

Constitution Street traffic is a nightmare



Three residents from Constitution Street in Leith attended the Leith Links Community Council meeting on Monday night to highlight their ongoing problems with rerouted traffic.

They explained that they estimate that about 30 buses an hour go down the street owing to various road closures in the Leith area. The number 22, 35 and 16 buses have all been redirected along the street, which although wide, is often littered with double parked cars, according to the residents. In addition there are heavy trucks on their way to and from Leith Docks which use the road as a shortcut.

The street was resurfaced on a temporary basis following the tram works and that surface was only supposed to be used for about six months ago. The Constitution Street residents explained that was about two years ago. One of the representatives said that if she takes a taxi home the drivers always claim that Constitution Street is one of the worst in the city. They claim that the problem is that whenever heavy traffic passes by the houses now shake. Many of these are historic buildings and they are worried that the structure could suffer damage as a result.

What the residents want is the introduction of traffic calming to slow the traffic down, perhaps even the introduction of a 20 mph zone, for the road to be resurfaced to absorb more of the noise and for the HGV traffic to adopt the preferred route away from their street along Great Junction Street, North Junction Street and Commercial Street.

Councillor Gordon Munro was one of the three local councillors in attendance, but perhaps due to his long experience on the

council, he was the only one who was able to speak authoritatively on the matter. He explained that traffic monitoring could be put in place to assess the volume of vehicles passing through, and also recommended that the residents get the names of any offending HGVs using the street so that these could be passed on to the council officers. He then said that all streets in the city are evaluated once per year by the Roads Department, but left the bad news till last. The street is due to be dug up again in the next couple of weeks by one of the utility companies, meaning that any permanent resurfacing will have to wait.



Vice-Convener of
Economic
Development –
Gordon Munro

Munro suggested that the council officers could be asked to meet up with residents so that they get the story first hand. He also explained that there is a plan for the docks traffic to be routed from the City Bypass along a relief road straight to the docks which would take the traffic away from residential areas in Leith, but that will not be happening any time soon.

Other than this the council held their AGM although in common with other community councils office bearers and members cannot be elected, as the elections have been postponed for a year. The existing office bearers will therefore continue for a further twelve months until they can be relieved of their duties or put themselves forward for re-election.

Other items discussed included the Greener Leith Vision for Leith Walk event at the Out of the Blue Drill Hall on Dalmeny Street on 5 June 2012, the Leith Gala on 9 June, the new

tennis courts which could be installed in Leith Links, the Mela Festival which takes place this year from 31 August to 2 September and an event on 6 June at 2pm when the future of Leith Links regeneration is to be discussed. There are plans to improve the area so that it is adopted as a Premier Park, and the plans to introduce tennis courts might attract funding from Lawn Tennis Scotland.

The community council also heard that there is to be a Bike Breakfast at the City Chambers and as part of Bike Safety Week there will be an event on 18 June at Ocean Terminal when the police will be offering free bike marking . The police are also keen to highlight the dangers to cyclists from buses and lorries and so some cycle safety tips will be offered. Dr Bike will also be on hand offering free servicing.