



The Grange Association

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

Newsletter No 91

Spring 2008

Recognised Scottish Charity SC025491

Forthcoming Events

- Sat 10 May 2-4** Our Annual Plant Sale. This will be held in the Marchmont St Giles Church Hall, most likely in the large hall, entered by the door to the south of the main church; there will be signs on the day to point you in the right direction. Come along and buy your summer bedding plants—once again, we will have a wide range available. And all donations of indoor and outdoor plants will be gratefully received—if you need help transporting them, we can collect items in advance (667 5570).
- Sun 22 June** As planned, there will be a summer garden trip by coach, to Alnwick Garden in Northumberland. The coach leaves the Grange at about 10am and returns at about 6pm, and the overall cost of £20 covers coach fare, entry fee, and a guided tour. If you would like to join us (and bring your friends), please contact Judith Reeves (667 5570), who will keep you informed of arrangements.

Our Autumn programme will feature talks on Wednesday 1st October and Wednesday 5th November, with the Christmas gathering scheduled for Thursday 11th December. Topics planned for 2008/9 are likely to include: railing restoration; microgeneration options for city dwellers; local trees; the Union Canal; and a tour of the Grange Cemetery. Unless otherwise stated, meetings take place at 7.30pm in Marchmont St Giles' new hall. Tea, coffee, and biscuits are served after the meeting. If anyone has suggestions for future speakers or events, please get in touch.

Judith Reeves

Helicopter noise: Some residents are irritated by the regular weekend tourist overflights. Investigation reveals the view of the Civil Aviation Authority: only if they fly below 1000 feet is there a breach of regulations; you need evidence of this (somehow!), and the helicopter's registration code, to report to caa.co.uk. In the interim, check out the operators' trade association site, www.bhab.org, which includes their pilots' code of conduct.

Anonymous Payment

An automated credit for £5 has been paid into the Association's Bank Account from the Alliance & Leicester Bank (Sort Code 72-00-06) Are you this anonymous donor? If so, the Treasurer would like to know who you are!

Brief Minutes of the twenty-ninth Annual General Meeting of the Grange Association

Held in Marchmont St Giles Church Hall, Grange Road, Edinburgh at 7.30pm on Wednesday 20 February 2007. (Full minutes available from the Secretary)

Some 75 people attended the AGM. Apologies were received from Cllr Steve Burgess, Tom Cunningham, Moyra Forrest, Tina Kelly and Tony Harris (Craigmillar Park Association), Caroline McInnes, Judith Reeves, and Joan Stevens. The minutes of the 28th AGM were adopted as a correct record, with minor amendments. There were no matters arising. In a wide-ranging report, our Chair Jon Oberlander mentioned the following:

- The Association had dealt with slightly fewer planning applications than in the previous year. During 2007, 80 applications had been inspected and comments made on 21 of these. Just 3 applications were refused by the planning department (although 6 were withdrawn allowing possible later resubmission). Several developments will affect the west of the area, around the Astley Ainslie, Pitsligo Road, Whitehouse Loan, and Hope Terrace.
- Further southward extension to the Controlled Parking Zone is now under discussion, as a means of alleviating problems caused by the initial extension; the Committee remains in contact with the Council over proposed changes, but these are unlikely to be implemented in less than 18 months.
- It was reported that the boundary change to the conservation area proposed last year was due to be considered shortly by the Council.
- The Association had been asked to comment on Planning Policies on Microgeneration and Edinburgh's Skyline and had submitted the committee's views on these to the Council.
- Members of the committee had been representing the Association on several Council sponsored bodies during the year. Local Development Councils (LDCs) have been replaced by Neighbourhood Partnerships (NPs), but the Association retains channels into council deliberations via the Civic Forum, Environmental Forums and Marchmont and Sciennes Community Council. It is too early to say how the newly constituted Grange and Prestonfield Community Council will impact on the work of the Grange Association, but we will monitor the situation and report back to the membership. The Chairman asked if the membership felt we should be represented on this body and this was affirmed, but there were no immediate volunteers for this role. It was agreed to reschedule our evening events to avoid clashes with those of the Community Councils.

Accounts presented by our Honorary Treasurer Marion Cantley were adopted, and thanks to our auditor recorded; Olga Franks and Gavin Neilson joined the committee, as co-optees, and office bearers were elected (as listed on page 8). Under other business, the issues of microgeneration, and relationship to the new Community Council were raised. Following the AGM, Dr Ewan Hyslop gave a very well-received talk on stone decay and preservation in the city.

Andrew Bell

John Christopher Bartholomew, 15/1/1923 – 16/1/2008: An appreciation

The Association was greatly saddened to hear of the death of John Bartholomew. We are very indebted to John, and to the Bartholomew family, for the strong support they gave us in our 1980-82 campaign for designation as a Conservation Area. John's first home was in Findhorn Place and he always had a soft spot for The Grange. Key to our success for designation was the publication in 1982 of 'The Grange a Case for Conservation'. John's brother Robbie, our former Chairman, offered his invaluable expertise and donated the paper for its publication. Many members of the Association will remember John's talk on "Old Maps of South Edinburgh" on 24 October 1990.

John was born in Edinburgh in 1923. He went to the St Trinneans School, the Edinburgh Academy and Gordonstoun. After reading Geography at Edinburgh University, he joined his distinguished map-making family firm. He was its cartographic director from 1953 until his retirement in 1984. John was President of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society and was elected fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1970. He was also president of the British Cartographical Society in 1970-71. John enjoyed travel all over the world and was proud of having experience of "all the continents except Antarctica". He co-funded the Scottish Rights of Way Society, now called Scotsways. In 1995, he was involved in having the family firm present two important collections to the National Library of Scotland (NLS): the firm's Archives and the John Bartholomew Collection of Antiquarian Atlases dating from 1525 to 1877. Both are being indexed at the map room of the NLS.

John Bartholomew was a dedicated family man, married to his wife Ginette Archard-James for 52 years, and father of five sons.

Sofia Leonard

Appropriate Repair and Maintenance of Sandstone Buildings

The majority of Edinburgh's pre 1919 buildings are constructed of sandstone which was generally quarried within a horse and cart journey of the construction site. Stone quarried in the Grange is known to have been used on Edinburgh primary schools and the dome of the Old College of Edinburgh University. Pillars at the west end of the Meadows, constructed by the architect James Gowans in 1886, demonstrated the variety of local stones.

Traditional methods of working stone produced little waste. Larger elements for the façade were cut in the quarry or on site. All sizeable 'waste' became the random rubble of the side and boundary walls. Modern construction methods produce considerable volumes of landfill waste. Sandstone is porous, and traditional water-shedding design features mean that rainwater does not penetrate deeply; misunderstanding of these basic principles in modern design can cause problems due to excessive water penetration, encouraging unsightly soiling and algal growth.

Mortar for sandstone buildings should be lime based, as lime mortars allow sandstone to 'breathe'. Re-pointing in cement mortars damages stone, as cement is impervious to water which cannot evaporate evenly. Crystallisation of absorbed salts and expansion through freezing also damages stone and accelerates the decay process. In extreme cases, stone replacement is necessary, maintenance minimises

the risks. Portland cement and premixed mortars available from chain builders' merchants are intended for brick. In Edinburgh, lime mortar products are also readily available and short courses in lime methodology are available at the Scottish Lime Centre Trust in Charlestown Fife. Other maintenance is also important: clearing downpipes and gutters of blockages and stopping leakages from overflow pipes will avoid excess water penetration. Other water barriers like non breathable paints should also be avoided.

Recent construction training has been targeted at new-build skills, assuming that our built heritage needed little regular repair and maintenance, consequently training in traditional skills nearly disappeared in the UK. Fortunately, these problems have now been recognised and the situation has improved. Historic Scotland publishes a free booklet - 'Maintaining Your Home - A short guide for homeowners' for buildings of traditional construction. They also publish a series of more in-depth 'Inform Guides' which cover most aspects of maintaining traditional buildings, also free. They are available in digital form from their website, or from Longmore House on Salisbury Place on our doorstep, so here in the Grange, we have less of an excuse for incorrect maintenance and repair than other areas of the country. Thankfully the majority of properties here have been well maintained over the years, helping to preserve the character of this conservation area.

Richard Groom

Planning Developments September 2007 to end of March 2008

It is possible, via the Planning Portal (<http://citydev-portal.edinburgh.gov.uk>), to view the drawings associated with individual planning applications. The route to the information is a little circuitous but an information sheet detailing the steps to take has been drawn up. If you have difficulties, we can e-mail you this sheet. Contact Andrew Bell at arkebell@btinternet.com.

Significant Applications and Planning Issues

Recently the Astley Ainslie Hospital disposed of several properties on its northern boundary. Development of these is taking place, and this will certainly improve their state, although in one case 7 dwellings are to replace a single house. The former SNH offices at 12 Hope Terrace have recently been advertised for sale with planning permission for 16 flats, although the agents also mention the possibility of a purchaser restoring the property as a single dwelling. Although in this period we commented on 13 applications, it is telling that just two were refused and one withdrawn. The two refusals were approved in amended form. This indicates a continuing difference of opinion between ourselves and the planning department on the merits or otherwise of some cases. However, most recent applications were not contentious.

Many will be aware of council proposals to extend controlled parking southwards, although detailed plans are not yet ready. We are assured that widespread consultation will take place both within and outwith the area in question (as yet undefined). As previously reported, we have been given assurances that the 'new' S1 CPZ will be re-examined to see if the number of poles and the location of signs can be changed to improve the appearance of the area. Those assurances are still in place, although lack of resources mean that an action will not take place immediately.

Applications and Decisions 1 September to 30 March 2008

All are considered by the Planning Group. * indicates comments made by Grange Association though not all of our comments involve a recommendation for refusal of permission. Note that the category 'Withdrawn' usually means that an application is being redrafted to avoid its being refused; most are later resubmitted in a revised, somewhat less contentious form. Some properties may appear more than once; that can indicate repeat applications have been made.

Granted:

Conservatories at:

12 Grange Crescent, 40 Lauder Road, 31 St Alban's Road, 43 Lauder Road,

Others:

- *34 Mansionhouse Rd Certificate of lawfulness for existing use.
7 Whitehouse Terr Glazed porch to rear.
19 Palmerston Rd Extend flat to form new bedroom & garden room.
5 Dalrymple Cres Alterations to rear within existing footprint.
143 Grange Loan Door slapping involving removal of cupboard/bookcase.
(Mixed decision)
18 Lauder Road Roof pitch made shallower to accommodate greater width internally.
119/4 Grange Loan Replace aluminium windows with uPVC.
*1 Cumin Place Convert garage to 2 bedroom mews cottage and extensions.
20 Findhorn Place Dormer window, rooflight, solar panel
*24 St Alban's Road Form car parking space in front garden.
*36/36A Dick Place Internal & external alterations.
*12 Hope Terrace 16 new flats and 1 mews cottage.
50 Lauder Road Erection of satellite dish.
1F 15 Strathearn Rd Courtyard extension & internal alterations.
*4/4A Dick Place Alterations & extension to existing annexe to form separate dwelling.
76 Relugas Road Internal alterations & minor changes to rear.
96 Findhorn Place Remove existing rooflight, enlarge and replace.
5 Hatton Place Extend existing offshoot to west of house.
*65 Grange Loan Change of use from office to residential. Alterations. New coach house annexe.
PF1 3 Grange Loan Form French doors and landing with steps to communal garden.
20-24 Sth Oswald Rd Erect Cedar fencing between apartments and coach house.
20 Dalrymple Cres Convert attic with dormer extension. Velux. Solar panels on flat roof.
40 Lauder Road Conservatory & alterations. Demolish outhouse.
29 West Relugas Rd Alterations & construction of single storey extension to rear.
1 Grange Loan Gdns Add dormer.
GF 14 Strathearn Rd Remove existing sun room & erect extension with part glazed roof.
19 Cumin Place Form bay window to existing opening.
32 Fountainhall Rd Alter window to French doors with external landing and steps to garden.

- 1F 15 Strathearn Rd Courtyard extension & internal alterations.
 36/36A Dick Place Form French doors to rear.
 *56 Fountainhall Rd Extend to side & rear & convert attic with dormer.
 1 Relugas Road Alterations to ground floor and first floor flat and garage.
 141 Grange Loan Alterations & additions to provide further bedroom & living space.
 40 Relugas Road Replace shed and erect greenhouse.
 43 Lauder Road Internal alterations and erect conservatory.
 *56 St Alban's Road Lower chimney stacks.
 PF 2 Sciennes Hill Pl Pation doors to rear.
 *13 Chalmer's Cres Replace driveway with block paving. Replace concrete paving.
 15 Findhorn Place Install railings around second floor French doors.
 12 Glenisla Gardens Garden landscaping.
 *9 Blackford Road Form new French window to rear, single storey extension to front.
 6 Oswald Road Renew consent for conversion of garage to dwelling.
 16A Sciennes Gdns Form single storey extension to garage, new extension to replace shed on NW side.
 4 Grange Loan Gdns Erect flat roof 2 storey extension to south, single storey extension to west.
 20 South Oswald Rd Alterations, erect new garage.
 24 Dick Place Form single storey extension to side, alter fenestration.
 19 South Oswald Rd Conservatory upgraded & extended. Layout rationalised.
 32 Blackford Avenue Form new slate roof over existing conservatory, change window and door of same.

Refused:

- *56 St Alban's Road Demolish two chimney stacks.
 *36/36A Dick Place Demolish garage. Rebuilt with granny flat, conservatory link.

Withdrawn:

- *8 Dick Place Alteration & extension to form new separate dwelling.

Pending:

- *145 Grange Loan Remove existing house/garage & construct 7 townhouses.
 *160-162 Whitehouse Loan/35-39 Newbattle Terrace Demolish cottages. Erect 3 townhouse and 11 flats.
 *54 Fountainhall Rd Demolish garage, conservatory and outbuildings. Extend dwelling. New garage.
 36/36A Dick Place Demolish Garage. Erect new garage with stores below, erect garden room.
 117 Grange Loan Extension to form study area.
 28 Grange Crescent Add dormer & skylights & replace windows.
 34 Grange Loan Demolish and rebuild kitchen offshoot.
 18A Dick Place Alter internal layout, reinstate 2 windows, replace steps to garden.
 141 Grange Loan Change of use from ancillary hospital accommodation to residential use.
 56 Fountainhall Rd Add glazed extension to rear, add dormer.
 21 Chalmer's Cres Demolish garage & outbuildings, relocate new garage, extensions and attic conversion.
 2A Chalmer's Cres Internal alterations, replace dormer window, alter existing extension.

Nature Notes: birdwatching made easy

The coming of spring this year seems to have been a slow process with chilly gale force winds bending the early daffs and bringing down some hefty branches from mature trees in the area. Plump looking woodpigeons are back in the garden stripping the new buds from the elder tree, always managing to leave enough growth to ensure a feast of berries in the autumn. A few randy toads braved the low temperatures to get to the pond early for the annual love-in, although some didn't make it any further than Cluny Drive, where they were steam-rolled by passing traffic. As usual, the coots were first to stake their claim on Blackford Pond with their substantially constructed nest in the semi-submerged overhanging branches of a willow tree. The buzzards, now resident in Mortonhall, can still be seen over the Grange and Blackford areas, especially on windy days when they like to soar effortlessly on fixed wings.

Close to the upper gate at the Midmar allotment was a smooth round boulder about half the size of a football and beside it were the remains of more than forty snail shells. I was pleased to note that my own plot was well within the range of that industrious thrush's anvil and hoped that it would be around for a long time to continue to help us organic gardeners. In my own garden our children took a very dim view of stomping on snails and preferred to toss them over the boundary wall onto the railway embankment. I suspected if we had marked their shells for identification purposes then we would have seen the same ones back the following day munching on our lettuces again.

There have been small flocks of goldfinches in the area and the call of the green woodpecker echoing through the trees. I got excited when I saw a large black bird flying towards me with a long curved beak and thought I was seeing a new species until it passed overhead and revealed itself as a crow carrying a twig lengthwise for nest building. In the swimming baths at Warrender, one Sunday morning I was treated to a fine view of the striped underside of a female sparrowhawk as it flapped low above the glass roof, while I skulled on my back in the deep end. Usually I just see the odd seagull or street pigeon passing overhead.

Tom Breheny

Development quality: useful links

If you are considering any kind of development in our area (either proposing or opposing it), one of the most useful documents you can get hold of is the Council's Development Quality Handbook. Judicious study of relevant sections can be revelatory. Villas policy, privacy, extensions, stonecleaning, window replacement, services on the outsides of buildings, and satellite dishes are amongst the many topics on which there is specific guidance. All sections of the document are available on the web via the first URL below; the second is a link to our Conservation Area Character Appraisal—essential reading for all those concerned with our local environment.

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/CEC/DQHandbook/DQguide_index.html

http://download.edinburgh.gov.uk/caca/Grange_CACA.pdf

The Grange Association Committee 2008/9

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John Duffus 43 Mansionhouse Road EH9 2JD	667 3682	Planning
Olga Franks 66 St Alban's Road EH9 2PG	667 1689	
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Dorothy Ryle 33 Mansionhouse Rd EH9 2JD	667 1444	Community Liaison

Bustracking A potentially very useful service: many bus stops in Edinburgh now provide Real Time Information, indicating how long you will have to wait for particular bus services. Unfortunately, the stops around the Grange are not equipped with Real Time Information displays. But if you go to <http://mybustracker.co.uk> in your web browser (at home, or—even better—on your iPhone), you can find out how soon your favourite bus will arrive at your friendly neighbourhood stop. Time for a brisk stroll, or a quick cup of tea? Now, *you* can decide.

Jon Oberlander

Copy date: 6/4/08. 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.

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