

THE BLACKET ASSOCIATION

(the "Association")

MINUTES OF THE 52nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION

Held on 12th November 2022 at The Old Bell, Duncan Street at 7:05pm

Present: Ian Chisholm – Chairman and Newsletter Editor ("IC")
Susan Hezlet - Communications ("SH")
Anne Starsmeare – Sustainability representative ("AS")
Stanley Bird - Neighbourhood Watch ("SB")
Arlene Doherty – New Residents ("AD")
Anne Henderson - Treasurer ('AH')
Bertram & Elspeth Zawc – 8 Dryden Place
Jan Conway & MaryAnn Julian – 14 Mayfield Terrace
David Starsmeare – 13A Blacket Place
Hugh Mackay – 10 Mayfield Terrace
Chris Jeffrey – 21 Salisbury Road
Alan Paterson – 62/1 Blacket Place
Caroline Sibbald – 50 Blacket Place
Anne Sturrock – 34/1 Mayfield Terrace
Patricia McDonald – 7 Blacket Place
Colin Blair – Arthur Lodge
Hazel Clark – Minutes and Social Convener ("HC")

Apologies: Mhoraig Blair – Website Co-ordinator ("MB")
Richard Scothorne – Planning ("RS")
Hazel & Paul Fletcher
David Steven
David & Janet Jenkins
Aiden & Fiona Courtney
David & Muriel Graham
Joanna Chisholm
Bill & Janice Gemmell

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

IC, as Chair, welcomed everyone to the AGM. Copies of the Annual Report had previously been circulated by email and in printed form as the November Newsletter. IC advised that apologies had been received from those listed above.

2. MINUTES

The 2021 AGM minutes, as published and circulated in the AGM papers, were agreed as an accurate record.

3. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The list of open actions was discussed. IC advised that the location of EV charging points was something the Council had under review, but that it was not currently high on their list of priorities. There had been a number of planning applications made to knock walls down to make way for charging points. These were currently being refused but that might change in the future. In the meantime, residents could use the charging points at Pollock Halls nearby.

The hustings events had happened but IC was unsure whether the carol singing had taken place. The table of actions at the end of these minutes has been updated accordingly.

4. ELECTION of COMMITTEE

IC reminded the meeting that he had done two, three-year terms as Chair of the Committee, which was the maximum permitted under the Association's constitution. IC was delighted to propose that Susan Hezlet be nominated as the new Chair. Her nomination was seconded by HC and AS and SH was therefore duly elected as the new Chair of the Association with effect from the end of the meeting. SH thanked IC for his hard work over the last six years and expressed her pleasure that he would be staying on the Committee as Vice-Chair.

Anne Henderson, Stan Bird and Richard Scothorne were all renominated and re-elected for another three year term on the Committee. IC advised that Mhoraig Blair was handing her role as Website co-ordinator over to her husband Colin Blair. IC nominated Colin and HC seconded his appointment.

IC highlighted the fact that the Constitution states that the Association can have office bearers plus no more than 7 other members, which meant that there was room for more people to join if they were interested.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair delivered his Report. The Covid-19 pandemic had meant there had been a lack of social events for years but that the Platinum Jubilee party, in June in Alfred Place, had been a big success. Discussions ensued as to whether there should be a social event for the King's coronation in May 2023 and a garden party too in June.

6. WEBSITE AND DATABASE REPORT

Mhoraig Blair was not present but her report was noted. It was agreed that the website had improved greatly under Mhoraig and that was sure to continue under Colin's tenure.

7. TREASURER'S REPORT

There were no questions on Anne Henderson's report, the most notable point being that the Jubilee party had been a huge success and had even made a profit.

8. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

Stan Bird highlighted the main points of his report which were that online scams remained the biggest issue. The Committee would continue to send out emails warning residents of the latest scams. It was noted that car key theft was becoming an issue in the Trinity area of the city.

9. SHRUBBERIES WORKING PARTY REPORT

The Chair thanked Hugh Mackay for the work done during the year by him and his team of volunteers for their planting, pruning, weeding and clearing of leaves. Hugh advised that there would be a team effort to collect fallen leaves on the 26th of November, if able-bodied residents were available to help. The Council would supply brushes, bags and shovels and would collect the full bags afterwards. Discussions ensued about the valuable work Hugh and his team do but that new blood was definitely required going forward. Anyone wanting to join the SWP should please get in touch with Hugh at 10 Mayfield Terrace. Bertrand mentioned that the university residence often blew their leaves out onto Blacket Avenue. SB advised that the university residence had a representative on the GPCC so he could mention the issue to him at the next meeting.

Action22.01 - SB to ask university residence rep at GPCC meeting to stop blowing leaves onto Blacket Avenue.

10. PLANNING REPORT

RS's planning report was discussed and it was noted that a wall at the Thrums Hotel was to be taken down as it was unsafe. The original stone would be re-used when it was re-built.

Caroline Sibbald told the meeting that her house backs on to the Minto Hotel and that they had had huge problems with them. The development started with the owners originally saying that a wall was unsafe and had to come down, and them promising to re-build it. They didn't do so and ended up getting planning permission to build on a larger area as a result. IC advised that RS was an expert in this area and was wise to this ploy. AD mentioned that as the planners are so overwhelmed with the amount of work and lack of employees, that the whole system was not functioning well at all. AH gave the example of the garage at the west end of Mayfield Terrace which has become a B&B, showing that the planning department isn't properly adhering to the conservation area rules.

IC noted that there had been 12 trees taken down at Pollock Halls and he would check whether the proper permissions had been sought beforehand.

Action22.02 - IC to check whether permissions to take down 12 trees at Pollock Halls were given before their removal.

Elsbeth Zawc told the Committee that builders at 16 Blacket Place were currently “ripping it to pieces”. IC said he would check with RS to see whether the proper planning application for changes had been submitted.

Action22.03 - RS to find out whether planning permission for changes to 16 Blacket Place has been granted.

Bertrand questioned whether there was any point in the Blackets continuing to be classified as a Conservation Area. The rest of the meeting agreed that although the planning department often make disappointing decisions, it is still worth our while doing what we can to protect the area.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Discussions moved to public transport with residents lamenting the Council’s refusal to renew electronic bus stops, showing the times of upcoming buses. IC advised that the Council will not be renewing broken ones as most people now have apps on their phones doing the same job. The number of bus stops was also being reduced to try to free up the traffic.

SH advised that there was no lighting on Blacket Avenue outside the nursery. IC informed the meeting that the Blacket route for cycling would be happening soon, in two phases. Blacket Place and Blacket Avenue would probably become one-way in the next few months.

The meeting closed at 8pm.

SUMMARY of OPEN ACTIONS:

REF	ACTION	RESP	STATUS
Action21.01	<i>The Committee to come up with policy regarding provision of electric car charging points in the Blacket Area for submission to the Council.</i>	Committee	Council has this under review – ongoing.
Action21.02	<i>The Chair to arrange for another husting for residents to question local councillors in advance of the forthcoming local elections.</i>	IC	Done - closed
Action21.03	<i>The Chair to ask Becky Colgreave to organise carol singing in Alfred Place in December.</i>	IC	Not done but closed
Action22.01	<i>SB to ask university residence rep at GPCC meeting to stop blowing leaves onto Blacket Avenue.</i>	SB	
Action22.02	<i>IC to check whether permissions to take down 12 trees at Pollock Halls were given before their removal.</i>	IC	
Action22.03	<i>RS to find out whether planning permission for changes to 16 Blacket Place has been granted.</i>	RS	