

## **Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council**

### **Annual Report 2024-26**

#### **Covering Reports by Chairman, Secretary and Digital Engagement**

This report covers the period from April 2024 to March 2026. During the period the key office holders were Stuart Pinkerton, chairman, Alan Denham, secretary, and Grant Roger, treasurer. This report is a joint chairman and secretary report. Please note that the report covers a 2-year period as community council election were held in spring 2025 and the 2025 AGM coincided with the election of the new community council

The Community Council has held face to face monthly meetings in Blackhall St Columba's Church and welcomes the interest and participation by the local community in matters of local concern. Additionally the continued support, presence and advice of the Inverleith and Murrayfield Ward Councillors as well as Police Scotland at the meetings is both appreciated and welcomed.

**Planning matters** - the community council support local residents where significant developments are proposed generating local concerns and which in the opinion of the community council, could affect nearby residential amenity adversely.

10 Columba Road - although not part of a conservation area, the proposed demolition of the large detached house - last used as a nursing home - and its replacement with a 4 storey block of 11 flats resulted in significant local concerns both in terms of the impact on the character of the area and the parking issues. The decision by the city council to refuse planning permission was welcomed. Likewise the subsequent retention and upgrading of the dwelling is equally welcome and will do much to retain the established character of the area.

City Plan 2030 - the approval of the Plan safeguarding important areas of open space at Hillhouse Road Woods, Craigcrook Road 'horse field', Ravelston Park and Orchard Parks was welcomed.

**Roads and Transport** - as in previous years, road issues continued to be a matter of local concern to residents. Speeding, poor road condition including potholes, and blocked gully drains were items raised regularly.

**Potholes** - The 2022/23 annual report stated - "The poor road condition of various sections of Queensferry Road/Hillhouse Road was noted frequently and it was disappointing to learn that there is no City Council programme of upgrade to address the problems, despite it having the third highest number of defects in the city." It is equally disappointing to report that after 4 years there has been no change despite concerns being raised in 2025 with Ward Councillors. No investment is proposed in 2026/27. During the year there has also been a significant deterioration in road conditions on other roads in the area eg parts of Craigcrook Road, South Groathill Avenue which provide key access to Craigleith Retail Park, and Orchard Brae junction.

**Bus services** - The continued financial support from Edinburgh Council for service 13 in 2025 is welcomed by the community council. The subsequent changes to the timetable when the bus times varied on each hour is however disappointing.

The continued absence of a direct bus service to Stockbridge from Blackhall and parts of Craigleith is disappointing.

**Experimental Traffic Road Order** - the City Council approved the changes on Queensferry Road introduced as part of Spaces for People through an ETRO in 2025. Despite the community council's concerns about the changes including at the Craigleith Road junction and Orchard Road junction and the possibility of bus lanes being operational 24/7, 365 days a year, to the disadvantage of the local community, the changes were approved without any acknowledgement of the community council concerns and no feedback was provided by the city council.

**Craigleith Drive Tunnel** - local residents' campaign expressing concerns about the unsafe nature of the tunnel with shared pedestrian and vehicle space due to the disregard for pedestrians by some motorists was supported by Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council. The positive outcome with priority being given to pedestrian safety is welcome and implementation of the works was completed in April 2026.

**Maidencraig Crescent Steps** - their location adjacent to specialist housing for the elderly means the steps are used regularly and frequently by elderly residents. With the absence of a ramp adjacent to the steps, there is little alternative but to use the steps to walk to Craigleith Shopping Centre. A number of residents have however suffered serious falls on the steps.

The continued absence of any progress to the provision of a ramp as an alternative to the steps is disappointing.

**Tram** - the city council undertook a consultation in 2025 on a tram extension from Granton to the Royal Infirmary. Following detailed discussion at several meetings, the community council expressed opposition to the use of the Roseburn Path as a tram route preferring the Orchard Brae alternative. The city council still has to report on the assessment of all the comments - expected in June 2026.

## **Other matters**

**Community Council Boundaries** - Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council participated fully in the city council consultation in 2024. The community council was keen to see the boundaries, particularly in Blackhall, adjusted to reflect more clearly the geographical area of Blackhall. The city council chose to ignore the comments and provided no explanation for maintaining the status quo.

**Police Reports** - the community council welcomes the continued involvement of Police Scotland in monthly meetings. Where attendance was not possible, a written report was provided. Their regular reports have highlighted the overall reduction in crime levels in north west Edinburgh in various categories during the period.

**Christmas support** - as in previous years, Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council paid for the Christmas tree and lights in Blackhall Dip in December 2024 and December 2025.

**Blackhall Dip Planters** - following concerns about the neglect of the planters installed by the City Council as part of the upgrading of Blackhall Dip in 2010, and their refusal to maintain them, the Community Council welcomed the support provided by the Blackhall

Horticultural Society to carry out the task. With funding for new plants from the Community Council, the volunteers from the Horticultural Society continue to maintain the planters.

**Meetings** - meetings are attended by a small but regular number from the community attending the meetings, often raising significant issues of local concern. All members of the community are welcome to attend the monthly meetings at Blackhall St Columba's Church - third Monday of the month (except July).

**Engagement** - the Community Council uses notice boards for dates of meetings, a web site on which the minutes and other information is available, e-mails to residents of forthcoming meetings and the agenda, and when appropriate the use of other social media.

Stuart Pinkerton - Chair  
Alan Denham - Secretary  
8 May 2026