

November **NEWSLETTER** 2011

PREPARING FOR WINTER

Last year we experienced the worst winter weather for about 50 years and we all have different experiences about how difficult things were, especially for the elderly and those needing specialist support. In response, and to their credit, the Council have undertaken a complete review of their severe weather plans and a whole range of improvements are to be introduced following consultations in public meetings and with residents groups.

These improvements are all listed on the Councils Website at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/winterweather which provides lots of useful information about the new plans. However from a local perspective and based on the complaints received by the Association these are a few of the most important.

- Busy local footpaths will now be included in priority gritting routes. This includes Main Street, Corbiehill Road (for the school) and Quality Street (for the Health Centre.)
- Salt bin locations have been reviewed and salt stocks have been tripled to allow more frequent replenishment.
- Local bases with salt and snow clearing equipment will be used to speed up response times, and if an emergency is declared more Council staff will be re-deployed on to snow clearing.

We are assisting the Council by distributing their leaflet "Be Prepared For Winter " which provides sound basic advice on how individual residents can plan ahead for any repeat of severe weather.

One very important message that we all need to grasp is that there is no law stopping residents from clearing snow and ice from pavements and there is no liability arising if this is done sensibly . If we are fit and able we can each help by clearing the footpaths outside our own house and also by trying to help elderly neighbours.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY—13 NOVEMBER 2011

A Service of Remembrance will take place as usual at 1 pm at the War Memorial at The Green. The officiating minister this year is Rev. D. Kornahrens from Holy Cross Episcopal Church. The attendance at this service has increased over the years since the War Memorial was erected and the DMSA would respectfully commend it to you.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH—ON

Friday 2 December 2011

6 –7 pm at Entrance to the Park

Performance by RHS School Choir in aid of their chosen charity.

Seasonal Wine and Nibbles served courtesy of the Association in Holy Cross Church Hall. Notices will be placed on the Notice Board and around the area nearer the time.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Almond Community Safety Forum is a group involving representatives from the police, the environmental wardens, local council support staff, and local community groups who meet every few weeks to discuss public order and community safety issues across Almond. The group decides which problems merit priority attention being given to them, generally resulting in action by the police.

One local issue which has been a serious problem for some time is the amount of delinquent and anti-social behaviour perpetrated by groups of youths in and around Davidson's Mains, so much so that since mid 2010 this problem has remained the number one priority for police attention. Over that period much of the trouble has been around Tesco but there have also been problems from time to time in the grounds of Lauriston Castle, at Barnton Park Tennis Club, on the former railway line, on Main Street, particularly around Mackenzies and in many parts of Silverknowes.

The police are aware of many of the trouble makers, who it is fair to say tend to come from outwith the local area, but much of the behaviour is challenging and intimidating without necessarily being illegal and this makes it very difficult to counter. The general approach of the police is to use high profile patrols around the times that trouble tends to occur and they have had some success. For example, eight youths have recently been charged with public order offences in Tesco. Last year temporary CCTV cameras were successfully deployed at Silverknowes Road Bridge to counter anti-social behaviour on the railway path and consideration is currently being given to their temporary use at the east end of Main Street.

Always remember that if residents have any concerns about personal or community safety issues it is very important that they contact the police. When troublemakers break the law the police will follow it up.

ALMOND LOCAL COMMUNITY PLAN 2011-2014

Work on the new Community Plan for Almond has just been completed and copies will soon be available in the Blackhall library. The plan covers Davidson's Mains, Silverknowes, Barnton and Cramond, Queensferry, Kirkliston, Newbridge, and Ratho Station. It is based on what local residents have said is important to the area following a series of public consultations and engagement meetings in 2010 and also on the results of annual opinion surveys conducted by the Council. Some of the objectives in the plan are rather conceptual and broad brush so the DMSA will be working with the Partnership to agree some specific actions and targets appropriate for our immediate locality and which can be clearly identified as being measurable and achievable. We would be very pleased to hear from residents about any ideas they may have.

Resident's survey's in Edinburgh always indicate that more people in Almond think it is a good place to live than those in any other part of the city and one important aspect of the high satisfaction rating is the easy access which we enjoy to local parks and green spaces. Using this as an example of local involvement, a key target in the plan is to improve the environment with an objective to improve green spaces by working with Friends of Parks and Community Groups. We have one of the best parks in the city in Davidson's Mains and we will be working to ensure that the Partnership commits to supporting the local Friends Group in the hard work that they do to maintain and improve the green space and the facilities.

TESCO NEWS

1. Tesco have been troubled with anti-social behaviour around and within the store, despite introducing a number of security measures, and liaison with the Community Police. There has been some recent improvement, which may be maintained, as winter inhibits the attraction of the area for gatherings of potentially disaffected youths.
2. The "Tesco Path" is being maintained by the company, but replacement of the vandalised litter bin at the exit from the car park has been delayed pending settlement of an insurance claim.
3. Tesco have again kindly agreed to donate refreshments in the Church Hall for the revival of attenders at the Christmas Light-up on Friday 2nd December. The DMSA very much welcomes their generous support
4. The DMSA continue to liaise with Tesco on matters of mutual concern. The Manager is very supportive of the work of the Association.

LICENSING

Over the summer residents living beside or near Mackenzies Public House in Main Street have been disturbed by the noise of patrons in the beer garden/car park. Local residents and members of the Association have twice met with the licensee, property owner and legal representative who have admitted there is a problem and state they are trying to solve it. Due to the change in the weather and dark evenings this particular problem is easing but there is still anti-social behaviour when patrons leave the premises. The Association would like to hear from residents affected by anti-social behaviour and who have suffered vandalism to property. It is vital that the police are informed and are notified of incidents so they have a record of disturbances should there be a need to take further action against the premises. While most of the residential complaints have been in connection with these premises there have also been incidents at The Olde Inn when Police have been called and attended. Residents want patrons of the local public houses to be responsible members of the community.

MEMBERSHIP—WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

The Management Committee of the Association is making the usual annual plea for all local residents to support our work by renewing their membership or by joining for the first time.

The committee are all volunteers who gladly give their time to support the local area but we do need members to give us the credibility and justification to claim to be supporting the interests of local residents.

Year on year the numbers of members can vary but on average about 10 % of local households are represented through membership and it would be great if that proportion could be increased.

Please remember that the Association is the only organisation which represents the interests of all local residents on Council related issues. This includes all Licensing and Planning matters and all Council services. We sit on the Almond Neighbourhood Partnership and its sub-groups and maintain close contacts with the West Neighbourhood Manager, local Councillors and the Police.

The cost of membership is kept very low and membership is available for as little as £1 per household.

If you are not a current member we would ask you to join the Association and give us your much valued support. If you would prefer not to cut the form from the Newsletter this can be downloaded from the website. Click on "Membership Form" on the Home page. Alternatively collection of your subscription can be arranged if you contact our Secretary.

We genuinely believe we make a difference but it is essential we have your support.

DAVIDSON'S MAINS & SILVERKNOWES ASSOCIATION

Subscriptions to Charlotte Cowe, Secretary, 151 Main Street, Davidson's Mains, Edinburgh, EH4 5AQ

NAME(S):.....

ADDRESS.....

POSTCODE..... EMAIL.....

PHONE.....

Would you be willing to deliver newsletters on an occasional basis? yes/no

Membership for 2011-2012 (minimum £1 per household) £1/ £2 / £5 / £10

FRIENDS OF DAVIDSON'S MAINS PARK

All interested persons are welcome to attend the AGM of the 'Friends of the Park' group to hear about the park improvements to date. The meeting will be held in The Royal High School at 7.30pm on 23 November. A Woodland Management Plan has now been agreed and a decision on funding is expected in early December. There has already been some preliminary tree management. The excessive spread of Himalayan Balsam (a non-native invasive species) is a concern as the plants inhibit the growth of natural vegetation including wild flowers. It is too late to tackle the growth this year but next year voluntary help may be sought from the community. Another concern is the number of car owners who do not respect either the law, park regulations or the needs of other visitors to the park and further restrictions may have to be put into place.

Contacts: Kristina Woolnough—kristina.woolnough@gmail.com; Eunice Smith—evnike@supanet.com

SAY "NO" TO LITTER

Extra bins have been provided for the disposal and regular collection of litter in this area and several local retail outlets have co-operated with a number of anti-litter initiatives. Pupils from the local schools have also been involved in "Litter-Pick" events. These efforts have been supported by Council Environmental Wardens and notices are on display reminding members of the public that persons seen to be dropping litter can be subject to a fine of £50.

www.dmsa.org.uk

Visit our website www.dmsa.org.uk to find information about local events, useful addresses, links to other organisations and more mundane matters like reports and newsletter. If you have events coming up contact the secretary to have them to be advertised on the website. Comments and suggestions are always welcome.

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: charlotte@dmains.co.uk	
Dr. J. Butt	Ms. M. R. Caden	Mrs. E. Edgar	Ms. J. Chapman
Mrs. P. McCulloch	Ms. H. Macnaughton	Mrs. E. Smith	Mrs. A. Venables