

Regent, Royal & Carlton Terraces Association
'RRCTA'
NEWSLETTER

September
2011

Autumn comes to the Terraces

..and brings a number of gentle changes to our immediate neighbourhood (*see below*).

At City level the final destination of the tramline has been determined. The trams are going to St Andrew Square – this raises some questions about the location of the switchback (*see overleaf*).

The City Council has yet to decide whether to object to the proposed Leith biomass plant (*see overleaf*).

Meanwhile Eric Graham continues his fascinating history of Calton. Did you know that the city prison was sited on Regent Road? Read all about it in the separate sheet entitled '*Go to Jail*'

Welcome to the Newsletter It's designed to provide information and news on matters affecting life in and around the Terraces and Calton Hill. It lets you know what the Association is doing on your behalf.

What do we do? The Association was formed in 1966, to protect the architecture of the area and its general amenity. Today we are also actively involved in a wide range of local issues.

Who can join? Anyone living on or around Calton Hill can join.

How can I join? Contact Claire Tait on 556 7565 or email us on rrcta@live.co.uk. Annual membership - £20 per household, or £10 for single occupant.

Changes in our Neighbourhood - from coffee to ipads!

Neighbourhood Cafes

After years with no neighbourhood cafe, it now looks as though we shall have the choice of two.

'**Just the ticket**' opened last Saturday at number 1 Montrose Terrace. The cafe is run by Jonathan and Rachael and provides tea, coffee, soup, sandwiches and home-made cakes in a sunny, spacious and quirky building. Newspapers are also available for customers and we hope that the cafe will thrive. Initially opening hours will be 9am to 6pm, although these will be adjusted to accommodate demand. If the cafe proves popular, the upper floor with its scenic views can be brought into use.

At the western end of **London Road Gardens**, the former **gardener's cottage** is in need of makeover. CEC invited interested parties to submit proposals by the end of July and the Council has recently reached a decision on the future of this building. We understand that it will be converted into a cafe/restaurant and that refurbishment is already underway. We are told that the new venture should open later this year, offering residents another 'cappuccino opportunity'.

New Apple Store

Devotees of Mac computers, ipads and iphones will be delighted to learn that a new Apple Store will open at the east end of Princes Street. Work is well underway to refurbish the former Burger King unit (and before that - Woolworths). This will create a two-storey Apple store. At ground level there will be a shop selling their range of products. At the upper level expect to find a 'Brains Bar', where experts will help you set up and operate all your Apple kit.

So far we don't have a date for opening, but work has been going on at this location for some months now and has also started on the upper floors of the building, which will become a three star hotel, with lounge looking east onto the equestrian statue of Wellington.

Weekly Food Market

If CEC planners agree to a current application, there will be a Food Market in front of the Cathedral on Broughton Street every Sunday from March 2012. The operator Victoria MacDonald wants to see this area (around the Paolozzi installation of the 'big foot') used as a community market, providing opportunities for the homeless, disabled, addicts etc through training and events. In time Victoria hopes to run a community market three days a week. A pilot market was held here during August.

Traffic Matters

'Twentifying' the Terraces

Carol Nimmo reports:

The Transport, Infrastructure and Environment sub-committee of the Council agreed in July 2011 to run a pilot scheme in the Grange area limiting traffic speed to 20 mph, without any accompanying traffic calming measures, such as speed humps. The pilot is scheduled to start in spring 2012, although the local residents association expects some slippage in this date.

The pilot scheme will run for three years before final evaluation.

To date, signage has been identified as a possible problem in the Grange. Large signs must alert traffic to changes in speed limit, and the siting of these may be viewed by local residents as additional clutter. This would not be a problem in the Terraces, but it looks as though it could be some time before the 20 mph zone spreads to our neighbourhood.

In the meantime we ask all residents to observe a voluntary maximum speed limit of 20 mph on the Terraces

Tram News

The route finally authorised by CEC will actually go beyond St Andrew Square to York Place. The final stop will be in the Square, but a switchback is required to allow the tram to switch line and the driver to move to the other end of the tram.

The switchback will require a minimum of two lanes on York Place and will be fenced along its entire length, to prevent public access to the points. This means that traffic on York Place will be funnelled into the remaining space – possibly causing a bottleneck – and traffic travelling east will be unable to make a right turn into the St James Centre or the Bus Station. No work appears to have been done to quantify the impact of the switchback on traffic in Picardy Place, but we anticipate that additional traffic management will be required and journey times across this major junction will increase.

The New Town & Broughton Community Council has written to officials, councillors and the Edinburgh Evening News asking for the switchback to be located on St Andrew Square, or on Princes Street, to minimise the impact on traffic at Picardy and York Place.

Leith Biomass Plant

CEC have until December 11th to comment on the application from Forth Energy to build a large biomass plant at Leith. As proposed this would have a significant and adverse impact on the views north from Calton Hill and Royal Terrace.

In the meantime, a report to the Westminster Parliament on future biomass subsidy levels is expected soon. A number of large companies (Drax, E.ON, etc) are actively lobbying for increased subsidies for biomass – an outcome that would make the Leith Plant more attractive to Forth Energy and its investors.

Forth Energy claim that they are reviewing the scale and mass of the proposed plant at Leith, in response to the number of objections lodged during the public consultation phase. According to press reports, they plan to push on with their applications for three other biomass plants on the Forth, to test the reaction of the Scottish Government.

Action required in November

The Association will be writing to City councillors in early November to urge them to object to the proposed scheme at Leith. By then, UK recommendations on biomass subsidies should be known and the issue debated in the national press. We'll keep you informed.

News in Brief

Two police officers from the Edinburgh Central team returned to their posts in early September following a tour in London to help the Met with the riots and their aftermath.

See the 'Jungle City' life-size model elephants on Calton Hill – raising funds for endangered species.

A total of over 80 objections to the fun fair on Calton Hill were received by CEC by email, along with numerous letters.

The crew that filmed 'Case Studies' are returning to Regent Road from Sept 21st – Sept 23rd. They are working on an adaptation of the novel 'Cloud Atlas'.

Waste Modernisation

The separate collection of food waste is proving very popular, but we are interested in your views – email us on rrcta@live.co.uk.

Mike Penny will be talking to the Community Council on waste collection in early November, so please let us have your views on the current trial collection arrangements, including the recycling of food waste and plastic bottles.

2011 Committee

Chairman - Ian MacIntyre; *Secretary* - Anne Casson;
Treasurer - Claire Tait

Maidie Cahill, Jim McCormack, Libby Morris, Carol Nimmo

New Members Welcome

contact rrcta@live.co.uk