

April 2013

# Community Council Elections

Preparations are underway for the elections and all of Edinburgh's 42 community councils will take part.

## Key dates to remember are:

<b>Monday 2 Sept</b>	Start of nomination period
<b>Monday 23 Sept</b>	End of registration period
<b>Thursday 24 Oct</b>	Polling Day (if required)

The Council will administer the community council elections and will work with community councils to develop a citywide publicity campaign.

Previous campaigns have included leaflets, flyers, posters, information in libraries, the press, local media, websites, newsletters and Council publications.

The elections offer a great opportunity to highlight some of the achievements and activities that community councils have been involved in.

If you have any materials or ideas for publicity please forward these to Eileen Hewitt on 469 3838 or email [Eileen.hewitt@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:Eileen.hewitt@edinburgh.gov.uk).



# Edinburgh Community Council News

## Review of Community Council Scheme

The Review aims to provide a modernised framework for CCs to operate with clear and improved guidance. On 13 December 2013, the Council authorised the Review of the Scheme and comments were invited on all aspects of the Scheme including membership, enforcement of the Code of Conduct, arrangements for special meetings, timing of the AGM and accountability.

Thanks to everyone who has submitted comments on the Review of the Scheme. A report on the outcome of the first period of consultation will be submitted to a Special Meeting of the Council on 2 May and community councils will be kept informed of developments.

## Influencing the Council

**Tuesday 30 April, 6.30pm for 7.00 pm start  
European Room, City Chambers**

Do you know how Council decisions are made? Have you heard about the new Petitions Committee? This session aims to give community representatives an overview of the Council's new governance arrangements, raise awareness of how to influence the Council and get your voice heard.

Councillor Maureen Child, Convener of the Communities and Neighbourhood Committee, will open the meeting and there will be opportunities for discussion with a panel of Council officers and elected members.

To register, please contact Eileen Hewitt on 469 3838 or [Eileen.hewitt@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:Eileen.hewitt@edinburgh.gov.uk).

## Morningside's experience with the Pre-Application (PAC) Consultation process



Towards the end of 2011, Morningside CC found itself, along with Craiglockhart and Merchiston CCs, in the middle of one of Edinburgh's most controversial planning cases, the development of the Napier University site at Craighouse. This sensitive site with several Grade A listed buildings is protected by a number of local and national policies.

The developers arranged public consultation events which were well attended and generated a good deal of opposition. A local group was founded in opposition to the development, called the Friends of Craighouse Grounds and Woods (FoC). They ran an extremely active campaign and researched every aspect of the proposal. They organised a petition that attracted several thousand signatures, which, they argued, gave them the right to be considered as the voice of the local community.

In the initial stages of the PAC, we maintained neutrality. Both the developer and FoC were making statements that we could not verify and were soon at loggerheads. In March we declared our opposition, though we did not actively campaign against. In October the plans were modified, but not, we felt, far enough to be acceptable to those in opposition. The application, based on these modified plans, was submitted in November.

We were anxious to represent the views of local residents and reluctant to assume that the FoC petition was a sufficient mandate to oppose the application.

We held a public meeting, at which almost all who spoke were bitterly opposed. But presumably those who were indifferent would not have turned out. We hand-delivered a questionnaire to around 3,500 households. Just over 200 were returned, the great majority of which were strongly opposed. But we had an uneasy suspicion that those unreturned represented a large silent majority who actually didn't much care. Without interviewing every householder, which would be completely beyond our resources, we had to accept what we were being told by those who did take the trouble to express their views. Therefore at our meeting in December CC Members voted to submit an objection.

During 2012 we had to spend more and more time on Craighouse, attending meetings, studying reports and trying to comprehend all the arguments. Craighouse was dominating our monthly meetings and impacting on our ability to deal with a wide range of other CC matters, which irritated us all. Our attempt at local consultation cost us quite a bit in both money and personal time, neither of which is in plentiful supply within a CC. Morningside CC's experience with the PAC process has raised important issues around the level of engagement required and the support to enable CCs to participate. Morningside CC welcomes the views of other CCs.

[chair@morningside.org.uk](mailto:chair@morningside.org.uk)

### Edinburgh Assoc of Community Councils

At a recent EACC Question Time Meeting, Council Leader, Andrew Burns, and Sue Bruce, Chief Executive, met with community councillors from across the city. The meeting sparked some lively debate on planning, licensing and environmental issues. A number of concerns were raised regarding community councils' involvement in planning and it was agreed to take this forward by organising a separate meeting. The Special Planning Meeting will take place on **Thursday 16 May at 6 pm in the City Chambers** and will also be an opportunity for Edinburgh CCs to discuss the draft Planning Concordat. A record of the [Question Time Meeting](#) is available on the EACC website at [www.edinburghcommunitycouncils.org](http://www.edinburghcommunitycouncils.org).

## Scottish Civic Trust Awards



Marchmont & Sciennes Community Council has nominated Brian Harris for a My Place Champion Award. Brian, a pensioner in his mid-eighties and

former community council member, was responsible for the identification of a strip of disused ground in Marchmont known as the 'Green Banana' due to its shape. Although other people help from time to time, Brian, has made himself responsible for clearing, de-littering, and planting the area, trimming the grass, pruning where necessary, removing dog dirt, spreading compost, and overseeing the whole enterprise

## £EITH DECIDES

Leith Neighbourhood Partnership (NP) made the decision to give the decision-making power on Community Grants over to the community in 2010. Six community councillors from 3 community councils volunteered to form the main part of a Steering Group, planning the events, deciding on the scoring system, eligibility for participation, assessing applications and much, much more. At the time there were no similar projects in Scotland from which to learn, but this was an opportunity to create something new for the Leith NP area.

Their work has not gone unrecognised. £eith decides has been used as a case study for the first Scottish Participatory Budgeting Conference and for research for the Welsh Government.

The £eith decides programme was a finalist for an Association of Public Service Excellence award in the category of Best Local Democracy Initiative in 2012. It has also been nominated for a prestigious MJ Award for Democratic Services to be decided in June. The community councillors are now arranging to meet to plan the fourth £eith decides programme for 2013-14. Watch this space.

## Neighbourhood Partnership Review

As part of the Council governance review, it was agreed to undertake a review to strengthen and develop the role of NPs in delivering better outcomes for communities. The scope of the review extends to:

- developing and strengthening current practice
- enhancing community participation
- strengthening the strategic influence of NPs

Community councillors and other stakeholders were invited to put forward their views in workshops and an online survey. Findings will be reported to the Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee on Tuesday 7 May 2013.

## Community Investment in Youth

Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council is keen to support young people and invest in issues and initiatives important to them. The community council has youth representatives from a local school on its committee and members have been supportive of an initiative to set up Blackhall Athletic Football Club.

The newly formed Blackhall Athletic Football Club is a big hit with young people of all ages and abilities. Lucas Arena Terry, 12 from Craigleith said, 'Playing for Blackhall Athletic has given me more confidence in my game, made me feel part of a team, and our coaches are helping me improve my game.'



Dave Pickering

## Annual Review of Planning Guidance

Significant progress has been made towards a new, user-friendly suite of planning guidance.

In December 2012, the following three consolidated guidelines were finalised and are now available along with other planning guidance at [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/planningguidelines](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/planningguidelines)

### Guidance for Householders

### Guidance for Businesses

### Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas guidance

The Guidance for Businesses includes text approved in February 2013, which requires that a change of use from a residential property to a short stay commercial leisure apartment or 'party flat' may require planning permission depending on the size of the property, the character of the area and the numbers involved. The guidance also says that the Council is unlikely to grant planning permission in respect of flats where the potential adverse impact on neighbours is greatest. The amended guidance will be reviewed in 6 months time.

The next stage in the consolidation of guidance will take place in May 2013, when the Edinburgh Design Guidance is due to be approved in final form.

## Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics

Edinburgh community councils were one of the first user groups to test out the updated Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (SNS) and Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) websites.

Scottish Government officials provided a step by step guide to using SNS and SIMD for gathering information on neighbourhoods including demography, deprivation and education. The presentations are available on the Scottish Government website at:

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/sns/SNSEve/SNSPres1mar2013](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/sns/SNSEve/SNSPres1mar2013)

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/sns/SNSEve/SIMD1Mar13](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/sns/SNSEve/SIMD1Mar13)

## Local Development Plan – A further chance to comment

The Proposed Local Development Plan will be published on 1 May and a six week period for representations will run from **1 May - 14 June**.

All those submitting responses to the Main Issues Report and others on the Planning mailing list will be notified about this by 1 May. The Planning Service will also be notifying people who live close to new proposal sites by letter.

All documents will be published online at [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/localdevelopmentplan](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/localdevelopmentplan). Drop-in sessions to help the public understand the Proposed Local Development Plan and how they can make representations, if they wish, will include:

- South East Edinburgh, Faith Mission Hall, Gilmerton on 9 May, 4-7pm
- West Edinburgh, Drumbrae Library Hub on 15 May, 4-7pm
- General Session, Urban Room, Waverley Court on 16 May, 4-7pm

Copies of the LDP and supporting documents will be sent to community Councils and groups and placed in public libraries and the Council's Planning Reception. If community councils would like more than one copy of the Proposed Plan to be sent out please contact Irene Beautyman, [Irene.beautyman@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:Irene.beautyman@edinburgh.gov.uk)

## EdinTravel

The [EdinTravel interactive map](#) has lots of useful transport information including [Roadworks updates and event-related traffic restrictions](#). Follow [EdinTravel](#) on Twitter for live updates on traffic and travel across the City.

Please send articles for the next Newsletter to:

Community Council Liaison Officer, Services for Communities, Drumbrae Library Hub, 81 Drumbrae Drive, EDINBURGH EH7 4EF Tel 469 3838  
[Community.councils@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:Community.councils@edinburgh.gov.uk)

