

THE BLACKET ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING on 1 September 2014 at 24 Mayfield Terrace

Apologies : Sheila McLeish (SMcL); Hugh Mackay (HMac); & Alex Stobart (AS)

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

MINUTES : Minutes of 12 May 2014 were approved, subject to the following being added to the list of Open Actions :

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

COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS : As an extension to his previous report, BC felt that the work of the Minutes Secretary could be eased by having reports circulated in advance which could then be discussed at the Committee meeting. It was agreed that only the Planning function required a formal deputy, including the need to collate & edit weekly Planning comments into the Planning report to be discussed at the Committee meeting.

RSE indicated that he will be standing down at the AGM from the role of Planning “officer” on the Committee. Coupled with the retirement of BC and RF (Newsletter Editor) from the Committee, HF asked all of the Committee for volunteers or nominations to fulfill the roles of Secretary & Minutes Secretary and to lead the Planning function, internally from existing members of the Committee without formal roles or externally.

It was therefore agreed that the Committee should actively pursue new members to join the Committee which can under the current constitution have 11 “full” members plus three co-opted members. BC will circulate a list of Committee members and re-election dates by the next meeting.

New Action 1Sep14(a): ALL - to actively seek out & approach possible new Committee members.

New Action 1Sep14(b): ALL - to find candidates for Minutes, Secretary, Newsletter and Planning.

New Action 1Sep14(c): BC - to provide list of current Committee with re-election dates.

PLANNING : Meeting with Planning : RSA reported that the meeting had been seen to be very successful and useful for both sides. The Planning team consisted of ten individuals who seemed keen to learn from their “customers” – to the extent that they expressed the view that they would like to carry out similar events with similar organisations in other areas.

The meeting ranged a wide range of topics as well as ranging over past decisions as well as the handling of future applications. In passing, RSA noted that some of the Planning team appeared visibly surprised at the “new” stable block in the grounds of 23 Minto Street.

BC asked if, in connection with the example of 23 Minto Street for which it was stated that the original planning submission for the “new” stable block was required for “family use”, there was a need for Planning to consider all previous applications in order to assess the degree of over-development.

RSA also noted that the Planning department are in the process of revamping their planning application & decision procedures but that this was not yet completed. He will report back on this when it is made available.

New Action 1Sep14(d): RSA to report on new Planning processes & procedures when issued.

Summary of Planning Matters – 12th May 2014 to 1st September

Applications – weekly Planning list dated 19/5

23 Minto Street - **14/01801/FUL** - Another application for this property - having discussed the matter with Ian Carter of West Blacket, it was agreed that there is no future in objecting to this application. There were, however, some errors in the application which were raised with the planners as otherwise inaccurate information could remain on the planning files. It was also agreed that the comments should come from the two Associations.

Applications – weekly Planning list dated 26/5

24 Blacket Place - **14/02027/FUL & 14/01993/TCO** - The planning application proposes replacing one garden shed with a slightly larger one - because of the greater length (approx. 0.5m) it was going to be necessary to fell a pear tree, hence the notice of proposed tree works. Plum tree does not affect the shed but, since they could probably have felled it without notice, there was no need to make representations. Planning had in any case already issued an RNO i.e. Requiring No Objection!

Applications – weekly Planning list dated 2/6

35 Minto Street - **14/02065/LBC** – This was within the West Blacket area and was for retrospective Listed Building Consent, only involving internal works including moving kitchen from basement to ground floor.

Decisions – weekly Planning list dated 2/6

24 Blacket Place - **14/01993/TCO** - This was for the felling of two fruit trees referred to above - it had been granted an RNO from the Planning Department.

Applications – weekly Planning list dated 9/6

44 Blacket Place - **14/01926/LBC** - The only document shown for this application is a deficiency letter from the Planning Department. The application is for conversion of garage to a therapy room which is ancillary to the dwelling. The letter states that the application should have been for Listed Building Consent not Planning Permission. Surprising as this is a change of use - however if purely for those living in the house, then this might not require planning permission : to be confirmed with Planning.

Applications – weekly Planning list dated 16/6

2 Mayfield Terrace - **14/02362/TCO** - This notice refers to an old yew tree at the bottom of the garden i.e. next to East Mayfield. This tree appears to be shown on Google Maps as being close to the boundary wall and is partially overhanging the road.

Decisions – weekly Planning list dated 2/6

26 East Mayfield - **14/01344/CLP** – This is for replacement of uPVC windows with new uPVC windows and, although the Association made representations against this, it has been approved.

Applications – weekly Planning list dated 23/6

7A Blacket Place - **14/02407/FUL** - This proposes widening gateway by 14" and the insertion of a conservatory rooflight. Widening of the existing gateway by such a small amount was not considered to be a problem although it was a pity that the gates were to be removed as the other two pedestrian entrances have gates – however these are not in any way similar to the traditional gates and railings in Blacket. The new conservatory rooflight is not a problem as it appears to be hidden from public view by a parapet wall.

44 Blacket Place - **14/02311/LBC** – Proposal is replacement of previously removed iron railings on the two adjacent sides of the property next to Blacket Place and Blacket Avenue. As they appear to be entirely appropriate (including vertical elements let individually into the cope of the wall), no objection was made.

Decisions – weekly Planning list dated 23/6

13 South Grey Street (part of West Blacket) - **14/02418/TCO** – approved : RNO

2 Mayfield Terrace - **14/02362/TCO** – approved : RNO

25 Minto Street - **14/00907/LBC** - Permission granted for the replacement of windows - noted in March that these were to be timber sash and case double glazed windows which did not require an objection.

Applications – weekly Planning list dated 30/6

44 Blacket Place - **14/02311/FUL** – Reinstatement of previously removed cast iron fence to boundary wall - noted to be an incomplete applications as drawings are required.

Applications – weekly Planning list dated 7/7

30 Minto Street - **14/02643/FUL** - Application was for the conversion of the remainder of this four storey house from residential use to Class 7, Guest House. Although concerned that area converted will have one bathroom serving four double bedrooms and one single bedroom, it was not seen as a planning issue.

However potential planning issue is availability of car parking - currently parking for three cars with no current intention to increase this. Currently there are 10 bedrooms and as this application would mean six more, this is a significant percentage increase. No question of the front garden being use for parking as it is next to a busy junction and small, thus only pressure will be for on-street parking - with yellow lines on both sides, expectation is that most will come by taxi.

Decisions – weekly Planning list dated 7/7

35 Minto Street (West Blacket) - **14/02065/LBC** - Permission granted to carry out internal works.

Applications – weekly Planning list dated 14/7

30 Minto Street - **14/02642/LBC** - This was for LBC for planning application 14/02643/FUL above.

Decisions – weekly Planning list dated 14/7

24 Blacket Place - **14/02027/FUL** - Application for garden shed was been granted.

Applications & Decisions – weekly Planning list dated 21/7

None

Applications – weekly Planning list dated 28/7

2 Blacket Place - **14/02915/FUL & 14/02915/LBC** - Application is for reinstatement of railings in place of the existing hedge. Character Appraisal for Blacket states "However, many of these railings were removed during the [war] and boundary treatment subsequently became a mixture of hedges and modern railings. The reinstatement of railings would result in a significant improvement to the historic fabric of the area." Proposed railings are not of traditional design but their installation would be an improvement on the existing hedge.

Decisions – weekly Planning list dated 28/7

44 Blacket Place - **14/02311/LBC** - Application is for the reinstatement of railings. Previously it was noted that this was an incomplete application as drawings were required. LBC has been granted - presumably grant of planning permission is still to come.

Applications – weekly Planning list dated 5/8

National Library of Scotland, 159 Causewayside - **14/03017/FUL** - Application proposes major rehabilitation and alterations (see below) but as it is part of West Blacket area, we will take our lead from them regarding comments.

Work includes : replacement of all existing external envelope claddings and coverings to walls, soffits and roofs including services, rainwater drainage and roof access systems, gates, fences, balustrades and railings; & extension of existing external envelope to enclose a roof terrace by forming a new roof over and external wall to the east side.

Decisions – weekly Planning list dated 5/8

7A Blacket Place - **14/02407/FUL & 14/02407/LBC** – Application for widening of gateway and installation of a roof light was approved.

44 Blacket Place - **14/01926/LBC** – Application for conversion of garage into therapy room was deemed by Planning as only requiring LBC which was granted.

Applications – weekly Planning list dated 11/8

18 Mayfield Terrace - **14/03157/TCO** - This is a notice to Planning of the intention to fell the yew tree in the front garden of this property. While it is magnificent and relatively young tree (probably in the wrong place), it dominates the small front garden and must be causing natural light problems within the house. Planning can be contacted but we have no legal locus for challenging this notice.

Decisions – weekly Planning list dated 11/8

23 Minto Street - **14/01801/FUL** – Application to convert this house to B & B use was deemed "Not Development". This is the new house - now known as 1c Mayfield Terrace - recently built in the grounds of 23 Minto Street. It was agreed with Ian Carter that it was difficult to make reasonable objections to this application but a letter was sent to Planning, noting various discrepancies in the application.

Decisions – weekly Planning list dated 19/8

30 Minto Street - **14/02642/LBC** – Decision was that LBC was Not Required for the change of use of the top floor of four from a domestic flat to Guest House use - rest of building is currently a guest house.

44 Blacket Place - **14/02311/FUL** – Application for reinstatement of removed iron fence was granted.

GRANGE/PRESTONFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL (GPCC) :

Summary of May & June meetings - Environmental Wardens - We had a talk from one of the Environmental Wardens. Their responsibilities include: Trade waste, public bins on the street, dog fouling, fly tipping, discarded needles; some public health duties; Japanese knotweed and hogweed.

They also deal with waste on private property, including communal stairs, but limited to providing advice only. Wardens are not responsible for overflowing street bins and bins not being replaced. Six teams of wardens in the city – approx. 6 wardens per team. South team covers area from Little France and Comiston to Tollcross. 2 teams work at night. Wardens work in pairs and also work in schools.

Dog fouling - Need 2 witnesses to be able to serve a penalty notice. Concentrate on education as very hard to get evidence. Many people reluctant to report offenders – 'tho Council don't disclose details of complainants. Owners behave when they see a warden.

Planning - Nothing of note in our area

Newsletter - GPCC Newsletter has been produced and distributed to approximately 2500 households

Newington Cemetery - The cemetery will be holding an event as part of Doors Open Day on Sunday the 28th of September.

Changes to Waste collection - New system to increase material recycled and reduce general waste will be introduced. Current green bin will become a recycling bin and a smaller bin will be provided for general waste. Pilot scheme, scheduled for September will be trialled in Prestonfield before extending city-wide. Residents will be able to recycle lots more plastics; including bottles, pots, tubs and trays and also small electrical items.

New, smaller wheelie bin (140L) will be used for general waste. Green wheelie bin will change from being a landfill bin to a recycling bin, which will be used for mixed recycling (plastics, paper, cans, cardboard etc). The blue box (for glass), the food bin and brown garden waste bins will continue to be used. The red box will no longer be used, and will be collected.

All bin collections will be on the same day each week - one week it will be general waste and food bins. The next week it will be the recycling bin and blue box, garden waste and food waste bins.

OTHER CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS : No reports presented.

WEBSITE : In advance of the meeting, JK had issued some mockups of the “new” website. The one with photographs of actual buildings was seen to be the most attractive. Lindsey Johnston has been very helpful in this process and JK will liaise with her to take the project forward.

New Action 1Sep14(e): JK to report progress on new website project.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH : IC reported that the various planned liaison meetings had been cancelled again. But he was also able to report positively that there seemed to have been little criminal activity in the Association area. However there was a continuing need to be vigilant. (Subsequently BC was in the company of a lady from Alnwickhill Road where there recently had been a spate of three burglaries in that area, including removal of a house-owner’s car.)

“Cold calling” : IC reported that there had been no groundswell of interest in emulating the Waverley Feuars’ action of making their area into a “No Cold Calling” zone.

BLACKET AVENUE WORKING PARTY : It was reported that the normal maintenance work is continuing but also that the Council had supplied 50 vinca plants for inclusion in the existing shrub beds. Also Council are going to survey and repair wooden fences as required.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING : Nothing to report – in future reports, unless occasioned by a planning issue, will be subsumed into the Neighbourhood Watch report.

COMMUNICATIONS : ***Newsletter*** : To be finalised at the next meeting and distributed immediately afterwards. Separate documents for newsletter and AGM papers will be created although printed copies of both of these documents will be delivered at the same time, if AGM papers are available at that time. Topics to be included in the Newsletter are :

New Action 1Sep14(f): HF to invite participation in and list arrangements for AGM.

New Action 1Sep14(g): RSA to document meeting with Planning - also new processes if available.

New Action 1Sep14(h): HF to seek new Committee members - including any unfilled roles.

New Action 1Sep14(i): JK to request new or changed eMAIL addresses.

New residents : It was agreed that a new Committee meeting agenda item entitled New Residents would be added to keep track of changes to the area.

SOCIAL EVENTS : **Open Gardens** : This was seen to have been a great success at which a net profit of some £180 was made. The use of the gazebo was agreed to have been invaluable but RF was seeking somewhere for this to be stored longer term as he no longer had space for it.

Bec reported that there had been very little interest in the previously suggested Children’s Event (only two positive eMAILs) so had been dismissed. But she is going to eMAIL round the residents with young families to see if any interest in a Halloween event, probably to be held in Alfred Place.

New Action 1Sep14(j): Bec to poll interest in and possibly organise Halloween event.

AGM : Agreed that this would be held on 17th November probably in Salisbury Arms again, subject to some rearrangement of facilities, although other possibly more expensive venues may be considered. The budget would be of the same order as last year and estimates based on previous attendances. It would be a purely social event (i.e. no external speaker) although BC undertook to get some copies of old maps of the area for display and/or circulation as a result of donation below.

New Action 1Sep14(k): HF to negotiate with Salisbury Arms for AGM.

New Action 1Sep14(l): BC to request AGM reports from HF, Bec, HMac, IC & RSE.

New Action 1Sep14(m): BC to provide copies of maps for display.

OTHER BUSINESS : **23B Minto Street** : BC made a formal complaint of a “statutory nuisance” through the H&S part of the Council website in May and while there was a response, there was no obvious improvement. With the door hanging across the narrow pavement, BC along with JK and Anne Sturrock subsequently made more approaches to the Council which resulted in the store being partially demolished which improved matters.

However there remain issues with what is left and the fact that NO apparent action has been taken about state of the house itself, particularly the insecure and dangerous window on to the pavement.

New Action 1Sep14(n): JK to provide RSA with latest contact on Council for RSA to pursue.

TV reception & 4G mobile signals : **Update** : BC will request update from Lindsay Johnston which he will circulate before next meeting.

Expansion of Blacket Association area : It was agreed that a further discussion would be held on this although some comments were made to the effect that we did not want to “stand on any other organisation’s toes”.

Minto Hotel : BC reported that he had very belatedly been in touch with Helen Cassels, Middleby Street, who was still experiencing issues with the noise & clients emanating from the Minto Hotel although it had marginally improved in the recent weeks. As previously reported, it was pointed out that the Association would unlikely be able to provide much help.

Map donation : HF brought along a copy of an 1826 engraved map which a previous resident Mrs Joan Weir had kindly donated to the Association. This was much admired by all.

Wall in Blacket Avenue : It was noted that the University and their contractor (Geo. M Bolton) had spent a long time making good the wall of the University postgraduate accommodation which is on Blacket Avenue. This care and attention has resulted in a superlative replacement for the previous structure and the Association will write to thank each of them.

New Action 1Sep14(o): BC to write to University & contractor re rebuilt wall in Blacket Avenue.

Railing history : HF noted her thanks to Bertram Zank for his updated historical railing document. It was noted that, in general, the Committee welcomed the reinstatement of railings.

Cockburn Association membership : RSA in his role as a Member of the Council of the Cockburn Association would like to explore with the Committee their views on the value and role of the Cockburn Association and the kind of relationship they would wish to have - as part of a wider strategic review about the role and focus of the Cockburn that has just started.

New Action 1Sep14(p): RSA to explore Blacket Association relationship with Cockburn.

Revised Proposed Local Development Plan : RSE noted that the Council had issued another version of the proposed Edinburgh local Development Plan - BC passed copy to RSA. RSE/RSA will review it and report back on any implications.

New Action 1Sep14(q): RSE & RSA to review & report on revised Local Development Plan.

FUTURE MEETINGS :

Committee	- 20 October (<i>host : RSE</i>)
AGM	- 17 November (<i>venue : tbc</i>)
Committee	- 12 January 2015 (<i>host : HF</i>)

SUMMARY of CLOSED ACTIONS :

- 14Apr14(c): *Bec – to consider usability of extra fields for accounts data.*
- 14Apr14(g): *Bec - to report back on reaction to proposed Children's Event.*
- 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(j) : *IC - to issues & options in banning "cold calling".*
- 12May14(k) : *RS/BC - to meet with Helen Cassells.*

SUMMARY of OPEN ACTIONS :

- 13Jan14(b): *ALL – elect Vice-Chair - carried forward.*
- 13Jan14(c): *ALL – identify new Secretary for 2014 AGM - carried forward.*
- 14Apr14(e): *AS – to report progress on dealings with Lighting Department - carried forward.*
- 12May14(a): *ALL – to consider Committee structure re workload analysis - carried forward.*
- 12May14(h): *BC - to report progress on FREEVIEW/4G signalling issues - carried forward.*
- 12May14(i): *RF/HMac - to examine possibility of expanding Association area – carried forward.*
- 1Sep14(a): *ALL - to actively seek out & approach possible new Committee members.*
- 1Sep14(b): *ALL - to find candidates for Minutes, Secretary, Newsletter and Planning.*
- 1Sep14(c): *BC - to provide list of current Committee with re-election dates.*
- 1Sep14(d): *RSA to report on new Planning processes & procedures when issued.*
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