

MINUTES

Monday 27 October 2023, 6:30 pm, online

**LLCC Members Present:** Gail Clapton (Treasurer & Vice Chair), Abigail Cunningham, Barbara Kerr, Andrew Mackenzie, Sally Millar (Secretary), Teresa Perchard, Jim Scanlon (Chair), Eileen Simpson

**Councillors:** Councillors Adam McVey, Chas Booth, Katrina Faccenda

**10 members of the public**

**Minute Taker:** Sally Millar

1. **Welcome and Apologies** –Chair welcomed attendees. Apologies were received from Amy Fairbairn, Angus Hardie, Chrissie Reid, Rhona Alcorn. Also, from Deidre Brock MP and Ben MacPherson MSP

2. **Adoption of Minutes** Adoption of Minutes of September 2023 meeting proposed by Gail Clapton and seconded by Sally Millar. Available at <https://leithlinksgc.org.uk/>

3. **Police Scotland Report** - No officers present. Report circulated by email. Does the fact that Leith Links is not named amongst the planned 'Dispersal Zones' for Fireworks night mean that there will be no Police presence there at all?

**4. A presentation was delivered by Miles Wilkinson, giving an update on the Leith Connections & LTN project**

Miles presented an update on the project, which can be found in Newsletter form at

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/33930/leith-connections-newsletter-october-2023> and on the website at <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/leithconnections>

These were some points highlighted:

*Cycle storage huts* – there are now 100 in use, taken up within days. If more are needed in this area, contact via the website to for these.

*Enterprise Car Club* is offering a discount to residents within the Leith Connections area, use code **EDILT**

*ETRO* – Starting from 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023 (for 18 months?), some elements of the LTN are still 'experimental' and can be commented on and potentially changed or reversed, these are:

- Prohibition to motor vehicles at Tolbooth Wynd/ Water Street junction
- Making Tolbooth Wynd two-way operation
- Prohibition to motor vehicles at Wellington Place/ John's Place junction
- Westbound bus lane/ bus gate on Links Place
- Contraflow cycling on one-way streets within the area - Water Street, Carpet Lane, Giles Street, Spier's Place, Maritime Lane, Seaport Street.

Sally Millar queried that if someone complains or raises a point **now** via one of the 'official' addresses, they just get an acknowledgement but it seems nothing may be done about the points until they are all considered at the end of the consultation process (April 2024)? This seems too late. Does Miles get to see these? He says he gets sent a summary of these. The first 6 months is the key period. Please send in your view asap, and before the consultation closes on 8 April 2024.

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/cycling-walking-projects-1/leith-connections/5>

It is very confusing on the website as to where to send such comments, as various different addresses are suggested, i.e. [TRO.consultations@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:TRO.consultations@edinburgh.gov.uk) and also [Edinburgh.Consultation@projectcentre.co.uk](mailto:Edinburgh.Consultation@projectcentre.co.uk)

Miles suggested sending always a copy to him directly at [leithconnections@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:leithconnections@edinburgh.gov.uk) as well as contacting other official addresses, if anyone has questions or comments about the area covered by the ETRO.

*Monitoring* – Miles was asked for more details about what, where, when and how monitoring would take place. Would a schedule be published? He said baseline data would be collected over a 3-6 month period, some is continuous monitoring. There will be project specific traffic counts eg. at key junctions.

Some info will be collected from focus groups and eg. school crossing guards. Miles also received the info LLCC collected at the 2023 Gala Day, and follows discussions on CC website.

There followed a lively discussion about various aspects of the LTN:

Teresa Perchard - The traffic on the roads around the periphery of the LTN need to be monitored too, to get a full picture of how the LTN is functioning. In particular, the complex junction at Vanburgh Place / Lochend Road / Easter Road/Duke Street needs careful monitoring, to find out where all the vehicles are coming from. In her view, this has been massively impacted by all the vehicles that can no longer go through Leith but must come around the edge and will hit that already busy junction. Miles said this was routinely monitored, but Teresa challenged this and will write in for more information / discussion.

Jim Scanlon – there is still no ‘No Right Turn’ sign on Salamander Place telling traffic that they can’t turn right through the bus gate on Links Place. Many vehicles go through it, and many also stop suddenly and try to reverse etc., often dangerously. The bus gate should not have gone live until such a sign was in place. When will it be put in place? (Miles says ‘soon’)

There is no camera sign up at the bus gate – there should be. When will this be put up? (again - ‘soon’)

When the 2-week grace period is over and drivers can be penalised for going through the bus gate, could they get off by claiming lack of adequate signage?

Road safety on Claremont Park / Gladstone Place – this road has become very dangerous as (1) the traffic has become much heavier along here since the LTN, (2) cars are speeding along here in spite of 20-mile limit, and (3) it has become frighteningly difficult to cross safely because so many vans and camper vans and commuter cars etc. are parked all along here, since CPZ – have to step out into the traffic to peer round them in order to cross.

Cllr. Adam McVey – could we get traffic calming and/or pavement build outs for crossing on Claremont Park, as on East/Hermitage Place?

Teresa Perchard – the current pavement build-out crossing point on East Hermitage Place is not safe for visually impaired users as it leads straight into a tree. Also, there is a drainage problem – a ‘pond’ forms at it when it rains.

Primary Schools – the bus gate on Links Place actually means that much **more** (not less) vehicle traffic goes past St. Mary’s School as all Salamander Place traffic now has to turn left along Links Gardens. Also, arguably, more traffic now also goes past Leith Primary School on Duncan Place, this is now one of the only functioning routes through the area.

How are accidents being monitored? Do different departments share data? Will it be possible to link accidents on the periphery of the LTN to the increased traffic and possible frustration of drivers caused by the LTN? Miles says that is not part of the LTN project.

Were retailers consulted? (are they counted ‘businesses?’) as they are suffering. Miles says businesses along the cycle route were consulted and there was a letter drop and should be a leaflet drop. A local business owner on Constitution Street said that no one in the Constitution Street Business community had received any letters or leaflets.

Miles has been sent the latest draft version of the LLCC survey aiming to collect ‘soft data’ on the LTN and CPZ, for his comments – he will send these to Barbara. Meanwhile he pointed out that Council on-street market research will also collect ‘soft data’. He also pointed out that the term, ‘road closure’ was inaccurate in some cases, as cycles and public transport was allowed, so it was not a closure just ‘motor prohibition’.

Miles Wilkinson was thanks for his attendance, his presentation and willingness to answer questions.

## 5. Update from Elected Representatives as available.

*Councillor Adam McVey* reported that the pedestrian bridge at the docks is about to reopen, in November, following repairs.

There have been discussions with/about Ocean Terminal which is now looking worryingly 'sparse' and 'not much of a destination' having recently lost M&S, Debenhams, and now the skate park.

*Councillor Katrina Faccenda* reported that she had followed up on the matter of police parking on Constitution Street. The Area Commander had tried to help by asking staff to be more considerate of the local community. There is now less parking in loading bays on Constitution Street – but the police are now filling up the 'permit only' spaces on Mitchell Street...

She will go and check on the matter of the stained-glass windows that have disappeared from Nobles Bar.

Good news, the lift in the Kirkgate is now, at last, working again. (It is the responsibility of the owner of the shopping centre, not Council.)

*Councillor Chas Booth* Noted that with regard to Ocean Terminal,

Leith Theatre Trust has just signed a new long-term contract with the council, covering the whole complex not just the theatre.

Transport Committee – with regard to road safety, has been exploring the idea of more expensive permits for heavy vehicles.

Short Term Lets – there have been 3,500 applications to Council for licences for Short Term Lets (STL). All STLs should have a licence, going forward. Citizens can check licences and report any to the Council that are trading illegally

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/private-housing/report-problem-short-term-let>

**6. Open Floor** – *Nicky Shallcross* of the charity 'Vintage Vibes' (<https://vintagevibes.org.uk/>) announced that the charity is currently actively seeking new volunteers in the Leith area to act as befrienders (not carers) and enter into 'friendship matches' with over 60s in the area who are lonely or isolated. They are based at Heart of Newhaven, and all participants are 'vetted' by the team, to ensure the safety of all concerned.

*Camillo Fracassini*, a resident of Leith Links, reported his disgust at the way the wild flower meadow at the eastern end of the Links, had been mown flat by the Council, leaving only a muddy pool, whereas the special volunteers who had tended the meadow so well all through the year had already trimmed it back nicely. Chair Jim Scanlon has already contacted Scott Thomson of Parks Dept. about this, but suggested M. Fracassini could contact him himself, too.

**ACTION: Chair will follow up with Parks Dept. Cllr Chas Booth asked to be copied in to correspondence.**

**7. Bins** – update from CC member Teresa Perchard. Council is reviewing / updating policy on the location of bins / hubs. Spring 2024 will be launch of new Litter Reduction Strategy. Now agreed that bins can be placed at bus stops (where they are much needed). Looking at how they can be placed in parks – must be no more than 20metres from the road (for collection by vehicles). This may be helpful for the Links but will not help with the huge litter problems on the Restalrig Railway Path.

## 8. Planning

We are waiting for the Planning Application to come in from the Developer for the Salamander Place / Salamander Street site. Living Rent have stated they will be objecting because plans are not mainly for family accommodation. The site on Baltic Street that was to be developed by Sundial Properties has passed to another (London based) developer and LH&NCC had asked for details of the changes they are bringing in – apparently these are very minor. The application now goes back to Planning, but there will be no new community consultation.

Question was raised about the empty site on Wellington Place / Constitution Street. Harbour Homes were going to build accessible flats but have run out of money?

**ACTION: Chair will write to Harbour Homes to ask what they intend to do with the site – sell the land, or what / when?**

**9. Leith Links Park** – There was brief discussion about the £12K from the Proclaimers. Members of the CC are putting together a booklet of photos of attractive social seating/performance spaces, for future discussion with MasterPlan Working Group in the first instance. Quite difficult to get costings. Barbara Kerr suggested asking the Tool Library people

to estimate some costs, on the basis of a few examples we could show them. A member of the public suggested a yellow arch with a 'sunshine on Leith' image on it, to make the Links a 'destination'.

#### **10. CC Boundary Changes**

See <https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/cg/community-council-scheme-and-boundary-review-2023/>

We need to discuss this as a CC and get a response in, also individual members are asked to complete the consultation - before the end of the consultation period (8 December). One suggestion is to make the CC boundaries match the Ward boundaries, which they don't at present, but in Leith Links case, that would mean amalgamating with Leith Harbour & Newhaven CC which already covers a huge area including all of the docks. The population of both LLCC and LH&N CC has been expanding greatly, with more to come, as all the new blocks of housing go up on brownfield sites around the docks.

#### **11. AOCB**

Although the tram is up and running, the job is by no means 'finished' as there are still 100s of outstanding faults and 'snags', issues and problems along the length of the route. Angus Hardie proposed that the CCTT group continue and intensify the campaign to pressurise the Council to commit to resolving these. A vote was taken and this was agreed unanimously by CC members.

A local resident enquired how to get the Council to adopt the roads within the Ropeworks development? Because these are currently unadopted, parking is unrestricted within the development which is causing massive problems for residents as commuters and many others now park there because of all the restrictions elsewhere nearby, leaving no spaces for residents. Councillors agreed that this is a very unfortunate situation. The responsibility lies with the factors of the various blocks, who need to 'hand over' the roads to the Council. Residents should therefore ask their factors to do this asap. There has been a motion passed in Council to look at this kind of situation as part of the scrutiny of possible 'new zones' for parking restrictions, but these could not be brought in at the Ropeworks now until there is a new TRO which will probably not happen until the next 'wave' of parking zones happens. (CEC is also looking at ways of speeding up the extremely cumbersome and slow TRO process).

#### **12. Next meeting: Monday 27 November 2023, 6:30pm at Duncan Place**

