

Fairmilehead Community Council Ordinary Meeting held on Tuesday 2 September 2025 at 7pm, Caiystane Hall, Fairmilehead Parish Church, 1 Frogston Road West, EH10 7AA.

Present: Dennis Williams (Chair); Colin Anderson (Secretary); Barbara Dick (Treasurer/Buckstone Association); Stella Thomson (Engagement and Inclusion Officer); Gillian Holmes (Minutes Secretary/Planning Officer); Norrie McLeod (Friends of Swanston Village); Amanda Dovesi; Jamie Adams

Ex Officio: Councillor Conor Savage (Ward 8); Councilor Neil Cuthbert (Ward 8)

Mike Wilson: Editor: The Fairmile, www.thefairmile.substack.com
Build Edinburgh, www.buildedinburgh.substack.com

Ronnie Shaw (Engagement and Inclusion Officer/Planning Officer), Liberton and District Community Council (LDCC)

12 members of the public

Apologies: Ian Murray MP; Councillor Jason Rust; Councillor Ben Parker; Edinburgh South West Community Police team; Helen Wilson; Brian Ralph.

1.Welcome

Dennis Williams thanked all present for coming to the first meeting following the summer break. He said it was gratifying to see some new faces, and hoped they found the meeting informative and useful.

2.Minute Of Meeting Held on Tuesday 3 June 2025

These were approved by the meeting.

Proposed: Barbara Dick
Seconded: Dennis Williams

3.Matters Arising

Speed cameras in Edinburgh

In a previous meeting the question had been asked as to why many cameras are covered and clearly not in use. Councillor Cuthbert said that he is aware that the South East of Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (SEStran) is concerned by this and will raise it with the Scottish Government. Speed cameras are operated by the Police. SEStran which encompasses 8 local authorities, aims to contribute to the development of a cohesive transportation system for the South East. Councillor Cuthbert advised that Brian Butler from SEStran has indicated that he would be happy to do a presentation to the FCC.

4.Co-option of new member to FCC – Mike Wilson

As well as editing The Fairmile, Mike Wilson is prepared to become a member of the FCC.

Proposer: Colin Anderson
Seconded: Jamie Adams

Colin Anderson advised that he is speaking to another resident who may wish to join. There may be a further co-option at the October meeting.

5. Correspondence and Report by Secretary

August 2025 Information Bulletin

Issued with the Agenda on 25 August.

The Fairmile

Latest issue was published on 29 August. Mike Wilson was pleased to report that there are now over 300 subscribers. A mention in the recent newsletter of Ian Murray MP had helped to boost numbers.

6. Financial Report

Barbara Dick advised that she has experienced difficulties with the FCC RBS Community Account. This includes changing signatories following the community council election. The balance on the account stands at just over £2000. This will be further added to when the allowance given by the Council to the FCC is received. The money will be used to cover rent costs for the hall, IT costs, insurance premium, development of the Local Place Plan (LPP) etc.

7. Website Development – Update

Stella Thomson stated the process of developing a new FCC website had started in February 2025. Various factors such as time lost due to changes needed in design, the huge time commitment involved, errors which caused setbacks, and the taxing technical aspects involved, have resulted in a lengthy process.

However, it is hoped that the site will be available for use by the end of October. At this point the main pages have been created, plus various elements to allow for the navigation of the site. Discussion with Members as to the site contents will take place before launch.

A number of questions were asked including if the June 2025 minutes are currently available online. The meeting was advised that until the site is live, Minutes, and all other information, will continue to be emailed to those who have supplied an email address to the Secretary. The attendance sheet completed at each meeting is used to keep the email list up to date.

The question was asked if the new site will supplant the FCC Facebook page. It was explained that the new website will act as a depository for all FCC documents, including Agendas, Minutes, Information Bulletins etc. Facebook will continue to be used to advertise and promote public meetings, The Fairmile, survey for a proposed LPP etc.

In response to a query regarding hand delivering Agendas, Minutes etc to those without internet access, the Secretary advised that he presently delivers for a very limited number of residents. Any increase in the number involved would require volunteers to undertake this task.

8. Scottish Water Office Building – update

There has been no recent communication from Scottish Water. An email received by Councillor Rust in June reiterated that Scottish Water will be relocating with the intention to sell the office building at Buckstone Terrace. Discussions are currently on-going with the Council to decide whether they apply for planning permission or proceed straight to the sale of the site. When the Waterfield site was developed, planning permission was gained by Scottish Water before the sale to Cala and David Wilson Homes.

When the site is sold it will mean Scottish Water have no continuing interest in the area, apart from the Pump House and various wayleave rights.

Colin will continue to monitor, and a further update will be given at the October meeting.

9. Local Place Plan (LPP)

Mike Wilson advised that the next step in developing a LPP will be the publishing of a resident's survey. Included will be questions related to such topics as the good and bad aspects of living in the area, ideas for improvement, types of future development regarding the built environment, together with identification of potential areas for development.

A draft survey is currently being refined prior to publication.

All of the LPPs produced within Edinburgh will feed into City Plan 2040. This plan will cover development within Edinburgh for the period from 2030-2040. Thus far two plans have been submitted for Midmar Paddock and Wester Hailes. The deadline for submission is early in 2026.

In addition to the survey, FCC hope to hold some in person events as it is important to gain as many views as possible.

Amanda Dovesi has been active in trying to raise funds to develop the LPP. She has had meetings with two local landowners, Alistair McClung, and Henry Trotter, who have both indicated that they are prepared to contribute towards the costs involved. Both are also keen to express their views with regard to future land development within the area.

Amongst the costs involved will be £75 per month for the survey host, Survey Monkey.

The next meeting of the LPP subcommittee will take place on Tuesday 23 September.

10. Traffic Issues at Buckstone Primary School

The planters located at Buckstone Circle/Buckstone Loan East should have been moved to within the school grounds before the summer break. They remain in-situ and there is now a suggestion that they be turned 90 degrees instead.

Colin has asked Councillors Cuthbert, Rust and Savage to investigate.

Barbara Dick emphasised that these planters pose a danger to the children. Drivers either park at them or attempt to drive around them. They also prevent access by residents. If turned, this may not solve the issues, plus there is the question of how long it might be before even this is done.

11. Planning Update

2 Buckstone View – Planning Ref: 25/03154/FUL

Recent updates to the plans have been submitted on the Planning Portal. If approved, this will be a large, detached dwelling with an outbuilding to house a sauna.

12. Transport and Environment

Hillend Junction

Traffic issues continue. Generally, traffic coming into Edinburgh is moving well, but traffic leaving the city is experiencing long delays. This has been caused in part by the fact that different companies installed the 3-way junction lights and the lights at The Steading Inn leading to the Snowsports Centre. Co-ordinating the sequencing between them has thus been difficult, although this has now been resolved. BEAR Scotland has carried out a road survey audit on behalf of Transport Scotland which has yet to be published. Hopefully this will address the issues.

Nonetheless, residents feel the traffic lights are contributing to a safer environment for local people.

Other problems arising from traffic build up within Fairmilehead:

Bus Lane Buckstone Terrace

The majority of drivers continue to ignore the bus lane meaning that those who remain in the right-hand lane experience great difficulty in accessing the left to then turn left onto Frogston Road West. Regular “near miss” incidents have been observed.

Lothianburn Roundabout

Drivers are using the wrong lane in order to skip the queues building up on Biggar Road. That is, they are taking the right hand lane (which should be used to access the Bypass), and then jumping back into the left after the double roundabouts.

Vehicles exiting the A720 Eastbound Off Slip

Vehicles leave the A720 at the Lothianburn Junction and go up the Eastbound Off Slip towards the Lothianburn Roundabout. Due to heavy traffic coming from Hillend towards Biggar Road, vehicles often have to queue before they can access this roundabout. Vehicles therefore back up down the Eastbound Off Slip. This is potentially very dangerous with vehicles exiting the A720 at speed onto the Eastbound Off Slip. This is another issue to be taken up with Transport Scotland.

Pedestrians crossing Biggar Road

Residents trying to cross both Biggar Road and the entry/exit points of the Bypass are being placed in danger due to the volume of traffic. No provision has been made to allow for safe crossing despite being well used routes by those on foot.

Councillor Cuthbert, as a member of the Transport and Environment Committee, had proposed a motion seeking analysis of how proposed City Centre road closures will impact the A720, which already deals with over 120,000 vehicles per day. Such an analysis would include the impact on local communities such as Fairmilehead; potential mitigation measures; and also consider scenarios for major public events. Unfortunately, the motion was not supported.

Councillor Cuthbert stated that one of the difficulties faced when trying to improve the situation is that multiple agencies are involved. The section of Biggar Road within Fairmilehead is the remit of the Council, whilst the section beyond the Bypass is classed a Trunk Road and is overseen by Transport Scotland. The A720 is also a Trunk Road.

Colin Anderson is proposing a meeting with Transport Scotland to discuss the various issues at Hillend. It is also hoped to have a site meeting, preferably at the height of the traffic delays in late afternoon, involving the Council Transport Officers, the three local Councillors and Police Scotland to discuss the Fairmilehead crossroads issues.

Morningside Road – temporary traffic lights

Temporary lights were due to be installed to allow for the redevelopment of the old Post Office. The schedule has been delayed.

Tram Extension

The cost of the proposed extension of the Tram network from Granton to the Edinburgh BloQuarter/Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh is thought to be £2.9 billion.

The Edinburgh Association of Community Councils (EACC) has made Colin aware that the project team for the extension would be interested in doing a presentation to local community councils. As the Scottish Government have stated that they will not fund the extension, one of the main questions is how the monies will be found. Colin will try to arrange a presentation.

ETRO – Greenbank to the Meadows Quiet Route TRO/25/17

The new Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) was recently published. This consultation phase concludes on 12 September 2025.

A720 – Lothianburn Closure Westbound.

The Bypass will close for resurfacing from Tuesday 16 September until Monday 22 September (5 nights) between 8:30pm and 6 am. Drivers going west will be diverted to the using Dreghorn junction.

Dropped Crossings

Colin has received notification from the Council's Road Safety and Active Travel team advising of the intention to change the crossings to dropped crossings with buildout construction, at the following locations:

27 – Comiston Springs Avenue at Pentland Terrace

58A – Pentland Terrace opposite Comiston Rise

58B – Pentland Terrace at Comiston Rise

Concern was expressed that narrowing the road might impede traffic flow.

Braid Hills Road at junction with Comiston Road

Stella stated that at this junction, due to the narrowing of the road surface, drivers are supposed to give way and allow cyclists to exit the cycle lane and stay in the middle of the road until past the crossing island which is the narrowest point. Unfortunately, on occasion, this does not happen resulting in a dangerous situation for cyclists. Some amendment to the arrangement may be needed. Clear signage spelling out the order of priority to drivers might help. A link to view the junction is shown below.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/mkfcfmH72ftV6sLUU8>

13.Reports from Councillors

Councillor Cuthbert

Waterfield

Councillor Cuthbert raised an issue which arose as a result of closing the one entry/exit road into the Waterfield development. Residents were aggrieved that insufficient notice had been given to allow them to make alternative arrangements during the period of closure. This had resulted in drivers mounting the pavement to get around the blockage.

Mounthooly

At Mounthooly, Scottish Water had closed access without warning. However, following complaints, the Council had instructed them to stop and re-open the road.

Weeds

Complaints regarding weeds have risen massively since the Council stopped using glyphosate-based weedkiller. Recognising that alternatives need to be found the Council is to purchase electric brush style weed removers. The Council will also offer support to local community groups who wish to clear their own areas. Weeding tools and collection bags can be provided. To request support for self-weeding email: waste@edinburgh.gov.uk.

Linda Goode commented that Councillor Rust had recently arranged for the removal of the weeds and dirt around the cycle bollards at Buckstone Terrace.

Clean Streets

Linda also asked about the advertising seen around Bruntsfield and Marchmont saying "We are going to spruce up parts of this neighbourhood soon". Councillor Cuthbert said that this is part of the new Pride in Our City Project. Should Fairmilehead wish to be considered for this, local residents can email: cleanstreets@edinburgh.gov.uk to highlight areas you feel need attention.

Councillor Savage

Councillor Savage had already sent emails relating to several of this evening's issues during the meeting.

Transport Infrastructure

Main area for complaint by residents.

Waste Management

August had seen a rise in the number of complaints.

Flypast amendments

Councillor Savage had proposed an amendment to the motion regarding aircraft flypasts over the city. The amendment to find ways to mitigate the impact on those who find such things distressing, such as providing vulnerable groups with sufficient notice, was accepted.

Motion for the Ocean

At a meeting of the Full Council, Councillor Savage had put forward a motion aimed at the conservation of Edinburgh's coastline and ocean recovery. The hope is to embed ocean conservation in strategic climate change decisions by the Council. The motion, which was passed, also requested that the Scottish Government be advised of the Council's recommendations for ocean recovery.

Whilst the need to protect Edinburgh's coasts, canals, lochs and estuaries is accepted, questions around funding of these measures were asked. Councillor Cuthbert advised that Edinburgh is currently the fourth most indebted Council in the UK. The idea that the Council can continually borrow to fund its many programmes is a false one.

14. Community Grants Fund

Stella Thomson currently represents the FCC on the Morningside Funding Panel and Jamie Adams on the Pentlands Funding Panel. The panels exist to award local community groups up to £5000 from the Community Grants Fund (CGF).

Jamie said that recent changes had been made to the application process which is done online. Applicants must be either a voluntary organisation or a community group. Application for the current round of funding closes on 30 September 2025.

Stella said applicants tend to be groups for either the elderly or young/teenagers. For example, an award had been given for the purchase of table tennis tables.

Application forms and guidance are available at: www.edinburgh.gov.uk

15. Ronnie Shaw – Liberton and District Community Council (LDCC)

Ronnie outlined the recent issues concerning LDCC:

- Plans for the new fire station have now been approved. It will be built on the existing site at Kirkbrae.
- Northfield House – this site has been purchased by the Council. Previous rumours that it was going to be used to house migrants had caused unrest. It will be used to provide accommodation for single homeless people. Asylum issues are dealt with by the UK Government, whilst the issue of Homelessness is dealt with by the Council.

16. AOCB

Hillend – Hotel site sale

Amanda informed that the Calderstones site at Hillend is for sale. It currently has planning permission for a hotel and ecolodge development and is being marketed by Drysdale and Company.

Amanda wondered if the FCC might explore some sort of community purchase. Colin advised that the FCC is an unincorporated body, and such ventures, including title acquisition, are beyond the remit of community councils. In any event, the site is outside the FCC area, and is in Midlothian.

Buckstone Playpark refurbishment

Is this still happening? In March Ian Murray MP had been told by the Council that a specification for an upgrade was to be formulated. The Council stated that they could not put a timescale on the project.

Park and Ride at Straiton

Buses will no longer enter the park and ride from 7 September. Motorists parking on the site will have to cross to a stop on the A701. Councillor Cuthbert had spoken to the Council leader who had stated that the numbers using the site had fallen. Looking to the longer term, relocation to another

site might be considered. The lease on the Straiton site from Midlothian Council is due to expire in 2027.

The possibility of a park and ride at Lothianburn might come back on the agenda. A previous petition had been rejected at the Transport and Environment Committee in May 2018.

17.FCC Meeting January 2026

It was decided that the FCC will only meet in January in the event that an urgent issue requires attention. If convened the meeting will move to the second Tuesday, 13 January 2026.

18.Date Of Next Meeting

Tuesday 7 October 2025

Forthcoming Meetings:

Tuesday 4 November 2025 Tuesday 2 December 2025

Contact email: www.secretaryfcc1@gmail.com