

**Minutes of meeting held in the South Side Community Centre  
on Tuesday 6 January 2015 at 7pm**

**PRESENT:** Lisa Sibbald (Chair), Tom King (Vice-Chair), Moira Gibson (Minutes Secretary), Hilary McDowell, Tom Bonallo, Ethel Murray, Tim Pogson, May Linton, Jan Fraser, Jo Scott, Maggie Bagan, Bob Hodgart, Kenny McLeod, Dora Lola-Luz, Colin Symes, Derek Suttie, Jez Kempston, David Wood.  
Also present were: Councillor Steve Burgess and PC Ross Stewart from Police Scotland.

**1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

Lisa Sibbald welcomed everyone to the meeting and offered best wishes for a Happy New Year. Apologies for absence were received from Colin Christison, George Pitcher, Linda Femister, Susan Brown, Isobel Leckie, Sarah Boyack MSP, Marco Biagi MSP, Sheila Gilmore MP and David Raine, and Kevin Hawes.

**2. Police Report**

PC Ross Stewart said Police Scotland had received 479 calls from the public during December. 137 crimes were reported with the majority relating to drugs and 50% of these were solved. As in previous months, he emphasised the importance of fitting good locks on properties, particularly main doors, so that drug users cannot gain access to stairwells and basements. These people are not homeless looking for shelter, but seeking covert places in which to use drugs (mainly legal highs). Montague and Rankeillor Streets are particularly vulnerable since they are close to the pharmacy dispensing free clean needles and the Apothecary which sells legal highs, making a perfect triangle for users. As well as locking doors, residents should not 'buzz' in anyone without checking their ID. Residents are advised to dial 101 to alert police to drug use/users, 200 2000 for the Council to collect needles, and 999 if they feel their person or property is threatened.

**3. Guest Speaker**

The guest speaker was Kate George, the artist invited to design the murals at Gifford Park. (For this item, local Gifford Park resident Susan Moore was in attendance). The project is being initiated and co-ordinated by Southside Association member Hilary McDowell. The planning application has been submitted to the Council, with £3,000 funding coming from a Sustrans budget for the new cycleway which is scheduled to open in May, so the project must be completed by then.

Kate is an illustrator and graphic designer who has worked on many mural projects in different parts of Scotland and with different users, eg schools, community centres, shops. She often recruits volunteers to help achieve her vision as projects are completed within one or two days, and various potential sources of volunteers were discussed. In consultation with local people, she completed a colourful local project on shopfronts in Dumbiedykes.

She gave a powerpoint presentation illustrating the different kinds of designs used in various locations, with a range of design styles. Her work uses vibrant colour and takes inspiration from local people, places and activities. The murals are created in longlasting masonry paint and, because local people have been involved in their design and delivery, they are rarely if ever vandalised. Her designs for Gifford Park refer to local shops and products, including cycles and cycling, and were well received. The Chair congratulated Kate on her designs and thanked her for the presentation.

**4. Community Safety Report**

Unfortunately, Kevin was unable to attend the meeting, so his report will be delivered at the February meeting.

## **5. Minutes of Meeting of 4 November and Matters Arising**

5.1 Fuller responses to the questions referred to in Section 4.2 are still awaited.

5.2 Section 4.3 of the Minutes referred to a discussion about the former Odeon cinema. An email in November from the office of Cllr Perry indicated that, following a meeting on 13 November, the Council would:

- arrange an inspection to establish the current state of the building;
- seek a legal opinion on the use of CPO powers;
- meet with Duddingston House Properties (DHP) during w/c 8 December.

Members have not yet received an update on the outcome of these plans although there are unconfirmed rumours that an offer to buy has been made to DHP.

5.3 The Chair confirmed that the grant referred to in Section 6.2 has been approved and the sum of £230 received from Castle Rock Edinvar. This will be used to develop a website and publicity materials for the Southside Association, publicising its activities and attracting new members.

5.4 Hilary gave an update on Section 8.1 and advised that the No Right Turn sign had been turned around to face the traffic, and the bus stop repairs had been completed.

5.5 Referring to Section 11.1 about preparations for the Christmas Party, the Chair congratulated and thanked all those involved in planning, organising and delivering the Christmas Party, particularly Colin Christison. All agreed it was a huge success.

5.5 A correction was made by David Wood to the report about the Causey Development Trust (CDT) in Section 11.2. This should read: The City of Edinburgh Council, in partnership with CDT, and with benefit of a grant from Edinburgh World Heritage, has appointed a Design Team to consult widely and develop a final design for The Causey. The project is being funded by CEC, Edinburgh World Heritage, Sustrans Scotland, the University of Edinburgh, Creative Scotland and the Mickel Fund.

5.6 Following these amendments, the minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting. Proposer: Jan Fraser; Seconder: Jo Scott.

## **6. Secretary's Report**

Correspondence had been received about the following matters:

- An email from Cllr Perry's office about the Odeon Cinema – see 5.2 above;
- A letter from the Council about proposed amendments to waiting restrictions on various roads, including Pleasance and Nicolson Square;
- Notice of a public consultation on proposed school streets scheme (closest school to Southside would be Sciennes). An online consultation is available and will run to 27 February;
- Notice of an application for a Golf in the Park event on Bruntsfield Links in July;

- A Date for the Diary: Meet the Funders event in Central Library, George IV Bridge, on Thursday 23 April from 1-4pm;
- Notice, dated 5 January, from SCNP about the 2015/16 Roads Capital programme. Members agreed that the pot-holed road outside the former post office should be repaired. It was noted that no previous notice had been received and that the deadline of 9 January was therefore unrealistic and should be disputed.

## **7. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer confirmed that funds currently stood at £2,315.23, which included the two grants recently received. Some of the SCNP grant for the Christmas Party had not been used, so this would be returned. The CRE grant for the website/flyer would soon be spent.

## **8. Planning and Licensing Matters**

- 8.1 The Planning Application for the mural at Gifford Park had been submitted, as above.
- 8.2 Hilary will chase up the 28 day enforcement period for the removal of painted shopfronts in Newington.
- 8.3 Cllr Perry is chasing up an unlicensed HMO in the local area.
- 8.4 There was discussion about the fact that a single complaint about advertising on the listed Queen's Hall had led the Council to request the removal of all advertising from the Hall's façade, risking the sustainability of the organisation and the business. Tom King asked members to lend support to the Queen's Hall at this difficult time; members agreed and the Chair offered to contact the Hall to let them know.
- 8.5 The regular Planning newsletter had been replaced with a blogspot at <http://planningedinburgh.com/>
- 8.6 It was noted that the letter-box had been removed from the former Post Office, but no one knew what plans are in place for this building.
- 8.7 A PAN (pre-application notice) has been lodged with the Council about Phase 3 of the University's Informatics Building (permission already given). The public consultation will be in the Informatics Building on 5 February from 3-7pm.

## **9. Environmental Matters**

- 9.1 The Chair reported a notification about plans for St Patrick Square Gardens. Between 26 January and 20 February, new shrubs and herbaceous beds will be laid and, following that, a new footway. There will be two noticeboards (one for the Association) at entrance gates. Work should be completed by 31 March.
- 9.2 Hilary reported that 130 new semi-mature trees are being planted in the Meadows, filling gaps in the avenues, which is welcome news.

- 9.3 Hilary flagged up that there was graffiti on the student block at West Newington Place and Moira agreed to pursue this matter with University authorities.
- 9.4 Maggie raised the issue of the man who sits in Deaconess Gardens each day feeding the pigeons. The dirt and potential for disease discourages children from playing in the park. It would be helpful if the Community Warden could tackle this problem.
- 9.5 David Wood flagged Hill Square which was looking run down. More trees and careful planting would improve this. He thought that an agreement between the Council and the RCS to improve Hill Square was in place and would appreciate an update from Councillors.

#### **10. Reports from other meetings**

On behalf of the Southside Association, Hilary had attended a meeting in December of residents of Montague Street, known as the Newington Residents' Association. Their main concerns were the prevalence locally of legal highs, the growing number of HMOs, etc. Hilary suggested that this group join the Southside Association, since they had so many concerns in common, but none had come along to the SA meeting this evening.

Jo Scott flagged up that the next meeting on the HMO consultation would be in the Mandela Room at the City Chambers on Thursday 8 January at 2pm.

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

Cllr Burgess offered an update on a range of issues. The Odeon, the SCNP opportunity for local roads applications, the work to improve St Patrick Square and the consultation on the University Informatics building had all been covered already in the meeting. He alerted the Association to two grants secured for Dumbiedykes: a) the Twenty More Project and b) the Spirit of Dumbiedykes £250,000 for the Canongate Youth Project and the Craggs Centre.

#### **12. Any other business**

- 12.1 Tom King raised two issues. Firstly, the Southside Advertiser was the product of a local business (his and Lisa's) and not funded or edited by any local organisation or charity. The magazine offered local charitable and community groups the opportunity to feature in the publication at no cost, thereby providing a local service. He encouraged local groups to contribute.
- 12.2 Tom lamented the imminent closure of the Engine Shed and asked whether local businesses or groups could be found to prevent this. Cllr Burgess said that the Engine Shed's Board had thought long and hard before making the decision but that it was now irrevocable. Tom suggested that another not-for-profit/social enterprise be found to occupy the building, continuing the tradition of a community space. Cllr Burgess agreed to bear this in mind.

#### **13. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 3 February in the Southside Community Centre at 7pm as usual. Professor Charlie Jeffery, Senior Vice Principal of the University of Edinburgh, will offer an update on the University's perspective on community engagement, including recent issues of concern relating to students in the community. We hope to have Clare Halliday of Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association to speak about their work at the March meeting.