



The Grange Association

<http://www.the-grange.org>

Newsletter No 90

New Year 2008

Recognised Scottish Charity SCO25491

Forthcoming Events

- Wed 20 Feb** Annual General Meeting. An opportunity to come and join, new members welcome. Formal business will be followed, as usual, with a presentation on Edinburgh Stone, by Ewan Hislop; this should prove an excellent sequel to Richard Groom's talk on the craft of stonemasonry back in October.
- Wed 19 Mar** David Todd will talk about the history of Edinburgh's theatres. David's knowledge of theatre is practical as well as historical, since he has worked in arts management in Edinburgh and London, at venues including the Traverse, Queen's Hall and the Festival Theatre—so this promises to be an enlightening evening.
- Sat early
May 10–12** Our Annual Plant Sale. We plan to return to our old stamping ground, the Carlton Cricket Clubhouse in Grange Loan; watch out for the Spring Newsletter for further details. And then come along and buy your summer bedding plants—we will again have a large range this year. All donations of indoor and outdoor plants will be gratefully received, and we can collect items in advance.
- Sun late May
or early June** Following last year's successful visit to 'The Garden of Cosmic Speculation' at Portrack, Dumfriesshire, we're planning another trip, most likely to Alnwick Garden in Northumberland. Last year, the coach left the Grange at about 10am and returned about 6pm, and the overall cost was £20; the precise details of this year's visit will be finalised in time for the Spring newsletter. In the meantime, if you would like to join us (and bring your friends), please contact Judith Reeves (667 5570) who will keep you informed of arrangements.

Unless otherwise stated, meetings take place at 7.30pm in Marchmont St Giles' new hall (instead of St Catherine's Argyle, as in previous years). Tea, coffee, and biscuits are served after the meeting. If anyone has suggestions for future speakers or events, please get in touch.

Judith Reeves

Are you a member of the Association? Annual Subscriptions are payable in mid-February. To join or renew by post, please complete the form on page 5. You can also join or renew at the AGM.

Controlled Parking Zone: changes afoot

Residents will be well aware of the changes wrought by the extension of the controlled parking zone that took place last year; many have lobbied for further extension to alleviate the parking pressures in the south side of the Conservation Area.

We are therefore pleased to note that the Committee has just been briefed by Brian Torrance and Andrew Mackay of the Council's Traffic team. It seems that progress is definitely being made, both regarding changes to the boundaries between areas 7 and 8, and S1, and the overall extent of S1. However, on boundary changes, nothing is yet cast in stone: although a report dated 25th September 2007 was approved by the Transportation Committee, a counter proposal is also under consideration.

On the S1 extension, the report itself states "With a significant number of residents clearly in favour of a further extension of the controlled area, it was agreed that a draft proposal ... would form the basis of a further consultation exercise. ... it is now proposed to enter into the agreed consultation process, with a view to creating a further new zone of controlled parking that will encompass the area bounded by the line of the south suburban railway, Astley Ainslie Hospital, Dalkeith Road and the existing boundaries of Zones 7 and S1."

By the time you read this newsletter, the Traffic team will have held one public 'drop-in surgery' about southward extension at the Reid Memorial Church. Feed your views to the team as soon as possible (by the end of February at the latest), by email to cpz.extension@edinburgh.gov.uk, or in writing to Traffic Control, City of Edinburgh Council, 149 High Street, EH1 1YJ.

Andrew Bell

Number 24 bus

Those with long memories (or access to our highly informative website) will note that in Spring 1998, Ian Macneil of Barra wrote "The number 24 bus has been a great success, but needs our support for it to be continued. Those wishing it to run earlier or later should make their views known to their local councillor."

Subsequently, in Spring 2000, Councillor MacLaren reported the planned extension of the route. However, in Autumn 2001, Sheila Reid noted the campaign that had had to be fought in response to the sudden re-routing of the 24, and in Spring 2002 reported its success. In Spring 2006, we drew residents' attention to Councillor Mackintosh's campaign to keep the number 38 service running at a reasonable frequency.

In the light of this decade's history, we note now that, like the 38, the 24 currently runs only hourly on Sundays and half-hourly on Saturdays, and that while the 38 runs every quarter-hour during the week, the 24 runs only half-hourly.

These frequencies can make the consequences of a missed bus more significant, so that people may choose alternative means of travel entirely. However, the old advice still holds: use it, or lose it. And if you feel strongly about the need to retain or improve the service, you can in the first instance make your views known to one of the four local councillors, copying in the rest. They are: Steve Burgess (Green), Gordon Mackenzie (LibDem), Ian Perry (Lab), and Cameron Rose (Con).

Dorothy Ryle

Gardens, gas pipes and meter boxes

Conservation areas “are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”; as the Council’s website notes, “Most works to the outside of a building or structure in a conservation area will require planning permission”; see our New Year 2006 newsletter for relevant details. However, one kind of work often seems to fly in the face of this advice, and that is the installation of new piping for utilities such as gas. Contractors have to get the gas from the street to the household, nowadays without letting it pass through other dwellings. This has been used as an excuse for some fairly ugly pieces of work, with pipes snaking over garden walls and up the fronts of buildings.

This is not appropriate in a Conservation Area. Although the alternatives (such as burial) may be more laborious or expensive, you should draw contractors’ attention to this issue. The following information comes from the section of the Council’s Development Quality Handbook devoted to ‘Services on Buildings’:

- a) A maximum of 450mm of supply pipe to be visible on the front wall of listed buildings. External pipes which are both horizontal and vertical must have the horizontal section within the basement areas (where applicable) and not be visible from the street. This is to ensure that horizontal pipes are kept as low as possible.
- b) Holes in stonework must be kept to a minimum and should be made through stone joints, except in the case of “V” jointing or rubble where holes should be in the stonework. Non-ferrous fixings must be used.
- c) Pipe runs should not interfere with cornices and decorative plasterwork. Where pipes are chased into walls, plasterwork must be reinstated to original.
- d) All redundant surface-run pipe work must be removed and the surfaces made good and painted to match existing materials and colour.
- e) Meter boxes should not be fitted to the front elevation (or any conspicuous elevation) of buildings.
- f) Pipe work and meter boxes should be painted to match adjacent stone.

If the gas contractors don’t believe you, refer them to the Planning Helpdesk (529 3595) in the City Development Department.

Andrew Bell & Jon Oberlander

Grange/Prestonfield Community Council

The following candidates were nominated for the Grange/Prestonfield Community Council area and, as exactly 16 candidates were nominated, no poll took place. Thus, on Thursday 11 October 2007, the following residents of the Grange Conservation Area were amongst those declared elected as community councillors: Ms Susan Tritton, 6 Grange Terrace; Mr Erick Davidson, 25A Dalrymple Crescent; Mr Douglas Stuart, 70 Blackford Avenue; Mr Douglas Fisher, 86 Findhorn Place; Mr Joseph Henderson, 39/35 Blackford Avenue; and Mrs Cecilia Irvine, 31/3 Oswald Road.

We hope you find it useful to know who your Community Councillors are; while we note that conservation groups, such as the Grange Association, are likely to continue to play a distinctive role, one question we may consider at our own forthcoming AGM is whether the Association should put forward a candidate to represent its interests on the Community Council.

Jon Oberlander

What is the Grange Association?

- A local community association, having charitable status, covering the area known as the Grange, from Hatton Place in the north to Relugas Place in the south, and from Whitehouse Loan in the west to Ratcliffe Terrace in the east.
- The Association is run by a committee of 12, plus others co-opted for their particular expertise.
- The committee represents your views, particularly on planning matters and other local concerns.

What does the Association do for you?

- It considers all planning applications affecting the area and, where appropriate, comments to the local authority.
- It was largely instrumental in having the Grange declared a Conservation Area in 1983, and an Outstanding Conservation Area in 1996, and assisting the Council in adopting a statutory character statement in 1998.
- It liaises with the appropriate authorities over matters concerning traffic.
- It is active in issues concerning tree management in the area.
- It organises talks, walks, visits and other social events on matters likely to be of interest in the Grange.
- It compiles and distributes the Newsletter each Spring, Autumn and New Year to all of the 3,000 households in the area covered by the Association.

What can you do?

- Join the Association by completing the Membership Form opposite. The more households we represent through membership (currently around 15%), the greater our voice in the matters that concern us all.
- *Volunteer for election to the committee*—contact the Chair, Jon Oberlander, 667 9551.
- *Volunteer to be one of the 64 distributors of the Newsletter.*
- Join in the activities advertised in the Newsletter.
- Raise any matters and bring forward ideas for meetings and articles with committee members—listed in each Newsletter, and on our website.

How much?

- The annual subscription for 2007 is £5 per household or business, with a £2.50 concession for over-60 households and student households. (The household system appears fair, and so far it has worked well.)
- Donations are always welcome, to help fund the production of the Newsletter and expenses incurred when arranging public meetings.
- You can apply for membership at any time, but it would help us enormously if you could apply by 12 February 2008.
- Please note that all memberships are due for renewal.
- There is a £1 charge to attend meetings, if you are *not* a member.
- If you have not already done so, you can arrange regular annual payment by Standing Order. Please complete the form on page 6, and send it to your bank, as well as completing and returning to us the Membership Form on page 5.

Membership of the Association ... and the Committee

The Committee send you our warmest greetings for the New Year and we hope that you will fill out the membership form for the Association, as well as the Gift Aid declaration, and send it to the Treasurer very soon. Gift Aid helps charities: over the last few years, we have been able to claim back hundreds of pounds. If you have not been a member before, please do join us now. The more committed public support we have, the better, as we work to implement the aims of our constitution. Your continued backing is a true encouragement to us, and we look forward to welcoming as many as possible of you to the AGM, and the talk afterwards.

As usual, we aim to elect a number of new people to the Committee. We also recognise that some residents can offer expertise on an occasional basis, but do not wish to serve on the Committee; we are grateful for the input from these members, and would like to encourage more to come forward on this basis. At the same time, we earnestly hope that some other members will be willing to put their names forward. The work is varied, interesting, and a continual learning process. Even as we push the work forward, good friendships are made: our monthly meetings are informal and enjoyable. If you think you might be interested, and would like to know more about it, please speak to one of the current Committee members, or to me. Please do consider it seriously: We need you!

Jon Oberlander

To: The Treasurer, The Grange Association
59 Fountainhall Road, Edinburgh, EH9 2LH

I/We would like to join/renew membership of The Grange Association for 2008.
OR

I/We would like to join/renew membership of The Grange Association until further notice, and am/are sending my/our bank the Standing Order Form.

Annual Subscription Rates:

Household Membership: £5

Senior Citizen/Student Membership: £2.50

I/We enclose £

(Please make cheques payable to The Grange Association, and enclose an SAE for your membership card.)

Name(s)

Address

Postcode Tel

Email

Membership form

Standing order form

To: The Manager
Bank
&
Address
..... Postcode

Please pay to The Bank of Scotland
51 South Clerk Street
Edinburgh EH8 9PP (Branch Sort Code 80-02-73)

for credit of the account of the Grange Association (account number 00352857)
the sum of (in words)

.....

1st payment : immediately, and on 1st February annually thereafter until further notice
and please debit my account, number

.....

Date Signed

Name

Gift Aid Declaration

Name of Charity: The Grange Association (Scottish Charity No SC025491)
(Please use CAPITALS)

I (Name)

of (Address)

..... Postcode

would like The Grange Association to treat all donations I have made since 6 April
2000 and all donations I make from the date of this declaration, until I notify you
otherwise, as Gift Aid Donations.

Date Signed

1. You may cancel this declaration at any time by notifying the Association.
2. Signatories of this declaration must pay income tax at least equal to the tax that the Association reclaims on your donations in the tax year (currently 28p for each £1 you give—i.e. paying 22p in the £1 income tax).
3. You can cancel this declaration if your circumstances change.
4. Please notify the Association of any change of address.

Temptations, concessions and compromises?

In 1849, Lord Cockburn wrote 'A Letter to the Lord Provost on the Best Ways of Spoiling the Beauty of Edinburgh', in which he noted: "on the Continent, buildings and parks remain safe for generations under little protection but the attachment of the people ... Is there such a feeling in this place? It is surely very timid. You hear people say 'It is very wrong, it is a great pity, surely somebody will interfere', but they never stir a finger themselves and the mischief proceeds. The attitude is 'let them do what they like they can never spoil Edinburgh' [but] Past examples are not proof against future mischief. How will Edinburgh look in 1949 or 2049? I see hurtful temptations, concessions and compromises."

In 2007, the "Edinburgh Skyline Study" consultation certainly seemed to the Grange Association's Committee to be a potential harbinger of a new era of temptations, concessions and compromises. While ostensibly a praiseworthy exercise in finding out which vistas and views people value most, so that they can be better protected (for instance, by ensuring that tall buildings were not subsequently built to obscure them), the concern is that any view *not* picked for protection soon might by omission be considered fair game for 'future mischief': eventual spoiling.

A number of the assumptions made by the consultants (Colvin and Moggridge) seemed, therefore, open to question. For instance, views from the Meadows north to the Castle (where the Quartermile development looms larger day by day) were reportedly not fully considered. Perhaps that's because that previously magnificent view is already considered a lost cause, sacrificed at the altar of developer profit. But views from Arthur's Seat also seemed peculiarly selective; one of the fantastic aspects of Salisbury Crags is undoubtedly its continuous view of the city to the south, west and north; but the consultation did not seem to properly register this, instead picking a restricted set of points, each with one tunnel-like beam of a view stretching off in one direction or another.

Will the gaps between those beams ultimately be filled with a new generation of tower blocks, like the 16 storey hotel proposed for Haymarket, which will be visible from many vantage points across the city? We note, of course, that Richard Murphy Architects have stated that their plans for this development—though in their own words 'monumental'—"will contribute to the evolving skyline of the city, but without blocking any significant views". No doubt, much depends in this case on what is meant by 'significant'; but there can be no doubt in general that Edinburgh's brilliant views and vistas are facing new challenges this century.

Whether the "Edinburgh Skyline Study" consultation represents part of the solution, or part of the problem, remains to be seen. While hoping for the best, we must take Lord Cockburn's warning seriously, and *all* be on guard against future mischief. A modern edition of Lord Cockburn's "A Letter to the Lord Provost" is available from the Cockburn Association, for £3.95; it is free to new members of the Cockburn. More details at <http://www.cockburnassociation.org.uk> or 0131 557 8686. Special thanks to Dorothy Ryle for drawing our attention to the quotation from the Letter.

Jon Oberlander

The Grange Association Committee 2007/8

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Controlled parking: a footnote

If you were caught out by the expiry of your first resident's parking permit after the first year of operation, you might consider appealing on the grounds that notice of the expiry was promised but not given: we know of at least one successful appeal!

Copy date: 1/1/08. You are welcome to quote from this newsletter, but please acknowledge the source. The information herein is as accurate as we can make it, but we do accept articles in good faith without necessarily being able to verify the contents.

<http://www.the-grange.org>

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