

Five things you need to know today

- ✘ **PORTOBELLO PARK – Dreams -VOCAL manifesto – Encouragement to vote – SPOKES manifesto**

Yesterday we carried the story that the campaigners for the building of the new Portobello High School PFANS were cheered by the fact that land campaigner, Andy Wightman was supporting their cause. Now the group campaigning against the siting of the new school in Portobello Park, PPAG, have made their replies on their Facebook page. They have said this:-

“The issues involved in the appropriation of common good land are complex and what Andy Wightman is saying is not consistent with advice from elsewhere. In particular he fails to distinguish between common good land where there is a right to alienate, and common good land where there is no right to alienate. Both Andrew Ferguson, a very experienced local authority solicitor who specialises in this area and Professor Robert Rennie, also a specialist in this area, have expressed views with which PPAG’s senior counsel, Roy Martin QC, agrees. These views do not support those expressed by Mr Wightman.”

In addition they offer a full explanation of what one of the foremost conveyancing professors said in support of a case involving Highland Council, and which they feel supports their own:-

“Further to Andy Wightman’s remarks about the merits of our case, the following seems to suggest that, if City of Edinburgh had stuck with their original promise – to provide replacement open space – they might not be in their current situation. Professor Rennie’s advice to Highland Council (4 August 2010) was that they could not appropriate Bignold Park, Wick for the building of a school because of its use as a public park. Bignold Park is considered to be inalienable common good land and so it cannot be appropriated for an educational purpose. Further, there is no method to obtain court consent for this as a petition under Section 75 would

be incompetent. He said that the only possible counter argument would be if it can be shown that new land is being provided by the Council as a replacement park in which case Bignold Park, although originally part of the inalienable common good, would then form part of the alienable common good and could be appropriated for educational purposes. Having considered the case law Professor Rennie concluded that an alternative park would have to be available immediately Bignold Park ceases to be available failing which any objection to the Council's use of Bignold Park for educational purposes would be likely to succeed."

So if what the campaigners are saying is that all that Edinburgh Council have to do is offer some ground in replacement to the part being taken up by a new school, then is this possible and where would it be?

Much wetness and raining here in the capital this morning. We chose this library photo of Baxterbear at the Castle, but you will see a photo of him with his Easter Egg if you have a look at his website. We hope you all had a Happy Easter and that you were well-behaved with the chocolate!

If your dreams were not sweet enough however then Richard Wiseman has the app for you. A new iPhone app called Dream:ON will detect when you are about to dream and play suitable music... If you download it then you will become part of a big experiment to try it out. The study has been launched at the Science Festival according to [The Guardian](#).

VOCAL is a charitable organisation which supports carers with information, training and advocacy. They have published their own manifesto setting out what they would like to see in a new council after May 2012. This is a copy of it here:-

[Local Manifesto 12 a 4](#)

If you are one of the 47,404 carers in The City of Edinburgh,

then you might find some of their information useful. They also have some funding available to allow carers a short break. Contact [VOCAL on their website.](#)

We have a [comprehensive list of all the council candidates here listed by ward](#), with a link to their individual profiles and copies of their election leaflets where we have them – and we have quite a few now, but still need more!

You have to register by 18 April 2012 to be able to vote in the upcoming election. The council is running a competition and you might win a year's pass to Edinburgh Leisure's gyms and pools, but only if you add your comment to [this blog post here](#)...and there are only 11 comments at the time of writing so you could be in with a chance!

Local cycling group Spokes have also published a manifesto of their own suggestions to candidates as to what they might say about cycling and cyclists in the city. You can read that here:-

[SPOKES 2012 Election Manifesto FINAL](#)

We attended the hustings that Spokes organised a week or so back and you can follow what each candidate had to say to the cyclists [in our Liveblog article.](#)