

Edinburgh councillor blogs – Councillor Maureen Child

✘ Councillor Maureen Child is Labour councillor for Portobello/Craigmillar.

Here she delves into her postbag and tells us what is going on over on the east side of the city.

Portobello Timebank members completed another fantastic clean up of Magdalene Glen last Saturday – a truly magnificent effort, and all very much appreciated! A lovely sunny day brought out a dozen people, of all ages and abilities, to pick up surface litter around the Asda footbridge, and to tackle weightier problems alongside Portobello Timebank members. On a previous recce Timebanker James Carver had discovered a trolley graveyard up near Fort Kinnaird, and 18 were recovered in various states of disrepair. A couple of recently fly-tipped mattresses were also dealt with. As ever, a Council refuse cage was filled with rubbish accumulated since the Timebank group were last there in May. Have you seen the photos on social media yet?

Also a massive thank you to the great 18 volunteers who spent a total of 74 hours on our Bellfield's pre winter clear up at the weekend!

Portobello Timebank is having a coffee and cake morning on Saturday in Portobello Baptist Church, 10am -12noon so come along and find out how you can get involved and help them raise some funds and find out about the next fun clean up! Tickets are £3 and accompanied children go free. See you there?

Our dynamic Portobello beach volleyball duo is featured again this week; great role models for women and girls taking part in sport and training on our doorstep! Click

here: <http://www.scotsman.com/sport/more-in-sport/beach-volley-ball-pair-bid-to-swap-portobello-for-gold-coast-1-4580833/amp>

The Thistle's Monday Tai Chi classes have been incredibly busy lately, so they recently added a fourth weekly session to the timetable. There is now a session on a Wednesday at 1.30pm. If you've never tried it before, and want to give it a go, do pop in and speak to the friendly reception team at Queen's Walk, Craigmillar.

David Calder's local podcasts are always worth a listen, and this one no less than the others about enabling children to swim: <https://www.buzzsprout.com/71622/568248-56-jump-in>. David's Party Podcasts now number well over 50 and are great to listen to in archive too!

As the parent of two sons who went to Towerbank Primary School and the grandparent of five Towerbank pupils and ex-pupils, I am personally delighted to contribute a little to the ongoing development of the fantastic playground by buying a ticket for their lottery. Maybe you would like to do so as well? Here's the link: <https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/towerbank-primary-school>

This week I gave a big plug for the amazing 'Alex and Charlie' book for children which three of the six young authors from Young Edinburgh Action who presented so confidently at Portobello Book Festival over the weekend. Watch me in action (if you really want) from 52m48secs

https://edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/293990

In my view, Youth Action shows us *all* how to do politics for real and make a tangible difference in people's lives; by participating and making a sustainable change in policy,

culture and attitudes. Our representative democratic structures, like Councils and Parliaments are important, but it can also seem like 'all talk and no action'. These youngsters show how participatory democracy can be done well. So, please do take note and learn from how they do politics!

On this topic, I just got a lovely note of thanks for this from Christina McMellon who chaired two Sunday sessions I went to in Portobello Book Festival. Christina says: "On behalf of the Young Edinburgh Action team (staff and young people) I'd really like to thank you for your contribution at the Education, Children and Families Committee on Tuesday. We were cheering you on as we watched the live stream. You reflected the project and our views about young people's participation perfectly." She also says the young people also got a big buzz out of presenting their work to Portobello Book Festival. This was all *such* a fabulous learning experience – for us all!

On the ongoing complaints about the occupation of caravans and mobile homes at foot of Kings Road, I had a walk about down there this week – in the rain – and met one of the local residents who desperately wants something done about them. I will ask – again – if the Council would put up notices encouraging people to have some consideration and not to camp there overnight in their caravans and mobile homes. It is causing some grief to immediate neighbours.

This week, I visited residents in the sheltered housing in Hope Lane, first thing in the morning, and saw demonstrated in practice how difficult they find crossing the busy Hope Lane to get to the new path and beyond. There are a number of things that have to be sorted around the new school as it beds in, and some of these are being flushed out through a road

safety audit. Once that audit is complete (very soon, I hope!) and the recommendations for changes clear, work will be done to sort out the issues these residents have. I am also well aware that the flashing lights on the 20mph signs on Milton Road are not working as they should, while the one on Hope Lane works fine! Apparently they were connected to the wrong electricity supply and that really does need to be sorted too! It is in hand.

On Tuesday evening, Ian Bienowski, network performance manager for Lothian Buses plc came to Craigmillar Community Council (CCC) to answer questions about the re-routing of the No 21. Since the changes in the Spring, instead of going via Peffermill Road, the No 21 goes straight to the new Royal Infirmary along the dedicated bus lane through Greendykes. Understandably, Craigmillar residents to the west of the Greendykes Road junction are upset and angry that they must now take two buses to get to the RIE and Savacentre and they are not as well served as before. This route change was to make sure the buses are more reliable, by avoiding congestion both at Craigmillar crossroads and the junction near Savacentre. All four Local Portobello/Craigmillar Councillors were at the Community Council Meeting. Last Spring these changes imposed on us with no notice at all, with no opportunity to protest about it. We – and CCC – are assured of a much better dialogue in future.

Have a great weekend when it comes!

Best wishes

Maureen

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