

FRIENDS OF THE MEADOWS AND BRUNSFIELD LINKS

14 Autumn 2006

NEWSLETTER 13 - SUMMER 2006

Dates for your Diary - Meetings of the Friends

The next Meeting will be at the Gillis Centre, 100 Strathearn Road (near the junction with Whitehouse Loan) at 7.30pm on 13 November 2006. There will be an opportunity to hear and to ask questions to Cllr Chris Wigglesworth in relation to Planning and Licensing issues. Unfortunately, a planned illustrated talk on the Trees of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links by Max Coleman has had to be postponed to a future Meeting.

The Spring Meeting is planned for 7.30pm on 5th February 2007 but the venue has yet to be decided.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL:

Please Renew Your Membership for 2006/2007 (form enclosed)

Ask a friend to join !

We need a new Newsletter Editor and Webmaster (see the Chairman if you can help)

POLICING ISSUES

On October 10, the Police met with members of the local Community Councils and the Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links at a meeting Chaired by Cllr Wigglesworth and attended by Cllrs Cairns and MacLaren. After the Meeting, Inspector Gavin Phillip, Lothian & Borders Police, issued this Report:

As you may have noticed, there have been a number of recent articles in the Edinburgh Evening News regarding incidents involving gangs of youths who have been responsible for assaulting and on some occasions robbing people in the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links areas. While the Police take such incidents very seriously and ensure that they are properly investigated, they are very rare. Although there has been a slight increase in the number of incidents reported to the Police during the summer months in comparison with previous years, the majority are of a minor nature and I am pleased to report that there has been an increase in the number of incidents for which a culprit (s) have been identified and been reported to the Procurator Fiscal. At most times of the day and night, the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links are busy with people walking through the area, or using it for recreational purposes. This in itself makes people feel safe and provides reassurance. However during the hours of darkness the areas are less densely populated, and I would therefore encourage you to take sensible precautions if you are walking through the area. This could include

- Keeping to bright well- lit parts
- Being alert to your surroundings
- If at all possible avoid confrontation, look and act confident but try to avoid "eyeballing" strangers and do not get into an argument with them

- If there is trouble, think about your escape route, move away from people or groups that you find threatening, and consider a safe place you can go and seek help.

If you do see a crime being committed, please call 999 in an emergency and urgent police assistance is required or 311-3131 to report the matter to the Police.

I have recently met with representatives of the three Community Councils who border the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links, elected members responsible for the areas, as well as The Friends of the Meadows group, council officials, Edinburgh University Students Association and the Edinburgh Community Safety Partnership. At this meeting issues such as lighting, maintenance of shrubs and trees as well as Police response to incidents was discussed. We will continue to work together to ensure that the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links remains an area in which people feel they can either safely pass through or utilise for recreational activity. I would therefore seek your assistance in promoting this message in the communities you live. As the Inspector responsible for Operational Policing matters in the Meadows, I will continue to look for improvement in the way in which we Police the area, and would be happy to discuss any issues with you. I have spoken with Inspector Tom Galbraith who has responsibility for the Bruntsfield Links area who would be happy to do likewise. The contact details are as follows

Gavin Phillip Sector Inspector, Tollcross 311-3131 or gavin.phillip@lbp.pnn.police.uk

Tom Galbraith Sector Inspector, Newington and Morningside 311-3131 or tom.galbraith@lbp.pnn.police.uk

Following this Meeting, we got the following Message From PC Bruce Burt, the local community policeman:

I am the Community Beat Officer for the area of Marchmont and was at the recent meeting at the cricket Pavilion in the Meadows with you.

Every Fortnight I send out via email a newsletter, which has all reported crime in the area. I am keen to add as many people to my mailing list to make them aware of ongoing incidents in the area. Would you like to be added to my mailing list? If so would you mind supplying your name, address contact telephone number and what company/organisation you represent.

Here are a list of all crimes reported to Lothian and Borders Police between 30th September and Friday 13th October 2006 in the area of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links.

In the early hours of the 8th October a male was arrested for a breach of the peace in the Meadows after shouting and swearing.

At 03:00hrs on the 7th October Melville Drive near to Bruntsfield Links a teenage male was assaulted and robbed of his mobile telephone. The suspect is described as male white 20 years old medium build 5'8" and wearing a dark hooded top.

At 23:00hrs on the 6th October outside licensed premise in Bruntsfield Links a male was assaulted by another male. The suspect is described as male white 13 years old slim build 5'6" wearing a baseball cap, white long sleeved top and dark trousers.

Between 00:30hrs and 01:00hrs on the 5th October at the public toilets in the Meadows rubbish was set alight which caused smoke damage to the toilets. The fire was put out by the Fire Brigade.

In the early hours of the 1st October in Meadow Lane a male was assaulted and robbed of his wallet by two males. These males were arrested by police.

If you have any information relating to any of the crimes mentioned please could you contact myself PC 3484-A Bruce Burt at Howdenhall Police station on telephone number 0131 658 5235 (direct dial) or alternatively email bruce.burt@lbp.pnn.police.uk

Bruce Burt
Community Beat Officer Marchmont
Howdenhall Police Station
9 Howdenhall Road, Edinburgh EH16 6TF
tel 0131 658 5235 (direct dial)

MAGNET PLAY AREA

Update from the Council on the Magnet Play Area.

The Magnet Play area has been successfully tendered and awarded to Robert Darling and Sons Ltd.

The proposed contract start date is 25 September 2006. The contract will take 4 months to complete but as always will be weather dependant.

The contract will be administered by the departments Technical Section, Ron Tulloch 529 7955.

As part of these works the existing play area at East Meadows will be removed and put back to Park Land.

James Galloway
Senior Technical Officer

Culture and Leisure
23 Waterloo Place
Edinburgh
EH1 3BH
0131 529 7972

THE GILLIS CENTRE

The Gillis Centre's past

The site and buildings that form the present Gillis Centre hold a wide and varied interest for secular, church and architectural historians.

The history of the Whitehouse site can be traced back to the 15th century when property comprised a small estate on the outskirts of the city. Over the following centuries, the Whitehouse became connected with the outbreak of the Great Plague and accusations of witchcraft. Also, the Whitehouse holds some 18th century literary associations with some important works written within its walls.

The ecclesiastical history of the site goes back to 1834 with the founding by Bishop James Gillis of the first post-Reformation convent in Scotland. For over 150 years the present Gillis Centre was well known in Edinburgh as St Margaret's Convent and School under the ministry of the Ursulines of Jesus. In 1986, the complex was renamed Gillis College and housed the senior seminary for the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh until 1995 when the Scottish Bishops decided to locate a National Seminary in Bearsden, Glasgow. The complex now became Gillis Centre, the Archdiocesan offices and agencies moved into the building and work began on developing a conference centre.

As well as the remaining Whitehouse dating back to 1670, the Gillis Centre comprises St Margaret's Chapel designed by James Gillespie Graham (probably under significant influence from Augustus Welby

Northmore Pugin) and opened in 1835. From the same period, the gatehouse and convent building was also designed by James Gillespie Graham, and Edward Welby Pugin (son of AWN Pugin) designed the school building completed in 1863.

The Gillis Centre now provides a range of office accommodation for various diocesan commissions bodies and organisations. In addition, the Gillis Centre houses the theological library from the former Gillis College, and provides conference facilities and residential accommodation available for commercial hire.

MEADOWS FESTIVAL

The Meadows Festival, one of the longest-running community events in Edinburgh's was axed this year after more than 30 years. It was claimed by the organisers that this was over growing levels of red tape and the soaring costs involved in staging it and the lack of volunteers to help

Representatives from various Community Councils and the Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links met on October 24 to attempt to revive the event in 2007, and this topic will be further discussed at our Meeting on November 13.

THE PAVILION CAFÉ, MEADOWS

In August this year, a new café made its tasty arrival in part of the cricket pavilion. Selling freshly made soup, sandwiches, paninis, salads, smoothies and a selection of cakes as well as teas and coffee, the café is a welcome addition to the cultural life of the Meadows. Antonia, the café proprietor and Friend of the Meadows member, hopes that she is providing a service that will benefit many of the people that use and live around the Meadows – joggers, cricketers, families, students to name a few.

Since opening the café, there has been great support from the local community and there has been a significant reduction in the amount of vandalism to the building. It is nice to see a historic building being utilised rather than lying empty and unused. We now have somewhere people can relax, enjoy a drink or something to eat whilst appreciating the beauty of the Meadows.

The café is open seven days a week from 10.00am till dusk

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Listed below are names and contact details for committee members of the Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links. Please address all correspondence to the secretary

Chair: Peng Lee Yap, 5 Meadow Place, EH9 1JZ Tel 229 0948
email : [Peng.LeeYap@snbts.csa.scot.nhs.uk](mailto: Peng.LeeYap@snbts.csa.scot.nhs.uk)

Secretary and acting Treasurer
Hamish McKenzie, 7 Bruntsfield Terrace, EH10 4EX Tel 229 6055
email: [Hamish@bruntsfield7.freeserve.co.uk](mailto: Hamish@bruntsfield7.freeserve.co.uk)

Membership Secretary Josephine Scott, 31/8 Sallisbury Road,
EH16 5AA Tel 667 3386
email: [jo.scott@ukonline.co.uk](mailto: jo.scott@ukonline.co.uk):

Committee: Colin Christison, Dennis Gallagher, Naomi Burnett,
Tim Puntis, Antonia Dickson & Neil Roger

Tree Warden: Mike Walsh, 17 Tantallon Place EH9 1NZ Tel 667 1708
email: [mcw@ecosse.net](mailto: mcw@ecosse.net)

Newsletter Editor and Webmaster: Position vacant: