

Firrhill Community Council

'Nec Aspera Terrent'

(Undaunted by Adversity)

Note of Meeting of the Council on 23 October 2017 held in Lochan View Community Business Centre, Firrhill Neuk.

Attendance: H Levy; S Duffy; L McGurk; J Turnbull; L Linn & J Napier
Cllr S Arthur, CEC Council; PC G Howie & Sgt K Dougal, Oxfangs Police

Visitors: S Campbell (Resident).

Apologies: F Gosney; Cllr J Rust (CEC Council); S Weir.

The meeting started at 6 pm, with H Levy in the Chair. The Chair welcomed Police Sergeant Kieran Dougal who has recently taken over from Billy Telford as the Community Police Team Sergeant for this area.

1. Minute of Previous Meeting:

The revised draft minutes for our meeting held on 25 Sept 2017 were reviewed. There being no further corrections, the minutes were moved for approval JT, seconded by LL. Approved.

2. Police Report: Sept 2017

Whilst the information provided in the following report was extracted from information received from the Police, it should be noted it has not been ratified and therefore may not be accurate or appropriate to refer to, quote or use as official statistics.

PC Graeme Howie spoke on the police report for the previous month.

Community Police Station:

TCI Alan Carson has taken over from CI Helen Harrison at Wester Hailes.

Incidents:

Housebreakings: HBWI x 3 offences – Oxfangs Farm Grove – 3rd September 2017
Theft Housebreaking – Oxfangs Crescent – 20th September 2017.

Assault: There was a report of a serious assault (solved) at Easter Haugh on 5th September 2017.

Road Safety / Initiatives: There were no road safety issues/initiatives in September.

Theft: A pedal cycle was stolen from Oxfangs Park on 4th Sept.
Property was stolen in a theft from Oxfangs Ave – 8th Sept.
The picnic bench in Hope Triangle was dumped unceremoniously in the Braid Burn on 9th Sept (now retrieved and returned).
Property was stolen in a theft from Oxfangs Park on 14th Sept.

Hate Crime: A 3 generation family subjected an English family to racial abuse (and two minor assaults) in Oxfangs House. All persons involved now charged with relevant offences.

ASB / NPS / incidents of note: There were a couple of minor acts of vandalism recorded in the area during Sept. A small cannabis cultivation was seized in Oxfangs Crescent on 9th Sept and persons charged accordingly.

Raised at Meeting: Fireworks: A discussion took place on keeping safe from bonfires and fireworks. The Police will be running a special operation to promote public safety but are also aware that whilst children and young people cannot buy fireworks direct, some adults are purchasing them on their behalf. It should be noted that people under the age of 18 are not allowed to buy fireworks, nor possess them in a public place and therefore the adults are breaking the law and making themselves liable for prosecution.

The meeting expressed the general feeling that the organised firework display held in Oxfords for a number of years did a lot to limit the number of unorganised bonfires in the area. Unfortunately, due to a catastrophic mishap, the event no longer takes place. The impact of this is that people are liable to set up their own bonfires and firework displays with the resultant risk of injury increasing.

People are still advised to contact the South West uplift team 200 2000 and report the building of bonfires, if they have concerns that it would be unsafe or it is on public land.

Raised at Meeting: Defecating in Common Stair: Complaint received about persons defecating in a common stair. Unusual situation – what can be done about it and who is responsible for cleaning it up? Police action relies on witnesses seeing persons performing the act. Pictorial evidence can be sent to Community Safety, South West Neighbourhood Office, CEC for information. Other than the occupants of the premises doing it themselves, advice on stair cleaning can be sought from the Environmental Wardens at the SWNO.

Community Police Team

Ward 8 comprises of 3 Policing Beats with 2 City of Edinburgh Council Funded Officers. Police Constables Graeme Howie and Sonja Kaiser. Beat PF57 covers the Firrhill CC area.

The Community Policing Team Inspector covering Wards is Police Inspector 11495E Scott Richardson. The CPT Sergeant covering ward 8 is Police Sergeant Kieran Dougal.

The CPT consists of 3 teams of community-facing Constables, and the emphasis will be on community working, in a bid to solve local issues.

In non-emergencies, should you wish to contact us, please do not hesitate to do so.

You can contact us by email at <mailto:EdinburghColintonFairmileheadCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk> or by telephoning the national non-emergency number 101. You can also follow us on Twitter @EdinPolSW.

Police Surgery

Oxfords Library, Oxfords Road North, Wednesdays 1700 - 1800 hours.

Warning about doorstep callers: don't sign up with, or give money to, anyone who cold-calls, i.e., anyone you haven't arranged to call. Say NO and report them to Police Scotland Tel: 101 or the City Council's Trading Standards Tel: 0131-529 3030.

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

3. Ward Councillors and MSP Reports

3.1 Councillor Scott Arthur

Hunters Tryst Site: A revised outline proposal has been submitted for “affordable housing (between 70 to 90 units) with Associated roads, parking infrastructure and landscaping.”

Comiston Farmhouse: The developer's appeal has been declined. The Council will soon decide what to do with this property. An informal consultation is underway with local residents.

Abandoned vehicles in Oxgangs: Ongoing but no real progress

Parking Restrictions needed: Consultation underway from Colinton Main Green/Drive junction. I have asked for Colinton Mains Terrace/Drive and the Easter Haugh/Oxgangs Road North junctions to also be considered.

Firrhill / Oxgangs / Braidburn Pitches: Meeting planned for Friday to discuss access arrangements.

Braidburn School: I have asked for a briefing on the cuts to holiday activities.

Oxgangs Broadway Improvement Project: With the Oxgangs Aldi store nearing completion a few questions have been raised about the path which runs along the boundary between it and the Library, in particular, we have to ensure it is adequately lit. This and other problems will be considered by the Council as part of plans to improve the area. There should be a site visit soon.

In discussion: a number of issues were raised in regard to this area.

- Dog fouling: shopkeepers should provide free bags for dog owners to uplift their animal's poo and this should be included on notices regarding dog poo.
- Aldi's will open on November 30th
- Still a need to check that the lighting on the pathway will be open all night. Not clear if lighting will be part of the city grid or private to Aldi. **Action**
- Harris fencing at the rear of the Good Companions – action to improve the look of the pathway is reliant on the good will of the owner which is not forthcoming at this time.

(See also Cllr Rust's report on this issue)

Flights: I have had a few emails about weekend aircraft noise from Buckstone / Fairmilehead / Firrhill. I am in dialogue with Edinburgh Airport about the noise levels.

In Council: My proposal to review the school uniform grant (currently only £43 for a primary school pupil), with the aim of increasing it was successful (thanks to Cllr Rust for his support).

Surgery in Oxgangs Library: first Saturday of the month, third Saturday by appointment.

Raised at meeting: Communal bins not being emptied

3.2 Councillor Jason Rust

1. Received an interim update from the Parks and Greenspaces South West Team Leader advising that the Braidburn Primary School contractors have now **cut the hedge back on Oxgangs Road North** near to the Firrhill pitches and Scottish Water has also been contacted by email to request that its part of the hedge is also cut back.

2. The Planning Application Notice has been submitted for the former **Hunter's Tryst School site** by the same developer as last time. There is to be a local consultation as before. I know initial feedback received by me has been sceptical about the application which does not appear much different from last time and indeed potentially a higher density of housing.

3. Working with council officers and the local business with a view to seeing what can be done to **upgrade Oxgangs Broadway**. The investment in principle is agreed, but there are some legal issues around the public realm and ownership which do need clarified, as we know from past experience re the steps etc. Following a council officers site visit on 12th October to gain an understanding of potential scope of works, the Council plan to undertake engagement with the shop owners and any other potential stakeholders, which should include the Community Council! This has been fully supported by Cllr Arthur. I will update you on this and ensure the CC is involved.

4. Contacted by residents regarding the broken fencing and **overhanging bushes on Oxgangs Road by Hunter's Tryst Pub**. The area in question is owned by MOD and falls within the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) Housing patch in support of the service personnel housing at Dreghorn. Speaking with DIO Housing officers to ascertain what can be done in this area.

5. The **street bin in Oxgangs Hill** at Cockym Lane between Oxgangs Loan and Swan Spring Avenue has been over filling and contains lots of bags and dog litter and has been reported a couple of times. Submitted written questions to Full Council for this week on the availability, provision and situation of litter bins more generally given the number of complaints received.

6. There have been reports of issues with young people causing **anti-social behaviour out-of-school hours on the Firrhill High School pitches**. Been in contact with local residents, school and police and the school link officer is involved. I do understand that those involved are not pupils at the school.

7. Arranged for **stair lighting at a block in Oxgangs Drive** to be corrected and communal windows to be replaced.

8. The Council has commenced a **consultation on school session dates and school holidays**. The consultation can be found at this link:

<https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/cf/school-session-dates-2019-20-and-beyond/>

9. We heard on 6th October that the appeal by the developer in relation to **Comiston Farmhouse** was refused by the Reporter. This means that the rejection of the luxury flatted development by the Council Committee stands. Responsibility for the house and grounds remains with the Council and various options are now being looked at and I am in touch with officials.

10. There have been a few complaints regarding the **path between Oxgangs Library and Aldi**. I arranged for an inspection by roads officers who advised that as it is 1.1m wide at its narrowest point and 2.2m at its widest point, it meets the criteria required for a walkway such as this. It was noted that there is quite a steep gradient to the path, however railings are in place to try and mitigate this. The diversion for pedestrians was agreed at the planning stage to this development. It has also been noted by roads officers that a new path connecting Oxgangs Broadway and the new store will be opened on completion of the development. However, I am aware concerns remain, especially at night-time and I have asked for a further review.

11. **Dog fouling in the field adjacent to Colinton Primary School** has been reported by me on behalf of local residents. The Environmental Wardens are to be increasing their patrols and further signage has been erected.

12. Chaired the election of office-bearers at **Oxgangs Neighbourhood Centre AGM**.

13. **Surgeries** continue the first Monday of every month at 6.30pm at Oxgangs Library. No appointment necessary.

4. Office Bearers' Reports

4.1 Information on Planning Applications in the Firrhill CC Ward (JN)

2/10/2017: No new applications.

Application 17/03845/FUL for the removal of window and blockwork below and fit new window and door to lounge at Flat 1 6 Oxgangs Farm Gardens was **granted**.

9/10/2017: Proposal of Application Notice 17/04444/PAN for a development of affordable housing (between 70 to 90 units) with associated roads, parking infrastructure and landscaping at site 72

metres south of 4A **Oxgangs Green**. Consultation requirements being assessed. Registered on 26.09.2017. Earliest date for planning application 19.12.2017.

Application 17/04358/CLP for a Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed attic conversion with front and rear Roof Windows at 116 **Colinton Mains Drive**.

Application 17/03431/FUL (Planning Permission) for the proposed erection of sun lounge to rear of property for disabled occupant at 30 Oxgangs Road North was **granted**.

16/10/2017: Proposal of Application Notice 17/**04444**/PAN as per previous entry. Additional consultation requirements are:

- agree public event details with CEC in advance, and notify all other interested parties at least 7 days prior to the event
- distribute leaflets to neighbouring properties and display posters on local noticeboards, eg shops, libraries etc as appropriate
- send PAN to Pentlands neighbourhood partnership

Decision on application 17/**04444**/PAN (Proposal of Application Notice). The pre-application consultation was **approved** on 12 October.

Noted for interest: Army barracks extension for new office block, garages and store at 3 **Dreghorn Barracks**, 82 Redford Road

4.2 Allermuir Health Centre (HL)

The open day (22nd Oct) to view the new health centre was well attended by members of the community. Additionally, to ensure the facilities were suitable for those with disabilities, two representatives of a disability group (a wheelchair user and someone who was partially sighted) were invited to the opening to identify any structural issues that may spoil their visit.

The Craiglockhart/Oxgangs Path Medical Practice is moving into the new building during the weekend 28/29 October, whilst the Firrhill Medical Practice will be the following weekend (4/5 November). The Firrhill Medical Centre building is to be taken over by Children's Services.

The Art Project Group are meeting on the 2nd November to meet Andrew Crombie and identify notable events in the history of the area. Invites have been sent out to community groups to get involved in the project.

4.3 Young Peoples Centre, Oxgangs Avenue (JN)

Background CEC papers covering this subject are the 2017 Progress Reports on Integrated Plan for Children and Young People 2015-18 and the Looked After Children: Transformation Programme. They indicate that the City Council's aim to reduce the rate of growth in the number of children who need to be looked after in residential care has been successful and produced a significant reduction in the usage of secure accommodation.

Part of the Corporate Parenting Action Plan was to provide two new, flexibly designed residential facilities (Heathervale, which opened in August 2016) and Oxgangs Young People's Centre, which is to be rebuilt on the current site.

Secretary contacted Scott Dunbar, Senior Manager, Children's Services (Looked After Children), and asked for an update and have been advised the project is moving forward with an expectation the demolition to commence in November with hopes that the main build will start in January. He supplied a couple of graphics for our use. He has made an offer to attend our meeting in each communication.

The new building will provide a maximum of 7 residential places, similar to Heathervale, which is less than previous. The team will also offer more outreach support.

4.4 Walkabout 11th October (LMcG, LL & SW)

Two members of Firrhill CC and a local resident did a walkabout covering the majority of the Oxgangs Farm area on 11 October. The following written report was supported by a number of pictures.

The main issues observed on this day which it was felt required attention were in Oxgangs Farm Drive including fly-tipping; poorly-lit stair entrances obscured by overgrown foliage; a smashed light on a lamppost; broken communal bin lids and bins being moved from their original placement; litter/debris accumulation on the road next to the kerb (particularly plastic bottles); and cracked paving and steps with loose railings at (nos. 17-21).

Some suggested possible actions which might be explored:

- The broken lamppost needs reported and repaired.
- Where access footpaths leading to the entrance to properties are poorly lit and dark due to overgrown foliage, could the streetlights at these properties be adjusted to provide better light?
- The broken steps, uneven footpath and wobbly, loose handrails outside Nos 17-21 should probably be inspected by the Council as they may be classed as unsafe.
- The flytipping issue in the Drive appears to be an ongoing problem. Notices which have been put up in the street warning about flytipping are currently not in place at the part of the street where most of the flytipping is occurring.
- There seemed to be an accumulation of litter/debris in Oxgangs Farm Drive on the road at the kerbside which didn't appear evident in the other streets in the Oxgangs Farm area. As Oxgangs Farm Drive sits at a lower level than the other Oxgangs Farm streets, could it be possible litter is washing down from the streets higher up on heavy rain days? There seemed to be quite a few plastic bottles on the road at the kerbside so it might also be possible that they've blown out of recycling bins, some of which currently have missing or broken lids. If litter in this street is a continuing problem, would it be possible to find out if the roadsweeper vehicle can make a more regular run in Oxgangs Farm Drive, particularly as it's situated just off the main road running down through Oxgangs?

5. AOCB

Date, Time and Venue of Next Public Meeting

Our AGM has been changed to our November meeting, which is the last meeting of the calendar year. To accommodate more people, it has been agreed to change the venue. Therefore, the date, venue and time of our next meeting is Monday **27 November 2017** in **Colinton Mains Bowling Club** at **6.00pm**. The focus of the AGM will be on environmental issues.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm approx.

6. Correspondence

Where appropriate, information obtained through correspondence on items identified on the agenda are contained within the relevant report and not included in this list.

27 Sept: Nominate now in the 'Rural Oscars' 2017

Invitation from Countryside Alliance to participate in their 2017 Rural Oscars awards scheme by nominating your favourite rural business.

The Awards recognise and honour those who routinely go the extra mile for their community, reflect the spirit of rural people and their desire to protect our landscapes and communities for future generations.

Nominations are in the following categories: local food and drink; village shop or post office; butcher; rural enterprise and pub. Nominations close on 13 November 2017.

28 Sept: Colinton Mains Drive: Roundabout at Tesco Superstore

Emailed Andy Edwards, SWNO re the concerns raised at the last meeting about the visibility of the metal railings on the central islands leading on to the roundabout. Indicated there had been a couple of recent incidents where the railings were struck and damaged by motor vehicles. The matter had been discussed and the observation made that the railings could be made more visible. Asked for a road safety assessment to be made in regard to the points raised.

Received a response from Karl Ivanov, Senior Transport Team Leader, South West Locality indicating the railings on the islands are there to prevent residents entering and exiting their drives from the opposite carriageway in an unsafe manner on the roundabout. The railings used are visi-rail type to give drivers visibility of any vehicles coming of the roundabout.

Agreed to have his inspector look at the railings and reflective strips can be fixed to the ends of the railings. Cannot give a definitive timescale on when it will be carried out.

In acknowledging his response, I added our concerns about the lack of visibility both for drivers, driving north on Colinton Mains Drive, turning left into Tesco's and for pedestrians crossing at this point. Suggested his inspector contact me prior to the inspection in order that I could meet with them to explain our concerns.

3 Oct: LILDEM stakeholder report October 2017.pdf

Email from Bruce Ryan, Centre for Social Informatics, Edinburgh Napier University, who is a facilitator and promotor of online engagement through the Knowledge Hub for Scottish Community Councillors Network.

The purpose of the email is to issue a copy of a report of a LILDEM survey carried out previously. It is headed "Community Councils in Scotland: Information Literacy for Democratic Engagement". This reports on the initial findings from a survey of information practices of community councillors carried out in early 2017. It should be read in conjunction with the report issued earlier based on a series of interviews with community councillors.

They would be grateful for any feedback and they will be exploring some of the issues raised in this report in posts on our research blog, <https://community-knect.net>. They would also be grateful for any feedback on these posts, but again - no pressure!

I have put a copy of this document on the Report's page on the website for information.

5 Oct: EACC Meeting Thursday 12th October 2017

From EACC Secretary, David Bewsey, notice and agenda for next meeting with the draft minutes of the previous meeting. Documents are on the EACC website.

Also available are copies of the proposed Locality Improvement Plans along with the glossary of terms. Worth a read as EACC probably needs to respond to committee about them. NB: Minimal involvement by community councils.

Statement on Equality:

"The EACC promotes and encourages total inclusiveness of all who wish to be or are Community Councillors. People from all minority groups and ethnic groups should be encouraged to join and become a Community Councillor enhancing the diversity of Community Councils. All Community Councillors must meet the criteria set out in the Scheme for Community Councillors."

This statement will be discussed as part of matters arising from the Minutes

The 2017 AGM will be held on Saturday 25th November 2017. Nominations for Office Bearers will be open until Noon on 17th November 2017. The form is attached and is also on the website in both PDF and MSWord format or it can be posted out on request. The current Office Bearers intend to stand again but we will need a succession plan going forward.

Also please ensure you update us on who your EACC Representative is and update our mailing list at <http://eepurl.com/bH-vWH>. This will ensure all relevant information gets to your representative.

6 Oct: 50 Years of Conservation Areas

From Planning Edinburgh about why they designate conservation areas and a proposal to designate Restalrig as a conservation area and are seeking views. The proposed conservation area would include St. Margaret's Parish Church and surrounding streets. Open for comments from 6 - 30 October 2017.

Where are Edinburgh's conservation areas? There are currently 49 conservation areas in Edinburgh, but unfortunately Firrhill is not listed on the map. However we do have 2 listed buildings, Colinton Mains Parish Church and Comiston Springs

6 Oct: Comiston Farm House - Appeal dismissed

From Cllrs Arthur/Rust advising that the developer's appeal re the Comiston Farm house refusal was rejected and decision of Council Committee to refuse upheld.

10 Oct: Calton Hill Draft Management Plan

From Sarah Murphy, Senior Parks Technical and Programmes Officer re draft management plan commissioned by Edinburgh World Heritage on behalf of the Calton Hill Steering Group, it aims to direct future management and maintenance of this landmark site and will be presented to City of Edinburgh Council on 15 March 2018.

The Calton Hill Steering Group would welcome views and feedback on this draft document. Please see the link below which will take you directly to a survey through which any comments or suggestions can be made, this survey will close on Tuesday 7 November 2017.

<https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/sfc/calton-hill-draft-management-plan-1>

10 Oct: Transition Edinburgh Newsletter October 2017

Transition Edinburgh's electronic newsletter covering news and events. Forwarded to those members and contacts able to receive emails.

11 Oct: Edinburgh Airport Airspace Change update

An update from previous email advising that the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) had temporarily halted its review of our Airspace Change Proposal. The Airport authority have published their Rationale Document explaining what they have proposed and why.

They have commissioned an Environmental Assessment to address environmental issues such as noise and air quality, as well as a tranquillity and visual intrusion study, a health impact assessment and an equalities impact assessment.

Detailed information is available on their website www.letsstofurther.com.

12 Oct: Edinburgh Flats Waste and Recycling Survey

From Hannah Milne, Senior Project Officer, Changeworks' Waste Team who is writing to ask for help in sharing an online survey about waste and recycling which Changeworks has launched on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council.

The short online survey is open to Edinburgh residents who live in a flat and asks what they think of the on-street waste and recycling bins. A summary of the results will be shared with the City of Edinburgh Council, who will use the recommendations to improve the service.

We would really appreciate it if you could share our survey with your mailing lists and on social media to help us reach as many Edinburgh residents as possible. Suggested text for newsletter, website and social media are included below as well as a photo and flyer. The survey is open until 23 October 2017.

12 Oct: Scottish Affairs Committee public evidence session

From Laura-Jane Tiley, Second Clerk, Scottish Affairs Committee writing on behalf of the Scottish Affairs Committee in Westminster about a public evidence session the Committee are running in Edinburgh on Monday 16 October. The session is part of the Committee's My Scottish Affairs inquiry which aims to hear ideas from the people of Scotland about the future direction of the Committee's work. At this meeting, they'll be hearing from third sector representatives about the current issues they face. This was an invite to community councillors to attend but at rather short notice.