

# Spurtle



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## MAJOR DEVELOPMENT FOR PUDOCKY B&Q SITE

Artisan Canonmills Ltd (the developer behind New Waverley in the Old Town) held two public consultations late last month on pre-application plans to develop 50 or more new flats at 13 Warriston Road. These came too late to be reported here, but see our website coverage on 29.7.16.

A second pre-application consultation on the development (provisionally named Canonmills Garden), showing revised and detailed plans, will be held at a date still to be confirmed.

Charlotte Swanson, part of Artisan's development team, commented on 18 July: 'We believe that high-quality housing could be the best development option for this key site overlooking the Water of Leith.'

'We are keen to invest further in Edinburgh. We have been delighted with the success of New Waverley and look forward to working with stakeholders to deliver the right solution for the Warriston Road site'.

The Warriston Road B&Q will shut on 3 September now that its lease on the land has come to an end. Parent company Kingfisher plc is meanwhile in the midst of a nationwide rationalisation involving the closure of 60 branches. See also our online coverage and the extensive, entertaining DIY comments which followed on 8.7.16.

## SUMMER CRAZE HITS TOWN

Pokémon Go launched in the UK on 14 July, and Spurtleshire is now awash with loveable creatures visible only with a smartphone.

Some 133 varieties are in the neighbourhood, from comparatively common drowzees (pictured), jynxes, pidgeys and rattatas, to mid-range scythers (spotted in Powderhall) and a rare aerodactyl (outside St Mary's Cathedral). Like real wildlife, these inventions favour particular sites only at particular times.

Players try to capture and tame them using a virtual 'pokéball'. They can acquire better tools by lurking outside invisible 'pokéstops' superimposed on the real world (e.g. at Broughton St Mary's, Fabric Focus, and Mansfield Traquair). The further players travel and the more creatures they collect, the more unusual, powerful and elusive are the species they encounter.

Battles between tamed pokémon take place in 'gyms', overlaid, for example, near Marshmallow Lady, Spitaki and Sherlock Holmes (Picardy Place). Winners claim these gyms for their teams: Valor, Mystic, and Instinct. They are rewarded with points and in-game currency to spend on additional helpful items of equipment such as lures, lucky eggs, and incubators.

Pokémon Go is free to join and play for anyone with a gmail account, and appeals equally to children, youths, and adult pedestrians not in a hurry or out of love with technology.



Photo by Alex McIntosh

## MUSIC FOR GOOD CAUSE



Local resident Sijie 'Susie' Chen (right) and visiting friend Liang-yu Wang performed sonatas by Mozart, Schubert, Beethoven and Brahms in Broughton St Mary's Parish Church last month. Chen organised the two concerts to raise money for Re-Act, Refugee Action Scotland based on Calton Road. See Lisa Rogers' article on our website (12.7.16).

## ROCHEID PATH'S FUTURE

Council officials want to know residents' and users' views on the Rocheid Path between Inverleith and Canonmills. They're keen to understand what people do in and feel about the area before developing an action plan for further improvements.

An explanation has been posted to 950 local addresses, with a link to the detailed 18-page questionnaire here: [<http://goo.gl/ZQKD8N>]. (When printing out, remember to specify black and white.)

Opinions are sought from any interested individuals or organisations (whether or not they received a letter) on: current use, work already done, proposals for the future.

The results will inform maintenance and management practice by the North Neighbourhood Parks Section in combination with the volunteer group Friends of the Rocheid Path.

Completed forms should be returned by Friday 26 August to Freepost RSJC-SLXC-YTJY, City of Edinburgh Council, North Edinburgh Local Office, Parks Section, 8 West Pilton Gardens, Edinburgh, EH4 4DP.

## NEW MONTHLY CONFIDENCE CAFÉ

LGBT Health are starting a new Confidence Café for LGBT+ people or those questioning their identity and looking to improve social confidence.

It's billed as a great chance to meet others in a safe, supported space, to contribute ideas for future activities, and to enjoy a variety of retro party games. The meetings are on the first Thursday of each month, 2–4pm, with the first on 4 August in McDonald Road Library. Admission free.

For further details Tel. 652 3283 or email [alison@lgbthealth.org.uk].

# Briefly



Does anyone know what this is? Reader **Elizabeth Semlin** spotted the stencilled design in the basement area outside **Café Picante** on Broughton St, but says she's baffled by what it's meant to represent. Her best guess so far is '**a flying maggot**'. Suggestions, please.

New Town & Broughton Community Council's extraordinary meeting to discuss the **RBS planning application** for Eyre Terr/Dundas St is now scheduled for **22 Aug at 7.30pm** in Broughton St Mary's Parish Church (Bellevue Cres). Members of the public are very welcome to attend. For other meetings, see p. 4.

An **81-year-old woman** was forced by a female attacker to withdraw a **3-figure sum** from the ATM at Picardy Place on 7 July. Police called the incident a '**brazen attack in broad daylight**' and called for witnesses (see our website 8.7.16).

Chocs away, sadly. **Coco Chocolatier** has decamped from its bijou premises on Broughton St after **5 mouth-watering years**. Sweet-toothed devotees must now **waddle over to Stockbridge**, where the business has relocated to **slightly more spacious premises** on Raeburn Place.

The next meeting of **Leith Central Community Council** is at 7pm on 15 Aug in McDonald Rd Library.

Brother and sister **David and Karen** are the new managers of the Blue Bear café on Brandon Terrace. They've taken over from **Jemma and Ben**, who will now focus on their new venture **Out of the Box** – a converted horsebox serving refreshments in **Inverleith Park**.

The **Ingleby Gallery** has moved to **6 Calton Terrace**.

**Changing times.** This proposal for a property in Drumsheugh Gardens **caught our eye** last month – an application to 'convert and extend an existing **mews garage and chauffeur's room** to form a new house'.

The planning application (Ref. 16/01329/FUL) to build flats at **21 McDonald Pl** has been withdrawn by the developer **Albany Street Developments Ltd** (see our website 21.3.16). It had attracted 35 letters of objection. Local activist Robin Lippett thanked **Cllrs Gardner and Donaldson** for their support. A revised application (Ref. 16/03471/FUL) has now been submitted, and may be read at [<https://goo.gl/YwJknk>].

## Stray dray and long delay

If you're wondering what ails Calton Rd, closed for months at its western end, the answer is 'structural damage' caused by a road traffic collision.

A beer delivery lorry on Calton Hill backed through the wall opposite Pivo on 4 December, and the road was immediately shut for safety reasons. The result has been further congestion on a narrowed Leith Street already chocker with traffic.



Scrupulous CEC procurement procedures have slowed any start on repairs, but as we went to press Calton Road was scheduled to reopen on 1 August.

## Pawkie and perjink



Photo courtesy of Lyon & Turnbull

This cheerful puss goes under the hammer at Lyon & Turnbull on 19 August. The Wemyss Ware tabby dates from around 1900, and is estimated to fetch between £3,000 and £5,000 at auction ... if it feels like it. For further details see: [<http://goo.gl/loCyTI>].

## One final hit?



Photo: Massimo Babetto.

Filmmakers returned to East Scotland Street Lane last month for another *Trainspotting 2* night-shoot. Some local residents were asked to switch off or cover their lights. Other nearby locations for the movie have included Princes Street, Shrub Place and Royal Circus. Pictured above on West Register Street are director Danny Boyle (pointing), to his right Ewen Bremner (Spud) and to his left Ewan McGregor (Renton).

## Deep down and statistical

Following a recent answer Councillor Booth received from the Council about Waste Services' barrow beats, Leith Central Community Council has used analytical skills to produce an expanded table (<https://goo.gl/gzttOc>), writes Vice-Chair Harald Tobermann.

It shows scheduled resources for each route as hours per week and as a percentage of total barrow-beat hours across Edinburgh.

While the written answer states there are 21 routes, LCCC's table itemises 37, of which 24 are in 'Leith' (according to CEC's particular definition of the area). This seems disproportionate, but the Leith ones are generally serviced only on certain days of the week not daily. Adjusting for this, of the total barrow-beat hours per week in Edinburgh (1,088), 30% are in 'Leith', while the City Centre gets 41% of weekly barrow beat hours. The rest are shared by Dumbiedykes, Viewforth, Tollcross, Sciennes, W. Nicolson St, Pleasance and Morningside.

There seem to be no barrow beats in Stockbridge, Broughton or Portobello. How routes are chosen, and whether they are completed every week, is not explained.

## Hill-smitten, much bitten

Our much travelled local troop – the 11th Edinburgh North East – let the world come to them last month. This year's summer camp was at the Blair Atholl Jamborette (a mini jamboree), Scottish Scouting's premier international event. The occasion brought together 1,500 Scouts and Leaders from all over the world for a 10-day camp in a picturesque corner of Perthshire.

Twenty-six Broughton Scouts headed for the hills on 22 July, with a big focus on making international friends and sharing exciting experiences. It was also a great opportunity to introduce visitors to the delights of the Highland m i d g e . — *Scott Richards*



## Reckoning sweet and wholesome hours

In recent years, the eco-friendly flowering of areas and steps in Broughton and its environs has been a welcome and life-enhancing development, and a fine garlanding of the World Heritage Site.

Until recently, the area pictured here on Drummond Place was void of vegetation, save for a rather forlorn rose. Now, with careful, inspired planning, it has become a sumptuous oasis and a joy to behold. On steps nearby, a neighbour has introduced a quince and sorrel to her largely edible assembly, while, elsewhere, a resident has added fennel, dill and hollyhocks to his usual French beans, sweetcorn, sunflowers et al.

Another area garden to savour is at No. 24a London Street, which has arguably set the standard of excellence for surrounding properties. Of course, the crème de la crème is always likely to be Christina Thompson's enchanted island on Bellevue Place, where two silver kelpies have recently been secreted.—JRM



## Look out for: Goldfinches

At a time of declines for many of our bird species, it's good to be able to report on a bird bucking this trend. The Goldfinch as a specialist feeder on small seeds was a fairly unusual sight until a recent dramatic increase in numbers. The reason for this is still unclear, but the popularity and range of birdfeed available seems the most likely cause.

*How to identify them:* With their striking red, white and black faces, and gold-flashed wings, they are very distinctive, and in the past their tuneful twitterings made them a favoured caged bird as an alternative to their close relative the Canary. Flocks of these birds are collectively known as 'Charms' – an apt description. Less endearing are their nesting habits: they make no effort to remove their chicks' droppings, which results in a solid block of guano by the end of the nesting season.

*Also look out for:* The Chaffinch – another cheery success. Also, the larger Greenfinch, sadly an increasingly rare sight in our gardens. —Miles Forde



Image: © Francis C. Franklin / CC-BY-SA-3.0

## Keeping older folks in the loop

*As we get older, the risk of social isolation becomes greater, which can also affect our mental and physical health. LOOPS (Local Opportunities for Older People) was set up to combat this. Sophie Watson, a volunteer at the organisation, tells us more.*

LOOPS runs a citywide phone line which helps over 65s to get out of the house, meet like-minded people, and enjoy everything Edinburgh has to offer.

Over 65s, their families, friends, and healthcare professionals can telephone us free to speak to a friendly LOOPS advisor about clubs and activities in their local area. LOOPS does all the research to provide the information needed, and can also organise transport to and from activities. Tailored to people's individual requirements and interests, LOOPS has already connected more than 600 older people to laughter, fun and friendships.

Garden Socials at the Botanics, the Wednesday Club at Broughton Parish Church, and evening classes at Broughton High School are just some of the activities in Broughton which we have found out about for our callers.

Speak to a LOOPS advisor for free today on 0131 603 8311. Alternatively, make contact via the website at [www.loopsphoneline.org.uk].



What will become of the Leith Street Bridge once the St James Centre goes? CEC says it will be stored for re-use elsewhere, but won't give details.

One option may be to link the North Edinburgh cycle and footpath network with the route to Portobello via a 'green bridge' over Leith Walk near Jane Street (see Issue 208).



## Briefly

The new **Premier Inn** opened on 9 July in the reclad and reorganised HM Revenue & Customs building at **44 York Pl**. Reader 'Roberto S' raised an eyebrow at the hotel's online suggestions for where to eat after climbing '**Arthur's Peak**', and at the claim that it is a mere '2-minute walk' from **Waverley Station**.

When CEC granted planning permission for redevelopment of **1–6 Canonmills Bridge** in 2013, it specified that work should begin by May 2016. Campaigners against the scheme say **no such works** have started, and claim other conditions have not been satisfied either. They are therefore pressing CEC's Planning Committee to **withdraw the permission**.



The **Artisan Roast** A-board on Broughton St has been updated since we last featured it in Issue 253.

Richard Murphy's **Hart St book-end** won a **RIBA National Award** at the RIAS Centenary Dinner earlier this summer (see also Issue 251). It had previously received the **Civic Trust National Award**, the Saltire Society Best House in Scotland, the **Edinburgh Architectural Association's Building of the Year** and the *Architects' Journal* House of the Year award. The building will now feature in a **RIBA/Channel 4/Grand Designs** House of the Year Competition to be broadcast this autumn.

**Grace Baptist Church** has begun operating from the **wooden mission hut** on Logie Green Rd. It is the latest move in the energetic evangelical organisation's policy of vigorous '**church planting**' across the UK and abroad.

Options for how private householders may manage their **common stair lighting** were usefully examined on our website by the **New Town Clean Streets Campaign** on 6.7.16.

The origin of Broughton's mysterious **Sunday morning whirr or whoop** has now been discovered. See our website 1.8.16

A report on consultation about the Council's proposed **Roseburn-city centre–Picardy Place cycle route** is expected to go before the Transport & Environment Sub-committee this month. Sustrans' 50% funding depends on no unwatered-down fudge.

# Moreover ...



In late June we covered the re-installation of the **Forsyth globe finial** on Princes Street (see our website 27.6.16) and promised a photograph once the scaffolding had come down. Here it is, like a **zodiac-themed dirigible** loosely secured by virgin boys. Other works on commercial buildings by the sculptor **Gilbert Bayes** (1872–1953) can be found at Selfridge and Co ('The Queen of Time', Oxford St, London), the former Brinstead piano showroom (an orchestra of putti, Wigmore St, London), and the Commercial Bank of Scotland ('The Qualities of Man in Modern Society', Bothwell St, Glasgow). **Closer to home**, Bayes's five painted figures originally appeared on a commemorative rood beam in **St James's (Episcopal) Church**, Inverleith Row. Installed in the 1920s, they were paid for by the congregation to honour their founding rector, **the Rev. Charles Jenkins**, who had served here from around 1907 until his death in 1917. He was the great-great-grandfather of **ballooning business tycoon** Sir Richard Branson. See Gilbert Cole, *A Church in Goldenacre* (1991), available at Central Library.

After less than 18 months, the **SpitFire bar** at 26B Dundas Street has transformed into **Daylight Robbery** – 'all day diner meets a late nite bar involving eating, drinking, **cavorting**, sport viewing and music listening to name a few'. Also 'veggie, vegan, dairy/glutton free options available'.

Planning permission has been granted for extensions to the side and rear of **Bellevue Chapel** on Rodney St, first reported in Issue 232 (Ref. 16/0231/FUL).

**STOP PRESS:** Police appealed for witnesses on 27 July after a man was assaulted at 12.40pm on Waterloo Place. The two attackers then made off in a white car towards Regent Road. The victim suffered serious injuries and was taken to hospital.

**Spurtle Team:** E. Dickie, J. Dickie, M. Forde, R. Fullerton, J. Hart, M. Hart, D. Hill, D. Young, A. McIntosh, J. R. Maclean, M. Orr, L. Rogers, C. Roussot, T. Smith, D. Sterrett, E. Taylor-Smith.

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1–2pm Stockbridge Library  
**Royston/Wardieburn Community Centre:** Last Friday, 4–5pm  
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You're welcome to attend  
our next meetings on **1 August and 12 September at 7.30pm**,  
Broughton St Mary's Parish Church, Bellevue Crescent

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