



PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the 298th meeting held on 30th April 2012 in Portobello Baptist Church Hall

Present: Sandra Blake, Archie Burns, Celia Butterworth, Diana Cairns, Dawson Currie, Maria Devoy, Robert Gatliff (Joppa Tennis Courts Club), Caroline Hosking, Nelson Johnstone, Ben McLeish (Gilberstoun Residents), Joe Madden (Portobello Open Door), Lawrence Marshall (Portobello Older People's Project), Brenda Molony (*Portobello Reporter*), Eva Schonveld (PEDAL), David Scott (Portobello Community Centre), John Stewart (PAS), Nick Stroud, Ros Sutherland (PPAG), Leon Thompson, Anne Ward (PCATS), Sean Watters (Towerbank Parents Council), Frances Wraith (Brightons & Rosefield Residents).

Apologies: Tom Ballantine, Kenny MacAskill MSP, Andrew Patterson (Portobello Council of Churches), Katie Quinn (CEC).

In attendance: Cllr Mike Bridgman, Cllr Maureen Child, Sheila Gilmore MP, Cllr Stephen Hawkins, Barry Mercer (Safer Neighbourhood Team), and ten members of the public.

298.1 Chair's welcome

John Stewart opened the meeting.

298.2 Police report

Barry Mercer summarised the main points of the monthly police report circulated by email. There were 39 reported crimes in our area in April, an increase of one over the previous month, mostly involving vandalism and theft; there had been a decrease in house-breakings, with the police having apprehended some of the culprits. Through Operation Divide the police offer key advice to cyclists to protect their bikes or to help retrieve them if they are stolen. Funding had been obtained to help improve lighting and window security in the Coillesdenes.

Nelson Johnstone thanked the police for initiating the improvements in the Coillesdenes. Robert Gatliff asked if the scheme to mark bikes with security information could be provided in Portobello; Barry Mercer agreed to find out.

* **Action: Barry Mercer to see if bike-marking service could be provided in Portobello.**

(The full police report is appended to these minutes.)

298.3 Environmental update

No East Team representatives were available to attend the meeting, but Katie Quinn had previously circulated a report by email. A metal bench would be installed at the bus stops near the Town Hall in early May. New fixings for the recycling bins in Windsor Place would be installed in early May, and local business users consulted, to try and keep the footway clear. The City Council team responsible for the city's toilets had refused to consider year-round opening for the toilets at Promenade/Pipe Street. A new location for the recycling bins on the High Street at Bridge Street would be arranged in May or June. A meeting to discuss the new signage for the Promenade was being arranged.

James Hunter also provided a report by email, looking comprehensively at the Beach and Promenade. He summarised the work undertaken through the Neighbourhood Pride initiative and the plans for regular cleaning. He outlined the Team's plans for monitoring the profile of the beach, encouraging recycling, and improving the 'gazebo area' at the eastern end of the Promenade.

The meeting expressed appreciation for all the improvements the Team had made or was planning in our area.

298.4 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Caroline Hosking pointed out that the recycling bins mentioned in item 297.3 were not “occasionally” but always blocking the pavement. Archie Burns indicated that he was referring to all Portobello’s churches in item 297.10b, not just the Old Parish. With these corrections the minutes of the March meeting were accepted: proposed by Dawson Currie, seconded by Anne Ward.

298.5 Matters arising

298.5a Bench at Town Hall bus stops (297.3). The East Team had arranged for this to be reinstated, but a metal one rather than the original wooden one.

298.5b ‘Gazebo area’ at eastern end of Promenade (297.3). James Hunter reported by email that the Neighbourhood Partnership’s Environment Forum had selected this area for an improvement project and provisionally allocated £24k to it, thought it would be reviewing the initial designs and costings in June.

298.5c Recycling bins at Bridge Street and Windsor Place (297.3). In hand (see item 298.3).

298.5d The Beach (297.3). James Hunter reported by email that the beach profile had been reshaped by recent storms, which had improved it. Further monitoring was to be carried out.

298.5e Planting in Rosefield Park (297.5d). Peter McColl had submitted a written report on this topic to the Neighbourhood Partnership as requested, but didn’t know if this had been considered at the meeting. He agreed to find out.

- * **Action: Peter McColl to find out if the Neighbourhood Partnership discussed the planting in Rosefield Park.**

298.5f Bellfield Street telephone kiosk (297.5e). John Stewart had arranged adoption of the kiosk, as requested. He reported that BT had removed the telephone equipment and that Steve Wheatley had put up a notice explaining the plan and notifying the location of the nearest telephone boxes (at the Town Hall). Steve had also applied for planning permission for the kiosk’s new role.

298.5g Promenade signage (297.5f). John Stewart reported that Andy Matheson would be arranging a meeting in the coming week, and he agreed to coordinate this for Sandra Blake, Archie Burns and Brenda Molony, who would attend on the Community Council’s behalf. Andy Matheson had been in touch with British Waterways, but they didn’t have any relevant advice.

- * **Action: John Stewart to circulate details of the signage meeting to those involved.**

298.5h Hustings for local election (297.5j). This had taken place, and Sandra Blake, Diana Cairns, John Stewart and Nick Stroud were thanked for arranging it.

298.5i Sponsorship of local rugby club (297.5k). Leon Thompson had sent the cheque as requested.

298.5j Community survey (297.7). Sean Watters would be producing an article for the *Portobello Reporter*. He, Sandra Blake and Ros Sutherland had met to discuss the next steps and would be meeting again to finalise plans. The prize-winner had been chosen and informed.

298.5k Changes to public entertainment licensing (297.8). Brenda Molony had submitted our response as requested. It was believed that the City Council was consulting further, and that the issue would return to its Regulatory Committee after the forthcoming election.

298.5l Annie & Belle Cafe (297.9c). Maureen Child reported that she had spoken to the chair of the Local Review Body and gained the impression that the Community Council’s letter had had a bearing on the decision, which might have been different if the strength of local feeling in favour of the Cafe had been known, though she observed that the other members of the Review Body had been guided by the Council’s planning policy. It was agreed that there was no need to have this as a future agenda item.

298.5m Local spring-cleaning events (297.9g). Maureen Child had passed on information as requested.

298.6 Noise from football pitches at Westbank Street

Robert Gatliff reported that neighbours in the area of the Power League soccer pitches in Westbank Street were being affected by excessive noise from footballs striking the surrounding wooden walls and from the social club. Stephen Hawkins suggested that their licence could be reviewed if there were persistent

problems. Maureen Child thought that some extra noise had been created during the site's recent refurbishment which should now have subsided, but if there were a continuing problem the City Council's Noise Service could be asked to investigate (email asknoise@edinburgh.gov.uk, tel 529 3030). It would also be helpful to write to the facility's manager to ask if he was aware of the problem.

- * **Action: Nick Stroud to write to Power League management asking about noise problems.**

298.7 Agree Agenda and AOB

Several items were noted.

298.8 Reports

298.8a Treasurer: Leon Thompson reported outgoings of hall rent (£60, for October 2011–March 2012), Christmas meeting expenses (£22.90), the donation to Portobello Rugby Club for junior kits (£50), insurance (£199.48 for public liability, interpretation boards and K6 telephone kiosk) and fee for planning application for 'phone box (£80), leaving £1,608.55 in the account. Bills were expected shortly for reinstating the geology board, the hire of the Town Hall for the hustings, and for the prize for the community survey winner.

298.8b Neighbourhood Partnership: Dawson Currie reported that there hadn't been a meeting recently; the next was due on 13th June at the High School.

298.8c Planning: John Stewart circulated drawings associated with Scottish Power's application to demolish the building at 1 High Street which once held winding gear for the city's cable trams. There was no clear reason for the demolition, and it was agreed that in the absence of a definite plan for new building in the area, and since this is a rare example from Portobello's industrial past, we should object to its demolition. John Stewart agreed to do this, but others can too through the City Council's planning portal, using the reference 12/01219/FUL. Comments and objections are due by 1st May.

(The planning portal is at <https://citydev-portal.edinburgh.gov.uk/idxpa-web/>)

John Stewart had received a letter on behalf of the developers at Ford Kinnaird who have produced new proposals for pedestrian and cyclist access to the site. Diana Cairns and Robert Gatliff agreed to meet the developers to review the plans.

- * **Action: John Stewart to object to partial demolition of 'Portobello Primary Substation'.**
- * **Action: John Stewart to circulate details of the Fort Kinnaird meeting to those involved.**

298.8d Signs and Plaques: Celia Butterworth reported that the Geology Board was holding up well after its restoration, and that restorative work on the Seashore Board at Eastfield would be undertaken when the weather was good enough.

298.8e Community Centre: David Scott reported that the Centre would be holding its AGM the next day.

298.8f Joppa Tennis Courts: Robert Gatliff reported that the clubhouse had been restored and was to be painted. The Club had held a successful open day the previous weekend and was all set for the new season. He hoped it would be possible to improve the signage to the courts, ideally with a new 'fingerpost' or from an existing one. Celia Butterworth agreed to find out about the current status and maintenance of Portobello's fingerposts. Robert agreed to find someone to write an article for the *Portobello Reporter*.

- * **Action: Celia Butterworth to investigate the condition and status of Portobello's fingerposts.**
- * **Action: Robert Gatliff to provide Brenda Molony with a contact to write an article about the tennis club for the next edition of the *Portobello Reporter*.**

298.8g Councillors

Stephen Hawkins circulated an 'end-of-term' report, as he would be standing down from the City Council the following Thursday. He drew attention to the hard work done by councillors behind the scenes and offered his best wishes to the three councillors who would be elected on 3rd May. Maureen Child had not circulated a monthly report this month as heavily involved in her campaign to be re-elected. She paid tribute to Stephen Hawkins, and thanked him and Mike Bridgman for coping with the change to the larger ward following the previous election. John Stewart expressed his thanks for Stephen's hard work for the ward over the previous five years; he also thanked Maureen and Mike, and wished them well for the election.

298.9 Any Other Business

298.9a Sir William Y Darling Bequest for good citizenship: Nick Stroud suggested nominating someone for this City of Edinburgh Award, and Maureen Child suggested another possibility. After some discussion it was agreed to nominate the second person on this occasion.

- * **Action: Nick Stroud to submit our nomination for the William Y Darling award.**

298.9b Portobello Golf Course: Ros Sutherland was concerned that Edinburgh Leisure was not committed to sustaining the Golf Course. Maureen Child observed that the Joppa Tennis Courts and Jessfield Bowling Green were run by groups of volunteers and that it might be similarly possible to take on the Golf Course, but it would certainly be preferable for it to remain in Council control. Stephen Hawkins suggested that its future might be more assured if it were adopted as a Jubilee Park as part of this year's Queen's Jubilee celebrations; he had put a motion for adoption to the full Council meeting on 26th April, which would be considered by the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment (TIE) Committee in June. Sheila Gilmore supported this initiative, and commended the work of Craigmillar's new community development trust.

- * **Action: Ros Sutherland to investigate options for community management of golf courses.**
- * **Action: Diana Cairns to write to the City Council requesting that the TIE Committee recommends to Fields in Trust that the Golf Course be adopted as a Jubilee Park.**

298.9c Guest speakers at Community Council meetings: Sean Watters asked if any speakers had been invited to future meetings. John Stewart said that Stephen Hajducki, a principal planner in the City Council with special responsibility for Portobello, had agreed to attend a future meeting.

- * **Action: John Stewart to invite Stephen Hajducki to the June or August meetings.**

298.9d Planning problem for the PEDAL wind turbine proposal: Robert Gatliff referred to that day's message from PEDAL about a break-down in negotiations with Scottish Water over the proposal to locate an urban wind-turbine at the Seafield treatment works. Although Scottish Water is owned by the Scottish Government, equipment in the site is owned and operated under a PPP/PFI initiative by an American company which is insisting on a punitive bond to underwrite the project and possible damage that could result from it. Eva Schonveld summarised the lengths PEDAL has gone to in trying to find a way round the problem, including investigating alternative sites, and was now negotiating for support from the Scottish Government. It was agreed that the Community Council should write to the Scottish Government in support of the wind-turbine project, along the lines suggested by Sheila Gilmore.

- * **Action: Nick Stroud to write to the Scottish Government to ask for its assistance in moving the wind-turbine project forward.**

298.9e Grids in the Figgate Burn: Caroline Hosking referred to previous discussions about the grids placed in the Figgate Burn in Rosefield Park to prevent debris blocking the culverts. There were two routes for the Burn and it wasn't clear what grids were in place or who was responsible for maintaining them and for ensuring the smooth flow of the Burn.

- * **Action: Nick Stroud to ask the East Team for information about the grids in the Figgate Burn.**

298.10 Future meetings

Meetings are held on the final Monday of each month, except July and December, at 7:30pm, in Portobello Baptist Church Hall, 185 Portobello High Street, Edinburgh EH15 1EU.

The next meeting is on 28th May 2012 (299, preceded by the 30th AGM)

Subsequent dates are: 25th June 2012 (300)
27th August 2012 (301; no meeting in July)
24th September 2012 (302)

Portobello Community Council on the Web: <http://www.portobellocc.org/>

The Safer Neighbourhood Team: tel: (0131) 652 4147
email: ADivSNTCraigmillarPortobello@lbp.pnn.police.uk

Portobello/Joppa Beat Update

Crime Update

Crime figures show an increase of 1 with 39 crimes being recorded across the Portobello/Joppa area in April. The majority of these relate to acts of vandalism and thefts. Housebreakings and associated crimes have dropped recently with 7 recorded this month. Recent good work has identified members of a group responsible for numerous local housebreakings. As a result several individuals are either in custody, or subject to bail conditions or curfews restricting their movements. Again we encourage all residents to remain vigilant, report any suspicious persons and ensure their homes and possessions are adequately secured.

Crime prevention advice can be found by visiting the Lothian and Borders Police website at <http://www.lbp.police.uk/> and clicking on the 'Crime Prevention' link, or alternatively you can arrange for a Crime Prevention visit by contacting the Craigmillar SNT team (tel 0131-652-4147).

There were two vehicular accidents in the Portobello/Joppa area this month, with no injuries reported.

Pedal Cycles and Operation Divide

As the weather improves and evenings stretch, many of us make more use of our bicycles for commuting and recreation. Unfortunately, thieves sometimes see this as a money-making opportunity and will steal unsecured bicycles. To help reduce the risk of you becoming a victim of this type of crime, and to assist in identifying your bike if it is stolen, we encourage you to note the following advice:

1. Always secure your bike to an immovable object using a substantial lock.
2. Always lock your bike through the frame.
3. Secure removable parts. Lock both wheels and frame together if possible.
4. Take a photograph of your bike and keep it in a safe place
5. Note the serial number, make and model and any unique features of your bike.

Remember: if you are leaving your bike in the garden it is still important to make sure it is secured so that the opportunist thief cannot 'nip in' and steal it!

After a successful pilot, Operation Divide is now covering the Portobello and Craigmillar areas. This is a dedicated plain-clothes unit tasked with enquiring into all the vandalisms and thefts of pedal cycles in the area. Along with increased enforcement we will be distributing prevention advice to local groups.

British National Party/Scottish Defence League Protest – Meadowbank Retail Park

On Saturday 21st April 2012, a demonstration took place outside the KFC premises at Meadowbank Retail Centre where the BNP and SDL were protesting about the company's policy of using halal chicken in their produce. 20 protestors attended and the protest was peaceful. During the demonstration, a group of 18 United Against Fascism (UAF) activists also attended and held a counter demonstration and again this passed off peacefully.

The BNP/SDL protest at KFC lasted about one hour, then the group attended at MSP Kenny MacAskill's office, which was closed at the time. A peaceful demonstration was held for a further hour before all parties dispersed.

On the Beat

Unfortunately five cars were vandalised overnight on Friday 6th and Saturday 7th of April in Abercorn Terrace. This appears to have been a random incident with no obvious motive and with one person or group responsible for all five cars. To date there are no suspects but enquiries are continuing.

PC Pears, one of the local Safer Neighbourhood Team officers, has carried out numerous joint visits with the local council community warden. Through joint working and better information sharing the police and Council have managed to deal with a number of local antisocial behaviour issues promptly and effectively.

Local Policing/Community Priorities

The policing priorities for the Craigmillar-Portobello area are

1. Tackle and reduce antisocial behaviour in common stairs in the Niddrie House area
2. Tackle and reduce antisocial behaviour and drug abuse in Bingham Way
3. Tackle and reduce antisocial behaviour and vandalism in the Cakemuir area.

Various antisocial behaviour operations are running in the local areas. Our aims are to target the persons responsible for causing antisocial behaviour, report any offences robustly, and provide community reassurance and crime prevention advice. Community engagement is vital to our success and we encourage all members of the public to report any incidents or information. Any information can be passed anonymously to crime stoppers on 0800-555-111 or online at <http://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

We are aware that there are various issues affecting local residents and we are committed to providing a high-quality service to all local areas. If you have any specific issues or concerns you would like to discuss please contact the Portobello/Craigmillar Safer Neighbourhood Team:

Tel: 0131 652 4147 (office)

Tel: 0131 311 3131 (24 hours)

email: ADivSNTCraigmillarPortobello@lbp.pnn.police.uk