

Tollcross Community Council – Meadows and Bruntsfield Links

Tollcross Community Council contains within its boundaries a large area of precious city-centre greenspace which is the West Meadows (from Middle Meadow Walk westwards) and the whole of the Bruntsfield Links. The East Meadows falls within the boundaries of the Southside Community Council. It is important that such a well-used facility is cared for so that everyone from the youngest to the most elderly can benefit from the open spaces and the (relatively) clean air. As anyone visiting the Meadows observes, the space is very well used by many people, local and visitors alike, in all seasons. Tennis, cricket, football, cycling, short hole golf, jogging, tai chi, sunbathing, sitting quietly - all have their place but inevitably wear and tear occurs. The care and maintenance of the green oasis in the city centre is of great importance to our Community Council and we are ever mindful of this.

The City of Edinburgh Council has a statutory duty to inform both local community councils of applications for events on the Meadows and Links; it also informs local amenity groups including the Friends of The Meadows and Bruntsfield Links (FoMBL). These applications are carefully monitored as to suitability and any application for an event which is considered unsuitable will be opposed. The use of the Meadows for commercial purposes has long been a vexed question, for various reasons including: the environmental issues regarding drainage and damage to already compacted ground, pre-event treatment of the grass and post-event re-seeding; the use of public space for private profit; restricted public access to public space because of events; the number of events being held on the Meadows and possible variations of lengths of events; income-generation from large events and any direct benefits to the Meadows through targeted spending; the importance of keeping up pressure on the Council to review its position on large events; the need for the ground to be given space to rest at various times, and so on...

At the October 2016 meeting of Tollcross Community Council it was proposed to adopt the policy of limiting all commercial events to a maximum of fifteen days and to rest the ground entirely every three years, thus leaving it fallow for one year in four. This was adopted unanimously.

Following the launch of the Council's Friends of Parks Initiative in 2000, with the co-operation of the Parks Department and Tollcross, Southside and Marchmont Sciennes Community Councils FoMBL was set up in January 2001, the initial meeting having been convened by Steve Leslie, the then Secretary of Tollcross Community Council. Our Community Council is represented on the Board of Trustees of FoMBL by one of its members.