



FORTY SEVENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the BLACKET ASSOCIATION to be held on TUESDAY 29 November 2016 in the Parkside Bowling Club from 7.30pm, starting promptly at 7.45pm and followed with an opportunity to socialise and meet other residents.

Agenda

- Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting (23 November 2015)
- Election of committee members and office bearers.
Hazel Dunn and Johnny Kruuk have reached the end of their terms of office and do not wish to stand for re-election. Stanley Bird, 4 Dryden Place, has been nominated to join the committee and further nominations are invited; these should be notified to the Acting Secretary, preferably in advance of the meeting
- Chairman's report
- Planning report
- Treasurer's report
- Neighbourhood Watch report
- Blacket Avenue working group report
- Any other competent business

Committee 2015–2016

CHAIR	Hazel Dunn	32 Blacket Place
TREASURER	Becky Colegrave	12 Alfred Place
MINUTES SECRETARY	Fiona Courtney	52 Blacket Place
NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH	Ian Chisholm 1	1 Dryden Place
PLANNING/SHRUBBERY	Hugh Mackay	42 Blacket Place
PLANNING	Richard Scothorne	7 Alfred Place
WEBSITE/CONTACTS	Johnny Kruuk	6a Mayfield Terrace
NEW RESIDENTS/CARDS	Arlene Doherty	56 Blacket Place
COMMUNICATIONS	Pauline Platt	27 Mayfield Terrace

CHAIR'S REPORT 2016

2016 has had its moments, but for the most part it has been a successful one for the five streets. The major event has been the planning application to convert the Minto Hotel site into residential properties. Hugh MacKay and Richard Scothorne coordinated the Association's response to the plans, with significant input from the residents that would be affected. The plans were revised taking into account many of our concerns, and planning permission has now been granted. It remains to be seen how the plans will be 'interpreted' by a potential developer, but we will maintain a watchful eye on proceedings.

Social Events

We were the guests of Parkside Bowling Club in April, which allowed residents to try their hand at bowling. Around fifty people attended, of varying ages and abilities, and all appeared to enjoy the session. We hope to repeat this in April 2017.

The annual Open Gardens evening was held in early June. We would like to thank Sue Ross Stewart (13 Blacket Place), Randall & Fily Nicol (1A Mayfield Terrace), and Wilma & Bob Cupples (24 Mayfield Terrace) for the chance to have a look around their policies. Despite the slightly lack-lustre weather, a hundred die-hards descended on 18 Blacket Place for drinks and the chance to chat with neighbours. It was a thoughtful final act on behalf of Janet & David Jenkins to host the party. They have since moved to a flat with limited garden space. The search is underway for gardens for the 2017 event!

A Plant Sale was held in October. The weather proved favourable, and many fabulous plants were 're-homed'. This raised £135 for the shrubbery fund, and allowed little bits of Blacket to be spread around.

Social events are an important part of life in this area, and we are always looking for new ideas that reflect the many and varied interests (and ages) of residents. We would like to hear any suggestions you may have for future events.

Links with External Organisations

Ian Chisholm is our recently elected representative on the Grange and Prestonfield Community Council. This link enables us to keep up-to-date with Edinburgh Council activities that may affect us directly or indirectly. We circulate items that we think will be of interest to residents whose email addresses we have. The Community Council has supported us in our objections to a number of planning applications, which has added weight to our case. Minutes of Community Council meetings are available on the website at grangeprestonfieldcc.org.uk

One item that is likely to impact on residents is the proposed cycle way through Blacket to connect Pollock Halls to Ratcliffe Terrace. Ian and I attended an initial meeting, and the formal consultation period is imminent. Residents may have noticed a traffic-monitoring device at the entrance to Blacket Avenue from Minto Street. We will keep you up-to-date when we receive any further information.

There is a group of volunteers that works in Newington Cemetery on Dalkeith Road. Volunteers meet on the third Monday of the month at 10am to work on specific projects, and new recruits are always welcome.

This will be my final report as Chair of the Blacket Association, a position I have thoroughly enjoyed. I have had the chance to meet many of the residents, and conclude that you really are an amazingly eclectic and interesting group of people. I should like to thank my fellow committee members for their advice and assistance over my tenure, and wish them continued success for the future.

Hazel Dunn
Blacket Association Chair

PLANNING REPORT

Edinburgh Council Planning Department sends us each week a list of new planning applications and decisions for the City. We look out the section for Newington and find out what affects the Blacket Conservation area and, in particular, the five streets. Half the time there is nothing. For the rest, we check out the plans and any other information available on line. If the proposals do not, in our opinion, affect the amenity of the area, we take no action. If we are in doubt, we discuss the matter and then either object or accept. If the former, it must be for a reason which conforms to the planning regulations.

At the last AGM we reported the proposal to close down the Minto Hotel and replace it with residential accommodation. In the summer the consent was granted and the project should now get under way. In the case of the garage at 20 Duncan Street, we objected to the proposal to partly demolish the building and erect 28 one bedroom flats. Here we realised this would lead to increased parking problems on both sides of Minto Street. The application was refused but the owner appealed and that is ongoing. Also in Duncan Street, on the corner with Upper Gray Street, there was a group of sheds. Application was made to demolish these and extend the terrace of Duncan Street to the corner. We supported that. The Salisbury Arms wish to extend outdoor drinking facilities. We are discussing this with those who are affected with a view to taking appropriate action. One other objection was made [but unsuccessfully].

Hugh MacKay

SHRUBBERY WORKING PARTY REPORT

Last year we planted Narcissi Jetfire, rather a lot of them. Mostly they came up and gave us a colourful spring. Since then we have added more Vinca, and in the semi-circle beside the Nursery we planted selected "left overs" from the Bring and Buy plant sale we held in the autumn. This should mean among others, red Crocosmia. This is good because the extensive planting of bushes in this plot had not yet produced much of a dividend. We planted orange Crocosmia in part of the shrubbery to the south west of Mayfield Terrace. Sue Ross Stewart donated Bluebells which we planted in the Avenue.

At the east end of the Avenue, the fence was in serious need of repair. The previous owner had, to an extent, maintained the area enclosed by this. However, it belongs to the Council and was excluded from the main section passed to us for maintenance. So faced with neglect, we took the initiative and, supported by the new owner of Aln Lodge and by the Parks Department of the Council, we have cleared the area and, very shortly, a new fence will be erected. We are promised financial support out of the Parks Department budget.

We have taken to using our email list to seek volunteers for gardening. Six residents turned up for tree maintenance. Fewer the next time but this was in the holiday period. At this time we always hope the trees will survive another year and the plants will give colour in our community. Finally, to those who collect litter dropped in the Shrubbery, thank you on behalf of us all.

Hugh MacKay

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

The Blacket NW coordinator has circulated reports during the year about various incidents that had occurred in the Blackets. As a relatively prosperous area we are a favourite target for thieves.

Nonetheless, most modern property crime is committed not by housebreaking but online. Residents should be very suspicious of attempts to obtain cash online, over the phone or on the doorstep. The extent of such crime in our area is not fully known. Any resident who has been a victim of such crime is understandably not always willing to share the experience.

Advice on dealing with all these threats has been circulated from Police Scotland and Neighbourhood Watch Scotland in particular.

There is value to residents to communicate any suspicious incidents to a NW coordinator. A list of all the coordinators with addresses (home and email) and areas of responsibility is set out below.

The coordinators also have a role in keeping up-to-date lists of residents. The recently created central Blacket address list (home and email) had been much assisted by information from the NW coordinators.

The local NW coordinators are:

Alfred Place : Victoria Gilmour, 15 Alfred Place

Blacket Avenue: Barrie West & Jennifer Flueckiger 46b Blacket Place

Blacket Place North: Alison Mowat 14 Blacket Place

Blacket Place South : Barrie West & Jennifer Flueckiger

Blacket Place South : Anna Regaard, 21Blacket Place

Dryden Place: Ian Chisholm, 11 Dryden Place

Mayfield Terrace West: Alice Kruuk, 6a Mayfield Terrace

Mayfield Terrace East: Pina Lang, 32 Mayfield Terrace

Ian Chisholm

TREASURER'S REPORT

Income was made up of subscriptions, proceeds from the Open Gardens event and card sales. Subscriptions were received from 47% of households in Blacket and we, again, encourage the remainder of residents to consider paying the £5 contribution.

The Open Gardens event was less well attended than previous years but, nonetheless, boosted income by £79.

Following a reprint of the Elizabeth Blackadder and Blacket Pillar cards, which was paid for last year, net income of £145 was generated from card sales and there is still stock left that will provide income in future years.

Expenditure related to the usual items of AGM, website, newsletter printing and landscaping plus there were modest costs for cleaning the street lights on Blacket Avenue and renewing the Cockburn Association membership, which had lapsed.

Following a different venue being selected for the AGM, costs were substantially lower. Website costs were higher than last year relating to a 3 year contract being taken out and paid for in full for the domain. Overall, funds were largely static over the period.

Becky Colegrave

The Blacket Association		
Summary of accounts for year to 31st August 2016		
2015		2016
£1,813.72	Opening bank account 1st September	£1,527.88
Income		
£475.00	Subscriptions	£570.00
£205.00	Open Gardens Event	£79.25
£415.00	Card Sales	£160.00
£114.60	Cheese and Wine Event	-
£72.00	Landscaping project fundraising	-
£50.00	Thrums Hotel donation	-
£50.00	Belleville Lodge donation	-
<u>£1,381.60</u>		<u>£809.25</u>
Expenditure		
£440.00	AGM Costs	£171.25
£30.00	Website	£81.00
£71.75	Printing Newsletters	£80.00
£545.94	Printing Blacket cards	£15.99
£259.75	Landscaping	£391.51
£320.00	Repair costs for fencing on Blacket Ave	-
-	Cleaning of Blacket Av street lights	£40.00
-	Cockburn Association membership	£40.00
<u>£1,667.44</u>		<u>£819.75</u>
-£285.84	Increase/Decrease in funds for period	-£10.50
£1,527.88	Closing bank account 31st August	£1,517.38