

# About the Mount

## Mount Florida Community Council Newsletter Autumn 2009

Welcome to Mount Florida Community Council's Autumn Newsletter. We produced a short Update Newsletter in June but it was not fully distributed, unlike this one which is distributed to each home. Many thanks, once again, to the Gillespie family for delivering our Newsletters to all homes in Mount Florida. If you don't get a copy, let us know and we'll arrange to get a copy to you.

### What is MFCC and what does it do?

We are a formally constituted group of residents who have a keen interest in what is happening in our area. Our main role is to act as a link between residents, Glasgow City Council departments and other public bodies, such as the Scottish Government, NHS, Police and Community Planning. We are consulted on all major issues and our role is to keep residents informed of City Council and other initiatives affecting our area and then feed residents' opinions back to the agencies involved.

Our meetings are attended, on a rota basis, by our 3 City Councillors, Archie Graham, James Dornan and Paul Coleshill who report on issues involving Mount Florida within the Council. We also welcomed Tom Harris MP to one of our meetings this year.

Representatives of MFCC also attend the meetings of a wide range of agencies that are involved in 'Community Engagement'. Community Engagement is a relatively new term which describes the work of the above-mentioned agencies, which not only want to inform us about what they are doing for us, but also want to consult with us as to what kind of services we need. They also want to work with groups like MFCC in order that decisions made, and the actions which result from these decisions that involve our community, are shared decisions and shared actions - i.e. more joined-up actions.

We meet in Battlefield East Church Hall on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month (apart from Jul/Aug/Dec) and all residents are made most welcome to attend and join in discussions.

We are always looking to engage new Community Councillors. To be an effective Community Councillor, all you need is an interest in what is going on in your area and a determination to make our area better for all our residents. If you can spare a few hours each month, then I'm sure you will find being part of your Community Council a very interesting and rewarding experience. You'll be made most welcome.

MFCC consists of up to 20 Community Councillors. If you would like to become a Community Councillor, and you are 16 or over, please contact either MFCC by e-mail on [mfcc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mfcc@hotmail.co.uk), phone us on **0783 191 2652**, phone the Community Council Resource centre on **0141 287 4723** or come along to our meetings on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September or 27<sup>th</sup> October.

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### *What's been happening Around the Mount*

**New 'Vicky'** - The New Victoria Hospital opened its doors for business on 8th June with the services moving across Grange Road on a phased basis. It's a very impressive place. The existing hospital, i.e. in-patient beds, A & E and Mansionhouse will remain in operation until the new Southern General Hospital is ready in around 2015. All residents should have received a copy of The Essential Guide to the New Victoria, which details all the new services. The widening of Prospecthill Road at its junction with Battlefield Road has made the junction a good deal safer both for pedestrians and cars, as has the reinstatement of the pedestrian island at that junction.

### Other News

The very impressive new Langside College is now open for business and the new Toryglen Football Centre has also recently opened. Over the last few months, Mount Florida has echoed to the sound of church bells for the first time in quite a few years - the bells are from Christ the King Church in Carmunnock Road.

**Local Churches Changes** - When Rev Alan Raeburn retires in May next year, our two Church of Scotland parishes will amalgamate and take the new name Clincarthill Church, named after the historic name of our area. The recently appointed minister of Mount Florida Church, Rev Michael Gargrave, will be the minister of the united parishes. We warmly welcome Michael to our community and wish him well in his new ministry.

**M74 Extension** – As most residents will have noticed, the M74 is being extended from Tollcross to join the M8 at the south end of the Kingston Bridge. A significant issue for residents is that there will be a new junction at Oatlands/Polmadie and relating to this development, Polmadie Road is being extended so that it joins with Aikenhead Road – this new road is being built just across from Holyrood Secondary. MFCC have received a copy of what the new Polmadie Road/Aikenhead Road junction will look like. A BIG change! The new road to the M74 will actually be the main road and Aikenhead Road will be a road off this new upgraded Polmadie Road.

It is our opinion that this new road will lead to a big increase in traffic levels throughout our area. Our main concern is the effect this increased level of traffic will have on the ASDA junction, which is already pretty heavily congested at peak times. There will be lots of traffic coming off the M74 at Polmadie and wanting to get to, say, Shawlands. Where will they turn right? Mount Annan Drive?

These plans were made without any consultation with residents. With all the Community Engagement talk we are hearing, MFCC and the other Community Councils affected really need to have an input at an early stage. We allowed all the traffic management changes on Aikenhead Road (no right turns and side road closures) to go ahead some years ago, as we didn't suss that they would result in so many cars turning right into Mount Annan. This time, it is such an obvious biggie; we need to be on the ball. We have been told that an engineer from the City Council will be attending our September meeting – we are not sure whether we are being consulted about the changes or merely informed.

**Hampden Park Problems** – The Concert Season started on Friday 19th June with the three Take That concerts, with a total of eight concerts finishing with Coldplay on 16th September.

Issues of public drinking and urinating associated with major events at Hampden continue to plague our community. If residents observe public drinking or urinating or any other anti-social behaviour at Hampden events they should call the Police Contact Centre on **0141 532 2000**.

Mount Florida Community Council has demanded a change in the philosophy regarding the ridiculous level of Public Toilet Facilities Provision for major events at Hampden Park, both football matches and concerts. All around our city, major events are regularly organised, whether it be Festivals (West End or Southside), World Pipe Band Championships, Glasgow Shows, Skyride, etc. At all these events, there are rows of Portaloos – 20 or 30 at the recent Southside festival. These events attract varying numbers of people of all ages and from many parts of Scotland and from all around the world. Major events at Hampden attract over 50,000 people to Mount Florida. Rightly or wrongly, these people drink alcohol and/or soft drinks on their way to and from Hampden. They travel long distances and when they get to the end of their journeys, they are as equally deserving as any visitor to similar Glasgow events of access to public toilets. At the recent Take That Concerts, there

were a few portaloos at the QP Rec and Polmadie Park as well as 5 at Hampden itself. We had mainly female concert-goers drinking all afternoon and into the early evening along with their take-away food. Where was there to go to the toilet? ASDA (where there were serious public access issues, particularly on the Saturday afternoon) or the single Female toilet at Hampden plus the 5 portaloos. The residents of Mount Florida were subjected to the degrading sight of female concert-goers, a large proportion of whom were clearly drunk, squatting to urinate all over the area. Imagine the reputation Mount Florida earns with visitors, and its effect on property values. Surely, in 2009 in a caring city, we must not treat either our residents or visitors to such a situation. Surely the promoters could spare a few thousand pounds to avoid this totally disgusting, degrading spectacle and its effects on their own reputation. Portaloos only cost £150 to hire. It is not allowed to happen at other major events in the city that attract many fewer fans than Hampden. Why should it be allowed or condoned in Mount Florida? Can you all imagine, for instance, just a handful of Portaloos at the World Pipe Band Championship on Glasgow Green? Would it be OK for pipers and their friends and families, as well as visitors from all around the globe, to have to urinate behind bushes? MFCC has invited all our elected representatives to get together to resolve this problem as soon as possible.

**More Hampden Park Problems** – Residents in the Carmunnock Road/Mount Annan/Aikenhead/Kings Park Avenue Rectangle have obtained some respite from the effects of events at Hampden by the temporary removal of parking restrictions during Hampden events since the Argentina game in November 2008. So far the changes have been generally well received. However residents in Kingsbarns and Kinmount have expressed concern about the numbers of vehicles being parked on pavements so obstructing pedestrians and prams.

The ridiculous sight of residents' cars being lifted from around Hampden many hours before the start of events and taken to Myrtle Park continues. The main reason for this is the inadequate level of resident information – the odd A4 piece of paper stuck on the odd lamppost here and there with sellotape just doesn't pass the 'Community Engagement' test.

MFCC were invited to a meeting on 25th August at Hampden attended by representatives of Hampden plc and our City Councillors. MFCC felt that the meeting was very worthwhile and beneficial to all concerned. Hampden's attitude to the many issues raised was that it wasn't really their responsibility, for example Policing, Portaloos, litter and signs for car parks. Hampden repeated their complaint that they have to pay for the streets around Hampden to be cleaned, yet Edinburgh pays for Murrayfield litter removal. The issue of Hampden not supporting local good causes was raised – however they prefer that any contributions made to local groups/events is not publicised. Hampden continue to insist that they are happy to meet with us to discuss issues. However we made the point that meeting after the concerts were virtually over was never going to be as effective as being involved when the events were being planned.

The issue of fans at concerts being sold alcohol inside the stadium and hence being drunk when they leave the stadium after 11pm was raised, and will be pursued with the licensing authorities.

#### **Litter/ Bulk Uplift/ Dog Fouling/ Overgrown Hedges**

These issues continue to blight our community. We have found that actual complaints to us regarding these topics have decreased this session – but we believe that this is due to residents despairing of effective action by Land and Environmental Services Department. Whether we like it or not, L&ES seems to operate on a ‘if you complain – we’ll fix it; if you don’t complain – then there is no problem to fix’ philosophy. Complaints were made about overgrown hedges on Bolton Drive which were obstructing pedestrian movement and it got them trimmed. The only solution continues to be that residents phone the Council Customer Care Centre 24 Hour Contact Centre on 0141 287 9700 if they have a problem with any of the above issues. If the response received is not up to the expected standard, as always, residents are advised to contact any one of their 3 City Councillors. The Council gives priorities to issues causing the most complaints. So complain...and get your neighbours to complain too!

#### **Traffic Management/ Inconsiderate Parking/ Rat-Running/ Traffic Calming**

The problem of drivers avoiding junctions/traffic Lights by rat-running through our side streets continues. The problem of not being able to park on Cathcart Road during daytime hours in order to access our local shops continues. The problem of cars parking round junctions so that pedestrians have to walk on the road continues. Our Councillors have got involved in various issues of parking and rat-running but have all been given similar answers – insufficient number of accidents or insufficient funds. Our MP, Tom Harris, is pursuing the issuing of traffic calming (as a resident). The proposed Hampden Traffic Order which will, hopefully, address many of these issues appears to be on the horizon. It’s good to see the Safer Routes to Schools improvements around MF Primary working effectively.

**Preparations for 2014 Commonwealth Games –** What has not been happening yet is the start of activities on the ground for this very important event

for our community. We will keep you posted about what is going to be done to spruce up our area and when it will start.

#### **Flofest 2009**

‘Flofest 09’ was a multi-cultural music festival, organised by primary 7 and supported by a team from various groups and companies across the city. Earlier this year ‘Material’ launched a competition ‘Fresh Material’ aimed at primary 7’s across the city. Schools were asked to think about an event they would like to organise, and to outline this demonstrating an understanding of market research, event management and budgeting.

Mount Florida pupils were encouraged to be creative, innovative and to think about their own strong points, what they do best, and to organise an event around their skills. They chose multicultural communities and music. They wanted to show the world that they are welcoming and vibrant. After much hard work, under brilliant sunshine the very first FLOFEST took place in June. The day was filled with music, dance, laughter and colour. Many local businesses and organisations including the Shezan, the Candy Jar, Catwalk Kids, Mount Florida Befriending Service, King’s Park Secondary Fair Trade Group and the local Mosque all came together to make the day a success. For their vision and effort the pupils were awarded the Evening Times Young Community Champion Award for the South East area and will represent Mount Florida at the forthcoming city awards.

Comments from pupils include – ‘I believe that Flofest brought the community closer together; we organised all sorts of things like bands and different cultural stalls and also workshops. I think that it was a very successful day and I’m sure that everyone enjoyed it and I think we deserve this award. I’m sure that the next FLOFEST will be just as successful.’ MFCC will certainly be supporting this initiative for 2010 – it was a great day. Perhaps it could somehow be extended to include Mount Florida children who attend St Fillans and Holy Cross Primary Schools. What about a Mount Florida Gala day?

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## **What has MFCC been doing?**

We have had another positive year and held 8 well-attended meetings with quite a few residents dropping in. Since our last Newsletter, sadly 2 of our Community Councillors have passed away. Despite the fact that he was terminally ill, one of the tasks **Charlie Boyce** took on was fighting Mount Florida’s battle to eradicate the disruptive and destructive effects of major events at Hampden Park – litter and disruption to residents’ car parking – in fact litter generally was his greatest target. He had a fierce pride in his community and was appalled at, firstly the amount of rubbish that was dumped on our streets and pavements but also at the poor service provided by the City Council in keeping the area spick and span. For his services to our community, Charlie was posthumously awarded the individual Community Champion Award for SE Glasgow and his name has gone forward for the City Award in October – a just reward!

**Ian Wood** was an extremely active man in many community and voluntary groups as well as taking a lead role in his ‘home’ community around his home in Stanmore Road. Ian attended many meetings on behalf of MFCC and was extremely skilled at sussing out what the meetings were about – he didn’t have enough time to sit in ‘talking shops’. Ian’s death was very sudden and came as a shock to us all. Our sympathies go out to the families of both men. We miss them, as friends and colleagues, and MFCC will miss their huge contributions to the community.

**Area Committees** Glasgow City Council's Area Committees help support the work of local community and voluntary organisations through their area budgets and are keen to hear from groups in the Mount Florida area who may be looking for funding.

Examples of the type of activities which have been funded in the past include:- purchase of equipment, environmental improvements, holiday play schemes, activity programmes, start-up grants or transport cost for day trips. Last year, the Church in the Mount Befriending Service received £1,994 to purchase equipment and to assist with publicity costs to promote their service and this year, Mount Florida School received just over £900 to help with the organisation and development of the 'Flo Fest' event. Applications for funding are available to download from the Glasgow City Council's web site or by phoning Area Development on 0141-287 4687/5463/5297. Applicants are encouraged to contact officers prior to completing application forms.

**Community Policing** Our Community Police Officer Andrew McWhinnie has been in attendance at all of our meetings and has been able to report that the Community Policing Team for the Langside multi-member ward has grown since May 2008 from 4 to the present complement of 9 officers. Inspector Creelman tells MFCC: 'Our Community Police officers aim to be a highly visible presence as they engage with local people. Street interviews have been carried out and local priorities have been identified. Action plans have been drawn up and we will be working with our partner agencies and organisations to tackle the issues that cause most concern within neighbourhoods over the coming months'. More information about your local officers can be found on the Strathclyde Police website. Contact with your Community Policing Team can be made via e-mail to [Langsidecommunitypolicingteam@strathclyde.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Langsidecommunitypolicingteam@strathclyde.pnn.police.uk) or by telephone on 0141 532 4994. Crime levels in Mount Florida are generally low if Hampden events are not included. Issues of Youth Disorder, under-age drinking continues to be given high priority with one off-licence losing its licence due to selling alcohol to under-age youngsters.

A policing issue which relates to Hampden is that although there are a good number of officers allocated to duties inside Hampden (which Hampden pays for) and in the streets around Hampden (which we pay for), these officers are largely allocated to fixed positions, e.g. at road junctions or at the railway station. We feel that, as mentioned above, there is a serious public order problem related to public drinking and urinating in the streets, lanes and gardens around Hampden. Residents are very clearly of the opinion that we need more roving officers to tackle the drinkers and the urinators. Do we really need officers at every road-end?

**Queens Park 'Bandstand':** Two MFCC representatives are members of a working group involving 4 neighbouring Community Councils (MFCC, Shawlands/Strathbungo, Langside/Battlefield/Camphill, and Crosshill/Govanhill) that has been given £15,000 funding by the Scottish Government in order to conduct a pilot project based on Communities working together to improve community assets. The project centres on the former Bandstand area within Queen's Park, which is currently not in use. The group's remit is for the Community Councils representing the communities surrounding Queens Park to consult with residents and groups wanting to perform in the park as well as considering the structural requirements for such a performance area. We have one year to bring forward proposals and outline plans. Initial responses to the idea have been very enthusiastic. The Queens Park Performance Project is progressing very well with the support of the City Council and we have already made considerable progress in canvassing the views of some 700 residents as to the performance events and facilities which they would like to see in the park. We have also considered a wide range of issues involving the prospective users of the area as well as the structural works required to produce a performance area fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Communication between MFCC and Residents**

There are several ways for Residents to contact and inform their Community Council of their opinions:-

**In person** – Come along to our meetings in the Battlefield East Church Hall and air your views. Meetings for the coming session will be on 22 September, 27 October (AGM), 23 November, 26 January, 23 February, 23 March, 26 April, 25 May, 22 June. We very much look forward to seeing you.

**By phone** – if you phone **0783 191 2652**, leave a message and your phone number, we will get back to you as soon as possible if you require information; or E-mail us on [mfcc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mfcc@hotmail.co.uk).

**Website** – Look out for the new website at [www.communitycouncilsglasgow.org.uk/mountflorida](http://www.communitycouncilsglasgow.org.uk/mountflorida) (coming soon), and meanwhile keep an eye on our current website at <http://mountflorida.civiblog.org/blog>.

**Newsletters** – We intend to publish quarterly updates, like the one published in June this year, in addition to our traditional annual newsletter.

**Noticeboard** – There will be a new Electronic Noticeboard, operated by a touch panel, in the window of the Jobcentreplus on Battlefield Road. This City Council pilot project will be installed in early September, to be followed in time by a 'real' noticeboard at the Clincart Road/Cathcart Road Junction; The proposed cost will be around £2000 and Hampden plc has indicated that they will be pleased to make a contribution to its provision.