

Spurttle



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**April
2019**

No 283

Tel: 07455 770474

spurttle@hotmail.co.uk

BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

DRUMMOND PUPILS STRIKE AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

On Friday 15 March, around 100 Drummond CHS pupils joined thousands of school students around the world in striking for action against climate change *write Angel Douglas and Benjamin Sterratt.*

Inspired by Greta Thunberg, who walked out of school in Sweden to make a stand against climate change, we gathered at the Scottish Parliament to protest. The media had estimated a turnout of around 400, but over 2,000 school students turned up. Many had made posters and signs including statements such as 'Why are we studying for a future we won't even have?' and 'The oceans are rising and so are we!' The atmosphere was buzzing as everyone was so clearly passionate about making the Government realise it is time to take action.

In the week before, we, along with some fellow pupils, handed out information forms with a parental consent slip attached. The form outlined our aims:



1. To persuade the Government to declare a climate crisis and pass stronger laws on pollution and harmful gases.

2. Scotland to become carbon-neutral by 2025, meaning we put less CO₂ into the atmosphere than we remove, slowing global warming.

3. More teaching of climate change in schools.

4. Educate the public about climate change, explaining how dangerous it is and how we can tackle it.

We are incredibly proud of the Drummond pupils who participated in the protest and who continue to demand action against climate change before it becomes irreversible.

STRIGIFORMES OVER SUBSTANCE?



Some people think it's a well-crafted hoot. Others say it's a witless effort to woo popularity. Public opinion is split over the carved wooden owl that appeared last month in the publicly owned section of Bellevue Crescent Gardens. A similar bird also adorns London Road Gardens. Is it harmless fun? Is it intended to deter gulls? Or, like the stone monolith which arrived in January (Issue 281), is it just an uninvited addition plonked on the park in the name of Council place making? Tell us your thoughts.

COUNCIL CONSULTS ON POWDERHALL OPTIONS

On 14 March, Council officials detailed six options for development of the Powderhall bowling greens, and asked locals for feedback.

All options envisaged: (1) an entrance square at the current entrance to the Powderhall waste transfer station; (2) a wider St Mark's Path within a 12m open corridor; (3) new nursery-school facilities, possibly combined with intergenerational living (day care and/or accommodation for older people); (4) pedestrian/cycle access via Dunedin Street. One option includes affordable 'family housing'. No option offers not building on the green space.

The proposals offer different proportions of publicly accessible and reserved-for-nursery protected green spaces, situated either adjacent to Broughton Road or set back behind buildings. You can compare (and respond) to them here: [bit.ly/2LaZ2wn].

Once public reaction has been gauged, a PAN application is expected this spring or summer, triggering further consultation.

Designs for the rest of the site are still in progress or in search of funding, and will be brought forward through the Planning system in batches. It seems likely, though, that they will include a mix of homes for social/mid-market/full-market rent, and homes for sale.



Demolition of the former plant is expected to be complete by the end of next month.

WAVERLEY'S NEW CHAPTER

Arup, Network Rail, and City of Edinburgh Council have been creating a development Masterplan for Waverley Station (Issue 273). With help from Allan Murray Architects, Grimshaw Architects, and others, they are considering how to respond to a forecast increase in yearly passengers from today's 23M to 49M by 2048.

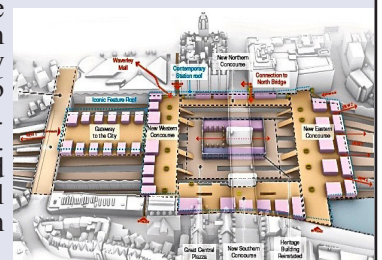
Integrated improvements will be made in stages over 30 years, addressing, among other matters: permeability; accessibility; functionality; and heritage assets. Eye-catching possibilities discussed at last month's Planning Forum include:

- large concourse areas above the current platform level; improved entrances and transport connections at street level

- improved links to the Bus Station and Edinburgh St James

- a new North-South footway through the station from Calton Rd to E Market St.

An online consultation will stay open until 26 April at [bit.ly/2Fp6NOo]. The finished Masterplan will be published in September.



Briefly

Candidates in the **Leith Walk (Ward 12) by-election** on 11 Apr are: Steven Alexander (UKIP); Jack Caldwell (Lib-Dem); Nick Gardner (Lab); Kevin Illingworth (Ind); David Don Jacobsen (SLP); Tom Laird (SL); Dan McCroskrie (Con); Rob Munn (SNP); John Ferguson Scott (Ind); Lorna Slater (Grn); Paul Mitchell Stirling (FBM). For a hustings report, see [bit.ly/2UKC4Sq].

Both **Leith Central** and **New Town & Broughton Community Councils** are objecting to a licensing request by the **Windsor Bar at 45 Elm Row** to remove noise conditions. They fear the effect on neighbouring tenement residents' amenity.

CEC's beleaguered **Waste Services** have ceased taking calls or answering emails from NTBCC and LCCC conveners frustrated at recent **shortcomings** and seeking information. Both have asked elected members to intervene.

There has been a lot written lately on social media about obstructions caused by **thoughtless parking**. So much, indeed, that at times there has been **little room for anything else**. Leith Central Community Council's website now covers the **legal rights and wrongs** in exhaustive detail here: [bit.ly/2JzRBDw].

SGN finished works to upgrade the gas network along **Broughton St** on 11 Mar. Thanks to staff operating extended hours and weekends throughout the project, this was 3 weeks **ahead of schedule**. Credit where it's due for that. Attention now shifts to similar operations on **Forth and London Sts**. Broughton St traders celebrated with a series of discounts and tasters on 30–31 Mar, but remain troubled by the closure to northbound traffic during Laing O'Rourke's works in and around **Picardy Pl**.

Those who think CEC pays too little attention to **our leafy friends** took a smitch of comfort last month. The **Theosophical Society** sought permission for a new rubble wall beside their new home (on ground between **Gt King St and SE Cumberland St Ln**). But consent was refused because the application 'contained insufficient information to allow the council to **properly and fully assess** the impact of the proposal on the tree located within the neighbouring garden area' (Ref. 18/10231/FUL).

There's no stopping Topping, who, as we exclusively revealed on 17 Jan [bit.ly/2FsqbLN], want to open a store at **2–3A Blenheim Pl**. Planning consent has now been given, so shopping at Topping will soon begin. Onward and upward.

Railings damaged (and later removed) when a car smashed into them outside the **Cask & Barrel** last July (Issue 276) have now been replaced and painted. Paradoxically, they were initially installed to prevent pedestrians deviating – convivially refreshed or not – from the pavement.

New playground project is growing

Locally based charity Saheliya and parent councils from Broughton Primary, Leith Walk Primary, and Drummond Community High School have successfully accessed £3,910 of funding from Leith Chooses.

The funding enables a one-year project to plant, harvest, cook, and learn about food. The project will grow colourful crops (peas, sweetcorn, sunflowers) in school playgrounds. Saheliya will promote the participation of ethnic-minority women and their families.

Project aims include the purposeful accessing of space for children, families, and wider communities, and promoting a good outdoor environment.

Project coordinator Rachel Blythe told *Spurtle*, 'Leith Chooses is a very positive demonstration of local democracy in action. The voting processes allow local people from age 8 to learn about what happens in their community and to choose between various options.'

Ten other projects were funded through the latest Leith Chooses process, part of the Council's Community Grants Fund; see [bit.ly/2DAZLTM] for details.

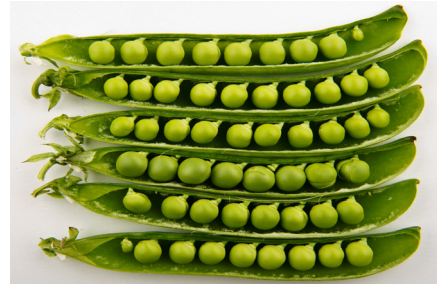


Photo: Bill Ebbesen, Wikipedia.

Beaten Drum has hollow ring

As reported in last month's Issue 282, councillors have unanimously rejected Drum Property Group's application to build student housing, new shops, and a hotel at 106–162 Leith Walk.

So what next for the low-level sandstone building, which Drum will find difficult to demolish given its integral value to the local Conservation area? Will Drum allow tenants to remain after their current leases expire this summer? Will Drum invite former tenants to return? Will Drum actively foster that diverse and energetic mix of shops and services it was apparently so keen to rehouse under its failed proposal?

Not on your nelly. Replying to an enquiry from the Save Leith Walk (SLW) campaign in March, Drum's Communications Director Fife Hyland made the developer's position clear: 'As we consistently stated throughout the consultation period, and in previous correspondence with all parties, recovery of vacant possession at our property on Leith Walk is an essential step in the process as we seek to redevelop the site in line with the aspirations of the City of Edinburgh Council.'

'We are currently assessing our options for the site and will not be making any of the retail or studio units available for occupation. The entire site will be vacant this year, and given our proposals for redevelopment, our estate management policies and our existing insurance arrangements, it is preferable for us to leave the units vacant, safe and secure.'

From a commercial point of view this may make sense. From a local point of view, it is an appalling waste of space; a boarded-up blight which could continue for years.

SLW has an alternative, bustling vision for the area (partially shown in the artist's impression right), focused on community cohesion, enterprise, and housing. It is formulating outline plans through a process of public consultations and workshops, and may in due course attempt to purchase the site under the Scottish Government's Community Right to Buy.

Leith Central Community Council has endorsed these general aims, including their proposed physical scale, and recently wrote to Planning Cmte convenor Cllr Neil Gardiner, urging the Council to adopt them as part of formal guidance at the earliest opportunity.



Per ardour ad astra

On 10 March, while stemming marauding ivy, a gardener at 33 Drummond Place was met by a frog on top of a connecting wall. It was a happy 'All hail' meeting.

This incredible creature (the frog) had ascended the 7ft wall using the ivy, possibly 'homing' to a pond in the No. 33 garden which had reluctantly been closed for technical reasons some 10 years before. Frogs have phenomenal memories and perseverance.

If, as seems more likely, it was heading for a neighbouring pond, the frog would have had to scale another precipitous wall of similar dimensions. We wish it *bon voyage*, happy landings, and long life. — JRM



Edinburgh on high: Doctors' orders

In Issue 281, we admired Alexander Handyside Ritchie's statues at 38–39 St Andrew Square. This time, we examine his more accessible statuary outside the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh on Queen Street.

No. 9 was designed by Thomas Hamilton in neo-classical style in 1844–46, and later incorporated Robert Adam's No. 8. Whereas Adam's façade is cool and douce, Hamilton's design seems positively flamboyant. This must have suited Ritchie, who was commissioned to finish the portico with three substantial stone statues. In charming architectural terms, these occupy a 'two-stage open Tower-of-the-winds structure' (Gifford et al.).

Of grandiose proportion, they represent: Asklepiós (pictured), the ancient Greeks' god of healing and founder of medicine; Hippocrates (c.460–370 BCE), the only non-mythical figure in the ensemble and the originator of what is now called Hippocratic medicine; and Hygeia, daughter of Asklepiós, who personified health.

Equally significant is the iconography of cocks and serpents, which ancient symbols are repeated both in the façade and throughout the building. The serpent was respected for its benevolent as well as its venomous properties, which paralleled similar properties of medicines. The cock symbolised the ritual sacrifice to Asklepiós made after being healed of a disease.

Within this remarkable assembly in Craigleith stone, Ritchie's statues stand protectively, looking back to the extraordinary story of medicine both in mythology and recorded history.— *JRM [with thanks to Colin McDowall of the RCPE Library].*



Broughton Scouts 100 years old

In 1919, two friends from Broughton Place Church – William Smart Melville of Wellington Street and J. Dryburgh of Willowbrae Road – registered the existence of a new scout group in the county of Edinburgh and Leith, Northern District, *writes Scout Leader Scott Richards*. Scout HQ in London allocated the new troop the snappy title '11th Edinburgh and Leith Northern District (Broughton Place Church) Scout Group'.

Wind forward through 100 years – with various scouting reorganisations changing the group name from 11th Waverley to 11th Leith, a flit down the street to Broughton St Mary's Church on Bellevue Crescent, and an amalgamation with the 74th Logie Green Scouts – and we arrive at the group we have today: 11th Edinburgh North East (Broughton St Mary's) Scout Group.

Back in 1919 the group comprised two adult leaders and 22 boys. Today, the nine adult and nine young leaders and 50 young people (boys and girls) are looking forward to their centenary year with a commemorative plaque presentation and photo display in the church, two celebration camps, a ceilidh, and a fun day/BBQ. Group members have designed a centenary badge, and rumour has it a local brewer has offered to create a centenary ale (adult scouts only). The ceilidh will be hosted in The Royal Scots Club, Abercromby Place, which played host to the 75th anniversary event in 1994.

If you have a story to tell about your experience as a Beaver, Cub, or Scout in Broughton, please drop the group an e-mail at [11thescouts@gmail.com].

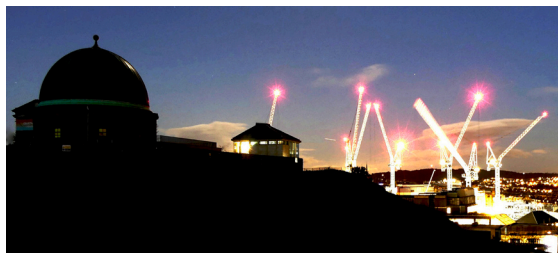
THE BOY SCOUTS ASSOCIATION.		FOR HEADQUARTERS USE ONLY
This form to be completed by the Troop Registrar and returned to the Local Association.		
TROOP REGISTRATION 1919.		
Name of Troop	Edinburgh & Leith	Date of receipt
County	Edinburgh & Leith	
Commissioner's District	Northern	
Local Association	City of Edinburgh	
Instructions:—The Registrar is requested to complete this form and return it to the Local Association not later than the 31st October of the year in which the Troop is first formed, through the County Secretary to the Local Association. The Troop will then be registered and a warrant for the Troop for a period of one year will be issued direct to the Commissioner. In future only Troop leading warrants will be required.		
Name of Troop	Broughton Place Church	Date of original registration by
Address of Troop Headquarters	Broughton Place Church Hall, Broughton Place	(Local Association)

Rapid growth, chronic shortage

From the Caledonian Mercury, 12 April 1819.

At this time, when such grievous distress prevails in the various manufacturing districts, particularly of England, in consequence of the extremely depressed state of trade, it is gratifying to remark the flourishing condition of the Scottish metropolis.

At no period, we believe, in the history of Edinburgh, was the spirit for building more generally alive: new and elegant structures are daily rising to view, and proceeding with unexampled celerity; and what has long excited surprise is, that, though dwelling houses and shops have for a considerable time been rearing in such rapid progression, there does not appear to be more than sufficient accommodation for the increasing population.



Briefly

A planning application (Ref.18/03340/FUL) for change of use of 'a domestic lockup' in **E. Scotland St Lane** to Class 4 business use has been refused. Officials found that it did not comply with **Edinburgh Local Development Plan policy Hou7**. 'The principle of the proposal is not acceptable, as it would have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity.' **Expect an appeal imminently**. For a brief summary of previous serpentine convolutions surrounding this site, see [bit.ly/2OkFNnh].

Police have been conducting speed checks on vehicles in **Drummond Pl, Broughton, Regent and London Rds, E London and Broughton Sts**. Expect more of the same on **Queen St** soon. Some drivers have been ticketed. Be warned: 20's plenty.

In the past, planning applications which attracted **seven or more objections** would be considered by elected members on the Council's **Development Management Subcommittee** rather than being delegated to officials. That threshold has now been **raised to 20** so that councillors can concentrate on larger, more complex, and **contentious cases**. The Greens and Lib Dems voted against this change, saying it will make it harder for **members of the public** to influence Planning decisions. In another change, councillors will now decide on applications whenever a community council's position on planning consent, as a **statutory consultee**, is at odds with the recommendation of officials. For chapter and verse, see [bit.ly/2TEcCBw].

After the **Broughton History Society's** meeting on 1 Apr, its next will be on 13 May at 7pm in **Drummond CHS**. Alan Borthwick will talk about 'Ballads, Songs and Snatches: Exploring the World of Gilbert and Sullivan'. Dress: shreds and patches.

The **Transport & Environment Cmte** last month agreed to install 66 on-street charging points for electric vehicles by the end of 2020. Nearby locations will be **E London St** (4 bays), **Heriot Row** (8 bays), **Montgomery St** (8 bays). These are the first of 223 scheduled to be in place by 2023. CEC will also trial using **lampposts** for this purpose. For further details, see Items 7.6–7.7 at [bit.ly/2IVG6pA].

Plans are afoot to open a new wine bar at **1 Haddington Place** in premises formerly occupied by HiFi Corner.

The Daily Business reports Royal Bank of Scotland is close to selling its **Dundas St** office and data centre site for £36M to Orion Capital Partners [bit.ly/2SNzEAN]. However, *Spurtle* understands that, contrary to some soothsayers' predictions, a **skyscraper shopping mall** is unlikely to result.

Work to build out the pavements at the **Drummond Pl end of London St** is expected to begin this autumn. The aim is to slow traffic and make crossing **easier and safer** for pedestrians (Issue 275). Some locals still believe a **central refuge** would be better, especially for people with vision and mobility issues.

Moreover ...



We like this artwork outside **Artisan Roast** a lot. However, we're not sure if its impression of native fauna and a whimsical onesie depict **Broughton St** after too little coffee or too much.

After a member of the public complained in 2017, **CEC Enforcement** investigated the giant poster slung from the gable end at **84 E Claremont/W Annandale St**. It had been there many years and was in breach of planning control (Ref. 17/00300/EADV). Property law firm **McEwan Fraser** has now removed this unconsented advertisement, and CEC will take no further action. Spurtle applauds officials' **patient and pragmatic** approach.

Narcissus Flowers, Something Fishy, and The White Witch (twice) have suffered break-ins on **Broughton St** in recent weeks.

Having, on 14 Mar, approved the Final Business Case for extending the **tramway to Newhaven**, the Council has appointed two contractors. **Morrison Utility Services Ltd** will first identify and clear underground obstructions along the route. Then **Sacyr, Farrans, Neopul Joint Venture** will handle design, construction, systems integration, testing, commissioning, and bringing into operational service. For the next 6 months, **Council, contractors, and other key stakeholders** will work to 'test buildability, undertake surveys, value engineer and develop further innovation into their design'. Finance & Resources Convener **Cllr Alasdair Rankin** (Ward 11) says, 'It's very clear to me that this procurement process has been carried out with **enormous thoroughness and diligence**, with every effort made to mitigate potential risks in terms of build quality and price.' So that's reassuring. **Now we can all relax**. For community councils' thoughts on improving the tram extension during and after construction, see [bit.ly/2HDLUme].

Spurtle Team: E. Dickie, J. Dickie, M. Forde, J. Hart, M. Hart, D. Hill, A. McIntosh, J. R. Maclean, S. Michael, M. Orr, L. Rogers, C. Roussot, T. Smith, D. Sterratt, E. Taylor-Smith, D. Young.
Post: Spurtle, c/o Narcissus Flowers, 87 Broughton St, Edinburgh EH1 3RJ.
 Printed by Minuteman Press, 63 Elm Row.



LOVELY THINGS TO EAT AND DRINK AT **COFFEE MAGIC, 10 RODNEY STREET**. TODAY'S SPECIALS ON FACEBOOK. **WARM, WELCOMING, LOCAL.**

LEITH CENTRAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

A forum for local people who want to engage with and work for their local community.



Leith Central Community Council

Participate in local democracy.

Make representations to City of Edinburgh Council, other public bodies and private agencies on everything that matters locally.

Next meeting: 7.00pm on Mon 22 April in Nelson Hall, McDonald Rd Library

leithcentralcc.co.uk/meeting-dates

Deidre Brock MP Edinburgh North and Leith



Regular Surgeries

Leith: 1st Friday of the month
1-2pm, 166 Great Junction Street
Leith Walk: 2nd Friday of the month
3.30-4.30pm, McDonald Rd Library
Stockbridge: 3rd Friday of the month
1-2pm Stockbridge Library
Royston/Wardieburn Community Centre: Last Friday, 4-5pm
dbrockmp.scot
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f/BenMacSNP @BenMacpherson

Ben Macpherson MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for Edinburgh Northern and Leith Constituency



Constituency Surgeries

(no appointment necessary)

Every Monday:
5-6pm at
Leith Library
28-30 Ferry Road
Edinburgh
EH6 4AE

Every Friday:
4-5pm at
Royston/Wardieburn Community Centre
Pilton Drive North
Edinburgh
EH5 1NF

Contact Ben

Office Address: 34 Constitution Street, Leith, Edinburgh, EH6 6RS

E-mail: ben.macpherson.msp@parliament.scot

Telephone: 0131 600 0134 or 0131 348 5786

Website: www.benmacpherson.scot

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NEW TOWN & BROUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL represents the views of local residents to City of Edinburgh Council.

You're very welcome to attend.

Come along and make a difference. The next meeting is on Monday 15 April at 7.30pm in

Broughton St Mary's Parish Church, Bellevue Crescent

www.ntbcc.org.uk