

# Regent, Royal & Carlton Terraces Association 'RRCTA' NEWSLETTER

May 2012

**A big thank you** to all those who attended the Association's annual general meeting on March 6<sup>th</sup>.

Residents voted to support a campaign to reopen the railway station at Abbeyhill, to oppose aspects of a liquor license application for the Gardener's Cottage in London Road Gardens (see overleaf) and to oppose communal bins for waste collection (see below).

We also listened with rapt attention to Eric Graham speaking on 'Playfair and the Terraces'. Few of us had realised that the masterplan for the Terraces, and the 'third new town', was laid out by William Stark, a Glaswegian architect to whom Playfair was apprenticed!

Join in the **Jubilee and Olympic celebrations** in our neighbourhood

**June 4<sup>th</sup>** – a **beacon** will be lit on Calton Hill by the Cadet Forces as part of a UK wide network, to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee

**June 13<sup>th</sup>** – Olympic torch arrives in Edinburgh- concert at the Castle.

On **June 14<sup>th</sup>** the torch leaves the castle at 7am to travel down the High St and Canongate to Holyrood, and then into the Park.

**June 16<sup>th</sup>** – 1950's themed evening **party in Regent Gardens** to celebrate the Jubilee, followed by a family **fete** during the afternoon of **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>** (see more overleaf).

## *Welcome to the Newsletter*

It's designed to provide information and news on matters affecting life in and around the Terraces and Calton Hill and to let 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](mailto:rrcta@live.co.uk).

## **Modernising Waste – Gull-proof Bags for the Terraces**

In 2011 the City of Edinburgh Council ('CEC') trialled a number of waste collection options in streets across the World Heritage Site, in order to reduce the mess caused by gulls and urban foxes attacking black bags.

Following the trials, council officials recommended the introduction of large communal bins in many streets in the New Town, sensitively positioned after consultation with the local residents' associations.

However palace-frontage streets and streets that 'follow the contours of the geography of the New Town' (*ie* streets on the flat) were permitted to opt for gull-proof bags instead of the large bins.

The seagull-proof bags used in the trial have design faults. CEC have therefore commissioned bags with a front-opening panel and a Velcro strap to anchor bags safely to the railings. A prototype is being tested and when the design is considered fit for purpose the bags will be ordered and distributed throughout a number of streets in the New Town, including the Terraces. The distribution is likely to take place in the autumn.

In order for the system of gull-proof bags to work, waste must be presented inside these bags and must be contained in black bags. If residents do not adhere to the new arrangements, CEC may impose large communal bins in our neighbourhood.

In the meantime the gulls are attacking the black bags – hanging them on railings is no longer a deterrent.

**We therefore ask residents to stop putting food into black bags and to use the separate food waste collection, as it is gull and fox proof.** Under this system, residents are provided with a small container, which collects food waste in biodegradable bags. This little bin is easily accommodated in the kitchen.

A larger black bin with lockable lid is then used to present the biodegradable bags and their contents for collection early on Friday morning. Residents who are using this system are happy with it, and it dramatically reduces mess on the streets.

To request the food waste containers, please ring 529 3030 or email [waste@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:waste@edinburgh.gov.uk) and ask for a food waste starter pack to help keep our streets clean.

## Traffic News

***We ask all residents to observe a voluntary maximum speed limit of 20 mph on the Terraces***

### **Reinstating the Blenheim Place/London Road Junction**

The Association was sent details of proposed new Traffic Regulation Orders ('TRO's) for Blenheim Place, Picardy Place and York Place by the Council for comment in early April.

These plans were not complete and omitted pedestrian crossings, traffic lights etc so it was not possible to comment on anything other than the siting of the traffic lanes. However it does look as though the traffic arrangements at the Blenheim Place/London Road junction will revert to their previous configuration before tram works.

The Association believes that this is the best outcome as it permits access to residents, but does not facilitate any additional use of Blenheim Place/Royal Terrace as a rat run. On this basis we stated that the plans for this junction – ie reverting to the previous configuration - were acceptable.

We also took the opportunity of asking the Council to introduce a 20mph zone on the Terraces via the same TRO's as the intention is to eventually adopt a 20mph limit on all residential streets across the city.

The TRO's show that traffic on York Place will be funnelled into single lanes at pinch points near the Portrait Gallery as two lanes are fenced off for the tram switchback. The design of the switchback is not yet available.

### **Leith Biomass Plant**

Forth Ports has abandoned plans to build a biomass plant at Leith Docks. As you have probably read in the press, the company intends to focus on other forms of renewable energy at this site, notably wind power.

Thanks to all residents who took the time and trouble to object to the original proposal.

### **Listed Buildings – VAT Change**

As part of the budget changes announced in March, VAT at 20%, will be charged on alterations to listed buildings from September 2012. Consent for alterations must still be obtained from the Planners.

The government conducted a short consultation on this topic immediately after the budget. Our MP (Mark Lazarowski), the Community Council and the Association, all wrote pointing out the negative impact this change will have on Edinburgh's New Town – to no avail.

The only concession has been for listed places of worship, which will be able to apply for VAT refunds on permitted alterations.

### **2012/2013 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

### **The Gardener's Cottage**

The plans for this building have changed significantly since we were advised that consent had been given for change of use to a cafe and an application for a full provisional licence, including off-sales and extensions to 2am during festival periods was lodged recently.

The Association, together with a large number of residents objected to the proposal on the grounds of nuisance and increase in anti-social behaviour in London Road Gardens. A number of us attended the hearing by the Licensing Board and put our case in person. The outcome was less than satisfactory and the license was granted, but a number of restrictions were imposed, most notably that no noise from the restaurant or its al fresco diners should be audible in nearby residents' homes.

While we hope that there will be no problems and the restaurant will be an asset to the community, we shall establish an incident log and advise residents what to do if they encounter any nuisance from the Cottage. Local residents will be leafleted with details when it opens.

### **Celebrating the Diamond Jubilee**

**Saturday June 16<sup>th</sup>** – Fifties themed party on the Liebenal Lawn in Regent Gardens from 7.30pm. Swing to the live music. Enjoy the hog roast and salad with wine from your own cellar. Catch up on the local gossip and unwind with your friends. Shelter from any spots of rain in the marquees.

*Tickets £10 from Claire Tait, 28 Royal Terrace.*

**All are welcome**

**3pm Sunday June 17<sup>th</sup>** – **Family Day** including tennis tournaments, croquet, home baking, bouncy castle, pony rides, magician, face painting...and more

**No dogs please, so the pony can relax!**

*No tickets. Bucket donations on the day to help cover costs.*

These events are part funded by RRCTA