

THE BLACKET ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING on 12 May 2014 at 24 Mayfield Terrace

Apologies : Sheila McLeish (SMcL); Richard Scothorne (RSA); & Alex Stobart (AS)

Present : *Chair* - Hazel Fletcher (HF); Bob Cupples (BC); Becky Colegrave (Bec); Ray Footman (RF); Richard Seligman (RS); Ian Chisholm (IC); Hugh Mackay (HMac); & Johnny Kruuk (JK)

MINUTES : Minutes of 14 April 2014 were approved subject to the following change :

13Jan14(g): *RSA – to liaise with Cameron Rose regarding joint meeting. This action is still open and was returned to the Open Action list.*

COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS : BC talked the committee through the analysis done on the eMAILs received and sent by the Secretary since the AGM. BC outlined the revised conclusion reached, namely that there was a need for a Minutes Secretary as well as a Secretary as done by Craigmillar Park and Grange Associations – see below update to BC's report of May 2013.

There was discussion about the number and work done by individual members of the Committee. Currently the constitution allows for 11 "full" members plus three co-opted members.

New Action 12May14(a): ALL – to consider the Committee structure in light of workload analysis.

PLANNING : Summary of Planning Matters – 14th April 2014 to 12th May 2014

Decisions – week commencing 14/4

15, Dalkeith Road - 14/00771/FUL : This application for smoke vents in the roof has been withdrawn. Surprising as it relates to health and safety within the building – anticipating that that this is because they wish to alter the application in some basic way.

Belleville Lodge Care Home - 14/00020/FUL : Application to increase and improve the parking area has been approved.

Applications – week commencing 28/4

20 Upper Gray Street - 14/01554/TCO : This is a TCO for a West Blacket property which has already been given the Council's "Raise no Objection".

Decisions – week commencing 28/4

17 Blacket Place - 14/00903/FUL : Approved

35, Upper Gray Street - 14/00927/LBC : Listed Building Consent was granted for the internal works covered by this application - property is also within the West Blacket area.

Decisions – week commencing 5/5

1 Blacket Place - 14/00692/FUL : Granted - minor alterations to driveway : "uncontentious".

Decisions – week commencing 12/5

23 Minto Street - 14/00233/FUL & 14/01006/LBC

This application has been approved, as I think I mentioned on Monday night.

15 Blacket Avenue - 14/00953/FUL & 14/00953/LBC : Uncontentious - approved.

Meeting with Planning : HMac understood that RSA had attempted to set up meetings including Cameron Rose but so far had been unsuccessful. HMac suggested that this matter would probably be best addressed by RSA approaching the Planning Department directly and invite Cameron Rose to attend any arranged meeting.

New Action 12May14(b): RSA – to liaise directly with Planning Department regarding joint meeting.

GRANGE/PRESTONFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL (GPCC) :

Planning : 23 Minto Street :GPCC have raised an objection to the extension to this listed building, as have West Blasket.

Roads and Transport : East Mayfield/Dalketh Road Junction : Extended time for pedestrians has been introduced. Also one of the members of the GPCC is collecting signatures to make East Mayfield one-way east to west. The GPCC would not support this as it may result in rat-running in the Blasket and Waverley Park areas.

Resurfacing the eastern part of East Mayfield had been voted top priority at the Roads Capital Programme selection meeting.

The shareholders meeting for the proposed cycle path between Pollock Halls and Fountainbridge has been postponed, as the plans were not sufficiently developed to be discussed.

OTHER CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS : No reports presented.

WEBSITE : JK proposed that the website be revised and will create a mock-up which can be used as a starting point for feedback. JK also proposed that the site structure be as follows :

1. Home
2. News & Events
3. History
4. Local Facilities
5. Neighbourhood Watch
6. Planning & Conservation
7. The Committee
8. Join / Contact Us

New Action 12May14(c): JK to produce new website mock-up.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH : IC that South Central Community Safety priority Group meeting on 23rd April had been cancelled but there was information from police Scotland that there seemed to a marked increase in crimes affecting properties including the robberies from sheds & garages. Most recent was a break-in at a property in Mayfield Gardens where the lock on a shed was forced and bikes stolen.

IC will attend the *Neighbourhood Partnerships – Priorities and Actions 2014 – 2017 Workshop* on 13th May which aims to develop and agree a set of actions to address the priorities of the 2014-2017 local Community Plan.

BLACKET AVENUE WORKING PARTY : HMac reported that the normal maintenance work is ongoing but noted two items. Firstly there was a planned activity to lift the foliage on a mature holly in Blasket Avenue to allow more light into the surrounding area, particularly for a young oak tree.

HMac pointed out that there had been a lot of good planting by the team in the Blasket Avenue area immediately adjacent to the Strawberry Hills nursery - this will improve the aspect of this in the longer term. While the Council have passed over most of the maintenance of this area to the Association, they will continue to mow the grass approximately 20 times per annum.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING : Nothing to report.

COMMUNICATIONS : **Newsletter** : To be finalised and distributed

New Action 12May14(d): Bec/RS – Bec & RS to supply items for Newsletter

New Action 12May14(e): RF/HF – RF to edit Newsletter & pass to HF for distribution.

SOCIAL EVENTS : **Open Gardens** : HF Bobbie Smith and Liz & Rob Wickes have agreed to run a plant stall for which donations will be requested in the newsletter. HF and Bec will organise the refreshments at the party and will send out an eMAIL to the Committee organising cover at the gates of the houses involved, namely 15, 17, 19 & 21 Blacket Place.

New Action 12May14(f): ALL - to sign up to act as stewards at the Open Gardens' gates.

Wine & Cheese evening : It has been proposed that there might be interest in event like this. Given the timing of the Open Gardens evening and the AGM, it was felt that this would probably be best left until early 2015.

OTHER BUSINESS : **23B Minto Street** : Concern was again expressed to BC at the state of this property. BC undertook to make a formal complaint of a "statutory nuisance" through the H&S part of the Council website. This was felt to be a more effective solution than trying to do so through the Planning Department.

New Action 12May14(g): BC - to make a formal complaint via the Council environmental website.

TV reception & 4G mobile signals : **Update** : Lindsay Johnston provide the following on 22nd April :

(1) At800 sent and independent auditor around the area to test for 4G interference. They have now officially admitted that our problems are caused by 4G.

(2) However at800 still insist that all households were sent a filter and a reminder mailing in Feb. (This is absolutely not true in my case)

On the basis of (2) above they have still refused to reimburse me, but have offered me a 'goodwill' gesture of £50.

They said on the phone that they will extend this gesture to everyone who is out of pocket, regardless of whether you take the matter further to their Ombudsman Service which is CISAS (Communications and Internet Services Adjudication Scheme) so you should all ask for your £50 back. I have refused the £50 for now and will submit a complaint to CISAS. Apparently one other person in Blacket has done the same, could you please let me know who you are!

Ian Murray MP received a rather disingenuous letter from at800 implying that only 2 people in Blacket had complained, and assured him we had all received filters but perhaps didn't 'recall' receiving them.

Can you all let me know if you have made any progress yourself - between us, we are over £1000 out of pocket, caused by 4G.

New Action 12May14(h) : BC - to report progress on FREEVIEW/4G signalling issues.

Expansion of Blacket association area : There was a discussion about HMac's proposal to expand the association's remit beyond the "five streets" defined in the Constitution, particularly to include Spence Street but to consider other parts of the larger Blacket Conservation area. It was agreed that RF and HMac would form a subcommittee to look into this and report back to the full Committee.

New Action 12May14(i) : RF/HMac - to examine the possibility of expanding the Association area.

"Cold calling" : In the light of the proposal by the Waverley Feuars to make their area into a "No Cold Calling" zone, there was discussion about the issues & implications of this. Doing so solely at the doorstep, would exclude the issue of unwanted telephone callers – it would also potentially present problems to doorstep collections by acceptable charities.

New Action 12May14(j) : IC - to issues & options in banning "cold calling".

Minto Hotel : Helen Cassels, Middlebey Street, has requested a meeting with the Association re Minto Hotel. RF & BC will do so but with expectation that we will not be able to provide much help as previously agreed.

New Action 12May14(k) : RS/BC - to meet with Helen Cassels.

FUTURE MEETINGS : Open gardens - 13 June (*party venue : 19 Blacket Place*)
 Committee - 1 September (*host : RF*)
 Committee - 13 October (*host : ?*)
 AGM - 17(?) November (*venue : ?*)

SUMMARY of CLOSED ACTIONS :

7Oct13(a): *BC – list new Committee roles and remaining Secretarial tasks – by next meeting.*
13Jan14(g): *RSA – to liaise with Cameron Rose regarding joint meeting.*
14Apr14(a): *BC – to provide list of external contacts in past year.*
14Apr14(b): *BC – to look for original website design criteria.*
14Apr14(c): *Bec – to consider usability of extra fields for accounts data.*
14Apr14(d): *IC – to seek more eMAIL addresses from NW representatives.*
14Apr14(h): *RSA - to seek guidance regarding bin store at 23B Minto Street.*
14Apr14(i): *BC - to report back on 4G/FREEVIEW signalling issues.*

SUMMARY of OPEN ACTIONS :

13Jan14(b): *ALL – elect Vice-Chair - carried forward.*
13Jan14(c): *ALL – identify new Secretary for 2014 AGM - carried forward.*
14Apr14(c): *Bec – to consider usability of extra fields for accounts data.*
14Apr14(e): *AS – to report progress on dealings with Lighting Department.*
14Apr14(g): *Bec - to report back on reaction to proposed Children’s Event.*
12May14(a): *ALL – to consider the Committee structure in light of workload analysis.*
12May14(b): *RSA – to liaise directly with Planning Department regarding joint meeting.*
12May14(c): *JK to produce new website mock-up.*
12May14(d): *Bec/RS – Bec & RS to supply items for Newsletter*
12May14(e): *RF/HF – RF to edit Newsletter & pass to HF for distribution.*
12May14(f): *ALL - to sign up to act as stewards at the Open Gardens’ gates.*
12May14(g): *BC - to make a formal complaint via the Council environmental website.*
12May14(h) : *BC - to report progress on FREEVIEW/4G signalling issues.*
12May14(j) : *IC - to issues & options in banning “cold calling”.*
12May14(k) : *RS/BC - to meet with Helen Cassells.*

Committee Structure Report - Update

In order to flesh out the job specification for the replacement Secretary, analysis of the correspondence (almost totally eMAIL) was carried out on that received by the Secretary since the last AGM i.e. almost exactly six months.

This was done primarily to find who contacts the Secretary so that the Committee can decide if this contact is relevant and if it requires to be referred to any other Committee member and/or circulated to the membership more generally.

However the process of doing this analysis showed up something more relevant, namely the volume and the principal senders of this correspondence. The senders of correspondence since November, in rough order of volume, were :

- a. Blacket Association Committee members
- b. Edinburgh Council
 1. Your Edinburgh registration
 2. Planning News
 3. Roads & capital Programme
 4. Council Leader's Report
 5. Planning Lists
 6. Garden Waste dates
 7. Transport Services
- c. Other Associations
 1. West Blacket
 2. Grange
 3. Southside
 4. Craigmillar Park
 5. Waverley
- d. Blacket Association members – not Committee
- e. Doors Open
- f. Calico
- g. Representatives – MP; MSP; & Councillors
- h. Edinburgh Civic Forum
- i. Saltire Society

There are two folders of eMAILs – namely one for general messages and the second for information sent directly to Association members. In the first folder there are currently 272 messages of which only 60 came from senders outwith the Committee i.e. 78% of messages originated within the Committee itself. No attempt was made to break these down further by content.

The second folder contains 95 messages currently of which 25 are in connection with the recent activity on the 4G/FREEVIEW problems. This latter has arisen from the initial eMAIL sent out by the Secretary at the request of an Association member who is coordinating this “project” but who, correctly, did not have access to the membership eMAIL database.

Revised conclusion

I suggest that the basic message of the original conclusion remain valid namely :

- a. Spreading the Committee workload more evenly
- b. Assignment of roles
- c. “Buddying” to provide continuous cover
- d. Assignment of “projects” – either immediately or when they grow too large

However, I would suggest that there is a need to split the current secretarial role by appointing a Minutes Secretary as well as a Secretary, as is already done by Grange & Craigmillar Park. The Minutes Secretary would be responsible for the paperwork for both the AGM and Committee meetings but this could be aided by requiring reports to be circulated in advance of each meeting.

	<u>Grange</u> <u>Association</u>	<u>Craigmillar Park</u> <u>Association</u>
President	x	
Chair	x	x
Vice-chair	x	x
Secretary	x	x
Treasurer	x	x
Minutes Secretary	x	x
Newsletter Editor	x	x
Events Organiser	x	
Community Liaison/Planning	x	
Garden Group/Community Liaison	x	
Member	x (3)	x (5)
IT Advisor		x
Web Advisor		x
Advisor		x (2)

Bob Cupples
14 May 2014