

## DRAFT MINUTES OF MCC MONTHLY MEETING, OPEN DOOR, WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE 2026

### Present

Members: Alastair Webb (Chair), Caroline McKinley (Secretary), Carol Duncan (Engagement Officer), Goff Cantley (Planning Officer), Tamsin Kilgour (I Love Morningside), Iain Meiklejohn (Chair, Friends of Midmar Paddock), Moira Gibson (Minutes).

Attending: Arne Strid, David Somervell, Douglas Grozier, Sarah Hunt, Alex Mawson, Stephen Fenning.

### Apologies

Members: Theo Spanellis (Treasurer), Callum McLeavy, Ken Harvey, Serena Naismith, John Robson (Spokes), Kerr Fraser (Morningside Heritage Association).

Others: Cllr Marie-Clair Munro, Polly Purvis (Chair of Local Place sub-committee), Jennifer Scarce.

### Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of 20 May were approved. There were some Matters Arising:

- 1) Under Travelling Safely, three dangerous 'hotspots' are due to be inspected once Cllr Ross has made appropriate arrangements. These are the junction of Morningside Park and Morningside Road by Holland and Barratt; the junction of Cluny Drive and Midmar Drive; the pavement on Morningside Drive by The Crescent, where tree roots have made the pavements virtually impassable. Council foresters have been out to prune the trees at The Crescent but a solution must be found for the roots which have damaged the pavements. **Action**: Cllr Ross to report back on opportunities for inspection and walkabout of 'hotspots'.
- 2) At Canaan Lane, John Robson is liaising with the schools.
- 3) The high volume of traffic on Morningside Road was discussed at the last meeting and an Action was taken by the Chair to draft a 'problem statement' which is on the MCC website ([www.morningside.org.uk](http://www.morningside.org.uk)). It calls for improved safety for road users and pedestrians, reduced emissions and shorter journey times, especially for public transport. It also notes concern that developments such as Astley Ainslie may add pressure on local infrastructure, and that solutions should not harm local businesses or displace traffic onto other roads. **Action**: once agreed, Secretary will email the Problem Statement to local Councillors.
- 4) Following the cancelled liaison meeting, there is no report from our community police. **Actions**: The Secretary to contact Police Scotland. Iain Meiklejohn to raise concerns at the EACC and find out if other CCs are having similar difficulty in getting crime reports.

Relating to Matters Arising, Moira Gibson reported on capacity problems at Boroughmuir High School. The City of Edinburgh Council underestimated pupil numbers when the new school was built and has known for over a decade that it was too small. The original 1,100-pupil building was supplemented by a 400-pupil annexe, but the roll is now 1,626 and projected to reach 1,738 by 2031. Pupils are eating in cloakrooms and social spaces are being converted to temporary classrooms, significantly affecting their educational experience. Similar issues affect James Gillespie's High School, where science teachers must move equipment on trolleys. The potential impact of the Astley Ainslie development, with 500 proposed dwellings, and rising private-school fees due to VAT has not yet been assessed. The Council report is at [8.4 - Learning Estate Update 2025 based School Roll Projections.pdf](#). A Working Group has met twice but no solution has yet emerged. Alex Mawson, from South Morningside Primary School and on the Working Group, attended to express frustration at the apparent lack of urgency. With no room to expand Boroughmuir and the Darroch building already in full use, additional premises are needed. Renting or buying the Gillies Centre for Sixth Form pupils may be the most immediate practical

solution. **Action:** Secretary to write to the Convener of the Council's Education Committee, cc'ing our own Councillors, to ask urgently for their Options Appraisal.

### **Planning**

- The Council approved George Watson's College's application to improve sports provision. Although the report referenced the safeguarded Active Travel Route between the Union Canal and Morningside, objectors said this was not properly considered, missing a chance to extend the route through the Royal Edinburgh Hospital site. Since the NHS had been required to provide this route, why was GWC not similarly required to do so?

MCC was also concerned that, despite public discussion about reopening the South Sub and recent tram-train proposals, officials described it as a 'disused railway line'. It is in regular freight use and provides a relief route around Waverley Station for moving rolling stock or diverting trains.

**Action:** John Robson to draft a letter to the Council complaining of failure to 'join the dots' and asking for an explanation about the Council's approach to both these concerns.

The Canny Man has submitted an application to vary its hotel plans.

### **Local Place Plan**

The Local Place Plan is being laid out by a graphic designer before submission to local Councillors for their comments. Potential synergies with the LPP Banzai is preparing for Merchiston and Bruntsfield.

### **Travelling Safely**

- The Chair's Tracker document, published on the MCC website, reports on progress on concerns raised about local problem roads and pavements. The requested local walkabout is yet to take place. Cllr Munro has confirmed that Falcon Road, Falcon Road West, Comiston Place and Comiston Gardens are in the programme to be resurfaced in November/December this year. According to the Roadworks Scotland website, road surfacing will take place on four roads over the summer. The pavement opposite Waitrose is set to be widened. As part of the Steels Place work, the nearby pedestrian crossing on Morningside Road will be upgraded to a Puffin crossing. A zebra crossing has been installed at Craiglea Drive.

Several deputations about road closures on the Braid Estate will be at tomorrow's Council Transport Committee, some for retaining the filters and others for a return to pre-Covid status. The Officials' report recommends removal of filters on Braid Avenue/Hermitage Gardens, and retaining Braid Road.

- The filter on Canaan Lane is scheduled for removal but, in light of its proximity to three schools and a health facility, it is likely that a different closure will be proposed.

### **Financial position**

- £200 is in the account. 2025/6 Accounts have been audited and submitted to the Council, so next year's Council grant should soon be given to us in August.

### **Correspondence**

- Poster for next week's Big Give Week for the Open Door: all contributions will be doubled.

### **Any Other Competent Business**

- Congratulations were offered to the Umbrella Festival for raising £87,000 and to Houseproud Morningside for winning Hardware Store of the Year at the Scottish Independent Retail Awards.

- Tamsin reported a series of break-in at flats and staff quarters in shops, and also youths gathering in the Cemetery on Friday afternoons. In addition, she reported two near-misses: one by a bike on a pavement, and another where a pedestrian was nearly hit by a car exiting the Waitrose ramp.

- Poor parking on Midmar Drive and the south side of Cluny Gardens was reported. Although permitted by the lack of yellow lines and possibly slowing traffic, it can obscure sightlines and cause near-misses or accidents.

- Carol's will investigate applying for a Community Grant for a seat and planters at M&S.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be at the Open Door at 7.30pm on Wednesday 15 July 2026.