

Craigleith / Blackhall Community Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 21 September 2026 at Blackhall St Columba's Church

Present - Community Council - Stuart Pinkerton (Chair), Grant Roger (Treasurer), Alan Denham (Secretary), Duncan Osler, Darlene Jeffrey, Martin Riddell, Russell Murdoch, Jim McLennan, James Burr.

Inverleith Ward Councillors - Hal Osler, Max Mitchell; Murrayfield Ward Councillor - Alan Beal.

Police Scotland - PCs Holly Matheson and Paul Gunderson

In attendance - 6 members of the local community

Apologies - Peter May

Minutes of 17 August 2026 - Minutes approved.

Police Report - The new community Police Officer PC Karen Maguire provided a written report :-

“Good evening,
Please accept my apologies. I am not on duty this evening therefore unable to attend. However, PC's Matheson and Gunderson will be in attendance.

Call volume:

Call volume for this month's report remains steady.

Trends:

- Youth antisocial behaviour has been a consistent issue both on the walkways and within residential areas.
- I have noted a number of calls in relation to 'suspicious persons' around residential properties. A reminder to ensure properties are secure and appear occupied. Please see attached for further advice.
- I have also noted steady calls in relation to thefts from vehicles. Please ensure vehicles are secure, consider a steering lock & the use of a Faraday pouch for keys that emit a signal (contactless entry/start)

Notable incidents/pieces of work:

- With support from the community team, the Local Initiative Team (LIT) had 2 days of action at Craigleith Retail Park. A number of persons were arrested and charged with relevant offences and a number of thefts were prevented.
- The Knife Angel is situated in Leith until 27th September 2026. Officers have been raising awareness and starting discussions with youths around violence and knife crime.
- Vehicle reported stolen and recovered same date, enquiries ongoing to try and identify the perpetrator.

What your Community Team have been involved in:

Our staffing levels continue to be lower than normal and we've had various abstractions supporting response policing / significant incidents and events within Edinburgh.

We continue to conduct uniformed patrols on the walkways and public parks

What is planned for the coming month:

Joint initiative with the LIT to conduct uniformed/plain clothes patrols on the walkways to target illegal motorbike/e-bike activity

Speed checks - locations tbc

Inputs at school covering ASB and Hate Crime

Other matters:

The national roll out of Policing for our Communities (PfoC) programme is now live in Edinburgh and looks to deliver more effective/efficient local policing services. A Community Investigations Hub will prioritise non-urgent demand.

Community Speed Watch “ Please see briefing note attached in the Annex and also more information below from PC Gunderson

Discussion:

With regard to car thefts, the subsequent discussion noted that there had been opportunistic attempts to steal cars in the area, often linked to break-ins to gain access to car keys.

Speed checks using community speed watch - community councillors and other members of the local community can be trained on speed guns and once approved can be part of a small team used in designated areas - see attached briefing note in Annex. PC Gunderson said that it was being rolled out more widely than East Lothian and they were now looking for volunteers to help with the new speed check initiative in parts of Edinburgh. Volunteers would also need to have NPPV Level 1 vetting when working with the police.

Concerns were also expressed about the excessive speeds of a minority of cars on Queensferry Road/Hillhouse Road, despite the reduction of the speed limit to 30mph.

E-bikes / e-scooters - a letter from Police Scotland had been circulated to schools in Inverleith Ward - see Annex.

Parking at Blackhall Primary School - a local resident had expressed concerns about the parking on double yellow lines at Cottage Park and Craigmillar Road junction. PC Gunderson will be at the school during the next week.

Seaford Drive - a local resident commented that her overnight deliveries of milk, juice and eggs had been regularly stolen. Although she had informed the dairy, she was asked by Police Scotland to use their report function to register the offences with the police;

Accident at Orchard Road/Queensferry Road junction - no information available;

Online deliveries - with Christmas approaching concerns about parcels left on door steps and being a possible target for theft.

Community Council Matters

City Plan 2040 - as part of the review of the development plan, Edinburgh Council has called for ideas to inform the Plan. These include sites to be protected from development, sites for development.

In the light of discussions at the August meeting, the Secretary had circulated a paper summarising the community council's ideas for CityPlan 2040. The paper was approved and comments will be submitted before the consultation ends on 30 September - now submitted .

Report back - Edinburgh Tram extension - noted that the City Council decided not to proceed with the northern leg of the north-south route, given the level of objections and funding issues. Priority will be given to the southern leg and the southern suburban rail line where funding for wider regional benefits may be available. A business case will be prepared and officials will report back to Edinburgh Council in 2027.

Ward Councillor Reports -

Matters raised by Ward Councillors :

Councillor Hal Osler :-

Local household waste bins being used for trade waste. All trades have to have their own commercial waste bins;

Blackhall Primary School playground - funding has been secured to upgrade the playground into a more robust and effective facility;

Ravelston Dykes Road/Craigcrook Road junction - vehicles have been driving straight through the junction. It was noted that when approaching northwards, there is no warning sign and no give way lines. Improvements in both directions are therefore necessary. Secretary agreed to email Councillor Osler on the matter;

Ravelston Park - reports of suspicious individuals hanging out;

Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) - officers have decided not to go ahead with the CPZ for the Blinkbonnys at present, but will be monitored for future implementation;

Craigleith Hill Crescent - problem with a large van using a parking space;

White lines - the reinstatement of white lines on Queensferry Road/Hillhouse Road is programmed. A local resident said that a relative visiting from Birmingham had commented on the very poor state of white lines in Edinburgh compared to Birmingham.

Councillor Alan Beal :-

Craigleith Tunnel was now fully operational;

Following the reorganisation of Stewart Melville College and Mary Erskine resulting in the Mary Erskine site now being for primary school pupils only, there was need for a road safety assessment. The 'Keep Clear' road marking on Ravelston Dykes

Road was not working effectively. It was also noted that following the relocation of all secondary pupils to the Stewart Melville site, it had resulted in an increase in cars parked in the Blinkbonnys;
Cold callers - an increasing problem.

Councillor Max Mitchell :-

Blackhall Primary School - welcomed the upgrading of the playground to provide a multi-activity play space;

Yellow lines - the double yellow lines at Ravelston Park and junction of Craigcrook Road/Jeffrey Avenue had been completed;

Bench on Craigleith Road had been destroyed.

Additionally Councillors Hal Osler and Max Mitchell mentioned the consultation paper launched by the Scottish Government on the day of the meeting (21 September 2026) to change the structure of Scottish local government by reducing 32 local councils to 6 Regional authorities but delegating some council functions to 166 new community authorities. Attached are links to the proposed changes :

[Local governance reform - gov.scot](#) [Public sector reform: proposal - gov.scot](#)

Next meeting - to be held on 19 October 2026.

Alan Denham

Secretary

Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council

24 September 2026

ANNEX

Advice and information from Police Scotland



E – Division
Drylaw Police Station
701 Ferry Road
Edinburgh
EH4 2TY

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS/CAREGIVERS: ILLEGAL USE OF ELECTRIC MOTORCYCLES/SCOOTERS

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are writing to raise an important concern regarding the use of electric off-road motorcycles/scooters in the community. This includes but is not limited to popular brands such as Sur-Ron, Talaria, Kubbi and Revvi.

We are aware a number of young people are using these bikes on public roads, pavements, footpaths and other areas in our communities where they are not legally permitted to be ridden. This is creating significant concern around the safety of pedestrians, other road users and the young riders themselves. Some of these riders observed appear to be as young as 5 years old.

We want to make it clear what the laws around these bikes are:

- **Regardless of size, any E-Bike or E-Scooter with a throttle capable of propelling it greater than 3.7mph is considered a mechanically propelled vehicle (this excludes E-Bikes that are pedal assisted, unless the E-Bike is capable of speeds greater than 15.5mph without pedalling).**
- **Being mechanically propelled means these vehicles meet the definition of a "motor vehicle" and as such they are subject to the same laws as other motor vehicles (i.e the same as a moped or motorbike or car).**

- **Use of these vehicles on a road or other public space is an offence and could leave the user liable to criminal prosecution under road traffic and/or antisocial behaviour legislation.**

To be used on the road, vehicles require to be:

- **Registered with the DVLA**
- **Licensed (taxed)**
- **Insured**
- **Compliant with relevant legislation including the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 and the Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989 (having mirrors, lights etc.)**

A driver/rider is also required to:

- **Have a driving licence**
- **Wear a helmet**

The only instance it is legal to use these vehicles is on private land with the permission of the landowner.

Please be aware that we are actively targeting the use of these vehicles in our communities. Riders found using these vehicles on public roads, footpaths or any place other than private land with the landowner's permission may face enforcement action including prosecution, fines and points on driving licences (current or future ones). One of the powers afforded to the police is seizure of the bike under Section 165A of the Road Traffic Act 1988 which will be utilised on every occasion to deter their use.

We strongly encourage parents/guardians to familiarise themselves with the above and speak with their children to ensure they understand the legal requirements before allowing them to use these vehicles. Please also strongly consider the risks that young riders are exposed to when using these vehicles, particularly when used illegally on roads and very often in an antisocial manner (tricks such as wheelies, driving at great speed, weaving in and out of traffic, riding on pavements). There can be very serious consequences if a collision occurs or if the rider is responsible for causing injury to another.

We ask all parents/guardians to please check the specification of any electric vehicle being used by your child. If you are unsure, please do not assume that it is legal to be ridden because it has pedals, is sold as an "electric bike", the seller or brand make no mention of it being illegal or because other young people are riding similar vehicles. We are more than happy to advise you if you contact us or approach us when we are out and about.

Our priority is the safety of your children and the wider community. We would much rather prevent an incident occurring than see a young person come to serious harm or face enforcement action.

Yours faithfully

Drylaw Community Policing Team



POLICE
SCOTLAND
POILEAS ALBA

Community Speed Watch

Guidance



Introduction

Road safety and Road crimes are priorities for Police Scotland. The key role of the police as defined in the Scottish Governments Road Safety Framework, is to enforce road traffic law and clearly this includes legislation relevant to speeding offences.

Speeding is an issue regularly raised at CAPP meetings as an issue effecting the quality of life throughout East Lothian. Police Scotland recognises there is a need to prioritise our resources to those sites which represent greatest risk. As such enforcement is concentrated in areas where it will have the greatest effect on casualty reduction.

Whilst we have and will continue to deploy resources to areas that do not meet this criteria to address community concerns there is an opportunity for the public to monitor those areas in support of Police Scotland. This scheme is known as Community Speed watch (CSW).

CSW is new to the East Lothian area, however, has been successfully rolled out in other areas. CSW effectively allows volunteers to check vehicle speeds in designated loci. This information is then passed to Police Scotland who will carry out the appropriate checks and issue follow up letters to persons identified when required.

You are receiving this correspondence as you have been identified as noting interest to this scheme.

Applying to Create a CSW

Anyone can contact the Divisional Commander, Local Policing requesting the information of establishing a CSW. The Commander will consider the grounds for a CSW to ensure this proposal is the correct solution to address the community concern.

It is hoped that each individual CAPP will take ownership and run their own CSW.

Police Scotland will conduct a site assessment of the proposed site ensuring relevant risk assessments are documented.

Any proposed site must be.

- within a built-up area
- away from any bend, junction, or crossing
- within a 20mph, 30mph or 40mph zone

Once this criteria has been met and the Area Commander is happy that a CSW will address the issue, your local community officer will be allocated as a CSW co-ordinator. They will be responsible for liaising with your group and Police Scotland.

Should the Area Commander decline the request a full explanation will be provided.

A lead volunteer will be appointed for each CSW and will meet with the CSW Co-Ordinator to discuss the requirements of operating the scheme prior to any deployment taking place. These include Funding, public liability insurance, a working application process for volunteers, training as well as equipment including clothing, signage, and suitable speed detection device.

Funding:

A CSW scheme will be self-funded and financial assistance should be sought from within the community to procure the required equipment. Once the scheme has been set up the running costs are negligible.

Public Liability Insurance:

Each CSW scheme must obtain public liability insurance before any deployment takes place. Again this will need to be self-funded.

Application Process for volunteers:

Any volunteer wishing to participate in the CSW will be provided with a Non-Police Personnel Vetting - Level 1 Form Part 1 from the CSW Co-Ordinator who will be responsible for processing these forms via the Police Scotland Vetting Unit.

Police Scotland retain the right to refuse an applicant the right to join a CSW scheme.

Training:

Once vetting has been completed the CSW Co-Ordinator will arrange the delivery of a training package including inputs on

- Road safety and health and safety awareness.
- Personal safety advice.
- How to successfully operate a speed detection device
- Practical demonstration at identified CSW speed check site.

All CSW volunteers will sign a CSW code of conduct form prior to undertaking any checks.

Equipment:



The following equipment is mandatory and must be purchased before any checks are authorised under the scheme.

- Police approved speed detection device. Road's policing suggest the purchase of a Unipar SL700 which is currently costing around £2,500. It is appreciated that this is a large financial input and to assist in getting the scheme up and running Police Scotland will assist in allowing the use of their detection devices in the short to medium term. Suitable insurance will have to be obtained prior to this.
 - High visibility vest with "Community Speed Watch" as shown above above.
 - Portable road signs, as above, deployed either side of the speed check area.
 - Equipment can be stored at a local police station should this be deemed most appropriate.
-

HOUSE BREAK-IN SECURITY ADVICE

Here are a few things to consider –

Do you keep your keys in sight of a window?

If you have an alarm and do you use it every time you go out?

Are your valuables easily accessible?

Have you uploaded your photos to the cloud or on to a hard drive?

The following tips could help prevent your house from becoming a statistic:

- If going away on holiday try and make the house look occupied – neighbours using drive ways, bins being taken in/out and lights on timers.
- Ensure your locks are tested to British Standard or meets the needs of your insurance company.
- Keep doors and windows locked, especially if out of view.
- Keep car keys secure and hidden at all times. If on holiday, take the keys with you.
- If you are out whilst it is dark, consider fitting light timers or leaving a light on.

- Fit and use outside security lights, preferably dusk to dawn – these come on automatically when it is dark.
- Window locks should be fitted where appropriate and used all the time. Do not leave the key in the lock.
- Mark all the electrical equipment with an ultraviolet marker pen or register at www.immobilise.com
- At the front of the house hedges or trees should be trimmed or cropped so as not to provide cover for thieves.
- Laptop computers and mobile phones are favourite housebreaking targets. These should be locked away or removed from view. Add tracking software to smart phones, laptops and Ipads to aid in the recovery of these items
- Consider investing in a safe or strong box for storage of cash and valuables. A safe should be securely fixed to the fabric of the building and should only be used for short-term storage of cash.
- Consider installing an intruder alarm system. More information can be found on alarm systems and monitoring at www.nsi.org.uk or www.ssaib.org
- Secure your shed and all tools that may be used to force entry to your home.
- Consider the use of a shed alarm; these can be purchased at a number of police stations.

If you see anyone acting suspiciously near to your premises please contact the police immediately with as detailed a description as possible of any person or vehicle involved. **Please call 999 if an emergency and urgent police assistance is required or 101 to report the matter to the police.**

For further advice www.scotland.police.uk