

**West Blacket Association
Annual General Meeting
November 27 2006**

Present:

Brian Charlesworth (Chairman), Evelynne Hill (Treasurer), Mike Hunter (Secretary), Irene Brown, James Campbell, Ian Carter, Jeff Robinson.

Roger Pountain, Alice Foster, Christine Gough, Peter McGowan, Gill Baldwin, Frank Thomas, Pam & Christie Duncan, Rosemary Wake, Margaret Muir, Scott Cockburn, Jack McLachlan, Marnie Roadburg, Phil Darby, Charles Warlow, Jane Robinson, Susan & Patrick Prenter, Maggie Barfas, Colin Stevenson, Jane Griffiths, Richard & Jackie Grant, Elma Alexander, Deborah Charlesworth, Ron Hill.

Cllr Fred Mackintosh. Prospective Cllrs Liz O'Malley & Ian Perry

Police. Insp Tom Galbraith, Community PCs John Leadbetter & Kevan Macdonald

Chairman's Report:

Brian Charlesworth welcomed to the AGM existing and new members of the Association, three representatives from Lothian & Borders Police & three present or likely future City of Edinburgh Councillors. He proposed that Ron Hill's local history presentation be moved to the end of the agenda, to allow the police and council representatives to leave earlier.

All members & residents should have received our November newsletter, giving details of the AGM, and of our website (www.westblacket.org.uk) and leaflet for new residents (produced by Jeff Robinson & Mike Hunter) explaining the objectives of the Association.

The primary aim of the Association is to monitor planning applications in the west part of the Blacket Conservation Area, to object if these are contrary to planning policy, and to follow up if contraventions are not enforced. We aim also to host occasional social events for members and residents.

During 2005-6, we have been concerned about the unapproved beer garden in front of the Minto Hotel, involving removal of a previously lawned area. Our attempts to have this reversed have been unsuccessful so far, but will continue.

Treasurer's Report:

Evelynne Hill had tabled full accounts for 2005-6. Our finances are healthy, and we are grateful for a generous donation of £47 which will appear in the accounts for 2006-7.

Election of officers & Committee:

Mike Hunter reported that none of the existing Officers or Committee wished to stand down. Rosemary Wake, of 9B Middleby Street, was willing to be nominated for election to the Committee. With no further nominations, Rosemary was duly elected unopposed.

Neighbourhood Watch:

Insp Tom Galbraith has now replaced Graham Jones as overall co-ordinator for the area. Although currently based in Howdenhall, he and our Community PCs will be moving shortly to St Leonards.

Jackie Grant had had a professional burglary last year, in plain daylight, by major force to a front window. Was this a pattern? Jane Griffiths enquired about

2 similar audacious crimes in South Gray Street, in which entry was also gained from the front of the houses. PC Leadbetter reported that these break-ins had been solved and suspects apprehended. Insp Galbraith described the Lothian & Borders new Initiative Team, targetting known criminals and crime patterns and using intelligence-led policing, and explained that the individual properties broken into could not be identified because of the Data Protection Acts.

Council Elections May 2007:

The West Blasket area will become part of the Southside & Newington ward, with 4 councillors elected by single transferrable vote. Liz O'Malley (Lib Dem) and Ian Perry (Lab) have been selected by their respective parties to stand for election in this ward. They each offered A3-size plans of the new ward boundaries. It was agreed that the "non-coterminous" boundaries for Council, Holyrood & Westminster elections are confusing and unfortunate.

Fred Mackintosh offered apologies on behalf of our other Lib Dem councillors who were unable to attend. He asked whether the new Duncan Street recycling bins, paper and packaging, are being emptied often enough. West Blasket may be prioritised for reduction in traffic speeds. Brian Charlesworth asked for any new information about the Minto Hotel planning applications, including replacement of the function suite by extra bedroom accommodation. Fred announced that he will not be standing for election to City of Edinburgh Council in May 2007 - he was thanked for his generous support to the Association.

Local History:

Ron Hill thanked the Secretary and Chairman for providing a laptop PC and digital projector for his presentation, which was much appreciated by residents. Ron offered to provide WBA members with details of their property history from his researches on request.

Mike Hunter
WBA Hon Sec