

PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the 150th meeting, held on 30th June 1997 in
Portobello Baptist Church Hall.

PRESENT:

Sandy Smith (Chair), Kathleen Hart (Treasurer)
Harold Alexander-Bowen, J. Blacklock, Sgt. James Brooks, Celia Butterworth, Cllr Maureen Child,
Shand Hutchison, Keith Jeffrey, Osbert Lancaster, Insp. Keith Marwick, John Maule, Beryl Neill,
Lesley Reid, John Stewart, Nick Stroud, David Turner, Kathleen Ward.

APOLOGIES:

Isobel Allen, Sasha Callaghan, Cllr Lawrence Marshall, George Murray, Margaret Smith, Tom Smith,
Gavin Strang.

Note: people who wish to submit apologies at the last minute should notify Sandy Smith on 669 6534.

150.1 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Sandy Smith welcomed all present, and introduced our guest speaker, Janis Pauwels, Senior Environment Policy Officer, who had come to explain the "Sustainable Communities Project":

'Going for Green' was set up by the government and started in England in 1996. It is now moving to Scotland, where 'Forward Scotland' and 'Going for Green' are to work together. Three cities in Scotland have been chosen: Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling. Each is working in two areas in a two-year project, to research the attitudes and perceptions of local people towards the environment.

In Edinburgh the two areas are Portobello and Wester Hailes. The five main areas of 'Going for Green' are to:

- reduce waste
- use transport efficiently
- save energy and natural resources
- look after the local environment
- prevent pollution

A Project Officer will be appointed who will work closely with the local community councils and there will be exchanges of information between Portobello and Wester Hailes. Edinburgh University will evaluate the results at the end of the two years. Discussion took place about whether the Project Officer would be a local person, and how we could best work with whoever is appointed. Osbert pointed out that because of the Centenary Workshop, Portobello already has some firm ideas about what we would like to happen.

The Chairman thanked Janis for her presentation.

150.2 MINUTES OF MEETING OF 26th MAY

Because of the unexpected arrival of the speaker, the minutes of the previous meeting were not discussed and accepted. This omission will be rectified at our next meeting.

150.3 MATTERS ARISING

150.3a Information Plaques: The Birds plaque was formally unveiled by Dr Gavin Strang M.P., after which there were refreshments at the Rockville Hotel. The Secretary will write to Norman Hughes to thank him for this.

The meeting on 2nd July will consider further interpretative boards; the Pottery board is now well advanced and Celia has written to various bodies for sponsorship.

150.3b Air quality in Portobello High Street: testing is being carried out; item continues.

150.3c Le Vineyard: the project is going ahead, though there is still no decision about the facade.

150.3d P.C.F.A. trophies: item continues.

150.3e Planning Applications: John Stewart, Chairman of Portobello Amenity Society, (PAS) described the role of community councils in planning matters. The Scottish Office recommends that each community council appoints one person to look into planning applications, particularly concentrating on those which are of wide concern. PAS has been doing this for the last 20 years, at their regular fortnightly meetings. It makes sense for them to monitor applications on behalf of the Community Council because of the fortnightly planning cycle; they could then respond on behalf of both organisations to strengthen objections. PAS would send the Community Council a copy of any letter sent on their behalf.

The Secretary will write to the Planning Department to explain this arrangement. (?)

150.3f Community Focus Workshop: at the meeting in June it was thought that we should make a list of local achievements so that people are aware of what has happened and is in process. Osbert added that aims that come from the Centenary Workshop should be listed, and he also volunteered to work with the new Project Officer. Kathleen suggested that anyone else who has the time might join in with this.

150.3g Extension of permitted licensing hours: item continues.

150.3h Brunstane Road traffic: over 100 people attended a meeting at the Jewel & Esk Valley College to discuss this. All aspects of the problem were considered. It was agreed that there is a problem, and that residents are suffering. Everyone at the meeting will receive a copy of the views expressed. Maureen felt that the problem had to be looked at in a wider context, and a traffic survey done of the whole area. A report is to be presented to the City Council's Transportation meeting on 11th August. Maureen wasn't sure if it would be worth asking for a closure; even a temporary one would take 12-18 months to implement.

150.3i Telferton allotments: Shand has written, and received a reply stating that the City of Edinburgh is still trying to find the money to buy this land. The Council is being pressed to adopt an allotment policy.

150.3j Quicksands: item continues.

150.4 WESTER HAILES PROJECT REPORT

Noone from Wester Hailes was able to attend our meeting, so Lesley reported that the project team had identified the following aspects of the problem:

- although the Head Teacher of the High School has promised to help in encouraging his pupils to drop less litter in the High Street, the High School's own premises were found to be severely littered.

- the timetable of street cleaning is not clear.
- dog fouling is a problem.
- it is not just school children who are responsible for dropping litter, but also residents and visitors.

It was agreed to give a Boots gift voucher to the four volunteers from Wester Hailes who carried out the survey.

150.5 REPORTS

150.5a Police

Inspector Marwick reported on the dog fouling situation. The Dog Wardens were in Portobello four times in May, gave advice to 83 people, and issued 51 ‘pooper scoopers’.

Following the concerns expressed at our May meeting, extra attention is being paid to traffic speeds in Coillesdene Avenue and Park Avenue, but noone has been caught speeding yet. The local Neighbourhood Watch groups are also monitoring this.

Several benches in Rosefield Park have been vandalised. Youths have been questioned about this but with no result. Local residents are asked to be vigilant.

Sgt Brooks told the meeting about the end-of-year activities at the High School. Five community officers had been involved in the ‘suspended timetable’ activities, including rock climbing, photography and beach visits – the last culminating with an officer being thrown into the sea! But all in good fun! The experiment had been a great success for both pupils and police.

150.5b Public Transport sub-group

Derek McKay had addressed a meeting of the sub-group about transport, concentrating particularly on buses. The City of Edinburgh Council is responsible for providing information about services. A new map showing bus routes in the city has just been published. At present, information for individual bus stops is being provided for the new ‘Greenways’ routes from Maybury to Princes Street and Princes Street to Leith. It is hoped that bus stops in Portobello will have information by September, two kinds of information sheet currently being considered. There will be another meeting of the group after the summer.

150.5c Treasurer’s Report

We have received our annual grant – £859.00 – from the City of Edinburgh Council.

The accounts at 30th June 1997 are:

Treasurer’s Account: £1918.01

Joppa Tennis Courts: £ 572.64

Lesley pointed out that we need a report from Joppa Tennis Club, and a new contract needs to be signed.

150.5d Cycling

Lesley had made copies of her report, which she circulated. She was very disappointed that provision had not been made on the agenda for a full discussion of this. It was agreed that this would be the main item on the agenda at the July meeting.

150.6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 150.6a Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, 1997: Sandy has received a letter asking for participation, unspecified.
- 150.6b Loyalty Card: Maureen reported that this had worked well initially but interest was now tailing off. We need a Business Association, and it was suggested that a customers group be formed to say what they would like and to bring in business. Item continues.
- 150.6c Christmas lighting and carol singing: this needs to be planned quite soon.
- 150.6d Lord Lyons Office: The official scroll has arrived. Sandy showed it to the meeting, and it was decided that we should have it framed. Shand would arrange this, and it would then be displayed either in the Town Hall or in the Library. Receipt has to be acknowledged: the Secretary will write.
- 150.6e Headed notepaper: now that we have our own Coat of Arms, Celia will find out the cost of reproducing it on notepaper.
- 150.6f Media interest in the Community Council: Shona Milne of Musselburgh News has asked to receive copies of Community Council minutes. The Minutes Secretary will arrange this, and Sandy will be the contact person.
- 150.6g Public conveniences: the public toilets in Bath Street are to be serviced by a mobile unit, and those at Joppa to be closed altogether. Maureen asked for support to get them reopened, in view of the strategic importance to the promotion of Portobello as a tourist venue. The Secretary will write to protest against the closure, and anyone else who would like to is invited to do likewise, to the Director of Environmental and Consumer Services, 500 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh EH11 3YJ.
- 150.6h Scottish Pottery Museum: Maureen has called a meeting on 8th July at 2:30pm in the City Chambers. It was agreed to ask Alison Robinson to be the Community Council representative.

150.7 FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meetings will be held on the following dates in Portobello Baptist Church Hall in the High Street (enter by the door to the right of the Portobello Bar), starting at 7:30pm:

Monday 28th July

**** No meeting in August ****

Monday 29th September

