

Newsletter 8 - Autumn 2004

Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links

<http://www.fombi.com>

October Meeting:

The next regular meeting of the Friends will be on Monday 11 October at 7.30pm at the King's Theatre, Leven Street.

A talk and tour of the theatre will be given by one of our members, Mr Andy Devenport

Good News Column:

Received 2nd September from the Planning Department of the Council

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING
SCOTLAND ACT 1997 ERECTION OF
12.5M SLIMLINE TELECOMMUNICA-
TIONS MONOPOLE, THREE SECTOR
ANTENNA AND ASSOCIATED
EQUIPMENT CABINES AT LAND
OPPOSITE, 69-74 BRUNTSFIELD
PLACE, EDINBURGH, EH10 4HH
REFERENCE NUMBER: 03/01048/FUL

I am writing with regard to the above noted application, to which you raised representations.

On the 2 September 2004 the City of Edinburgh Council considered this application, including the comments (of the Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links). It was resolved that the application be REFUSED.

The proposal is contrary to the Central Edinburgh Local Plan Policy CD4(Conservation and Design - Conservation areas), CD5 (Conservation areas- redevelopment) and Non-Statutory Guidelines - Radio Telecommunications as the proposal, owing to its precise location in close proximity to the adjacent open space (Bruntsfield Links), will have a detrimental impact upon the visual amenity of the area on the character and appearance of the Marchmont and Meadows Conservation Area.

We Need New Members: Do you know of anyone who is interested in the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links?

We need new members!

Two recruitment leaflets are enclosed with this newsletter.

Can you pass them on to another two persons who might be interested in the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links?

Why not ask them along to our meetings on October 11th or February 21st?

Signage : Signs at last in place!

The educational information signs on the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links were inaugurated by Councillor Ricky Henderson on the 22nd June, the only sunny day in that week! A number of invited guests including Jim Mackay, City of Edinburgh Council Staff who work in the Parks Department, the designer, Gordon Muir and other staff from the Paul Hogarth Company and, of course, members of Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links. Jimmy Robertson of the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club, and Brian Murdoch of the Meadows Croquet Club toured the signs and read the information on them.

The City Council provided a light buffet lunch which was hosted by the Meadows Croquet Club in their very pleasant club house. A small number of guests were instructed in the simplest game of croquet after lunch in the sunshine, a most enjoyable experience.

The planning of the signs and bringing the project to fruition required cooperation between the City Council, the design firm and the Friends. We had some interesting and productive meetings. We did not all agree on the way forward at all times and were sometimes frustrated by the time it took to move things forward. This was truly a partnership exercise and we are grateful for the help given by many people who spent a lot of time working on this.

The Friends hope that now the signs are in place they will prove useful to local people and visitors.

The park rules on the back should

remind users that they have a responsibility to care for this wonderful area of open space in the city centre and the map on the front should be of assistance to those who use the park as a route to different parts of the city.

Many people have commented that the Meadows and Links provide a pleasant break between work and home allowing them to adjust to the different environments.

We hope the signs will not suffer too much damage as time passes and would be grateful if people using the meadows could inform the park keeper or a FOMBL committee member if they observe any interference with the signs.

Changes to the Committee

At the 2004 AGM, three of the Committee stood down, as required by the Constitution.

Jo Scott was re-elected to the Committee and continues to be the Membership Secretary.

However, she stood down as Treasurer and Hamish McKenzie has kindly agreed to be acting Treasurer, until a new Treasurer is appointed.

Peng Lee Yap was willing to stand again as Chairman but Oliver Chapman, Valerie Boggs and Gavin Sprott stood down.

There are, therefore, vacancies for three Committee Members.

We would be keen to hear from anyone who is willing to be elected to the Committee especially if they are willing to also act as the Treasurer.

Further details regarding the post of Committee Member can be obtained from the Chairman or Secretary

Quartermile Good Neighbours Relations

Group: Notes from the Quartermile Good Neighbour Relations Meeting held at 1 Lauriston Place, Edinburgh on Wednesday 25th August 2004 at 7.00pm

Planning Update

The planning consent has been completed with the signing of the Section 75 Agreement (a legal agreement between the developer and the Council) The main items from this agreement, are as follows:

Cycleway improvements to North Meadow Walk.

Signalisation improvements to Lauriston Place which includes junction improvements at Lauriston Place / Chalmers Street,

Illumination of stone columns on Middle Meadow Walk and Melville Drive.

Junction Improvements, at Middle Meadow Walk / North Meadow Walk.

Replacement of 3 bus stops along Lauriston Place.

Widening of south footpath along Lauriston Place.

Contribution towards trees on the Meadows.

Preparation of a green travel plan.

Formation of a car club.

Financial contribution to secondary and primary schools in the area.

Affordable housing provision.

Demolitions and Construction

The Skins, Boiler House and Ducts and the Florence Nightingale Nurses' Home have all been demolished by Keltbray.

Keltbray are also doing the soft strip of certain other buildings on site.

At the end of October Keltbray will leave the site

The second phase demolition package has been awarded to a company called Central Demolition. This work will take until the end of Jan 05.

Two further demolitions packages will be awarded towards the end of the year to start in January 05. Construction is due to start in the 2nd week of November with the first underground car park which is situated at the buildings, New Central 1 and 2 at the east of the site. Construction of the Medical Blocks and the infills will start in January 05.

Noise, dust and vibration monitoring

Dust and noise from the demolitions have so far been kept to an acceptable level and are monitored on a daily basis.

No breaches of the dust level have been recorded, minor spikes have occurred but none due to specific events.

There have been several breaches of the vibration level but these have all been high frequency vibrations, such as telephone systems and not caused by demolitions.

AOB

All of the timber panelling of the former chapel has been removed along with the Four Seasons ceiling paintings for storage and re-use when the Surgical Hospital is refurbished. Keltbray are to be asked to keep the piles of crushed arisings damped down in order to minimise dust blowing around and out of the site.

The next Good Neighbour Relations Meeting will be held on Wednesday 27th October at 7. pm in the boardroom of the Surgical Hospital.

Agendas will be sent out the week before.

Short-Life Working Group for Meadows and

Bruntsfield Links

14th September 2004

PROGRAMME OF WORKS SEPTEMBER 2004 - JUNE 2005

Purpose of report

To inform the Working Group of the programme of works planned for the Meadows & Bruntsfield Links, September 2004-2005.

Main report

A planned programme of works, totalling about £60,000, will be carried out at the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links, September 2004 - June 2005, in accordance with the Planning and Design Framework Plan.

Soil aeration and sand spreading will be undertaken on all areas where events took place during the summer of 2004. (All costs will be met by the organisers of the events).

The chain link fence at Meadows Place will be replaced with railings in the spirit of the original railings, as approved by Edinburgh Word Heritage Trust. The installation of the railings will be carried out by Culture and Leisure's Workshop staff.

The Friends of the Meadows will apply for grant-aid for the necessary materials to repair and restore the railings at Lonsdale Terrace, Leven Terrace and Marchmont Road (cost of materials £30,000). The installation of the railings will be carried out by Culture and Leisure's Workshop staff.

Soiling and reseedling of worn grass areas and desire lines will be carried out on the

Meadows & Bruntsfield Links to improve standards.

Four over-mature trees will be removed at West Bruntsfield Links and 15 replacement semi-mature trees planted.

Four trees infected by Dutch Elm Disease will be removed from the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links prior to 31 March 2005.

All tree stumps will be completely removed by digging or grinding out.

The naturalisation of daffodil bulbs, gifted by Marie Curie Cancer Care, will be planted at locations in Melville Drive, subject to further consultation with the Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links.

The demolition of the former Meadows bowling pavilion.

Financial Implications

The estimated costs of the works at the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links are £60,000, which will be met as follows:

Railings Summerhall, £14,000. Culture and Leisure, Capital Programme, 2004/05

Railings at Lonsdale Terrace, Leven Terrace, Marchmont Road, £30,000. Subject to a successful grant-aid application

Tree planting £10,000. Section 75 Quatermile Development.

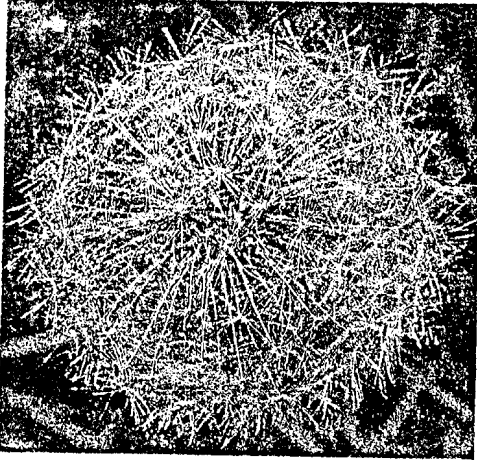
Associated grounds maintenance works, £6,000 Culture and Leisure Revenue Budget 2004/05.

Recommendations

The Meadows and Bruntsfield Links Working Group is recommended to:

Note the programme of works which will be carried out at the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links from September 2004 - June 2005.

The minutes of the meeting of the 14th September are not yet available and will be published in the next newsletter.



A Short History of The Meadows by Ian Nimmo.

Situation: To the north side of Melville Drive. Area: 58.4 acres (22.032 hectares).

The Meadows remain one of the most important open spaces in Edinburgh and one of the most popular. In a city built on hills, the flat, wide-open green sward of the Meadows, set in a treescape of more than 1,200 elm, sycamore, maple, ash, lime, beech, cherry willow, poplar, chestnut, oak and other varieties, the enfolding south side of the city in dramatic skyline silhouette, with sweeping panoramas beyond, conjure sharp and pleasing contrasts - yet it is less than a mile from Princess Street.

This was once the site of the wind-swept Borough-Loch, which was part of the

historic old Borough Muir and one of the main water supplies for Edinburgh's Old Town.

As the years passed, the loch took three names; the Borough Loch; the South Loch to draw the distinction with the North Loch, now occupied by the railway line at the foot of the Castle Rock in Princes Street Gardens; then Stration's Loch after John Stration, who unsuccessfully attempted to drain it and the surrounding marshlands in 1658.

In the olden days the loch was inevitably used for washing animals and, when no one was looking, a depository for rubbish of all kinds, in spite of it being a water supply and dumping strictly forbidden.

In times of drought the quality of the water dropped with the level of the loch and a dyke was built at Lochrin to try to contain and control the water. It is recorded that a vandal of ancient times was jailed for knocking down part of the Lochrin dyke.

In 1722 the Loch was leased to Thomas Hope of Rankeillour for 57 years at the annual rent of £800 Scots. Hope's task was to complete the drainage, create a 24-foot wide walk, enclosed by a hedge and a row of trees on each side; build a 30-foot wide walkway from north to south, lined by a hedge and lime trees, with a narrow canal on nine feet on each side.

The suggested names for the new park were Hope's Park, after the lessee, or The Meadow. Almost three centuries later, both names live on in Hope Park Crescent and Hope Park Terrace and today the Meadows, intersected by Middle Meadow Walk (opened in 1743), Jawbone Walk and Coronation Walk, are properly in the plural.

From the beginning, the Meadows was

another Edinburgh delight. Capital citizens came to admire and walk its surrounds of "one mile and a-half and 135 yards English measure".

When Melville Drive was opened in 1859 as part of the South Side development, it brought a further wave of popularity and at weekends, in particular, a steady procession of carriages brought the great and the good of the city to walk or play or picnic as families, parade in the latest fashions or push perambulator to provide Edinburgh's future generations with "the fresh and scented air of The Meadows".

As the city grew, even then threatening precious green places, the far-sighted "environmentalists" of their day saw the need for protection. The Edinburgh Improvement Act of 1827 stipulated that "should not be competent for the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council, or any other person, without the sanction of Parliament obtained for the express purpose, at any time thereafter to erect buildings of any kind upon any part of the grounds called the Meadows or Bruntsfield Links so far as the same belong in property to the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council".

Further later acts reinforced this firm statement and when the Commissioners of Police leased the Meadows for a period of 39 years in 1853, undertaking to keep them as a Public Park but relieving the Corporation of all costs and burdens, it was acknowledged that they had passed into safe keeping.

Over the centuries the Meadows have provided Edinburgh's sports men and women a full range of activities. From football, bowling, tennis, cricket, croquet, quoiting, a strip for toxophilite clubs (as archery was once called) and even target practice for the Royal Company of

Archers themselves. Hundreds turned up for the old bandstand concerts, but plans for a Meadows racecourse were turned down in 1842. When the great International Exhibition of Industry, Science and Art was held in the West Meadows during the summer 1886, Edinburgh and its Meadows site were given worldwide recognition.

Still in the West Meadows, commemorating the opening of the exhibition, an interesting and important piece of sculpture. The Prince Albert Sundial is an octagonal pillar with a bronze armillary sphere atop which acts as a sundial. Eight of the 11 stone courses are from a different quarry with varying colours. From the base they are: Moat (red); Corncockle (red); Whitsome Newton (yellow); Cragg (yellow); Myreton (blue); Ballochmyte (red); Myreton (blue); and Redhall (yellow). At the top of the pillar are shields with the coronet of the Prince, the arms of the Marquis of Lothian, the cipher of the Lord Provost and with the city Arms and the Scottish Arms and the advice: "Tak tent o' time, ere time be tint".

Likewise, at the west end of Melville Drive, the 26-feet high commemorative octagonal stone pillars from a number of quarries were erected by the Master Builder and Operative Masons of Edinburgh to mark the exhibition. They are rendered in different styles and at the tops sit 7-ft high unicorns, with 24 shields present the Arms of Scotland, England and Ireland, coats of arms of 19 Scottish burghs and the crest of the Edinburgh masons. The whale's jawbone arch at the Melville Drive end of Jawbone Walk also celebrates the exhibition and was presented by the Zetland and Fair Isle knitting stand.

Another of those unexpected and fascinating Edinburgh memorials is also situated in the Meadows. Close to the Jawbone is the little fountain dedicated to

Helen Acquroff, the blind Edinburgh musician and singer who graced the city's concert halls and theatres in the second half of the 19th century. During the programme she would compose a verse or two about the guest of honour or dignitaries in the audience and, at the end of the evening, give her special rendering to the delight of everyone.

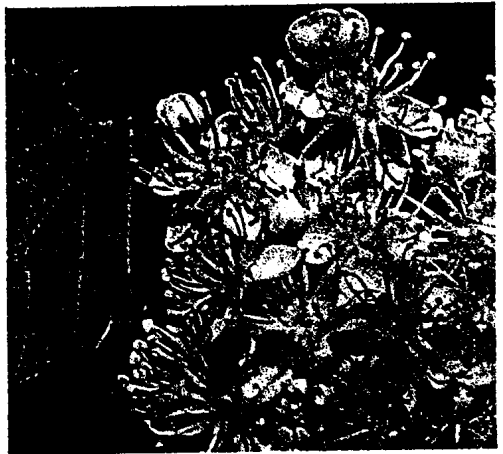
Helen Acquroff was also a force on the city's temperance platforms, when she adopted the name of Sister Cathedral and it is fittingly reflected in the inscription on the pedestal of her fountain.

Situated just behind Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and close to Edinburgh University, the Meadows remain as popular as ever and continues to be a major attraction for holding all kinds of events from circuses to tented theatre. The role of the Meadows will have to be reconsidered in the future when the old Edinburgh Royal Infirmary is vacated as it moves to a new site and the new Lauriston village is created in its place.

The trees of the Meadows and the adjoining Bruntsfield Links must have the last word. They make a major impact on the city's treescape. Among those not already mentioned are cherry, crab apple, rowan, alder, birch and almond trees. It is interesting to note a third of the trees - more than 400 - are elms. Their vulnerability to the rampant Dutch Elm disease and the future look of the Meadows is obvious.

*From Edinburgh's Green Heritage by Ian Nimmo
Reproduced Courtesy of
The Recreation Department, City of Edinburgh,
17 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3BG*

Febuary Meeting:
The spring meeting of the Friends will be held on Monday, February 21st, 2005 at the Archers Hall at 7:30pm. A talk on the history of the Meadows, Bruntsfield Links and the surrounding area will be given by Mr Malcolm Cant, a well know local historian. Archers Hall is the home of the Queen's bodyguard in Scotland and has many fine paintings including one by Raeburn.



Disorder on the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links on Fireworks Night at the Edinburgh Festival 2004!

One of our members reported that there was a lot of drinking and rowdiness on the Meadows and links. Did any other members witness this? This topic and cycling on the Meadows will be discussed at the meeting on October 11th.

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

Secretary: Hamish McKenzie, 7 Bruntsfield Terrace, EH10 4EX.
 Tel 229 6055 email: hamish@bruntsfield7.freereserve.co.uk

Treasurer: Josephine Scott, 31/8 Salisbury Road, EH16 5AA
 Tel 667 3386 email: jo.scott@ukonline.co.uk

Committee : Colin Christison Dennis Gallagher Naomi Burnett
 Tim Puntis

Tree warden: Mike Walsh, 17 Tantallon Place, EH9 1NZ
 Tel 667 1708 email: mcw@ecosse.net

Webmaster & Newsletter Editor Derek Christie.
 email: D.Christie@ed.ac.uk

PLEASE OBSERVE and SUPPORT the CODE



Fouling



On Walkways



BBQs



On reserved sites & pitches

Park Watch Partners: ... Every 'Friend' is a partner in helping to protect our unique urban parkland, by acting as the Council's eyes and ears. They will appreciate your assistance, as they cannot be everywhere at all times. Just telephone one of the numbers below, if you see something that needs their attention, (you may give your name or not— as you prefer).

Dumped Items	0800 100 3366	Rubbish, furniture, traffic signs, shopping trolleys, etc.
Litter Problems	0131 664 8330	Environmental Task Force Manager for Meadows & Tollcross
Park Wardens	0131 332 2366	Vandalism to trees, turf, seats, playgrounds, monuments
Pathway Lighting	0800 23 23 23	Non-functioning lamps - quote lamp post number or location.
Police/St Leonard's	0131 662 5000	Disturbances, fires, vehicles parked on grass, vandalism
Graffiti	0131 200 2000	Graffiti removal (Council)