MERCHISTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of public meeting on 17th Nov 2015 at Royal Ettrick Hotel

[Note: Meeting venue moved at short notice due to temporary closure of Merchiston T&B Club]

Present

Members:	*Public:*
Tom Graveson (Vice-Chair)	Michael Billinghurst
Sally Lloyd (Secretary)	Richard Lloyd
Frances Hawarden (Treasurer)	
Ian Clement	
Bridget Stevens	
Mike Talbot	
Ted Tate	

Welcome & Introductions

Tom welcomed all present.

Apologies

Members: Mairianna Clyde, Ian Doig, James Geekie, Robin Morris; Cllr Gavin Corbett.

[Note: James arrived for the meeting at Merchiston T&BC but, due to a misunderstanding, went away in the belief that the meeting was cancelled. Apologies to James.]

Minutes of previous meeting

Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting on 20th October 2015 was proposed by Ian C., seconded by Bridget, and agreed.

Matters arising are taken below.

Report - Police

Police officers did not attend the meeting. However, Tom tabled an extract from a Police Scotland report to the South West Neighbourhood Partnership comparing crime statistics for 2014 and 2015 in the Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart area. The numbers (for 2015/2014) were: total crimes (3225/3370), violence (18/10), indecency (30/9), dishonesty (390/483), housebreaking (54/36), motor vehicle (48/104), vandalism (91/81), disorder (87/78). The solvency rate for housebreakings improved from 42% in 2014 to 80% in 2015.

Matters raised by residents

CEC Consultation on parking regulation changes: Local resident and business owner, Mike Billinghurst, spoke about the difficulties experienced by customers to shops in Bruntsfield who wish to park, particularly at weekends. It was agreed to write to Councillors for the ward urging the conversion of more permit-holder-only bays to mixed-use bays in the Bruntsfield area **[Action: Sally]**.

[Note: Following email correspondence it was decided to postpone action on this item until further discussion at the next meeting.]

Report - Planning

3 South Ettrick Road: A local resident has raised concerns about this application to demolish a number of houses and build a new dwelling. Mairianna is investigating and will report back..

St Kentrigen's Church, St Peter's Place: A planning application has been submitted to convert the building into a 31-bed student residence. This is a renewal of consent previously given in 2009. Mairianna has submitted an objection on behalf of MercCC..

Report – Neighbourhood Partnerships

South West Neighbourhood Partnership: No meetings have taken place recently.

South Central Neighbourhood Partnerships: There have been no recent meetings of the full SCNP Board. However, a report tabled by Bridget [see attachment] on meetings that she attended on behalf of MercCC includes a note on a meeting of the SCNP Personal Safety Action Group.

Report **- Licensing**

Bridget said that there had been no meeting of the Licensing Forum recently.

Report - Treasurer

Frances reported that the only expenditure in the past few months has been £90 for printing of 2,000 flyers and £10 for the annual subscription as a Friend of the Meadows & Bruntsfield Links. The balance in the bank is currently £1,979. Payments are due for several months of room hire for meetings at Merchiston Tennis & Bowling Club. .

Councillors' Notes: No reports received.

AOB

Parking permits for carers visiting residents: Frances sought support for an increase in the number of parking vouchers given to residents who have carers visiting. At present 300 vouchers per annum are allocated by the Council but this is grossly inadequate when several carer visits are required each day. Ian C. will enquire with Council officials and report back **[Action: Ian C.].**

Merchiston CC acronym: Sally raised the matter of possible confusion with Merchiston and Morningside community councils both using MCC as an acronym. To avoid ambiguity Mike has been using MercCC in minutes while Sally has recently introduced MeCC. The views of Morningside CC will be sought on how we avoid confusion when the MCC acronym is used for external reference.

CEC Budget Challenge: It was agreed to make a submission under the following headings:

- Gulls de-nesting: support the cogent case made by Kay Smith for a city-wide service;
- Protect the existing funding for community police officers;
- Protect funding for police officers to be attached to schools.

[Action: Sally]

Edinburgh Association of Community Councils: It was agreed that Tom should represent MercCC at the AGM on 28th November 2015. It was also decided to support the motion that the meeting should go ahead as proposed. Tom is authorised to vote on nominations for EACC posts as he considers fit. Other members are welcome to attend. Sally is to confirm that Tom will represent MercCC. **[Action: Sally]**

Neighbourhood Partnership Capital Roads Programme: Suggestions for road & pavement repairs and improvements in the SCNP area include:

- Merchiston Avenue & Merchiston Park - pavement upgrade;
- Widening the pavement outside Napier University's Merchiston Campus so that the width of Colinton Road is constant along this stretch of road.
- Forbes Road South – improving the road surface.

Cases in support of these proposals will be prepared and circulated for comments before submission by the Secretary to the SCNP by 31st December **[Action: Sally & Ian C.]**.

In the SWNP area the pavement on the west side of Gilmore Place is in poor condition. Tom will investigate and report back on procedures for submitting proposals **[Action: Tom].**

Engagement: Sally circulated a report on accessions to the web site and Facebook page during October.

Sally plans to bring forward proposals to the next meeting on promotional material for distribution at local fairs and, also, on improvements to the web site.

Mike reported that, thanks to help from Cllr Gavin Corbett's team, some 1400 MercCC flyers were distributed to households in the Shandon, Ashley and Harrison Park areas.

Date of next meeting

Tues 19th January 2016 from 7pm at Merchiston Tennis & Bowling Club.

1.12.15

Report on meetings attended by Bridget Stevens for MercCC since 20th Oct 2015

Dig-In Management Committee - 27 October

Mainly shoperations matters; still need more volunteers for range of tasks - serving in shop, tidying/cleaning shop, promotion & publicity etc. Community cohesion group (which I'm on) re-named at my suggestion PACE (Promotion and Community Engagement) but needs more members.

SCNP Community Safety Action Group, now called *Personal* Safety Action Group - 10 Nov

Various interesting items of info from Scottish Fire & Rescue Services and from Police Scotland. Including (from Fire Service) – launch of free tuition in CPR for members of the public, community groups, plus usual reminder about fire checks available to householders free of charge. From Police Scotland – announcement that crime trends are down, except minor assaults, and possession of weapons/drugs. Feb 2015 initative to tackle NPS (New Psychactive Substances/Drugs), sometimes known as "legal highs", had been successful, especially with regard to supply. However, beggars were now more numerous – younger, more likely to be Caucasian and/or working in pairs, some amputees. Only aggressive begging can be acted on. I said that MCC was grateful to have the same police officers attending our meetings, and that I hoped CEC would continue its funding of these community police officers in the face of national centralising changes introduced by Police Scotland. *NB – if others agree, we could include this in our response to the CEC Budget Consultation.*

Meeting at Morningside Library to contribute to Independent Assessment (Customer Service Excellence) of Library Service - 12 November.

Feedback generally favourable and I checked that free CC photocopying still available at *all* local libraries.

MABLAG (Meadows & Bruntsfield Links Advisory Group) - 16 November

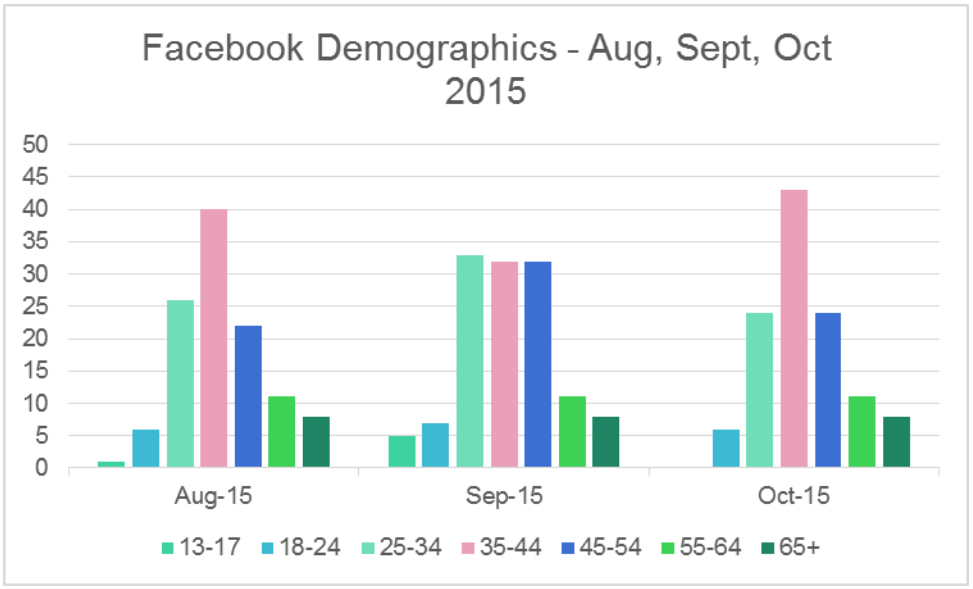
Wide-ranging discussion: successful re-seeding of Meadows post-Underbelly; poor state of toilets on Meadows - Edinburgh Leisure responsible for maintenance of cafe building and cricket pavilion, including their toilets – will provide future meetings of MABLAG with details of work done in this regard; recognition of invaluable work done by FOMBL: weeding, gathering leaves etc - reiteration that Parks Dept willing to lend equipment and donate bulbs; proposal to instal outdoor gym equipment on Meadows; review of new barbecue bins which had caused more fires than they prevented; designation of some areas as NO BARBECUES with signs to be put up in early 2016; problem of cars parking on the Meadows; new lighting on Bruntsfield Links already in place; 35% of litter bins contents are recycled, as well as grass cuttings, leaves etc. I asked for longer notice to be given to local residents about free compost resulting from this; Greenspace Scotland holds money from plastic bags surcharge and can award grants for green projects; no further attempt to attain Green Flag status for M & BL. David Doig, Local Environment Manager, Services for Communities, plans to retire by March 2016 but undertook to update M & BL Management Plan for discussion at next meeting of MABLAG.

Merchiston Community Council – Social Media Statistics – October 2015

Report by Sally Lloyd

Facebook Stats

	August	September	October	Trend
Number of fans	112	113	116	Up 3
Reach (organic)	500	498	449	Down 49
Total impressions	1315	1674	1289	Up 385

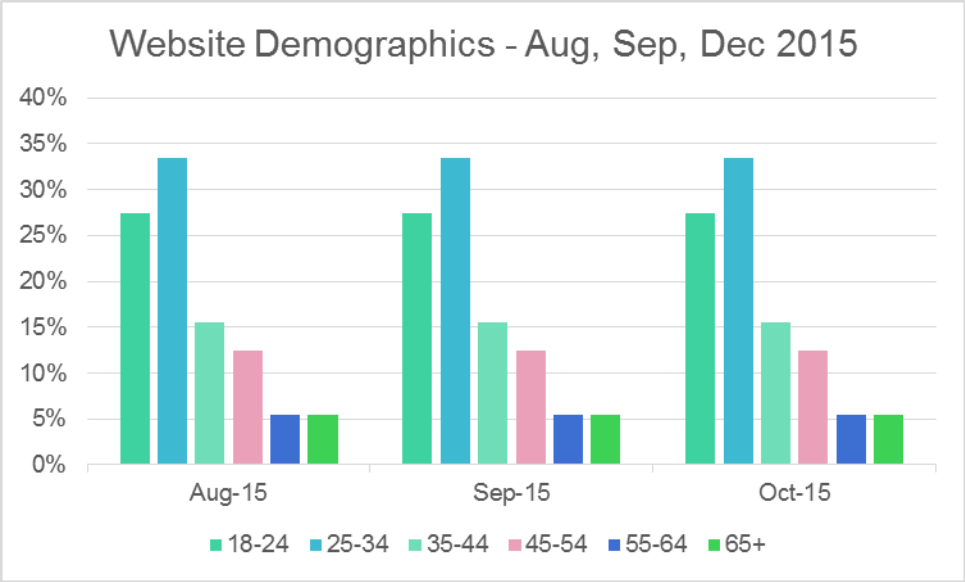


Twitter

	August	September	October	Trend
Number of fans	141	154	163	Up 9

Website Views (01-31 October)

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Comment
Sessions	472	300	388	Up
Users	335	227	219	Down
Pageviews	754	678	869	Up
Pages/Session	1.6	2.26	2.31	Up
Avg Session Duration	01:44	01:56	01:55	Down
Bounce Rate	73.52%	63%	68%	Up
New Sessions	67.16%	67.33%	51%	Down



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