



The Grange Association

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

Newsletter No 92

Autumn 2008

Recognised Scottish Charity SC025491

Forthcoming Events

- Sat 27 Sept** The Cockburn Association's Doors Open Day allows us to visit lots of interesting buildings; those nearby include University buildings, Marchmont St Giles and the new Whitehouse Lodge. Check out <http://www.cockburnassociation.org.uk> for lists, a neat Google Maps interface, and details of a new photo competition.
- Wed 1 Oct** We're delighted to kick-off our season of talks with a presentation on Architectural Ironworks, by Ali Davey of Historic Scotland. This should be of special interest to residents who are considering renewal or replacement of their own railings.
- Wed 5 Nov** We will explore microgeneration: sources of domestic scale renewable energy, such as solar panels or small wind generators; Nick Heath of Changeworks will lead the discussion on the efficiency and effects of the different options.
- Tue 9 Dec** The Christmas Gathering will be held, as in previous years, at the German Church in Chalmers Crescent at 7.30pm. Enjoy an evening with friends old and new, stories, songs, wine and shortbread.
- Wed 18 Feb 2009 7.00pm** Annual General Meeting. An opportunity to come and join, new members welcome. Formal business will be followed with a presentation: we plan to focus on energy efficiency in traditional buildings; the speaker will be confirmed in the next newsletter.

Unless otherwise stated, meetings take place at 7.30pm in Marchmont St Giles' new hall. Tea, coffee, and biscuits are served after the meeting.

Grange Conservation Awards Readers will recall that in 2002, we instituted an award to recognise outstanding contributions by residents, which improve the quality of the area. The plan was that Awards would be made whenever a good example was recommended to the Association's Committee, and approved by a majority. Types of award-worthy enhancement included: restoration of gates or railings; high quality repair of stonework; new building contributing to the character of the area; and tree planting and landscaping complementing the local streetscape. However, although we made one award (for 1 Blackford Road), we then stalled over questions of whether self-nomination was allowed, and whether enhancements had to be publicly visible. But it's still a good idea in principle, so we think it's time to worry less, and try it again. Please send any member of the committee information about a change for the better. It can be along the lines sketched above, or it can be something we haven't even thought of. Let us know!

Conservation: Do It Yourself Street Descriptions

The Grange is an outstanding Conservation Area. Securing this status required a lot of research by residents, working together through the 1990s. The fruits of their labours are reflected in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal, published by the Council in 1999, and available online at http://download.edinburgh.gov.uk/caca/Grange_CACA.pdf.

One of the inputs to the Character Appraisal was a set of Street Descriptions, which captured the quality and character of individual localities within the area.

We have reviewed a set of these street descriptions, and we feel that it would be useful for today's residents to see an example, illustrating what is worth recording. Our website carries a copy of the general format for developing a street description, and a number of worked examples, from the time at which the Character Appraisal was being drafted. The fuller set gives a better idea of the range of descriptions which are useful. A list of relevant reference works is also available; all these resources can be found via <http://www.grangeassociation.org/planning/planning.htm>

We would like to encourage residents to try their hand at developing a description of their own street, as it looks today. It should be both interesting, and helpful in spotting changes for the better—as well as things that can be improved. Email your description—and photos of the street, if you like—to jon@oberlander.co.uk, and we will mount the best on the web, and advertise their availability via the newsletter.

When you send in your description, you might also want to include a covering note (not to be published) drawing attention to good and bad individual developments you have spotted on your street. These might be candidates for conservation awards (see p1), at one end of the scale, or unauthorised developments that might be checked by the planning department's enforcement unit, at the other end of the scale.

Jon Oberlander

Standard Format For Local Character Guidelines

LOCALITY: (street or locality name)

1 Status

1.1 Record Conservation Area status, identify only [A- and B-] Listed Buildings, Tree Preservation Orders.

1.2 Other publicly identified controls?

2 Particular Characteristics To Be Safeguarded

These will be what the Association believes the planning authority should pay special attention to when exercising its function under the Planning Acts. Be brief and to the point. Each particular characteristic should be supported by the reason for its inclusion.

3 General Character

This section gives the context for the reasoned selection of specific characteristics.

4 History

Additional information which may: (i) lend weight to arguments with owners, developers planners in consideration of appropriate development; or (ii) be of use and interest to local people.

Quality And Character Of The Grange Conservation Area

LOCALITY: GLENISLA GARDENS

1 Status

1.1 1 to 15 Glenisla Gardens, as a terrace, is Category B listed and the street lies within the Grange Conservation Area.

1.2 Because there does not appear to be any space for new development, some of these guidelines will appear to be academic.

2 Particular Characteristics To Be Safeguarded

2.1 Simplicity and elegance of unified terrace curving down and round into cul-de-sac invisible from street entrance.

2.2 Scale and rhythm of houses with paired projecting porches to the street and paired gables to the gardens; continuous facades with stepped cornice and ridge lines.

2.3 Painted harling with sandstone dressings (note existing stone is poor in quality and renewal may be difficult.)

2.4 Any work within the external envelope of the terrace should retain or restore the original design and detail.

2.5 Forest scale trees on a grass bank opposite houses. These are in the care of the Council (Recreation Department) with whom there has been extensive correspondence about replanting programmes.

3 General Character

3.1 Rus in urbe character with terraced cottages facing grass bank with forest trees (the best conkers on the South Side)

3.2 McWilliam: "a cosy terrace with twin porches and pinnacled dormers in the Sydney Mitchell style, c 1890, curving down into the valley."

3.3 Detailed description of facades available on Information Supplementary to Statutory Lists produced by City of Edinburgh District, Marchmont Ward 50, pages 15-17.

4 History

4.1 The land was part of the Mortonhall estate fields adjoining the old Blackford Farm (converted to 3 flats 1979) on the north bank of the Jordan / Pow Burn. It was feued to a builder William Watson and solicitor Peter MacKenzie for the construction of "artisans' cottages, each to cost not less than £300"

4.2 The Dean of Guild Warrant for nos 6-15 is dated 5.11.1897, for designs by J B Nisbet. Nos 6-11 were built first (Lists state 1896), and nos 12-15 in 1899. The Warrant for nos 1-5 is dated 7.7.1898, for similar designs by George Lennox Beattie, and the houses were built the same year.

April 1997, Graham Dickson

Planning Developments April 2008 to end of August 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

Controlled Parking Zone. Detailed proposals for the extension to controlled parking south of zone S1 are soon to be made available for inspection. Those within the proposed area should receive details directly; other interested parties should be aware that comments are being canvassed in September and October. As previously reported we have been given assurances that the 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. This matter is ongoing.

Several properties where planning proposals were approved are now up for re-sale or 'dormant'. New or revised applications may be lodged for these or possibly the state of the housing market may cause delay to the developments. New guidelines on development in villa grounds have been drawn up which should afford better protection in conservation areas especially on prominent corner sites.

Applications and Decisions 1 April to 31 August 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:

*145 Grange Loan	Construct 7 townhouses.
*160-162 Whitehouse Loan/ 35-39 Newbattle Terrace	Demolish cottages erect 3 townhouses and 11 flats.
*54 Fountainhall Road 36/36A Dick Place	Demolish conservatory and outbuildings. Extend. New garage. Newgagge with stores below. Garden room.
117 Grange Loan	Extend to form study.
28 Grange Crescent	Add dormer & rooflights & replace windows.
34 Grange Loan	Demolish & rebuild kitchen offshoot.
18A Dick Place	Alter layout, reinstate 2 windows, replace steps to garden.
141 Grange Loan	Change of use from hospital ancillary use to residential.
56 Fountainhall Road	Add glazed extension to rear, add dormer. (Mixed)
21 Chalmer's Crescent	Replace garage. Extensions and attic conversion.
2A Chalmer's Crescent	Internal alterations, replace dormer window.
86 Grange Loan	Remove outhouse, erect conservatory.
Flat 6 121 Grange Loan	Install replacement windows.
*32 South Oswald Road	Alterations, new balcony & storm porch remove trees. (In amended form)
8 Dick Place	Reinstate house as one dwelling.

GF 12 St Catherine's Place	Extend garage, form first floor storage room.
25 Oswald Road	Widen gateway & resurface driveway.
125C Grange Loan	Convert door to window and window to door; en suite bathroom.
5 Glenisla Gardens	New ponds & paving in rear garden.
*2 Whitehouse Terrace	New vehicle gate, timber fence, erect summerhouse, other hard landscaping. (Mixed)
*22 Mortonhall Road	Form car run-in, retaining wall with wrought iron gates.
8 Grange Road	Double glazed doors to rear, partition hall to make study.
14 Mortonhall Road	New velux rooflights, replace existing rooflights.
38 Dick Place	Alterations to driveway access.
1 West Relugas Road	Extension to rear.
1A Blackford Avenue	Demolish garage to provide 2 storey extension.
*31 Lauder Road	Internal alterations, new dormer & rooflights. Reposition gatepost.
9 St Catherine's Place	Erect cedar greenhouse, extend patio.
33 Lauder Road	Erect summer house.
14 Wyvern Park	Construct single storey lounge to rear.
3 Relugas Road	Erect lean-to greenhouse.
24 Dick Place	Single storey extension to side & rear, widen driveway & gates, new railings.
23A Dick Place	External canopy & door to side, solar panel.
145 & 147 Grange Loan	2 sign boards.
62C St Alban's Road	Erect garden shed.
62C St Alban's Road	Install window in northeast gable.
69/4 South Oswald Road	Alter 2 bedsits to form 2 bedroom flat.
31 Dick Place	Form French doors from windows.
12 Chalmers Crescent	New solar panel & alterations to rear kitchen outshot.

Refused:

53 Grange Loan	Replace wire fence with wrought iron fence.
22A Mortonhall Road	Extend roof; install rooflight.
1 Relugas Gardens	Extend to rear forming 2 bedrooms, dining room & WC.

Withdrawn:

*10 Blackford Road	Alterations, side extension above outshot, rear extension. Replace garage.
137 Grange Loan	Alter & extend single dwelling.

Pending:

22A Mortonhall Road	Install 3 rooflights & replacement door.
1 Cumin Place	Amend wall height and garage doors.
1 Relugas Road	Install satellite dish.
3 West Relugas Road	Install terraced rooflight & rooflights.
31A Blackford Road	Form 3 new rooflights, replace existing velux, extend upper floor bedroom into attic void.
*10 Blackford Road	Alterations, side extension above outshot, rear extension. Replace garage. (Amended design)
18 Lauder Road	Replace steel framed window with 3 upvc windows: colours to match original.

Nature Notes: Friendly Robins and Killer Swans

In April I was digging in the garden and stopped to take a rest for a few minutes. I sat on the bench beside the back door to admire the weed free herbaceous border that I had just cleared and watched the resident robin on his rounds checking out the newly upturned earth for tasty morsels.

He flitted about the garden before perching on the fork that I had left standing upright and then on to the handle of the watering can beside me. I was wishing that I had had my camera handy to capture the image of this friendly visitor. However, he came even closer. I was sitting with my left leg over my right and he alighted on the muddy toe of my raised wellie boot and settled down facing towards the garden. I kept as still as possible and could feel the weight of his tiny body as he fluffed up his feathers. I counted the seconds to see how long he stayed. It was 55. When I had an allotment at the end of our street about ten years ago I got regular visits from the resident robin when I was digging my plot during the nesting season. That particular robin was also in the habit of perching on my boot toe as I lay in the grass, resting between digging. It would be nice to think that these birds were related and the habit was a family trait.

I saw the first swallow in the area on the 30th April and a flock of house martins several days later. There was also a woodcock circling around the observatory on Blackford Hill in the gloaming. As usual the swifts arrived later than their cousins.

I passed the old jagged tree stump in the Hermitage where the kestrels successfully raised three chicks last year, hoping to see a hawk visiting the auld hoose, but no such luck. What I did see was a great spotted woodpecker hammering away at what was left of the tree, assisting in reducing its rotting bulk and returning it to the damp

Publications for sale

The Grange: A History in Maps The maps cover the Grange from the early 19th century to the present day. The set comprises 13 maps in A3 size, printed in black on white, with a selection of 9 smaller maps in a binder. For the first time we are including a photograph of Grange House, an important local feature until it was demolished in 1936. The maps are selling for £10.00 per set and the photograph of Grange House for £1.00 each.

"One Hundred Trees to Plant in the Grange for the Millennium or Later" by **Alistair Scott**. A very useful and informative booklet about trees that should grow well in the Grange. This publication will help you to make a decision on which tree to plant where, according to the space available and the effect you wish to achieve. The booklet sells for £3.00; it is also available for free from our website, in PDF format.

If you would like to buy the map book, tree book, or more, please complete an order form (available from the Products section of our website), and send your cheque to the Secretary.

earth to feed new saplings. I was surprised to see some of the new nest boxes erected in the Hermitage being so close to the ground and expected any self respecting bird to shun them on account of their vulnerability. However, I couldn't resist a peep into one of those boxes to discover a blue tit sitting on a cosy nest. I could only imagine her horror at seeing a big ugly face looking in through the hinged roof. I respectfully retreated to a safe distance and was relieved to see her mate popping in with insect snacks gathered from the oak tree above my head.

In early June at the allotment at Midmar, I heard the resident buzzard mewing and watched it soaring on high, just a speck in the clear blue sky. It suddenly stooped in a perpendicular dive at a remarkable speed, more like an eagle, and into a copse in the middle of the field. Buzzards appear clumsy and slow without any wind to assist them as they flap hard to gain height under their own power, but with a suitable breeze under their broad wings they are a joy to watch. A plump short tailed field vole scurried along the line of radishes just inches away from my feet as I looked down again. The folk on the lower part of the allotments are being raided by rabbits this year so a few raptors in the area might help to restore the balance.

A rather moth-eaten sparrowhawk passed over our garden one evening showing several missing wing feathers. The distinctive grey and black-barred wing pinion feathers of sparrowhawks are often found at the scene of pigeon kills, and I've found a few in the Astley Ainslie Hospital near the fir trees where the pigeons like to feed.

The male swan on Blackford pond has gone into killer mode again this year by attacking and killing any ducklings that have been unable to escape its attentions and there are now very few mallards being raised on the pond as a result. I became a victim of a swan attack myself beside Dunsapie Loch during a lunchtime break from work. There was a mother swan with a young brood of six cygnets sunning themselves beside her on the grassy bank. The male swan was some distance away standing on a small hillock like a sentry. I gave them a wide berth and sat on a large rock to admire the view. Seconds later I heard the whistle of feathers behind me and felt two almighty blows on the back of my head, at the base of my skull. I can only describe the sensation as feeling as though I had been punched by Mike Tyson. I felt dizzy and fell off the rock with my hands coming up instinctively to protect my face. Fortunately the cob retreating after administering his knockout blow and I was left sitting in the wet grass with a powerful headache. I had always taken stories about swans causing serious injuries to humans with a pinch of salt. Now I know differently.

Tom Breheny

Useful numbers

Call CLARENCE on 0800 23 23 23 to report road and lighting faults.
Call 0131 529 7050 to report antisocial behaviour and find out how to help end it.
Call the Rapid Response Team on 0808 100 33 66 about litter and dumping.
Crime stoppers are on 0800 555 111; St Leonard's Police station is 0131 622 5000, while Howdenhall is 0131 666 2222. And courtesy of the Grange Prestonfield Community Council, we note that the community police officer for Grange/Sciennes is PC Neill Sinclair on 0131 662 5022.

The Grange Association Committee 2008/9

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Tree cowboys: If you think that dubious work has been carried out on a tree within the area, it is worth checking with the Council's Arboriculture Officer (529 3919). One recent report revealed that the trees' owners were not responsible for the damage, but a cowboy contractor was, and the latter is now being prosecuted.

Copy date: 1/9/08. 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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