

THE BLACKET ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING on 14 January 2013 at 32 Blacket Place

Apologies : Jennifer Johnston-Watt(JJW) & Patricia Alston(PA).

Present : *Chair* - Hazel Fletcher(HF); Bob Cupples(BC); Ian Lewis(IL); Alison Mowat(AM);
Becky Colegrave(Bec); Sheila McLeish(SMcL); Ray Footman (RF);
Richard Seligman (RS); Hugh Mackay(HMac) & Ian Chisholm (IC).

MINUTES : Minutes of 29 October 2012 were approved.

NEW COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS :

BC circulated copies of the note of 12 April 2011 from RF on the Responsibilities within the Blacket Association following the announcement of the retirement of the "super Secretary", Ian Carter. It was noted that there was a vacancy for a ViceChairman.

RF agreed, as previously intimated, to remain as the Newsletter editor; BC reaffirmed his willingness to be the Secretary until the 2014 AGM; RS agreed to continue doing the Planning role (with the assistance of BC); AM will continue as NW Coordinator until she finds a replacement; Karin Froebel Overton (KFO) will remain as the Website manager; Bec agreed to share the Social role with HF; & HMac agreed to remain the contact for the Blacket Working Party.

It was noted that there was need for an updated "welcome pack" for new residents (e.g. link to website; updated historical booklet; Standing Order form for subs etc) and SMcL undertook to do this. It was agreed that there was a continuous need for all Committee members to pass on any information on the arrival of any new residents.

In the knowledge that this was probably not the definitive list (and all were asked to consider omissions), the following were identified :

GPCC : Currently RF is sole representative and willing to continue in short term. Given volume of activity from this, it was suggested that two representatives were needed.

Citizen Participation Network : Agreed that we would not send any representative but instead be content to take the published minutes but then to send a representative as required.

Southside Association : Agreed that we do not need to be involved with this group at present.
BC will pursue as yet unreceived invitation to participate in "amenity strips" outside Commonwealth Pool.

Civic Forum : To be assigned

Edinburgh Guidance : RS undertook to summarise this – principle appears to be that either a lower burden of proof of usefulness of proposed is needed or that the an application is deemed acceptable unless there are enough objections to deem it not suitable.

Cockburn Association : HMac agreed to be the representative. BC will inform them of this.

New Action 14Jan13(a): ALL – identify any other existing or new contacts required.

New Action 14Jan13(b): SMcL – production of new "welcome pack".

New Action 14Jan13(c): ALL – two representatives for Grange Priestfield Community Council.

New Action 14Jan13(d): ALL – representative to receive & circulate Citizen Participation minutes.

New Action 14Jan13(e): BC – contact Southside Assoc re "amenity strips" at Commonwealth Pool.

New Action 14Jan13(f): BC – pass on HMac details to Cockburn association as new contact.

REVIEW of 2012 AGM :

It was agreed that the AGM had overall been a success, with a turnout estimated at 80 (including a Police Constable; a Councillor; & the local MSP) and Bec was congratulated on her negotiation skills. The space allocated by the Salisbury Arms, as laid out on the evening, did not lend itself very well for the formal part of the proceedings but that the social part was very much enjoyed by all.

BC apologised for the confusion with the name labels at the start and for lacking a voice for the formal items – also the “police surgery” could have been more clearly identified. However overall the principle of a more socially based night, in a suitable social setting, is proving to be popular and will be adopted as the norm, including possibly with a suitable speaker or other event.

For future AGMs, Salisbury Arms would be high on the list of good venues but with the room laid out with the speakers at the opposite end i.e. away from the diners. Other social venues which might be considered include the Parkside or Mayfield Bowling Clubs or a suitable within Pollock Halls.

Matters raised under Other Business at the AGM included a request that a database of trees growing in private gardens along with some sort of guidance on the suitability and health of trees would be useful as an early warning mechanism for the otherwise unexpected removal of a significant tree. This was in the context of the agreement that the area gains much of its attractiveness not just from the public trees but also from the existence of a large number of mature trees in gardens.

However it was recognised by the Committee that there are a lot of pitfalls in trying to derive such a facility e.g. matters of privacy; giving advice versus guidance; availability of professional arboreal expertise etc. Given that there were various opinions within the AGM audience on this, it was agreed that an article in the Newsletter seeking views on this matter would be a suitable starting point. Also it was not clear if the Council still maintained a tree planning officer and/or if free advice was available.

In response to the request to publish all Committee meetings on the website, BC will pass copies of the Minutes to KFO for publication.

New Action 14Jan13(g): RS – clarify position re tree planning with Council Planning department.

New Action 14Jan13(h): BC – to supply copies of circulated minutes for inclusion on website.

PLANNING :

DAMAGED GATEPIERS : The announcement of the repair of the gatepiers was met with pleasure (particularly the implicit acceptance of their ownership by the Council) and no little surprise. An item on this would be included in the Newsletter.

THRUMS HOTEL : Having not had any communication from Jim Eadie MSP (with whom he had an onsite meeting in December) or Councillor Rose, HMac summarised the situation as being unchanged since the AGM. BC offered to escalate the problem by writing a detailed letter to the Council Chief Executive, copied to all parties involved, spelling out the whole sorry saga.

Given that the Council’s policy of *festina lente* (e.g. time taken to repair the gatepiers) was at distinctly at odds with the very evident general desire at the AGM for a return to *rus in urbe* in Blacket Place, BC proposed that a temporary repair be made to the fence in advance of any repair to the wall or fence. This was not agreed by a majority of the Committee who wished to keep up the pressure. Residents will be encouraged in the Newsletter to influence the Council in any way they can.

New Action 14Jan13(i): BC – write to Chief Executive summarising Thrums Hotel wall process.

NEW PLANNING MATTERS : 29 Mayfield Terrace : An application to build a new outside stairway from the first floor of the building into the rear garden (above the kitchen extension of the lower flat) was refused as being inappropriate. This followed formal objections by several neighbours and also the Association.

NEW PLANNING GUIDELINES : RS to produce report as per Action 29Oct12(d).

EXISTING PLANNING MATTERS : 8 Alfred Place : RS to get definitive decision on planning application as per Action 29Oct12(e).

GRANGE/PRESTONFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL (GPCC) : RF will attend next meeting. The GPCC have been asked to give input for inclusion in 2013 road maintenance plan with regard to roads requiring significant attention. RF will circulate.

OTHER CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS : No report

WEBSITE : More feedback on the use of this will be requested in the Newsletter before any decision is made on freezing or expanding the website facilities.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH : Since the last meeting, there were only two items of note. A camper van was broken into in late October and the contents rifled but nothing was stolen. More recently the courtyard door of house in Mayfield Terrace was forced but it did not appear that the offender had actually entered the house.

BLACKET AVENUE WORKING PARTY : HMac reported that it was a quiet time of year.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING :

20 MPH limits : Situation is as was anticipated at inception given that the Police made it clear that they did not have the resource to police this initiative. It was agreed that *inter alia*, all residents would be encouraged to report discreetly any flagrant abuses to police and/or commercial vehicle owners.

COMMUNICATIONS :

Next Newsletter & Use of eMAIL for distribution : It was agreed that Newsletter would be issued in January, partially electronically with agreed eMAIL addresses and partially on paper, to reduce costs. "Paper" recipients would be encouraged to give an eMAIL address. RF will draft articles on trees-in-gardens database; Gatepiers; 20MPH speed limit abuses; provision of eMAIL address for newsletters & other communications; Open Gardens; website use; & Belleville Lodge. BC undertook to provide the two distribution lists from initial AGM eMAIL use responses.

New Action 14Jan13(j): RF – to draft January Newsletter.

New Action 14Jan13(k): BC – to produce electronic & paper mailing lists.

SOCIAL EVENTS :

Open Gardens : It was proposed that the Open Gardens evening would be 14th or 21st June and HF indicated that there were already gardens lined up for this - article in Newsletter would seek more. BC undertook to check if offer of the party garden in 2012 (overtaken by Street Party) was extant.

New Action 14Jan13(l): BC – to check 2012 "party" garden offer.

Other events : RF to contact Owen Dudley-Edwards re April social event as per action 25Jun12(c).

BELLEVILLE LODGE : It was agreed that while there was no interest in a formal event, residents would be encouraged in the Newsletter to offer their talents as "good neighbours".

OTHER BUSINESS : eMAIL from Caroline Sibbald on archiving was carried forward.

FUTURE MEETINGS :
Committee - 18 March (**host : RS**)
Committee - 29 April (**host : tba**)

SUMMARY of ACTIONS :

- 16Jan12(h) : KFO re progress of website update facility – CLOSED**
- 6Mar12(e) : “Good neighbours” with Belleville Lodge – CLOSED**
- 25Jun12(c) : RF to speak to Owen Dudley-Edwards for possible social event – carried forward.**
- 25Jun12(e) : BC to monitor the Mayfield Terrace gatepier repairs – CLOSED**
- 10Sep12(i) : ALL to access and assess the Blaket website – CLOSED**
- 10Sep12(j) : HF to include poll on website useage as part of AGM entry – CLOSED**
- 10Sep12(m) : RF to assess viability of Belleville music events from responses – CLOSED**
- 29Oct12(a): BC to supply list of tasks & external contacts & meetings – CLOSED**
- 29Oct12(b): Gatepiers - BC to contact Derek Roden and escalate within Council – CLOSED**
- 29Oct12(c): Thrums wall - BC to escalate within Council – CLOSED**
- 29Oct12(d): RS to produce report on implications for new planning process – carried forward.**
- 29Oct12(e): RS to get definitive decision on application for 8 Alfred Place – carried forward.**
- 29Oct12(f): RF/HF to produce and distribute newsletter before AGM – CLOSED**
- 29Oct12(g): BC to provide invoice for 2012 Cockburn membership for IL to pay – CLOSED**
- 14Jan13(a): ALL – identify any other existing or new contacts required.**
- 14Jan13(b): SMcL – production of new “welcome pack”.**
- 14Jan13(c): ALL – two representatives for Grange Priestfield Community Council.**
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