

# THE SOUTHSIDE ASSOCIATION

117 Nicolson Street  
Edinburgh  
EH8 9ER

*Founded 1972*

*Scottish Charity No SCO12262*

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## Minutes of meeting held in the South Side Community Centre on Tuesday 8 January 2013, at 7pm

**PRESENT:** Sandra McCormick (Chair), Margaret Bagan, Caroline Barr, Tom Bonallo, Susan Brown, Cllr Steve Burgess, Angus Calder, Colin Christison (Secretary), Jan Fraser, Moira Gibson, Bob Hodgart, Michael Huddleston, Tom King, Kenny McLeod, Ethel Murray, George Pitcher, Molly Ross, Fiona Scott, Jo Scott, Lisa Sibbald, Pamela Spiers, Derek Suttie, Random Switch, Colin Symes, Jennifer Thoms, Ola Uduku, and PC Graham Watt.

### 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Sandra welcomed everyone to the meeting, and wished them a Happy New Year. Apologies for absence were received from Vera Anderson, Sarah Boyack MSP, Linda Femister, May Linton, Carol McHugh, Robert Ross, Keith Smith, Louise Smith, and Marjory Watson.

### 2. Police Report

PC Watt said that crime figures were down slightly in December 2012. More officers were on the streets, and, on 21 December, all Edinburgh officers, including the CID, had been on street patrol. 37 officers, from Chief Inspectors downwards, were on patrol from St Leonard's Police Station.

A 'rave' had taken place in the former *Odeon* cinema in December, with participants gaining entry from Buccleuch Street. The police had ejected them fairly quickly, and no obvious harm had been done. He reported that drugs had been found in a raid on a flat in Pleasance that morning.

Graham said that the present three officers in the area were about to be supplemented by a further three, with another one to join the team in the near future. The next meeting of the Community Safety Priority Group will be on Wednesday 27 February at 2pm in the City Chambers; he requested ideas for local priorities.

Sandra and the members thanked PC Watt for his report.

[ALSO – Edinburgh Local Policing Plan 2013/4. Meeting on 15 January at the Business Centre in the City Chambers, from 7pm – 9pm.]

### 3.1 Guest speaker: Michael Huddleston, *Community Connecting, Places for People Scotland, Care and Support*

Sandra introduced Michael, who explained the scheme run by Places for People Scotland, Care & Support. Community Connecting supports older people (65+) to help increase their self-esteem, and make connections in their local area. Vulnerable people are assessed, an individual care plan is formed, and they are matched to a volunteer who is trained on isolation and dementia. Three or

four hours of support per week are given, and volunteers accompany people to various places, including classes, shops, and leisure facilities. Independence is encouraged and after about four months volunteer support is phased out. The exercise helps extend people's interests as well as reducing dependence on longer-term care packages and reliance on day centres. Small things make a big difference, such as the ability to use public transport. A dedicated volunteer co-ordinator supervises the staff, and arranges training, disclosure, support etc.

After some questions, Sandra and the members thanked Michael for his presentation.

### **3.2 Guest speaker: Angus Calder, Braidwood Bike Skills Park**

Sandra introduced Angus, who attended to have early discussions for the above. A small underused and undervalued piece of woodland next to the Craggs Sports Centre could be used for urban bike skills training, with a beginners section and a hump track. The land is owned by the Council, and once a bike park designer comes up with a plan, which has to be safe but not uninteresting, the idea will move forward, with neighbourhood consultation.

There were numerous questions, including about possible conflicts with the public and dog walkers, funding, involvement of local schools, etc after which Sandra and the members thanked Angus for the information.

## **4. Minutes of meeting held on 6 November 2012, and matters arising**

Agreed; proposed by Fiona Scott and seconded by Jan Fraser.

- 4.1 Item 5.4 – MABLAG (Meadows and Bruntsfield Links Advisory Group). Bob Hodgart had attended the meeting on 7 November, and said that it had been lively, with sharp debate. Local community councils and city council officials had discussed the problems caused by waterlogging, and remedies were considered. Minutes will follow.
- 4.2 Item 8.1 – proposal for the Neighbourhood Road Capital Programme 2013-14 submitted and acknowledged. The SA has asked for the south pavement of Montague Street to be resurfaced.

## **5. Secretary's Report**

- 5.1 Christmas Event. Horrible weather, very cold and wet, but numbers were very high (in excess of 200). Thanks to all who made it such a success - helpers, singers, musicians, centre staff. This year's event is on 3 December. Scott Wilkins, the Community Education Worker at the centre, is keen to widen the scope of the event.
- 5.2 Scottish Water has launched a major consultation and invites comments online by 12 February 2013. See [www.scottishwater.co.uk/yourviewscount](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/yourviewscount).
- 5.3 Pollock Halls to Fountainhall Road/Ratcliffe Terrace cycle improvements: on-street traffic surveys will take place for two weeks starting on 21 January.
- 5.4 Marco Biagi MSP will be guest speaker on Tuesday 5 February.

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

Fiona said that the balance at the end of December was £1289.83.

## **7. Planning and Licensing**

- 7.1 Ref 12/04368/CLP. Live entertainment and as a cinema (Class 11) with ancillary bar, restaurant and coffee shop premises at 7 Clerk St, EH8 9JH. Application is for a certificate of lawfulness.
- 7.2 Ref 12/04584/LBC. Demolition of the fly-tower and single storey queue shelter; Infill of the existing opening in the dividing wall between the auditorium and the fly-tower; single storey ground floor escape corridor cut back to the line of the auditorium and made good; at 7 Clerk Street, EH8 9JH.

There was much discussion about the above planning applications, submitted by Duddingston House Renfield Street Ltd, and the impact of a possible night-club. It was agreed to be cautiously supportive of the applications. There will be a further application for the construction of a residential block (18 flats, 102 bedrooms) for student accommodation on the site of the fly-tower and queue shelter.

## **8. Environmental matters**

- 8.1 The Secretary of the Causey Development Trust had written about a forthcoming portrait photography project, celebrating the people of the Southside and their stories. It is planned to display some images outdoors in the Causey to promote its potential as a community events venue. The project photographer would be happy to attend a future SA meeting to give more details.
- 8.2 Plans to resurface North Meadow Walk were announced in November, and following an initial short consultation, are now being redesigned after major concerns about the possible impact on trees; more information will be made available in due course.
- 8.3 Meadows drainage - there appears to be confusion about the herringbone system of drainage on the 'Events' part of the Meadows, with the Council not being aware that some work was done there in 2003. More information to follow.

## **9. Question and Answer session with the attending Councillor**

Cllr Burgess had participated in the previous discussions. Random Switch said that there were very hazardous potholes in the carriageway at the Nicolson Street/West Richmond Street crossroads, with tripping and wheel-blocking taking place. *Afternote:* Cllr Burgess requested urgent action from the Roads Dept for repairs were made.

## **10. Any other business**

(after Item 3) – George Pitcher said that communities should be at the heart of community planning, and he discussed the role of community councils as well as other groups and organisations in the process. A review of the city's community council scheme is under way – see the Council website. The new administration's approach is to put communities at the fore in developing policies across the city, mainly through Neighbourhood Partnerships, although there was a widespread feeling that

they aren't working in their present format. The Leader of the Council, Andrew Burns, is determined to have a culture change throughout the entire council structure. The 'top down' approach would be replaced with a 'bottom-up' one.

**11. Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 5 February. Guest speaker – Marco Biagi MSP.

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