

LIBERTON/GILMERTON  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
PARTNERSHIP



DRAFT – NOT YET APPROVED BY STEERING GROUP

BURDIEHOUSE BURN VALLEY PARK STEERING GROUP  
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 28<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2008  
IN THE OFFICES OF THE SOUTH EDINBURGH PARTNERSHIP  
13 NEWTOFT STREET, EDINBURGH

**PRESENT:**

Mike Shields	CEC Services for Communities (Parks)
Jenny Hargreaves	CEC Services for Communities (Parks)
Stuart Gash	Local Resident
Emma Aitken	Local Resident
Ian Henderson	Local Resident
Tam Anderson	Better Burdiehouse Burn Group
Margaret McIver	Better Burdiehouse Burn Group
Gilbert Clark	Better Burdiehouse Burn Group
Charlie Cumming	Edinburgh & Lothian Greenspace Trust
Val Munro	South Edinburgh Healthy Living Initiative
Chris Hampton	Community Director – Kaimes
Alan Bell	South Edinburgh Partnership (Chair)
Margaret Campbell	South Edinburgh Partnership

**APOLOGIES:**

David Doig	CEC South Edinburgh Environment Manager
David Jamieson	CEC Parks & Greenspace Manager
Jessica Morgado	CEC Services for Communities (Parks)
Jane Bilous	CEC Trees & Woodland Officer
Bruce Bennett	Local Resident
Tom Brown	Better Burdiehouse Burn Group

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

- 2.1 With reference to Para 3.4, Jenny Hargreaves advised only one warning sign had been ordered for the Skate Park and not “signs” as minuted. Margaret McIver reported that the sign had in fact been erected today, ie 28<sup>th</sup> February.
- 2.2 With the above amendment the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> December were accepted as an accurate record.

### 3. **MATTERS ARISING**

- 3.1 **Litter Bins – (Para 3.2)**: Alan Bell informed the group that David Doig had been on holiday and therefore he could not report on progress with regard to sourcing funding for replacement bins. Margaret McIver reported that the bin formerly situated beside Burdiehouse Community Centre was still missing.
- 3.2 **Membership of Management Group – (Para 3.6)**: It was noted that Stewart Gash was now a member of the Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park (“BBVP”) Management Group as were Gilbert Clark and Margaret McIver representing the Better Burdiehouse Burn Group (“BBB”).
- 3.3 **Representation on Liberton Gilmerton Neighbourhood Partnership (Para 4.14)**: Alan Bell reported that all Partnership directors, including local Councillors were now on the mailing list for the BBVP. The subject about how best the group can be represented on the Liberton Gilmerton Neighbourhood Partnership has yet to be discussed. Alan will keep the group informed of progress.
- Action: Alan Bell***
- 3.4 **Litter – Ellens Glen (Para 4.16)**: Alan Bell reported that David Doig was yet to make contact with Morrisons Supermarket with regard to their responsibility for the maintenance of the area surrounding their store. In addition the meeting between Morrisons, Liberton High School and local resident Stewart Gash has yet to be arranged to discuss the difficulties.
- Action: Alan Bell***
- 3.5 **Hyvots Loan Entrance (Para 7.1.4)**: Alan Bell reported that he and Jessica Morgado had investigated the entrance gate from Hyvots Loan which they deem to be unsuitable. Jessica has since informed Alan McGregor, CEC Access Officer of their concerns and is in the process of contacting the developers in order that the entrance gate may be rectified. Stewart Gash reported that one of the Ellens Glen entrances was now too big. As a consequence the number of trial bikes etc using the area has increased. Also some pathways have not been finished. Alan intimated that there are a number of issues that requiring the attention of the developers and he would ensure they were notified. Alan informed the group that landscaping was not within the remit of the developers but that they were willing to look at participating in a joint funding application.
- Action: Alan Bell***
- 3.6 **Dog Fouling Signage (Para 7.1.10)**: Alan Bell reported that Jessica Morgado had erected stickers wherever possible. However, as a number of bins were missing she could not include these. Alan suggested the group may wish to investigate erecting fixed signs. Mike Shields reported that the Council are considering erecting one all encompassing type signs. The sign will be picture orientated and will include bar-be-que's, dog fouling etc. Mike was unsure if it was intended to include “no motor cycles etc” but he will check with Duncan Monteith the CEC Officer with responsibility for the signage in parks. It was noted that pedal cycles could not be included as, with the exception of Holyrood Park, bikes are now allowed in most parks throughout the city.

3.7 **Skate Park Lighting (Para 7.1.8):**

3.7.1 Chris Hampton asked for clarification with regard to the conflict over lighting. Alan Bell explained that some residents feel that to light the skate park would encourage further use of the skate by those young people who use it solely as a drinking den. It was noted that the CCTV cameras have not made much difference to this problem. Both the cameras and the lighting can have the effect of encouraging those recalcitrant young people to smash both as the lights and/or cameras are interfering with their mischief. The CEC Parks Technical Department has advised not to install lighting. In their experience, lighting only works when the specific area is staffed.

3.7.2 Alan did however report that equally there was also local support for the inclusion of lighting. It was noted that the BBVP had not yet come to a firm view either way. The question of lighting is at the moment academic as there is no funding available.

3.7.3 Gilbert Clark requested that in the event that lighting is installed that vandal proof lights are used. Alan concurred with this view but pointed out that there is no such thing as vandal proof. It is not unheard of for youngsters to actually cut down the poles!

3.8 **Flood Prevention Work (Para 8.1):** It was noted that there was no feedback at this stage with regard to the unsafe flood prevention work at Ellens Glen.

3.9 **Skate Park Cleanliness (Para 8.2 & 8.3):** It was noted that there was no feedback at this stage with regard to the Skate Park cleaning regime.

3.10 **Burdiehouse Community Centre Para 8.4):** Margaret McIver reported that the subject of dumping rubbish in the site of the new Burdiehouse Community Centre had been raised at the last LGNP. Since then the situation had improved considerably.

4. **BURDIEHOUSE BURN VALLEY PARK COMMUNITY GROUP (Paper Circulated)**

4.1 Alan reminded the group that one of the conditions of Heritage Lottery Funding is a requirement to investigate the setting up of a Community Group or "Friends of the Park" group. For the purposes of these minutes this is referred to as "Friends Group".

4.2 Alan informed the group that the concept of a Friends Group to support the development and management of Greenspace is well established both nationally and internationally.

4.3 The Friends Group consists of local people, albeit not exclusively, who are bound together by a constitution which sets out the aims and objectives for the Group. These vary according to the size of the Friends Group, the skills of its participants and the challenges it may face. A typical remit for a Friends Group might include any or all of the following:

- Contributing to the management of the park;
- Enhancing biodiversity eg creation of wildflower meadows, creating bird boxes etc.
- Practical tasks such as clean up or tree planting.

- Fund raising for improvements and/or events in the park.
  - Improving access.
  - Leading walks and talks
  - Producing leaflets or other educational material.
- 4.4 Within Edinburgh, of the 141 parks there are 23 Friends Groups working with the CEC Parks Service to help look after the parks and green spaces. The Council are now actively encouraging the creation of Friends Groups as they recognise this as being a mechanism to support the parks and engage with the local community. Corstorphine Hill Friends Group currently has c.1,000 members. Tam Anderson reported that the old Better Burdiehouse Burn Group ("BBB") had approximately 250 members with 60 attending regularly on burn clean-up days.
- 4.5 Alan reminded the Steering Group that the creation of a Friends Group had been suggested in the past but had been met with a mixed response. Alan was never sure as to the reasons for the objections but it was now a requirement of the lottery funding to investigate the setting up of a group.
- 4.6 Alan reported that the suggestion had been made that the most sensible way forward would be to extend the remit of the existing BBB to incorporate the entire park and not just the Burdiehouse area.
- 4.7 Gilbert Clark reported that the BBB had discussed this proposal at its meeting last week. Whilst the idea had not been rejected they felt it important to seek assurance that if the BBB were to be incorporated within a larger group that good community support would be forthcoming.
- 4.8 Gilbert intimated that pre 1996 when the BBB had more or less sole responsibility for the Burn within their area; community support was high and vandalism minimal. After the Council took over responsibility, maintenance was poor and the local support diminished because the volunteers could not establish their role within the process. As a result of the reduction of local involvement and commitment, vandalism increased and the park deteriorated.
- 4.9 Tam Anderson reported that the group maintain a bank account which although effectively dormant, is still viable.
- 4.10 It was generally agreed that a the Friends Group would be more credible and have "more buying power" if it were larger in number but only if the participants and committed.
- 4.11 Gilbert requested that a visit to another Friends Group of similar size and residential area be arranged for the BBB. Jennie Hargreave and Alan agreed to arrange a visit.

**Action: Jenny Hargreaves/Alan Bell**

- 4.12 In response to a question from Charlie Cumming, Alan confirmed that the Friends Group would have representation the LNR Management Group. The Lottery conditions stipulate that the management group must include the key stakeholders. The management plan will show clearly the areas of responsibility.

- 4.13 It was anticipated that the Friends Group would not include officers from any statutory organisation. However such individuals could be called in whenever their expertise is required.
- 4.14 In conclusion Gilbert Clark confirmed that the BBB have no objections in principle to taking forward the creation of a Friends Group. However, they have yet to discuss the concept fully and come to a firm decision. Gilbert will ensure this is on the agenda at their next meeting. Gilbert very much hoped for a positive outcome; he was of the opinion that concept was both politically and economically sensible.

5. **DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (Paper Circulated)**

5.1 Alan Bell reported that the purpose of the paper was to inform the group of the items suggested that would form the basis of a 10 year development programme to be included in the management plan for the BBVP. Funding for these items has yet to be sourced and some may be included as part of the Heritage Lottery application. Alan emphasised that the list was by no means exhaustive or final and can be added to and/or amended at any time. In many cases no sites have been identified. The group discussed the 13 items contained within the paper and agreed to all of them in principle. These are as follows:

- 5.1.1 **Creation of a Wetland Area:** No site identified. Gilbert wished an assurance that some areas of the park be left fallow in order that they might create their own natural habitat. Alan assured Gilbert that such areas are a requirement of the Local Nature Reserve Status. He added by reminding the group that the park covers an area of approximately two hectares and there is sufficient room to incorporate a number if not all of the 13 suggestions.
- 5.1.2 **Creation of a Pond Area:** No site identified.
- 5.1.3 **Refurbishment of Machine Store and Bothy as a Visitor/Volunteer Centre:** Alan Bell tabled a concept design plan prepared by Cooper Cromar. The building is currently very unsightly. The design plan shows how it might be renovated whilst at the same time retaining the bulk of the existing building. Costings for the proposal are yet to be calculated. Alan intimated that this was the kind of project favoured by the Heritage Lottery which is currently giving a high priority to the refurbishment of existing buildings within park areas. Gilbert again raised the question of vandalism. Alan assured the group that the architects in question have experience of working within South Edinburgh and are aware of the potential for vandalism and the like. The group considered this proposal should be given a high priority within the Management Plan.
- 5.1.4 **Removal of Barriers to Physical Access:** It would be the intention that improvements to access would enhance those already required to be undertaken by the Council.
- 5.1.5 **Culverts at Wimpey Bridge and Broken Bridge:** It was noted that the downstream side of the Broken Bridge is ugly; conversely the upstream side is attractive. It is proposed to improve the appearance of the culverts by means of murals, mosaics and the like.

- 5.1.6 **Underpass at Gilmerton Dykes Street:** It may be possible to improve the appearance of this unsightly area and reduce the incidence of graffiti.
- 5.1.7 **Boundary Fence at the "Narrows":** This section of path narrows and is bounded on one side by the burn and other by an unsightly metal fence beyond which are some very untidy gardens and some ferocious looking dogs. It is proposed that the boundary fencing be improved. It was noted that some residents had erected trellising which looked quite effective and may work for the length of path in question. Given the unsightly nature of the area the group felt this should awarded a high priority within the management plan.
- 5.1.8 **Develop the Natural Amphitheatre in Moredun Wood:** This area has potential but to date with the exception of the creation of a teaching area, no one has come up with any innovative ideas. The group awarded this a medium to high priority.
- 5.1.9 **Sustainable Drainage System ("SUDS") at Moredun Wood:** An ugly surface water outlet from a SUDS is currently situated adjacent to the amphitheatre. It has been suggested that at a cost of C.£3,000 it could be possible to make it look like a natural gully lined with stone.
- 5.1.10 **Construction of Multi Sport Court at the Dip:** Alan was keen to ensure this item be included within the Management Plan as it had received huge support from local young people. A resource similar to that at the Inch Community Centre was envisioned.
- 5.1.11 **Construction of two seven-a-side Football Pitches at the Dip:** The area is currently now being used by an amateur football club despite their being no changing facilities. Some members of the group thought it may be possible in future to use the new Burdiehouse Community Centre. It was noted however that the Community Centre is closed at the weekends. It was suggested that the perhaps the plans for the new centre could be adapted to include changing facilities and Alan agreed to raise the subject with the architects. However the general consensus was it was probably too late. It was noted that Ian Bristow, Development Officer for Burdiehouse Community Centre does receive the papers for the BBVP meetings.
- 5.1.12 **Natural Play Areas and Other Projects:** There are a number of ways to provide opportunities for visitors to participate in active lifestyle activities within the park. For example, the creation of natural play areas using the natural landscape similar to the Forestry Commission proposals for Possil Park in Glasgow and/or the development of more adventurous cycle paths of mountain bikes. The Bike Station would be keen to see the creation of rough tracks beside the pathways. Some concerns were expressed that mountain bike type tracks may encourage the use of quad bikes and motor bikes. It was reported that investigations are currently underway with regard to the renovating the mountain bike track and the Mansion House.

- 5.1.13 **Lighting for Path from Lasswade Bank to Murrays:** Alan reported he had recently attended a meeting of STAR, at their behest, as they had been seeking more information with regard to the continued debate in respect of skate park lighting scenario. At that meeting a compromise suggestion had been put forward, namely to install street lights on the path from Lasswade Bank to the Murrays. This would have the added benefit of providing the requisite amount of light for the CCTV cameras to function at night. It was noted that the Police were in favour of the proposal. Alan reminded the group that the Lottery would not fund lighting and it may be that pressure would need to be placed on the Council to include this work as part of their development plan. Whether or not lighting would have an affect on wildlife may be a determinant when the Council considers a planning application.
- 5.2 Charlie Cumming informed the group that eventually all the suggestions above, and others, will be prioritised within the Management Plan. However, the group should remember that items considered of say "low priority" may leap-frog to the top simply because there is a funding stream available to enable the work to be carried out.
- 5.3 Alan Bell confirmed that Parks for People Lottery Grant runs for five years and will accept applications of between £250,000 and £5m.

## 6. **PROGRESS REPORTS**

- 6.1 **Countryside Ranger Service Progress Report (Circulated):** The progress report prepared by Jessica Morgado, CEC Countryside Ranger was noted.
- 6.2 **Project Co-ordinator's Progress Report:**
- 6.2.1 The progress report prepared by Alan Bell, Project Co-ordinator, was noted.
- 6.2.2 **Community Events Programme:**
- (a) Alan Bell reported that Esperanza Martin from the Edinburgh & Lothian Greenspace Trust had now organised the Dawn Chorus Event for the morning of Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> May. Alan pointed out that this date coincided with that of the Wildlife Detectives event. Given that the Dawn Chorus event take place early morning the group did not feel there was any conflict with the events happening on the same day.
- (b) Jennie Hargreaves reported that funding for advertising was limited and the Council were now encouraging the use of their website for information on events.
- 6.2.3 **Boundary Fencing – Burdiehouse Community Centre:** For the benefit of Margaret McIver, Alan confirmed that the fencing referred to was the final piece to be completed in the same style as all other boundary fences and was not the area first thought by Margaret. It was agreed to check the hinges on the gate which are thought to be rusting and ensure they are galvanised.

7. **AOCB**

7.1 **Play Area – the Dip:**

7.1.1 Alan Bell reported that work on the play area adjacent to the skate park was due to start in the week beginning Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

7.1.2 Alan reported that the original estimate of c.£79k has now been reduced to c.£74k including contingencies. Alan had anticipated this would result in a reduction in the Partnership's contribution. However, the WREN conditions of grant stipulate any reduction in costs will result in a reduction of grant. Therefore the WREN contribution will be reduced accordingly. In an effort to meet the shortfall Alan has submitted a funding application for £5,000 to the Council Parks & Gardens Capital Programme. The application includes an element for interpretation boards.

7.1.3 Gilbert Clark asked if the play equipment was vandal proof. He was concerned that irreparable damage would leave the park looking unsightly creating a bad reputation for the area. It was reported that the design of the equipment is as vandal proof as possible. Similar equipment has been successfully installed elsewhere and remains intact. Charlie Cumming informed the group that before any such developments take place the client is required to undertake a risk assessment to ensure the equipment is fit for purpose. There had been concerns with regard to one piece of equipment similar to that damaged in East Lothian. However a Parks Officer from East Lothian reported that the problem with the equipment had been rectified some two years previous and was still intact.

7.2 **Scottish Power Funding:** In the interests of clarity Alan Bell informed the group that the funding received by the Partnership from Scottish Power was unrestricted funding and had no conditions attached. The Partnership had suggested it might be appropriate to use this money towards lighting the skate park but it is not required to do so. The money can be used for any project deemed appropriate by the Partnership Board.

7.3 **Lovells:** Alan reported that he had arranged a meeting with Home in Scotland to discuss the £10,000 grant from Lovells. It was noted that the funding would be given to SABRO for green space improvements. Alan's understanding is that the money is to be spent within the housing estate and not the park.

8. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2008 @ 2.00 pm**

In the offices of the Partnership Support Team