

## **Portobello Amenity Society Chairman's Report June 2009**

- The Heritage Lottery project concerning the erection of the three coade stone pillars in the Community Garden is now complete. A new top in modern Coade stone has been made by a PAS member for the middle pillar and was put in place in August.
- This year we monitored 96 planning applications for the Portobello area and wrote objecting to 23. Many of our objections related to inappropriate shop fronts and shop signage and overlarge extensions.
- PAS also responded to the public consultation concerning the N.W. Portobello Masterplan, a process started last year. We helped the Masterplan Action Group in their campaign to raise the planning department's awareness of local people's views and opinions. Over 200 letters were received and the planners, as a result, have reduced the size of the proposed flats along the Sir Harry Lauder Road and decided not to move either the library or the community centre for the time being. The revised development brief for this N.W. Portobello area will be used to determine future planning applications.
- PAS members have also been actively involved in the PONGS campaign to prevent a private company – Viridor – from building a waste transfer site off the Sir Harry Lauder Road. PAS was one of the local groups which gave a presentation to the planning committee. Although the planning committee refused the application, Viridor have lodged an appeal which will be heard in December. Again PAS will give evidence to the Reporter leading the inquiry. If this planning application is granted, it could mean 928 extra lorry movements a day coming through the Portobello area.
- PAS also lodged an objection to the new Edinburgh City Local Plan concerning 19-24 Promenade, ( The Ghost Train Site ) as the Council no longer wishes to acquire this site for environmental improvement. Unfortunately the Reporter has agreed with the Council's decision not to acquire this site.
- PAS has also had continuing dialogue with the Council regarding the Figgate Burn flood prevention measures, road signage, shopfront paint colours, litter bin provision, and graffiti removal.
- PAS continues to be represented at meetings of Portobello Community Council and the Edinburgh Civic Forum. We hold regular meetings with the Council's Task Force officials at which we have raised various issues such as street cleaning and park maintenance.
- We have deliberately carried out fewer planting projects this year in Portobello's parks as the Council did not let our previous bulbs die back before cutting the grass and so we are monitoring to see the effects of this

on next year's bulb growth. We have however offered to make a contribution to the Council who are improving the quality of the landscaping at Eastfield and we have suggested appropriate plants and shrubs which would grow well in this situation.

- We continue to hold regular monthly meetings to which all members of the public are welcome.