



May

# NEWSLETTER

2012

## VANDALISM AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Annual surveys of residents' opinions across the city carried out by the Council repeatedly show that the Davidson's Mains and Silverknowes area is one of the best places to live. Most local people think that there is a good community spirit, that we live in a pleasant environment and that we have a good range and quality of services. We need to remind ourselves about the overwhelmingly positive aspect of living in our area because we are vexed by the fact that increasingly the work of the DMSA seems to be taken up in responding to residents' concerns about crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

The problems affect most of the area from time to time although generally it is temporary or intermittent and the police can sort it out. In the past year Tesco, Davidson's Mains Park, Lauriston Castle, Main Street, Barnton Park Tennis Club and various locations in Silverknowes are examples of where problems have occurred. However, the eastern part of Silverknowes particularly in streets close to the access points from Muirhouse have proved a particular source of continuing trouble. Local residents in Silverknowes have received a detailed newsletter from the DMSA giving information about the up to date situation and about further planned meetings to try to find solutions to the problems. In Silverknowes the Council have spent over £100.000 on street lighting improvements because there is much evidence that good lighting is a deterrent to street crime. They have also installed CCTV which is in operation in two houses which overlook the access route from Muirhouse into Silverknowes Eastway. Consideration is now also being given to enhanced street lighting in the vicinity of the CCTV cameras to improve the quality of the images which are not good in poor light.

At a recent Community Safety Forum meeting where we meet with police, council staff and other community groups to agree priorities for Almond Ward it was decided that Silverknowes should continue to be the top priority for police attention in the Almond area. More generally residents should be assured that we have a good relationship with the local police and we are satisfied that they are working hard to address the problems in the area.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY!

### SCOUT COMMUNITY WEEK (14-20 MAY)

To support the community the scouts are working on Monday 14 May to remove non-native Himalayan Balsam from Davidson's Park and you may wish to support them with a donation.

### JUBILEE PICNIC — Saturday 3 June 2012

Holy Cross Church are organising a picnic for local residents

### GALA DAY - Saturday 16th June 2012

Davidson's Mains Gala will be held in the grounds of Lauriston Castle.

### ASSOCIATION— AGM

While at time of writing no date has yet been set for our AGM it is likely to take place towards the end of June. We are intending to have a talk on Davidson's Mains Park as well as a questions/answer session with our newly elected councillors! A flyer will be delivered to every house at the beginning of June advising residents of the date.

## **LIBRARY SERVICES**

Residents may not be aware of a service provided by the Council called Library Link. This is a bus service for anyone who has difficulty getting to the library because of age, disability or ill health. The free minibus will pick you up from home and take you to your local library. The bus has wheelchair access and trained staff and WRVS volunteers are on hand to give assistance on and off the bus. You can choose your books, and then sit down to enjoy tea/coffee and a chat before being taken home again. Details are available from Blackhall Library on 529 5595.

There is also a mobile library service provided by the council. We have never received any comments about difficulties in being able to access Blackhall Library (which is our nearest) but would like to hear from residents who would be interested in a mobile library service coming to Davidson's Mains and/or Silverknowes. There is currently a mobile library service in Cramond. If there is sufficient interest we will follow this up to see what can be done about trying to bring the mobile library to our area.

## **COLD CALLING ZONES**

We have been asked by one or two residents about the possibility about setting up "No Cold Calling Zones" in our area. These are designated streets or groups of streets which are advertised and signposted so that doorstep traders and salesmen are aware that the residents do not want to be contacted, other than by prior appointment. The scheme is supported by the Police and Trading Standards and is intended to provide some degree of comfort and assurance against doorstep selling scams and pressurised sales techniques. At present there are 35 schemes in operation in Edinburgh but there are none in Davidson's Mains or Silverknowes.

We have spoken to Trading Standards to find out what needs to be done to set a scheme up and there are two important issues which need to be taken into consideration. The first thing is that the scheme works best in a clearly defined area where there is no scope for confusion about the boundaries. This is important because traders and salesmen and companies in general need to be made aware of exactly where the restrictions are in operation. A cul-de sac is the rather obvious best example of a situation where there would be no doubt, whereas a part-street or a single street with access at either end and junctions along its length would be more difficult to define and by consequence the zone would be more difficult to ensure observance with the rules. The other requirement is that over 50% of the residents (50% +1) must confirm their support for the zone before it can be set up. Experience suggests that there can appear to be strong support for a zone but that it can be very difficult and time consuming to obtain the required number of signatories. This is especially so for zones in larger groupings of residents. We would be interested in knowing if any groups of residents in our area are interested in setting up a No - Calling Zone for their immediate locality. If there is sufficient interest we would do our best to help but ideally it would be expected that the residents themselves would be prepared to do some of the work involved in establishing the necessary level of support for a scheme to proceed. Every house has to be contacted and Trading Standards have made it clear that they do not have the resources to do that. Please let us know if you and your neighbours are interested and we can help you with more details and contact information.

## **DAVIDSON'S MAINS GALA DAY**

The 80th Davidsons Mains Childrens' Gala will be held on Saturday 16th June at Lauriston Castle. On the run up to Gala Day the committee have organised a series of events. There is a family ceilidh on Saturday 2nd June to which all are welcome, young and old: skill is not required but enthusiasm is vital!. In gala week there is the first Gala birthday party for nursery to primary 3 on Monday 11<sup>th</sup>; on Tuesday (p1-p4) and Wednesday (p5-p7) there are football tournaments co-ordinated by Cramond Football Club. On Thursday 14th at The Royal High School there is a touch rugby tournament for all run by Royal High Corstorphine (Cougars). As usual if anyone would like to become more involved in the Gala organisation or would perhaps be able to spare some time on gala day please don't hesitate to come forward. You will be made very welcome. Contact Susan on 336 2572 or [dmainsgala@live.co.uk](mailto:dmainsgala@live.co.uk)

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## **GOOD TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

We are always pleased to hear from local residents. Please feel free to either phone, write or email any comments you may have. We always try to reply promptly!

## **LOCAL LICENSING**

An article in the November 2011 newsletter gave details of anti-social behaviour at Mackenzies Public House in Main Street. After further trouble in November and early December the DMSA asked for a review of the licence for these premises. This was held in January 2012 when members of the Licensing Board informed the licensee that he was to report back to the Licensing Board 6 months later to discuss essential improvements for the running of the premises. On our part we were asked that representatives from the DMSA would attend a mediation meeting to agree on a course of action to make sure that the premises were run in a proper manner. A very positive meeting was held in February when we were assured that the problems would be addressed. We were subsequently informed that the licensee had resigned and a new one was being appointed. At the time of writing DMSA representatives have met with the new licensee who has assured us that the premises will be run in an orderly manner and that improvements will be made to try to bring back local clientele. It is too early to make judgements but we are very encouraged by the lack of trouble in the few weeks since the new manager took over. However, we know, and the Manager accepts this, that the real test will come with the lighter evenings and warmer days. It remains important that incidents of anti-social behaviour are reported to the relevant authorities as well as ourselves.

## **BLACKHALL MOSQUE**

The DMSA has been contacted by residents from House O'Hill Road and Drylaw Crescent about a number of concerns around activities at the Blackhall Mosque. The problems mentioned include the volume of traffic, parking difficulties, litter problems and noise, which is a particular problem when there is activity late in the evening. There is an added concern that it is understood that a planning application is pending for an extension to the premises which would be likely to result in increased usage with the potential for exacerbation of the current problems. The Committee has had a discussion about this issue and has agreed to invite representatives of the residents to our May or June committee meeting when we can learn a bit more about the problems and what is going on. In principle we have agreed to support the residents in any formal objections they may wish to make on any planning application relating to extension of the premises. We recognise the sensitivities around the issue, but the position of the Committee is that the residents have legitimate complaints which would apply irrespective of which ever group or organisation was using the premises in the manner which has been put to us.

## **JUBILEE TREE**

The DMSA committee has decided to mark the occasion of the Jubilee of Her Majesty The Queen by planting a commemorative tree at a suitable location in the grounds of Lauriston Castle. Permission has been given by the Parks & Gardens Manager for the Castle for this planting which will take place in the autumn/early winter. The DMSA has agreed to underwrite the cost of the tree but local residents may also wish to make a personal voluntary contribution to the cost of this venture. Donations can be made via our Secretary or at the AGM in June.

## **LITTER PROBLEMS**

The DMSA is contacted regularly by local residents who are concerned about the amount of litter which lies about the area, particularly on Main Street but also in other locations. This is an ongoing problem which we fear will never really "go away " because of the number of fast food outlets between The Corbie at one end of the village and Gregg's, the Deli and Tesco at the other end. Towards the end of last year the Environmental Wardens held a summit meeting involving a number of interested parties including the DMSA, the Friends of the Park, the local schools and local business to discuss the problem and which resulted in a number of initiatives to improve the situation. We recognise there are things being done. The Head Teachers at the RHS and the Primary School are always very helpful, supportive and understanding of the problem as are many of the local businesses. Perhaps it is time for a follow up initiative. The Primary School had a litter collection planned in April but unfortunately it had to be cancelled and is planned to be carried out later. Also, the DMSA has nothing but praise for the way Tesco accept their responsibilities to keep the former railway pathway, which they own, clear of debris and litter. They do a clear up periodically in marked contrast to previous Supermarket operators on the site. Remember the Environmental Wardens are on call to deal immediately with litter problems when they are reported.

## FRIENDS OF DAVIDSON'S MAINS PARK

In 1922 the local authority purchased an area of land from the owners of Barnton House. Since that time Davidson's Mains Park has been much valued by local residents and visitors as an attractive area of woodland and open space. However in recent times it has become obvious that attention is required in order to preserve and enhance the nature of this valuable local asset. The Friends group has been successful in an application for a grant for additional tree planting and it is expected that the initial work will start this autumn. Before then the local Scout Group and other groups of local people will be involved in the removal of Himalayan Balsam (a non-native local plant which inhibits the growth of native wildflowers). Do watch local notice-boards for an opportunity to become involved. It is hoped that at the forthcoming AGM of the Association there will be an illustrated talk about the history of the park which residents will find extremely interesting.

Contacts: Kristina Woolnough—[kristina.woolnough@gmail.com](mailto:kristina.woolnough@gmail.com);  
Eunice Smith—[evnike@supanet.com](mailto:evnike@supanet.com)

### SCOUT COMMUNITY WEEK (14-20 MAY)

The local Scouts, Cubs and Beavers will be working hard on Monday 14 May (the beginning of Scout Community Week) in Davidson's Mains Park. They will be removing as much as they can of the young growths of non-native Himalayan Balsam. This will prevent the plants from setting seed and spreading this invasive plant even further around the park. There will then be more opportunity for native wildflowers to grow and flower. There is the opportunity to sponsor the Scouts with this worthwhile project and we would encourage residents to do so.

### THE BIG LUNCH - SUNDAY 3 JUNE AT 12.15 PM.

This is a one day get-together for neighbours across the UK. A record number of people are expected to take part this summer to celebrate The Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The Holy Cross Church, Davidson's Mains is inviting everyone to a picnic in their grounds to join in the fun. After lunch there will be activities and games for all to enjoy either watching or participating! If the weather is wet the picnic will take place in the hall or church. Unfortunately no dogs can be allowed. The organisers need to know how many people will be there in order to set out tables and chairs.

Contact: [Hall@holycrossedinburgh.org](mailto:Hall@holycrossedinburgh.org) or call between 10am - 6pm on 336 5120.

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### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairperson:	Mr. Rod Alexander	336 3856
Vice-Chairperson:	Mr. Keith Hannay	312 8513
Treasurer:	Mr. Gordon McGregor	336 5875
Honorary Secretary:	Mrs. Charlotte Cowe	336 2494
151 Main Street, EH4 5AQ		email: <a href="mailto:charlotte@dmains.co.uk">charlotte@dmains.co.uk</a>

Dr. J. Butt	Ms. M. R. Caden	Ms. J. Chapman	Mrs. E. Edgar
Mrs. P. McCulloch	Mrs. E. Smith	Mrs. A. Venables	

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### WEBSITE—[www.dmsa.org.uk](http://www.dmsa.org.uk)

We keep our website up to date with local news and you can use it to contact the Association about any matters which are concerning you. We are always interested in hearing from local residents.