LOCAL PLACE PLAN

Fairmilehead Community Council

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1. INTRODUCTION

FAIRMILEHEAD Community Council's commitment to producing a Local Place Plan was motivated primarily to provide residents, community organisations, young people, landowners and other stakeholders with an opportunity to influence the future development of their district.

It was also intended to contribute towards the preparation of The City of Edinburgh Council's emerging City Plan 2040.

It was an exercise that included extensive data-gathering, including two online surveys, public meetings, engagement with school pupils and discussions with major landowners.

The first of the two online surveys attracted 237 respondents (the second - aimed exclusively at young people - just the five), making it one of the most substantial local engagement undertakings in recent years.

The findings revealed exceptionally strong levels of satisfaction with Fairmilehead as a place to live.

Not only did residents highly value the district's 'green spaces' - including the proximity to the Pentland Hills - they also appreciated its low-density residential character, strong sense of community and family-friendly environment.

While opinions differed, regarding future housing development, there was widespread agreement that any significant new development should be accompanied by corresponding investment in schools, healthcare, transport and 'community infrastructure'.

Several clear priorities emerged:

- **Protection of 'Green Belt' land and valued 'green spaces';**
- **Ensuring infrastructure keeps pace with any future development;**
- **Addressing traffic congestion and transport challenges;**
- **Improving local leisure and community facilities;**
- **Meaningful community involvement in planning decisions; and**
- **Securing community benefits from a proposed redevelopment of the Scottish Water offices site, on Buckstone Terrace.**

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE Local Place Plan was launched for three principal reasons:

- **First, the community council wished to proactively contribute towards the preparation of The City of Edinburgh Council's future planning framework, ie City Plan 2040;**
- **Second, it wished to demonstrate to local residents that their views matter and that community participation is central to local decision-making; and**
- **Third, and most importantly, the community council wanted to create a structured opportunity for local people to share their hopes, concerns and aspirations for Fairmilehead's future.**

A dedicated sub-committee co-ordinated the work, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to gather evidence from across the community.

Particular emphasis was placed on obtaining measurable data while also providing opportunities for residents to explain their views in their own words.

The community council members were pretty confident in their predictions about local opinion, and so it largely proved.

Being almost exclusively a residential area (all low-rise), with quite a bit of 'green space' nearby - agricultural fields and the Pentland Hills - the prediction was little appetite for change and that's exactly what local people broadly said.

3. COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

FAIRMILEHEAD is predominantly a low-density residential community located approximately three miles (five km) south of Edinburgh city centre and bordering Midlothian.

It benefits from immediate and easy access to the Pentland Hills and surrounding countryside, while remaining well-connected to the city.

The area comprises the neighbourhoods of Buckstone, Caiyside, Comiston, Hunter's Tryst, Princess Margaret Rose, Swanston, Frogston and Winton.

It also includes the conservation area of Swanston Village.

Fairmilehead is generally regarded as a desirable place to live, with residents valuing its environmental quality, relatively low density, access to open space and strong community identity.



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3.1 COMMUNITY TRENDS and PROFILES

IT goes without saying that people's views of their locality are going to be at least a partial reflection of what they knew about it when they first moved there.

In other words, people moving into Fairmilehead will have known, in advance, it's a mostly residential area, with very few shops and quite a bit of 'green space'.

Fairmilehead is not an area that people feel forced to move to because it's the only part of the city they can afford.

Nor is it an area that people move to because it is rich in cultural assets, such as cinemas and cafes. It's an area that comprises lots of houses, most of them privately-owned.

Public data for Edinburgh, including by community council boundary area, is available here:

https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/strategy-performance-research/area-profile-dashboard

In The City of Edinburgh Council's City Plan 2040, there are to be found a series of 'place profiles', including for Fairmilehead and neighbouring Colinton (aka 'ward eight'), here:

https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/documents/s100584/Item%207.5%20-%20App%201%20Part%202.2%20Place%20Profile%20Wards%206%20-%2010%20combined%20low%20res.pdf

3.2 KEY STATISTICAL DATA

Fairmilehead Community Council area demographics brief:

Total population: 10,147 (+2.5 per cent since 2014)

- **Female:** 5,239 (51.6 per cent of total | +3.0 per cent since 2014)
- **Male:** 4,908 (48.4 per cent of total | +8.7 per cent since 2014)
- **Over-65:** 2,690 (26.5 per cent of total | +33.4 per cent since 2014)

Population breakdown by age and gender:

- **0 to 15:** 933 male | 939 female
- **16 to 24:** 474 male | 416 female
- **25 to 34:** 307 male | 307 female
- **35 to 44:** 555 male | 627 female
- **45 to 54:** 659 male | 751 female
- **55 to 64:** 691 male | 798 female
- **65 to 74:** 729 male | 749 female
- **75+:** 560 male | 652 female

One-family households: 88 per cent:

- Married couple: 6,300
- Aged 65 and over: 1,400
- Cohabiting couple: 700
- Lone-parent family: 600

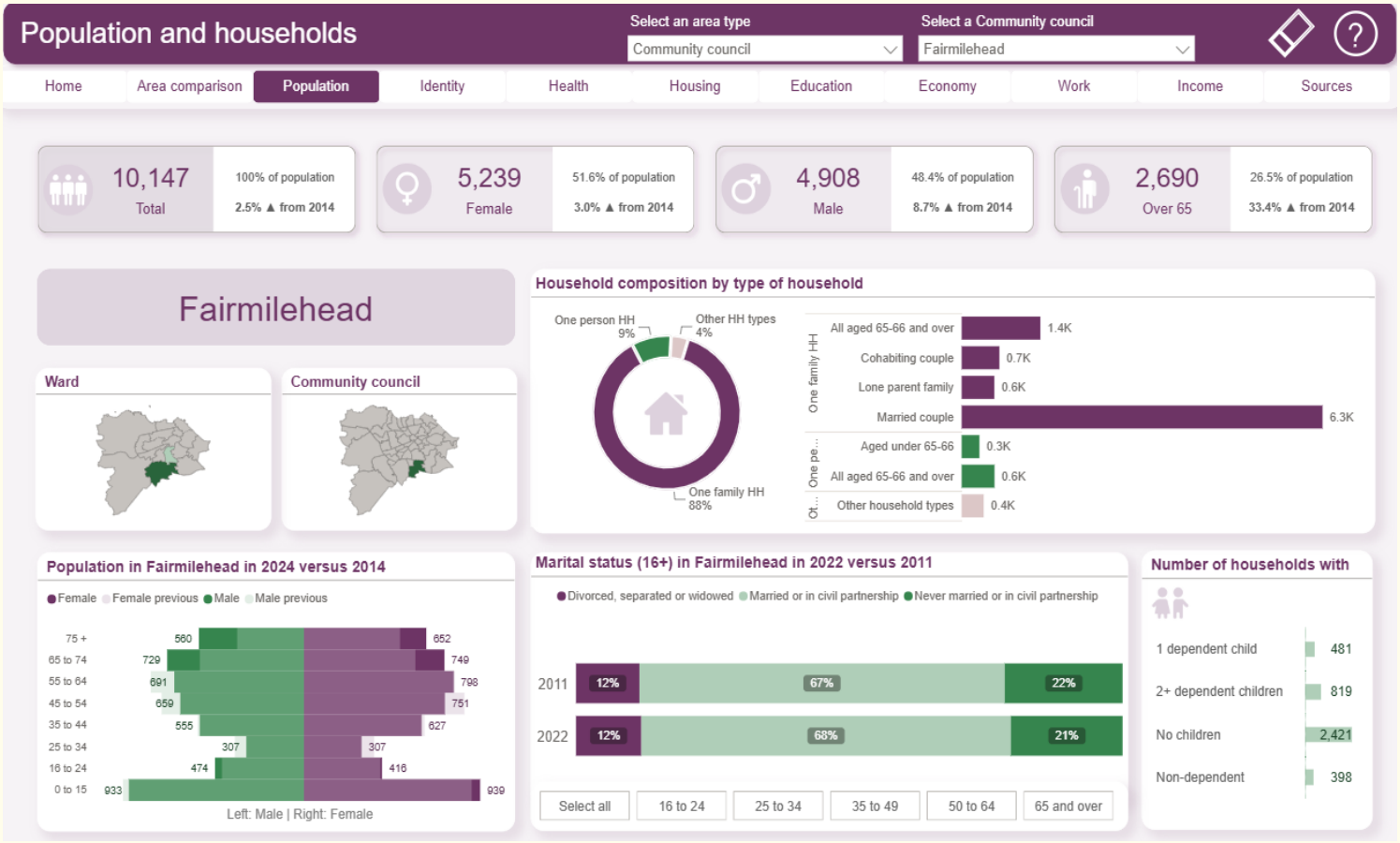
One-person households: nine per cent:

- Aged 65 and over: 600
- Aged under 65: 300

Number of households with:

- No children: 2,421
- One dependent child: 481
- Two or more dependent children: 819

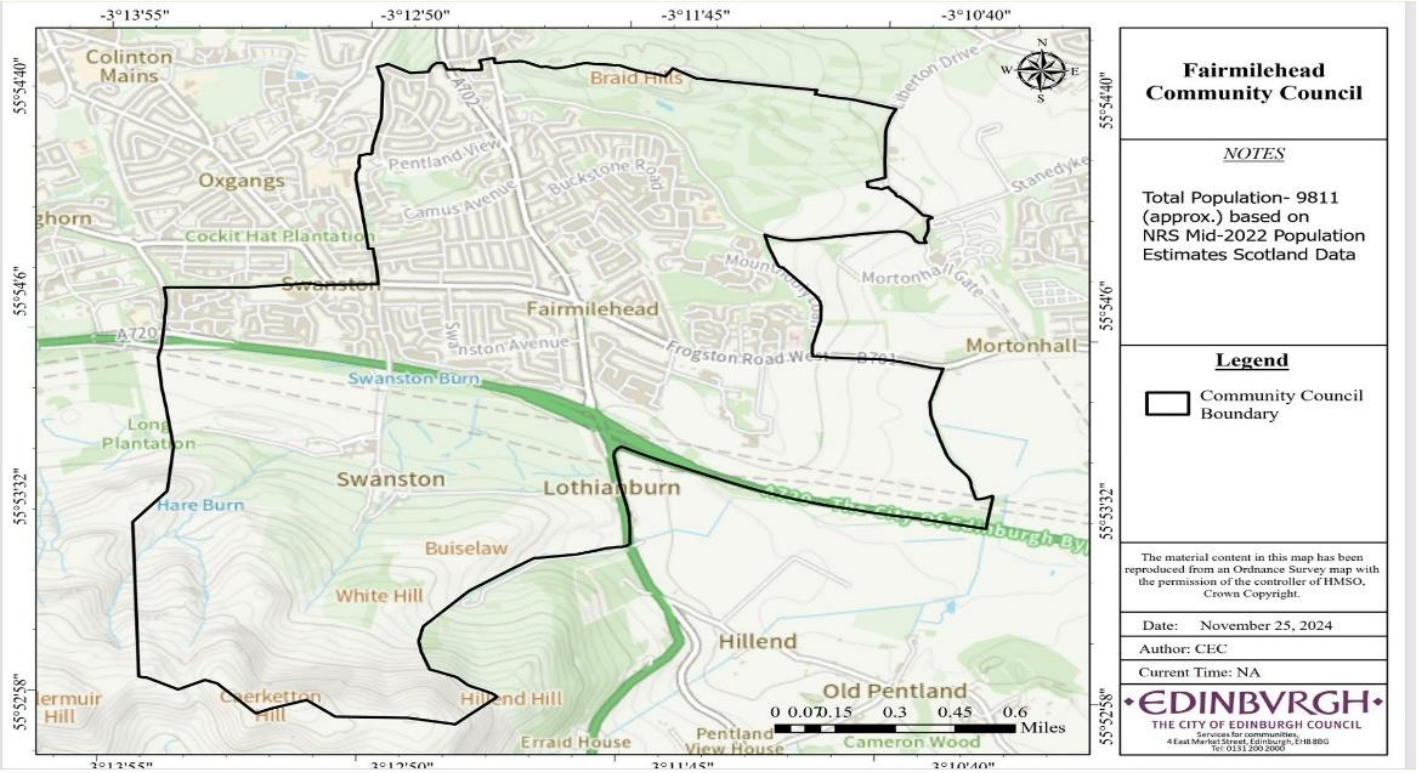
Demographics summary



Source (and further statistics) can be found at:

[Area profile dashboard – The City of Edinburgh Council]

Map of Fairmilehead Community Council boundary



Source:

https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/36007/fairmilehead-cc-boundary-effective-28-mar-2025

3.3 FAIRMILEHEAD 'PLACE INVENTORY'

FAIRMILEHEAD might be mostly (low-rise) housing, but it is not entirely without other neighbourhood elements, including a GP practice and shops.

Fairmilehead contains a broad range of community assets, including:

Education: Buckstone Primary School, Pentland Primary School, Boroughmuir High School, Firrhill High School, Cranley Nursery and Fairmile Nursery (on Oxgangs Road);

Healthcare: Braids Medical Practice, Boots pharmacy and Fairmilehead Dental Practice;

'Green spaces': Fairmilehead Park, Buckstone Park, Waterboard Field (Brough Park), The Knoll Community Woodland, Buckstone Woods and easy access to the Pentland Hills;

Community facilities: Fairmilehead Community Council, Fairmilehead Parish Church, St Fillan's Church and Buckstone Association;

Recreation and leisure: Swanston Golf Club, Swanston Farm Ltd, Mortonhall Golf Club, Pentland Hills walking routes, fitness activities and equestrian facilities; and

Historic locations: Morton House category A-listed building, Comiston House (on Camus Avenue - pictured), Comiston Farm House (on Pentland View), The Caiy Stane (Caiystane View), The Buck Stane (Braid Road) and Swanston Village.

Fairmilehead Community Council identifies these buildings and landmarks as being of particular historical interest and asks that their significance is recognised in City Plan 2040, and in the determination of any development application affecting them or their setting.



4. LOCAL PLACE PLAN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

THE Local Place Plan was produced through five data-gathering exercises:

- **Main resident survey (Online Survey No.1);**
- **Community consultation meeting;**
- **Youth engagement, including a dedicated youth survey (Online Survey No.2);**
- **Stakeholder discussions with major landowners; and**
- **Views of FCC 'members' (ie elected and co-opted representatives)**

In total, this Local Place Plan engagement exercise carried out by Fairmilehead Community Council involved 237 responses to an initial online survey, five responses to an online survey aimed specifically at young people, 25 attendees at a special in-person meeting of the community council and over 2,700 views of dedicated Local Place Plan content on TheFairmile fortnightly eNewsletter. There were also 94 objections to a planning-in-principle application submitted for offices owned by Scottish Water, on Buckstone Terrace (see elsewhere in this document, for details).

Of the 237 respondents to the initial online survey, some skipped individual questions.

5. FIRST DATA-GATHERING EXERCISE – ONLINE SURVEY No.1

PRECEDED by a significant amount of public relations activity, the main survey was undertaken between November 30 last year and January 15 this year and received 237 responses.

Promotion included printed leaflets, social media engagement, mainstream media engagement, community meetings and coverage through TheFairmile.Substack.com newsletter, which at the time had circa 350 subscribers.

A specific post on TheFairmile, announcing the survey launch, received 1,222 views.

Some 169 responses came via TheFairmile Substack website and 50 via a specially-prepared and distributed leaflet (a QR code was included to harvest 'take-ups').

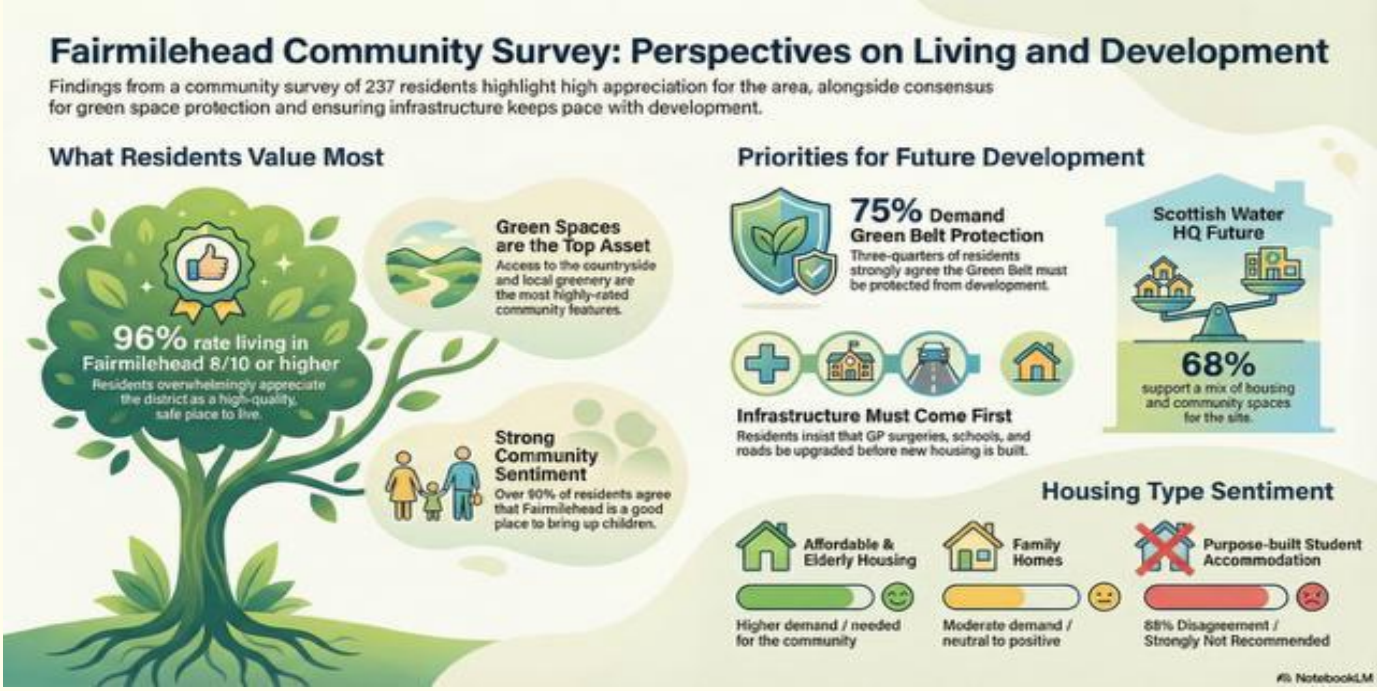
The survey combined multiple-choice questions with space for comments. With the benefit of hindsight, one topic that could have been included in the survey, but wasn't, was the climate challenge.

5.1 MAIN SURVEY FINDINGS

RESIDENTS expressed extremely high satisfaction with living in Fairmilehead, generating a weighted average score of 9.09 out of ten.

The highest-rated local assets included:

- **'Green spaces';**
- **Access to countryside;**
- **Access to the city bypass;**
- **Local schooling and childcare;**
- **Healthcare provision; and**
- **Churches and community activities.**



5.2 IN MORE DETAIL

1. Protection of 'green spaces'

The clearest finding from the consultation was the importance of 'green space'.

Residents repeatedly identified the Pentland Hills, the Waterboard Field, Buckstone Park, Mortonhall estate and woodland areas throughout the district.

These spaces were viewed as fundamental to Fairmilehead's identity and quality of life.

2. Infrastructure before development

Many respondents stated that existing infrastructure already experiences pressure.

Particular concerns included: GP capacity, dental provision, schools capacity, road congestion and public transport.

Residents consistently argued that future development should only proceed alongside corresponding infrastructure improvements.

3. Traffic and Transport

Transport emerged as one of the most commonly-raised concerns.

Issues highlighted included: congestion around Hillend and Biggar Road, bypass junction delays, public transport reliability, pedestrian safety, road maintenance and road crossing facilities.

4. Community facilities

Respondents identified a need for: improved leisure and retail facilities, enhanced play provision, community meeting spaces, local cafés and social spaces and activities for older people and young people.

5. Sense of place

Many comments reflected a desire to preserve Fairmilehead's established character while accommodating carefully-managed change. Residents frequently described the area as safe, attractive and family-oriented.

This summary was based on specific questions and responses in the survey, a breakdown analysis of which is listed below, in Appendix One, converted into charts (Appendix Two) and followed by participant comments (Appendix Three).

In broad statistical terms, the following conclusions emerge from the findings:

- **75.42 per cent strongly agree that 'green spaces' must be protected from any form of development;**
- **27.35 per cent either agree or strongly agree that more affordable housing for lower-income households is needed;**
- **There is fairly strong opposition to high-density housing, with 67.66 per cent of respondents either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with it;**
- **There is mostly neutral support for 'granny flats' (or adjacent properties to assist households with caring responsibilities);**
- **Residents argue that all city brownfield sites should be exhausted before any 'Green Belt' land is considered;**

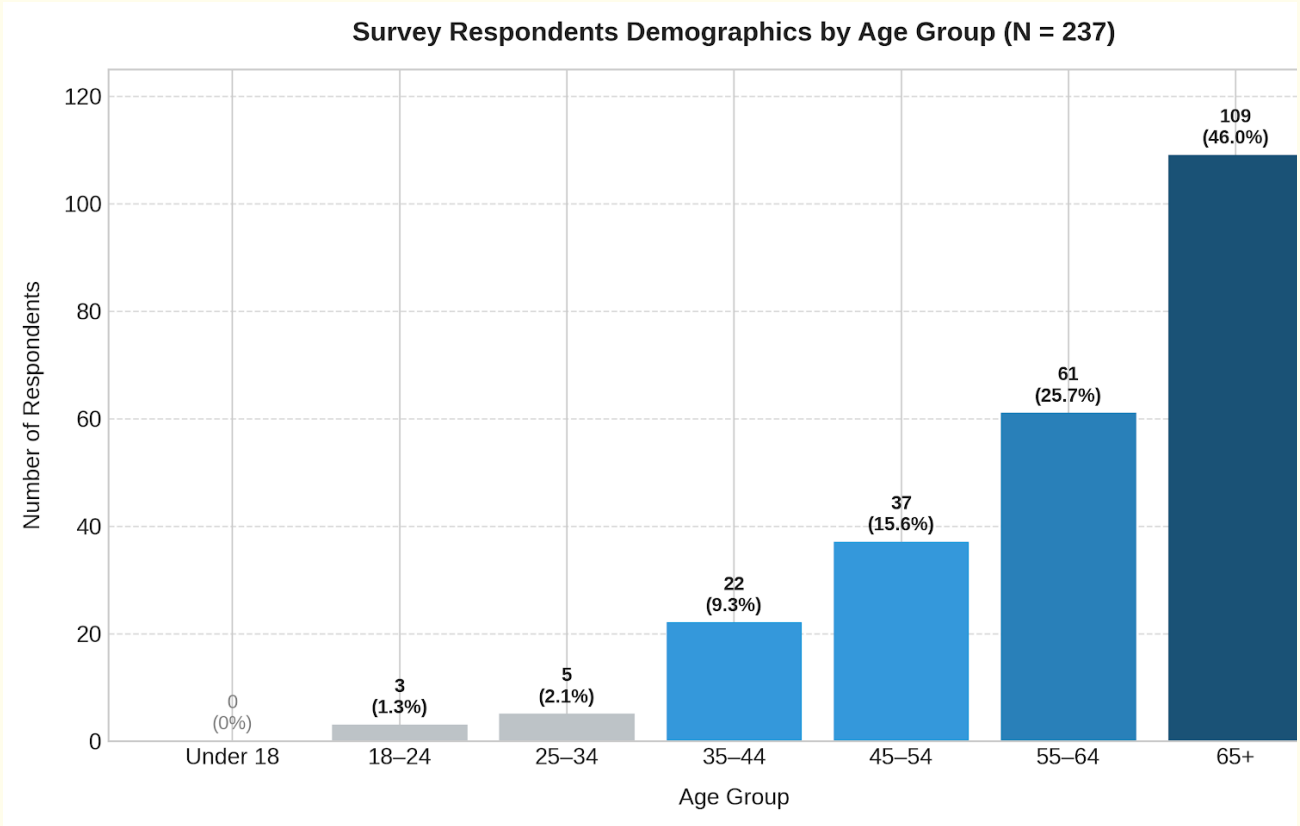
- **A dominant sentiment is that developers should be mandated to complete essential infrastructure (GPs, schools, shops, etc) prior to selling new homes - indeed, be encouraged to co-design proposed new homes with the community council;**
- **Concerns were raised that increasing density and 'low-quality' developments would ruin the established residential character of areas like Buckstone;**
- **There is a strong desire for the Fairmilehead Community Council (FCC) to have a formal, influential role in the planning process;**
- **There is a strong belief that developers should first consult the Fairmilehead Community Council regarding any 'Section 75' infrastructure or financial contributions;**
- **Almost 60 per cent of respondents agree or strongly agree that their elected representatives have the best interests of the area at heart;**
- **Residents reported difficulties registering with local GPs, with some forced to travel several miles to other, usually previous, practices. There is a strong demand for an expanded health centre or an additional NHS dentist;**
- **While Buckstone Primary School is seen as an asset, there are concerns regarding future capacity and the physical condition of the building. Residents expressed a desire for a new high school in south-west Edinburgh, mainly to relieve pressure on Boroughmuir High School;**
- **Many residents feel the area lacks a 'heart'. There is a notable absence of local shops, cafes, independent restaurants and libraries; and**
- **A lack of 'local hubs' is particularly felt by older people and those without cars, who find it difficult to travel into town for social activities.**

5.3 THE DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

THE survey was completed mostly by older people, with 45.76 per cent of respondents describing themselves as aged 65-plus and 25.85 per cent describing themselves as aged 55-64.

Meanwhile, none of the respondents described themselves as aged under 18, three between 18-24, five x 25-34, 22 x 35-44, 37 x 45-54, and 61 x 55-64.

The eight people who described themselves as aged below 35 represented 3.38 per cent of the overall sample.



6. SECOND DATA-GATHERING EXERCISE – COMMUNITY MEETING

THE second data-gathering exercise was a special in-person Local Place Plan meeting of the Fairmilehead Community Council, in April this year (promoted in an edition of The Fairmile newsletter which received 772 views), and which attracted an audience of circa 25.

A dedicated dog exercising park - perhaps involving the charging of an entrance fee - was one of at least three ideas discussed at the meeting.

Another idea was public seating in Brough Park, in Buckstone (which might be possible by approaching an already-operating community projects fund), while a general store open until 10pm and the establishment of a gym was also briefly mentioned.

By correspondence, there was an appeal for 'affordable' sheltered housing on the Scottish Water site.

In addition, there was general concern that the district's physical assets - not least its 'green spaces' and listed buildings - be protected against development.

In summary: a dedicated dog exercise facility, improved park facilities, public seating, additional retail provision, gym and leisure facilities and 'affordable' sheltered housing.

7. THIRD DATA-GATHERING EXERCISE – YOUTH ENGAGEMENT and ONLINE SURVEY No.2

RECOGNISING that no 'young person' had completed the first online survey conducted (between November 30 last year and January 15 this year) by the community council, a second, tailored survey was launched specifically for them.

The survey ran for a month, up to July 11 this year, during which time the head teachers of four local schools - Boroughmuir High, Buckstone Primary, Firrhill High and Pentland Primary - were asked to share details to their Fairmilehead cohort (sadly, not every school confirmed whether they had done so).

In addition, a 'summer edition' of The Fairmile (viewed 757 times) urged readers to bring the survey to the attention of any young person they knew.

The survey had been preceded by a two-person delegation from the community council to Buckstone Primary School, in March this year, to speak to year seven pupils - from whom there was a lot of energetic engagement.

This revealed a desire for age-appropriate play facilities, additional sports and leisure infrastructure (cargo net, an 'astro pitch', a zip line, a basketball court, 'monkey' bars, a helter skelter, a fixed table-tennis table and a bigger basket swing than is currently there), 'better' places to meet friends, more leisure opportunities, the protection of 'green spaces', improved cycling facilities and 'better' lighting in some locations.

Young respondents generally reported feeling safe in Fairmilehead and valued its quiet environment and sense of community.

Statements included: There is a sense of community, everyone knows each other and it feels safe - the 'green spaces' are important - there needs to be proper bike trails - it's nice having friends living close by - there are not enough places to kick a ball about - the potholes make cycling difficult - there needs to be better lighting at 'the woods' and at 'the Knoll' - there needs to be more information about the former water pumping station near Buckstone Terrace.

Once the online survey deadline had been reached - on July 11, 1pm - a total of just five responses had been submitted. Three were aged 12 and under and the other two were aged 16-18. Four boys and one 'rather not say'.

The responses can be found in Appendix Four.

8. FOURTH DATA-GATHERING EXERCISE – LOCAL LANDOWNERS

THE community council's commitment to engaging with local people was extended - in May - to the district's main landowners: Alastair McClung (Swanston Farm Ltd) and Henry Trotter (Mortonhall Estate).

Both men were offered the opportunity to each provide an appendix to this document (Appendices Six and Seven), because of their potentially significant influence over the area's future.

Discussions with both landowners highlighted the importance of balancing environmental stewardship, public access and long-term economic viability.

Both gentlemen emphasised their commitment to maintaining public access, while recognising that agricultural incomes alone are insufficient to support modern estate operations.

Diversification - through recreation, hospitality and other appropriate activities - was identified as increasingly important.

Both landowners had taken part - as individual respondents - in the main online LPP survey (ie Online Survey No.1) conducted by the community council over the festive period.

However, notwithstanding this, the community council considered it necessary to reach out to each of them, on account of their significant land holdings either in the area itself or very close by. It was not to provide any form of preferential treatment.

From the in-person meeting, it soon became clear that both entities are highly committed to maintaining and improving public access (paths, etc) to their land.

8.1 SWANSTON FARM LTD KEY POINTS



IN the case of Swanston Farm Ltd, its diversification has been mainly about hospitality, accommodation and recreation (such as equestrianism, golf and leisure walking trails).

This comes as no surprise since its land - in the foothills of the Pentland Hills - does not easily lend itself to large-scale housing developments.

Operating on the basis that each commercial approach is considered on its own merits, Swanston Farm Ltd has been the base for many local businesses since the late 1990's.

As a tenant of Swanston Farm Ltd, Swanston Golf Ltd operates a golf shop within the ground floor of the Swanston Farm's brasserie. The wider golfing offer includes the historic 18-hole Swanston Golf Course, the Templar Short Course, and a driving range incorporating a golf academy and custom club-fitting services – providing a comprehensive range of golfing and recreational facilities.

In addition, to providing business accommodation, Swanston Farm offers holiday-letting facilities that attract visitors from the local area, across the UK and internationally.

The farm's Highland cattle are also a popular attraction, drawing tourists and contributing to the area's visitor appeal.

Recently, it submitted a planning application – now withdrawn - for a new-build property immediately adjacent to the former Lothianburn Golf Club clubhouse (reference: 26/01575/FUL on The City of Edinburgh Council's planning applications portal). This planning application is expected to be resubmitted, accompanied by the additional information requested by the planning authority.

Should a need be identified, through future assessments of community demand, Swanston Farm says it may bring forward proposals for additional leisure and recreational facilities that support and complement the existing provision operated by Midlothian Council - contributing to the diversity and resilience of the area's recreational offer.

8.2 MORTONHALL ESTATE KEY POINTS



MEANWHILE, at Mortonhall Estate, there is not only a collection of important historic buildings, some dating back to the 18th century, but also a camping and caravan site, associated convenience store, a public bar and restaurant (Mortonhall Stable Bar & Restaurant) and a garden centre (operated by Klondyke) - as well as a concession farm shop, selling organic vegetables amongst other products. These provide many useful facilities for the community and visitors to Edinburgh.

Its recent planning history has been mainly about energy, tourism, hospitality and housing proposals.

In 2014, a planning application (reference 14/05137/FUL, on the city council's planning applications portal) for 18 houses located 105m east of 48 Frogston Road West was refused - first, by the city council and upheld, by the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals (reference PPA-230-2150). More recently (but the exact dates are not known), an attempt to promote land east of Mounthooly Loan to be designated for housing in the city council's then Local Development Plan (City Plan 2030) was not supported by the council.

And a 'planning-in-principle' application in 2024 for 400 homes - earmarked for land some 200m south of 4 Mortonhall Park Gardens (reference 24/01525/PPP on the city council's planning portal) was withdrawn just before it was due to be considered by the city council's Development Management sub-committee.

The viability of Mortonhall Estate is not just about being able to maintain and improve public access to its land, but also to maintain the estate's historic built infrastructure and environment. Mr Trotter said he was open to the idea of learning more about 'co-designing' but, given what he'd heard at the meeting, he was unsure how this could be delivered in practice.

With regard to the historic properties on the Mortonhall Estate, Mr Trotter expressed the view that the city's conservation guidance / regulations merited being brought up to date to enable viable investment and repurposing of the historic built environment for economic use today, that will help sustain the area for the future. He suggested the guidance and regulations, as they stand, are 20-plus years' old and do not encourage viable repurposing (of buildings that were built for a different era).

9. FIFTH DATA-GATHERING EXERCISE – Some views from FCC elected representatives (in alphabetical order)

James Adams - Pentlands Community Grants Fund Panel

Fairmilehead has almost everything except a heart. Residents told us plainly what is missing: local shops, a cafe, a library, somewhere simply to meet. This is felt keenly by older neighbours and by anyone without a car. My hope is a small, walkable local centre, and the Scottish Water site is the obvious opportunity. Not a retail park; just a few good places within walking distance of home.

Amanda Dovesi - Pentland Hills Consultative Forum

In the UK, currently, there are more dogs than there are children aged below 16. We have many recreational and leisure facilities in 'green spaces' tailored for children. I believe, therefore, it is now time to consider and give equal importance to structured, safe and secure exercise facilities for dogs in south Edinburgh, to provide and improve animal welfare, societal enrichment and wellbeing for our communities.

Janice Pauwels – Transport officer

Fairmilehead has seen a considerable increase in congestion from cars at the Fairmilehead Church junction down to the city bypass. I would like to see ongoing monitoring of traffic levels in the area and thinking, 'out the box' to reduce congestion, develop more sustainable transport options and stop 'rat running' in local streets. More provision for cycle routes locally and safer pedestrian routes are also needed.

Stella Thomson - Engagement and Inclusion officer (and also Morningside Funding Panel)

My imagined future (1) has a central community space, offering much-needed provision for classes, meetings and charities, such as a tool library and a community cargo bike library; (2) is where people take more of a share in improving our valuable green spaces; and (3) is where neighbourhood-designed quietened routes connect to schools, play parks and wider cycle infrastructure, enabling child independence and giving adults access to leisure and work.

Mike Wilson - Local Place Plan sub-committee lead and editor of TheFairmile.Substack.com

If Fairmilehead ends up being identified as suitable for more housing, my fervent wish is that it is designed as a 'sustainable neighbourhood', as articulated at some length on my other website, BuildEdinburgh.com.

10. SCOTTISH WATER OFFICE SITE – (on Buckstone Terrace)



THERE is currently just the one 'planning issue' of significance in the area: the disposal of large offices operated and owned by Scottish Water, on Buckstone Terrace.

However, at the time of writing, its progress had just reached a planning-in-principle application (reference 26/02900/PPP on the city's planning applications portal).

That said, two public consultation events, hosted by Scottish Water - as part of a Proposal of Application Notice - attracted lots of local engagement among residents.

Views harvested during the main online survey (Online Survey No.1) about the Scottish Water site varied considerably regarding future uses, with suggestions including: housing, mixed-use development, community facilities, healthcare services, educational uses, recreation facilities and employment space.

Despite differing views on specific outcomes, several common principles emerged, including:

- **Community engagement should continue throughout the planning process and infrastructure implications must be carefully assessed;**
- **Community benefits should form part of any redevelopment proposal; and**
- **The site's strategic importance warrants a 'high-quality' design response.**

As a reflection of community concerns, FCC submitted an 'objection' to the PPiP - not an objection to the idea of housing on the site, but to the detail of what was being proposed.

Little surprise, therefore, that at the time of writing, some 94 objections had been lodged on The City of Edinburgh Council's planning applications portal, with two comments in support.

The Online Survey No.1 asked respondents to answer questions and comment on the proposed Scottish Water office disposal. These can be found in Appendix Five.

11. DEVELOPMENT PLANS

FAIRMILEHEAD Community Council recognises that, in the main, this Local Place Plan exercise is primarily to help shape the city council's upcoming planning ambitions: City Plan 2040.

It acknowledges that there is already a city council Local Development Plan - City Plan 2030 - just as there is a more Scotland-wide plan: NPF4 (National Planning Framework fourth edition).

But these are both plans already in-situ, already agreed (by The City of Edinburgh Council and the Scottish Parliament, respectively), such that an organisation like Fairmilehead Community Council has no authority to challenge them.

Insofar as Fairmilehead Community Council might have an influence on the city council's upcoming City Plan 2040, this document obviously seeks to feed into that process.

The community council is only aware of the planning-in-principle application re the site of the Scottish Water offices on Buckstone Terrace (see above). It is not aware of any other plots of land that might be available for sale and therefore possible development.

If and when such plots might become available for possible development, the community council will form a view, based on their merits.

12. POLICY PROPOSALS

Retain the 'Green Belt' boundary as currently defined within the Fairmilehead Community Council area

The community council asks that the 'Green Belt' boundary within its area is carried forward unchanged into City Plan 2040. This is the most strongly evidenced position in this plan: 75.4 per cent of respondents strongly agreed that 'green spaces', especially those constituting the 'Green Belt', require vigorous protection against development. Residents consistently argued that the city's brownfield capacity should be exhausted first. This relates to the National Planning Framework (fourth edition) - ie NPF4 - Policy 8 (Green belts) and Policy 9 (Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings).

Designate and protect identified local 'green spaces'

The community council asks that the following are identified and protected as local 'green space' in City Plan 2040: the Waterboard Field (Brough Park), Buckstone Park, Fairmilehead Park, The Knoll Community Woodland and Buckstone Woods. These were named repeatedly and unprompted by residents. The Waterboard Field in particular was described as a well-used space serving Buckstone Primary School, sports groups, families and dog walkers, and as an important link between Biggar Road and the Mortonhall estate. This relates to NPF4 Policies 3, 4, 6, 20 and 21.

Recognise the buildings and features of particular significance identified in Section 3.3

The community council asks that the buildings and features listed in Section 3.3 are recognised as being of particular significance to the local area, and that this is a material consideration in the determination of applications affecting them or their setting. This relates to NPF4 Policy 7 (Historic assets and places).

Require infrastructure capacity to be assessed and secured before occupation of new development

The community council asks that development of a scale material to local services is not permitted in the Fairmilehead area unless capacity (for example, in GP provision, NHS dental provision and school places) has been assessed and, where additional capacity is required, its delivery is secured and phased to precede occupation rather than follow it. This was the dominant view in the consultation, expressed repeatedly and in strong terms. It aligns directly with NPF4 Policy 18 (Infrastructure first).

Support a mixed-use redevelopment of the Scottish Water site, incorporating community and commercial floorspace

The community council supports the redevelopment of the Buckstone Terrace site and asks that City Plan 2040 and any development brief require a mix of uses - including housing, together with community and small-scale commercial or retail floorspace, rather than housing alone. Residents were divided on the preferred use but returned repeatedly to the view that a site of this prominence and scale is an once-in-a-generation opportunity that housing alone would be a waste. Relates to NPF4 Policies 14, 15 and 16.

Identify and support a local centre for Fairmilehead

The community council asks that City Plan 2040 identifies a local centre for Fairmilehead, capable of accommodating small-scale retail, food and drink, and community uses within walking distance of the Buckstone and Fairmilehead residential areas (NPF4 Policy 27). The absence of any such centre was one of the most frequently volunteered comments in the survey, and the resulting isolation is reported as falling hardest on older residents and those without cars. This proposal is the most direct point of alignment between this plan and NPF4 Policy 15 (Local Living and 20-minute neighbourhoods). The Scottish Water site is the most obvious opportunity to deliver it.

Maintain the established low-density residential character of the area

The community council asks that City Plan 2040 supports the retention of the established low-density, low-rise residential character of the Fairmilehead area (NPF4 Policy 16), and that proposals for the 'densification' of individual garden plots are resisted where they would harm the character and amenity of their surroundings. 67.66 per cent of respondents opposed higher-density housing. The community council records, for completeness, that this position sits in tension with the general direction of NPF4.

Require accessible design in new development and in public realm works

The community council asks that new development and public realm works in the area are designed to be usable by people with limited mobility, including the provision of dropped kerbs, level access and seating on pedestrian routes.

Provide for leisure, play, sport and informal meeting space for adults, children and young people

The community council asks that City Plan 2040 supports the provision and improvement of leisure, play, sport and informal meeting space for adults, children and young people in the Fairmilehead area, and that new development of a material scale contributes to it. The community council's engagement exercises noted that a gym and pool were mentioned and children aged over seven years old have nowhere to play ball games. Pupils at Buckstone Primary asked for better play and sports provision, bike trails and improved lighting. Relates to NPF4 Policy 21 (Play, recreation and sport).

13. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, GOING FORWARD

BASED upon the Local Place Plan consultation findings, Fairmilehead Community Council identifies the following strategic priorities:

Priority one

Protect and enhance valued 'green spaces', woodland environments and access to the countryside;

Priority two

Ensure that infrastructure improvements accompany significant new development;

Priority three

Improve transport connectivity, traffic management and road maintenance;

Priority four

Expand opportunities for recreation, leisure and community participation;

Priority five

Support high-quality, community-focused redevelopment of key strategic sites; and

Priority six

Increase opportunities for engagement with young people and under-represented groups.

14. CONCLUSION

THIS Local Place Plan consultation demonstrates that Fairmilehead is a community with a strong sense of identity and attachment to 'place'.

Residents overwhelmingly value the area's 'green' setting, community character and quality of life.

At the same time, consultation participants recognised that change is inevitable and therefore wish future development to be carefully planned, community-informed and supported by appropriate infrastructure.

This report provides a robust evidence base to inform future planning decisions, local advocacy and engagement with The City of Edinburgh Council's City Plan 2040.

Fairmilehead's future should build upon the qualities that residents already value, while ensuring that the area remains sustainable, inclusive and resilient for future generations.

15. WITH THANKS

A HUGE thank you should go to the dedicated sub-committee of the Fairmilehead Community Council, which met regularly to map out how to best produce its Local Place Plan.

And to the wider community council, under the energetic leadership of its secretary, Colin Anderson.

Also, thank you to all residents of all ages in the community for their time and effort to complete the local place plan surveys and for attending our meetings, without whose insightful views and comments this document would not be possible. This includes pupils and teachers at Buckstone Primary School.

Thanks too to Alastair McClung, of Swanston Farm Ltd, for providing financial support, thus enabling the production of many of the LPP materials. And to both Alastair and Henry Trotter for attending our landowner meeting and providing us with their valuable input and perspectives within the community.

This document was in large part written by Mike Wilson, with extensive input from Amanda Dovesi.

A draft copy of this Local Place Plan, and accompanying Information Notice, was issued to local elected members and neighbouring community councils on 22nd September 2026, with a 28-day window for comment.

APPENDIX ONE

ONLINE SURVEY NO.1 - IN NUMBERS

From one to ten (one being at the low end and ten being at the top end), how much do you like and appreciate living in Fairmilehead? 10/10 (ten out of ten the most popular answer, receiving a percentage mark of 44.49 per cent);

From one to ten (one being at the low end and ten being at the top end), how much do you like and appreciate the following 'community assets':

The several 'green spaces' in the district 10/10 (ten out of ten the most popular answer, receiving a percentage mark of 63.56 per cent);

Access to health services 10/10 (ten out of ten the most popular answer, receiving a percentage mark of 39.83 per cent);

Access to sport and leisure services 8/10 17.09 per cent;

Access to playparks for children 8/10 14.89 per cent;

Access to food, etc shops 10/10 33.62 per cent;

Access to schooling / childcare 10/10 16.6 per cent;

Access provision for people with a physical disability 5/10 9.05 per cent;

The parish churches 10/10 16.17 per cent;

The community events hosted in the church annexes 10/10 15.32 per cent;

The bus services 10/10 35.59 per cent;

Access to the countryside outside the city bypass 10/10 54.7 per cent;

Access to the bypass 10/10 54.04 per cent; and

Access to pastimes and hobbies 10/10 21.89 per cent.

To the following statements, please state whether you Strongly disagree / disagree / neutral / agree / or strongly agree…

Fairmilehead's 'green spaces', especially those that constitute the 'Green Belt', require to be vigorously protected against any form of development: 'Strongly agree' was the most popular answer, receiving 75.43 per cent of the vote (weighted average 4.51);

Fairmilehead should be kept exactly as it currently is: 'Agree' was the most popular answer, receiving 30.21 per cent (weighted average 3.5);

Fairmilehead needs more nursing / residential care provision 'Neutral' 44.44 per cent (weighted average 3.47);

Fairmilehead needs more schooling / childcare provision: 'Not applicable' 34.75 per cent (weighted average 4.22);

Fairmilehead needs more traffic-calming provision: 'Disagree' 28.39 per cent (weighted average 2.96);

Fairmilehead needs more provision for people with a physical disability: 'Neutral' 34.47 per cent (weighted average 4.31);

Fairmilehead needs more dog-walking and dog-exercise facilities: 'Disagree' 28.81 per cent (weighted average 3.02);

Fairmilehead needs more activities specifically for young people: 'Agree' 41.15 per cent (weighted average 4.18);

Fairmilehead needs more housing of all tenures: 'Disagree' 32.2 per cent (weighted average 2.61);

Fairmilehead needs more single-household homes: 'Neutral' 42.31 per cent (weighted average 2.72);

Fairmilehead needs more two-person homes: 'Neutral' 46.15 per cent (weighted average 2.83);

Fairmilehead needs more family homes: 'Neutral' 41.63 per cent (weighted average 2.71);

Fairmilehead needs purpose-built student accommodation: 'Strongly disagree' 60.68 per cent (weighted average 1.56);

Fairmilehead needs higher-density housing (as opposed to low-density detached and semi-detached housing), if only to create the critical population mass to enable local services to flourish: 'Strongly disagree' 37.45 per cent (weighted average 2.11);

Fairmilehead needs more housing that comprises a main home plus an 'adjacent', separate property (aka 'granny flat') to assist households with caring responsibilities: 'Neutral' 38.03 per cent (weighted average 2.9);

Fairmilehead needs more housing that is 'affordable', for lower-income households: 'Neutral' 29.91 per cent (weighted average 2.76);

Prospective housing developers should be obliged to co-design any plans they might have for the district, with the Fairmilehead Community Council: 'Agree' 50.64 per cent (weighted average 4.31); and

Prospective developers should be obliged to consult with Fairmilehead Community Council with regard to infrastructure or financial contributions (aka Section 75 requirements): 'Strongly agree' 57.87 per cent (weighted average 4.45).

To the following statements, please state whether you Strongly disagree / disagree / neutral / agree / or strongly agree…

I am reassured that our elected representatives (community council, local councillors, etc) have the best interests of Fairmilehead at heart: 'Agree' was the most popular answer, receiving 48.09 per cent of the vote (weighted average 3.57);

I feel safe in Fairmilehead: 'Agree' was the most popular answer, receiving 59.57 per cent of the vote (weighted average 4.19);

Fairmilehead is a good place to bring up children: 'Strongly agree' 46.19 per cent (weighted average 4.66);

Fairmilehead is a good place to grow old: 'Agree' 55.27 per cent (weighted average 4.08);

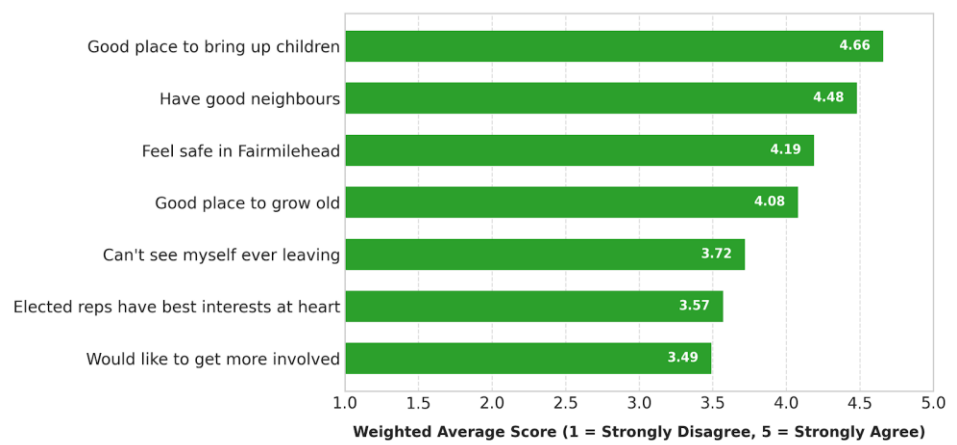
I have good neighbours: 'Strongly agree' 55.13 per cent (weighted average 4.48);

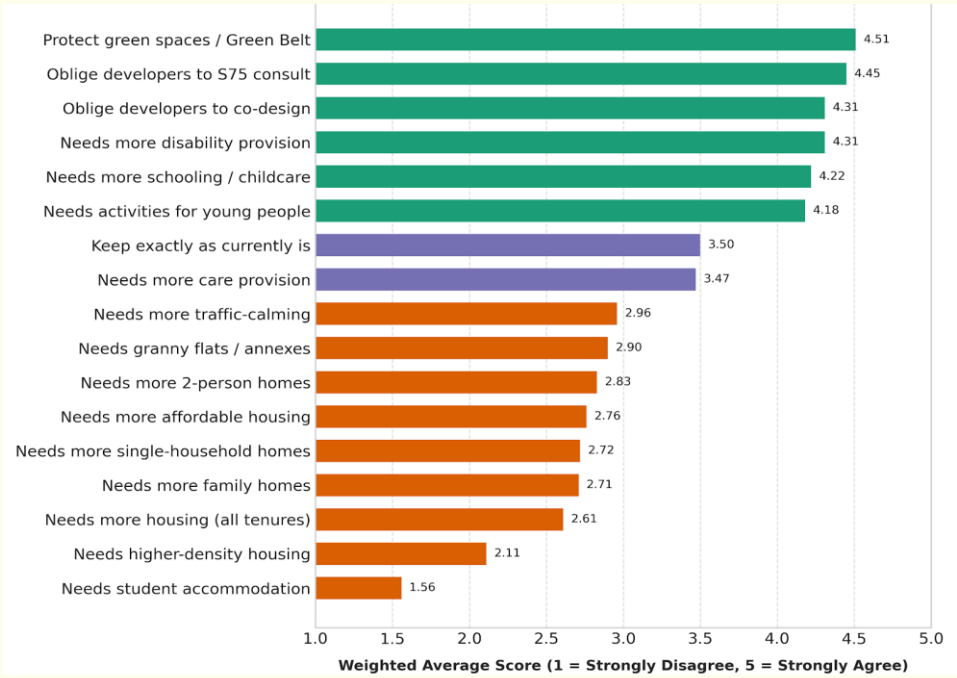
I can't see myself ever leaving Fairmilehead: 'Agree' 31.06 per cent (weighted average 3.72); and

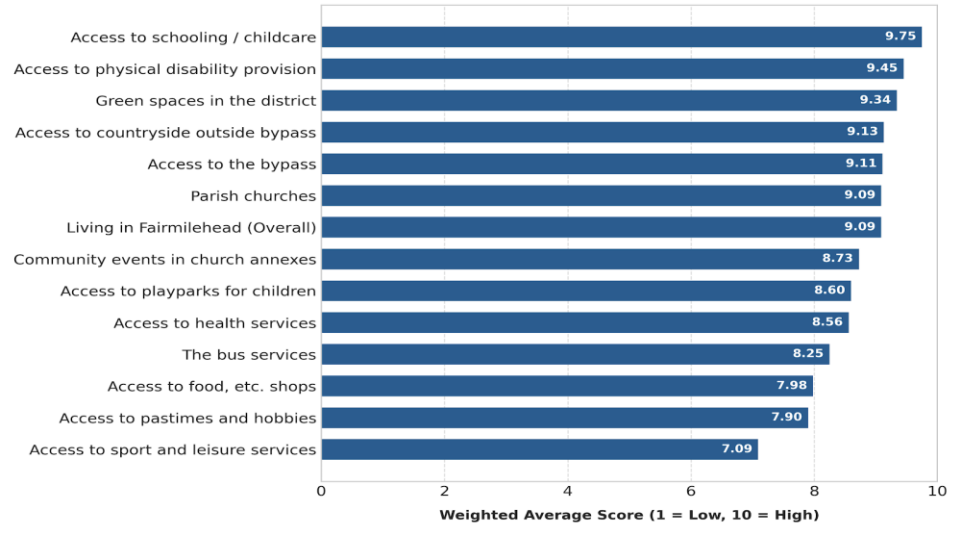
I would like to become more involved in community activities, such as woodland management, litter picking, helping out at the Fairmilehead Community Council, etc: 'Agree' 48.09 per cent (weighted average 3.49).

APPENDIX TWO

ONLINE SURVEY NO.1 - IN CHARTS







APPENDIX THREE

ONLINE SURVEY NO.1 - IN WORDS BY SUBJECT MATTER

Green space, woodland and parks

The number of 'green spaces', woodland areas and the parks are what make Fairmilehead so special and a supports healthy lives for families and children. The Mortonhall estate is easily accessible and a valuable resource for not only Fairmilehead but the wider area. Building on this land would severely change the nature of the area. The waterboard field and Buckstone Park are well used and deserve ongoing investment to encourage ongoing usage. Traffic management measures at Hillend / Damhead have had a negative impact right back beyond the bypass and requires better consideration. Pockets of small shops are better than one big one, providing variety and minimal impact on the area. We value the ability of the kids to walk to school (Buckstone) on their own without crossing any main roads. The area has a very good bus service, which is valuable.

'Green spaces' should remain exactly that. Brownfield sites should he considered for any future building requirements even if the area isn't as profitable for the developers.

All the city's brownfield sites should be used before there is any thought of building in the 'Green Belt'. The 'Green Belt;' was put in place to save the countryside and green areas; once lost, it is irreplaceable.

I feel sad that, despite having many 'green spaces' in Fairmilehead, children over seven cannot use them for ball games. Especially in an age we are trying to encourage children to get off electronics and get outside. This is unfair for children who aren't yet old enough to walk themselves to the play park.

I don't think Fairmilehead needs more houses. Buckstone Park needs renovated; it could be a great place for families to go but it's not great at the moment. Wraparound care for Pentland PS is very difficult to secure, this needs to be addressed.

I think we should have dedicated secure dog parks in the community, which would benefit dog walkers and the wider population.

I live in the Margaret Rose Estate and volunteer / work in the grounds regularly, to keep it looking nice. Hence, I am not really available to help elsewhere. Sorry. We have the playground for young children open to all. We get hundreds of dog walkers who use the private woodland on Margaret Rose Drive and who walk over the grass nearby and often let their dogs leave 'presents' for us to clear up but do nothing to help preserve it and the mature trees there. It would be nice if we could have some assistance in these areas, if possible, please.

Investment in the play parks and preservation of the current 'green' and woodland areas.

The Waterboard Field - as it is known, locally - is a well-utilised space, by Buckstone Primary School, sports groups and the local community - particularly kids and dog walkers. It is a space that parents are happy to let kids walk to themselves and is a very visible area, creating an easy link between Biggar Road and the Mortonhall estate. I would strongly encourage this to be preserved and investment continued.

Better parks for children and more outdoor activities for children - outdoor play is better for mental health and takes them off tablets.

There should be a presumption against development on 'green space'.

Better provision of play park equipment, especially Buckstone Park.

Perhaps a car park for commuters could be incorporated when the waterboard building, etc is developed.

Timber-built housing in newly-planted woodland would be welcome in the field spaces within the city bypass.

Infrastructure, schools and health provision

The Fairmilehead area is at maximum capacity - the available infrastructure is not coping with the number of residents / homes as it is. The high level of traffic is polluting the area, sound pollution is high, the number of dog walkers is at an all-time high, the current pavements have already been improved for people with disabilities. It's time to preserve what we have and repair what needs repairing!

Fairmilehead can't cope with anymore development and this is evidenced with the traffic, school class sizes and doctors' waiting lists.

While some change is needed to ensure Fairmilehead grows and thrives, it needs to be closely regulated to ensure the needs of local residents are met. Simply improving the transport infrastructure would create a more affluent and well-balanced community.

Consideration needs to be given to public transport, particularly at 'risk hour' and for the many schools that feed into the area!

Any new development should have mandatory infrastructure contributions (school, GP, shops, etc...).

When considering new housing applications Edinburgh city council's planning department should take a more critical view of the impact on local services and infrastructure.

Lack of dropped kerbs in Buckstone make it more difficult for elderly/wheelchair users/ people pushing buggies / people with disabilities. Local GP did not allow me to register, as my previous GP has a large catchment - which I am technically still in even though it is a three-mile drive away, so not practical. Would really like to be able to register more locally as it would be much more convenient to walk to the GP rather than drive (and pay to park), especially with a young family.

Schools / nurseries do not need to be expanded at the moment - Buckstone appears to have capacity, albeit the building is old. But if more homes are built then that would need to be addressed. Also the issue over Boroughmuir High School… if there is more construction in south-west Edinburgh then a new high school will likely be necessary (e.g. at Dreghorn) but that should not redraw catchments for Fairmilehead.

Opposed to loss of 'Green Belt' and 'green' access corridor to development. Critical that any future development includes provision for infrastructure upgrades, including transport, schooling and health care (GP and dental).

Developers should complete infrastructure (GP, chemist, shops, etc) BEFORE they can sell new houses.

An expanded health centre.

Any new development applications must explain how local services can / will be able to support the new developments and ensure current services provided are not overloaded or provide for how these services will not be overloaded.

This is a brilliant area to live in. We should welcome all new residents - but need, for example, more healthcare facilities.

Provision of sheltered housing for elderly / disabled.

Housing, of any kind, alone, is a bad option. Any housing needs to be complemented by new schools, doctors' surgeries and better road infrastructure.

No further new housing development should take place until there is adequate provision of education and health (GP and dentist) to cover any such development. Additionally, given the reliance on Frogston Road (especially when there is a problem on the bypass) developments should not be made which cause further traffic issues in the area.

Building homes without support services (shops, schools, GP, public transport) just makes an area worse for everyone.

Solar panels should be mandatory on all new-builds. Move to eco-friendly builds, such as passive housing. Infrastructure needs improvement.

Bus services - especially frequency - are not fit for purpose. Access to shopping facilities - and many other services - for people with disabilities / without cars are very poor.

Any increase in local housing provision should only be approved alongside commensurate increases in local service provision. For example, new schools, GP surgeries. Additional road access to the bypass should also be built to avoid bottlenecks.

We could do with another doctor and NHS dentist in the area.

We love the community feel of the area and how many of the services you require are on your doorstop or have good bus connections to those located elsewhere.

Awareness of community events could be shared through the local schools, to support local pride in the area. I know the Buckstone headteacher sees the surrounding area as an asset that the school should be actively engaging with.

Without improvement to the bus service, particularly at early and late times, I don't think the infrastructure could take much more development.

We retired from Morningside, after 33 years there, having been in Fairmilehead before for five years with a very young family. A downsizing move to Fairmilehead, especially for family reasons, seemed to be a no-brainer. We have a son and family living reasonably nearby. We're still very happy here, but, as we age, there are quite big potential issues surrounding transport, bus services, taxi service expense and local shopping facilities. GP access is good via a walk (so far), car (so far) and bus (subject to ability to get to / from the stop). Should our health fail, affordable care options in the area (near to some family members) are nil.

A care home or business that would offer employment to a number of younger workers would be appreciated. Something that encourages visitors to explore the Pentlands and all that they have to offer would also be appreciated.

Traffic, transport, roads and active travel

Since the erection of new traffic lights between Fairmilehead, leading into / out of town, the traffic queues have become lengthy. System needs reviewed, urgently.

The lights at the three roads are causing dangerous tailbacks on Biggar Road and on bypass slip roads.

Fairmilehead needs investment in road surfaces and pavements.

Traffic control needed on Oxgangs Road, ie traffic lights and crossing close to Swanston Avenue.

Cycle provision is poor compared to other areas of the city.

Quicker transport to town. More places to eat.

Would like to see pedestrian access improved to get over the bypass at Hillend/ Lothianburn. Would also like to see safer pedestrian crossing over Biggar Road close to Cobbs / Sainsbury's.

Bus links with hospitals, especially the Royal Infirmary, improved. The number 11 could be extended. I have requested this through Edinburgh Transport but was told it was too complicated!

I would not wish to give any answers that suggest there is no room for improvement. Proposals, especially housing, should be judged on their merits. The traffic issue is not traffic calming but traffic volume - a hard one to crack.

Traffic around Buckstone Primary School needs to be limited. Since FCC arranged with the council to have them [planters?] moved, traffic has increased often and the speed and the restricted entry times are ignored. Signage is very poor and it is never policed. In addition, residents have not been consulted.

The lack of thought put into the impact of the traffic lights at Hillend and the three-way junction, beyond, is unbelievable. The traffic impact on people just trying to get to the bypass or Frogston Road at peak times is extremely problematic. The traffic also backs up onto the bypass, because of these changes.

The '20-minute neighbourhood' is a myth in Fairmilehead. It is built around the car and is slave to it – even the bus lanes are slaves to the car up here. The bus service is chronic (especially for pram users) and the local shop infrastructure means there is no way for a community to flourish. Apart from the access to 'green spaces', it is a depressing and isolating neighbourhood to live in.

Primary school needs more playground space. Too long a walk to bus stops for older and disabled people.

I live on Frogston Avenue and am very troubled by the speed of the traffic which goes up and down.

There should be parking facilities for local residential occupiers. At present, the streets - e.g. Buckstone Road - are used by commuters who block access / sight for householders, making it dangerous to move from driveways to the road (can't see oncoming traffic). Present councillor should visit to view the problem before there's an accident.

Traffic control at Hillend requires review. Traffic now backed up into and out of Edinburgh due to new traffic controls at Hillend.

Over the past year few years, there has been an increase in traffic congestion on the main routes through Fairmilehead. This will have knock-on effects on air pollution levels in the area, which is very concerning to me.

The cones for protecting bus lanes should be removed. The speed limits are inconsistently signed and some have wrong signs (e.g. large 30 instead of small repeater).

Reduce the number of traffic calming bumps in Buckstone estate.

Already too many new houses in Fairmilehead. No extra provisions that I'm aware off. Fairmilehead crossroads struggling with amount of traffic.

Would like an X something bus service.

Road crossings on A702 and more prosecutions of dangerous drivers.

The streetscape of Fairmilehead needs important consideration, to make it an attractive place. From clever designing of cycleways to more structured home zones and quality local environments for families. The roads, pavements and streetscape is particularly poor, especially when considered against others. The treatment around the church (parking, pavements quality environment) needs a rethink. This is the centrepiece buy is such poor quality urban realm; it could be beautiful.

The bus facilities must be improved for our young families and the elderly, so they can go to work, into town to spend money, and enjoy leisure time. The same goes for our children and teenagers. They need to be able to travel easily - to the cinema and other leisure and volunteer pursuits - without being hampered by the poor bus service we've had to endure in this area. If there was a better, more reliable bus service, bored teens could do positive things for themselves and society, not be forced to hang around in groups potentially causing problems and having no outlet for just being young. Also very little for our elderly population. There should be more hobby craft-style opportunities and groups they can join. Most of the WEA or Edinburgh adult classes are difficult for them to get to or scheduled in town. There needs to be more available in and around Fairmilehead. We have been neglected for far too long. Especially where transport is concerned.

Roads are in a bad state and constantly being dug up.

The roads are more hazardous since the introduction of bike lanes. The entry to the waterboard field needs to be controlled by lights. Housing developments need to be planned with due regard to the existing social mix of the community.

The road network has been ruined with the cycle lanes, etc. The bus companies feel that more could be done to encourage bus usage and by creating bus lanes, which can be used by cyclists and hire vehicles - much of the problem will be resolved.

Intrusive cycle lanes have spoiled parts of the community.

It is great that the church is a community hub but the accompanying cars - parking and the state of the road in Frogston Avenue - is frustrating.

Increased police activity? Evidence of people drinking in the Biggar Road woods. Better lighting in the cut-through from Biggar Road.

For many homes, it is a lengthy walk to a bus stop.

Fix the roads and improve transport links.

Roads are in a very bad state in our area - many need proper resurfacing, not the current patching which quickly deteriorates again.

Roads need properly maintained. They are in a shocking state around Frogston Road. Church usage impacting on state.

I haven't had anything to do with the community council. However, I am concerned about the personal agendas of some, particularly with regard to cycle lanes.

The 'Green Belt' must be protected. Traffic lights at Frogston / Biggar Road need cameras / lane change / extra light southbound to stop cars coming through on red. No more development - protect and repair what we have! Including the roads, please.

Highways, pathways, drainage should have a programme of maintenance.

Traffic light crossing on Oxgangs Road, closer to Swanston Avenue.

Improved traffic flow on the A720 city bypass, with fewer closures.

Double yellow lines around Frogston junction especially on the Oxgangs Road side, to relieve congestion.

No further development. Road calming in Frogston estate - specifically Frogston Gardens - for all the racing rat-runners that use our estate to try and jump the ever more frequent long queues on Frogston Road, due to congestion on the bypass.

Positive traffic calming, not just bumps in the road. Keep the 'greener' areas and plan for this. The area around Morton Mains should be improved and made visible and accessible for all, with structured walks and 'green space' especially around the tower house. The walks around the fields are hugely important and need to be emphasised. Biggar Road needs improvement; it has become a motorway and what a poor gateway to the city. More leisure uses around the old golf club opposite the petrol filling station.

Access to countryside outside city bypass via bicycle, e.g. Flotterstone, the A702 is very busy and not safe.

Traffic turning right into Buckstone Road, and at waterboard estate from the south, holds up main traffic, due to cycle lane pillars, especially during peak periods.

I would like to see anti-social parking addressed in residential streets, particularly in cul-de-sacs and at turning points.

Housing

More housing, so that young families and professionals can afford homes, is always a benefit to creating a prosperous community.

Fairmilehead will be ruined by having more housing.

Housing is not the issue in the area. We need more large family homes with 'green space' and / or better planning provisions to allow families to do this to existing homes. We also need homes with parking - all our streets are used as park-and-ride, with nowhere for residents to park. Any development must have realistic parking provision.

Not convinced that Fairmilehead needs any more housing. Where?

'Green Belt' land within bypass should be fair game for housing developers with the proviso that some wooded, 'green' parkland spaces are retained / planted.

Fairmilehead does not need any more new houses!

Solar panels should be compulsory on all new housing. Fairmilehead should not have any more housing without significant infrastructure improvements.

There is a wide area with no shops, so more provision is encouraged. More housing is needed in a housing crisis and some of this should be on fields currently 'Green Belt' if we are being realistic about housing need. We should plan for it rather than 'dog whistle' objecting to everything. This should be planned and executed over the next ten years. There should be no battery energy storage inside the bypass.

We do not need more houses.

Housing is needed across the city. Fairmilehead can't be exempt from it.

No further care homes or other institutional buildings.

Low-rise housing, in keeping with existing properties.

Shops, community facilities and things to do

Upgraded playground facilities.

I can only comment on my experience living in Buckstone. It's a very family-oriented area which people usually leave as they get into their 70s and 80s. It's not handy for shops, library, leisure centres unless you have a car.

A few benches in the area would be appreciated by the elderly, as there are nice walks but nowhere to take a rest!

We need more leisure facilities / gym and swimming.

Better activity / sports facilities - would be great to see someone like David Lloyd taking over the Scottish Water building rather than more housing appearing here.

Buckstone is not a great place for old people. Too far away from the shops, such as they are, and library. No community centre, etc.

I'm unclear how to become more involved in community activities.

A community centre with a cafe may be useful.

Indoor bowling, with social space.

Family-oriented cafe / play cafe would be great.

We need more community spaces. It feels like there is no heart.

A library, independent café, indoor market with local food and good-quality pop-up food outlets, community car chargers.

I would invest in a swimming pool!

What and where is the demand for community spaces? A genuine question.

More restaurants / pubs, family-friendly, would be welcome.

Better-quality local shopping facilities.

Character, safety and community life

Fairmilehead is a settled, well-established and desirable residential area. The scope for change is at the margins as new development sites are likely to be rare. In most cases, I would oppose densification on smaller plots as this would be detrimental to the character and amenity of the area.

Fairmilehead has been consistently neglected, since I have lived here over 22 years. Lack of consistent transport and attention to street and road maintenance has been rife. The lack of facilities for children and teenagers - coupled with the lack of cohesive transport - means there is little for them to do that is healthy and interesting; hence the occasional trouble with gangs of youths who cause litter and graffiti. Usually not out of spite but boredom and lack of opportunity. More care needs to be taken to nurture Fairmilehead and ensure it remains a safe and prosperous community for all.

Rising of gang culture in Oxgangs is a concern.

Too many weeds growing out of kerbs and in other parts of the street. It would be good if more people took responsibility for the area outside their own houses and did a bit of weeding. Not everyone is capable of that, but many are. That they don't do it is symptomatic of the lack of community spirit in Fairmilehead as there are too many households where people's concern seems to stop at the end of their garden path.

There should be more rubbish and dog waste bins provided in open areas where dogs are exercised.

Not covered elsewhere but attempted burglaries remain an issue in the area.

Very glad we chose to live here, more or less by accident, 50 years ago.

Other comments

Where I have put 'Neutral', it is because I have limited awareness of the current availability of these provisions (as they don't relate to me just now).

Existing commitments mean being selective about anything extra. We may look for a home elsewhere that ticks the boxes for our final decades.

Good to see a plan of works and strategy as a measure of success.

The country's politics could drive me out of Scotland (and therefore Fairmilehead, but not because of Fairmilehead).

APPENDIX FOUR

ONLINE SURVEY No.2 (Young People)

THE following questions were posed, to respondents aged under 18, with responses:

I feel able to go out, to meet or play with local friends, on my own: three strongly agree, two neither agree nor disagree;

I feel physically safe in Fairmilehead: three strongly agree, one agree and one neither agree nor disagree;

Street lighting in Fairmilehead is adequate: two strongly agree, two agree and one neither agree nor disagree;

Fairmilehead is a place where children and young people can feel safe, regardless of their colour or country of origin: three strongly agree, one agree and one neither agree nor disagree;

I find it easy to get into town from Fairmilehead: two strongly agree, two agree and one neither agree nor disagree;

I find it easy to get to my clubs and societies from Fairmilehead: one strongly agree, one agree and three neither agree nor disagree;

The speed of road traffic in Fairmilehead is acceptable: three agree, one neither agree nor disagree and one disagree;

The volume of road traffic in Fairmilehead is acceptable: one strongly agree, two agree and two neither agree nor disagree;

I find walking / wheeling around Fairmilehead easy: two strongly agree and three agree;

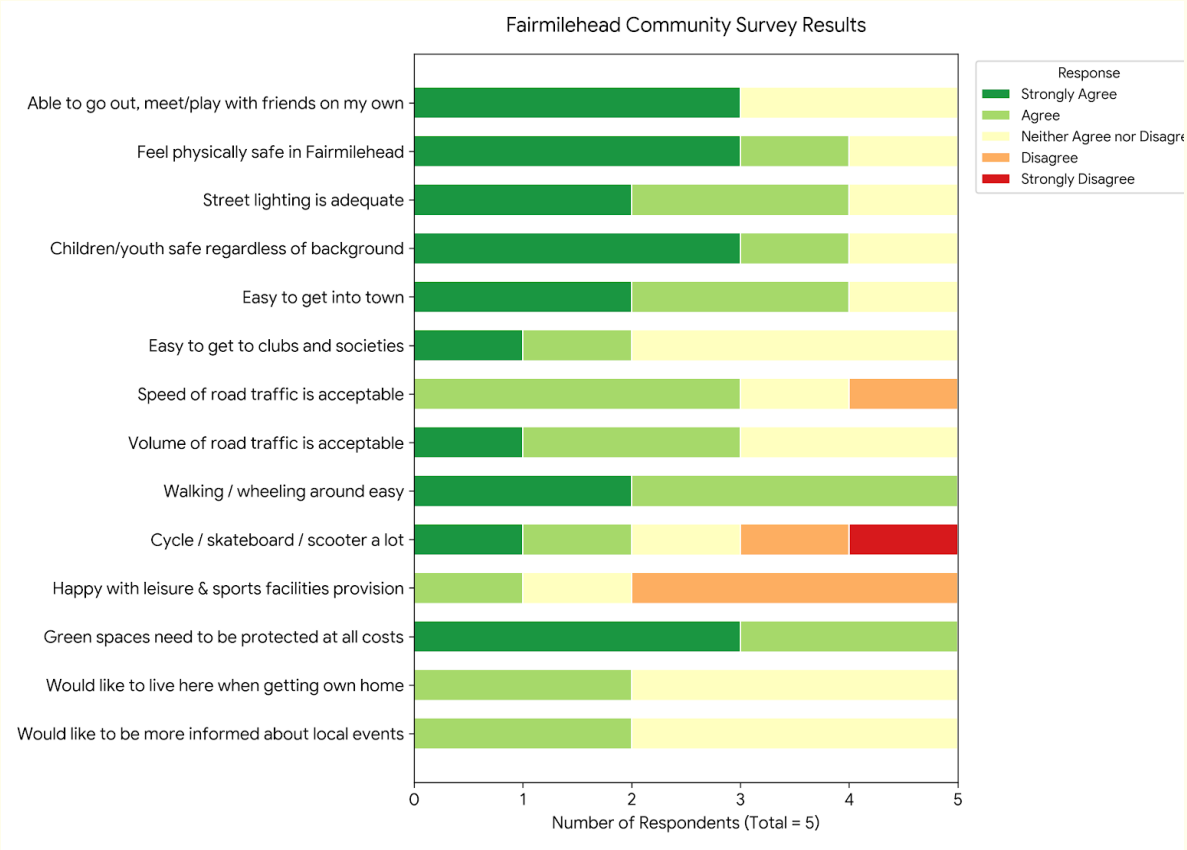
I cycle / skateboard / scooter a lot around Fairmilehead: one strongly agree, one agree, one neither agree nor disagree, one disagree and one strongly disagree;

I am happy with the provision of leisure and sports facilities (play parks, football, tennis, etc): one agree, one neither agree nor disagree and three disagree;

The ‘green spaces’ in Fairmilehead (including its wooded areas) need to be protected at all costs: three strongly agree and two agree;

I would like to live in Fairmilehead when it’s time to get my own home: two agree and three neither agree nor disagree; and

I would like to be more informed about what is happening in Fairmilehead: two agree and three neither agree nor disagree.



APPENDIX FIVE

SCOTTISH WATER OFFICES, answers to questions and comments

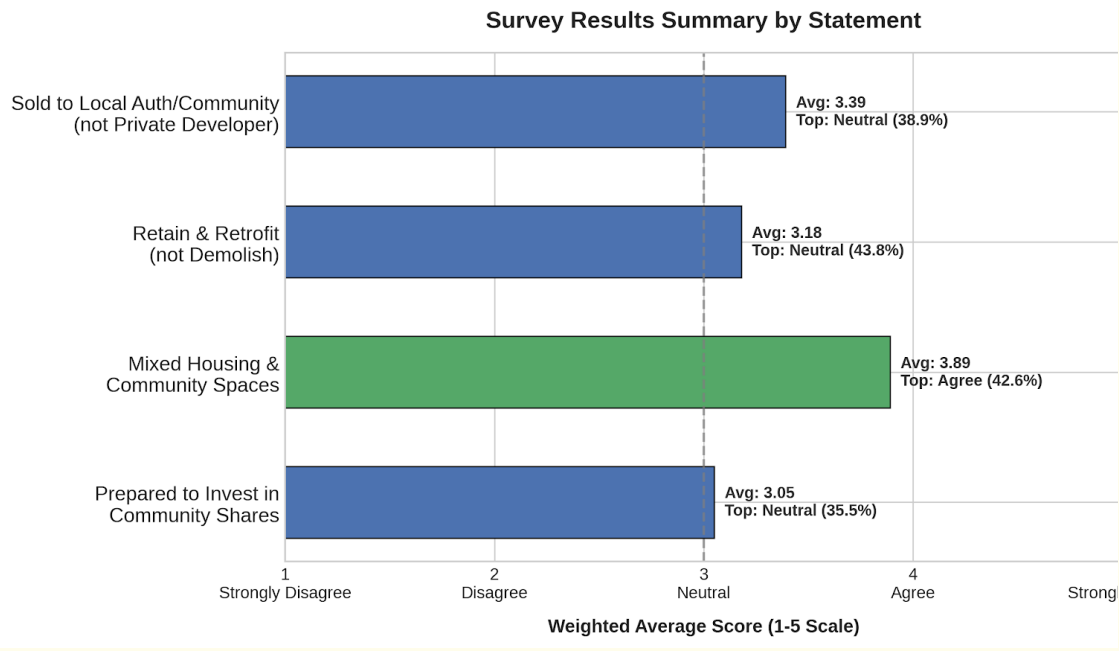
To the following statements, please state whether you Strongly disagree / disagree / neutral / agree / or strongly agree…

The building should be sold to either the local authority or the community, not a private developer: 'Neutral' was the most popular answer, receiving 38.89 per cent of the vote (weighted average 3.39);

The building should be retained and retrofitted, not demolished: 'Neutral' was the most popular answer, receiving 43.83 per cent of the vote (weighted average 3.18);

Whatever fate the building (replaced or refurbished) it should at best comprise both housing and community spaces (e.g. meeting rooms, work spaces, craft studios, etc): Agree 42.55 per cent (weighted average 3.89); and

If a community purchase, I would be prepared to invest in 'community shares': Neutral 35.47 per cent (weighted average 3.05).



This is what the survey respondents said (sub-edited, including for politeness):

A hotel on the site would be bad for the area, changing its nature and spoiling the community feel. It is a very prominent site and a better result would be housing and a community area.

Any development needs vital facilities - nursery, primary school, doctors' surgery, chemist shop, etc. Without these, no development should happen.

We are in great need of short / medium-term convalescent care and long-term / recuperative / stroke / heart attack care. The site would be perfect to provide this kind of facility for people of all ages / groups. It has a car park already.

The use of this land should consider traffic flows and the nature of the surrounding area to support a strong residential and small business community. The likes of a hotel would be at odds with that and not be suitable in such a close-knit community or on such a prominent site. Better use would be for residential purposes, to allow others to benefit from the area's amenities.

Private sector, and not community purchases, is always my preferred option.

The demographic in Fairmilehead is generally older; therefore, it facilities should be mainly for this cohort.

No more housing.

If it is to be used for housing, there needs to be extra facilities, e.g. health.

Wind turbines in water board area.

I don't know what is realistic, affordable or sustainable as regards the Scottish Water building. It doesn't appear to me to have heritage value.

The site provides an once-in-a-generation opportunity to create more community space (e.g. retail / cafe). That should form part of any plan for the site.

I think it would make a good site for a high school for the Buckstone and Pentland primary schools, to take the load off Boroughmuir and Firrhill High Schools and to lessen travel and associated environmental impact. I would like to see it refurbished as such.

I really appreciate the effort to turn this space into what the community needs, but I would be shocked if we don't just end up with more three, four and five-bedroom houses.

Good place to have a new primary school.

The land sits in front of other new-build houses and is a prime location for new housing. Refusing to sell to a private developer, to create more ‘affordable' housing, would make absolutely no sense.

Development of this site as mixed housing (potentially flats, but low-rise) should be prioritised over losing ‘Green Belt’. It should include community facilities (e.g. shops or pub / food), especially as the Charwood bar and restaurant is closing.

If it goes to local authority, it should provide council housing (assuming it has the money to do so).

A community centre.

I would say the site is an eyesore, so redevelopment would be welcome. However, not more housing. We need more accessible spaces; for example, rent-a-space offices would be really attractive in the area.

Difficult to answer, without having an idea of what might be proposed. While community spaces sound good in theory, we wouldn’t want empty spaces sitting there not being used; when they could be good-quality housing, instead. Is there any demand for community spaces, or would it simply compete with the church hall or Pentland CC, for example? More ‘green space’, play space would be good.

Is there is enough unmet demand for community space?

We lack housing for young adults starting out, so we should provide for them.

Could the building and site be used as some kind of health facility?

As a self-employed homeworker, I strongly feel the area lacks any co-working space or even places to visit during the day for a quick meeting or cuppa. We also lack a local gym.

I am not sure how relevant the above questions are as I would have thought - with only six or seven months until Scottish Water moves out - the decision on what is happening to the building and land will have already have been made!

Buckstone Primary would struggle to accommodate more children if the site is converted to housing.

Building should be continued as office space and employment.

No more houses without community provision e.g. childcare providers.

A private developer is the only way to ensure a quality product. Key is the development brief and Section 75 contributions. A community buy-out would be a nightmare; the cost involved to maintain the property year-on-year would simply not work. Important to keep the 'green' edge to the street and perhaps with more local facilities behind before the residential starts.

Sale to anybody but a private developer is highly unlikely so I would be careful not to raise hopes. It may be possible to do a deal with them to get some community benefits and, if for housing, it will need to deliver 35 per cent 'affordable'.

It should be used for housing. Fairmilehead Parish Church and St Fillan's are well-equipped for community centres.

Road infrastructure around this land already struggles to cope with existing traffic not only at rush hour but throughout day. More housing will cause more congestion.

The site would appear to offer a massive opportunity for a diversified development, including various residential / commercial / community uses - which would require the council to be BRAVE.

It should be demolished and redeveloped for a sensible mix of houses and higher-density flats with an appropriate level of parking NOT 0.5 spaces per flat. Thirty-five per cent 'affordable' housing is a matter of policy and will be provided. There could helpfully be some retail provision and perhaps some small business spaces on the ground floor. Community buy-out is unrealistic and not the best use of the space when the parish church has excellent halls to rent.

I'd like to see it developed into something useful for the whole community - like a sports centre.

The community and local council are not best placed to redevelop a commercial property. It should be professionally and commercially developed, but the design and planning process should be rigorously overseen by, and in partnership with, the local authority and community.

We need a proper community facility in the area, with meeting rooms and the like. Fairmilehead church provides this, to an extent.

Housing flats for elderly looking to downsize would be ideal, provided they have lift access for disabilities.

APPENDIX SIX

LANDOWNER, Alastair McClung, Swanston Farm Ltd

SWANSTON Farm extends to 544 acres and comprises 24 acres of woodland and forestry, 278 acres of rough grazing, and 201 acres of improved grassland. The estate supports a diverse range of enterprises and amenities, including Swanston Brasserie, self-catering holiday cottages, a livery yard, office accommodation, storage facilities, golfing amenities, and residential-let properties. As a hub for numerous businesses, Swanston Farm is also one of the largest independent employers in the area.

We are committed to investing in the long-term sustainability of the estate, with a strong focus on public access, biodiversity enhancement, leisure and hospitality, education and wider community benefit. Our vision is to maintain a thriving and economically viable business while delivering responsible environmental stewardship and supporting the diverse needs of the local community.

APPENDIX SEVEN

LANDOWNER, Henry Trotter, Mortonhall Estate

AS landowners, we were grateful for the invitation to meet and engage with Fairmilehead Community Council (FCC) in May this year.

At that meeting there appeared to be a consensus that Mortonhall estate covers a relatively modest part of the FCC area.

However, the estate's land managers take on board the estate's wider utility and their responsibilities to meet high standards - contributing to community sustainability, wider public benefit and sustainable growth - alongside a viable estate economic business model.

The estate's aspirations and vision are, long-term, remaining committed to Fairmilehead where the family business has operated in differing ways for seven generations.

In the FCC area, our immediate objectives include reopening the (currently closed) pre-school children's nursery at Morton Mains Farm, farming, and recreational facilities for horse and pony owners; along with the provision of housing.

Elsewhere, the objectives extend to growing the existing offer in hospitality, retail, tourism and leisure (including public access). These will deliver local employment.

Additionally, we would like to provide economically-viable workspaces for owner-operated businesses. This may require the repurposing of vernacular buildings, making changes to bring them up to modern-day standards.

Plans also include boosting biodiversity, harnessing renewables and moving towards 'Net Zero', with energy generation for both resident businesses and the wider National Grid.

We would like to thank FCC for this opportunity to engage with the community and outline the estate plans and aspirations for its future development.

Fairmilehead Community Council

acting on behalf of our local neighbourhoods

About us

Fairmilehead Community Council seeks to provide a voice for local residents on matters as diverse as road conditions, traffic congestion, planning applications and project ideas. It currently has eight elected and co-opted 'members', who are all voluntary and meet outwith the council's in-person monthly meetings (at Fairmilehead Parish Church), to which all local residents are welcome to attend. Local residents are also able to access a fortnightly eNewsletter, a secretary's report and various emailed updates.

https://fairmileheadcc.org
email: lppfairmilehead@gmail.com

ENDS