

**DAVIDSON'S MAINS & SILVERKNOWES ASSOCIATION**  
**Management Committee Meeting 11 February 2020 at 6.45 pm**  
**in St. Margaret's Church Hall, Main Street**

1. **Apologies:** Laura Thomson, Seonaidh Edgar, Councillors Kevin Lang and Norman Work.

2. **Present:** Rod Alexander (Chair), Charlotte Cowe (Secretary), Jill Smith, Gordon McGregor, Brian Flanagan, Carolyn Williams, Coll Gardiner.

3.1 **Minutes:** The Minutes for January were approved.

**3.2 On-going Issues Log – to note**

Rod advised that the log had been updated to include information relating to the Alliums on the banking at Silverknowes Road East and implications for a future review by the Scottish Government into the operation of Dangerous Dogs Legislation.

**3.3 Matters arising**

3a. The committee were hardly surprised to note that the promise by the Council that enforcement action to cut back the conifers on Ferry Road at Silverknowes Neuk by the end of January had failed to materialise. It was noted that the Council had now stated that the planning had been put in hand but that it was a complex operation involving road traffic restrictions and would take longer. In the meantime it was unfortunate that the serious risks from the street lights being completely obscured would continue.

3b. Illegible Traffic Signage on Queensferry Road

It was noted that there had been no progress on getting the signage cleaned despite a number of complaints having been made. The committee were very concerned about this lack of action and it was agreed a further complaint would be made.

3c. Abandoned bike frame padlocked to the railings outside Boots

The committee were pleased to note that the Council had finally removed the bike frame which had been a safety hazard for several weeks.

3d. Required Footpath improvements outside Maitland Bowling Club.

The committee discussed the problems of the very narrow footpath outside the bowling club and the extremely high kerbing, both of which created very difficult access problems for buggy and wheel chair users. Rod said that it was clear that the need for drop kerbing had been overlooked in recent installations in our area and that we would press for it to be done as soon as possible. A project for widening the footpath had been under consideration a few years ago but had been given a low priority at the time. It was agreed we would try to resurrect it given the safety concerns around increasing traffic. Both projects would be added to the action list.

3e. Serious flooding at both east and west ends of The Green

Rod confirmed that he had received feedback from the Council complaints system that the gully at the west end of The Green had been cleared. It now appeared that flooding had also occurred at the east end and this would be reported for action.

**4. Correspondence**

Charlotte confirmed that all relevant correspondence had been circulated or would be considered under the appropriate agenda item.

**5. Reports**

5a Police Report

PC Donald Macleod was welcomed to the meeting to present the monthly police report for January. The report again reflected a relatively low level of criminal activity in our area which had been the pattern for several months. There had been no incidences of housebreaking, with one assault and a couple of road traffic incidents. The committee very much hoped that this trend would continue.

## 5b. Treasurer's Report

Gordon reported that the balance in the account was £4432.98 as at 31 January 2020

## 6. Planning issues

### 6a. 30 Corbiehill Road

It was noted that this application had still not progressed to consideration by the Planning Development sub Committee.

### 6b. 54 Silverknowes Road

Rod confirmed that an objection to the application had been made by the DMSA on the basis which had been discussed at the January meeting and on behalf of residents who had asked the Association to represent their views. The main point was that the latest submission was virtually unchanged from the earlier one which had been refused both by the Council and then later on appeal as being unsuitable for the site. The DMSA had fully agreed with the earlier decisions and could not see any reason for these to be reversed.

## 7. Current Consultations

### 7a. Knights of the Island event at Lauriston Castle on 18/19 May.

The committee spent some time discussing an application for the finish of a round Britain rally for over 90 teams including support vehicles to be held in the grounds of Lauriston Castle. It is estimated that over 200 vehicles and 300 people would be taking part in a private event, with a requirement for parking these vehicles on the grass together with space for tents and communal areas for meals, bbq's, presentations and entertainment.

The overriding view of the committee was that the scale of this event is much too big for the available resources on the site. Particular concerns include potential damage to the grass surfaces especially with the Gala taking place only four weeks later, the proposal that music, possibly amplified, should be played as late as 11 pm in the evening, and the proposal to use the area to the north of the castle, on the site of the croquet pitches as a communal area. Charlotte reported that it was known that the Chairs of the Gala committee and the Croquet Club were very concerned about the event. It was understood that the Croquet Club had just spent a significant sum to upgrade the playing surface for the new season and that they had a reasonable expectation that their rental payments would insure that the playing surface would not be used for any purpose which created a risk of damage. The committee also had concerns about the implications for traffic management relating to the event and it was suggested that the police may have to be involved for the arrival and departure from the castle, and there are also questions about the regular users of the grounds possibly being excluded for over 24 hours for a private event to take place. It was agreed that all these concerns would be detailed in a formal complaint to the Council. Charlotte confirmed that the membership had been circulated with the details and she was aware that a number had contacted the parks department directly to state their concerns. Rod said he was concerned that the Association had been asked to comment on what was a major national event at a very late stage with it being scarcely plausible to believe that it would not now go ahead. The committee considered that this should have been discussed with local residents back in the autumn when it appeared that initial meetings had taken place between the Council and the organisers.

### 7b. Fettes College Charity Run on 17 March 2020

The committee discussed the proposed annual charity run and were fully supportive of the event which had taken place annually for a few years with absolutely no problems.

### 7c. Mindful Peace Walk on 14 June 2020

The committee had no concerns about this walk which ends in Lauriston Castle grounds. The organisers estimate there will no more than thirty participants.

## 8. Neighbourhood Networks

Rod provided an update on the request for the Chairs of the Community Councils in Almond and the DMSA with the Director of PLACE to discuss the failure of the Neighbourhood Network structure and the complete breakdown of engagement with community organisations. The Director had now agreed to a meeting with the Democracy and Governance Manager for the Council and it was anticipated it would take place within the next two or three weeks. Rod said he anticipated being able to provide an update on the outcome at the March meeting.

## **9. Local Action List**

The committee spent some time discussing the complete list of projects on the DMSA action list so that an updated list could be posted on the notice board and website. It was recognised that one or two points of information had still not been clarified by Council Officers but that there was a need to get some information made public.

## **10. Gritting of paths in the Park**

The committee again discussed the problem of the lack of priority gritting on the cycle path west of Silverknowes Road bridge, with complaints about injuries to cyclists from falling off bikes on slippery sections in Silverknowes and through Davidson's Mains park. It was noted that this subject had been discussed at the December meeting when it had been reported that any extension to the current priority gritting programme for this winter was not possible due to tight budget constraints, a situation which the committee had been obliged to accept. However as a sequel, it appeared that the Council were now intending to review the gritting policy for cycle tracks before winter 2020/21 and it was agreed the DMSA would now write to draw attention to the need to extend priority gritting from Silverknowes Road bridge westwards so that it was included in the review .

## **11. City Plan 2030**

The committee discussed the importance of making representations on the future City Plan given the influence the final adopted plan would have on the long term development strategy for the city, including new development sites and roads and transport policy; all the things which currently plague the local area with worries about congestion and pollution. It was noted that the Council are undertaking a series of public displays and consultations across the city with the one at Blackhall Library on 4<sup>th</sup> March being the most convenient for committee members to attend before the next meeting on 10 March when the DMSA submission would have to be discussed and agreed to meet the closing date for the review.

## **12. Installation of Defibrillator in village**

Charlotte and Rod updated the committee on the situation with plans for the defibrillator. Following the January meeting it had been determined that none on the business premises around the centre of Main Street had sufficient space on their external walls and so the only option appeared to be a position on the wall of the Corbie. Charlotte had then written to the proprietor to ask if he would be supportive of this proposition and she was awaiting a response. The committee discussed a number of options if the approach to the Corbie was declined, including making another approach to St Margaret's Church which would attempt to allay their concerns. It was agreed the situation would be discussed again at the next meeting before any further action was taken.

## **13. Upgrade of Roundabout at Main Street**

The committee discussed the long delayed response from the Council to the public consultation on the proposed design for the roundabout at the east end of Main Street. The Council had concluded that the original design should proceed without any change which meant that the main concern from residents about additional traffic queuing, particularly on Main Street, from the narrowing of the carriageways to a single lane on the approaches had been discounted. It was recognised there would be protest about this even taking the Council line that it was justified on pedestrian safety grounds. The other main issue from the response was the decision that the alternative option of a traffic light controlled junction could not be justified following a detailed traffic analysis and consideration of the much higher cost. It was anticipated that the work to upgrade the roundabout would not now be undertaken before 2021/22 at the earliest.

## **14. Current Traffic and Parking Issues**

14a Davidson's Mains School anti traffic pollution campaign

Rod said that it was unfortunate that he had been unable to attend the most recent meeting of the group but would catch up at the next meeting. The group had developed a detailed action plan with a number of planned initiatives to reduce levels of pollution outside the school. They wanted principally to discourage car use and reduce parking. Much of it was trying to change behaviour but they were proposing the painting of double yellow lines outside the school with regular checks and enforcement by traffic wardens. In the longer term they wanted to improve the public realm outside the school by narrowing the carriageway widths and widening the footpaths.

Rod said that he had spoken to one of the group about the air condition monitoring equipment that they had used to obtain their readings in the expectation that similar equipment could be used to measure air pollution in the village. He hoped to have more information on this by the next meeting.

### **15. Flower Planters in Village**

The committee were pleased to hear from Rod that he had been advised by the Scouts that they were making flower planters for the village. They were intending to construct four planters in two different sizes, with the smaller ones to be used where there was less space available. Rod said he had discussed funding with the Scouts but they hoped to cover the cost through local fund raising if possible. The committee were fully supportive of this but agreed that if there was any deficit to be covered a contribution could be considered at a later date.

### **16. Date and Plans for AGM**

The committee discussed the difficulty in trying to fix a date for the AGM at a time when one of the local church halls were free for a booking. Looking at the availability of the Councillors and the committee it appeared that Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June was the only viable option and so this date was agreed subject to Charlotte re-checking that the Councillors could commit to that date. Graham had previously indicated it was a date he could not meet due to a prior important booking but he said he understood the difficulties and would try to switch dates. It was agreed that if the AGM is held on the Wednesday 10 June, the monthly committee meeting would be delayed until Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> recognising the need to have a committee meeting after the AGM and before the summer recess.

### **17. AOCB.**

17a. Rod raised the issue of provision in the Council Budget for funding Christmas Lights in outlying areas, including Davidson's Mains, for 2020 and then subsequent years. He was assured by Graham and Louise that there had not yet been anything to suggest that provision would not be made but it would be clear after the Council Budget meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> February.

17b. Charlotte advised the committee about possible locations for future committee meetings and said that it appeared likely that the committee could return to meeting at Davidson's Mains primary school in May and June.

17c. Jill reported that two large commercial cooking oil cans had been dumped on Main Street on the opposite side of the road from Greggs and Mira . After discussion about the possible reasons Louise agreed to report the matter to the Council.

17d. Charlotte reported household items which had been fly tipped on Silverknowes Road on the section down to the foreshore and it was agreed she would report the problem to the North West Locality Team for action.

### **18. Date of Next Meeting 10 March 2020 6.45 pm in St. Margaret's Church Hall, Main Street**