



Friends of Corstorphine Hill

NEWSLETTER No. 31

March 2008

Editor: Les Hutcheon Tel 334 3832

Chairman's Tidings

Firstly, may I take this opportunity to wish all our members a happy and prosperous 2008.

2007 was a productive and positive year for the friends. It saw the Friends group win the planning campaign to keep Corstorphine Hill free from any building work. I feel that any intrusion such as this would have created a precedent for future misuse and abuse of the hill.

In addition it should always be remembered that Corstorphine Hill is not only green belt and nature reserve land, but it's also a historical site within our community making it a place of the people. Where else would we get an area of woodland and green fields with such breath taking views within the boundary of the city of Edinburgh.

Speaking of our beautiful hill, we are more than half way through one of our current projects, the woodland management plan. This year will see the removal of more rubus and the trees throughout will be checked to ascertain which of those require replacing.

Our walled garden has had another fantastic year in 2007, winning once more the coveted gold prize in the Keep Edinburgh Growing competition and a certificate of merit from Scotland in Bloom. Thanks to all the workers who have contributed their time and help this last year to make these awards happen.

The winter talks have been first class, held in the excellent accommodation of the Best Western Capitol Hotel. It is disappointing to report that at some of the talks the turn out has been dismal. A great amount of effort is put into these talks, therefore I would like to encourage you all to support us through greater attendance. These events have proved extremely interesting and are completely free.

For your diary the next talk is Tuesday 11th march at 19.30 in the hotel. The speaker is Ms Aileen Fox from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds talking about the RSPB in Scotland.

Another date for your diary is the AGM on Thursday 17th April 2008.

Eddie Price

Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on **Thursday 17th April 2008** at **7.30 pm** at the **Best Western Capitol Hotel Clermiston Road**

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Approval of the minutes of the 2006 AGM
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. Chairman's report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Election of Office Bearers and Committee Members
7. Any other business

Corstorphine Fair

The Corstorphine Fair 2008 will be on Saturday 7th June, from 11 - 4pm. As usual dozens of local community organisations, including Friends of Corstorphine Hill will be taking part to publicise our activities and raise money, as well as provide a great family day out for the community. This is the biggest (and best) community event in Edinburgh and about 25,000 people attended the last Fair in 2006. This year we will be selling copies of the soon to be published 'History of Corstorphine Hill'. We need some volunteers to man/woman our stall during the day. If you could help us for an hour or two on the 7th June please contact Gordon Swann, tel. 0131 334 4769 or any other member of the Committee.

Gordon Swann.

Tower Opening

As usual we plan to open the tower on alternate Sundays from 2.00 till 4.00 pm throughout the summer starting on 8 th June (linking with Corstorphine Fair week) through till September.

Talks

The **wildlife crime officer** can be contacted at charles.everitt@lbp.pnn.police.uk

The final talk of the season is on **Tuesday 11 th March at 7.30 pm** at the Capitol Hotel to be given by **Aileen Fox** about the **RSPB in Scotland.**

And Walks

The guided walks programme is being put together and there will be more information in the next newsletter but the the first walk is in May to catch the early bird.

Keith Donnelly will lead a **Bird Walk** starting from **Clermiston Road North car park on Saturday 3rd May at 10.00 am.**

The walk will follow an anticlockwise route past the tower and the main path to return to the car park. There will be an option for those so inclined to drop out at the Kaimes Road exit.

In The Garden

In the summer the garden was judged for the Keep Edinburgh Growing and we were awarded the Gold certificate for the community category jointly with Gorgie City Farm

In the Beautiful Scotland in Bloom competition we were also awarded Gold certificate. Credit must be given to the small dedicated team who maintain the garden a few hours a week. Where would we be without volunteers?

On Clermiston Road improvements to the footway and gate at entrance on the drive to the Tower are most welcome. It also helps to describe to visitors where this wonderful garden is.

Alan White

Potential Problems Anticipated to Result from the Zoo Master Plan

Because of the problems pertaining to the proposed Zoo development, we have formed a secondary group, which includes representation from Corstorphine and Murrayfield Community Councils, Corstorphine Heritage Centre and other members of the community.

The Group considers that the Royal Zoological Society is the body responsible for the perceived problems to the area. It is well known the Society is intent on expansion in Scotland. As well as Edinburgh Zoo development there is the Highland Safari Park and suggested plans for a rainforest exhibit for endangered species in Glasgow. It raises the question where is all money from the sale of Zoo land really going? Resulting in no advantage to the local community with increased housing density, massive traffic congestion, and loss of valuable nature reserve and green belt land.

The attached map illustrates the problems, which the Group foresee being brought to the area.

Areas shown

- * Within LNR outline the area is council owned green belt and nature reserve.
- * Outline of the zoo boundary.
- 1** Green belt approximately 13 acres of land within the zoo presented for building 100 houses.
- 2** Hatched area of land zoo would like to lease.
- 3** Hatched area of land zoo would like to take out on licence.

Congestion areas including existing and other developments

- 4** 30 flats completed at foot of Kaimes Road.
- 5** Forestry Commission building. It is known that other organisations are about to move into the building thus increasing the amount of traffic.
- 6** The proposal of a roundabout on the main road to cope with the traffic from 100 houses in the zoo (area 1) and the Forestry Commission car park.
- 7** It is also proposed that a set of traffic lights will be installed on the main road at Pink Hill to cope with the additional traffic caused by 130 houses yet to be completed.

Summary and Conclusions

There are 30 flats at Kaimes Road exiting onto the main road, proceeding east 30 metres it is proposed to install a roundabout to cope with the houses within the zoo and vehicles from the Forestry Commission. Pedestrian traffic lights exist some 20 metres further along opposite the zoo entrance. Proceeding eastwards some 30 to 40 metres we have the combined entrance and exit of the zoo and Holiday Inn car parks, which have the capacity for approximately 600 cars. A further 10 meters along would be traffic lights to deal with the Pink Hill development of 130 houses. The zoo visitor numbers for last year was approximately 650,000 with a predicted increase to 900,000 in the future.

Cumulatively does this amount to an unacceptable congestion?

FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The fee is **£ 1.00 per member per year**. Donations are also welcome!
It is important to keep our records up to date, therefore, please fill in the form below even if you have supplied the information before and return the form along with your subscription to Eddie Price 25 Corstorphine Hill Avenue, Fred Davies 5 Saughtonhall Place, Martin Craven 42 Clermiston Road, or indeed through any member of the committee or your newsletter deliverer if you see them.

First name.....Surname.....(please print)

Address.....Postcode.....

E-mail (if applicable).....Tel. No.....

As always we can use volunteers who in turn enjoy participating in preserving the reserve. Activities can vary and here are examples where you can indicate in which direction you can make a contribution:-

committee work

giving a talk

leading a walk

newsletter production

organising talks

organising walks

taking a turn on the Tower rota

walled garden maintenance

opening/closing the garden gate

any other activity

newsletter delivery Martin Craven is particularly looking for volunteers to deliver newsletters in the Craigmillar, Craigmillar and Blackhall areas. If able to help phone him at 334 1247 .

Please fill in the form promptly. For audit purposes it is essential our records are up to date.

The Finest Views the Eye can Feast on

The History of the Hill has been finished and is about to be printed. Copies can be obtained from Fred Davies, 5 Saughtonhall Place Edinburgh EH12 5RH, Tel. 0131 337 9232, or ordered through any member of the committee. It will also be on sale at our stall at the Corstorphine Fair. The cost is £ 5.00 each and more information will appear on the website as soon as it becomes available.

Friends of Corstorphine Hill

Registered as a charity No. SCO28842

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