



The Newsletter

THE GRANGE ASSOCIATION AUTUMN 2011 | ISSUE NO.101



Tripping the light fantastic!

Inside story: **Behind the scenes in one of the Grange's most unusual contemporary homes**

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The Grange Newsletter | AUTUMN 2011

Welcome to the 2011 Autumn edition of **The Newsletter of the Grange Association** After considering the feedback from the 100th edition we have decided to keep the larger format. Your views are appreciated on all aspects of the content. It should be noted that not all articles necessarily represent the views of the Association. As well as keeping a watching brief on planning, conservation, environment and all matters of concern to residents, the Grange Association organises events, talks and excursions throughout the year. It is simple to sign up or renew your subscription – all you need to know is on the next page. Come and join us and play your part in sustaining the Grange's character and vibrancy.

Richard Mowe, Editor, The Newsletter

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Value for money...
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Why we're worth it!

By RICHARD BROWN

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Grange Association has been in existence since the early 1970s, a registered charity working to protect and enhance the Grange area, for all who enjoy its character and beauty. It is the only independent body dedicated to guarding the Grange heritage – based on historic and architecturally recognised merit, with an active and engaged resident community of 3000 households.

The Grange Association:

IS CONSTANTLY active and in touch with our elected representatives, local officials and community bodies in order to guard our amenities;
PROMOTES awareness and education about the Grange character;
DEFENDS the preservation and improvement of its best features;
PUTS PRESSURE on the Local authorities to keep up high standards of planning and architecture when examining applications and awarding planning permissions in their area;
ORGANISES a programme of talks on topics of local interest (free to members), and occasional visits further afield;
HAS AN ACTIVE gardening group;
PRODUCES The Newsletter three times annually, and delivers it to every household in the Grange area, in accordance with our constitution.

This work requires the moral support as well as the financial backing of the community of residents. We are very grateful for the support of all our members, but the resident community keeps changing and renewing itself therefore it is always important to recruit new members. We can do more for the community, and our views will be seen as more representative of the whole Grange area, with as high a membership as possible.

At the February 2011 annual general meeting it was agreed that from 2012, subscriptions should be:

£10 for an individual or £15 per household

We understand this is a significant increase. The existing rates have been unchanged since 2000, during which time the costs of venue hire, printing and other administrative expenses have continued to grow. The Association now has a larger programme of activities, a website and a fuller and brighter newsletter. The Committee believes that the new subscriptions are modest in relation to the work it does to conserve and enhance the Association's area. We make a commitment not to increase them for five years – until 2017.

If you are concerned about the upkeep of the area in which you live, and are not yet a Grange Association member, please support the work of the Committee and join!

What to do about your 2012 subscription?

If you are a member for 2011, we will be in touch directly either by email or post, including the revised Standing Order form for your bank. We'd like to encourage you to pay by Standing Order; however you can continue to pay by cash or cheque, of course, in 2012.

Otherwise, if we have your details on our database, it means you have been a member in the recent past. We'll also contact you directly by email or post, with details of how to rejoin. Equally, there will be the opportunity to ask for your details to be removed.

If you are not yet a member and wish to join, please download a 2012 membership and standing order form from the Grange Association website, or contact the Treasurer (667 8289 or treasurer@grangeassociation.com) for paper versions.



Arch of time...

By CAMERON ROSE

The significance of the Jawbone Arch in the Meadows is the visual link it makes to an era of vibrancy and vitality in industry, art and science. It is one of only a few remaining public objects from the International Exhibition of Edinburgh on the west Meadows in the summer of 1886.

The 125th anniversary of the opening of the exhibition devoted to art, science and industry was on 6 May 2011. Although some wanted to make elements of the exhibition permanent, the Act of Parliament prohibiting permanent building on the Meadows was observed, and the buildings were removed after the exhibition closed. The whale jawbones, however were sited in their present position where they have survived very nicely for 125 years.

“Meet me at the Jawbone” is a familiar refrain. Generations of students, footballers, cricketers, residents and visitors have used the jawbone to define where in the Meadows to meet or play.

The arch, however, is becoming tired. The structure is still solid but there are gaps where there was once a smooth surface. With plentiful surrounding foliage from nearby trees, the shade has enabled mosses to take hold. In short it needs smartened up. An appeal to raise £60,000 to repair and conserve the Arch was born on 6 May, 2011.

As well as local businesses there has been warm support from local organisations including The Grange Association. Discussions are under way with potential donors and trusts and local businesses.

Contributions to the Meadows Jawbone Arch Appeal can be made as follows: www.justgiving.com where tax can be reclaimed; Edinburgh World Heritage Trust, 5 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh EH 2 4DR. There is also a Facebook page (Meadows Jawbone Arch Appeal).

Cameron Rose is a local resident and councillor for Southside & Newington and can be contacted at cameron.rose@edinburgh.gov.uk or 0131 529 4078

HOUSE PROUD

In the second of our series *House Proud* Richard Mowe meets the owner and inspiration behind one of the Grange's most distinctive contemporary homes.

Simply going with the flow...

It looks as gleaming and pristine today as it did when it was finally unveiled to a curious outside gaze some nine years ago. The garden ground has matured around the clean-lined edifice which has bedded down comfortably in its setting with open views from its all-enveloping terraces, and floor to ceiling windows to Blackford Hill, Arthur's Seat and the Royal Observatory.

It has nothing in common with its neighbours behind the high-walls of Blackford Road – some traditional stone villas and other less distinguished modern homes.

It was built on a vacant feu to order by property developer Mike Afshar when he ran out of space and ingenuity in adapting his previous home at 57 Dick Place. Originally his company had considered building an apartment development on the site but encountered a problematic rock formation that would have rendered underground parking difficult.

He had been looking around for a larger property, which would have provided more space for his two growing sons Bobak (18) and Kamran (12) and also an additional living space for his parents who wanted to spend more time with the family here and as well as in his native Iran.

After a few unsuccessful bids for larger traditional houses in the area he turned to the double feu plot his company had recently acquired with the idea of building a new home specifically tailored to his wishes and requirements. The planners responded enthusiastically to the outline proposition for the site, for which they had despaired of ever finding an appropriate development.

"The whole idea was to build something light and airy which would be totally different," says Afshar as he shows me around his creation. "I was very influenced by the work of Richard Meier, an award-winning American architect who designed the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona."

What appealed to him was the way Meier allowed spaces to flow in to each other and the way there was no distinct demarcation between the outside and the inside. "On the way back from a visit to the States I found an article about him in the in-flight magazine and then once home I spent hours reading and finding out more about him. I was already keen on the style of Frank Lloyd Wright and Charles Rennie Mackintosh so you can find those influences too."

He turned over the initial planning phase to David Lawson of Edinburgh architects Oberlanders with a view to him designing the exterior of the house and taking it through the planning / building warrant stages. Afshar wanted to take over the interior design himself. They negotiated their way through the design stages – the double height central living space and helical steel staircase at the front door were delicate issues which conflicted with the fire regulations of Scottish building standards and this was overcome by introducing a secondary stair to the rear of the property and the plans were approved. Smart technology and design was incorporated into the structure using the latest materials to make it ecologically sound. Even although it is double the space of his former home in Dick Place the heating bills are less than half the previous outlay.

It proved a learning curve for his business as a house developer, allowing him to incorporate many of the ideas and materials into his projects, notably his extensive high-specification development Caer Amon overlooking the Forth at Cramond, on the site for the former Dunfermline College of Physical Education as well as the Murrayfield development of Succouth Heights. He established the family company AMA with his Iranian-born brothers Ali, Behnam and Behzad.

"The entire house is a steel frame in-filled with insulating blocks, covered by further layer blanket insulation and finished with polymer based render (susceptible to cracking) block work, allowing insulation and render to obtain maximum "U" value out of the walls.

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Stairway to the stars... and the double-height living space in the Afshar family's Blackford Road modernistic haven



Curvaceous appeal above the front entrance



Lights transform the building at night

There are floating ceilings with hidden lighting to define the room rather than cornices. The doors are panelled with marquetry in Mackintosh style which we ran through everywhere, including specific pieces of furniture. We have two-miles of under-floor heating which means the rooms keep an ambient temperature all year round – and there are no draughts. We deliberately connected the heating and security system together so that when the security system is turned on there is an automatic recognition for the boiler to move to set back mode reducing the heat output. Also we placed heat exchanger/ automatic vents to control the air movements within the house. Low energy lighting and smart technology was all part of the strategy for energy conservation. We deliberately decided on top specifications but that has brought dividends because after nine years it all looks as good as new. That includes the cherry-wood kitchen, which has been worked hard because my wife Nazie loves to cook,” says Afshar.

There are unique individual touches everywhere: Mondrian-style coloured glass rises up from the ground floor to the roof; panels on the front and side entrance doors reflect different periods of architecture while as a

lasting legacy his sons' handprints have been captured on the wall outside. All the fireplaces have been designed as works of art including one that seems to throw molten lava down on the floor. Afshar commissioned Brian Caster of Powderhall Bronze in Edinburgh who was mentored by sculptor, Sir Eduardo Paolozzi, and was responsible for the statue of Donald Dewar at the top of Buchanan Street in Glasgow.

Although the planners remained supportive not everyone was as keen on the house in the initial stages. “People wondered whether it was supposed to be a hotel and criticised the fact it blocked the view of the traditional house behind us. Someone even suggested it looked like an Odeon cinema from the Thirties. But I think people have warmed to it.”

He was initially reluctant to take part in this publication, however in the interest of promoting new architecture and resulting benefits he hopes his example will encourage others to be bold and ground-breaking. He enjoyed living in two traditional houses within the Grange Conservation Area for 25 years, but now he would never consider turning the clock back.

planning watch

By Graham C Bell

Concern has been mounting over the mooted erection of a mobile phone mast on the Grange Cricket Ground. As yet no application for planning permission has been lodged and the site of the mast and its design are not yet known. It is important that the mast does not impact adversely on the amenity of the Grange. An example of how intrusive a mast may be, can be seen on the South side of Glenlockart Road on the Merchants' Golf Course. The GA planning committee are committed to examining any planning application that may be lodged and a meeting with the Cricket Club and the mobile phone company has been sought.

Objections lodged by the Grange Association and neighbours resulted in a planning application being refused to demolish the front wall and to convert much of the front garden for car parking at 18 St Albans Road. The paving over of gardens for parking and the loss of ground is a major concern, particularly in a conservation area. The Association has been actively following alterations and extensions being carried out at 5 Lauder Road. Objections by the Association to the original planning application resulted in a reduction in size of the extension to the rear. As work has progressed it became obvious that the steel structure extended well beyond that shown on the plans. The attention of the architect and the City planning department was drawn to the obvious departure from the approved plans. As a result the contractors were forced to accept the steel structure did not conform to the approved plans and were instructed to make a sizeable reduction in the upper steel beams. Further progress will be carefully monitored.

We welcome observations by neighbours and others, to assist us in keeping a close watch on developments that may impinge on the amenity of the conservation area. Following requests from readers we include all decisions made since Autumn 2010. These had not been included in the last two newsletters but the list should now be complete back to Issue No 1.



Signs of development at last – on the long derelict corner site at Whitehouse Loan

DECISIONS FROM THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Granted:

21 HOPE TERRACE	Alterations to kitchen wing.
28 MANSIONHOUSE ROAD	Placement of new window.
22 MANSIONHOUSE ROAD	Extension of dormer window, removal of various extensions & extend driveway.
9 HOPE TERRACE	Form new pavement crossing, gates & driveway.
7 HOPE TERRACE	Single storey rear extension.
8 WHITEHOUSE TERRACE	Widen new & existing door/window & internal alterations (part refused).
5A HOPE TERRACE	Single storey rear extension.
30 MANSIONHOUSE ROAD	Demolish garage & replace garage & playroom.
37 CHARTERHALL ROAD	Form roof lights.
20 FINDHORN PLACE	Installation of six photovoltaic panels on south facing roof.
Flat 1, 2 LAUDER ROAD	Proposed new window to sun-room.
141 GRANGE LOAN	Erection of single-storey flat roof extension and alterations.
17 ST THOMAS ROAD	Garage conversion to day room.
GF 29 GRANGE LOAN	Formation of timber sliding doors in new opening to rear.
131 WHITEHOUSE LOAN	Single storey side extension.
23 FINDHORN PLACE	Single storey rear extension.
112 RELUGAS ROAD	Install new Velux windows to front and rear elevations.
7 MANSIONHOUSE ROAD	Formation of dormer to rear.
47 LAUDER ROAD*	Replace sunroom.
1 BLACKFORD AVENUE	Form dormer windows to north and south elevations.
8 RELUGAS ROAD	Form dormer to rear.
24 FOUNTAINHALL ROAD	Replace three existing roof windows with Velux windows.
FLAT 3, 6 DALRYMPLE CRES	Replace existing rooflight with new rooflight.
1F3 7 SCIENNES HOUSE PL	Install balanced flue for gas boiler, horizontal flue cover.
44 DICK PLACE	Install log cabin at rear of garden
46 GRANGE ROAD*	Amendment. Slate pitched roof with dormers to front & back
5 SOUTH LAUDER ROAD*	Enlarge existing vehicular access and infill pedestrian access.
19 FINDHORN PLACE	Alteration of ground floor windows including French doors.
14 DALRYMPLE CRESCENT	Alterations to windows on lower ground floor to rear and side of the house.
108 GRANGE LOAN	Single storey rear extension with flat roof.
4 DICK PLACE	Demolish existing stone-walls forming external stores to create patio.
FLAT 1, 2 LAUDER ROAD	Double-glazing to existing sash and case windows and external door.
52 – 54 MAYFIELD ROAD	Proposed single storey extension and associated internal alterations.
5 SOUTH LAUDER ROAD	Removal of stone pier and roof-light and change from window to door.
12 ST THOMAS ROAD*	Vary existing permission by substituting render finish to rear and side
9 BLACKFORD ROAD	Remove existing porch and erect new porch
49 LAUDER ROAD	New & replacement roof-light windows, new sanitary facilities
7 MORTONHALL ROAD*	Flat roof mounted solar panel installation.
79 FINDHORN PLACE	Private driveway installed in rear garden which backs on to Relugas Road.
14 GLENISLA GARDENS	Replacement of timber fencing and alterations to existing garden areas.
12 OSWALD ROAD	Erect conservatory to rear of property.
GF 7 DICK PLACE	Renewal of planning permission for formation of access.
25 BLACKFORD AVENUE	Remove chimney and convert attic with dormers & roof-lights.
4 DALRYMPLE CRESCENT*	Two one-and-a-half storey rear extensions and 6 solar panels on flat roof.

36 DICK PLACE
28 RELUGAS ROAD
17 HOPE TERRACE
9 DICK PLACE
GF 18 STRATHEARN ROAD
18 FINDHORN PLACE
53 DICK PLACE*
160 – 162 WHITEHOUSE LOAN / 35 – 39 NEWBATTLE TERRACE*
72 – 80 CAUSEWAYSIDE
4B PALMERSTON ROAD
2/6 LAUDER ROAD
12 HOPE TERRACE
38A DICK PLACE
2 BLACKFORD ROAD
4 STRATHEARN ROAD
15 FOUNTAINHALL ROAD
125D GRANGE LOAN
5 DALRYMPLE CRESCENT
9 WEST RELUGAS ROAD
SOUTHWEST OF 4 LAUDER LOAN
33 DICK PLACE

Refused:

41 LAUDER ROAD
7 MORTONHALL ROAD
6 LAUDER ROAD
18 ST ALBANS ROAD*

Permission not required:

36 DICK PLACE
5 FINDHORN PLACE
NEW – PENDING:
38 (GF1) DICK PLACE
119/2 GRANGE LOAN
17 HATTON PLACE
42 FINDHORN PLACE
41 LAUDER ROAD
2/1 LAUDER ROAD
160 WHITEHOUSE LOAN
131 WHITEHOUSE LOAN
4/5 BLACKFORD AVENUE

Orangery on rear of property.
Replace rear conservatory with single storey flat roof extension.
Installation of two conservatory roof lights.
Two solar panels on inner roof, new 100mm diam cast iron down pipe.
New extension to rear, adjacent to outhouse. Internal works.
Erect new single storey extension to rear of property
Alterations and extension to rear. Formation of driveway to front.
Demolition of existing cottages and erect three blocks (19 units).
Refigure windows, two new roof-lights
Erection of a porch.
Slim-line double-glazing.
Reinstate villa, various new build, new entrance, landscape enhancements.
Upgrading windows to slim-line double-glazing.
Reinstate original semi-detached house.
Alteration to form one dwelling and erection of double garage.
Change of use to residential, removal of external fire escape.
Five solar panels to roof of conservatory.
Alterations to rear extension.
Alter attic to form balcony.
New two-storey dwelling house.
Erection of summer-house, alterations to stone wall.

Erection of conservatory and house alterations.
Five solar PV panels on rear slated roof relocated from flat roof.
Timber gates to existing openings for vehicular & pedestrian access.
Car parking space to front including part demolition of boundary wall.

Alterations to internal layout – new door openings on first and ground floors.
Solar panel array

Erection of new extension and single garage.
Formation of two-bed apartment.
Slim-line double-glazing.
Increase existing window openings
Erection of conservatory and house extensions
Widen opening in kitchen wall
20 residential units, six town houses plus block of apartments.
Driveway gates replaced.
New window to south gable.

An asterisk (*) 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 refusal; most are later resubmitted in a revised and somewhat less contentious form. Some properties may appear more than once; possibly indicating repeat applications have been made.

Contact: **Graham C Bell (667 8631) planning@grangeassociation.com**

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Environment

Clean-up on Lover's Loan: This popular path has been full of litter and graffiti until recently when the Grange Association took action. There had been many complaints about its state but an urgent message from the Association to the relevant Council officer resulted in a swift clean-up. Let us know of similar problems and we'll try to obtain equally effective and speedy results.

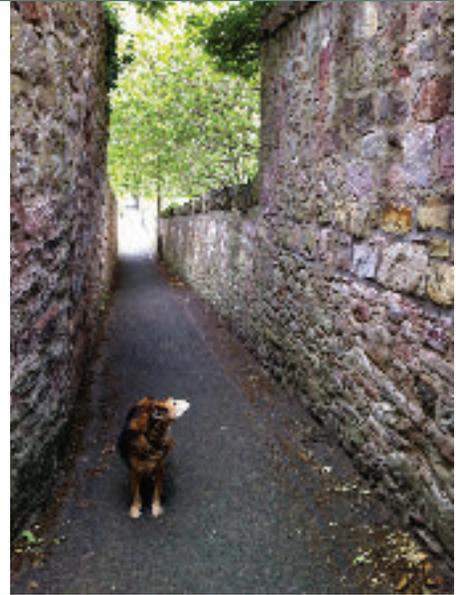
Traffic and Parking

Priority Parking Area "B1" (south of S1): By the time this newsletter is distributed this scheme should have come into operation. Residents in the area have received information from the City Council about the introduction of "Priority Parking"; selected areas in each street are zoned to be restricted for residents, with a permit, for 90 minutes each weekday. This scheme designed by the Community Council, working with councillors and transport officials is to try to restrict commuter parking while not introducing a full CPZ. There has also been consultation on plans for more nine-hour (all day) bays in zone "S1".

20mph Area: Formal consultation for the proposal to create a pilot 20mph limit for the area bounded by the Meadows, Holyrood Park, Blackford Hill and Morningside Road has ended and the scheme received approval at a recent Council meeting.

All the main bus routes will remain at 30mph despite campaigns by the Grange Association, the Community Councils and organisations such as Spokes that some routes (such as the Kilgraston Road/Blackford Avenue stretch) should be included in the 20mph area. Our concern now, especially as this is a pilot scheme, is that the amount of signage should be the minimum legally allowable. Legal requirements mean that there must be large signs at every change from 20 to 30mph.

Snow Problems: The problems of last winter seem a long time ago now but may be back before the next newsletter in January 2012. The City Council has held several consultation events (some attended by GA members) to see what actions are required to help to prevent similar problems and a report is expected shortly. The provision of additional grit bins would help – any suggestions for more bins will be considered and passed on.



Approving glances at the clean-up on Lover's Loan from a frequent passer-by

Recycling

Bottle Tops: There are now various groups collecting plastic bottle tops, which can be recycled in various ways (some fleeces are made from recycled plastic!). We have a contact in the Borders, which welcomes bottle tops (those with recycling numbers 2 or 4) and these are made into fibre optic coating. Any profit from selling the tops goes to the Borders Hospital Hospice. Please collect your tops and let me have them (just leave outside my door at 6 Grange Terrace – or I can collect).

Energy Matters

Solar scheme: The Grange Association provided a letter of support for a successful grant application made by Transition Edinburgh South (TES). The group state: "Three major parts of the energy project have been bundled together and termed 'TES Energy Action.' This covers a solar special purchase scheme where we have negotiated advantageous terms from two reliable installers, home energy visits (these need to take place in order for people to qualify for the solar special purchase) and a home insulation scheme which again has some very advantageous terms from a reliable national company with long established Edinburgh roots. We are working to ensure that we have good information related to planning (including conservation areas), and an effective process with the council to support smooth delivery – the council are very supportive of our activities."

More information is available on the TES website: <http://www.transitionedinburghsouth.org.uk>

Monitors: I still have a few monitors available for loan to local residents – please contact me if you would like one.

SUE TRITTON

Garden Exchange

With 47 people on the mailing list and as many as 20 turning up for a local garden visit, the Grange Garden Exchange seems to be flourishing.

Garden visits At our first meeting it was clear that garden visits would be the most popular activity. Alison Cunningham has helped to arrange an activity every month. Four members have invited the others to visit their gardens. We have also visited Falcon Bowling Club to see the banks of roses cared for by John Chalmers.

Redhall walled garden. It was originally a kitchen garden for the Redhall House in Colinton Dell and one of our group told us something of its history. redhall@samhservices.org.uk

Shepherd House garden, Inveresk, where you can see the low espaliered crab apples making a fence which looks like rubies in the autumn and the lavender rill and fountain. www.shepherdhousegarden.co.uk

Craigieburn near Moffat on the Grange Association coach trip arranged by Judith Reeves where we were welcomed by the owners and given a home cooked buffet lunch. The garden was immense, extending over gullies, forest and herbaceous borders. There were hundreds of irresistible plants for sale.

We keep a list of equipment available for sharing and several requests for help and information have been met from within the membership. I maintain the membership list and send regular newsletters with information about visits.

Members have carried out work on the **Newington Library garden**. Volunteers are welcome.

If you want to join us and hear about future activities write to: gardens@grangeassociation.com
Newsletters are posted under the gardens tab at <http://www.grangeassociation.org/>

ALISON BRAMLEY

Autumn & Winter Talks

21 September: Edinburgh's New Water

Following a summary of the history of Edinburgh's 'old' water supply via its various reservoirs' the talk will cover the reasons for the new developments and explain the environmentally friendly construction of the two new enormous (surface area as big as four football pitches) ten hour holding tanks at Flotterstone.

19 October: Ribbon of Wildness – Discovering the Watershed of Scotland

The Watershed of Scotland is a line that separates east from west; that divides those river catchment areas which drain towards the North Sea on the one hand, and those which flow west into the Atlantic Ocean on the other. It's a line that meanders from Peel Fell on the English border all the way to the top at Duncansby Head, near John O'Groats – over twelve hundred kilometres, through almost every kind of terrain; hill and mountain, field, bog and forest. The talk will be given by the author of *Ribbon of Wildness* Peter Wright.

The book was launched at a sell-out event in the 2010 Edinburgh Book Festival and is dedicated to mark the pending centenary of John Muir's death in 2014.

16 November: The Graham Dickson Memorial Talk

This talk will be given by Archie Clark who was a colleague of Graham's between 1967 and 1986 when they worked together at Robert Matthew Johnson-Marshall and Partners. Archie is now retired as an architect but like Graham shares an interest in



Happy days – the Garden Exchange group on an outing to the garden of Judith and Tony Reeves

community life. His talk will be not so much about grand designs but about the people who put them together and some of their memorable moments.

14 December: Winter Wine and Song

A relaxed mixture of music, song, words and wine.

All events start at 7.30pm at Marchmont St Giles Church 1A Kilgraston Road, Edinburgh EH9 2DW 0131 447 4359 with social gathering from 7.15pm, generally we finish about 8.30pm although the December event will finish later with a refreshment break in the middle.

Flashback: The July coach trip to Craigieburn Gardens near Moffat and two smaller gardens in Broughton was a great success in perfect weather. The five-acre garden also ran a cafe where an excellent home cooked lunch was served. The coach was full with 33 attendees.

Tony Reeves, Events Organiser

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