

Deputations

Culture and Communities Committee

10.00 am Thursday, 11th May, 2023

Hybrid Meeting - Dean of Guild Court Room / Microsoft Teams

Deputations

Contacts

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CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL
CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Item No 3

11 May 2023

DEPUTATION REQUESTS

Subject	Deputation
3.1 In relation to Item 7.4 on the agenda – Guidance on Park Lighting	Written submission from Councillor Caldwell, local Ward Member
3.2 In relation to Item 7.6 on the agenda – Lawn Tennis Association Investment in Park's Tennis Courts	1. Written submission from Friends of Inverleith Park 2. Written submission from Leith Links Community Council
3.3 In relation to Item 9.1 on the agenda – Motion by Councillor Heap – WASPS Studio Space in Dalry	Written submission from Save our WASPS Studio

7.4 Guidance on Park Lighting

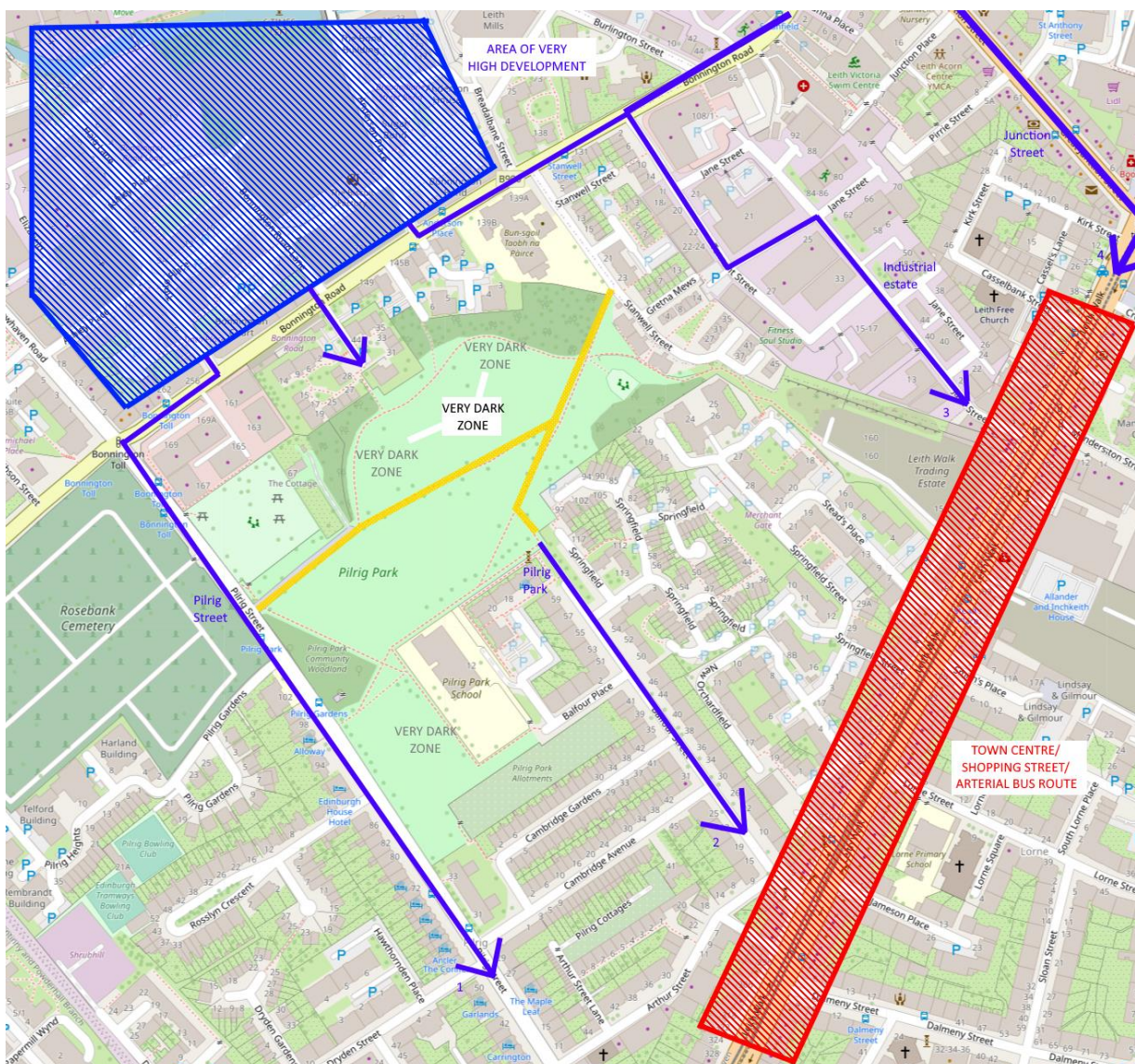
Deputation by Councillor Jack Caldwell, Leith Walk ward 12 (Liberal Democrat Group)
9th May 2023

I am delighted to see Pilrig Park within the top 10 recommendations as it is a primary example of a park which has high population density surrounding it due to large, brownfield developments in recent years, which will become more common around Edinburgh if the sites identified in City Plan 2030 are progressed for residential development in the next decade and I believe should be taken account of.

In practical terms, hundreds of new flats have been built up on the west side of the park, with the local town centre/shopping street/bus arterial route being recognised as Leith Walk on the east side. This has meant a massive increase of residents rightly using the park as their preferred active travel route to the shops during daylight.

The Local Destinations' dimension in the report takes into account residential areas including population density (ie demand) but does not outright identify Shop amenity as a factor, which I appreciate is difficult to quantify. However, many new developments in the last few years have passed without the Council identifying potential reasonable upgrades to Pilrig Park through statutory improvement mechanisms, such as paths and lighting. This has led to desired paths running through the park but more relevant to this report, a large number of people who face safety concerns (both perceived public safety and the ability to see where they're going) or longer, alternative, non active-travel routes to get to the shops once the sun has set while our aim is for our residents to be able to walk, wheel and cycle safely at all times and seasons.

The below map vaguely outlines the four possible routes residents (blue) can get to amenities (red). One of the routes (through Pilrig Park) is challenging without proper lighting and another is through a small industrial estate.



I ask committee and officers to liaise with Planning for future considerations and recommendations as many parks across the city, such as Dalmeny Street Park, have a high population density surrounding them as well as a high amount of development sites nearby which will impact on both the 'Local Destinations' and 'Connecting Paths' dimensions in the near future.

Further engagement with local stakeholders could also highlight every park's unique situation, particularly with recent material changes to areas that must be reflected in infrastructure. Thank you for reading this deputation.

From: Pam Barnes

Sent: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 3:17 PM

To: Lesley Birrell <Lesley.Birrell@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Blair Ritchie <Blair.Ritchie@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Subject: Attn of Lesley Birrell, Blair Ritchie - Clerks - Culture and Community Committee Thurs May11th.

Lawn Tennis Association Investment in Park's Tennis Courts – Inverleith Park

Please would you give the Culture and Community Committee members these more detailed considerations of the discussions with the Friends of Inverleith Park. We are not against the refurbishment scheme but have reservations about the booking system.

At 7.1 of the LTA report it says that the Council has engaged with the Friends of Inverleith Park however no details are given.

We would like the Culture and Community Committee to know that the Friends of Inverleith Park committee has mixed opinions about this proposal. There is a concern that we will be changing a system that works well for everyone to one that will be more limiting. Many like the spontaneous nature of the present system and remark on how reasonable people are - in that they wait in line if it is full and those playing on court are good about freeing the court when they know people are waiting.

In our ideal world we would like the courts playing surface to be refurbished and then to be available freely to those that turn up as happens now. **We think it is important that any charge is kept very low and that users are consulted before any future changes are made.**

Para 4.6 of the Report says there is research that the use of courts is increased if they can be booked in advance. However there is no detail given about how this research was done, where it was done or exactly what it showed.

Here are 3 quotes reflecting the mixed opinions of the Friends Committee.

Whereas everyone would be pleased to have the courts re-furbished - the first 2 quotes reflect the unease that some have about the LTA offer. The 3rd quote is from someone who feels it is ok provided certain safeguards are made. It has also been suggested that there ought to be wider consultation other than just the Friends. The LTA offer might limit people from trying out tennis whereas at the moment it is easy to turn up and have a go - if you have to book with a smartphone and app maybe people won't bother or won't have smart phones. There is some feeling that a public

park should have facilities free for all to use.

Quotes about the LTA proposal for the tennis courts at Inverleith Park

- *"I personally think it should be free to everyone, and never locked up, it has never been vandalised and as soon as they lock it up that would be asking for trouble. It was designed to encourage children to play tennis."*
- *"The beauty of the system at present is that anyone can play whenever they want at no cost. Up grading and charging and making it exclusive will not be an advantage to any that use it at present, and will only exclude the average player. When they were first put up we feared vandalism, which has not been the case. Lets keep it as fun for all."*
- *"I feel that as long as the courts still have quite a few (preferably the majority) as free slots and that provision has been made for those who do not have technological skills then it is a good idea. I like the fact that the council has to give a commitment to keep the courts maintained at that level as so often maintenance of a new facility is overlooked. It is a pity that decisions have to be made so quickly as it would have been better to monitor the usage for a full year prior to all the upgrades to gauge how, when and by whom the courts are used."*

From: Teresa Perchard (Leith Links CC)

Sent: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 6:36 PM

To: 'lindsay.grant@edinburgh.gov.uk' <lindsay.grant@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Cc: 'Sally Millar (Leith Links CC)

Subject: Leith Links Tennis Courts - proposed investment by the Lawn Tennis Association

Sent on behalf of the Secretary, Leith Links Community Council

Dear Lyndsay

Lawn Tennis Association proposed investment in Leith Links Tennis Courts – comments from Leith Links Community Council (LLCC)

Thank you for your email of 18 April outlining proposals for investment by the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) in upgrading the tennis court facilities in Leith Links and changes in the future way that the tennis courts can be used, notably the introduction of a booking system, key access and a small admin fee for booking courts. We briefly considered this at our Community Council meeting on 28 April and have subsequently gathered comments from LLCC members. I understand the Culture and Communities committee is considering the issue on 11 May and would be grateful if our comments on this could be brought to their attention.

As you know this facility, and Leith Links as a whole is within the Leith Links Community Council area and members of the LLCC have been working with you for some time on the development of a Masterplan for Leith Links. As you also know the area of the park the tennis courts are located in is a rather run-down and under-used area of the park with derelict unusable bowling greens x 3, a derelict pavilion building covered in graffiti, a pétanque court and no facilities for seating, a heavily graffitied container and some goals/pieces of metal lying around and a couple of dumpster communal bins on wheels. The future of the former bowling greens area and the associated pavilion is a key issue the Master Plan needs to address. Until this point the tennis courts had not been identified as in particular need of upgrading as part of that Masterplan.

We appreciate the opportunity that the proposed investment by the LTA represents to improve the tennis facilities in Leith Links which will forego the need for some scheduled maintenance that might arise in the near future. We also appreciate the LTA's insights about how to encourage more people to engage with tennis by having a booking system and have no reason to challenge their advice on this, though note

that operating it introduces additional equipment maintenance costs. The courts are in use all year round, though not floodlit, and it is noticeable at busy times that people wait in groups – next to the derelict building and with no seating – until a court becomes free with no time limits on use. People often use the tennis courts at present for dog training/exercise off the lead too. Having a booking system would help with the bunching of users and also allow more information to be gathered about the volume of actual usage which might help with planning the service better for the future. It would also prevent non-tennis usage of the courts as mentioned above. **So it is an interesting proposition which we welcome at a general level.**

We would, however welcome more information about the proposal in terms of the extent of refurbishment required and what will be included in scope, for example will there be any opportunity to instal seating for people waiting to play or watching games so as to enhance the overall facilities? If not is this something the Council could consider adding to the scheme? What is the timing of any works? How will the courts be promoted by Edinburgh Leisure? Will professional coaches be charged fees above £1 booking fee? Etc.

We would also want the Culture and Communities Committee to be made fully aware of the ‘environs’ of the tennis courts within Leith Links and the need, frankly, for something to be done about the derelict graffiti covered pavilion and the continued lack of any clear story about when and how public toilets will be provided in Leith Links on a permanent basis. Clearly investing in improving the Tennis Courts will jar alongside the continuing dereliction of the bowling green area, and pavilion, and seems very inconsistent to fix up just one bit of what looks like a ‘no go’ area. As local population grows all of the Links needs to be usable. Imagine the embarrassment if there was an LTA and Judy Murray launch of the refurbished tennis courts to the backdrop of the derelict pavilion? Members of the public using facebook groups locally are already drawing comparisons between the investment in planters to close off part of John’s place as part of an active travel project. In short they are puzzled by the Council’s priorities to invest in new planting and facilities on a section of road whilst an area of adjacent park remains derelict and the facilities people most ask to be present in Leith Links, public toilets, are not being provided except through very expensive hire of temporary toilets in the Summer. The playpark encourages parents with very small children to spend time in the park but there are no baby changing facilities which is rather grim in winter. Any serious tennis match players are also likely to welcome access to at least a toilet. So - we would like **to press you** on what is being done alongside the LTA investment to improve the facilities in this part of the park for those who will be using the tennis courts as well as other, especially to improve the appearance of the area and to make some progress on the Council’s commitment to have public toilets in all premier parks.

We also wonder if this is an opportunity to look at how the adjacent Petanque court could be promoted better – for example if it was also added to the Edinburgh Leisure booking system and had a lock entry system this would make it more known and also discourage dog training within the court (that also happens in the tennis courts). Even better if the derelict pavilion was brought back into use in some way for storage for boules – which are very heavy items – was available for clubs etc this could be a way of developing usage of this facility.

I hope this is helpful and that if the proposed investment is supported by the Culture and Communities Committee we can hear more about the implementation soon.

Best wishes

Sally Millar

Secretary LLCC

From: saveourstudioswpp
Sent: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 1:55 PM
To: Committee Services <Committee.Services@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Cc: Ross McKenzie <Cllr.Ross.McKenzie@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Dan Heap <Cllr.Dan.Heap@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Subject: Statement

Below is a Statement in support of:

Agenda Item 9. Of The Culture and Communities Committee meeting on Thursday 11th May at 10am

Save Our Artists' Studios in Edinburgh

We, the undersigned tenants at West Park Place Studios in Dalry, would like the committee to help us to remain in our studios here.

Our studios, based in two historic old industrial buildings, host over 50 artists and creative businesses and are currently threatened with closure by the building owners. We need your help to ensure that our studios remain open and thriving as working studios for local artists.

Our area, Gorgie-Dalry, already has the poorest provision of arts and cultural resources in Edinburgh. Closing the studios would eliminate most of what provision there is. The proposed sell off would make it impossible for some of the arts workers there to remain in business at all.

The property owners Workshop and Artists' Studio Provision Scotland (WASPS) bought these publicly owned studios from Edinburgh Council for just £1 in 2021. Now, only 2 years later, they are threatening to close and sell the building without any meaningful consultation with the community or the artists based in the studios.

It's not just the tenants who would be affected. Our studios are also a centre for arts education and training, with many people from the local area and further afield attending classes and workshops there.

These historic buildings should not be sold off to be developed, as is sadly likely, into yet more purpose-built student accommodation with which our area is already saturated

Instead, this valuable community asset could and should be restored and upgraded to become an arts hub for the area: not just studios, but a centre for education and training, exhibitions and other events.

Please help us make sure that our studios remain and thrive as an important cultural asset within the Gorgie-Dalry community, sustaining local artists livelihoods and the wider creative community.

We have a petition on [Change.org](https://chnng.it/q5rTtSpcPK) (<https://chnng.it/q5rTtSpcPK>) with currently 700+ signatures, and support from the local business community.

Thanks for your support!

Tenants of West Park Place Studios:

Imogen Alabaster
Jo Arksey
Jessica Brettle
Carolyn Burchell
Steve Burnett
Damian Callan
Colin Duncan
Gill Curran
Jenni Jones
Jill Martin-Boualaxai
Michael McVeigh
Mike Spring
Anke-Beate Stahl
Yvonne Weighand-Lyle
Ann Wright
Allison Young