

Secretary confirmed a response had been sent and acknowledged. The proposals put forward on behalf of the Community Council are shown below:

Priority 1. Improve and maintain parks and greenspaces:

Action – one of the actions here was to improve community parks, pathways, safety and planting, including wild flower. In giving consideration to Colinton Mains Park, we added on bulbs and fruit or flowering trees. We also sought more recreational activities, especially for youths, not just football pitches.

Priority 4. Improve bus services:

Action – one of the actions here was to ensure the Wester Hailes Healthy Living Centre has suitable transport services properly advertised and promoted. We added our concern for vulnerable people within our community who may have to use two buses to access the new Firrhill Health and Social Care Centre when it is open.

Priority 6. Reduce parking problems:

Action - to look at the hazards caused by vehicle parking on corners at junctions, obstructing sight lines for drivers trying to access main roads

Priority 7. Improve pedestrian provision:

Action – action required to stop the encroachment of hedges and trees over pavements

Action – to improve the quality of lighting in areas where it is very poor causing a hazard to pedestrians.

Priority 8. General Items:

Action – to seek and approve sites for community recycling and provide for same where need identified.

SG Consultation Paper on Housing Land:

Minute Secretary confirmed a response had been sent and acknowledged. A copy of the submission is attached as [Appendix 1](#).

Abandoned Tesco Trolleys:

Secretary reported that she has received a letter from the Store Manager on the actions they have taken. See Correspondence List item 9 for details.

Oxgangs Street - Kerbstone:

JB thanked Cllr Rust for his action in getting the kerbstone repaired.

Police Report

The Chair welcomed the two new officers to our meeting. PC Sandbach gave the following report for the Firrhill / Oxgangs area:

In the period between 24th December 2013 and 27th January, 146 calls were made to police which included 15 calls regarding nuisance/loud music, 2 neighbour disputes and 13 domestic incidents.

There have been two reports of housebreaking and a suspicious vehicle seen in the area has also been reported. This is a low figure for this type of crime which shows people are continuing to be vigilant in protecting their own and their neighbours' property.

Also during this period there were two attempted thefts of motor cycles reported. Both involved tampering with ignition barrels and wires being cut.

On road traffic matters, several complaints were received regarding vehicles causing obstruction, but generally they were cases of inconsiderate and bad parking rather than actual obstruction.

The Community Policing Team Inspector covering the three Pentland Hill wards is Inspector Liz Duthie. The CPT Sergeant covering Wards 2 and 8 (which includes Firrhill) is Sgt Mac Mackenzie.

To contact the CPT, you can email to EdinburghPentlandHillsCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk or use the new national non-emergency number **101**. They are also on twitter @PentlandsPolice.

Police Report: Dec 2013

This report was received from PC Derek Brown on 23rd December and circulated to members as there is no regular meeting held that month. It has been included for recording purposes only.

In the period between 25th November and 19th December 2013, 106 calls were made to police for the Firrhill / Oxgangs area. Several were duplicates of the same incidents and quite a few were generated from Oxgangs Childrens Home. There were 20 calls regarding nuisance/loud music and 3 neighbour disputes. There were also 3 domestic incidents.

Due to an increase in housebreakings across the whole Pentlands area, people are being more vigilant and reporting anything they think to be suspicious. One such call turned out to be a legitimate roofing company, Thermal Coatings, however their hard sell tactics leave a lot to be desired and the operatives were warned accordingly. However, enquiries are continuing into a male who took payment for cleaning gutters but did not do the work.

A male has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal for carrying out a serious assault. Another male and female have also been reported for assaults. In a separate incident another male and female have been reported for supplying controlled drugs. A male has been reported for driving without a valid driving licence or insurance. Several others have been reported for various driving offences, including drunk driving.

During the afternoon of 30th November a car window was smashed in Oxgangs Green and property stolen from within.

Overnight between 2nd and 3rd of December a window was smashed in Oxgangs Gardens.

Between 14th and 15th December, a house in Colinton Mains Drive was entered and property stolen.

To pass on information about crime anonymously, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or fill out their secure, encrypted online [Giving Information Form](#).

Ward Councillors' and MSP Reports:

Councillor Elaine Aitken

Firrhill Health Centre

Public information events were held in November and the Pentland Neighbourhood Partnership meeting in December. Members of the project team were available to discuss the latest design developments. The GP's have now agreed the plans, which should be submitted to the CEC Planning Dept shortly.

Pentland Primary School

I visited the school to monitor parking at the Oxfangs Green entrance in November. Now a plan for double yellow lines at Oxfangs Green, Hill and Loan has been prepared for consultation. This should help with the parking on the approach to the school. I also observed 5 cars driving into the school grounds to drop off their children. I've informed Mrs McKenzie about this. Parking attendants also visited the area.

I noticed a large build up of leaves on the approach road and footpath to the school and arranged for this to be cleared.

Parents contacted me about an issue with some of the toilets, which I raised with the Facilities Manager. This seems to be a problem with the drains and further investigation will be undertaken.

I also discussed poor drainage on the school playing field with the Facilities Manager. As a result, investigation work will be undertaken by the Scottish Agricultural College.

Last Thursday, I attended the P6 Burns Supper and was very impressed by the high standard of the performers.

Oxfangs Primary School

I attended the Parent Council meeting last week, giving an update on the Firrhill Health Centre and discussing the parking problems. I will be monitoring traffic flow over the next few weeks.

18 Bus Service

Last year, I attended the Transport Committee to ask for inclusions to the 18 bus service, which was to go out again for tender. The follow-up report was at Committee two weeks ago reporting on the result of the tender process. I have included a link below to the report but because the tenders were too expensive, the service will continue in its present form until July 2016.

<http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/41897/item 7 9-subsidised bus service contracts final>

In discussion it emerged that the service was not being extended because of a low bridge, which required the use of single decker buses. G McD spoke on the service provided by Lothian Buses touching on the policies adopted by the company and the difficulties it faced in trying to improve services. Whilst acknowledging the points made, members spoke of the difficulties faced by many members of the community in trying to access health, education and other facilities due to the poor timetable operated by this bus service.

Stair Entry Systems

I have received a number of complaints about the cost to owners of the installation of new systems. I have discussed this with the Acting Head of Housing.

In discussion, the Chair advised she had received similar complaints and considered that the cost of systems installed through the City Council Housing Dept was far in excess of what was affordable to owner-occupiers in this area. Generally felt that where such work was required occupiers should have the right to seek alternative estimates. The City Council may impose an annual service charge for the routine servicing and repairs, where they are the lead property owners.

Drains

A number of blocked drains have been brought to my attention and I have asked for them to be cleared.

Pentland Community Centre

Most of the groups and clubs have now returned to the Centre following the refurbishment. The Easter and summer youth programmes are being set and new activities are being organised for all age groups.

Statutory Repairs

Council tenants and owner occupiers continue to have problems organising work to be done in communal areas. My group will be attending a briefing later this week and will raise concerns.

Councillor Jason Rust

1. 2014 continues where 2013 left off, with continued complaints being received regarding refuse collection locally. Problem mainly relate to non-collection on scheduled day and failure to return bins to collection points. A number of formal complaints are now being pursued.
2. I attended the Area Board last week. Projects include Oxgangs Crescent and Oxgangs Drive commence soon.
3. I have taken up lighting complaints raised at Pentland Primary School Parent Council and the Council are pursuing a TRO in relation to yellow lines on the corners near the approach to the school to improve visibility.
4. The provision of disabled bays near Oxgangs Neighbourhood Centre is being reviewed and I expect to hear back from officials shortly.
5. I attended the Prestonfield Burns Supper with students from three high schools in Taiwan.
6. Our Group has asked questions regarding the Lord Provost's Budget over-spend as highlighted over December in the newspapers.

Gordon Macdonald, MSP

Defective and Dangerous Building (Recovery of Expenses)(Scotland) Bill

As its title suggests this is a Bill to make provision for the recovery of expenses incurred by a local authority in the repair, securing or demolition of defective or dangerous buildings. Introduced 30 October 2013 it is presently going through Stage 1 of the legislative process, which should be completed by 4 April 2014.

All building owners have a general responsibility to maintain their property. Where owners neglect this responsibility, local authorities can carry out such works to buildings as is necessary and seek to recover their expenses.

In terms of defective buildings, under section 28 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003, the local authority has the power to serve a defective building notice on an owner requiring them to rectify the defects to bring the building into a reasonable state of repair. The local authority may undertake the work where the owner fails to carry out the work specified in the notice, and can recover from the owner expenses incurred by it in doing so.

Local authorities have a statutory obligation to deal with dangerous buildings under sections 29 and 30 of the 2003 Act. Under section 29, where the local authority considers that urgent action is required to reduce or remove any danger to people in or around the building, the general public or to adjacent buildings or places, it can carry out any necessary work. It may then recover expenses incurred in doing so from the owner. Section 30 enables local authorities to serve a notice on owners to undertake work the local authority considers necessary to remove the danger. Where owners fail to carry out the works they may be guilty of an offence and on summary conviction would be liable to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale (currently £5,000).

This new proposed legislation basically amends the primary legislation (the 2003 Act) and other statutes to facilitate the recovery of such expenses.

Edinburgh's Garden District – Statutory Public Consultation

A Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) has been submitted by Murray Estates for the development of the Garden District in West Edinburgh. The Garden District is a £1billion investment to create new communities providing 3,500 family homes, a new world class visitor attraction – the Calyx, along with a new community stadium to compliment the new National Sports Performance Centre.

In response to this application, Currie Community Council arranged a public meeting on the 4th February, to let its residents see and hear about these proposals, which will affect the area and that of the adjoining districts.

PNP Reports:

Pentlands Funding Panel – 15th January (HL)

A verbal report given.

South West Area Board – 8th October (JN)

A written report was circulated at the meeting and is attached as [appendix 2](#). The main business of the meeting was a review of Neighbourhood Environment Projects carried out during 2013/14 and proposed for 2014/15. Any issues arising should be brought up at the next meeting.

Members' Reports:

Planning Report:

There were no planning applications of note within the reporting period.

Sale of Land – Oxfangs Path

The advertisement of the sale of the former Oxfangs Social Work Centre and St John's Church sites was brought to the attention of the Community Council at the last meeting by G McD. Further developments on this matter have arisen in the form of an Oxfangs residents' letter issued by Mark Borthwick, Projects Manager, Service for Communities and forwarded to the Secretary by N Tinlin

(Secretary, Fairmilehead Community Council). The purpose of the letter was to inform residents that the preferred bidder for the land has included the amenity green space land between the advertised sites and the Library within the terms of their offer and it was the intention of the department to agree this unless there was good reason not to. Fairmilehead Community Council has submitted a letter objecting to the sale of this amenity land. It should be noted that the letter was dated 23 December 2013 and allowed 21 days for comments from that date and we are now outwith this period.

In discussion the preferred bidder was identified as Aldi Stores. It was not clear on how many bidders had submitted offers but it was understood that less than half were from housing developers.

Action: to carry out a local consultation in the area surrounding the development site to ascertain the feelings of the local community in this area. HL and JN to draft a leaflet for this purpose.

Edinburgh Planning Concordat 2013

On 7 August 2013, the Planning Committee of the City of Edinburgh Council approved the Edinburgh Planning Concordat 2013. This is a tripartite agreement produced as a result of extensive discussions with the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce and the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils. It promotes a collaborative approach to major developments in our City with increased consultation and engagement at the heart of it. The Concordat gives a commitment to provide assistance to community councils to seek the wider community's views.

The City council are now looking for Community Councils to formally sign up to the New Concordat. It is debateable as to whether Firrhill Community Council will benefit in this as the commitment relates to major developments. The brownfield sites in the Firrhill area are not likely to come into this category. It may also have limited value to those community councils in the city centre, where the problem is the volume of work and not enough time or resources to do the job. However in support of the efforts of the EACC to improve the commitment of the local authority and developers to engage with community councils consideration should be given to signing up.

Action: Secretary to email Jo-Anne.laidlaw@edinburgh.gov.uk confirming agreement to sign up to the Concordat

Correspondence

A list of correspondence received during the period 3 Dec 2013 to 22 Jan 2014 is attached as [app 3](#)). For more detail on any of the correspondence listed contact the Secretary, Peggy Wright,, Tel 531 9796,peggy.wright@live.co.uk

Actions:

Item 31 - Trading Standards: Doorstep Crime – information to go on website

Item 34 - Edinburgh Proposed Local Development Plan Briefing Opportunity: HL & JN to attend

AOCB:

PNP Health Sub Group Fair (HL)

The PNP Health Sub Group are organising a networking event in Oxbgangs Library on Saturday 1st March 2014, between 10.30am and 2pm. The aim of the event is to:

- to provide an event for local service providers who impact on the communities health and the opportunity to exchange knowledge & information

- create the opportunity for local service providers to show case their work & disseminate information
- to provide an event for the local community to access Health information
- to gather information to feed into the PNP plan 2014-17

Action: To promote the event within the area.

Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting:

Date, venue and time of our next meeting is Monday 24th February 2014 in the Lochan View Community Business Centre at 2.30pm.

Response to the Supplementary Guidance

Firrhill Community Council's response to the draft consultation paper issued November 2013 on the Housing Land Supplementary Guidance.

Q1. Policy Context

[Do you agree that the Supplementary Guidance complies with Scottish Planning Policy?](#)

Firrhill Community Council has reservations in regard to this question. The Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) is intended to guide local authorities in the production of strategic and local development plans. We have concerns that the new targets sets by the Supplementary Guidance (SG) may be to the detriment of local authority planners and the communities they serve. A SG was already referred to in Section 5 (Housing and Community Development) *Policy Hou 1 Housing Development* where it states "If after two years from the adoption date of the plan, additional housing sites are needed to maintain a five year effective supply, the Council will prepare supplementary guidance to address this matter. This guidance pre-empts that position and we ask the question – why?

The targets already set out by the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) from 2009 are not being met at the present time and this surely cannot be because there is not currently an effective supply of land. To provide further areas for developers can only be to the detriment of the city where existing sites are being left derelict and unused because they are not financially attractive enough.

Looking at the list of names of organisations submitting representation in regard to the "effective supply of land" (Issue 15) it seems mainly the developers who are raising the issue and yet there are many brownfield sites lying derelict within the city.

Firrhill Community Council do not think that a policy which requires the identification of land sites for an extended 20 year period as referred to in the SG is helpful to the planning authorities. Whilst politicians talk about protecting greenfield sites, open spaces and green belt areas, the wording within the guidance undermines such intentions. In identifying and allocating sufficient housing land to the extent proposed facilitates developers rather than planners. It puts pressure on the planners to facilitate housing completions, which may be to the detriment of the policy to build on brownfield sites first.

Q2. Housing Land Requirement

[The distribution of the strategic housing land requirement must strike an appropriate balance between meeting housing need and demand where it arises with capacity constraints and deliverability.](#)

[Do you think that the distribution of the housing land requirement identified in Table 3.1 is justified? If not, why not?](#)

We do not consider that the housing land requirement identified in Table 3.1 is justified. In terms of population density the City has a lot less space for new development than the rural areas. Increasing the population density in rural areas would give greater incentives to improve the transport infrastructures lacking in those areas which in turn would lead to further investment.

We disagree with paragraph 3.11 and consider new development proposals will undermine the delivery of housing on existing brownfield sites. Where the existing targets for 2009 – 2019 are clearly not being met despite the current generous supply of land, it is illogical to suggest that increasing the supply of land will improve that situation. It just means developers will build houses where it suits them rather than the planners.

Q3. Strategic Development Areas

[Do you agree with the breakdown by Strategic Development Area as shown in Table 3.2? If not, why not?](#)

For the reasons stated above. In terms of land mass there is a lot more space in the areas outwith the city than within it.

The Scottish Government and the Edinburgh Planning Authority needs to consider whether they wish to retain a green belt or not. If the erosion of the green belt continues then the city planners will soon lose all control of the City's spatial dimensions. Developers will apply to other Local Authorities for planning consents that will extend the metropolitan area into the Lothians. This is already reflected in the South East Edinburgh Local Development Area which is split between two planning authorities.

Q4. Outwith Strategic Development Areas

[Do you agree with the additional allowances outwith Strategic Development Areas as shown in Table 3.2? If not, why not?](#)

We disagree for reasons given above. The provision of the additional allowances can only be seen as an inducement to developers but at what cost. Derelict buildings and wasteland sites within the City's existing developed areas will remain as eyesores within the local communities where they are located. Brownfield sites should be developed first and then, if necessary, consideration be given to building on greenfield land within the parameters set out in the proposed Edinburgh LDP.

Q5. Delivery

[Is the distribution of the housing land requirement including additional allowances, over the period to 2024, shown in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 deliverable? If not, why not?](#)

We are not sure what this question means – if it means releasing planning constraints on farmland, greenfield land and green belt land to suit developers – then hopefully not. Again there is no evidence to show that the delivery of housing on such a scale would be achieved within those timescales.

Q6. Facilitate Delivery

[What can SESplan, the key agencies, developers and the Scottish Government do to facilitate delivery of the strategic housing land requirement?](#)

The Scottish Government and the planning authorities should take whatever actions deemed appropriate to ensure existing brownfield sites are used for new developments and that these actions should be taken sooner rather than later.

Q7. Further Comments

[Are there any further comments on the draft Supplementary Guidance you would like the SESplan to consider?](#)

Firrhill Community Council recognise the need for new affordable social housing to be supplied and support that aim in its entirety but are not convinced that releasing greenfield land on the outskirts of the city will achieve that result.

Consideration should be given to the historical cause of the housing crisis, which was the lack of investment by private developers and the restrictions placed on local authorities to fill the gap. This has led to housing becoming unaffordable to the majority of people because of a policy of restrictive house building alongside increase demand.

In considering the Reporter's conclusions in regard to the issue of a "generous land supply" against the meaning of "effective land supply" and the reality that most of the land is owned by private individuals or organisations it would appear that the only constraints available to local authorities is the removal of planning constraints – in which case why have a planning authority.

It is time local authorities took control of the housing needs in their area and invested in new developments to meet those needs and where necessary through the compulsory purchase of land for such developments.

Report: South West Area Board

Date and place of Meeting: 21 January 2014 at Wester Hailes Library

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting/Action List for 8 Oct 2013:

A report on this meeting was provided for the Community Council's November meeting. As I had been unable to attend the report was based on the business papers for the meeting. The following information has been extracted from the draft minutes:

a) Landlord Performance

The average time to let an empty home in the South West Neighbourhood area is 24 which is higher than the current target of 22 days. This due to a number of factors, including:

- an exceptionally high number of properties returned in poor condition requiring a clear out,
- and a significant number of properties requiring multiple offers before being let.

Re-instatement of pre-final snag viewings introduced in order to assist in reducing the time.

Rent arrears have increased by £135,150 since last month to £1,330,466 and are 84% higher compared to the same period last year. Factors affecting this increase include:

- SW continue to have a high level of housing benefit backlog
- under occupancy
- 679 tenants affected, 650 are in rent arrears this figure represents 10% of properties.

Action to resolve matter includes ongoing discussions with SSU and Revenues and Benefits to provide additional resources in neighbourhoods to address this backlog.

SW exceeded the monthly target of 55% of housing advice cases which do not go on to present as homeless, achieving 74%.

Bulk Item Amnesty: the Property Team completed a spring clean amnesty in Oxfangs which was well received. Further requests to DH or local Housing Officer.

AOCB

The following subjects were covered under Any Other Business and copies of the reports, etc. will be attached to the minutes of meeting along with this report.

- The EBS Housing Advice Roadshow attended Oxfangs Library on 23 October 2013.
- Welfare Reform Information: city wide update covering:
 - Under-occupation update
 - Discretionary Housing Payments
 - Kitchen & bathroom programme
- Home and Energy Advice Guide

2. Action List

1. Proposed project 639 (Cock My Lane) – discussions have opened with Parks and Greenspaces (J Galloway) with the view to joint responsibility to solve this matter. Still ongoing.

2. The findings from the Dunedin Canmore pilot on welfare reform were to be circulated but it appears there has been some objection to this. Debbie Hertbertson provided a general overview.

3. Residents seeking advice/information on how to operate their home heating systems. Apparently advice is given when they first move in but no documented information is left for future reference. This has been actioned and awaiting a response.

4. Wester Hailes Civic Square Project: This is not an HRA asset and whilst Council officers want to retain it on the action sheet this project requires major funding which is not available at present.

3. Neighbourhood Environmental Programme (NEP)

The listed Pentland NEP Projects 2013/14 for the Firrhill Ward were:

896 – 9 Oxgangs Park: to landscape and fence rear garden area

897 – 1-3 Oxgangs Crescent: Secure Drying Area

898 – 20-22 Firrhill Drive: footpath and handrail

899 – 1 Oxgangs Drive: Fencing and new access to Colinton Mains Park.

Projects 879 and 899 have still to be completed.

The list of Pentland NEP Projects 2014/15 for the Firrhill Ward consist of

1024: Oxgangs Crescent: footpath

Reason: the surface of the footpath has broken up and has become a slip hazard for local residents. Dilapidated fencing.

Proposal: re-surface the footpath with asphalt and install a pin kerb. Eliminate the slip and trip hazards making the area safe for local residents to use. Replace dilapidated fencing to match existing.

Comment: there are actually two footpaths here and it is the asphalt path that is in poor condition. The other path which consists of concrete slabs is in very good condition.

1054: 2 Firrhill Drive: fencing

Reason: residents complaining about rotten and rusted hurdel bar fencing.

Proposal: install new metal bow top fencing which will improve the aesthetics of the area and will require no maintenance.

Comment: The existing fence is in good condition for its age but needs maintenance (de-rust and paint) to preserve its life. Hurdle bar or wire mesh fencing is the standard fencing in the Firrhill/Oxgangs area therefore changing the style is not liable to improve the aesthetics of the area.

1057: Oxgangs Brae: security lighting

Reason: areas at entrance doors have no lighting. Residents do not feel safe after dark when entering the building.

Proposal: install new security lighting to entrance door areas to improve safety and security of residents.

Comment: Is this new property? This area was built 50+ years ago and it is only now that there is a security issue?

1061: 32-34 Oxgangs Avenue: drying area/gardens

Reason for project: drying area and garden access routes are in a state of disrepair. The desired effect is to repair damage to land, old fences and formalise residents' walkways to the drying area and gardens.

Proposal: Relay footpath to the drying area, cut and clear drying area and gardens for tenants in the stairs. Provide access for tenants to their gardens and drying areas.

Comment: Again this is hurdel bar fencing and in good condition for its age with only the one lower bar missing between two posts (approx 1 metre). This communal area is in need of attention thus I support this proposal

1065: Firrhill Drive: footpaths 18-20

Reason for project: footpaths leading to stairs are in need of repair, concrete flags are broken causing trip hazard.

Proposal: Lift concrete flags and resurface footpaths with asphalt. Remove trip hazards and areas of ponding for local residents. Installing new steps with handrails.

Comment: The concrete flags are in very good condition for their age and could have been lifted and reset so that a smoother level appearance was gained. There were no obvious trip hazards. There was one step with no handrail but the hurdel fencing could have provided support if it had not been obscured by an overgrown hedge.

1066: Firrhill Drive: footpaths 26-28

Reason for project: footpaths leading to stairs are in need of repair, concrete flags are broken causing trip hazard.

Proposal: Lift concrete flags and resurface footpaths with asphalt. Remove trip hazards and areas of ponding for local residents. Installing new steps with handrails.

Comment: As for the previous - the concrete flags are in very good condition for their age and could have been lifted and reset so that a smoother level appearance was gained. There were no obvious trip hazards. There were no handrails at the steps but again the hurdel fencing could have provided support if it had not been obscured by overgrown hedges.

The footpath leading to the stairs at Nos 22-24 Firrhill Drive was done last year and therefore the proposals above will keep them the same and for that reason I would accept the proposals.

4. Firrhill Walkabout

I missed this walkabout, which took place on 9th January, but I note from the report I received from Tam Nisbet that the Community Group Representative was L Linn. The information comes from the report done by Tam Nisbet, who was the lead officer.

- Firrhill Drive – footpath outside the ONC in need of repair
- Firrhill Drive – dog fouling
- Firrhill Drive – metal frame lying on grassed area – referral to Dunedin-Canmore
- Firrhill Drive – fly tipping – settee to be uplifted o/s No 53
- Firrhill Drive – potholes on carriageway at Nos 5 and 41
- Firrhill Loan – gulley cleaning – at car parking area o/s No.10

Correspondence List

By e-mail: all messages forwarded to members with this facility; some transferred to website where appropriate.

N.B. Items in bold are of particular interest.

- 1 Cliff Beevers: copies of various e-mails to/from Scot Gov & City Councillors re calculation of Edinburgh's housing need + lack of encouragement to developers to use brownfield sites.
- 2 Sarah McDonald: request from Edinburgh Health & Social Care Partnership for 'service users or carers with lived experience' to join EHSCP to attend meetings and ensure scrutiny of decisions and policies made by the P'ship. Info from Rachel Howe 529 6552 (by 31 Jan.)
- 3 Review of Polling Places, re e-mailed suggestion from Sec that more Oxgangs residents be able to vote at Colinton Mains Church instead of climbing the steep hill to Pentland School: thanks from Depute Returning Officer, confirmation that there is space for more polling places at the church + our suggestion has been recommended to Council.
- 4 Scott Neill: thanks for Firrhill CC's contributions to ETI group's Aims & Priorities List.
- 5 Eileen Hewitt: confirmation of receipt of FCC's signed Constitution.
- 6 IT Computing classes, including for Jobseekers: Oxgangs Library 529 5549; Oxgangs Neighbourhood Centre 466 0678; Pentland Centre 445 2871
- 7 Cllr Andrew Burns: Council Leader's December Report
- 8 Cllr Richard Lewis: free Wi-fi now available in all Edinburgh Public Libraries.
- 9 Graham Nisbet, Tesco Manager re Sec's written complaint about abandoned trolleys not being retrieved when reported: apologies, and he will ensure trolley retrieval team patrols the area more thoroughly. Store Duty Manager, 24 hrs: Tel 535 0466.
- 10 Cllr Lewis: Council's vision for future of Meadowbank Stadium – 3 options costing £35.1m, £41m and £85.2m being considered by Culture & Sport Committee.
- 11 Eileen Hewitt: list of CC Office-bearers – www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils
- 12 E Hewitt: Scottish Rural Development Programme 2014-20: Stage 2 Final Proposals (and summary document) are published on Scot Gov website. Consultation closes 28 Feb '14
- 13 E Hewitt: Strategic Review of Water Charges 2015-21. Customer Forum wants to accurately represent the view of residents + businesses in discussions with Scottish Water re price setting and future investment for water and waste water services. The Water Industry for Scotland (the economic regulator) will determine customer charges in Nov '14. More info at: www.customerforum.org.uk. Views by 31 Jan.
- 14 Sarah McDonald: 'Edinburgh Roadworks Ahead Agreement': conditions to be adhered to by all water, electric, cable, etc, companies to impact as little as possible on footway and road users. Info

at www.edinburgh.gov.uk; e-address for response and/or comments:
sfc.roadsagreement@edinburgh.gov.uk.

15 Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs): (a) disabled parking place on Oxfangs Green to be removed, no longer required; (b) new disabled parking places to be introduced in Colinton Mains Cres, Firrhill Drive, and Oxfangs Farm Ave. For more info: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/trafficorders

16 Community Council Induction Meetings: 18 Jan (F Gosney & J Burt registered); also, extra meeting scheduled for 18 March, 6.30-9.00 pm, City Chambers.

17 Colin Dick: feedback on Firrhill Dr HMO application for 4 occupants: 2 bedrooms + lounge (for 2). Licence likely to be granted pending 2nd inspection.

18 Jo-Anne Laidlaw: Edinburgh Planning Concordat 2013 – financial assistance to CCs to engage with community into the quality of development in its area. Response by 31 Jan.

19 Sarah Boyack MSP: December e-newsletter.

20 Local Fire & Rescue Plan 2014-17:
<http://firescotland.gov.uk/media/486389/cityofedinburghdraftlocalplan-pdf> for info;
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SFRSLocalPlan-Edinburgh> for response by 14 Feb.

21 Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust: small grants scheme for community gardening: Apply by 5 pm, 7 Feb. Info at www.elgt.org.uk Phone Mark 445 4025 to discuss project.

22 Sarah McDonald: Pentlands Digest 2013 – reports on various projects in PNP area.

23 Police Report for Firrhill area: Dec. '13

24 Balerno CC: copy of their letter to Council objecting to development on greenfield site at Ravelrig/Pilmuir.

25 D Williams re Oxfangs Brae/Path site: highest bid from a commercial developer; suggests holding a meeting in favour of social/affordable housing, as detailed in report to Finance & Budget C'ttee, Feb '13, when approval given to dispose of HRA land at ex-Social Work Centre. + Copy of letter with comments/objections sent by N Tinlin, Fairmilehead CC. [On Firrhill CC's Agenda for 27 Jan meeting]

26 Sarah McDonald: ETI sub-group meeting moved from 27 Jan to 10 Feb, 2 pm.

27 E Hewitt: Planning & Renewable Energy Forum free Edinburgh event, 28 Jan 9.30-12.30, at B+B, 3 Rothesay Terr. To book a place e-mail events@planningaidscotland.org.uk

28 Statutory Public Consultation re Edinburgh's proposed 'Garden District' – 3000 homes by Murray Estates west of Currie. 29th Jan, at the Gyle (outside Boots), 2-8 pm; 30th Jan at Wester Hailes Education Centre, 2-8 pm.

29 E Hewitt: Transport Forum, 24 Jan, re community & accessible transport [Sec attending]

30 E Hewitt: Proposed National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) and Scottish Planning Policy:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/NPF3-SPP-Review/NPF3>

31 E Hewitt re Doorstep Crime: residents are discouraged from contracting with cold callers at the door or dealing with any doorstep callers. Also: use door chain or bar; close door when 'phoning to check a caller's ID; do not call mobile numbers (starting 07...) to verify identity. If in doubt call Police Scotland on 101 (999 if an emergency).

32 Lloyd Richardson: issue raised by FCC re alleged damage to pavement/fence on Oxfangs Cresc by site machinery/lorries; response: report by Council's Development Control Team states no damage was caused during the development (ie, it was pre-existing).

33 H Levy: PNP Health Group Fair: Sat 1 March, 10.30-2.30 Drop-in at Oxfangs Library; various activities and stalls.

34 Irene Beautyman: briefing opportunity for Community Councils on the proposed Local Development Plan process and the role of CCs within that process. [On our Agenda for 27th Jan] N Tinlin is coordinating meeting dates for CC reps in Pentlands area.

35 'Big Hearts Still Game' programme at Tynecastle, free every Tuesday from 28th Jan, 2.00 -3.30 pm. Tel 0131 200 7218, or e-mail benedict@bighearts.org.uk

36 Kim Aitchison, Housing Officer: issues raised at Firrhill Walkabout, 9th Jan.

37 LOOP Network (Local Opportunities for Older People): keeping older people and their carers informed about the range of preventative and support services available locally. Launch event: Wester Hailes Ed Centre, 31 Jan, 2-4.30 pm; e-mail enquiry@evoc.co.uk

38 Lloyd Richardson, Professional Officer, Roads etc, in response to request by FCC Sec, has raised a works order for a sign to be installed on Braid Burn Path (at Colinton Mains Bridge) to warn pedestrians of possible flooding at foot of path and use C.M.Rd as alternative route (likely in next 2 months).

39 Ex-Old Town CC member: request for support against Caltongate development by signing petition <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/caltongate-petition> (to Planning meeting 29 Jan)

40 Sarah Boyack MSP, Jan e-newsletter, including updates on housing crisis, the future of Tollcross Fire Control Room?; impact of bedroom tax; Cameo cinema's 100th birthday.

41 Cllrs Rust & Lewis: Council Consultation on Events in City Parks (closes 31 March) – read info on website www.edinburgh.gov.uk (heading 'Parks Event Manifesto') and fill in survey, or for paper copy Tel Rebecca Gordon on 0131 469 3110.

For more detail on any of the above contact: Peggy Wright, Tel 531 9796, peggy.wright@live.co.uk