



Your Forth and Inverleith councillors

NEN NEWS DESK

Are you passionate about North Edinburgh and well informed about the issues affecting it? Are you connected to local communities or projects? Are you a keen writer, blogger, video maker, podcaster or social media user?

The newly relaunched NEN is looking to recruit three dynamic community reporters to work with the paper.

The role is part-time and voluntary, but includes intensive training with former Guardian reporter and social media expert Tom Allan. The three new community reporters will be equipped with smart phones, and trained in how to blog, produce videos and audio interviews, and how find and report local news stories in interesting and creative ways.

Applications are particularly encouraged from people who are already involved in local projects or community groups, and ideally you will already have some experience of writing or publishing your material online. But the main qualification is a passion for the area, and an interest in sharing stories from North Edinburgh. Initially, applicants are being sought in the Inverleith Neighbourhood Partnership area of the city.

» If you are interested in finding out more about the role and how you can apply, please email w_t_allan@yahoo.com for more details.

The NEN Board

New Council, new hope

Optimistic future for our community newspaper

by DAVID PICKERING

NORTH EDINBURGH NEWS has hope of a more secure future following this month's council elections. The election result saw Labour and the SNP forming a coalition to run the city council for the next four years, and NEN's voluntary board is convinced that the new administration brings new hope for the future of your community newspaper.

Martin Hinds, chairman of North Edinburgh News, said: "The North Edinburgh community was devastated when the NEN was forced to close last year after the Lib-Dem led council withdrew our funding. Since then we have managed to resurrect the NEN, and we've been delighted with the reaction we've received from the local community and the support

"we are very keen to work constructively with the new council"

we've receive from groups and local organisations like Edinburgh's Telford College. However we are operating on a shoestring budget and we are looking for support from our politicians. Community newspapers make an important contribution to community life – they encourage active citizenship, promote strong communities and are a great way of getting information out in neighbourhoods where many people still don't

have or use computers or new technology. We are sure all of these things are supported by our elected members, and we want to work with the new administration to help our newspaper not only to survive but to thrive and develop."

Broad support

Both the Labour Party and the Green candidates pledged support for the community newspaper in the run-up to the election and

SNP councillors have taken out an advertisement in this month's paper. The NEN's board hopes that support can become even broader as the new council meets to set it's priorities.

"The new administration faces a number of challenges and we are very aware that these are very tough times," Martin Hinds continued. "Many different groups will be pushing for more funding and finances are very tight. However we believe that the attitude of politicians towards community newspapers has changed for the better and we are very keen to work constructively with the new council."

The NEN Board plans to seek an early meeting with Forth and Inverleith councillors.



The NEN is your community newspaper so please put your pen to paper and tell us what you think, what you feel strongly about or what makes you angry. If you would like your letter to appear in the paper it must include your full name and address, although these may be withheld at your request. **Send your letters to:- The Editor, North Edinburgh News, c/o Edinburgh's Telford College, 350 West Granton Road, Edinburgh EH5 1QE**

The NEN Board:

Martin Hinds (Chair)
Cathy Ahmed
Pam Barnes
Willie Black
Thomas Brown
Ann Confrey
Alex Dale
James Thomson
Eddie Thorn

Contributors:

Thomas Brown
Ann Confrey
CORE
Cllrs Day and Redpath
Tony Delahoy
Edinburgh's Telford College
Living Well North Edinburgh
Christine Mackay
North Edinburgh Childcare
North Edinburgh Young People's Forum
David Pickering
Pilton Community Health Project
www.youthfootballscotland.co.uk

And a special thanks to our advertisers:

Cllr Gavin Barrie
BOMAR Carpets
Cllr Steve Cardownie
Malcolm Chisholm MSP
Crawford Gowans Solicitors
Cllrs Day & Redpath
Drylaw Telford Community Council
Easter Drylaw Residents Association
Forth Community Gala Committee
Granton Information Centre
Fiona Higgins
Cllr Lesley Hinds
Inverleith Community Councils
Alison Johnstone MSP
Muirhouse Salvesen Community Council
Muirhouse Slimmers Club

Design: www.lennondesign.co.uk

Distribution: Premier Delivery Edinburgh

Printed by: quotemeprint

The NEN Board issues the following Editorial Policy in each edition and welcomes comments from NEN readers

- To produce a fair, interesting, positive, informative and independent community newspaper
- To increase community awareness and understanding of regeneration activities
- To promote the North Edinburgh area in a positive way, both locally and nationally
- To cover local campaigns and initiatives in a positive way
- To cover any negative issues brought to our attention by local people/groups, but highlight any positive responses/campaigns being initiated to address any such problems
- To counteract negative publicity from other media sources, by providing a positive/local angle on the story
- To include articles from local contributors, either groups or individuals
- To use the letters page as a forum for topical debate, fair and free speech for local people/group
- To use the letters page as a forum for free speech, allowing criticism of issues, but ensuring individuals are protected from personal attack
- To ensure all articles are balanced and that any person or group in the article is given the opportunity to present their side of the story/argument
- To implement/resolve any suggestions, criticisms etc (where appropriate to local issues) made at editorial forums
- To promote local businesses and organisations
- To ensure NEN remains apolitical
- Any letter or article which the Board or Editor consider libellous will not be published
- The factual content of any letter will be checked and if the facts cannot be verified the letter will not be published

How to contact us:

By email: northedinnews@gmail.com
Telephone: 07925 405 972
Post: North Edinburgh News
c/o Edinburgh's Telford College
350 West Granton Road
Edinburgh EH5 1QE
Our blog: northedinburghnews.wordpress.com

The views expressed in the North Edinburgh News are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Editor or Publishers. Any individual, group or organisation is welcome to contribute. Please note copy may be edited.

Please have your copy to us by Wednesday 15 August for inclusion in our next - Summer Special - edition

A Capital Crisis

Dear Editor

Famine does not happen in the UK, although there is still widespread poverty and all the misery that flows from that. Famines are happening around the world: we have all seen the dreadful pictures, particularly harrowing are the pictures of children dying. One's heart breaks that this is happening every minute of every day.

The financial crisis caused by the banks, which is now being passed onto the people, has shown that private ownership and control of major producing companies are not capable of maintaining them in the interest of everyone: they are too busy looking after profits, buying, selling and closing down places of work.

This is Capitalism.

- *Private ownership driving force is for profit.*
- *Private ownership thrives on increasing exploitation of people for profit.*
- *Private ownership leads to exploitation of animal and other forms of life for profit.*
- *Private ownership leads to gross exploitation of natural resources for profit.*

Despite industrial and technological development giving an opportunity to solve the world's problems of hunger and disease, it has been used to make massive fortunes for a very small number of people worldwide.

The system has been challenged by many generations of people who have gained improvements in many areas of life, but the present crisis confirms the system is incapable of managing the economy.

A change has to come, but those who control and gain from the existing system are resisting as hard as they can.

A new way to tackle the terrible problems of mass famine, unemployment and poverty must be allowed to operate. Appealing to the better nature of existing owners of industry, etc, obviously has no effect!

*A. Delahoy
Silverknowes Gardens*

Worker's Rights

Dear Editor

'Rights come with Responsibility' is a favourite call of the Cameron government. A second favourite: 'strikes are wrong and evil in intent'.

The biggest and longest lasting strike – still going on and having disastrous consequences – is the strike of the very rich and their investment companies in 'the Market': they only invest if the profit return is large enough.

Although they are only investing money, 'rights with responsibility' obviously does not apply to them, whereas the majority of the population invest the whole of their working lives. The majority of workplace strikes are, in the main, by people exercising their rights and responsibility to their families in resisting efforts by employers to worsen conditions of work and pay – and being made to feel guilty for doing so.

*A. Delahoy
Silverknowes Gardens*

Big thanks

Dear Editor

We would like to thank the residents of Forth Ward for electing us at the election to represent them at the Council.

Two of our priorities are housing/fuel poverty, and the regeneration of the area. We have already approached Council Officers to start this process and we will keep you informed of our progress.

Since being elected in 2008 Cammy has done much for the community and attended many community meetings and events but it was difficult when events clashed. Now that there are two of us we can attend events more often.

Councillor surgeries will continue as advertised for the time being but from August this year, instead of fortnightly surgeries, there will be weekly surgeries at the Muirhouse Millennium Centre, The Prentice Centre and at the Royston Wardieburn Community Centre.

This is just an indication of how we will be working for the residents of North Edinburgh.

*Councillor Cammy Day & Councillor Vicki Redpath
Labour Councillors, Forth Ward*

Challenging the System

Dear Editor

A look at our history shows how society has changed; for example from serfdom, to feudal, to what we have now: capitalism. There is no reason to suppose that capitalism, in turn, will not be superseded by the most likely system of socialism.

When challenged, those in control of each system struggled very hard to maintain that control. The capitalist leaders are no different: they have powerful means to retain that control, but are savvy enough to allow general improvements to take place depending on the amount of pressure put on them.

Rapid industrial development throughout the 19th century, followed by the technical developments of the 20th century and the digital developments of the 21st century, have brought problems of trying to manage the vast volume of goods produced – they cannot do so, The only solution they see is to close down places of work, and this, as we know, creates massive poverty and misery. Other capitalist countries act likewise.

As in previous centuries those who own or control the means of production and the land are resisting social changes in society; in fact they are trying very hard to undo much of the collective social progress that has been achieved.

The new social system will not automatically come into existence: it has to be shown to be wanted by the majority, and to work on behalf of the majority.

*A. Delahoy
Silverknowes Gardens*



1,000 mile cycle raises £8,000 for Oaklands

A TEAM OF LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS cycled the length of the country to raise funds for Oaklands School last month. Over nine gruelling days the men from Crewe Toll's White Watch pedalled from Lands End to John o' Groats and raised a magnificent £8000 for the local school.

The money raised by the team of ten cyclists and two support drivers will help buy specialised Petra Running Bikes, which give children a totally new experience of freedom when they use them, for Oaklands.

Crewe Toll Station Commander Dave Dourley, who led the team on the thousand mile North Quest Fundraising Cycle, explained his station's links with Oaklands. "We decided to support Oaklands because we have a very good working relationship with the school - being on Ferry Road it's very close to our fire station and we're regular visitors, frequently involved in various activities", he said. "The children and young people at Oaklands have severe and complex additional support needs and we know the staff do a really fantastic job here, so when we heard Oaklands needed support to raise money for these amazing bikes we were delighted to offer our services. The cycle was a real test - some of our guys had only been cycling for a few weeks - but we are delighted to have completed our challenge for such a good cause."

Oaklands Head Teacher Maureen Mathieson said: "This makes a huge difference and we are so grateful to the Crewe Toll team for making this tremendous effort for us. We'd also like to thank everyone who sponsored the fire-fighters. The money raised enables us to buy specially built cycles for the children to enjoy. It's terrific!"



Friends reunite for Craigroyston farewell

CRAIGROYSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL teacher Barbara Wilson has retired after a teaching career in North Edinburgh that spanned 39 years! Barbara taught at Silverknowes for 29 years before moving on to the new Craigroyston when it opened in 2003.

Craigroyston Primary School held a special assembly to thank and say goodbye to the popular teacher before breaking up for the Easter holidays.

Barbara was joined on her special day by friend and former colleague Moira Moyes, who retired from Craigroyston just eight weeks before Barbara. Barbara and Moira became friends when they studied to become teachers, graduating in 1973. Barbara went on to teach at Silverknowes while Moira taught at nearby Muirhouse, but the friends were reunited when the schools merged to form the new Craigroyston in 2003.

Over all those years Barbara and Moira taught and nurtured hundreds of local schoolchildren, although Barbara did point out that Moira did take off a couple of years to have a family so she's still basically a novice!

Barbara (left) and Moira are pictured with Craigroyston pupils who helped to make the assembly special.

The Muirhouse Centipede's on the march!

THE CENTIPEDE PROJECT, the community regeneration initiative launched in Muirhouse in March, has received a welcome boost with news that the project has been awarded funding to help take plans forward.

Linda Dunbar, Locum Minister at Muirhouse St Andrew's Parish Church, organised the initial consultation event held in the church. That event generated a number of great ideas - the favourite being a community gardens project - and now it seems that those ideas have taken a step closer to becoming a reality.

Linda said: "We have had great news at the Centipede Project - we have been awarded £5000 Pilot Project funding from the Church of Scotland's Parish Development Fund, so we are now gearing up to develop some of the ideas for the Community Gardens project. We hope to send out more information by the end of the month, but in the meantime a new Facebook page - Marvellous Muirhouse - has been set up for people, groups and projects to promote their activities and to celebrate all the good things going on in Muirhouse and surrounding areas.

You can find the page at www.facebook.com/MarvellousMuirhouse so please:

- log on and 'Like' the page
- post on the page to tell everyone about your activities
- pass the information on to all your contacts

This has the potential to be a great networking resource; if you want to see a similar page and how the networking has taken off, have a quick look at Glorious Govan on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/#!/GloriousGovan>



Green light for Raeburn

PLANS TO TRANSFORM the derelict Raeburn House Hotel into a nine bedroom boutique hotel and restaurant were given the go ahead by councillors last month - despite recommendations by planning officials to refuse the application.

News that the Stockbridge eyesore is to be renovated has been widely welcomed - some local residents feared that a 'super-pub' could be opened on the Raeburn site in an area that's already well served by bars, while others were just keen to see the old building restored to its former glory.

Owner Archie Maclean said: "Yes, we were delighted with the result and very much appreciate the support of the local people - we ended up with over 7600 signatures of support which was incredible. From the very beginning when we held the public meeting we got a great response from the locals and we felt quite humbled as the support grew and grew. What started as a business opportunity has grown into a project that the whole community wanted done, so we felt that we had a duty to get it done."

Mr Maclean went on: "Thanks to the local councillors and in particular Councillor Hinds who presented our case to the planning committee. Thanks also to the local Community Council who supported our proposals and wrote to the planners telling them so. We have some work to do with the planners on conditions but we hope to start work in early July and hope to complete in September 2013. Who knows, if we get a late summer next year we may all have a drink in the beer garden!"

news in brief

Dianne seeks sponsors for Diabetes walk

West Granton Road woman Dianne Vanderster is taking part in a sponsored walk on behalf of Diabetes UK on 17 June and she's looking for NEN readers to sponsor her.

Dianne, who is 73, has had diabetes for 'eight or nine' years and believes that the charity's 'Walk for Diabetes' events are worth supporting, so she's decided to take part in the Edinburgh and Lothians event which starts from Linlithgow Palace on 17 June.

Although Dianne and husband Jack have lived in West Granton Road for many years, many of her friends and neighbours have moved on and it's not quite so easy for Dianne to get round the doors to look for sponsors - so she's asked the NEN to help.

No sooner said than done - if you'd like to support Dianne in her sponsored walk to raise funds for Diabetes UK contact:

Scottish organiser Susan Williamson on 0141 245 6380 or email Scotland@diabetes.org.uk

Groups join forces to fight back

North Edinburgh Fights Back and North Edinburgh Women's Group are jointly holding a public meeting on Wednesday 13 June from 6.30 - 8pm in North Edinburgh Arts Centre to discuss fuel poverty, cuts and welfare attacks.

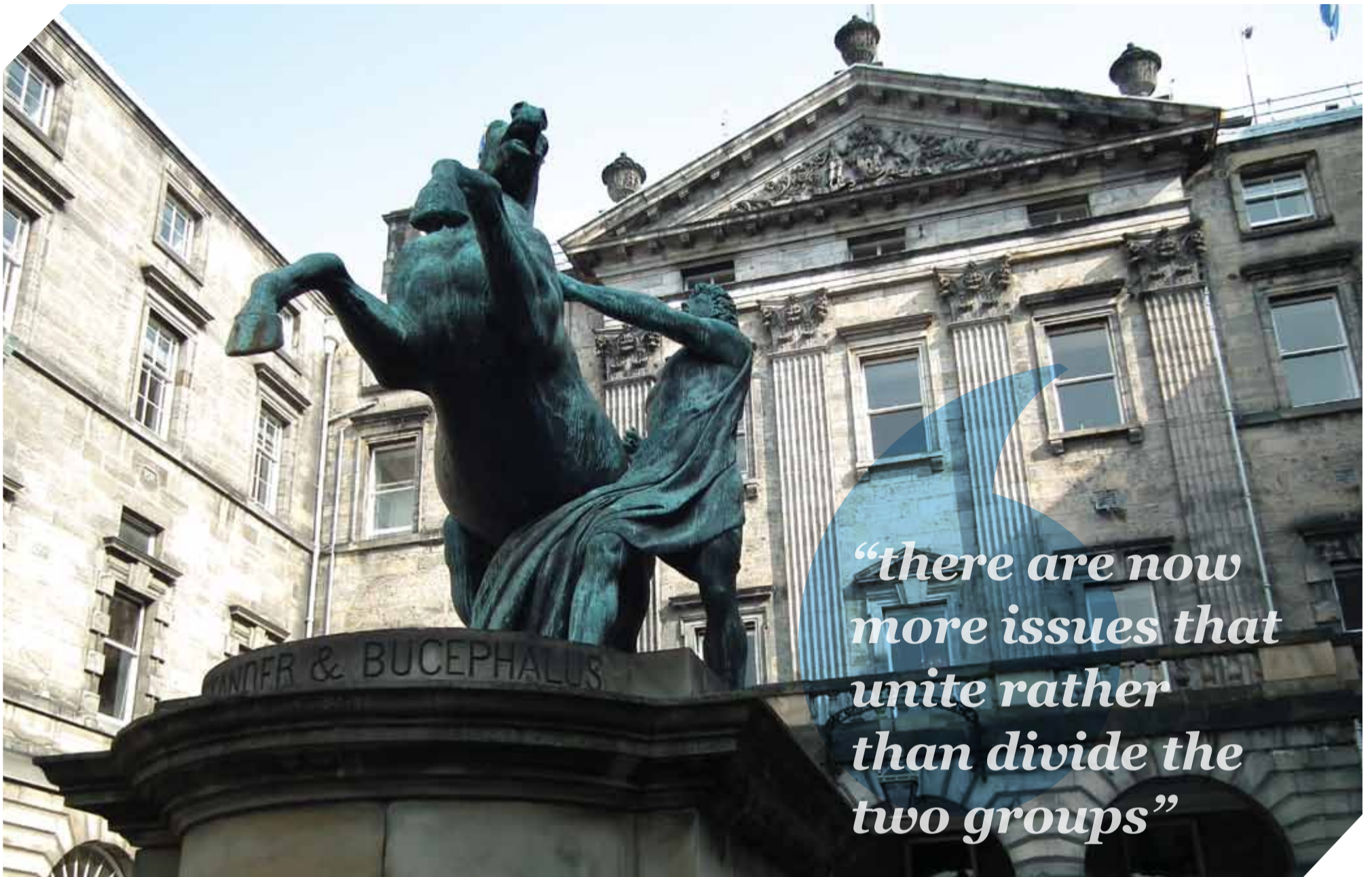
The groups also plan to present the Anti-Poverty Charter to the Full Council meeting at the City Chambers on Thursday 28 June at 9.30am. All welcome at both events.

For further information see the North Edinburgh Fights Back Facebook page or call 0131 551 5149.

Community gala planning day

Organisers of the West Pilton and Muirhouse community gala are holding a planning event at Muirhouse St Andrews Parish Church on 19 June from 11am - 1pm. The gala committee is inviting local groups and organisations along to establish what they require for this summer's gala at West Pilton Park and an opportunity to sign up for the big day.

To confirm attendance, or for further information about the Gala, email wpmcgala@gmail.com



“there are now more issues that unite rather than divide the two groups”

A NEW ERA for Edinburgh

Labour and the SNP have vowed to work together to take Edinburgh forward

by DAVID PICKERING

FOLLOWING the local council elections on 3 May. The two parties finished first and second in the city council elections and have a strong mandate from the electorate.

In the local wards, Labour picked up two of the four Forth seats through Cammy Day and Vicki Redpath while Conservative stalwart Allan Jackson and SNP group leader Steve Cardownie were re-elected. In Inverleith, Stockbridge community council chairman Nigel Bagshaw was elected for the Green Party and the SNP's Gavin Barrie was also elected. The two new faces join Labour's Lesley Hinds and Conservative Iain Whyte, who were both re-elected, as Inverleith's four councillors.

No one political party could win an overall majority following the 3 May vote and negotiations were necessary to form a new administration. The election result - Labour 20, SNP 18, Conservative 11, Green 6 and Lib-Dems just 3 - left Labour, as the largest group, with a number of options and their decision to enter a coalition with the SNP was a surprise for many.

A new contract with the Capital

However it seems that there are now more issues that unite rather than divide the two groups, and group leaders Andrew Burns and Steve Cardownie have agreed to work

together for the good of the city through a 'contract with the capital' which will 'build a more co-operative and prosperous Edinburgh that benefits every individual and community'.

The agreement includes more than 50 pledges that the administration will be judged on, with a review going to Council each year detailing what progress has been made on meeting those aims.

Labour group leader Councillor Andrew Burns said: "Edinburgh is internationally recognised as a fantastic city. It is successful, prosperous and a great place to live and work. Yet our city has major challenges and we need to acknowledge that we have some work to do to rebuild trust between the residents of Edinburgh and their elected representatives. Tackling these requires strong leadership, which we will provide, as well as the political stability created by having a 38-strong coalition between the Council's two largest parties."

Councillor Steve Cardownie, leader of the SNP group, added: "This new contract with the capital marks a fresh start with a Council willing to listen to local people and work together with local communities, businesses and the voluntary sector. Together, we will move Edinburgh forward for the benefit of the city and its people, with

decision-making that shows we are listening to public opinion."

Council Chief Executive Sue Bruce said: "The agreement lays out the goals that officers will be charged with delivering on behalf of the whole Council. It is a challenging set of objectives, as it rightly should be for a capital city. I'm very much looking forward to working with councillors, the senior management team, partner organisations and all of our committed staff on achieving them."

The new administration has one distinct advantage over the outgoing one - experience. When the last administration came to power only Steve Cardownie had any experience of running departments - while there were many Lib Dem councillors with years of experience, none had experience of power or responsibility, and there was a whole raft of councillors with no local government experience at all. Almost from day one, the administration found itself on the back foot with a botched school closures programme and throughout its time in power it was beset with problems - in particular the tram fiasco, undoubtedly the biggest factor in the Lib-Dems dramatic demise on 3 May.

The new administration contains a good mix of politicians with strong experience of running departments, councillors with some experience under their belts and a fresh new intake - hopefully with fresh new ideas.

There's no doubt they'll all have learned from the mistakes of the last administration - and that's got to be good for Edinburgh.

The agreement sets out six key priorities:

- 1 Ensuring every child in Edinburgh has the best start in life
- 2 Reducing poverty, inequality and deprivation
- 3 Providing for Edinburgh's prosperity
- 4 Strengthening and supporting our communities and keeping them safe
- 5 Ensuring Edinburgh, and its residents, are well cared-for; and
- 6 Maintaining and improving the quality of life in Edinburgh.



Ann Confrey reports on Employment and Training Opportunities in and around Edinburgh

WITH THE CLOSURE of the popular Community Employability Office on Ferry Road Drive, it is good to know that there is still a locally based support service ready and able to help residents of North Edinburgh find and make the most of available job, training, education or volunteering opportunities and to assist with a range of health and welfare issues.

Since 2003 Community Renewal, a not for profit organisation, has been working to transform communities by engaging and supporting people to get involved in community activity and to improve health, learning and employment.

In 2008 Community Renewal extended its reach to include Edinburgh, opening offices to embark on area focused projects initially in Muirhouse and latterly Craigmillar.

Community Renewal staff work with unemployed people including those who may have significant barriers to accessing opportunities, with their overall aim to break through these barriers to reduce unemployment and health inequalities.

Through an open ended listening process people are supported to identify where they would like to make a change in their own lives and in their community and encouraged to take positive steps towards this.

James Riordan, Team Leader at the Muirhouse project explains how the team work: "At each Community Renewal Centre the door is always open and people can drop in for a chat and cup of tea. The biggest barrier people face to improving their lives can be lack of confidence so it is important to create an environment that is friendly and safe.

"We take a people first approach to help deal with a range of issues and, most importantly, to gain the trust of the people we come into contact with. Once we have gained the trust of an individual we learn about the real or perceived barriers that they need support to overcome. We build on the initial trust step by step until we are able to discuss and develop a personal plan that focuses on improving the individuals' personal health and economic activity.

"We also look to tackle some of the environmental and social problems that contribute to stress, ill-health and low morale in the neighbourhood. This is part of

Community Renewal's holistic approach to breaking the cycle of decline".

Local regeneration

The UK and Scottish Governments have produced numerous programmes and spent many billions of pounds aimed at local regeneration, encouraging people into work and improving health. There is recognition that to be sustainable, neighbourhood regeneration cannot just be about bricks and mortar but must address employment and social issues in tandem. Otherwise the cycle of decline is not broken.

Despite this, figures collated in 2010 show that Scotland has more people in receipt of out-of-work-benefits than the average for Great Britain and that two-fifths of all working-age claimants of out-of-work disability benefits are under the age of 45.

In Scotland alone there are around 20,000 young people aged 16-19 not in work, education or training. In some housing estates and inner city areas only 1 in every 2 adults is economically active.

Figures from ONS population survey Oct 2010 – Sept 2011 show that in the Edinburgh North and Leith Parliamentary Constituency alone there are 12,800 economically inactive people. 9,460 are of working age and claiming benefits of some kind and of these 4,700 people over the age of 16 are registered unemployed.

Yet the same source (2008 figures) cites that there were 96,200 jobs on offer in the area. 66,000 of these were full time positions offering an attractive average pay of £512.00 per week.

<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/wpc/1929380436/report.aspx#tabwab>

What is clear is that many residents of North Edinburgh and Leith are not easily accessing suitable jobs when they become available. This is where Community Renewal can make a difference. They understand that people who are unemployed and particularly those who may find themselves long term economically inactive or who have a range of health or family difficulties do not always find it easy to motivate themselves to make positive changes in their lives.

The team take steps to understand what is really holding people back and what their real motivators for personal change are

before encouraging and supporting them to take positive steps forward.

'Partnership' is today's buzz-word in service delivery. But Community Renewal believes that the real challenge is in making this work at the grass roots level.

"All too often people find themselves referred from one agency to another completing endless forms and providing the same information over and over again until they end up confused, demoralised and eventually become lost in the system.

"Community Renewal aims to widen the

- range of services working effectively together for the benefit of the individual and the community as a whole. From housing departments, schools and colleges to NHS initiatives - we try to provide a simple and seamless process with one point of contact.

"We take the time to learn about the needs of the person and support them through the various services that can help – even bringing the service to them if necessary" adds James

Next time you are in the area, don't pass by, call in for a cup of tea and a friendly chat – it could mark the start of a whole new you!!

Success

The results speak for themselves, with over 3000 people involved with the projects finding jobs, over 1000 moving into training, education or volunteering and around another 1000 others taking active measures to improve their health and wellbeing.

CONTACT US:

From pilot schemes supported by Glasgow City Council and European funding Community Renewal now has 50 staff plus a host of volunteers making a difference in communities across Scotland.

See how your local team can help you make a difference at:

Edinburgh – Muirhouse (North Hub)
Unit 13, 11 Pennywell Court
Muirhouse Shopping Centre
Edinburgh EH4 4TZ
0131 332 8773
muirhouse@communityrenewal.org.uk
<http://www.communityrenewal.org.uk>

Case Study

Charlie is a family man in his early 60's who was made redundant from his job of 23 years, where we had worked as a forklift driver. His wife had heard about Community Renewal through Keep Well, a local health project who come into the office to do health checks and give advice, and she suggested that he should come and see us. He was very nervous about coming in, mostly because he had never had to ask for help with anything in his life and he didn't know what to expect.

Charlie was in need of a more personal service geared towards him, and we explained how we might be able to help him get back to work. We explained how we could make him a CV, put together application letters, do mock interviews, help him with more a focused jobsearch tailored to his needs, source bus fares, make referrals to other agencies, and provide any other suitable assistance as required.

Charlie explained that although he had not been out of work for long, he was struggling with lack of self-confidence and was having some issues with depression, mainly stemming from not being able to provide for himself and his wife. He said that he had worked all of his life, and could not understand how he had found himself in this position of unemployment, particularly given his long service with his company.

Charlie focused his jobsearch mainly around driving, labouring, cleaning and janitorial vacancies. We put together a CV for Charlie (focusing on his reliability, dedication and love of hard work!) and some speculative letters to send out to recruitment agencies and other employers. He also made telephone applications for a number of cleaning and driving vacancies.

We heard about a vacancy for a Janitor at the local college, so we called Charlie immediately to advise him to go in for an application form. From previous experience we have found that these vacancies are gone the next day, so swift action was required! Charlie called the next day to say that an agency had taken him on as a forklift driver, another agency had been in touch about a cleaning vacancy, and he had an interview for the college.

Within three weeks of coming into Community Renewal, Charlie was employed full time at the local college as a Janitor. He came in to tell us with a big box of chocolates and a smile on his face, and went off for the weekend for his daughter's birthday with a weight off his shoulders.

We stay in regular contact with Charlie, and can report that he is still smiling and more importantly, still working!

Spartans Breastfeeding Café is open

Local mum Becky Smith cut a cake to officially open the new Spartans Breastfeeding Café earlier last month



BECKY and her two year old son James were joined by Spartans' development manager Dougie Samuel and a happy team of NHS Lothian professionals to mark the occasion.

The Spartans breastfeeding café is a friendly, informal setting where mums who are breastfeeding – or pregnant women – can drop in for a chat about breastfeeding with local health visitors and midwives. And as well as being a great place for advice, support, encouragement and information, it's also a great place to meet other mums who are breastfeeding – and tea and coffee is free!

Any breastfeeding, even for a short time, is beneficial for you and your baby. Having good information about breastfeeding, plus support and advice, will help you - and your baby - get off to a good start and will help you to keep going.

Welcoming the new café, NHS Lothian's Katie Roggeri said: "It seems such a long time ago that we first talked about the need for a local breastfeeding support group, how we could set one up and how to move things on. I'm delighted that, with the tremendous

support of Spartans, we have been able to secure this venue. It's really great to see the community working hand in hand with NHS Lothian and it's a credit to everyone who has been involved. I hope the project grows and grows and I'm really looking forward to coming back to see how the project is developing."

Spartans' Dougie Samuel said: "Since we've been established here we've always tried to ensure that Spartans would be at the heart of the community so we are delighted to welcome the breastfeeding café to Spartans. This initiative follows on from the Spartans Smilers project we undertook with Cathy (Wood, North West Local Health Partnership public health practitioner) and her NHS Lothian colleagues and we hope it will be just as successful."

» **Spartans Breastfeeding Café takes place every Monday from 12.15 to 1.45pm at Spartans Community Football Academy off Pilton Drive. For further information, contact your local midwife or health visitor or just drop in to Spartans Breastfeeding Café.**

Total Craigroyston

Total Craigroyston is the latest 'early intervention' strategy to support families with children in North Edinburgh. Total Craigroyston Manager Christine Mackay explains what it's all about...

"...giving them the best opportunity to succeed in their lives"

TOTAL CRAIGROYSTON has been set up to encourage all the various organisations which work with Children and Families to work together to improve outcomes for children and families in the neighbourhood around Craigroyston Community High School.

Our initial focus will be on children who are looked after by the Council to ensure that they have all the support they need to give them the best opportunity to succeed in their lives. We will also be working to reduce the need for children to go into care, and that means finding ways to support families at an earlier stage and in a variety of ways.

The idea is to take a holistic approach – ensuring that all of the local resources in both the statutory and the voluntary sectors are on the same page, facing the same direction and contributing to the agreed outcomes. It may be that we need to change how some of our services are delivered so that we can offer support at an earlier stage and we want to involve local people as well as local staff in helping us think what changes might be necessary.

We held a meeting in mid-March, bringing together the local Neighbourhood Partnership, the Edinburgh Partnership and the Total Craigroyston steering group (pictured right) to start the discussion and what everyone agreed on was the need to ensure that local residents, service users and local staff are completely involved in shaping the direction of Total Craigroyston.

To help us do this we have been working with an organisation called SNOOK, and over the month of June we will be running a series of events and workshops aimed at local residents, service users and local staff so that we can come up with a set of ideas and proposals, based on local knowledge and expertise, that we can take forward.

A Design Workshop will be held on Monday 28 May from 9.30 – 12.30 in Craigroyston Community High School. Come along and give your ideas for changing the way we do things. A crèche is available but places must be booked. Please contact Stephen Straiton on 469 3375 or email Stephen.straiton@edinburgh.gov.uk

On Saturday 2 June, the SNOOK team will be out and about at Muirhouse Shopping Centre, North Edinburgh Arts and Muirhouse Library speaking to local people and hearing views.

A Young People Speak Out session will be held in Pilton Youth and Children's Project on Wed 6 June from 7 - 9pm to help us gather young people's views.

A Prototyping Lab (don't be put off by the title!!) will be held on Monday 18 June from 10 – 4pm in West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre. This will give the SNOOK team an opportunity to present the ideas that have been gathered and to have a think about the ones we want to take forward. A crèche is available but places must be booked. Please contact Stephen Straiton on 469 3375 or email Stephen.straiton@edinburgh.gov.uk



» **If you are interested in being involved in any way or you have ideas or a story to tell about your involvement with local services please get in touch. We are based at the Local Neighbourhood Office in West Pilton Gardens, telephone 529 5050 or email Christine.mackay@edinburgh.gov.uk. Please contact us if you'd like more information.**



Twenty's Plenty for Drylaw Residents

EASTER DRYLAW RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (EDRA) launched their local road safety campaign at Drylaw Parish Church last month. The group plans to raise awareness of speed limits in the area and hopes to encourage drivers to act more responsibly.

EDRA chair Eileen Brash explained: "Parking and traffic matters are regularly discussed at our meetings, and the issue most frequently raised by residents concerns the speed many vehicles drive at within our area. In response we are launching an Awareness Campaign which will highlight the speed limit in this area – 20mph."

She continued: "We are liaising with the police, councillors, local council staff and Ferryhill Primary School and we have applied for funding which would enable 20mph road markings to be installed

at all entrances leading to and from Groathill Road North. We believe these measures will complement the 20mph signs already erected on Ferry Road and at the top and bottom of Groathill Road North, and make it clearer to motorists that they are travelling in a 20mph zone".

EDRA will be raising the issue in a number of ways over the coming weeks – through schoolbag leaflet drops, posters, banners, flyers and a series of 'awareness days'.

EDRA would be delighted to see more local residents getting involved to support the campaign. The group meets on the third Monday of the month from 7.30 – 9pm in Drylaw Parish Church; to find out more, or to discuss other issues of concern, why not attend their next meeting on 18 June.

Drylaw Food Blog launched

DRYLAW NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE'S Cooking Group launched their new blog last month and invited locals to watch cooking demonstrations, buy cakes, take part in a best apron competition and much more, writes Thomas Brown.

The 22 April event was sponsored by Sainsbury's at Craighleith and Shay Dean, the store's PR Ambassador, was on hand to assist with the launch night. Around 50 members of the community attended and the night was hailed a success by Elizabeth Graham, project worker at Drylaw Neighbourhood Centre. She said: "Our cooking group has been meeting for around two years at the centre and we thought that a blog was a great way to spread the word of what we are doing and sharing our recipes. Each week we will update the Blog with recipes and photos from that week and hope that other local people can try some of our recipes."

Sainsbury's Shay Dean said: "Our Community Grants Fund is made up of the money raised from the Bags for Life scheme. We granted an award to Drylaw of £150.00 for this Blog launch and I am delighted to come along tonight to represent the store. We also have other projects from North Edinburgh who we are currently assisting with applications and these include PEP, Blackhall Primary School and Craigmoynton Girls Football Club."

Local woman Anne Murray won the best apron competition; she was a deserved winner as a lot of time and effort has clearly gone into her apron.



Ian makes his own wee piece of history!

IAN MOORE was presented with Drylaw Telford Community Council's Thomas Tierney Award for Good Citizenship at a reception in Drylaw Neighbourhood Centre last month. Ian – who came to the area in 1942 and has lived in Drylaw since 1953 – was joined by his wife Muriel, Mrs Cath Tierney and her son Thomas, local councillors, community councillors and members of North Edinburgh Social History group to celebrate the occasion.

Presenting the award, Councillor Lesley Hinds said: "I've known Ian since we moved to Drylaw and he's helpful, always has a smile on his face and is always willing to work with others. He's a great character, and I think Ian receives the Award for 2011 for his contribution to the North Edinburgh Social History Group's 'Never Give Up' project in particular. It's a tremendous piece of work and it shows us that history is not just about kings and queens – it's about ordinary working people too. Ian and the group have made sure that Drylaw and Greater Pilton's history has been well recorded."

Ian told the meeting that he first became interested in history from a very early age. "I was born in Tanner's Close in West Port, where Burke and Hare lived – but not at the same time we lived there, of course! It still had an air of history about it and maybe that's where my interest in the subject comes from."

He went on: "I've been interested in history – particularly social history – ever since; unfairness and deprivation has always been a theme running through it. There is progress in society but it's still not fairly balanced, yet. The rich still get richer and the poor get poorer, but I think change is coming. I believe if we all work together, talk to and with each other, and our politicians – then our community centres and communities like ours could develop into launch pads for broader and wider community action."

North Edinburgh Social History Group member Brian Robertson said: "Ian's local knowledge is absolutely incredible and he brought a lot of laughs to the group too, he was great to work with. Ian's a great bloke and we're delighted he's received this award."

Jackie Brown, Drylaw Telford Community Council treasurer, who has also known Ian for many years, agrees. "Ian is one of the friendliest, kindest and most helpful people you could meet. I think the community council definitely made the right choice."



source

- a healthy appetite for info at PCHP



IT'S BEEN a hectic time at Pilton Community Health Project (PCHP). Over the last few months the project has recruited a new coordinator, organised a successful Food Festival and then launched Source, an exciting new information room at their Boswall Parkway office, during an Open Day!

Coordinator Jen Richards took up her new post in March – one of her first tasks was handing out Yummy Food Festival flyers in the pouring rain in Pennywell Road, and it's been full on ever since!

"There's nothing like throwing yourself in at the deep end!" she said. "The weather was awful that day but we were really delighted to see so many people attending the Food Festival – it really was a great success."

Jen had previous experience at PCHP when she worked with the Barri Grubb project, so she knew what to expect when she returned to Pilton.

"It's a small but very motivated team, and it's sometimes a case of all hands to the pumps! Like everyone else we'd like to have more resources but we make sure that we make the most of what we have. PCHP has a proud history, a very good reputation and is well

known in the local area and beyond. It's great to be back in North Edinburgh, meeting up with former again and I'll be making contact with a wide range of community groups and organisations in the weeks ahead. Yes, we'll continue to face challenges but we have a dedicated and very committed team and I'm very excited about our future".

Since the Yummy Food Festival, PCHP has gone on to open Source, a new community health information resource, during their Open Day on 29 March (the highlight of which was a cookery demonstration and tasting sessions with North Edinburgh's own Yummy Mummies! - pictured)

PCHP senior project worker Anita Aggarwal said that the idea behind Source came from local people themselves. She explained: "People who live locally told us that they want access to clear, accurate, information about health issues, and Source is our answer to this request. Source is our new health information resource, where our friendly volunteers can help you find information about health and community issues. We have a wide range of leaflets and books, as well as internet access to make sure you can get the information you need, and if we don't have it ourselves, we know someone who does! We want local people to come in and check us out. It's a great opportunity to get clued up and become confident about dealing with health issues."

The new Source room is a really welcoming and comfortable space, much appreciated by staff, volunteers and visitors. The room was created with the help and hard work of Edinburgh's Telford College students.

Emma Castle, Learner Development Tutor of Woodwork and Masonry Trades, said: "Our students thoroughly enjoyed their work at Pilton Community Health Project and got a lot out of it. We'd like to thank Mark Smith Glazing, who kindly donated the glass for the project, and we are all delighted that the resource is being enjoyed by the local community".

Source is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10am to midday.



Looking to get fit in a friendly environment while still having fun?

Why not join in the fitness classes available at the Scout Hut, Boswall Parkway.

Zumba Fitness - Tuesdays 7.30pm to 8.30pm

Zumba Toning - Sundays 12pm - 1.00pm

Boxercise - Sundays 7.30pm - 8.30pm

Classes are suitable for all fitness levels. No need to book in advance.

New class coming soon - Powerhoop

Learn how to Powerhoop using a weighted hoop and lose inches from your body.

➤ Visit the website for more details of all classes - or email funfitnessforall@yahoo.co.uk to pre-register your interest in the Powerhoop classes.

Discounts are available for all classes if you pre-pay for a block of classes.

A warm welcome to Living Well's Shazia

LIVING WELL'S CHAIR, Jackie Brash, says "We are delighted to announce that Shazia Majid has joined as our new Mental Health Support Worker. Some people may remember her from when she worked before at PROP & Pilton Community Health Project, as a Volunteer Coordinator, leaving in January 2010 when the funding for the volunteering work came to an end. Shazia is based at our Pilton Centre at 5 West Pilton Park. We know she'll make a great contribution here and I and all the Members are so pleased that Shazia is back on our team!"

Shazia says: "I am looking forward very much to working with the Living Well Team and having worked in Pilton before, I know just how important the Centre is to its members and how hard staff and volunteers work in providing an excellent service".

Shazia is particularly looking forward to celebrating the Centre's work at the Mental Health Arts Festival which will take place later on in the year.

Our services are for people 18+ who have mental health concerns and live in North Edinburgh. Activities we offer include Relaxation, Support Groups, Tai Chi, Crafts, Pottery and Drop-In sessions.

➤ If you'd like a copy of our programme or some more information about our services, give us a ring on 0131 343 6375 or email us at: livingwellnorthedinburgh.org.uk
Living Well North Edinburgh, 5 West Pilton Park, Edinburgh EH4 4EL
Opening hours: Monday-Thursday 9am to 4pm



Food for Thought

Pilton Community Health Project's Anita Aggarwal tells us about North Edinburgh's new food forum... and rhubarb!

'Food for thought' – Pilton's community food forum

It's a winner of a name and an idea that is starting to bear fruit. The newly established community food forum is now called 'food for thought'. John Muir, who works at West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre, won the competition to name the group and a shiny new recipe book. We had plenty of other good entries; we thought this one summed up our ideas best.

Lots of people have told us they are interested in food and either want the chance to get involved with food projects or are already involved. The food forum aims to link up work which is already going on and work together to make more 'foody' things happen in the area.

At the next meeting we will be planning food events in the summer. Come along if you are interested in getting involved. It will take place on Thursday 24 May at 10am at Pilton Community Health Project.

For more information, or to book a crèche space, call Anita on 0131 551 1671. Watch out for more information from the Food for Thought Forum.

Food things for you to get involved with:

Every Tuesday, 10 -12:

Barri Grubb's cooking club at Pilton Community Health Project, telephone 551 1671.

Every Tuesday, 10.30:

Granton Community Gardeners meet at Salvation Army. gardengranton@gmail.com

Every Tuesday, 10 – 12:

Food co-op at West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre, telephone 551 3194.

Every Day:

Drylaw cooking group's Food Blog at <http://drylawcookinggroup.wordpress.com/>

Community Cafes at North Edinburgh Arts, Royston Wardieburn and Muirhouse Millennium Centre.

Rhubarb Recipe

We have still got a way to go before there are lots of good fruit and vegetables growing in Scotland, but I have a friend who lives in Granton who is eating rhubarb from his garden already, so here is a lovely rhubarb recipe from the Love food, hate waste Scotland website

<http://scotland.lovefoodhatewaste.com>



Rhubarb, Apple and Orange Compote Serves: 4

Serve this compote for a delicious breakfast with yoghurt and a bowl of muesli. This recipe also works well with pears instead of apples.

Recipe author: Caroline Marson, Banbury.

Ingredients:

250g rhubarb, sliced
1-2 apples peeled, cored and bruises cut away, cut into cubes
50ml orange juice
25g caster sugar
Yoghurt



Method:

- 1 Combine the rhubarb, apples, orange juice and sugar in a pan. Bring to the boil over a medium heat.
- 2 Reduce heat, and simmer for 3 minutes or until fruit is tender.
- 3 Remove from heat and cool. Serve spooned over muesli with fruit juice and yoghurt.

Gardening tips Rhubarb grows like a weed in Scotland; you don't even need to look after it and it is happy in a shady corner.

Healthy fact It's a great source of fibre, but don't eat too much as it acts as a laxative!

Strange but true Rhubarb is the only vegetable used as a fruit!



Pilton walkers step out for better health

PILTON WALKING PROJECT has been going for 10 years - based at Pilton Community Health Project for the past seven – and we felt it was time to celebrate and thank some of our long standing volunteers for their contribution. Les Simpson, Allan Hawke and Fred Downie collectively have volunteered for 21 years!

Les started walking in the 1950's when he did his military service and completed his mountain leadership in 1975. He loves walking and has inspired his grandsons with his zeal, although he says he still has his two great-grandsons to work on! "I've made a lot of friends through the walking project," he says, "I really enjoy the social side and seeing the change in people as they get used to walking more."

Former teacher and school inspector Allan has climbed all thirty Scottish mainland county summits, but he also likes gentler walks and helping others enjoy them too. "Walking is good for physical, mental and social health - a good leg stretch and a good chat make the day. I like introducing folk to new areas of Edinburgh that they might not know, from the Cammo Estate to the wonderful Water of Leith".

Fred joined the group when he retired. He said "We only had five people on the first walk; my wife, the organiser and two others! After a few months more people came along and the walks became a bit of a social occasion - some of the group went for a cuppa after the walk and we got to know each other. The walks filled

up and although people came and went, we always had a group whatever the weather!"

"I kept volunteering because it was clear folk were enjoying themselves - in some cases the walk was the only trip outside they made that week. Ten years has just flown past - that just goes to show how much we all enjoy it!"

A New and Exciting Programme of Walks

PCHP runs local walks on Mondays from the project at 73 Boswall Parkway. Walkers leave with Christine and Liz at 1.30pm, catch a bus and take a walk in or around Edinburgh: perhaps the Meadows, Holyrood Park or Granton's ForthQuarter Park. Once a month walks include a visit to a local place of interest, like Drylaw House or Blackhall Mosque.

PCHP is joining up with Drylaw Neighbourhood Centre for the next few weeks - on Fridays at 9am a minibus leaves from the Neighbourhood Centre and takes you further afield - maybe to the Pentlands or over to Fife. Trips last two to three hours, back in time for lunch!

If you're interested in coming along to any walk, call Clare Symonds on 551 1671.

We also welcome new walk leaders to join our group of volunteers. We offer walk leader and other training and welcome anyone interested in encouraging local people to get out and about a little more. If you have good personal and social skills, and enjoy walking, you're the right person to volunteer for us!



Welcome to West Pilton's Fabby new food co-op!

FORTH COUNCILLOR Cammy Day opened West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre's new food co-operative on 2 May. The Fabby Food Store offers quality fresh produce at competitive prices and the West Pilton Grove location is convenient for local shoppers.

Cammy Day said: 'People will remember Barri Grubb, the food co-op

based at the Health Project, had to close because of council cuts. That project is a real loss so I am delighted to see this new resource – a partnership between the city council, Community Learning and Development and local people – open here today. I hope many local people will use the new shop and I wish the venture every success'.

He went on to present a basket of goodies to local woman Johann Boyle, who won the competition to name the new co-op – Fabby Food Store.

Fabby Food Store opens on Tuesdays from 10am – 2pm. For further information call West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre on 551 3194.



Bye bye Bert!

THE CLOSURE of Community Employability (see article right) has brought about the loss of a much-recognised North Edinburgh character. Bert Craig, for so long a familiar face through Working Links' popular 'Where's Bert?' feature in the NEN, cleared his desk for the last time last month after having worked in the area for ten years.

"It's very sad", he said. "I think we did a pretty good job here over the years and we were never driven by targets or figures but concentrated instead on doing the very best we could to support people, helping them to make the right choices about what options were best for them and then supporting them all the way through. Some clients need a lot more support than others but that's the nature of the job – every person who walks through our door is different, has different needs. For some, all that's required is maybe just a wee confidence boost or help with job applications and filling in forms, while others need much more complex support. However there's a huge sense of job satisfaction when a client you have been working with intensively for a long time finally lands that dream job – a job which had seemed impossible just a few months before. Those are the ones you remember most".

Bert hopes to find work and doesn't plan to settle into retirement just yet. "I still feel I've got something to offer, and I hope my working experience and contacts here in North Edinburgh could be put to good use by a local organisation. We all know how difficult it is to find work just now, though - times are hard, and the telephone hasn't rung so far. I'm here if anyone needs me, though – I love working in this area; it feels like home and I feel part of the community. I'm 67 now, but I'm as enthusiastic as I've ever been and I believe I've got more to contribute. I'm just not ready to walk away yet".

Bert did leave briefly before Working Links pulled out of the area, only to return when Community Employability was started up. It may seem unlikely, but could there yet be another comeback for Bert – North Edinburgh's own Frank Sinatra?

Local parents plan grassroots Gala



A GROUP OF LOCAL PARENTS has got together to organise a grassroots community gala at West Pilton Park this August. The group only met for the first time in March but plans to resurrect a real community fun day are now well advanced.

Sean Gardiner, a parent involved in the steering group, explained: "The idea really just came out of the blue. We were talking about how other areas – Davidsons Mains for example - have very successful fun days and galas and we thought: why don't we have one? At first we were thinking about West Pilton alone but, when people talked about the great Muirhouse Festivals and more people came on board, we thought we would extend it to Muirhouse too. We've come up with lots of ideas for the day and we've been really pleased with the number of organisations, businesses and individuals who have signed up to be part of the day itself. The response has been brilliant".

The group plans to combine the family fun element with information stalls too.

"There are an awful lot of organisations in the area doing great work, but some residents don't even know they're here. We'll set up tents and stalls on gala day to give organisations the chance to publicize what they do, and we plan to introduce a ticketing system for the bouncy castles and things like that. If we set that up in the information area that would mean that families will get a see the

information stalls before they go on to the fun activities for the kids. We think that combination of information and fun will work well – it should be a great day".

West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre Community Learning and Development worker Alan Addison is supporting the group – not that they need much support!

"This is a really enthusiastic group and I think what they have in just a few short weeks is pretty incredible. They're not setting up in competition with anyone else; this is just a grass-roots community idea that's come from local parents who are now taking on the responsibility for organising the event themselves. It's a lot of work but their commitment and energy is incredible", he said.

Sean Gardiner told NEN: "We have now submitted all our applications for funding, the park and the neighbourhood centre and we are still recruiting volunteers. We're also looking for traders to book stalls and we ask anyone who wishes to contact us to use wpmcgala@gmail.com. We are also still looking for any pictures taken by the public of previous gala days."

The community fun day will take place on Sunday 26 August in West Pilton Park. You can keep up to date with the group's activities through their website at www.westpiltonandmuirhousegala.co.uk



COMMUNITY EMPLOYABILITY CLOSED DOWN

THE COMMUNITY EMPLOYABILITY OFFICE in Ferry Road Drive closed its doors for the last time last month. The local employment and training organisation lost out as the city council restructured employability service delivery across the city.

Community Employability came into being when national organisation Working Links decided to pull out of the North Edinburgh in July 2010. A partnership between Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce and North Edinburgh Trust saw the local employability service saved then, but there was no reprieve this time around and the office has closed.

Community Employability's current clients – around 300 people – have now been referred on to Pennywell Shopping Centre-based Community Renewal, which was part of the four-agency consortium that successfully tendered for the employability contract.

Lead organisation Stevenson College, Community Renewal, FourSquare and Volunteer Centre Edinburgh will now deliver Edinburgh's integrated employability service for the next two years. It's thought that the contract will save Edinburgh taxpayers at least £150,000.

There's no word yet of what will happen to Community Employability's office on Ferry Road Drive - landlords Pilton Central Association are considering a number of options, including the use of the building as a base for local community organisations.

North Edinburgh's story goes WORLDWIDE

NORTH EDINBURGH Social History Group's research archive is now available on-line. The group amassed a wealth of material whilst undertaking research for their 'Never Give Up' book, published last year, and all the supporting documents and photographs can now be found on-line following a collaborative project with lifelong learning agency Scran.

Scran, part of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, enables online access to resources from museums, galleries, archives and the media, supporting learning and teaching at all ages.

Scran's Helen Foster worked with the local Social History Group to make their extensive resources available to a wider audience, and the online exhibition was launched last month at North Edinburgh Arts Centre.

Social History Group member Roberta Blaikie explained: 'It took us two years to produce 'Never Give Up' – the book, DVD and photo exhibition – and we realised it was important that all this research was saved for future generations and made available for others to access easily. We are all rubbish with computers, but thankfully we met up with Helen at Scran. We did a lot of talking, Helen listened and did all the hard work and now we've been able to get everything digitized!'

Brian Robertson, another enthusiastic group member, added: 'We're delighted that this material is now available on-line. Some of the pictures in the book are quite small and we had to leave some things out because of the limited space available, so it's great that all the information we gathered over such a long time is now available on the internet for everyone interested in our area's history'.

Fittingly, the collection was launched before the local performances of 'The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists' and was accompanied by a new protest song penned and performed by group member Ian Moore.

Access to Scran's archive is available through Edinburgh City Libraries – go to <http://yourlibrary.edinburgh.gov.uk/capital-collections>. You'll find North Edinburgh Social History Group's archives under Local and Family History.

Scott Hastings opens Inverleith Park fitness trail

INVERLEITH RESIDENT and former Scotland rugby star Scott Hastings officially opened Inverleith Park's new fitness trail on 24 April. Scott was joined by members of the Friends of Inverleith Park group at a ribbon-cutting ceremony organised to mark the occasion.

Funded by the city council, wooden fitness equipment has been installed at ten stations around the park's northern perimeter, and Scott was joined by his training companion Parker the dog as he demonstrated the delights of the exercise trail!

Inverleith Park is already a very popular location, used by a number of sports clubs, fitness groups and thousands of individuals, particularly joggers. The Council, along with the Friends of Inverleith Park and other user groups, decided that a fitness trail would improve the facilities and equipment for users of the park wanting to exercise.

The trail was completed at the end of March and fitness enthusiasts can now complete a circuit of the park whilst tackling bench sit-ups, a tyre run, wobble board and a number of other challenges along the way!

Scott said: "As a local resident and a regular jogger I am very impressed with the fitness trail. I am amazed at the number of people who have been using it to boost their exercise. I have had a bit of fun using the exercise stations as a break from my regular running route. Inverleith Park is a really fantastic space and this new fitness track enhances the amount of things that one can do whilst admiring the wonderful views across our great city". Friends of Inverleith Park convener Tony Cook added: "Comments about the fitness trail have been overwhelmingly positive and the new facilities will mean that even more people will come to enjoy this wonderful park."

"Inverleith Park is a really fantastic space..."



OPEN DAY as Royal Victoria Hospital prepares to close

SCOTS RUGBY LEGEND Gavin Hastings kicked off an open day at the Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) on Craighleith Road on 12 May. The event was organised to celebrate the history of the landmark hospital which has provided healthcare services to the local community for over 128 years.

The Open Day was held just four weeks before services at the hospital are relocated to the new Royal Victoria Building at the Western General.



The RVH, established in 1894 by Sir Robert William Philip, was originally created as a tuberculosis sanatorium before it evolved into a care of the elderly hospital. A special display of memorabilia and photographs taken throughout the ages took centre stage during the day, along with attractions outside in the grounds which included a magician, bouncy castle, tombola and a birds of prey display.

Opening the event Gavin Hastings, who won 61 Scottish caps during an outstanding rugby career, said: "The Royal Victoria Hospital has held a special place in the hearts of the local community for a long time. Being part of this community myself, it is a great opportunity for me to get involved and I am delighted to come along and celebrate the history of this landmark hospital."

The new Royal Victoria Building, built nearby on the Western General Hospital site, has been designed to provide the highest quality healthcare services in a modern setting. It will become a new landmark in healthcare history when it opens, as the first of its kind in Scotland to have all the patient accommodation being single en-suite rooms. Construction company Laing O'Rourke, who are responsible for the construction of the new Royal Victoria Building, also provided a display for the open day to show the future of healthcare services for the elderly, and another Open Day was held at the new building on 26 May.

The new building was officially handed over to NHS Lothian last month and the first patients will arrive in June. The Royal Victoria Hospital site will be put on the market this summer.

We, your elected Labour Councillors, would like to thank all the residents of Inverleith and Forth Wards, who voted for us and chose us to represent their views. We promise to continue to explore all opportunities to improve the quality of life for people living, learning and working in this area, and we will be available to deal with any problems you might have.

Your Councillors working for you



Cammy Day



Vicki Redpath



Lesley Hinds

Councillor Cammy Day and Councillor Vicki Redpath Labour Councillors, Forth Ward

Surgeries:

Muirhouse Millennium Centre 1st and 3rd Wednesday 6.00pm (except July)
Royston/Wardieburn Community Centre 1st and 3rd Wednesday 7.00pm (except July)
The Prentice Centre 2nd & 4th Wednesday 6.00pm (except July)
Trinity Primary School 2nd and 4th Wednesday 7.00pm (during school terms)
or telephone 0131 529 3281 for an appointment

Lesley Hinds Labour Councillor, Inverleith Ward

Surgeries:

Stockbridge Library, every Wednesday 7.00pm -7.30pm
Ferryhill Primary School every Wednesday 6.00pm (during school term)
or telephone 0131 529 3235 for an appointment



Global Schools Partnership

STAFF AND CHILDREN in North Edinburgh Childcare's nursery first made contact with Larbec International Academy in Kumasi, Ghana, through the British Council's Global Schools Gateway in June last year. A joint partnership was set up between the two organisations to provide opportunities for all of the children to learn and develop as global citizens. The partnership started with children and staff in both organisations getting to know one another through occasional phone calls and by sending letters, drawings, photos and emails. However it was felt that more could be achieved through direct face to face contact, and steps were therefore taken to explore the possibility of reciprocal visits.

The cost of travelling between settings would have been unaffordable for either organisation had it not been for a grant secured through the British Council's Global Schools Partnerships programme, which provided each centre with almost 50% of the travel costs. The remaining costs for the visits were raised through a wide variety of fundraising activities e.g. bake sales, quiz sheets, guess the birthday, stalls at the ForthQuarter Fair, face painting and a Christmas raffle. These events were very well supported by all the families who attend North Edinburgh Childcare and by the local community, all of whom helped staff to raise the necessary funds within a relatively short timescale. Once it was established that sufficient funds would be raised to allow the visits to go ahead two members of the staff

team, Patricia Spiers and Shaz Akbar were selected as the nursery representatives who would make the trip.

With all the pre-visit requirements completed Patricia and Shaz set off on 16 February for a ten day visit to Ghana. On arrival they were made to feel extremely welcome by everyone they met. The community spirit in Ghana was very contagious, and Patricia and Shaz found that they were welcomed with cries of 'Akwabba' (welcome) everywhere they went!

The trip included two days travelling, five days working with the teachers and pupils in the school, two days training staff in active learning and emotional wellbeing in the early years and one day visiting local areas of interest. Patricia and Shaz also supported the school to raise its profile by visiting a number of organisations across the local community including the police station, abattoir and refuse company - and by meeting the Ashanti Queen and her Elders! A key area for further development in the school community is waste disposal and sanitation, and it is hoped that the courtesy calls made will support school staff in bringing this to the forefront for future development.

On returning to Edinburgh, Patricia and Shaz immediately began finalising the details for the Ghanaian teachers' reciprocal visit. On 1 March Louis Safro, Head Teacher of Larbec International Academy, and Ruth Achiaa, a teaching staff team member, arrived in Edinburgh for a nine day visit. The children at North Edinburgh Childcare welcomed the



visitors with a special assembly including greetings songs that they had prepared especially for them. To complement the program of activities undertaken in Ghana, Louis and Ruth spent time observing the teaching practices in North Edinburgh Childcare's nursery playrooms and learning how to engage in active learning with children. They visited the various departments of the organisation including the Out of School Service and Training Service, all of which gave them ideas for future developments back at Larbec. Louis and Ruth also spent time visiting other organisations and various places of interest across Edinburgh. A special Parents' Evening was held on 7 March to celebrate their

visit and promote the ongoing success of the joint partnership.

Everyone at North Edinburgh Childcare would like to say a huge 'thank you' to all the local organisations who welcomed Louis and Ruth to their settings, allowing them to gain a greater insight of how things work here in Edinburgh.

These visits have proved invaluable in the progression of the partnership; both centres now move forward with solid footing, comfortable with each other in knowing they share a vision for the future in developing children as Global citizens, becoming familiar with their similarities and respecting each other's differences.



CRAWFORD GOWANS DEFENCE LAWYERS

**IN TROUBLE? NEED A LAWYER?
CRAWFORD GOWANS DEFENCE
LAWYERS CAN HELP YOU.**

- Do the Police want to interview you?
- Have you been charged by the Police?
- Do you just need some advice?

Our Lawyers have years of experience in defending people. We will give you advice, attend at the police station with you if you are to be interviewed and represent you at Court.

Appointments not always necessary and the first meeting is always FREE.

Registered to provide Legal Aid
**36 MUIRHOUSE CRESCENT,
EDINBURGH, EH4 4QL**

**24 HOUR CRIMINAL
LEGAL ADVICE: 0131 343 1987**



Summer is Coming! Here's a Date for your Diary

Come rain or shine there is
Free Fun for all the Family at:

North Edinburgh Community Festival Saturday 29 September 2012

Join us at The Forthquarter Park (behind Telford College and Morrison's) for this your 4th annual community event and enjoy an afternoon of Free Fun and Discovery.

A wide range of free attractions and activities for everyone – come and discover what this area of North Edinburgh has to offer!

**Community Information Stands
and Car Boot Spaces available**

To book your place email Jim Pattison
Jim.Pattison@edinburgh.gov.uk



Muirhouse & Salvesen Community Council

c/o Muirhouse Millennium Centre
7 Muirhouse Medway EH4 4RW

t: 0131 467 3578

e: Muirhouse&salvesencommunitycouncil@live.com
w-www.muirhouse.wordpress.com

MEETING DATES – 2012

every 3rd Tuesday of each month

19th June

July/August (summer recess)

18th September

16th October

20th November

18th December

Granton Information Centre (GIC) provides free, impartial and confidential advice and assistance on a range of issues including welfare benefits, housing advice, tax credits and debt.

Drop in sessions (Granton Information Centre):

Monday & Wednesday: All HOUSING issues: 9.30 – 12.30
 Tuesday & Thursday: BENEFITS & MONEY ADVICE issues: 9.30 – 12.30

Outreach:

Tuesday: 10.00 – 1.00 CREWE MEDICAL CENTRE
 (Only for patients of Crewe Medical Centre)

Tuesday: 2.00 – 4.00 MUIRHOUSE MEDICAL GROUP
 (Only for patients of Muirhouse Medical Group)

Home visits and appointments may be available on request.

Telephone/Fax: 0131 552 0458

134 – 138 West Granton Road, Edinburgh, EH5 1PE



Mike Crockett MP

Drop in advice surgeries. No appointment is necessary.

First Saturday of the month.

Kirkliston Library: 9.30am - 10.15am
 South Queensferry Library: 10.45am - 11.30am
 Muirhouse Library: 12:00pm - 12:30pm

Second Friday of the Month;

Drumrae Hub: 11am – 12.00pm

Third Friday of the month:

Tesco Corstorphine (Meadow Place Road): 5pm - 7pm.

For more information visit www.mikecrockettmp.com



Thank You

Councillors Steve Cardownie & Gavin Barrie thank the residents of Forth & Inverleith Wards for electing them to the City of Edinburgh Council.

If you require advice or assistance our contact details are available at www.edinburgh.gov.uk or on 0131 200 2000

MUIRHOUSE SLIMMING CLUB

Muirhouse Slimming Club meets in the ground floor flat, Birnie's Court, Muirhouse View on Thursdays from 5 – 7.30pm.

£5 joining fee, then only £2 per week

The Club Leader and existing members offer ideas, encouragement and recipes to help each other reach their goals and there are also day and evening outings throughout the year.

Come along, you have nothing to lose but weight!!!

Call Irene on 554 6447 and join a Fun Slimming Club!



Councillor Lesley Hinds

Labour Councillor for Inverleith

Surgery Times:

Wednesday (during term time)
 6pm Ferryhill Primary School, Groathill Road North
 7pm Stockbridge Library, Hamilton Place

Contact phone: 0313 529 3235



Alison Johnstone

MSP for Lothian Region

On the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month during term time I hold a surgery for Lothian residents at the Scottish Parliament between 11am and 1pm.

Please call to book a surgery appointment or to arrange another time and venue that is convenient for you.

Contact me on 0131 348 6421

Alison.Johnstone.msp@scottish.parliament.uk



Malcolm Chisholm MSP

Surgeries every Saturday 10a.m. at Leith Library and 12 noon Royston Wardieburn Community Centre

Bomar Carpets, Flooring and Blinds



Bomar carpets are an independently run family business with 23 years floor covering experience. Our aim is to provide total customer satisfaction with our efficient, fast and friendly service. Bomar use only experienced highly qualified and fully insured fitters.

GREAT CARPET OFFERS NOW ON!!

Plus Three Vertical Blinds or Three Roller Blinds for £110

ANACONDA

Heavy Domestic

Was £9.50 sq m
NOW £7.50 sq m

KEY WEST

Heavy Domestic

Was £13.99 sq m
NOW £11.99 sq m

CABARET

Plains & Stripes

Was £13.99 sq m
NOW £11.99 sq m

LINEA

Heavy Domestic

Was £10.99 sq m
NOW £8.99 sq m

ATLANTIC CITY

Heavy Domestic

NOW ONLY £6.99 sq m

Expert Fitting | Free Estimate and Planning | Open 6 Days | All Enquiries Welcome
 We guarantee **LOW PRICES, QUALITY PRODUCTS** and **SUPERB FITTING SERVICES!**

13-15 Ferry Road (opposite Leith Library)

Tel 0131 554 4050

sales@bomarcarpets.co.uk www.bomarcarpets.co

DRYLAW TELFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Our next meeting will be held on
 Wednesday 27 June at 7pm
 In Drylaw Neighbourhood Centre

All welcome

MAKE YOUR COMMUNITY COUNT

- Join Your Community Council

Whether you've lived locally all your life, or have just moved to the area, your opinion matters! But how can you make sure your voice is heard?

One way is to attend a local community council meeting. You can pop along to see what happens, volunteer to be part of a project or volunteer to become a member – whatever your level of interest and commitment, your community council will welcome you.

But what are community councils, and what do they do? A community council:

- is made up of local people who are interested in where they live;
- takes an interest in local and city-wide matters;
- offers advice and support to local individuals and groups; and
- represents local opinion to the City Council and other large groups.

A community council might typically do any of the following things:

- help get funding for community projects;
- advise residents in planning and licensing queries;
- support local events such as spring fairs;
- liaise with the Council about local concerns such as green space, new buildings or safety;
- and much more besides!

Community councils work closely with residents' associations and community groups so that together, our voices are heard. Rather than duplicating projects, we support what's already happening so that local people get help with what matters to them.

There are four community councils in the Inverleith area – you can attend one or all of them, depending on where you live and what your concerns are. The maps and contact details (right) tell you where they are and how you can get involved.



Craigleith Blackhall Community Council generally meets on the first Monday of the month at 7.30 pm in Stewart's Melville College Dining Room.

Chair: Eddie Thorn

Contact: Maureen Kane sec@craigleithblackhall.info

Website: www.craigleithblackhall.info/

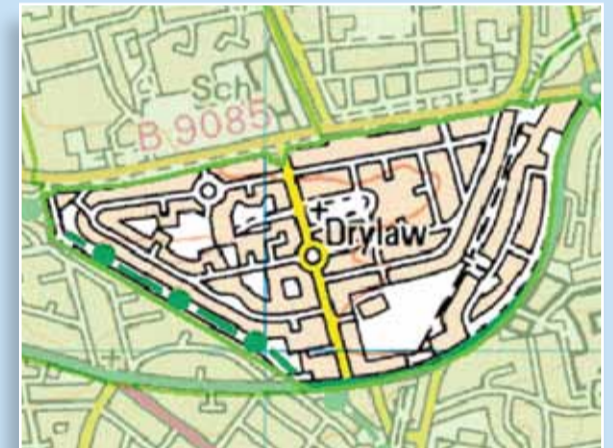
Drylaw Telford Community Council

meets at 7pm on the last Wednesday of the month in Drylaw Neighbourhood Centre, 67b Groathill Road North.

Chair: Alex Dale

Contact: Ian Greenhalgh ian@scotfloor.co.uk

Website: *New website under construction*



Stockbridge Inverleith Community Council meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 7pm in Stockbridge Library.

Chair: Nigel Bagshaw (until 3 May)

Contact: contact@stockbridgeandinverleithcc.org.uk

Website: www.stockbridgeandinverleithcc.org.uk/

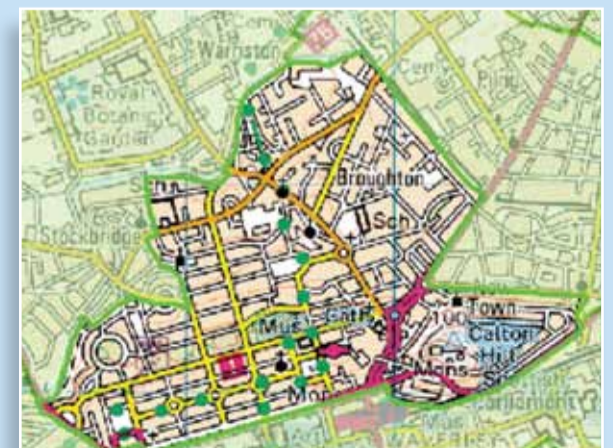
New Town Broughton Community Council

All meetings are held at the Drummond Room, Broughton St Mary's Church, Bellevue Crescent (enter by ramp, suitable for wheelchairs, down at right hand side of church) on the first or second Monday of the month – please contact the Chair or Secretary for exact dates. Unless otherwise stated, meetings run from 7:30pm until around 9:30pm. The June meeting will take place on the 11th.

Chair: Ian Mowat

Contact: mowats@blueyonder.co.uk or secretary@ntbcc.org.uk

Website: www.ntbcc.org.uk/



community directory

ADVICE

CORE (formerly Black Community Development Project)	467 7990
Community Renewal	332 8773
Drylaw Police Station	343 3171
Granton Information Centre	551 2459
Lothian & Borders Police HQ, Fettes	311 3131
North Edinburgh Credit Union	466 5006
North West Carers Centre	315 3130
North Edinburgh Trust	625 0045
North Edinburgh Volunteer Centre	629 4202
Mark Lazarowicz MP Constituency Office	557 0577
Pilton Citizens Advice Bureau	332 9434

CHURCHES/PLACES OF WORSHIP

Blackhall Mosque, Queensferry Road	343 3802
Blackhall St. Columba's, Queensferry Road	332 4431
Bristo Baptist Church, Queensferry Road	332 9488
Church of the First Born, West Granton Green	551 5361
Drylaw Parish Church, Groathill Road North	343 1441
Granton Baptist Church, Crewe Road North	552 0915
Granton Parish Church, Boswall Parkway	551 2159
Granton United (Methodist/URC)	332 3316
Muirhouse St. Andrew's, Pennywell Medway	476 9525
Old Kirk, Pennywell Road	332 4354
St David's Episcopal, Royston Mains Place	01890 819063
St Margaret Mary's, Boswall Parkway	552 3957
St Paul's, Muirhouse Avenue	539 0085
St Serf's, Ferry Road	249 4899
Seventh Day Adventist, Boswall Parkway	0777 239 1405
West Pilton Christian Centre, West Pilton Park	343 6391

COMMUNITY CENTRES

Drylaw Neighbourhood Centre	315 4989
Muirhouse Millennium Centre	467 3578
Royston Wardieburn Community Centre	552 5700
The Prentice Centre	552 0485
West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre	551 3194

OLDER PEOPLE

Drylaw Rainbow Daycare Centre	343 6643
LifeCare, Stockbridge House	343 0940
Pilton Equalities Project (PEP)	315 4466
St David's Wednesday Wanderers & Smarties Club	538 6262

FAMILIES

Circle Scotland (formerly Family Service Unit)	552 0305
Granton Child and Family Centre	552 4808
Haven Project, Craigroyston Primary School	332 9269
North Edinburgh Childcare	332 8001
North Edinburgh Childcare Crèche Services	311 6933
Pilton Retreat, Ratho	333 1659
Stepping Stones North Edinburgh	551 1632
St David's Krazy Kids Club	538 6262
The Yard, Eyre Place Lane	475 4506
Women Supporting Women	551 1671

HOUSING

Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association	657 0600
Central Muirhouse Low-Rise Tenants Association	467 3570
City of Edinburgh Council North Local Office	529 5050
Edinburgh Tenants Federation	475 2509
Fresh Start	476 7741
Housing Support Inclusion Service	529 5093
Manor Estates Housing Association	337 3222
Muirhouse Housing Association	336 5282
Pennywell Tenants and Residents Association	476 2359
Port of Leith Housing Association	554 0403
West Granton Housing Co-operative	551 5035

HEALTH/WELFARE

Bangholm Medical Centre	552 6363
Barri Grubb	551 1671
Craigroyston Clinic	315 2121
Craigroyston Dental Clinic	332 7930
Crewe Medical Centre	552 5544
Davidsons Mains Medical Centre	336 2291
Inverleith Medical Practice	552 3369
Living Well North Edinburgh (formerly Stress Centre)	343 6375
Minor Injuries Unit, Western General Hospital	537 1330
Muirhouse Community Slimmers Club, Birnies Court	552 6477
Muirhouse Surgery	537 4343
NHS 24	08454 24 24 24
North Edinburgh Drug Advice Centre (NEDAC)	332 2314
North West Carers Centre	315 3130
Pilton Community Health Project	551 1671
Stockbridge Health Centre	225 9191
Western General Hospital	537 1000

RECREATION/ARTS

Ainslie Park Leisure Centre	551 2400
Blackhall Library	529 5595
Granton Library	529 5630
Leith Library	529 5517
Muirhouse Library	529 5528
North Edinburgh Arts Centre	315 2151
Screen Education Edinburgh (formerly Pilton Video)	343 1151
Stockbridge Library	529 5665
The Spartans Community Football Academy	552 7854

SCHOOLS/EDUCATION

Blackhall Primary School	336 1023
Broughton High School	332 7805
Community Learning & Development Forth	552 5700
Community Learning & Development Inverleith	332 6316
Craigroyston High School	477 7801
Craigroyston Primary School	343 6465
Edinburgh's Telford College	559 4000
Davidsons Mains Primary School	336 1184
Ferryhill Primary School	538 7382
Flora Stevenson's Primary School	332 1604
Forthview Primary School	332 2468
Granton Primary School	552 3987
Pirniehall Primary School	332 5256
St David's Primary School	332 3500
Stockbridge Primary School	332 6109
The Royal High School	336 2261
Trinity Academy	478 5050
Wardie Primary School	552 3896

YOUTH & CHILDREN

Bfriends, The Prentice Centre	552 8265
Fet-Lor Youth Centre	332 4506
Granton Youth Centre	467 5854
Muirhouse Youth Development Group	332 3356
Pilton Youth and Children's Project	332 9815
The Klub	315 2100
The Yard, Eyre Place Lane	476 4506

If your group or organisation would like to be included in the Community Directory please email us at northedinnews@gmail.com



“A 4-1 victory ensured the cup would be heading back to Broughton”

Brilliant Broughton win the Cup

IN A FITTING END to the Edinburgh Schools FA's Under 13 season, the year's two headline makers met in the cup final at St Augustine's. Craigmount got off to a bright start, taking the lead through prolific goalscorer Michael Allan, but Broughton hit back before the break through Tod Rowell before dominating the second half. Trevor O'Hara netted a double before Murat Dag's fine strike sealed a 4-1 victory and ensured the cup would be heading back to Broughton.

St Augustine's 3G surface is similar to Broughton's and it was the boys in navy blue who started brighter. Page had to dive bravely at the feet of strikers twice in the opening minutes, but you sensed an opening was imminent. Glasgow was starting to pull the strings and Bell

came close when his shot narrowly missed the top corner.

However in their cup final run Craigmount have risen to the challenge time and again; only a fool would rule them out and in the 12th minute they showed why. Allan pounced on an upfield ball, outmuscled the usually rock solid Walker and slipped the ball past Martin for the opener.

The goal brought the game to life - Broughton responded by pushing forward relentlessly and got their reward. Bell's shot, after a fine dribble, was saved by Page but he was helpless to stop Rowell slipping in the rebound to put Broughton level in the last goalmouth action of a pulsating first half.

The second half belonged to Broughton. Glasgow had an early

effort well saved by Page, but the big goalkeeper was powerless to stop O'Hara putting Broughton ahead minutes later. O'Hara rounded the goalkeeper but still had plenty to do, firing home past a line crowded by defenders.

O'Hara struck again on 45 minutes. Sent through by a superb pass, he showed excellent composure to again take the ball past Page before executing a far simpler finish.

With legs tiring, substitute Murat Dag picked up the ball on the edge of the penalty area and produced a fine turn, and even more sublime finish, curling the ball high into the net to clinch Broughton's victory.

www.youthfootballscotland.co.uk



Stroll along for Saturday soccer sessions

CIVIL SERVICE STROLLERS is one of Edinburgh's oldest football clubs - the Strollers were founded in 1908 - and the club has strong roots in the North Edinburgh area, having been based at the former Civil Service Playing Fields on Marine Drive (now operated by Edinburgh's Telford College) for well over fifty years. The club is keen to see more local youngsters enjoying the game and launched a new Saturday morning soccer school last month.

Strollers' general manager Tom Brown said: 'We are starting up a regular Saturday morning soccer school for both boys and girls and we hope lots of young people will come along. The plan is to have two groups - one for 4-6 year old and the other from 6- 10 and the emphasis will be on enjoying the game and having fun. We are trying to engage the local kids to form a community hub and Saturday's soccer school is just the start.'

Operating in partnership with Play2Learn Sports Coaching, Diamond Football is fast-flowing four-a-side football game that ensures young players get more touches, develops positional awareness and improves first-touch skills - and most important, it's fun to play!

Sessions are held for children (boys and girls both welcome) born in 2005 or 2006 from 9.30am and it's a 10.30am start for children born in 2007 and 2008. Each player receives quality coaching, chances to win medals and prizes and can have a lot of fun too.



For further information call Shane at Play2Learn on 07952 147 577, email Shane@Play2Learn.info

May misery for local sides

SPARTANS just failed to win the East of Scotland Premier League title last month, when they were pipped at the post - on goal difference - by Stirling University.

Leith Athletic, who play their home matches at Telford College Sports Ground, were relegated to the first division. The fate of the Marine Drive side was sealed following defeat by Lothian Thistle.

Trying times for Telford's rugby students!

FORMER SCOTTISH rugby star Gregor Townsend joined young talent from Edinburgh's Telford College last month when he conducted a coaching session as part of the inaugural Edinburgh Colleges' Festival.

Putting the new Marine Drive rugby pitches to the test, Gregor, who gained 82 caps, worked with Telford's rugby performance students then held a short Q&A session.

Robert Chrystie, Rugby Performance Course Leader at Edinburgh's Telford College said: "The new and improved rugby pitches allow our students to achieve better results through having good quality training facilities. Our rugby performance course is one of very few in Scotland. It is therefore of the utmost importance that we provide our students with the resources they require in order to improve their rugby skills.

"The event with Gregor was of real use to the learners, some of whom are considering a professional career in the sport. Being able to have access to someone who has experienced the sport and its highs and lows is a great experience for them and we hope to build upon this with similar sessions in the future."

Gregor Townsend said: "I really enjoyed working the boys on their skills. I was keen to pass on my experience and I definitely made sure they all worked extremely hard in the session! The rugby performance course at Telford College is important as it helps individuals to reach their full potential within a physically demanding sport - I'm proud to be able to work with colleges to help develop the future talent of Scottish rugby."

The event was part of the Edinburgh Colleges' Festival, which runs until 30 June and celebrates the work and talent of students from Edinburgh's Telford College, Stevenson College and Jewel and Esk College ahead of the October 2012 merger. The event is one of the largest student-led Further Education events in the UK.

