

Spurtle



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No 224

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BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

TIME TO LIMIT BOOZERS IN 'SWARMING' NEW TOWN

The New Town and Broughton Community Council (NTBCC) has called for no new alcohol licences to be issued in the western New Town.

It believes there is overprovision of licensed premises in the First New Town generally. 'The area is often swarming with people who have drunk too much on a Friday or Saturday night, and there is a risk that this could reach a point where the police are no longer able to control it.'

In response to the Council's regular invitation to comment on its Statement of Licensing Policy, NTBCC has therefore called for a halt to new licences on George Street (west of Frederick Street), Rose Street and Rose Street Lanes (west of Frederick Street) Castle Street, South Charlotte Street, Hope Street, Hope Street Lane, Randolph Street, Charlotte Square (south side), Charlotte Lane and Queensferry Street (south of Melville Street).

Although these streets do not form part of Broughton, the effects of alleged overprovision elsewhere inevitably overspill in terms of noise, damage and mess in areas to the north and east.

NTBCC has also suggested: (a) no extension of outside drinking beyond 10pm (except during the designated Festival period); (b) planning applications for properties intended to be run as licensed premises to be considered first by the Licensing authority.



Hatti Pattison is one of over 15 artists and crafters displaying painting, illustration, fashion, ceramics and photography at this year's Beaverhall Studios Open Days on 16 and 17 Nov (11am-6pm). Commissions will be taken, work sold, and there'll be information on courses. The Studios are at 27 Beaverhall Road.

SHRUBHILL DEVELOPMENT STALLS AS COMMITTEE INSISTS ON SITE VISIT

Planning Committee members have postponed approving or refusing planning permission for a proposed Shrubhill development until after visiting the site in person (Ref. 13/01070/FUL).

The non-decision, taken on 24 October, was welcomed by some locals. Chris Gray wants the former tram sheds' distinctive dog-tooth wall retained, arguing that this 'archaeological heritage' is key to the Shaw Colonies Conservation Area's character. Removing such a key B-listed feature would, he says, set a dangerous precedent.

Others were disappointed. Architectural observer Euan Leitch had earlier argued that in any 'trade off between the extant sheds and the fragment wall I'd argue the former have greater heritage significance'. He called the latest move farcical. Harald Tobermann, who handles planning for Leith Central Community Council, has said the gap-site 'arguably blights the whole area'. He wants City of Edinburgh Council to be more active in promoting redevelopment here.

In any case, these plans will probably never be built. They are a paper exercise designed to establish ground rules and encourage new owners and developers to step forward with proposals of their own.



For background, see *Breaking news* (20.10.13; 9.4.13; Issue 218).

SAD LOSS OF OLD FRIENDS

A further six mature Guernsey elms have gone from the grounds of Drummond Community High School, leaving a noticeable gap in the local skyline.

They were felled last month after an audit of 6,000 trees in the Council's Children & Families estate across Edinburgh. Trenching work will be undertaken to try and prevent the spread of the Dutch elm disease fungus through interlocking root systems. Fewer than 100 other Guernsey elms survive in Scotland.

'So sad to see these guys go,' remarked Dee Swift on Facebook. 'They've seen so much history happening, and also experienced quite a bit of the dark thunder of love, trunk to trunk.'

New trees will be planted. We assume the dark thunder will look out for itself.



LOCAL RAISES STEP CONCERNS IN KGV PARK

Most locals welcome recently upgraded surfacing and play equipment in King George V Park (*Breaking news*, 9.7.13, Issues 208, 221). But Scotland Street resident Johnnie Macaulay fears some 'improvements' there are downright dangerous.

Despite Council assurances, Macaulay - who has professional experience in the building industry - is most worried by the area beside the slide. He says sharp concrete coping stones and the unyielding 1/4-inch steel-plated seating area - a blend of metallic exactness and fatal efficiency - 'are a serious accident waiting to happen'. Whilst some parts of the steel have been bevelled smooth, others narrow to a 50° vertical angle. The adjacent 32 steps should - he says - include platforms for every metre of elevation to stop a person falling all the way down. They don't.

Spurtle understands a further Council safety inspection is scheduled. However, Macaulay is unconvinced, and will continue to raise these issues with the relevant officials.



Briefly



Lilo, the extensively advertised missing cat, returned exactly 1 week after disappearing last month. **Posters on every available Bellevue lamp-post** and a social media campaign had appealed for information. But it transpired that all along she had been **only yards from home**, mostly depriving a neighbour of sleep by messing about with his security lights.

Broughton History Society meets on 11 Nov at 7pm in Drummond CHS. Luss we forget, **Gillian Beattie-Smith** will talk on **'Dorothy Wordsworth and Scotland'**.

Last month @geckogirl61 tweeted us a **warning**: 'Pondkeepers beware – suspect a Heron desiccated my pond in Bellevue area today. Get your nets on ASAP!' **We feared a particularly drouthy bird**, but @geckogirl61 later clarified: 'Am once again the victim of Android spellchecker which substitutes words at will. Pond is not coconut covered – just empty'.

Friends of the Rocheid Path plan 'general tidying' sessions from 10am–2pm on 3 Nov and 9/10, 16/17 Nov. If you plan to attend, email [therocheidpath@gmail.com] for details.

Radio Stafford 103 run by service users at the **Stafford Centre (SC)** on Broughton St celebrated its first anniversary last month. It streams live, 5 days a week from 12pm–4pm, with 10 DJs providing a mix of tunes, SC information and local news. **To listen for free on your mobile**, follow the 2 steps described here: [<http://goo.gl/3TlRb4>]. The station costs £600 pa, so donations and funding ideas are welcome.

The **much-missed General Store** at 76 Dublin St – which has been largely vacant since the untimely death of Mr Fazal Mohammed in July 2012 – **is now under offer**.

Teething troubles attend the new **gull-proof bin-bags** introduced on mostly east–west New Town thoroughfares over the summer. Apparently their attachment or removal **damages railings**, some residents aren't using them at all, and others leave them outside all the time. We hear addresses are being **'guerrilla stencilled'** onto bags as a way of shaming neighbours into line, which sounds effective if a tad Swiss. Recycling buckets should have been distributed by early Nov.

Council 'disdain' irks parents

Parents are expressing anger and frustration at the proposed redevelopment of 154 McDonald Road (Issues 222–23), and what they see as under-investment in Edinburgh's mainstream state education.

One reader wrote to us about it as follows: 'The inequity is the galling issue. Things like not having to pay for resources. Speechless. My daughters' reading books are ancient and falling to bits. Where is the fairness in that? I went to school in the '80s and remember books that we had to share which were falling apart. I thought those days were long gone.'

'We are unlikely to stop the plans for modular classrooms now, or to stop 154 being converted into flats. A gym/nursery re-build is "off the table" yet they strung us along over the summer promising a proper look at all options. ... The process stinks and they have treated us (and by default the children) with disdain.'

'We have marked out the footprint of the modular buildings and the amount of playground we'll lose is shocking. Broughton PS is covered in scaffolding and the gym/nursery has worryingly large cracks in it and is no longer watertight. My daughters usually eat their packed lunches at their classroom desk as the dining hall cannot accommodate everyone. Only if they opt for school dinners do they get to eat with their friends in the dining hall.'

'The quality of the whole school experience is being eroded and our efforts to engage with the Council are fruitless. They simply don't care, and some kind of citywide parental group needs to form to be able to exert pressure so that proper resources are allocated.'

Fair comment or sour grapes? Tell us your impressions of the current education/planning situation in Broughton.



Caught between a reek and a hard place

Council officials want to change the way rubbish is collected from **Claremont Court** (East Claremont Street), but agreeing how is proving difficult.

Three years ago, CEC wanted to seal the buildings' two rubbish chutes and make a single, bigger area for on-street communal bins. This would save money, improve recycling and require fewer collections. But residents quickly highlighted that the Basil Spence-designed complex had recently been listed by Historic Scotland and that they wanted to retain its original features and facilities. CEC, which owns one-third of the properties here, had been unaware of the listing.

Despite prolonged discussion with the Claremont Court Residents Association and consultation with residents, no decision has yet been reached. The reliability of collections has continued to be erratic, often resulting in overflowing rubbish bags left uncollected and vulnerable to gulls and foxes.

Environment Convener Lesley Hinds recently intervened and organised a poll in August. Most voters chose to keep the chutes, create a recycling area, and have 4 collections per week. But they were afterwards told by Waste Services that any such arrangement was impossible, and by Leith Neighbourhood Partnership that it must be paid for from a Neighbourhood Environment Programme fund already earmarked to fix local subsidence.

Residents now hope Ward 12's Cllr Deidre Brock may restore harmony by banging some heads together.



Staff and friends at Northumberland Street's Gallery on the Corner celebrated the latest crop of six artists to pass through its doors on 16 October. Opened in 2010, GoC was the first social firm started by Autism Ventures Scotland to create employment opportunities for people with physical or mental health conditions, or people from disadvantaged backgrounds. It provides a platform to exhibit and sell artwork in a high profile location in the heart of Edinburgh's gallery district.

The Yard – 20 years young

It's been 20 years since HRH Princess Anne first cut the ribbon on the new Scotland Yard Adventure Centre, writes *Emma Bone*. At the time The Yard was run by a small committed team of part-time playworkers and volunteers who had been working out of a portacabin in King George V Park.

Today The Yard is firmly established in the heart of the community, and is looking forward to expanding its service across Scotland. It provides a play service 6 days a week, 50 weeks of the year to over 1,500 children and families from all over Scotland. It also offers training courses, youth clubs and play for children and young people aged from 3 to 25 years.

Its ability to look forward with confidence is mostly thanks to a massive refurbishment last year. As part of BBC Children in Need, Nick Knowles and the team from *DIY SOS* transformed The Yard in just 9 days with the help of over 300 tradespeople from all over Edinburgh and the Lothians (Issue 211).

But they didn't just give The Yard a new lease of life. What they did was show everyone how much they cared. They helped a much loved and necessary centre, that had been living hand to mouth for years, continue to provide a service for disabled children and young people who need a place to play. *A longer version of this article appears in Breaking news (1.11.13). For more information visit [www.theyardscotland.org.uk]*



Not smoking made simples

Freshly arrived on Broughton Street is Vapour Lounge, an e-cigarette emporium in what were formerly the basement premises of the LA Nail Bar. A railing-mounted meerkat and 'jauntily' parked tandem advertise the new business.

E-cigarettes aren't just for Yorkshiremen. They appeal to all those keen to give up smoking without foregoing the pleasure of exhaling clouds over other people. The idea is that, over time, decreasing amounts of nicotine are breathed in amidst



flavoured vapour. Or that the same amount of nicotine is breathed in but at less financial and physiological cost.

The market for the products is growing, hence the gasps of excitement which greeted local employer SKYCIG's recent takeover by US tobacco giant Lorillard Inc. for £30m. The e-cigarette manufacturer now plans to double its 35-strong headquarters staff in Broughton Street Lane by spring 2014. A further £30m may be available in 2016 if performance matches expectations. (The total potential investment is therefore £60m, not £6m as misreported by the *Edinburgh Evening News*.)

SKYCIG was founded in Edinburgh in 2011 and moved its HQ to Playfair House from George Street in October last year. A spokesperson tells *Spurtle* the firm has no plans to move again soon, and would prefer to occupy further floors here in the same building if required.



Barbara Franc returns to the Union Gallery this month with a solo exhibition until 25 Nov. Her *Menagerie*—including 'Harebell' above—is sculpted largely from recycled materials.



One of the joys of meandering in Edinburgh is chancing upon sylvan scenes reminiscent of Provence or paintings by Cézanne or Bonnard. This glorious concoction is the work of an inspired resident in Nelson Place. Even the ivy-clad telegraph pole is a thing of art. *JRM*

Briefly

Move along, please. Nothing to see here. The 12ft-long, sand-filled fibreglass crocodile featured on p. 1 of Issue 223 was stolen from St Andrew Sq on 4 Oct. A **Police Scotland** spokesperson said: 'Due to its size, it is believed that someone may have seen something regarding its disappearance.' The model returned invisibly next day.

Do you require repair or maintenance? Imagine how much worse it would be if you were a building. **Guidance** from Hypostyle Architects, Edinburgh World Heritage, Historic Scotland and others is available free on Mon 11 Nov, 5.30–7.30pm, at 85 George St.

Ten new faces joined the **New Town & Broughton Community Council** last month, and 2 that of **Leith Central**, reflecting a positive trend across the city with 3 councils even having to hold elections. **Ian Mowat** and **John Hein** returned as chairs.

TG Tip: Most people have a **dominant side of the body**, which they use to carry heavy bags and generally do most of the work. Consequently, **one side is stronger** than the other (and sometimes posture is squint). **Even your load** and try to carry heavy shopping, handbags etc. with your non-dominant side. **Pull in your tummy muscles and think about posture.**

A Sale of Art will take place at **St Andrew's and St George's Church** on George St on 21–23 Nov; and a traditional coffee morning with gift stalls, also on Sat. 23 Nov. **Proceeds to Christian Aid.**

Free events this month at **Out of the Blue** on Dalmeny St include: exhibitions by Edinburgh photographer **Craig Buchan**, 4–13 Nov; **Wiff Waff Wednesday** on 13 Nov; a **Vintage Kilo Sale** on 23 Nov and, for all those Christmas gifts, a **Flea Market** on 30 Nov. For more info see: [http://goo.gl/kAiw2i].

Despite Police Scotland reservations, **3 local 'saunas'** have had licences renewed: London St Sauna, Steamworks (Broughton Market), and New Town Sauna (Hart St). Dundas St Sauna will appeal a refusal. The *Edinburgh Evening News* has not clarified why it accepts money from businesses it would rather not think about (*Breaking news*, 25.9.13).

Gwyn Roberts, son **Gareth** and daughter-in-law **Sam** have taken over the **Phoenix**, the latter two's former local on Broughton St. **Yvonne Thorburn**, a former Lothian & Borders custody officer, is now in charge of food. Watch out for the **Banh Mi**, not a defiant customer's demand but the first in a range of new **Vietnamese dishes.**

Moreover ...



An exhibition of prints by the late **John Bellany (1942–2013)** has been showing at **Edinburgh Printmakers on Union St.** Bellany enjoyed a 4-decade working relationship here, producing over 60 editions. Featured above (courtesy of the artist and Edinburgh Printmakers) is his **'Screeching Gannet'**, displaying his typically ambiguous relationship with birdlife. *John Bellany: A Life in Print* continues until 9 Nov.

Lock up Coffee's disappearance from Broughton St Lane is temporary. The **pop-up baristas** plan to re-pop up in spring 2014.

The latest quarterly programme for the **LGBT Health and Wellbeing Centre** (on Howe St) features **events, workshops and support** for Edinburgh's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender folk. **Copies are all over Broughton St** or at: Tel. 523 1104 [jules@lgbthealth.org.uk].

Broughton St Mary's Christmas Fair will be on Sat 23 Nov from 11am–2pm behind Bellevue Cres.

Broughton's **most expensive shoebox** was 'under offer' last month at offers around £75K. The former garage at 8 E. Scotland St Lane is now a **'Lounge /Office/Studio, fitted kitchen, WC & free standing shower'** where it is theoretically possible to sneeze in all rooms simultaneously. [http://goo.gl/T9ZQdD]

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2nd Monday of the month:
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1pm-2pm Stockbridge Library

NB. No Surgeries on Public Holidays.

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Alison Johnstone
MSP for Lothian Region



On the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month during term time I hold a surgery for Lothian residents at the Scottish Parliament between 11am and 1pm.

Please call to book a surgery appointment or to arrange another time and venue that is convenient for you.

Contact me on 0131 348 6421
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Friday advice sessions:
4.00pm **Stockbridge Library**, no appointment necessary;
5.00pm **5 Croall Place**;
other surgeries throughout the constituency – phone for details

New Town/Broughton Community Council

THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL REPRESENTS THE VIEWS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS TO EDINBURGH CITY COUNCIL

Next Meetings:

4 Nov.
& 2 Dec.

at 7.30pm

St Mary's Cathedral House, 60 York Place

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AMDECORATING

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