

Saving the trees one at a time

Ocean Way trees may be in danger.

At a recent meeting of the community council, local resident Ruth Buckle pointed out that there are other trees in the area also under threat – those on Ocean Way.



Bill, Charlotte (!0) and Ruth Buckle (and Honey the dog) want to save the streets on Ocean Way PHOTO ©2020 The Edinburgh Reporter

She said: “The next obvious attack is Ocean Way where as far as I can see, it’s one of the very few treelined boulevards in Leith very close to Salamander Place which is one of the most polluted places.

“Bill and I have lived here for 15 years, and we saw the trees

being planted, and we watched them grow. They're a fantastic amenity for everybody in the locale. I just don't see why it's reasonable for the trams to cut them down, I don't see the justification and I don't understand why they need the space given that there's a huge space on Stevedore Place.

"I'm not arguing the point that there should be a tram stop there. But the position that I'm talking about is we have a pavement, we have a green verge and we have a hedge with 36 specimen trees, and a verge on the other side. So, it is basically a double pavement, and what I would be looking for is help and guidance to see how we can prevent the trees being cut down in the first place.

"I know that the Trams have a policy for replacing any trees cut down 2:1, but I have little faith in the plans because they showed five rowan trees on the plans as still existing. These have already been cut down.

"And they also say that they'll cut down the trees, and they will replace them in the casino area. But we still will lose the boulevard – a continuous lane of trees. And we will lose the cushioning and the barrier between us and a tram stop.

"We have a lot of stour and noise coming off the docks. A lot of discussion is being generated on Facebook. An artist, Tim Threlfall, has actually got involved in this. And I see a lot of commonality between what's happening with the Discovery Garden, and the trees.

"We calculated that some 600 to 700 houses have been built in a floodplain without any provision for shrubbery or greenery. And in fact, Barratt when they built it, they were one of the first developers that came in, and they had to put in a boulevard of trees to convince people to buy in this area.

"I know that it's taken off, but we're going to lose an amenity and I just don't see why that needs to happen. I'm looking for some kind of reassurance from the trams that they

are doing enough to preserve the trees. And if they don't preserve the actual ones that are standing, then they have to be planted in that area."

As Ruth explained to the community council, artist Tim Threlfall has begun his 30 Trees project.

He says the 'council is hell bent on destroying perfectly healthy trees in the name of 'progress'. Thirty of these trees line the east stretch of Ocean Drive in Leith between Constitution Street and Tower Place. These trees will be cut down to make way for the tram to Newhaven. He disputes that saplings are a replacement for the mature trees which will be lost here. To plant 60 trees in this area would require quite a lot of space.

His project involved schoolchildren naming and writing a short story about each tree. The stories have now been pinned to the trees to draw attention to their plight.

Kindtrunk's Story

"My name is Kindtrunk and I really like it when children go to school and they look really happy and I really like it when insects crawl up my trunk and birds use me as their homes. I hope in the future you don't chop me down."

Kindtrunk's story was written by Freddie, aged 8



Skyleaf's Story

Hello, my name is Skyleaf. I love seeing in the morning kids coming to school, and on the way they always give me huggles down the road. I breathe in carbon dioxide and breathe out oxygen for the humans. Lots of insects come and visit me and live in me. There is lots of wildlife that I see every day like Freia the fox, Birdy the bird (he is a blue tit), Gary the grey squirrel and Hatty the hedgehog at night. The future is depending on us trees, but people are cutting us down. I would like more insects living on me.

Skyleaf's story was written by Evie H, aged 9



Use [///breath.skin.wheels](http://breath.skin.wheels) on what3words to find Skyleaf, the first of the 30 trees.

You can read more of the stories on the project page [here](#)