



Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links

NEWSLETTER 33

Spring 2013

Convener's Comment

Barbecues

Although the weather has to some extent mitigated the effects of irresponsible use of barbecues on the Meadows during the past year, the Council's policy on barbecues is still one of concern to FOMBL. On 26 November 2012 the South Central Neighbourhood Partnership met to consider the legal options for banning barbecues, and came to the conclusion that the extra manpower involved in policing the Meadows during hot weather would be unaffordable. The papers for the meeting stated:

In order to provide adequate staff cover to patrol the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links on days and evenings when the demand is high, a budget for stand by and overtime payments would be required. Staff would also require to be provided with specialist equipment to extinguish barbecues. Therefore an additional budget for capital and training costs would be necessitated.

However, the subsequent meeting did not address this issue, but instead passed a resolution supporting 'increased barbecue site provision'. However, many barbecue fans don't bother to look for the sites, but put their barbecues on the grass anyway. Your committee felt that it was important that this issue was thoroughly thrashed out in a public meeting, to which all members could contribute. We have therefore arranged that our next meeting will be devoted to a debate on the subject, where all voices can be heard (*see box below*).

Drainage on the Links and Meadows

After last year's flooding, we were all wondering when our parks would recover. Some work on the drainage has been done, as illustrated overleaf, but much of the work had to be put on hold because of further flood damage. We hope that this year events will be cancelled if bad weather is forecast.

On a more cheerful note, we welcome a new transatlantic member who has contributed an article on page 2. We report some ideas for artwork on the Meadows (p. 3). We are pleased that the plans for improving North Meadow Walk are now taking account of our plea to avoid damage to tree roots. And while we still await the result of our application to WREN for major funding for our Barclay Corner project, we have received a welcome contribution from Scotmid in the form of £250 in vouchers. Perhaps they might go towards a prize for the person who comes up with a good name for a Meadows pathway that needs christening: the path leading from Middle Meadow Walk to the Magnet playpark past the tennis courts. Please get thinking! *Heather Goodare (Acting Convener)*

The next meeting of FOMBL will be on Monday 18 March at 7.30 p.m. at the Barclay Viewforth Church (Pillar Hall). Refreshments will precede the meeting. The subject will be a debate on the topic of increased barbecue site provision on the Meadows and Links. Councillor Jim Orr will propose the motion, and Audrey Simon will oppose it. The debate will then be open to the public, and finally a vote will be taken.

All are welcome.



Drainage works on the Links, December 2012

The view from Atlanta

One of the first things that struck me upon moving to Edinburgh two years ago was the lack of green space in the city. Beautiful and grand, with the whispers of history around every corner, I have been in love with the capital since I first visited in 1998. However, I find it hard to grasp the fact that there are no green patches around street lamp-posts or on street corners, or that there are few trees growing up from the pavements in residential neighbourhoods. These are things I took for granted during the many years I lived in Atlanta - plenty of green space to balance out the twelve-lane highways and sprawling industrial complexes.

However, the parks are a different matter. Room for my dogs and my husband and me to run, greens to practise putting, and amazing views of Arthur's seat and that fabulous Scottish sky, the Meadows and Links are a highlight of my life here in Edinburgh. The rolling hillocks of the Links and the grand old avenues of trees in the Meadows are truly and metaphorically a breath of fresh air to this girl who spent her childhood years in the Appalachian mountains of the Eastern USA.

The democracy of the Meadows and Links

But what these spaces really symbolize is equality. For no matter whether one owns a semi-detached in Morningside or shares a tenement off Lothian road with five other students, whether one is newly arrived from Eastern Europe working as a janitor or is an executive with Lloyds, these people can all be found enjoying the Meadows and Links. And rightfully so.

Without fail, there are those who do not appreciate the shared nature of the space or the fact that the earth is fragile. These people will leave their garbage, dog waste, and barbecue embers after they have gone home. But there are also others who appreciate the tenuousness of such space in an increasingly crowded planet and will do their bit to put their rubbish in bins and pick up an errant empty bottle to restore the balance. Thanks to these who care and behave responsibly both on the part of themselves and others, we can all continue to share this green space together. And all the citizens of Edinburgh - whether natives or new like me - will be the better off for it. *Jennifer Beck*

Artwork or ads?

There has been considerable discussion in the South Central Neighbourhood Partnership and MABLAG (Meadows and Bruntsfield Links Advisory Group) about the problem of graffiti on walls facing the Meadows, especially the back of the Scottish Power sub-station. One solution proposed by Council staff is to erect advertisement hoardings, which would prevent access to the walls. This would involve no cost to the Council, as it would be self-financing. Another would be to plant holly bushes, as was done on the south side of the Links along the university building. A third possibility

would be to commission artwork. Students and graduates of the Edinburgh School of Art are keen to discuss this, and Astrid Jaekel, who has already done some interesting work in Edinburgh, has written an article for us, which we are happy to print below. We are hoping that she and others will bring along some more examples of their work to our next meeting on 18th March. If everyone agrees that such a scheme would be preferable to advertisement hoardings we would then need to take the idea back to MABLAG, and seek sponsorship. Please let us know what you think. (Ed.)

Meadows/Bruntsfield Links Design Proposal

I am an artist/illustrator with a range of experience working on public art commissions. I generally work in the traditional medium of papercut and apply it in new and contemporary formats, often large-scale settings throughout the city.

Having arrived in Edinburgh in order to pursue my Master's degree in Illustration in 2010 I have spent a lot of time trying to understand what actually happens underneath the skin of the City. This curiosity has often inspired my work, much of which has been of a 'public art' flavour. I would relish the opportunity to explore the possibilities of public art within such a vibrant location as the Meadows/Bruntsfield Links.

The heart of Edinburgh

These parks are at the historic and cultural heart of Edinburgh; often overlooked in favour of the big headliners, it is these green spaces that provide the ordinary residents of our City with some of their fondest memories. They are a gathering place to socialise with friends, a place to sit alone and contemplate life, or a place to run around in an attempt to recreate ourselves. Furthermore, this green expanse provides us a timeline to the seasons, the cherry blossom lining Jawbone Walk indicating the coming of spring, giving way to the long summer nights barbecuing with friends, before the crisp autumn mornings full of reds and browns provide a welcome burst of colour on the walk to work, and finally an informal party venue on a cold December night to gather and watch the Hogmanay fireworks.

I would envisage the creation of a number of panels upon which snapshots of life within the Meadows/Links throughout history could be depicted. I would love to delve into the City records in order to gather images of previous festivals, events and gatherings that have taken place, and bring the atmosphere of these events back to life. I would hope to use a similar style to my work currently being installed along Rose Street (*see below*), and also believe that a similar construction method could be employed: i.e. either vinyl boards or back-lit laser cut metal panels, which would be easy to clean.

Astrid Jaekel

astridjaekel@gmail.com. www.astridjaekel.com

Mural at the Roxburghe, Rose Street



Volunteering: work parties on the Meadows

On Sat Feb 2nd a small group laboured hard to collect leaves, twigs and litter into collectable piles. Our next outing is on Sat. 2nd March 10.00-12.30 - meet at the Cricket Pavilion. We will aim to have a work party on the first Saturday morning of each month - that way people can write these into their diaries, e-calendars, mobile phone reminders, post-it notes on the kitchen door and things-to-remember lists on the loo door, etc. Do try and come along for some or all of these meetings. We have negotiated a special rate for coffee at the former police box – now called the Meadow Box!

Richard Ellis Tel. 0131 447 4124 email: rellis.consultancy@virgin.net

Forthcoming events

Meadows Marathon 3 March 2013; **Rock ‘n’ Roll Half Marathon** 14 April 2013
Community Safety Event 14 April 2013; **Pedal on Parliament 2013** 18 May 2013
Meadows Festival and Taylor’s Funfair 2013 27 May – 2 June 2013.

Meadows Chamber Orchestra: final concert in this season, the 41st in the orchestra’s history, will take place on Saturday 25 May 2013 in Canongate Kirk at 7.45 p.m. The programme, conducted by Peter Whelan, includes three works by Handel: the Arrival of the Queen of Sheba, the Concerto Grosso in G major, and the Water Music. Also included is Mozart’s Oboe Concerto in C major K314 played by Rosie Staniforth, and two short new works by young composers, John de Simone and Alfredo Caponetto. Discounted tickets from Heather Goodare (*contact details below*).

Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 20 June at 7.30 p.m. at the Croquet Pavilion, Leven Terrace.

Useful contacts

Mike Shields Community Parks Officer 0131 529 5126; email: mike.shields@edinburgh.gov.uk
Police: Safer Neighbourhood Team. PC 4601 Yocksan Bell 0131 662 5022 or Sgt 4554 Peter Houston (same number). To report a crime: 0131 311 3131; emergency 999; or (anonymously) to Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111.

Anti-social behaviour (24/7): 0131 529 7050; **Litter:** 0131 529 3030

Defective lamp-post lighting: note number and ring Clarence – 0800 23 23 23

David Doig Local Environment Manager (responsibility for roads, parks and green spaces): email david.doig@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel. 0131 529 5187

Forestry Service: email forestry.service@edinburgh.gov.uk. Tel. 0131 311 7079

Complaints regarding Council vehicles driving on Links or Meadows:

Taskforce, Craigmillar Depot: 0131 664 8330; or Jim Monaghan on 07786 110 377

Graffiti: report to 0131 200 2000 or email operationdivide@lbp.pnn.police.uk

Kathy Evans: Local Community Safety Manager (tackling anti-social behaviour and joint working with the police) kathy.evans@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel. 0131 529 5106

Environmental Warden team leader: Mohammed Demnati 0131 529 5204

FOMBL Committee members

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Membership Secretary: Mrs Sabine Murdoch, 1 Greenhill Gardens, EH10 4BN Tel. 0131 229 4793.

Minutes Secretary: Elizabeth Jogee **Committee:** Andy Devenport, Richard Ellis, Linda Hendry, Neil Roger.

Webmaster: Philip McDowell

Website: <http://www.fombl.org.uk>

We thank Scotmid for their gift of £250 in vouchers to help with our fundraising for the Barclay Corner.

SCOTMID co-operative