

Spurtle

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BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

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Tel: 558 8574

spurtle@hotmail.co.uk

BROUGHTON vs TESCO

A considerable number of locals objected to Tesco's plans for an Express store at Picardy Place (*Issue 169*) – enough to ensure City of Edinburgh Council's (CEC) Planning Subcommittee will examine the proposals at a future date.

Planning rules severely limited grounds for objection, with any social, economic or ethical considerations deemed 'immaterial'. Instead, locals criticised architectural aspects, noise and traffic disruption. A request was made to CEC for a moratorium on the site until detailed proposals for the new Picardy Place layout and tram stop are finalised.

Resistance to Tesco will probably broaden to include Licensing. A change to national law and an extension of restrictions on pubs and carry-outs (in Leith Walk, Broughton/Forth Streets, Picardy Place and Broughton Street Lane) may curtail the supermarket's activities. However, the rules are in flux and both public and legislators are unclear about their final form and date of introduction.

The New Town and Broughton Community Council says it will work with retailers to market Broughton as a speciality shopping area, and will monitor future licensing applications. However, it has declined any leadership role in the fight against Tesco on the grounds of inadequate resources and 'unclear' public opinion. (See page 2.)

GREEN LIGHT FOR BARONY COMMUNITY GARDEN

The dream of making an eco-friendly community garden off Barony St will shortly be realised. The plan to redesign the run-down children's playground was initiated by Broughton Village Association (BVA) over 3 years ago. Despite setbacks, the BVA and its offshoot the Broughton Project Group (BPG) persevered in seeking planning permission and finances. With CEC Parks Dept as lead backers offering an initial £65K, BPG gained Edinburgh and Lothian Greenspace Trust's support. Thanks to the latter's dynamic fund raising, the target of £165K has been reached.

The garden will have play equipment, sheltered seating, raised beds and many shrubs and trees. It is designed as a relaxing space for people of all ages, and should open in July.

Two project coordinators told *Spurtle* of their delight and relief. Stephanie Scott, former BVA Secretary, said, 'We are all absolutely thrilled and look forward to the grand opening.' BPG's Meg Nelson added, 'We're delighted our funders recognised the potential and also the strength of local support ... I can't wait to relax and play in the garden this summer.'

This is a major development in the 'greening' of Broughton, and we salute the many individuals and groups who worked hard over the years to rejuvenate this precious space in the community.

LOCAL ARTIST MAKING HER MARK



Lindsey Mclean (whose work appears above) is an exceptionally gifted S6 pupil at Drummond CHS, writes *Vaila MacLaren*. She has completed Standard Grade and Higher Art & Design courses (top marks twice), and is now completing work for Advanced Higher. Her work was chosen for the SQA Higher Exhibition in the Parliament Building last year, making her one of only 250 pupils selected out of 32,000 applicants. She is aiming for a degree in Drawing and Painting at Glasgow School of Art.



Briefly

Broughton PS pupils, staff and parents raised £650 in **Red Nose Day** events, including a home-bake café and wearing clothes back-to-front.

Local firm Glovart Holdings Ltd are seeking planning permission for a new 5-level development at **1, 2, 3-6 Canonmills Bridge**. The proposal includes 2 restaurants, 6 flats and 3 townhouses, in a modern, zinc and stone-clad, aluminium and glass-balustraded design reminiscent of a **gigantic IKEA composite storage solution**. Look for Ref. 09/00830/FUL at: [www.citydevelopment.edinburgh.gov.uk].

CEC's **Standards for Housing** are aimed at achieving 'high-quality, successful and sustainable residential environments' and will interest locals affected by new developments. Draft documents are online at [www.edinburgh.gov.uk], and at the address below. **Send comments by 30 Jun**. to Gina Bellhouse, Business Centre G1, Waverley Court, 4 East Market St, Edinburgh EH8 8BG or email: [gina.bellhouse@edinburgh.gov.uk].

Late news! As *Spurtle* went to press, we learned that the **New Town and Broughton Community Council** had arranged a meeting on 29 April to discuss setting up a local **traders association**. An invitation on the noticeboard outside the Stafford Centre said the NTBCC was aware of various challenges facing traders, such as tramworks, but made no mention of Tesco. Full details in next issue.

'**Treacle**' succeeds Baroque Bar on Broughton St.

Passing of an inspiration

Daniel McCalman died at home in Broughton on 27 March, aged 31. In life he suffered from Leigh's Encephalopathy, which allowed him to move only his mouth and eyes, but he defied doctors' prognoses by living well beyond the age of 10. The needs of terminally ill children moved his mother, Nancy Blaik, to begin fundraising. The Children's Hospice Association Scotland – with houses in Kinross and Balloch – is a direct result of her efforts and Daniel's inspiration. Our condolences go to family and friends.

Community Council criticised

At the **New Town and Broughton Community Council** meeting on 6 April, Alan McIntosh 'constructively criticised' its record over Tesco at Picardy Place. He explains: I argued NTBCC had failed to predict public concern, and then been slow to react. I said it was poor at seeking out public opinion, and so was unrepresentative. I felt it should not have joined a campaign against Sainsbury in Stockbridge without also campaigning against Tesco in Broughton.

NTBCC agreed it had not predicted public concern, but denied it should go seeking local opinion. It was enough that members' names were on the noticeboard and meetings open to all. NTBCC doubted the opposition to Tesco because 'only those who are against things tend to get in touch'. It had neither time nor resources to assume a leadership role. It considered lobbying politicians useless. It favoured helping traders market the area, but set no timetable.

The debate highlights typical tensions between frustrated 'constituents' and statutory bodies staffed by too few unpaid volunteers with too much to do. An obvious solution is greater public involvement. Community Council elections are in October.

Your questions answered ... or not?

Spurtle asked Tesco 6 questions about its Picardy Place plan. Responses appear in italics. Despite repeated invitations to answer Questions 1, 3, and 6 fully, no such answers came. In reply to Question 2, Tesco refers to contacts made *after* not *before* choosing the site. Tesco is no longer answering *Spurtle* emails.

1. When is the earliest at which you hope to open this branch? Will it be a Metro? *Our proposal is for a Tesco Express store. Express stores are our smallest format and are ideal for customers who are looking for a basket or 'top up shop' stocking everyday essentials.*

2. Whom did Tesco consult (and when) before choosing this site? *We have spoken with the local Councillors and also been in contact with those businesses who voiced concerns in a recent media article.*

3. What motivated Tesco to open here when it already has 2 stores nearby? *Our proposed changes at the store include improving substantially the disabled access. I am sure you will appreciate it is really important that disabled customers are given the same opportunities for access as those who are able-bodied.*

4. How many people does Tesco expect to employ at this new branch? *Around 20 new jobs.*

5. What (if any?) impact do you expect the new branch to have on local retailers? *We know from other areas that a new Tesco Express store brings customer choice and would help to keep people shopping in the vicinity, with a knock on benefit to other retailers and service providers of an increased footfall locally.*

6. Are there any examples in the UK of locals persuading Tesco NOT to open a branch in the neighbourhood? If so, what kind of arguments did Tesco find persuasive?

Still no certainty for No. 13

CEC is again assessing its subsidy of the No. 13 bus (*Issues 162, 164*).

Options include: keeping the current route; reviving the former route between Leith and Mansfield Place; extending the route to Craigleith and Seafield; reducing frequency from half-hourly to hourly; and cutting the whole service. A decision is expected in early May.

Mark Lazarowicz MP supports reviving the former route and has launched an online petition at: <http://bringbackourbuses.blogspot.com>. 'Restoring the 13 will give locals a better choice, and relieve pressure on the 36 and other local buses. With timetable improvements, it could also provide a better frequency.'

Cynics suspect that political as much as financial considerations will drive continuation of the present service, which ignores Leith in favour of the New Town and West of the city. Locals can lobby their councillors, and Transport Convener Phil Wheeler.

Independents for Edinburgh!

Robin Lippett, Bellevue Area Residents Association Chair, has interests as a Stockbridge independent retailer. In light of opposition to Tesco's plans for Picardy Place and Sainsbury's plans for Raeburn Place, he sent an open letter to the Convener of Economic Development. We publish the reply next month.

Dear Councillor Buchanan,

Edinburgh thrives on diverse shops and shopping areas. Quality independent traders support and increase visitor numbers. They maintain the local infrastructure and vitalise communities such as Broughton and Stockbridge. CEC must incentivise, support, promote and protect these independent shops and shopping areas. I urge CEC to implement:

- Substantial rate reductions for small, independent shops. (I have never understood why small business rates are vastly more than residential rates. Local shop owners get hit at work and at home. I am fed up paying a disproportionate amount of rates to CEC.)

- A rate holiday or reductions for start-up local businesses which fulfil certain criteria such as a viable business plan, attractive shop frontage within appropriate guidelines etc.

- Grants to improve shop fronts in specific shopping areas. I believe this has already been done in other parts of Edinburgh and, if extended, would at least help start-up businesses, improve the cityscape and overall amenity for the community.

- Moderation of over-aggressive parking policies in shopping areas.

In the current economic climate, with appalling effects of tram-related roadworks and closures, many small businesses teeter on the brink of ruin. They need a fair break now. What will CEC do to help them?

Trip keeps Kenyan ties strong

In February, 2 Drummond CHS staff visited Muthambi Boys and Muthambi Girls schools in the Meru District of Kenya. Annie Scanlon reports. Our partnerships have existed for 4 years with joint projects and British Council-funded exchanges for students/staff. We learn together, exchange ideas and views, and discover the similarities and differences of growing up in an increasing 'small' world. It is not a charity – we raise funds for projects that make Kenyan and Scottish students creative and knowledgeable about local and global issues.

Patricia Snow and I received a very warm welcome, participated in classes and answered questions including: 'What is the government of Britain?'; 'Will I get white if I come to Scotland?'; 'What happens if you steal mangoes?'; 'Can I marry you?' (from an S1 boy!)

In March we hosted Josphat Murungi (Boys' Head Teacher) and Hildah Kinyua (Girls' English teacher) at Drummond, with visits to the Castle, shops and a night of kilt wearing, Burns, haggis and the Highland fling. Mr Murungi now has the costume and a great performance ready for his first assembly back home!

Going forward we will run a 2-way monthly newsletter featuring school and local news. Next session students can get involved in the Kenya Partnership and in Fair Trade work throughout school. We hope to take senior students/staff to Muthambi in 2010 with a return visit by Kenyans in 2011. Any funding help from locals would be much appreciated.



Students giving blood get 30 mins out of class, a cake and a bottle of juice.

Briefly

Rodney St Tunnel has opened. First impressions of travelling through it at night: 'Not unlike the Death Star docking sequence in *Star Wars*.'

Unite PLC received 3 offers for the McDonald Rd site by the 20 March deadline (*Issue 169*). Agents **Retties & Co.** and Unite expect to announce the successful purchaser's name around 5 May.

Broughton History Society meets at 7pm on 11 May in Drummond CHS. Christopher Fleet will describe '**Four Centuries of Local Maps, Plans & Their Makers**'. Visitors £2, members free.

The New Town and Broughton Community Council normally meets on the first Monday of the month (except Bank holidays, July and January) at **Drummond Community High School** library. All meetings are open to the public. Next meeting **Monday 11 May 7.30 pm**, and **AGM** followed by meeting **Monday 1 June 7.00 pm**.

TV news: (1) A camera crew was spotted in Broughton St on 27 Mar. **Crombie's** had made a Windies-style haggis for the BBC's *Caribbean Food Made Easy*. (2) On 8 Apr. the Irish version of *Who Do You Think You Are?* researched the Edinburgh roots of gardener **Diermod Gavin** in Claremont Crescent.

BL Developments has redrawn plans for **Shrub Place** after Taylor Wimpey withdrew. The revised £70m proposal includes a 120-room hotel, extensive green space, and 300 apartments of which 80 will be affordable housing.

An **unholy row** is brewing over Paolozzi's *The Manuscript of Monte Cassino*. **Greener Leith** campaigners want the foot at the Foot of Leith Walk when Picardy Place is revamped (*Issue 169*). It would replace the hated 'unicorn's horn' close to the artist's Albert St birthplace, attract visitors, and link to a possible sculpture trail from the Shore to the Gallery of Modern Art. Arts commentator **Richard Demarco** says the works should stay **together** near St Mary's Cathedral. Meanwhile, **Friends of Hillside & Calton** want them for Hillside Crescent Gardens; close to Paolozzi's Leith Walk Primary School, on a major route into the city, and in line with Playfair and CEC's ideas for a central feature there. To be continued ...

Belle's View

Hi fans



Oh the summertime is comin' – and the leaves are sweetly bloomin'. What's for fun in bud-burstin' and blossom-laden Broughton?

Soapy! Feeling like having a big old spring clean and washin' that man right out of your hair? Or maybe you need a bath but your boiler is on the blink? Get along to **CC Blooms on Greenside Place** on Saturday 23 May for their **Suds Foam Party** with chart, pop and dance music by DJ **Blondie!** 11pm–3am.

No spring chicken? At **Joseph Pearce's** of **Elm Row**, **Anna** has just introduced their new **spring menu**, including roast spring chicken breast wrapped in Virginia smoked bacon – with ginger and thyme stuffing, braised leeks, garlic butter carrots and white wine reduction sauce. Superb with their organic Chardonnay! And if you feel like having lunch in the spring air, you can sit at tables outside the bar – blankets are provided for the knees, if the haer has rolled in!

If antiques float your boat, trip lightly to **Lyon and Turnbull's** auction rooms at **Broughton Place**, where you can bid for a cast iron bust of **Flora the Goddess of Spring**, with flowers in her hair in (lot no. 11) in an auction of gorgeous antiques on Saturday 9 May at 11am (view Thursday 7 May: 10am – 7pm, Friday 8 May: 10am – 5pm, and on the day from 9am). If you can't find anything to suit your credit-crunched purse, make do with a cup of tea and a bun in their café! [www.lyonandturnbull.com]

Till next time!

Persephone Belle

Community Council ...



swings into action

Shirley-Anne Sommerville MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament
for Lothians



Surgery Times:
Fridays 9.30–11.30am
at the Scottish Parliament
Other times by arrangement
Call or email for an appointment
email:
Shirley-anne.sommerville@scottish.parliament.uk
Tel: 0131 348 6823
www.shirleyannesomerville.org

Malcolm Chisholm MSP
Edinburgh North and Leith



Constituency Office:
5 Croall Place, Leith Walk, EH7 4LT
Tel: 0131 558 8358
Fax: 0131 557 6781
Saturday surgeries:
9am Leith Library
10.30am Royston/Wardieburn
Community Centre
12pm Stockbridge Library

Mark Lazarowicz
MP for Edinburgh North and Leith



Constituency Office:
5 Croall Place, Leith Walk, EH7 4LT
Tel: 0131 557 0577
Fax: 0131 557 5759
mark@marklazarowicz.org.uk
www.marklazarowicz.org.uk
Friday advice sessions:
4.00pm Stockbridge Library,
42 Hamilton Place
5.00pm Ainslie Park Leisure Centre
6.00pm Constituency Office

Spurtle Team: Maria Hart, George Hosey, Alan McIntosh, John Ross Maclean, Fiona Watt.

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**New Town/Broughton
Community Council**

**Vacancies for 3 Community
Councillors**

The Community Council represents
the views of local residents to
Edinburgh City Council.

Next meeting
11 May at 7.30pm
at Drummond CHS

AGM 1 June at 7.30pm
at above venue

For details please contact:
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