



The Grange Association

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

Newsletter No 93

New Year 2009

Recognised Scottish Charity SC025491

Forthcoming Events

- Wed 18 Feb** 7.00pm (Note earlier time!) 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, with Craig Kennedy of Historic Scotland as the speaker.
- Wed 25 March** We're delighted to host a talk by Caroline McInnes on 'The Union Canal Story'—a brief history of Edinburgh's local canal, from the start to the present day.
- Sat 9 May** 2.00pm-3.30pm 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. But also note that all donations of indoor and outdoor plants will be very gratefully received—if you need help transporting them, we can collect items in advance (667 5570).
- Sat early June** Gardens Walk. This year we're planning a slightly different event—an informative circular tour of the peaceful and historic Grange Cemetery. More details in the Spring 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. *Are you a member of the Association?* Annual Subscriptions are payable in mid-February.

Domestic energy – an area-based project?

As noted overleaf, we had a good discussion about microgeneration at our November meeting. In the light of this, Nick Heath, of Changeworks Ltd, suggested that, with the interest already shown in the Grange, it could be a suitable place for an area-based energy efficiency and renewables scoping study including a broader carbon reduction strategy. Such a study would be useful for both the residents and organisations concerned about energy use. The form of the project is still to be defined. Several people at the meeting expressed an interest in pursuing this, and if you are interested in knowing more about it, please contact Graham Dickson.

Microgeneration in the Grange

The 5th November session in our autumn programme was devoted to the pros and cons of various methods for domestic-scale energy generation. There were three speakers, and a good audience contributed to helpful discussion. Nick Heath, of Changeworks Ltd, spoke about domestic energy use, passive reduction by insulation, and active small scale energy production appropriate in our Conservation Area. Kate Evans gave the city Planning department's current views, and Lorn Macneal described his practical applications of solar panels and ground source heat pumps, particularly at the new house in Grange Loan. Nick has kindly made his presentation available online, at www.the-grange.org/events/microgeneration.pdf

From Nick's presentation, several key points emerged. First, most (but not all) types of microgeneration system are suitable for use in the Grange, and allowed under current planning guidelines. Secondly, most systems still have a relatively high capital cost, which is offset by a lower (in some cases, very low) running cost. Thirdly, while a mixture of different types of system is often the most effective approach, the single thing you should do first before even thinking about microgeneration is: insulate! There is little point in generating your own power if half of it is disappearing through your roof through a lack of insulation. Another article in this issue, on double glazing, touches on the latter's supposed energy efficiency. Finally, and most importantly, domestic energy systems have two main applications: heating and electricity. For a householder, heating the space within their house, along with their hot water, accounts for the majority of their energy demand.

Now, there are three main ways to provide heating (though there are others, not covered here): solar hot water (SHW) panels; biomass stoves or boilers; and heat pumps of various kinds.

SHW systems come in two shapes: traditional flat panels—which look like velux windows—or evacuated tubes. Such systems have already been approved on some properties within the Grange. The average house needs around 3,000 kWh of energy per annum just to heat its hot water, and a typical SHW system costing around £3k to install will deliver around 50% of this. So as well as a hot water cylinder, you will need an ordinary boiler too; however, few SHW systems will play nicely with combi boilers (as opposed to traditional or condensing ones, which are now preferred).

Biomass stoves or boilers burn organic material (basically, wood) very efficiently, and act like traditional central heating systems, connecting to a house's normal system of radiators; feeding the system can be manual or automatic. The fuel can be sourced locally—there is a new supply from Invergordon, for instance—and there are three types of fuel: logs, pellets and chips, of which the first two are suitable for domestic use. The smaller, stove, size, again costs about £3k to install, and costs about £500 to run per annum. However, the big issue with biomass systems lies in their particulate emissions: it remains to be seen whether they can be safely be used within smokeless zones. If you are interested in exploring the current situation, you should contact the number given at the end of this article.

By contrast, heat pumps are already accepted. They reliably take heat from the ground, water or air, drawing on the energy stored in the environment to provide a constant temperature all year round. A house must be insulated and airtight for a heat pump to be worth installing, but the running costs for space heating and pre-heating your hot water are near zero. Ground source pumps rely on a loop of pipes under ground—so you need a big garden, or a borehole. Installation costs around £11k for the former, and £14k for the latter. If you don't have a garden, then air source heat pumps are slightly cheaper to install, and can be fitted into a loft.

By contrast, if you want to generate your own electricity, the options are more restricted, within the Grange. If you lived on a hill, then wind turbines would be a possibility, but with low and variable wind speeds within the city, they are neither efficient enough nor likely to be permitted. Hydro power requires more, and faster-flowing water, than we receive here even in the wettest of summers. So the preferred option is photovoltaic (PV) cells, which directly convert sunlight into electricity. Currently, £9k will buy you about 12 square metres of roof mounted cells, generating about 1.2 kWh per annum. PV costs will surely fall, but right now, they are suitable for electricity generation, but not for heating.

There are grants available from SCHRI for installing microgeneration systems—30% of the cost, up to £4k—and they maintain a list of accredited installers. If you are interested in finding out more, the best thing is to call Energy Saving Scotland's advice centre on 0800 512012.

The following links should be useful, too:

www.est.org.uk/schri

www.est.org.uk/bestpractice

www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk

www.changeworks.org.uk/uploads/83096-EnergyHeritage_online1.pdf

Graham Dickson & Jon Oberlander

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.

The Committee has identified a number of recent examples of good stonework, and proposes to give at least two awards at the AGM in February. To see images and text about each of the nominations, visit our website. Email richard.groom@cskills.org to let us know what you think—and to forward further nominations for us to discuss in time for awards at the AGM.

Richard Groom

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 2009 is £5 per household or business, with a £2.50 concession for over-60 households and student households. (The household system appears fair, and continues to work 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.
- 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.

As usual, we aim to elect a number of new people to the Committee. Both the Chair and the Secretary are retiring this year, and we will need a new Treasurer the following year, so we *very much* welcome new talent.

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

Membership form

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 2009.
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 if you wish to receive a membership card.)

Name(s)

Address

.....

Postcode Tel

Email

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.
3. You can cancel this declaration if your circumstances change.
4. Please notify the Association of any change of address.

To double glazing or not?

Several residents have enquired about this issue over the last year. According to the Council, "Double glazing in itself does not eliminate draughts and is not cost effective in terms of heat conservation. Only about 20% of heat is lost through windows, and most of that escapes through the air gaps around the window frames, not through the single glass panels themselves. Although double glazing can reduce heat loss, the reduction is often not significant, a payback period of 60 years is suggested. If original timber windows are in reasonable condition, a basic overhaul, together with draught proofing or secondary glazing, provide better value for money than the installation of double glazing."

Historic Scotland drives the point home: "Replacing existing timber windows with new, double glazed windows is often promoted as a means of combating heat loss, draughts, dust ingress and providing perceived improvements to sound insulation and security. However research has shown that double glazed replacement of existing windows is not cost effective in comparison with other energy conservation measures. In fact your existing windows can be upgraded at a lower cost to bring these benefits whilst still retaining the original features and style which give character to your home. The replacement of the panes of glass in existing multi paned sashes with double glazed units is usually not possible. This is due to the narrow astragal and small glazing rebate dimensions of existing windows being incompatible with the technical requirements of double glazed units – which usually require a much larger rebate and a corresponding enlargement of astragal size. As an alternative, secondary glazing, using side hung or horizontally or vertically sliding windows, can be fitted internally. Secondary glazing reduces heat loss and dust ingress and provides very good insulation against noise. Where the building is listed, this alteration would require consent from your Local Authority planning department."

Nonetheless, you may still wish to consider double glazing as an option. We have checked the position with the Planning Department, and in May 2008, they advised "Replacement of windows with double glazing in a house in a conservation area will not need planning permission, *provided that the replacement windows are timber framed and matching the proportions and opening mechanism of the originals.*" This being so, Kirstine Baxter notes a potentially useful organisation called the Glazing Advisory Service (<http://www.glazing.org> or 01786 475747). The service is free to householders, being funded by the contractors. A similar service is offered by the larger Window Advice Centre (<http://www.windowadvicecentre.co.uk> or 0141 332 7878). It should be emphasised that uPVC windows are not at all likely to be accepted within the Conservation Area; timber-framed double glazing costs about three times as much as uPVC, at £1,200 for a typical astragaled window.

More information is available from the Council, here:

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Attachments/Internet/Environment/Planning_and_buildings/Planning/Developmentquality/Replacement_window_doors.pdf

Tom Cunningham and Richard Groom

The Grange Association Committee 2008/9

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Dorothy Ryle 33 Mansionhouse Rd EH9 2JD	667 1444	Community Liaison

Recycling rewards. It's now possible for householders to buy compost generated from the brown bin garden waste collections. Forth Resource Management, located near the Braehead Community Recycling Centre, has 20kg bags available at £2.20 each, or 5 for £10. They can deliver orders of over 20 bags (though this service isn't free!). There are plans afoot to make the compost available via garden centres, too. To find out more, check out <http://www.frmrecycling.co.uk/cms> or phone 0131 339 5554.

Copy date: 31/12/08. 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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