

Call for progress on plans to turn a leafy street into a blue/green corridor

SNP councillor Vicky Nicolson hopes the council will be able to make a difference to an area in her Inverleith Ward, and also to constituents who live there by turning a road into a greened over area.

Residents living in the Craigleith area have experienced significant flooding issues both in their gardens and their homes, and this could be a solution for that problem.

The councillor has asked the City of Edinburgh Council at the Transport and Environment Committee on 7 March to report on plans which examine the possibilities of closing Carrington Road to all traffic, greening it over and then using the land to divert a stream which regularly floods back gardens in the area. Cllr Nicolson is convinced there would be huge benefits for all.

A motion being brought to Transport and Environment Committee today seeks an update on plans previously discussed which would deal with local flooding issues in Inverleith. [@VicNicSNP](#) and local MSP [@AngusRobertson](#) explained to us what the solution might look like. pic.twitter.com/kEsf4ke2YK

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [March 7, 2024](#)

She said: “When I was campaigning to be elected as a councillor in 2022 people got in touch with me about this flooding issue – not just in their gardens but also in their homes. It particularly affects those with a culvert or stream running through their gardens. That culvert is part of the waterway and when it runs through anyone’s garden it becomes their responsibility.

“I believe this stream originates on Corstorphine Hill comes all the way down Craigleith Hill Avenue and along Carrington Road and ultimately ends up in the Water of Leith. Carrington Road is one of the proposals for the green/blue network and the motion I have proposed asks officers to update councillors on what progress has been made and what is being planned for the future. This way we could reassure constituents that we are taking this seriously and acting on their behalf.

“A couple of projects are progressing, one at Orchard Park which is a swale – it is an area where there is some flooding and it is a way of catching the water and then releasing it into the water course once the heavy rain has stopped. Another project which is making progress is at Easter Drylaw Park where there are also some historic flooding issues.

“I think it would future proof people’s homes with the changes to our climate by using some of our green spaces to capture some of that water and deal with the extreme flooding which we are seeing.

“I am not hearing that there would be a huge amount of opposition to closing this road for flood mitigation but it is early days.

“The hope is to open up the water course and to reduce the flood risk for local residents, but also to bring biodiversity to the area and make it into a destination where people might want to bring their children and picnic and enjoy the local area. We have been very reactive to flooding since I became a councillor and this is an opportunity to be proactive and allow our vision but more importantly the vision of local constituents to shape how the area looks.

“I am very excited about the impact that it could have on the children who go to local schools here. They could study the impact of something like this on the different species that could be introduced to the area and making it a nice place to spend time.”



Cllr Vicky Nicolson who represents Inverleith

The council identified five projects, including the Craigleith Catchment Study, to deal with flooding [in response](#) to a motion by Cllr Hal Osler who also represents the area. Funding of £2 million has been allocated to these schemes which were chosen after a workshop with Scottish Water and SEPA. Around a quarter of the funding was allocated to the Craigleith project and in conjunction with Scottish Water the council was said to be progressing the Craigleith Thriving Green Blue Neighbourhood project, but it would be subject to Sustrans funding and additional council staff resources.

The Edinburgh Green Blue network [drafted a plan in 2022](#) which outlined the way that flows from the Western General Hospital could be separated and follow a natural drainage path along Carrington Road to green space, Police Scotland HQ, Broughton High School and Inverleith Park and the Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh. The scheme was envisaged to include multifunctional basins, ponds, wetlands, biodiverse swales and street trees or rain gardens.

Local MSP Angus Robertson said: "It's not obvious to everybody that this part of central Edinburgh has a flooding issue. Just along the road in Craigleith there is regular flooding that impacts on people and as a knock on consequence consideration is being given to how do we deal with the water that flows from there all the way to Inverleith Park. Some really interesting plans have been drawn up that would lead to this area become a nature area where water could be directed to the Water of Leith. There is a lot in this which is worthy of consideration. I am really pleased that my SNP colleagues on the council have raised a motion on this so that everybody can be informed about it and I look forward to constituents from nearby to get in touch and let me know what they think.

"It has a lot to lend itself to all the neighbours here, Broughton High School, Fettes College, Police Scotland HQ. I think that having an open green area which would deal with

this water issue in a controlled way whilst retaining the beauty of this part of Edinburgh is something worthy of consideration. As with all flooding issues money has to form part of the thinking. Financial resource has been provided by The Scottish Government but there are other funding pots available from Scottish Water and others. We are all invested in this, none of us want to see the flooding issues here. In some respects the cost is higher by not doing anything. These flood events take place ever more frequently so to deal with that environmental challenge and to have a way of dealing with the water in this area more effectively seems to make sense to me.”



Carrington Road



Land surrounding the Police HQ at Fettes



Fettes College

[The Transport and Environment Committee meets on Thursday 7](#)

[March at 10am – the papers for the meeting are here.](#)

These papers include an amendment by the Liberal Democrat Group to Cllr Nicolson's motion which reads:

- "Committee:
- 1) Welcomes the excellent work done to date by officers in recommending proposals for the Craigleith Catchment Study
- 2) Notes ongoing resident's concerns within Craigleith Hill Avenue regarding flood risks and development of flood mitigation measures
- 3) Understands that the modelling work for flood risk within the catchment study is still ongoing and several projects to mitigate flooding issues in Craigleith are being considered.
- 4) Further understands that Western General Hospital (NHS Lothian), City of Edinburgh Council Flood Prevention Team, Scottish Water and the Edinburgh and Lothian Strategic Drainage Partnership working group (E&LSDP) are jointly working to identify potential solutions within the Craigleith Catchment study area
- 5) Agrees that a collaborative community approach between stakeholders has the potential to reach the best outcome within this catchment.
- 6) Further agrees to request an update report on progress of the shortlisted projects in Craigleith catchment in two cycles."

The changes which the LibDem amendment seeks to make is to clarify the funding and to ask for a full report in May 2024 on the Craigleith and other projects.