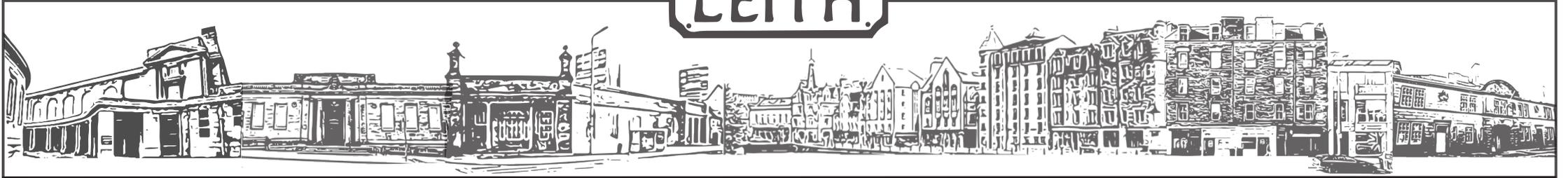


# LEITH



## THE HEADLINES

Participants told us that Leith is a vibrant area with a strong sense of local identity and pride in the community. There are a wide range of championed businesses, services and organisations that provide resources for an equally broad range of population groups making up the residential profile in the area. Examples included Citadel Youth Centre, which is open 5 nights a week to young people aged 5-12, supporting parents (particularly young mothers) and young carers, and supporting people to apply for benefits and employment; Milan Senior Welfare Organisation, which provides services and advocacy for vulnerable older BME people (for whom English might not be their first language); NE Edinburgh Older Men's Health and Wellbeing Group for older men at risk of depression and/or suicide; and The Leither, a community-run local magazine for the area. Other

initiatives in the area offer residents mechanisms for skill sharing and swapping. The Leith Time Bank at the Pilmey Development Project enables members to accrue time credits through donating their time and skills to the community that they can then exchange and call upon when they need it.

Currently, Leith's infrastructure is under threat by building developers transforming sites into new housing. While this brings people into the area, the infrastructure required is not financially supported or extended to accommodate the higher numbers of residents. Participants highlighted that Leith has the highest population concentration per square metre in the UK. Furthermore, there are concerns around gentrification. New, wealthier services and businesses are targeting the area, threatening small businesses

and vital grassroots and charity organisations who rely on council funding, volunteers and donations. Participants also highlighted the challenge faced in competing for funding – some of which is made available through participatory budgeting (called 'Leith Chooses'). Here businesses and organisations pitch for funding, which is voted on by Leith's residents. Ironically, while there is a democratic ethos underpinning this process, the participants described how in reality, the process can be exclusionary and favours those who have the literacy and access to IT software such as PowerPoint and the internet to cast their vote. Furthermore, cuts to library services that provide IT tuition is becoming problematic as application processes (such as apply for benefits) are becoming increasingly digital.

# CRAIGMILLAR



## THE HEADLINES

Craigmillar is a large district made up of smaller fragmented areas, each with their own sense of distinct local identity and belonging. While residents are, reportedly, wary of entering into other areas and using area-specific resources, there is also a strong sense of community support and care for one another. The area as a whole has undergone phases of regeneration, which has focused very much on social housing but without consideration of the social infrastructure needed to support the growing number of residents. These developments have led to the loss or displacement of key landmarks and shared spaces (such as losing The Gaff cinema), where there are concerns around the safety and accessibility of community resources and public places – such as play parks next to busy main roads and the Jack Kane Community Centre which is located up a steep hill.

There are several organisations that play a key role in the communities of Craigmillar. These include The White House – a community centre and kitchen; The Thistle Foundation, which offers a low-cost gym and physical activities, arts and cooking workshops and free meeting spaces; Craigmillar's Men's Sheds; Homeless Village, which offers resources to homeless people including accommodation, a café, sports and training; The Green House Thrift Shop – a re-cycling and up-cycling second-hand shop; Phone Link, a volunteer-run outreach telephone service for isolated people in the community; the library and community cinema. While these organisations play a crucial role in supporting these communities to thrive, gaps and challenges have been raised around the area's undeserved negative reputation; cultural cohesion between different ethnic and minority groups; poor

travel infrastructure to access services in neighbouring areas; lack of community consultation on planning and developments; and a lack of access to funding for community-led initiatives leading to the loss of valued resources such as the local newspaper (The Chronicle) and an award winning community-run addiction support service.

# PORTOBELLO



## THE HEADLINES

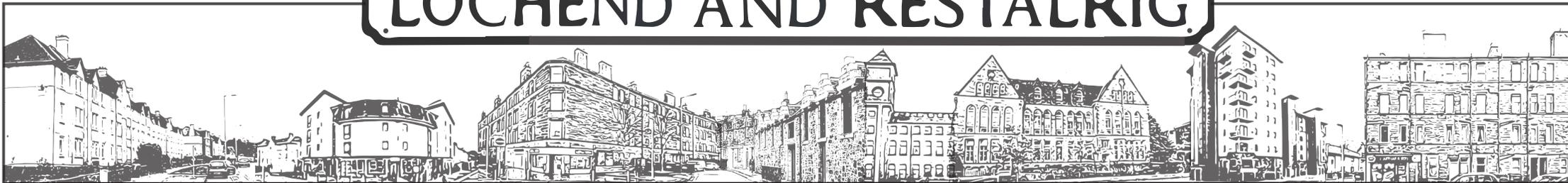
Portobello is a seaside suburb, famous for its beach, promenade and high street. Participants told us that over the last few decades the area has undergone a great deal of social and economic transformation, with a concentration of modern housing re-developments that share the area with large traditional Victorian homes situated near the shore. As Portobello has become a more desirable location to live, it has become increasingly more expensive to rent and buy properties. This incremental gentrification is becoming problematic for residents who have lived in Portobello for most of their lives. Local industry has also been affected with many independent and family-run retailers and businesses being pushed out or having to raise their prices as they are unable to compete with the influx of larger supermarkets chains – the locations of which has affected the smaller

retailer's footfall. Access to parking, as well as a lack of shared green spaces, are also notable concerns in the community.

While there are many in-comers to the area, locals maintain a strong sense of community spirit and efficacy, evidenced by community buy-out projects such as Bellfield, a group of Parish Church buildings bought by the Action Party community group that hosts a pop-up café and provides low cost spaces for hire; The Portobello Reporter, a local community-run newspaper; community interest groups such as Tribe Party, a collective that provides affordable work spaces, opportunities to take part in creative collaborative projects and support to local clubs and groups; and social enterprises such as Breadshare Community Bakery, which provides affordable

healthy produce for the community and supports local food suppliers. Other championed resources include the library, which provides the Community Rooms resource for groups to hire; Portobello Baths; the beach and promenade; Apple Tree Café; and St. John's Church hall.

# LOCHEND AND RESTALRIG



## THE HEADLINES

The areas of Restalrig and Lochend sit geographically next to each other (alongside Craigtintny) and at points overlap. During the last decade, the area has undergone a neighbourhood regeneration programme, which encouraged community-led regeneration activity, environmental improvements and better access to better shopping facilities. While this locality is known for high levels of deprivation, there are many community-based initiatives and organisations that support a wide range of population groups. These include The Craigtintny Community Centre, who run a range of free activities for children, young people and families and provide free holiday lunches for children receiving free school meals; The Ripple Project, which provides a range of volunteer-run youth services, a community café, social clubs for older people, creative classes such as knitting,

cooking and writing and runs a local newspaper called The Speaker; Game Changer, a public social partnership located at Hibs stadium with a focus on physical and mental health and offers spaces to hire for community events; Piershill Library, which provides access to computers and provides free holiday activities for children; and Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living, which offers peer support groups, access to independent living services.

Lochend Park is a well-known attraction in the area, however participants were concerned over its up-keep and cleanliness, and suggested the need for a better play park for children – making the park a more desirable destination for families. Concerns have also been raised around transport links, with a need for improved bus services and security when

on board. There are also underutilised spaces in the area which, potentially, could be used by community groups to run events such as car boot sales and, by linking up and collaborating with organisations, bring people together through making and sharing food.