

# Edinburgh councillor blogs – Councillor Maureen Child

Councillor Maureen Child is a Labour councillor who represents Portobello/Craigmillar ward in the city. Here she rounds up her week from her postbag.



Dear All

I love reading all daily news on social media from all our our local primary and secondary schools. They all have Twitter accounts, which they use to great effect. There's lots of great learning and teaching going on, every day in every single one of them!

Towerbank Primary School also have a newsletter, which is well worth reading to find out about the highlights of their week, mostly written up by the children themselves. It's fantastic to see the fruits of their links to Tanzanian School through the fabulous Portobello-born, inspiring Twende Pamoja Trust. More about Towerbanks's highlights here:

<https://towerbankprimary.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/newsletter-9th-feb-18.pdf>

If you are having persistent problems with refuse collection in your street, we would all like to get a solution. It's not in the Council's interest to keep on having to come back, any more than it is your interest! Brunstane Gardens residents recently came to me with their refuse collection problems and

I arranged for a senior manager and the team to meet up with them on site.

They are in a cul-de-sac off Brunstane Road so access is tricky and waiting on the Road at a peak commuting period is not a good thing to be doing either. The result of their all putting heads together is that they are now served by a smaller vehicle, on a different round, and the collections have all been going smoothly for the last three weeks and that is set to continue. I really do want to know about seemingly intractable refuse collection problems, like this one, so we can find sustainable solutions.

Unusually, I have declared a view on a local planning application ahead of Committee, which enables me to speak up and campaign before the application comes up for determination by other Councillors. I joined the 'Save the George Campaign' when the previous proposal to demolish it came up. That application was rightly refused by planning officers under delegated authority.

The latest planning application for the former cinema, then Bingo Hall, at 14 Bath Street is to retain the facade but turn the rest of the building into 20 flats. It comes to Committee with an officer recommendation to grant planning permission next Wednesday morning. As in the vast majority of local matters, all four Portobello/Craigmillar Councillors aka 'Team P/C' will be saying our concerted piece against the proposal on Wednesday, alongside the other objectors.

The building is only an eyesore now because it has been neglected by its owners. It is Category C Listed, Art Deco, well worthy of refurbishment and retention and it could have further life as a community resource, already discussed with ready and willing partners, including Out of the Blue. There are plenty of grants that would enable this to happen, once

the planning situation is clarified. Report link here. It's Item 6 on that Agenda: [http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/56169/version\\_2\\_full\\_meeting\\_papers\\_-\\_development\\_management\\_sub-committee\\_of\\_the\\_planning\\_committee\\_-\\_21-02-18](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/56169/version_2_full_meeting_papers_-_development_management_sub-committee_of_the_planning_committee_-_21-02-18)

The North East Locality Committee, consisting (for the present) just of all 15 Local Councillors across four Council Wards, meets for the first time on Monday at 10am in the Dean of Guild Court Room, City Chambers. You are welcome to attend or to watch live on the internet. It's archived for repeated viewing too. What prime viewing!

The papers are here: [http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/4333/north\\_east\\_locality\\_committee](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/4333/north_east_locality_committee).

This is another step in Edinburgh, as a whole City, meeting the recommendations of the Christie Commission and the requirements of the Community Empowerment Act.

We are there to lead that process and ensure that all the Community Planning Partners work together as teams to tackle the 'wicked' issues and problems that can only be solved effectively, efficiently and sustainably by working together cooperatively. NHS Lothian, Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and lots of other agencies and groups have all made their own firm commitments to make this emerging closer partnership work. We are all keen to work closely with citizens, families, neighbourhoods and communities to make sure people's lives and the places they live improve – albeit with diminishing financial resources. Quite a challenging task, so we will need your help!

At Brunstane Road South there are still a few objections to

the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), the tortuous legal process that has to be undertaken before parking restrictions of any kind can be put in place and enforced. These objections must either be withdrawn or a report goes to Committee to overturn them. Council officers had thought that by amending the TRO, they could restart the process, but they have been advised that by law they have to continue with the original TRO. I am pressing for letters to go out to the objectors and that this process be moved on as a matter of urgency. Inconsiderate parking outside Brunstane Station will cause an accident and this has TRO has been dragging on far too long, seemingly interminably.

There have been a number of vehicle accidents on the road at Eastfield; the latest an injury accident to the driver of the crashed car on 2 February. Not all those accidents get reported to Police and recorded by them. This time, it appears three resident family cars were written off, yet again, and local people fear there will be a fatality one day.

There appears to be some consensus among Eastfield residents that the traffic island to the east of the junction with Coillesdene Avenue is unnecessary. That island, combined with the camber of the road – and drivers going far too fast for the road conditions, of course – is the root of the problem. I am having discussions with Police Scotland and the local roads authority to see what should be done to make accidents here far less likely.



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**World Community Arts Day 2018 is being launched at Craigmillar Library, 17 February 2-4 pm. All welcome.**

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Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust (ELGT) are bringing a Mini Zoo to Craigmillar Country Park on Sunday 25 February 12.30pm to 2.30pm. Animal Man's Mini Zoo will have a selection of weird wonderful and cuddly animals for you to see and maybe handle, if you dare. Contact Ben at ELGT on 0131 445 4025 or e-mail [ben@elgt.co.uk](mailto:ben@elgt.co.uk). Next month it's Owl Magic!

There have been a number of recent incidents locally on motor bikes, vandalism, a serious assault, theft, robbery. Police Scotland is the first port of call, of course, contacted by ringing 999 for the response team, as an incident is ongoing, or 101 to contact the community beat officers with your information. The police always need our help as responsible citizens in preventing and solving crime, so if you ever have any information that might help, do not hesitate to call them and tell what you know.

The local Police work very closely with Council and other services to keep people safe. They have set up local consultation meeting where you can talk face to face about any concerns you have with the Community Officers, which the Council pay for.

Outside that time, do phone and make an appointment. Surgeries are: EC33 (Portobello) – To be held at the Portobello Library on the last Friday of every month @ 1300hrs. Next Portobello surgery 23/02/2018. EC34 + EC35 (Craigmillar) – To be held at The White House on the last Friday of every month @ 1500hrs. Next Craigmillar surgery the 23/02/2018.

Or e-mail  
[www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/contact-us-form](http://www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/contact-us-form)

There is an archaeological dig currently taking place at Fishwife's Causeway and they will be holding an open day on Saturday, between 10am and 4pm, when you can go along hear about the work and talk to the archaeologists carrying out the dig. These are extensive archaeological excavations on the site of the old bottle works. AOC Archaeology are carrying out the investigations and will have staff on hand on Saturday to explain what's they're doing.

Help celebrate the fantastic success of our local basketball teams based at Portobello High School in this Evening News article and spread the word. Brilliant season of sport!

<https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/sport/basketball/round-up-kings-in-stunning-fightback-kats-purring-yet-again-1-4687747>

I hope you have a great weekend, whatever you're doing. I have a few emails to reply to, and phone calls to catch up on, so will now get on those cases!

Kind regards

Maureen

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