



**October**

# **NEWSLETTER**

**2014**

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

**Armistice Day Service Sunday 9 November**  
**War Memorial, The Green at 1 pm**

Those wishing to join the procession should meet at East Barnton Avenue at 12.30 pm.  
The procession will leave at 12.45 pm to arrive at The Green at 1 pm.  
The officiating minister is Rev. Russell Barr.

**Christmas Lights Switch-on Friday 5 December**  
**Holy Cross Church Hall Quality Street**

The DMSA are planning to organise a switch- on event as in previous years but we are awaiting confirmation from the Council that they will support it on the planned date.  
Watch our Notice Board and Website for details.

## **DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION.**

The Association was recently asked by Police Scotland if we could help to make local residents aware of a high incidence of attempted and actual house break-ins in the area, with particular concern that many involved entry through garages which had not been properly secured. We were naturally very pleased to be able to assist the police and we posted the information on our notice board and website. However, in addition, for the first time, we decided also to use direct email communication to those members for whom we had an email address. In a similar way we followed up with direct communication on the outcome of a meeting with the police where the problems had been discussed and an action plan was agreed. The feedback we received from members of the Association on the use of direct emailing was extremely positive and so we then decided to use direct emailing to send information on other topics, and, for example, we circulated our comments on the public consultation on the proposed 20mph zone for our area to assist members who may have wanted to make their own submission. For the present we will only use direct communication on important issues. If you are a member and would like to take advantage of direct email communications from the Association on important issues all you have to do is ensure that Charlotte has your email address and you will be added to our circulation list.

If the opportunity for direct communication on important local matters from the Association appeals to you and you are not yet a member, you can avail yourself of the opportunity by joining the Association to give us your support. The minimum membership fee is only £2 per annum. There is a membership form on our website which can be printed and completed. Alternatively send your subscription with your name, address and email address to Charlotte.

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

We welcome comments and suggestions from local residents about matters which concern you. Contact us either through the website [www.dmsa.org.uk](http://www.dmsa.org.uk) or contacting Charlotte our Secretary. Keep up to date with local events/issues throughout the year via our website and also with direct emailings on matters of importance in the community. We also welcome suggestions & comments with regard to the website i.e. if is not up to date or there are items/links/addresses/events which you feel should be there or even if you just wish to say you are happy with it!

## **FRIENDS OF DAVIDSON'S MAINS PARK**

During the summer months much time and effort has been devoted to the removal of invasive non-native Himalayan Balsam plants. Although a small triangular area (between two paths) had been treated with chemicals, several plants had been missed. In order to ensure a thorough clearance the remaining plants and the inevitable regrowth required eighteen additional hours work for removal by hand by a member of the Friends Committee. An untreated new area of growth close to the school was cleared due to welcome help from some Royal High School pupils. For a period of time (as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme) a pupil from RHS undertook litter clearance in the denser areas of the park. A few local residents helped cut small patches in the grass and wildflower seeds have now been sown. Weed-free areas have been created around some of the new trees. Notices will be posted on the park boards as other opportunities arise for such practical voluntary work. If you wish to receive advance knowledge of such requests (without obligation) do get in touch. Contact details offered will be held in confidence. Contact details are Eunice Smith, Chairperson, 336 2013. email: dmainspark2013@btinternet.com

## **MORE NEWS ON DAVIDSON'S MAINS PARK**

We mentioned the need for improvements to the entrance to the park in our April newsletter, with complaints being made about the mess at the roundabout regarding sunken kerb stones, the uneven footpath surface and the grass surface being badly damaged and rutted by vehicle over-runs, particularly in wet conditions. Since then we were delighted to report in May that the Almond Neighbourhood Partnership had approved a project to improve the appearance of the roundabout and reduce the risk of damage to the kerb and surface of the roundabout from motor vehicles. The project is currently at the design stage and the proposal is to reduce the diameter of the roundabout to allow widening of the road carriageway. This will permit vehicles to be parked in an appropriate manner around the perimeter of the roundabout while providing room for moving vehicles to pass by without transgressing onto the kerbs and grassed surface as occurs at present. The project will include the re-laying of the kerb stones and re-surfacing of the pavement and in general will much improve the general appearance at an important location. It remains on schedule for completion by early 2015.

The news is not so positive about the other project which was in hand to provide additional parking at the entrance to the park, with a proposal to create about twelve additional parking places inside the park entrance adjacent to the track giving access to the Scottish Gas Networks Governor Station. This project had many positives to commend it but it has transpired on close assessment that the local Environment Manager has genuine concerns about the inadequate degree of separation between moving vehicles in park and other park users, especially younger children. We accept that these are legitimate concerns but the problem of insufficient parking availability remains, with all the negative effects on local residents, and we hope that a solution to the problem can still be found.

## **NEW PATHWAY FROM FERRY ROAD BRIDGE TO SILVERKNOWES ROAD EAST**

The committee has been given advance sight of the draft plans for the new pedestrian pathway to link the footsteps on the Ferry Road side of the former railway bridge with the bus stops on either side of Silverknowes Road East. It will be remembered that this project was approved by the Almond Neighbourhood Partnership in May for completion in the current financial year. The scope of the project has been extended to include a new direct pedestrian access to the cycle path and includes replacement of the steps at the bridge which are in poor condition and the construction of new steps to provide the link to the cycle path. This extension of the project is very much welcomed because it has always been a source of complaint that there was no proper access to the cycle path from the east end of Main Street. The project is scheduled for completion in early 2015 and it is good news that there will be only one more winter for local residents to have to trudge across the wet and muddy grass between the bridge and Silverknowes Road East.

## **BREAK-INS AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

It is very disappointing to have to return to the problem of minor crime and anti-social behaviour in our newsletter. These problems tend to go in cycles and after a period of relative calm, over the past few months there has been a significant underlying problem. It recently escalated to a level which is quite unacceptable. The problems included attempted and actual break-ins to properties and during September there was a notable pattern of entry to garages, which in some instances resulted in entry being obtained to adjoining properties. The problem was most prevalent in Silverknowes but extended to our whole area and beyond, with a significant problem also in the Barnton Avenue area. There has also been a problem over the summer with motor bike thefts by youths who use the cycle paths and other locations in the area for so-called joy riding and are a serious risk to other users of the paths. As if this was not bad enough residents in Silverknowes have had to cope with an underlying problem of low level anti-social behaviour such as stones being thrown at windows. It is the sort of problem which is difficult to counter but can make lives a misery for the victims. There is little doubt that the local police resources appear to have been stretched to cope with these problems at a time when they have been introducing organisational changes following the formation of Police Scotland. In our meetings they assure us they have been giving priority to the local problems and that a number of arrests have been made. More recently in September, in response to a spike in the numbers of break-ins, the police introduced a specific action plan for the area. It included a step-up in joint working with the Drylaw Police, an increase in both foot and vehicle patrols, the use of plain clothes officers, and the deployment of CCTV. We hope the operation is a success but we would stress how important it is for all crime to be reported so that the police are always aware of the full extent of the problem.

## **LOCAL 20 MPH LIMIT**

The widely advertised public consultation on proposed 20 mph limits for the city closed on 17th October. Residents will know that the Association had campaigned for two or three years for 20 mph speed limits in our area and so we are fully supportive of the Council's policy decision to introduce them after public consultation. The plans for our area are for the whole of Davidson's Mains and Silverknowes to be designated as a 20 mph zone with the exception of Cramond Road South, Lauriston Farm Road, the south end of Quality Street and the east end of Main Street. In our submission to the Council we gave clear reasons for opposing each of the exemptions and we believe the 20 limit should apply to all the roads in our area. It is clear from the communications we have received from residents that the majority agree with us and it is likely that opinion in our area is in line with a recent public opinion survey which showed that 65 % of the population supported reduced speed limits and only a small minority of about 5% were opposed to them. The next step is for a report to be put to the Council on the outcome of the public consultation. It will make any appropriate recommendations for changes to the proposals before approval is given for a progressive roll out of 20 mph zones across the city from 2015.

## **NEW NOTICE BOARD**

Observant residents will have noticed that the Association now has a brand new notice board at our site at the " Royal Bank Corner ". The previous one had served us well over many long years but was starting to show its age with the rubber seals starting to deteriorate and there were many occasions last winter when our blurred notices could barely be read because they were so wet. The new notice board will clearly be weather proof but also has the advantage that it is bigger and has space for up to twelve standard A4 sized notices. The former notice board could take only nine notices which meant we were short of space to post notices from community organisations at busy times, such as around the festive season. We should remind local community groups that we are very pleased to make the board available for non-commercial notices. A new notice board was an essential requirement for us to operate effectively, almost irrespective of the cost, but the Association was delighted to receive a 50% grant towards the cost from the Almond Neighbourhood Partnership in recognition of the important role we play on behalf of the Partnership and the Council in engaging with local residents on community affairs. Their donation was much appreciated.

## **PARKING PROBLEMS CORBIEHILL ROAD/CRESCENT/VIVIAN TERRACE**

The Association continues to get complaints from local residents about inconsiderate parking on Corbiehill Road, Vivian Terrace and Corbiehill Crescent but the situation has moved on since the summer. During May and June the local Roads Manager undertook a survey of the parking situation which involved daily inspections over two or three weeks with visits taking place up to three times a day. This was done to obtain evidence of the problem before statutory parking restrictions could be considered. His recommendation now is that double yellow lines should be introduced on a number of the junctions and corners. It is at these locations that inconsiderate parking currently has the biggest negative effect on traffic movements and it can reasonably be anticipated that these proposals would have strong support from local residents. (A plan with the locations is circulated with this newsletter to residents in the immediate locality). The parking survey results supported a possible case for restrictions to be introduced on one side of the north end of Vivian Terrace and the Management Committee independently believes there is also a case for possible restrictions on Corbiehill Crescent. However we know from our communications with residents there are mixed opinions regarding possible restrictions on sections of these streets and there would certainly be objections leading to delay. We agree with a plan to get on with the statutory process for the introduction of parking prohibition at the road junctions first and to keep the situation under review. This does not preclude consideration being given to further restrictions being considered at a later date if necessary.

## **NEWS SNIPPETS ON OTHER LOCAL PROJECTS**

The projects for improvements to the roundabout at Silverknowes and to re-align the kerb on Barnton Avenue, both of which we have described in earlier newsletters, are still being designed and costed for future consideration. It would be into next year before they could be considered for approval because this year's budget is fully committed on other projects.

## **CAN YOU HELP DELIVER OUR LITERATURE?**

The management committee are extremely appreciative of the help we get from many residents for delivery of our newsletter and occasional local flyers but sometimes due to holidays or illness we need to have other deliverers, especially when flyers have to be distributed urgently as sometimes happens. If you would be prepared to help out, either regularly or on an occasional basis, we would be very pleased to hear from you and would ask you to get in touch with Charlotte to give her your contact details.

## **BECOME A COMMITTEE MEMBER**

We are a relatively small group on the Management Committee and we could do with the help of one or two new members. Many residents tell us that they really appreciate the work that we do for the local community but we find it difficult to attract residents to the committee who are willing to give a little of their own time. The duties are not onerous and it is an opportunity to get involved in decisions which can make a difference to the area. All that is required is an interest in the local area, the ability to get on with people, and a bit of common sense. If anyone is interested please get in touch with Charlotte.

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Chairperson:	Mr. Rod Alexander	336 3856
Vice-Chairperson:	Mrs. Aileen Venables	476 2085
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>		

Mr. P. Anderson, Ms. M. R. Caden Ms. J. Chapman Mrs. S. Edgar  
Mr. B. Flanagan Mr. Henry Lennox