

## **Craigeith / Blackhall Community Council**

### **Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 20 April 2026 at Blackhall St Columba's Church**

**Present** - Community Council - Grant Roger (Acting Chair/treasurer), Alan Denham (Secretary), Duncan Osler, Martin Riddell, Peter May, Darlene Jeffrey, James Burr;

Inverleith Ward Councillor - Hal Osler;

Police Scotland - PC Paul Gunderson;

City of Edinburgh Council - Jane Iannarelli, Scott Dorkin, Crawford McGee, Evelyn Kilmurry

**In attendance** - 13 members of the local community

**Apologies** - Stuart Pinkerton, Martin Riddell, Russell Murdoch, Jim McLennan, Councillor Alan Beal.

**Minutes of 23 March** - Minutes approved.

**Police Report** - PC Colin Cursiter spoke to his report :

#### **Call volume:**

Year-on-year, call volume for this month's report remains steady.

#### **Trends:**

Youth antisocial behaviour has been significant during the Easter break. This has been the main focus of our time over the last few weeks and has included projectiles being thrown at moving vehicles, people, and from bridges over the cycle path. Enquiries are continuing into those responsible and the necessary action will be taken once concluded.

There have been reports of bogus workers in the Inverleith ward, and we would generally anticipate further reports of this as we come into the nicer weather with homeowners looking to have work done to their properties. Please visit the link below for advice, and consider signing up to the Neighbourhood Alert system:

#### **CONTACT US;**

**Email (for all ward areas):** [EdinburghCPTNorthWest@scotland.police.uk](mailto:EdinburghCPTNorthWest@scotland.police.uk) Email address is not monitored 24/7 or for reporting crime or ongoing incidents. These should be reported by calling 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency).

**X (Twitter):** @PSOSNWEinburgh **Facebook:** <https://en-gb.facebook.com/EdinburghPoliceDivision>

Sign up to the Neighbourhood Alert system here: <https://neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk/sign-up-for->

#### **Notable incidents/pieces of work:**

Nothing of note.

#### **What your Community Team have been involved in:**

Unfortunately, our staffing levels continue to be lower than normal, and we have had various abstractions to events in Edinburgh & elsewhere, along with assisting colleagues in other areas of Drylaw.

We conducted more speed checks and gave suitable advice where it was required without the need for any additional action.

**What is planned for the coming month:**

We have further speed checks planned and now have bike marking events in the diary for over the summer months. The dates planned are as follows:

- Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May, 1500-1800hrs at Craikleith Retail Park
- Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1400-1700hrs at Inverleith Park
- Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August, 1100-1400hrs at Drylaw Neighbourhood Centre

**Other matters:**

It is noted from the March minutes that there were a couple of items highlighted that could benefit from clarification:

- It was noted that bike thefts from sheds in Gardner Road were omitted from the report. To clarify, we do our best not to speak of specific incidents or details regarding incidents - this helps to protect the privacy and anonymity of individuals. However, our report did speak of acquisitive crime with advice to keep valuables hidden/locked away where possible.
- With regards to Councillor Osler's comments that Police are trained in the use of quad bikes - this is true however tends to relate more to rural areas rather than within Edinburgh city itself.

***Please note that any figures provided in this report are not verified and are my interpretation of Police systems only.***

The following matters were raised in the follow-up discussion :-

A member of the community had witnessed shoplifting at Sainsbury's where the culprit had fled by means of the fire escape. She was disappointed in the response from staff. Although stores should report cases of shoplifting, PC Gunderson said that stores had different policies in relation to shoplifting and experiences vary. Additionally security staff change over time. It was recommended that she contact the Sainsbury management to gain more information on their policy.

It was noted that the press had reported an incident on Roseburn Path where a cyclist was threatened by local youths in black and on black bikes. Additionally the Secretary had passed 8-10 youths on black bikes doing wheelies on Queensferry Road near Stewart Melville's College in poor light on Easter Sunday.

It was suggested that there should be increased opportunities for occupying such youths with skate parks similar to Saughton Park. It was commented that Drylaw Park has a skate park, but not of the same scale as Saughton.

Ravelston Woods - a question was asked whether there were problems with youths in the Woods. PC Gunderson said that in his 3 years in the area, he had not been called out to an incident. Councillor Osler said that there had been experiences in the past but not recently.

## **New Blackhall Library**

The 4 members of the City of Edinburgh Council set out the background to the replacement library :-

Blackhall Library building was affected by RAAC concrete - it was the worst example of RAAC in the city and there was no alternative to closing the building on safety grounds;

It was a well used library, third busiest in the city;

The catchment area is wide - not limited to Blackhall - and extends to Cramond, Barnton, Craigleith and Drylaw;

Council's thoughts are moving to a replacement which will need to fit in with new library strategy and the direction of travel over the next 5 years;

The new building could be a hub building offering not only library services but other council services such as housing and social services. Recently opened libraries at Ratho and Maybury are linked to a school and GP services, and also provide a social hub;

The permanent solution is not an easy fix and the Council decided to provide a temporary library at Davidson's Mains Primary School. It is anticipated that it will open in the next 2 months. While it is a satisfactory interim solution, it is not the same as a permanent solution. The Council is passionate about something that will work for the community;

Ahead of a formal consultation, the Council has been seeking community and users views including school children to inform the consultation. Once the temporary library opens, it will include information panels about both community engagement and the online survey. The forthcoming online survey will also be supported by walk-in events.

The following questions/matters/issues were raised by the community members present :-

What is the date for completion of the permanent library ?

Council - There is not a target date for completion. Allowing for the forthcoming consultation, reporting to Committee on the results of the consultation and the preparation of detailed designs it could be a minimum of 3 years.

Where will the new library be located ?

Council - The old site is not ideal for a replacement - difficulty of access from a busy arterial road, not clear that it could accommodate a hub building, and the preference is to work jointly with other parts of the Council. No specific sites have yet been identified but it is known that Davidson's Mains Primary School needs significant investment and will require to be upgraded in the future. The need for a new library presents a possibility of new resources for each being brought forward together. The primary school site is central to the library catchment area.

The new building will last 60-80 years and it will be important the Council work with future users including school children.

Community - the temporary library at Davidson's Mains Primary School raised concerns amongst parents about children's safety. Council officials were not aware of these concerns and agreed to look further into the matter. They said that there is a lot of evidence of libraries and schools working together satisfactorily.

If no library what will the old site be used for ?

Council - It could be redeveloped for other uses including housing.

Hub

Community - Blackhall has 3 separate groups of shops but no central focus. A well located hub in Blackhall would be welcome in addressing this problem, but a hub in Davidson's Mains would not fulfil this role. One view was that the existing library site on Hillhouse Road is ideal and has provided easy access for 50 years, exemplified by the high usage of the building before closure. Rather than a large hub further away, there was a view amongst the community that something smaller would be preferable, sited in an accessible location in Blackhall. Given the City Council's 20 minute walk-in policy, the new library should be sited as central as possible, as it will be important to maintain a high level of patronage.

Councillor Hal Osler - the new library provides a chance for the community to think about what other uses and services will be needed in the area. The library service is evolving with enhanced provision. New libraries in the city located next to schools, GP services and meeting rooms.

The Council was asked whether a facility similar to that in Pennywell combining housing and the library in the same structure would be feasible but the Council thought that it would not work in this location.

The Chair said that the forthcoming consultation should specifically ask what additional services the community would wish to be considered as part of the new library.

### **Other Community Council Matters**

#### **Strachan Road traffic lights (Hillhouse Road/Telford Road junction)**

The proposed installation of a pedestrian green man phase at Strachan Road was welcomed by the community council. Nevertheless to implement it, it is disappointing that the disabled parking space will be required to be moved further away from the Blackhall Medical Centre. Likewise the removal of the current easy parking for the shops opposite could raise customer problems. There will be a consultation later in 2026 on the TRO required to implement the changes.

### **Ward Councillor Reports -**

#### **Councillor Hal Osler reported on :-**

The current access problems in north west Edinburgh caused by road works on St John's Road and Corstorphine Road, as well as the current major road closure at

Davidson's Mains roundabout for 10 weeks. She said that pedestrian safety was important and the changes at D Mains will support this objective.

The worn white lines on Queensferry Road/Hillhouse Road are to be replaced - but no date available.

Following a Freedom of Information request, information is now available on the Edinburgh Council's web site setting out the workload of Councillors by Ward. Workload in Inverleith Ward is high.

### **AOCB - Tram Consultation**

A member of the community sought an update on the tram consultation. It is expected to go the June meeting of the Transport and Environment Committee. It was also noted that a number of political parties have indicated that they will not support the financing of the tram extension.

Next meeting - to be held on 18 May 2026. The AGM will also take place on that date.

Alan Denham

Secretary

Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council

21 April 2026