

Welcome everybody to the 3rd edition of the Sustainability bulletin.

Group Members: Anne Starsmeare, Jenny Dunbar, Peter France, Lindsay Johnson, Alan Paterson, Fiona Salzen, David Starsmeare.

We are very pleased to welcome a contribution from Richard Scothorne on Planning & look forward to receiving similar contribution in the future.

Living in the Blackets with an electric vehicle (EV)

We are lucky to live in a location close to the city centre. Whilst shorter, local journeys can be made without a car, this is not always practicable. We have collected some local experiences of living with an EV.

Charging

The biggest public network for EV charging in Scotland is ChargePlace Scotland <https://chargeplacescotland.org/>. You need to join as a member and it is worth getting a RFID membership card (a contactless card) although iPhone/Android apps can also be used.

The nearest public charging site to the Blackets is Pollock Halls which has a number of chargers. These are currently open 24/7 and are free to use for ChargePlace Scotland members.

Edinburgh Council maintain a number of public charging sites (on the Charge Place Scotland network) favouring hub sites. The nearest Edinburgh Council site to the Blackets is Thirlestane Road which are for a fee.

The council has an email address where residents can request further public charging facilities electricvehicles@edinburgh.gov.uk

It is also possible to install a home charging point for those with off-street parking or a garage. There is currently a Government Grant available for installation of up to £350 for certain households.

Those with home chargers may be able to share with neighbours using websites such as <https://co-charger.com/>. If any resident of the Blackets has an EV charger that they would be interested in sharing with other residents, please get in touch.

Parking/Low Emissions Zone

For those that don't have off street parking the Zone 7 current cost at time of writing April 2023 is £34.70. The Low Emissions Zone (LEZ) is due to be enforced in Edinburgh from 1 June 2024 EVs will be able to enter the LEZ.

Range

This depends on the EV you buy and the type of driving you do. Driving around town is generally more efficient than longer journeys which may need a bit more planning if you need to stop and charge.

Zap Map (www.zap-map.com) is a good tool to check real-time availability of chargers across multiple networks.

Planning - Home insulation and energy sustainability

A small group of interested residents has explored the most appropriate role for the Blacket Association to play in this agenda. We agreed that the Blacket Association will:

- Ensure that residents are up to date with the latest approach of the planners in terms of energy related development (eg solar panels on listed buildings, conservation grade double glazing etc). The new National Planning Framework 4 is now in place - and so supersedes the existing local plan – and there are likely to be changes in the approach as NPF4 has a strong focus on sustainability and the implications of the climate emergency. I will be discussing this with the planners and will be able to report on how approaches around planning permission may be changing.
- Help people to get in touch with others locally who have experience of going through the hoops already (eg on solar, air and ground source heating, double glazing etc). To this end I will continue to monitor planning applications and decisions locally with this in mind and create an updated list of local residents who may be able to help others with particular queries. We will be setting up a way of helping people to get in touch with others with experience, and will advise in due course.

We are not the only organisation to be thinking on these lines and it would clearly be valuable to keep in touch with others. So I will be liaising with the West Blacket Association, the Grange Association, and the Community Council to ensure that we aren't reinventing the wheel.

Richard Scothorne, richard@scothorne.com

Secondary Glazing - The economical & easy choice

There are many ways to upgrade the energy efficiency of your windows which we'll cover in future issues.

One great alternative to double glazing, is secondary glazing. It's really easy to install, it fits most windows and doesn't require planning permission. There are several glazing companies who now provide this clever glazing solution. 5 years ago, we had secondary glazing installed by Glaze And Save, who were extremely professional, and their award-winning system has certainly made a huge difference.

They are made from InvisiTherm polycarbonate sheets, which are securely kept in place by strong magnetic strips. This glazing system is virtually invisible and because it is completely reversible, your historic windows will remain intact. They're also completely compatible with working shutters.

Since installing them, we've found that they've greatly improved thermal insulation, totally eradicated condensation, reduced noise and helped prevent UV rays fading the furniture and paintings.

JD

Stoves - Keep our air clean!

Domestic fuel burning is now the biggest single source of particulate air pollution in the UK – more than cars and lorries. A stove emits 3000x more particulates than a gas boiler per Kwh. Tiny particles get into the bloodstream and contribute to asthma, heart disease and cancer. Edinburgh is a smoke control zone where only smokeless fuel (anthracite & authorised manufactured briquettes) can be used on open fires. Wood can only be used in an "exempt appliance", a stove set out in the DEFRA list. It is illegal to burn wood in a domestic fireplace – and no, there is no exemption for listed buildings!

We love watching the flickering flames, but pollution from them has been growing at 3% a year. Do you really need that woodburner? Please consider the impact of breathing in all those tiny particles on your family and your neighbours. And if you can't give it up, consider replacing your old stove with the latest Ecodesign models, use kiln dried logs, and keep the chimney swept.

Guidance see [Wood burning stoves FAQs: updated February 2023 – SPICe Spotlight | Solas air SPICe \(spice-spotlight.scot\)](#) and [Smoke control – The City of Edinburgh Council](#)

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