



Community Councils Guidance

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Tribute to Councillor Val Walker Convener of the Culture and Communities Committee 2022-2025 | 2 |
| 1. An Introduction to Community Councils..... | 4 |
| 2. The Role of the Community Council Member | 6 |
| 3. Duties of the Community Council Chair | 8 |
| 4. Duties of the Community Council Secretary | 10 |
| 5. Duties of the Community Council Treasurer | 12 |
| 6. Duties of the Engagement and Inclusion Officer..... | 16 |
| 7. New Community Councils | 18 |
| 8. Dealing with Disputes | 20 |
| 9. Conducting Community Council Meetings | 23 |
| 10. Financial Good Practice | 27 |
| 11. The Role of the Community Empowerment and Engagement Team | 29 |
| 12. The Role of the Governance Team | 30 |
| 13. Community Councils and their Boundaries | 31 |
| 14. FAQs relating to community council member numbers..... | 38 |
| 15. Dissolving a Community Council..... | 41 |
| 16. Engaging with your Community | 45 |
| 17. Conflict of Interest | 47 |
| 18. Equalities Guidance | 49 |
| 19. Community Councils Social Media Guidance | 50 |
| 20. Community Councils and the Licensing Process | 54 |
| 21. Community Councils and Planning | 57 |
| 22. Links and contact details for Council services..... | 68 |
| 23. Key dates for Community Councils | 69 |
| 24. Forms and Templates | 70 |



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

You can get this document on audio CD, in Braille, and **Large Print** if you ask us. Please contact Interpretation and Translation Service (ITS) on its@edinburgh.gov.uk and quote reference number **25-0586 - Community Council Guidance**. ITS can also give information on community language translations. You can also get more copies of this document by contacting governance@edinburgh.gov.uk

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

Tribute to Councillor Val Walker

Convener of the Culture and Communities Committee 2022-2025



Sadly Councillor Val Walker unexpectedly passed away in April 2025.

Shortly before Val's passing, she kindly provided the foreword to introduce the Community Council Guidance. In her role as Convener of Culture and Communities Committee, she was a huge advocate and supporter of community councils. To honour Val's commitment to community councils, we have included her words below.

"It's been over half a century since community councils came into existence in Scotland in 1973 - and in that time, we've seen over 1,200 established across the country.

These bodies are groups of residents who are passionate about their communities and play an important role in grassroots democracy.

Community councils provide a key role within their local communities, providing a wealth of local knowledge and experience that the Council can tap into to deliver better services. Community councils understand their local needs better than anyone and the Council will make better decisions when community councils are engaged with the decision-making process.

Thank you for taking your chance to take a lead in your local area and make your community a better place. From campaigning on key local issues, organising meetings, chairing debates, looking out for vulnerable individuals and groups, to liaising with local and national representatives and much more – the life of a community councillor in the Capital is never ordinary!

I'm continually inspired by the stories I come across of community councils. In Lady Nairne, the Northfield and Willowbrae Community Council worked tirelessly to ensure that a solution was found when the previous 69 supported bus service ceased operations several years ago. Following extensive engagement with ward councillors and Council officers, a new route was implemented just in time for Christmas last year, which I know was a welcome gift to those residents who had long campaigned for its reinstation.

We've also seen Longstone Community Council lead a campaign to erect a new bridge to link their community to the Hutchison/Chesser community, as part of a new active travel project. Initially a bridge was not part of these plans but following successful meetings with their ward councillor, Council officers and the developer, some £170,000 worth of contributions were earmarked to support the delivery of the bridge.

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

These are just a couple of the many examples of the excellent work community councils are doing across our city every day. I'd encourage all residents to consider standing as a community councillor. Edinburgh draws its strength from its people, and we need their views, ideas and expertise to move forward together.

I wish every newly elected community councillor and nominated representative members of local interest groups the very best of luck in their role."

1. An Introduction to Community Councils

What is a Community Council?

- 1.1 Community councils are groups of people who care about their community and want to make their area a better place to live. They meet, usually once a month, and their chief role is representative; to consult the local community and to put forward these views to the local authority and other organisations including Scottish Government

Background

- 1.2 Community councils are established in accordance with the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and have certain statutory roles and powers. Local authorities are required by law to set up a scheme to allow the establishment of community councils.

Community Councils in Edinburgh

- 1.3 Community councils already established in Edinburgh range from rural communities to inner city neighbourhoods. Community council representatives are volunteers and are elected for a period of four years. Each community council receives an annual grant from the City of Edinburgh Council intended to cover its administrative expenses.
- 1.4 Community councils have a statutory right to be consulted on local planning issues. The City of Edinburgh Council's Planning Service sends out a weekly list of all planning applications submitted. While there is no statutory requirement for local authorities to consult them on licensing matters, community councils are considered as 'competent objectors'. They may appoint representatives to attend meetings of the Licensing Board and speak in support of objections.

Activities

- 1.5 There is a great variety of activity undertaken by community councils to represent their communities. Community councils will regularly:
 - a) Write letters and emails following a meeting of the community council in order to highlight issues.
 - b) Attend meetings with public officials to discuss local issues.
 - c) Hold public meetings either at regular intervals or in response to a specific issue, or to find out what are the areas of concern within the community.
 - d) Monitor the upkeep of the area.
 - e) Carry out surveys in the area, typically by using questionnaires.
 - f) Meet with other community councils or other community groups.
 - g) Co-ordinate and submit responses to draft policy reports or consultation documents.

- h) Receive and respond to enquiries and problems raised by members of the public.
 - i) Produce a newsletter and distribute it to all homes in the area.
 - j) Post information regarding meetings and activities on notice boards, websites or other forms of social media.
 - k) Arrange for public officials or others to attend future meetings of the community council.
 - l) Arrange community events such as gala days, fetes, or clean up days to promote the community council and foster good relations within the community.
- 1.6 Community councils often take part in activities and other projects which might benefit their area, either working on their own or in partnership with other agencies.
- 1.7 A community council can act as a campaigning body in raising awareness of specific local issues. They can be particularly useful in co-ordinating smaller, local organisations to ensure that resources aren't being wasted and that several groups aren't all trying to do the same job.

The Scheme for Community Councils (“The Scheme”)

- 1.8 Local authorities are required by law to set up a scheme to allow the establishment of community councils.
- 1.9 The Scheme provides information on the rules and regulations governing community councils such as election procedures, boundaries and membership. Ultimately, it is entirely a matter for any community to decide if they want a community council in their area. Some neighbourhoods feel that they are already well represented by tenants and residents' associations or other groups.
- 1.10 However, should people living in an area decide to form a community council, all that is required is that at least 20 people who are on the electoral roll for that area sign a petition requesting that the City of Edinburgh Council takes the necessary steps to organise an election to establish a community council. At that point, a report will be prepared to go to the relevant Committee of the Council recommending the adoption of a timetable for the election.
- 1.11 For more information see www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils

2. The Role of the Community Council Member

- 2.1 As a successful candidate, you will have signed a Declaration of Acceptance at the first community council meeting declaring that, having been elected to the office of community councillor, you accept the office and undertake that you will fulfil the duties of it according to the best of your judgement and ability and in doing so, comply with the requirements and standards of conduct contained in the City of Edinburgh Council Scheme for Community Councils.
- 2.2 As a member of your community council, it is important that you recognise from the outset the importance of your role. This means not simply offering your own views and opinions on local issues or taking decisions that are based on your own self-interest. In practice, this will involve discussing issues with people in the community to clarify their views and assess the strength of their feelings on different topics.
- 2.3 As a community councillor you should encourage people to bring issues to you so that you can take them up at community council meetings. Try to check out the facts before taking matters to the Council. If there are two sides to the story, make sure that both are put forward. There is little point in taking up time at meetings to discuss problems that are based simply on misunderstandings of the facts. Remember, **If in doubt, check it out!**
- 2.4 At some point it may be that you will find some **conflict** between your own personal views and interests and those of the community that you are representing. Always try to make sure that the views of the community come first. Your community will quickly lose confidence in you if the views of community councillors are put first.
- 2.5 The task of any community council is to identify the needs and aspirations of its community and to take decisions that will lead to appropriate action in that community. At some point this might involve setting priorities on different needs within the community.
- 2.6 Different views are normal, healthy aspects of any vibrant community, so you shouldn't think of them as something that can be altogether avoided. What is important is that you approach competition or conflict in a **fair and reasonable** manner.
- 2.7 You should take a **fair and balanced view** of your community's needs and aspirations. You should listen to representatives from different groups in your community. You should always try to avoid being influenced by any personal prejudice you hold toward individuals according to their race, gender, sexuality, disability and/or other diversity factors that may impact how you treat others in the community.

The Code of Conduct for Community Councillors (“the Code”)

- 2.8 The Code is in Schedule 3 of the Scheme and sets out the standards and principles of conduct that individual community council members are required to adhere to in performance of their duties.
- 2.8 The Code is based largely on the Code of Conduct for City of Edinburgh Council elected members and relevant public bodies as provided for in The Ethical Standards in Public Life etc (Scotland) Act 2000.
- 2.9 Failure of any individual to comply with the Code will be dealt with according to the Community Councillor Complaints Procedure.

3. Duties of the Community Council Chair

- 3.1 This guidance note provides further information on the duties of the Chair.
- 3.2 The Chair is one of the 4 office bearer roles that community councils are required to elect. Please refer to section 6.28 – 6.33 of [the Scheme for Community Councils](#) for more information about office bearers.
- 3.3 As an office bearer, your name and email address will be publicly displayed on the Council's website. It is recommended that a generic email address is provided rather than a personal email address.

Representing the Community Council

- 3.4 If you are elected to the office of Chair, you will be the chief representative of the community council. Periodically you may be asked to speak to other groups about the work of the community council. Also, if the community council wishes to send a delegation to the City of Edinburgh Council (e.g. to object to a planning application) it may be appropriate that the Chair leads the delegation. Finally, although it is not a very common occurrence, the local press may wish to ask the views of a community council on local issues; again, this is the kind of situation where you as the Chair would normally represent the community council.

Ensuring That Meetings Are Properly Convened

- 3.5 The great majority of preparation needed for a community council meeting is the responsibility of the Secretary. Nevertheless, as Chair, you must liaise with the Secretary before agendas and other documents are distributed to the members. Together with the Secretary, you should discuss what items are to come up at each meeting and prepare the agenda accordingly. (You should also agree with the other members how items get on to the agenda, the timescale for submitting ideas, etc).

Ensuring That Meetings Are Properly Conducted (in accordance with the Scheme and Constitution)

- 3.6 As Chair, your main responsibility is to preside over all meetings of the community council. Most community councils also elect a Vice-Chair who can take over in this capacity when necessary. Along with the Secretary, you are responsible for ensuring that community council meetings are run in accordance with the terms of [the Scheme for Community Councils](#). For example, prior to any meeting starting, you should check that sufficient elected and nominated members are present to form a quorum. (see section 9 of [the Scheme for Community Councils](#)).
- 3.7 During meetings, you will ensure that the agenda is followed. You will ensure that each item is settled before moving on to the next one. You will conduct

voting and, where necessary, explain the details of the Scheme or Constitution as it relates to any issue discussed. You will rule on the competence of motions and other business. Finally, you will guide the discussion and maintain order at all times during the meeting.

4. Duties of the Community Council Secretary

- 4.1 This guidance provides further information on the duties of the Secretary.
- 4.2 The Secretary is one of the 4 office bearer roles that community councils are required to elect. Please refer to section 6.28 – 6.33 of [the Scheme for Community Councils](#) for more information about office bearers.
- 4.3 As an office bearer, your name and email address will be publicly displayed on the Council's website. It is recommended that a generic email address is provided rather than a personal email address.

Key Duties

- 4.4 As the Secretary of your community council, you may be the busiest officer bearer. Your key responsibilities will be:
- 4.5 Acting as first point of contact for the community council and issuing replies. This could be through the community council's email address or website. You will also help organise your community council's meetings e.g. booking the venue, making sure everyone can access it and helping to organise the meeting room.
- 4.6 You will prepare the agendas of the community council meetings with the Chair, which will include sharing the agenda, minutes and all relevant documents before the meeting. You will write the minutes during the meeting and afterwards, send the minutes of the community council meetings to the City of Edinburgh Council once they have been agreed.

Point of Contact

- 4.7 You will usually be the first point of contact for anyone who wishes to get in touch with the community council. You will receive correspondence for the community council and will be required to carry out correspondence on behalf of the community council. It is important, therefore, that you as Secretary are kept informed about everything that the community council is doing. If any other member undertakes work on behalf of the community council, you should ensure that you know about it and receive copies of any relevant paperwork; after all, it is the Secretary who people will contact for information on all aspects of the community council's work.

What are the Minutes?

- 4.8 All community council meetings must be minuted. This is a written record of the meeting. The job of taking the minutes usually falls to you as the Secretary. However, you don't need to take them. This could be another member of the community council or a member of the public. Some

community councils appoint a separate Minute Secretary but either way, it is your responsibility to ensure that the minutes are taken.

What need to be in your Minutes?

4.9 The minute must record the following information:

- a) Status of the meeting e.g. ordinary meeting, AGM, sub-committee meeting.
- b) Date, venue and time.
- c) Who chaired the meeting.
- d) List of those who attended (members of the public don't need to be named if they don't want to however the number members of the public attending should be noted).
- e) Apologies from community councillors who can't attend the meeting.
- f) Acceptance of the last minute and any matters arising.

4.10 In recording the main items on the agenda, keep it brief. The important thing is to record the decisions reached. Don't write down everything which was said.

4.11 Just concentrate on writing down:

- a) The subject under discussion.
- b) The main points of arguments, for and against.
- c) Any major disagreements.
- d) A community councillor's dissent to a decision must be added to the minute if they specifically request that their dissent is recorded.
- e) Details of voting, when applicable. Remember, not *all* members of the community council members have voting rights e.g. Ex Officio members or Associate Members.
- f) Decisions reached e.g. who will do what, and when.

Distribution of Agendas, Minutes etc.

4.12 Having taken notes at a meeting, it is always advisable to type up the minute *very* soon afterwards. Otherwise, you are likely to find that you can't read your own notes and don't remember what went on. Minutes are usually sent out at the same time as the agenda for the next meeting. As is mentioned above, you will usually liaise with the Chair and community councillors to decide the items to be included on the next Agenda. Minutes should be distributed to everyone at the same time as the agenda.

4.13 You should ensure that both agendas and minutes are widely distributed as noted in [the Scheme for Community Councils](#) section 3.8.2.

4.14 A copy of the approved minutes must be provided to the City of Edinburgh Council within 10 working days of approval via the governance@edinburgh.gov.uk email address.

5. Duties of the Community Council Treasurer

- 5.1 This guidance gives further information on the duties of the Treasurer.
- 5.2 The Treasurer is one of the 4 office bearer roles that community councils are required to elect. Please refer to section 6.28 – 6.33 of [the Scheme for Community Councils](#) for more information about office bearers.
- 5.3 To undertake the required duties of a Treasurer community councillors must primarily refer to section 9.15 and sections 12.1 – 12.12 of [the Scheme for Community Councils](#) and this guidance.
- 5.4 As an office bearer, the Treasurer's name and email address will be publicly displayed on the Council's website. It is recommended that a generic email address is provided rather than a personal email address.
- 5.5 There is also an additional guidance note available titled "Financial Good Practice" which the Treasurer and all members of the community council should read and refer to.

Banking Arrangements

- 5.6 A bank account should be opened in the name of the community council for it to receive the annual administrative allowance from the City of Edinburgh Council and make payments.
- 5.7 The City of Edinburgh Council must be supplied with bank account details and be notified immediately of any changes to bank account details (by email to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk).
- 5.8 The bank account should be set up in such a way that requires at least two office bearers to authorise payments agreed by each community council.
- 5.9 The signatory roles must be held by at least 2 office bearers (including the Treasurer) and 1 other community councillor who does not need to be an office bearer.
- 5.10 Community councils should regularly review the availability of signatories for the community council and take proactive action to ensure a minimum of 3 signatories are available during the community council term

Treasurer Key Duties

- 5.11 The Treasurer is principally responsible for:
 - a) Looking after the community council's funds.
 - b) Regularly undertaking a budgeting exercise, estimating the cost of room hire, photocopying, postage etc. for the coming year. This will help prevent the

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

community council being unable to perform its basic functions towards the end of the financial year, through lack of funds.

- c) Recording and retaining accurate records of all financial transactions.
- d) Ensuring that all financial records and accounts can be made available for inspection by the City of Edinburgh Council, on request.
- e) Producing regular written financial 'statements' to be presented at meetings which involves an update on expenses and income and the resulting bank balance etc. This can also include providing a copy of the accounts as at the date of any applicable community council meeting.
- f) Arranging for community council accounts to be independently examined annually and at the close of each financial year (i.e. 1 April – 31 Mar or partial accounting period if a community council has been established during the term).
- g) Ensuring that independently examined annual statement of accounts are provided for approval at the community council Annual General Meeting (AGM) (which is held in May or June annually except in an election year when it can be held in any remaining month of the calendar year following the election e.g. in 2025 the AGM can be held in any month from the first community council meeting to 31 December 2025. From 2026 the AGM must be held in May or June annually).

5.12 Ensuring that the independently examined annual statement of accounts have the following recorded:

- a) Full Name (first and surname) of the independent examiner printed in capitals.
- b) The signature of the independent examiner.
- c) The date the independent examiner reviewed and approved the accounts.
- d) Full Name (first and surname) of the Treasurer printed in capitals
- e) The signature of the Treasurer.
- f) The date the Treasurer reviewed and approved the accounts.

5.13 Supplying the independently examined annual statement of accounts (signed and dated by both the independent examiner and the Treasurer) to the City of Edinburgh (by email to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk) by the last working day of August each year (with the exception of a community council election year where they must be supplied within 10 working days of their approval and no later than 10 January 2026).

5.14 It is important to note that where annual accounts are not submitted and received by the City of Edinburgh Council within the timescales detailed that community councils will not receive their annual administrative allowance, unless there are exceptional circumstances reasonably preventing provision.

5.15 Example 1: Provision of Annual Accounts and Payment of Annual Administrative Allowance 2025

5.15.1 A community council chooses to hold their AGM on 1 November 2025 (as it is an election year).

5.15.2 The annual accounts provided by the Treasurer for approval at the AGM on 1 November 2025 will cover the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025. The accounts are subsequently approved at the AGM on 1 November 2025.

5.15.3 The Treasurer ensures that the signed and independently examined annual accounts (for the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025) are then supplied to the City of Edinburgh Council by 11 November 2025 (10 days later and by email to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk).

5.15.4 Upon confirmation that the City of Edinburgh Council is satisfied with the provision of the submitted signed and independently examined accounts (for the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025) then the annual administrative allowance will be paid to the community council as soon as practicable.

5.15.5 The final deadline for the provision of annual accounts (covering periods up to 31 March 2025) is 10 January 2026.

5.16 Example 2: Provision of Annual Accounts and Payment of Annual Administrative Allowance 2026 to remainder of community council term.

5.16.1 A community council AGM is held in May or June 2026 (non-election year).

5.16.2 The annual accounts provided by the Treasurer for approval at the AGM in May and June 2026 will cover the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026. The AGM approves the accounts in May or June 2026.

5.16.3 Once approved, the Treasurer ensures that the signed and independently examined annual accounts (for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026) are then supplied to the City of Edinburgh Council by the last working day of August 2026 (by email to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk).

5.16.4 Upon confirmation that the City of Edinburgh is satisfied with the provision of the submitted signed and independently examined annual accounts (for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026) then the annual administrative allowance will be paid to the community council in September 2026.

Purpose of the City of Edinburgh Council administrative allowance

5.17 The City of Edinburgh Council pays an annual administrative allowance to community councils. The principal purpose of the administrative allowance is to cover administrative expenses e.g. postage, photocopying, production of leaflets and newsletters and any other means of consulting with or expressing the views of the community.

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

5.18 Whilst the key duties of the Treasurer are outlined above it is also important to note that it is the responsibility of **all** community council members to ensure that spending accords with the purposes of a community council administrative allowance.

5.19 Examples of administrative costs include:

- a) Hall/meeting room hire.
- b) Online meeting platform costs e.g. Microsoft Teams or Zoom.
- c) Web server costs.
- d) Photocopying.
- e) Stationery.
- f) Postage.
- g) Production of community council newsletter, annual report or community directory.
- h) Purchase of IT equipment (e.g laptop) that is suitable to assist an office bearer to undertake their role.
- i) Design or maintenance of community council website or social media pages.
- j) Involving local people in local decision making (e.g. surveys or consultations on local issues).
- k) Participation in local community planning activities.
- l) Developing links with other groups (e.g. any costs incurred from joint working with organisations such as minority groups, youth groups, local history society, pathways/environment group etc).
- m) Publicity and promotion - advertising meetings, purchase and/or repairs of notice boards, production of leaflets and flyers, stand at community gala day etc.
- n) Membership/affiliation fees e.g. Edinburgh Association of Community Councils (EACC) membership fees.
- o) Independent examiner's fee (where applicable) for independently examined annual statement of accounts.
- p) Information Commissioner's fee.
- q) Insurance for community council.
- r) Conference attendance.

5.20 Community councils may incur minor expenditure on donations to local charitable and community activities, but this is not the true purpose of the administrative allowance.

5.21 Some community councils are active fundraisers, organising fetes, galas and so on. Any extra funds raised by these means can be spent however the community council decides providing it affords some benefit to the local community.

5.22 The [Community Council website which is provided by the Improvement Service on behalf of the Scottish Government](#) also has a webpage which provides more information about funding available to community councils.

6. Duties of the Engagement and Inclusion Officer

- 6.1 This guidance is on the duties of the Engagement and Inclusion Officer.
- 6.2 The Engagement and Inclusion Officer is one of the 4 office bearer roles that community councils are required to elect. Please refer to section 6.28 – 6.33 of [the Scheme for Community Councils](#) for more information about office bearers.
- 6.3 As an office bearer, your name and email address will be publicly displayed on the Council's website. It is recommended that a generic email address is provided rather than a personal email address.
- 6.4 The Engagement and Inclusion Officer's key duties include:
- a) Identify issues with the engagement and inclusion of all members of your community.
 - b) Conducting events and initiatives to promote engagement and inclusion in your community.
 - c) Provide updates at each community council meeting on engagement and inclusion activities since the last meeting. This could be a note on updates to your community council's website, the use of social media or other types of feedback that you have received.
 - d) Producing your community council's annual engagement and inclusion report outlining activities that have taken place during the year.

Engagement and Inclusion Methods

- 6.5 The purpose of a community council is to act as a voice for the local area. Your community council can only claim to represent the views, wishes and needs of its community if it engages all individuals, businesses and organisations. You can seek the views of your community through many different methods. You should consider that your whole community is included.
- 6.6 You should use the questions below to help you.
- a) What are you engaging about?
 - b) Who are you engaging with?
 - c) What type of information do you want?
 - d) What resources are available to get the information? E.g. the budget you have, the community councillors and volunteers who can work on getting the information, when you need the information.

- e) How you will use the information and provide feedback to those who have engaged with you.

Annual Engagement Report

- 6.7 You will be required to produce an Engagement and Inclusion Report for your Annual General Meeting (AGM). This should detail the previous year's engagement and inclusion activities by your community council, noting how you have fulfilled your key duties and how your community council is working to engage and include all of your community in its work.

7. New Community Councils

Newly formed community councils established following an election or where a previously dissolved community council has reconstituted.

- 7.1 Following an election, there may be newly formed community councils. These are community councils that have been newly created, following a scheme and boundary review.
- 7.2 During the course of a community council term, a community council may take the decision to dissolve or following a community council election, a community council may not receive sufficient nominations to establish. If a community council dissolves, or does not establish following an election, there is provision in the [Scheme](#) (paragraph 6.14.4) for the community council to establish during the community council term.
- 7.3 Where a newly formed community council is established or where a previously dissolved community council has reconstituted, the community council is entitled to a £500 one-off payment to enable its initial function. A further £500 payment is also available where the community council serves communities impacted by socioeconomic deprivation (as measured by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation).

Annual Administrative Allowance

- 7.4 The City of Edinburgh Council pays an annual administrative allowance to community councils. The principal purpose of the administrative allowance is to cover administrative expenses: postage, photocopying, production of leaflets, newsletters and so on. (Community councils may incur minor expenditure on donations to local charitable and community activities but this is *not* the true purpose of the Council grant).
- 7.5 The administrative allowance includes a base grant of £522 per community council and in addition a population element is awarded of 2p per person in the boundary area and an accommodation element of £150.00. The purpose of the administrative allowance is to cover administrative expenses and can also be used to pay for accommodation and secretarial support.

Banking Arrangements

- 7.6 Each community council must establish a bank account and run a balanced budget.
- 7.7 Community councils should appoint a Treasurer who will deal with all financial matters. Each community council shall establish a bank account and run a balanced budget. The annual administrative allowance will be paid in to the community council's bank account.

- 7.8 The bank account should be set up in such a way that requires at least two office bearers and 1 other community councillor to authorise payments agreed by each community council. One of the office-bearers should be the Treasurer.
- 7.9 Section 12.8 of the scheme states that '*Any two of three authorised signatories, who must be office-bearers of the community council, may sign cheques or make payments on behalf of the community council. Authorised signatories may not be co-habitees or family members*'.
- 7.10 The signatory roles must be held by at least 2 office bearers (identified in the scheme i.e. Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Engagement and Inclusion Officer) and 1 other community councillor who does not need to be an office bearer.
- 7.11 Further details can be found in the Financial Good Practice section of this guidance.

Insurance

- 7.12 Community councils are responsible for arranging their own insurance and are strongly recommended to undertake their own review of the insurance cover in place for their organisation, in line with the terms & conditions of their policies, to ensure that adequate cover is in place. The Council is not authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to provide insurance/risk advice or recommend insurers or brokers to third parties such as community councils. The Council would recommend contacting Citizens Advice Scotland (<https://www.cas.org.uk/>) in the first instance who can provide advice for free or seek independent advice on insurance and risk management as this insurance is likely to be essential for the running of a constituted group for example, a relatively minor incident could produce a claim from a volunteer or member of the public for compensation and the associated legal expenses)

Scheme for Community Councils (“The Scheme”)

- 7.13 All of Scotland’s local authorities, including the City of Edinburgh Council, are required to produce a ‘Scheme for Community Councils’. This document details the rules and regulations governing the relationship between the City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh’s community councils. The Scheme covers everything from the purpose of community councils to conduct at meetings, financial arrangements and so on. [The current Scheme](#) was approved by Council on 26 September and is effective from 28 March 2025.

Constitution

- 7.14 The Scheme forms the Constitution of each community council therefore there is no requirement for community councils to develop their own Constitution.

8. Dealing with Disputes

Introduction

- 8.1 Community councils are self-regulatory bodies that operate with support and advice, where appropriate, from local authorities. Given that community councils are public representative bodies, dealing with important and sometimes contentious matters, it is understandable that disputes may occasionally arise. These disputes may be between individual members of the community council, between the community council and another individual or even between the community council and the City of Edinburgh Council. Whatever the situation, it is important that community council members remain conscious of their responsibilities and seek a sensible resolution to any kind of disagreement as quickly and amicably as possible.
- 8.2 The following procedures may be useful as a general guide, though in handling disputes of any kind, there is no substitute for common sense, consensus and compromise!

Disputes Within the Community Council

- 8.3 The Chair is responsible for conducting business at meetings and it is essential that due deference is paid to the Chair by all present. The Chair decides the order of business, who will speak and for how long.
- 8.4 While business is being discussed, it is important that the Chair ensures that all points of view have equal time to be aired. Towards the end of a debate the Chair may summarise the arguments for and against a motion to ensure the minute secretary (and others) clearly understand the pertinent issues. If a consensus cannot be reached on any point, the Chair should take a vote with the majority verdict prevailing. **All members of the community council will be bound by this decision.**

Disputes Between the Community Council and Members of the Public

- 8.5 Individual members of the public may wish to attend meetings of their local community council to hear certain items of business being discussed. While they may not vote or otherwise interfere with the conduct of the meeting, they may be invited to speak at the discretion of the Chair.
- 8.6 A member of the public may request that their community council consider a particular issue. This request must be considered by the members. If it is considered appropriate, then the matter should be included on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the community council. The Secretary or Chair should write to the person who raised the issue, inviting them to speak to the matter. If the community council does not consider the request appropriate, then a letter should be sent to the individual concerned notifying them of the reasons. Details of the request and the refusal should be reported to the next

meeting of the community council and recorded in the minutes. **The person should be advised that if they are aggrieved by this decision then they may refer the matter to the City of Edinburgh Council for advice and guidance.**

Conduct of Community Council Members

- 8.7 Although the Chair has overall responsibility for conduct at meetings, each individual member of a community council is responsible for their own behaviour and has a duty to comply with the Code of Conduct. However sensitive an issue may be and however strongly people may feel, it is absolutely essential that community council members maintain a respectful demeanour. Personal differences must not be allowed to undermine the correct conduct of business. This is equally true whether it involves a disagreement between two community council members or between a community council member and another person.
- 8.8 In the event that a debate becomes too heated, the Chair must intervene and bring the meeting to order. If any of the protagonists have resorted to inappropriate language or behaviour, it is the responsibility of the Chair to immediately ask the 'offender' to apologise. (Common sense suggests that this is the best way of preventing long-lasting and damaging grievances from emerging).
- 8.9 Difficult situations or disagreement can be resolved between those directly involved, especially if addressed at an early stage. If this cannot be achieved, the matter should be taken up with the community council office-bearers. If the office-bearers fail to respond, members can raise their concerns as an item at a community council meeting to ensure full consideration of the facts. It would only be in the final stage when a community council has taken all reasonable steps to resolve the matter but has been unable to do so that the City of Edinburgh Council would be approached for support and advice.
- 8.10 The [Community Councillor Complaints Procedure](#) sets out provisions for dealing with alleged breaches of the Code and the sanctions that can be applied in such an event.

Disputes *with* the City of Edinburgh Council

- 8.11 Where a community council experiences difficulties with a department of the City of Edinburgh Council, it should first attempt to resolve them with the appropriate officer.
- 8.12 For complaints and suggestions about anything that the City of Edinburgh Council does, contact the Quality and Customer Care Unit on 0131 200 2000 or e-mail: customer.care@edinburgh.gov.uk. Copies of the City of Edinburgh Council's '*Suggestions and Complaints Guide*', with a Freepost form, are available in local area offices or by telephoning the above contact number.

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

Unresolved disputes

- 8.13 In the event that a disagreement or dispute has arisen which the community council is unable to be resolved, then the community council may wish to ask the City of Edinburgh Council to help. However, this does not mean that the City of Edinburgh Council should be the first point of contact in such a situation. **The City of Edinburgh Council should only be approached as a last resort, once all reasonable steps have been taken by the community council to deal with the problem. Guidance will be offered on a case-by-case basis.**

9. Conducting Community Council Meetings

Introduction

- 9.1 The rules for conducting community council meetings are contained within the Scheme, Constitution and Standing Orders. No two community councils will conduct their meetings in exactly the same way and the following notes aim to highlight key aspects of meeting procedure and provide general guidance.

Meetings

- 9.2 Community councils should hold a minimum of one AGM in May or June and six ordinary meetings each year. All meetings must be properly minuted, and copies of the minutes, along with an agenda, should be distributed to all members at least 7 days in advance of the next meeting. Community councils must conduct annual reviews (as a minimum or more frequently where required) of meeting arrangements (day, time, location and in-person/virtual/hybrid) to assess and ensure they are accessible and are meeting the needs of community councillors and the diverse communities they represent taking appropriate action where applicable to overcome any identified barriers to participation.

Public Notice of Meetings

- 9.3 Public notice of community council meetings should be given by a copy of the agenda being put up in a public place within the local area at least 7 days before the meeting is due to take place.

Chairing Meetings

- 9.4 In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair (if the community council has appointed one) should chair meetings. If both Chair and Vice-Chair are not present, one of the office bearers or failing that, another member should take on the role of Chair. The Chair shall conduct the business of the meeting and maintain order. All comments should be addressed to the Chair. (A fuller note of the duties of the Chair can be found in the Chair's Guidance Note).

Quorum

- 9.5 The quorum for general meetings of community councils is one third of those presently serving as elected and nominated representatives on the community council or three voting members, whichever is the greatest. If a quorum is not present, the Chair should postpone the meeting until a later date providing that there will be sufficient time to inform all members of the new date.

Order of Business

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

- 9.6 The Chair shall follow the order of business on the agenda unless a change in circumstances dictates that some alteration to the agenda would be in order. Any suggested change to the order of business should be put to the membership for their approval.
- 9.7 Typically, the order of business at a community council meeting might be as follows, as set out in Schedule 4 of the Scheme:
- a) Where applicable, confirmation of video or audio recording followed by recording of membership present and apologies received.
 - b) Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising
 - c) Reports of Office Bearers
 - d) Reports of Sub Committees
 - e) Ordinary Items of Business
 - f) AOCB
 - g) Questions from the floor*
 - h) Arrangements for Next Meeting

*Some community councils have an “Open Forum” as the last agenda item of each meeting, and this is recommended as good practice. This provides an opportunity for members of the public to bring additional community-related issues to the attention of the community council. (Discussion during the “Open Forum” period may not affect any decisions previously taken by the community council, though it may be agreed to reconsider a particular matter at a subsequent meeting).

Voting on a Motion

- 9.8 The Chair should ensure that there is a full and even-handed discussion of every issue put before the members. If an item is likely to generate a particularly busy session, the Chair may wish to limit the time allocated to each speaker. If ample time has been given to the discussion of an issue and no agreement has been reached, then the matter should be put to a vote. All votes shall be taken by a show of hands.
- 9.9 In the event that there is an equality of votes, the Chair shall have the casting vote. Once a motion has been passed by a community council no contrary motion should be considered for a period of at least six months unless notice has been given of the proposed item in the summons for the meeting and the community council agrees the decision was based on erroneous, incorrect or incomplete information.

Declarations of Interest

- 9.10 In accordance with the Scheme for Community Councils, all community council members must declare their interest(s), where appropriate. If any member has a private interest in a matter which comes before the community council, they must declare that interest and withdraw from discussion and decision making on that matter.

- 9.11 The criteria for what constitutes an ‘interest’ are not easy to define. However, if a member feels that it might reasonably be suspected that their private interest could influence them or that it might create a bias on their part (due to how it affects them or someone close to them) **then they must declare their interest**. If a member has doubts as to whether a matter is sufficiently material as to require them to declare an interest, they should declare it nevertheless and allow the community council to decide whether they should withdraw from discussion on the matter. It may be good practice for each community council to maintain a **Register of Interests**. This Register could contain details of each member’s interests pertaining to particular matters which have been raised at meetings.
- 9.12 For further guidance on declarations of interest please see the Code of Conduct (appended to the Scheme for Community Councils – www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils)

Failure to Declare an Interest

- 9.13 If it is subsequently discovered that a community council member had an interest in an item of business but had failed to declare that interest and withdraw from the meeting, then that item should be placed on the agenda for the *next* scheduled meeting, for re-consideration. The community council’s previous decision may then be either confirmed or altered.
- 9.14 At that next meeting, the community council should also consider the position of the member who had failed to declare their interest. Community council members who fail to comply with the Code of Conduct may be suspended from the position of community council member by action of the community council or by action of the Council

Conducting In-person, online or hybrid meetings

- 9.15 Community councils may decide to take an in-person, online or hybrid approach to their meetings, and the platform to be used for any meeting is for the community council to decide.
- 9.16 Virtual and hybrid meetings must be accessible to members of the public and community councils must share details on how to join virtual meetings via their usual public communication routes (e.g. website, social media, notice boards etc) or upon request from a member of the public.
- 9.17 If the community council chooses to host a hybrid meeting, they will need to establish whether the venue has an adequate internet connection to support the running of a hybrid meeting. Community councils will also need to consider how the meeting will be run procedurally, what software they will choose (i.e. Microsoft Teams, Zoom etc.) to use and how they will set up the meeting room so that the participants who are present can be seen by the web camera(s) and heard by the microphone(s).

- 9.18 If holding a hybrid meeting, it is recommended that the community council consider advising all members and individuals attending remotely to join the meeting at least 15 minutes before it is due to start to ensure that their internet connection and IT equipment are working effectively.
- 9.19 Community councils should ensure that they have a process for addressing network or IT issues that may prevent members or the public from joining the meeting, or if individuals are disconnected during the meeting. The simplest solution would be to communicate this to the Secretary, by email or a telephone call.
- 9.20 Community councils should also ensure that there is a process in place to register a vote if a member is disconnected during a vote. The simplest method is to communicate which way they are voting by text message to the Secretary.
- 9.21 In order to prevent a two-tier meeting whereby either those attending virtually or those attending in person are at a disadvantage in terms of opportunities to contribute, it is recommended that members are invited to speak/contribute in the order that they indicate this to the Chair. If possible, the Secretary should assist the Chair in keeping track of the order of those wishing to contribute.

Meeting in private

- 9.22 The Scheme allows community councils to meet to discuss items of business in private where it considers it appropriate to do so. Notice of such a meeting will be given to the public in the usual way. However, the Notice will record that the meeting, or a part thereof, is intended to be held in private. The decision to meet in private will be agreed by a majority vote (if required) at the start of the meeting or before the item under consideration is discussed.
- 9.23 It is recognised that community councillors may be required to meet to discuss operational matters. At these meetings, no decisions can be taken. Only meetings that have been properly called, with notice published in accordance with the Scheme, are considered constituted meetings of the community council and it is only at these meetings where community councils can take decisions.

10. Financial Good Practice

Introduction

- 10.1 Community councils may have different approaches as to how you will represent your community. There are financial requirements that everyone must follow.
- 10.2 It is important that clear systems are put in place by your community council to manage your finances. All members of community councils have a responsibility to ensure the correct use of your community council's funds. If you have any concerns, they should be brought to the attention of the whole community council. If you still have a concern, contact the Governance Team.
- 10.3 The National Council for Voluntary Organisations provides clear [guidance on financial management](#). They also provide guidance on their website for the processes English charities need to follow. Requirements for English charities do not apply to your community council.

Processes, procedures and controls

- 10.4 Your Treasurer has primary responsibility for all matters relating to finance. Their duties include maintaining accurate systems for recording income and expenditure, preparation of regular statements to the community council, preparing annual accounts for independent examination and ensuring that expenditure accords with the purposes of a community council as defined in the 'Scheme for Community Councils'.

Planning and budgeting

- 10.5 Your community council should agree a budget. Your treasurer should provide summaries at each of your community council meetings updating you as to your income, expenditure and the funds that you have available to allow you to represent your community.
- 10.6 Spending and receiving money:
- a) All financial transactions require the approval of the membership of your community council.
 - b) All financial transactions should be recorded in in your community council's accounts. This is so you have a complete record for your annual accounts that need to be agreed at your AGM.
 - c) Your Treasurer should have evidence of all transactions in your accounts.
 - d) There should be written evidence to back up every transaction entered in the records.
 - e) At least two office bearers need to authorise payments agreed by your community council.

Expenses

- 10.7 Your community council may reimburse the office bearers, members and employees for any reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. Claimants should submit evidence, e.g. a receipt, and a detailed record of the expense. The payment of expenses must be agreed by your community council.

Honoraria Payments

- 10.8 The dedicated efforts of all community council members are very much appreciated. Under the Scheme, it is not permitted to give honoraria payments to members of your community council for their hard work.

11. The Role of the Community Empowerment and Engagement Team

Community Empowerment

11.1 The [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#) places many duties in respect of both community planning and community empowerment on the City of Edinburgh Council and other public bodies, including:

- a) Putting in place appropriate governance arrangements to support effective and efficient community planning, providing clarity on the role of community bodies in decision making.
- b) Community planning, including preparing, maintaining and delivering Locality and Local Outcomes Improvement plans.
- c) Participation requests.
- d) Community Asset Transfer.

Our Community Empowerment and Engagement team

11.2 The City of Edinburgh Council's Community Empowerment and Engagement team provides the following support to our communities and community councils:

- a) Administer [local community grants](#) across the city.
- b) Support development and better use of the city's community centres.
- c) Support partnership work and community networks in different parts of the city.
- d) Provide a point of contact for those contacting the Council when it's unclear which of our services would deal with a specific request or enquiry.
- e) Provide guidance on how community councils can be established.

11.3 The Community Empowerment and Engagement Team can be contacted at: communityengagement@edinburgh.gov.uk

12. The Role of the Governance Team

- 12.1 The Council's Governance Team can provide the following services to community councils:
- a) Governance advice limited to the [Scheme for Community Councils](#) and its guidance notes.
 - b) Receipt and processing of the independently examined annual accounts and where applicable, subsequent processing of the annual administrative allowance.
 - c) Receipt and archiving of community council meeting minutes, agendas and AGM reports.
 - d) Processing and administering the Community Council Complaints Procedure.
- 12.2 Where an enquiry is received that does not fall within the parameters of the services outlined above then, where possible, the enquirer will be provided with advice on how to progress through an alternative and appropriate contact channel, which may include via [the Council's reporting mechanisms on its public webpages](#).
- 12.3 You can contact the Governance Team about the services offered by:
- a) **Email to:** governance@edinburgh.gov.uk
- [Please note that the current community councils mailbox - community.councils@edinburgh.gov.uk - will be retired permanently soon. From **30 September 2025** you will not receive a response from this mailbox so please ensure that you update your Governance Team contact details now. Further reminders will be issued to all community councils prior to 30 September 2025.
- 12.4 Standards of service you can expect from the Governance Team. We will aim to provide a response within 10 working days of receipt.

13. Community Councils and their Boundaries

| Community Council Name | Area (sq.km) | Population (NRS-mid2022) | City of Edinburgh Council Ward Name | City of Edinburgh Council Ward No. | UK Westminster Constituency | Scottish Holyrood Constituency | Localities | Neighbourhood Areas |
|---|--------------|--------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|--|
| Balerno | 44.25 | 6,755 | Pentland Hills | 2 | Edinburgh South West | Edinburgh Pentlands | South West | Pentlands NA |
| Colinton | 11.61 | 8,026 | Colinton / Fairmilehead | 8 | Edinburgh South West | Edinburgh Pentlands | South West | Pentlands NA |
| Corstorphine and Clermiston | 5.62 | 21,947 | Drum Brae / Gyle and Corstorphine / Murrayfield | 3 and 6 | Edinburgh South West / Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Central / Edinburgh Western | North West | Western Edinburgh NA |
| Corstorphine East and West Craigs | 3.46 | 8,366 | Almond and Drum Brae / Gyle | 1 and 3 | Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Western P | North West | Almond NA / Western Edinburgh NA |
| Corstorphine Gyle | 3.28 | 6,904 | Drum Brae / Gyle and Corstorphine / Murrayfield | 3 and 6 | Edinburgh South West / Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Western | North West | Western Edinburgh NA |
| Craigentinny and Meadowbank | 4.00 | 17,582 | City Centre, Leith, and Craigentinny / Duddingston | 11, 13, and 14 | Edinburgh East and Musselburgh | Edinburgh Eastern / Edinburgh Northern and Leith | North East | Leith NA / Craigentinny/Duddingston NA |
| Craigleith and Blackhall | 3.17 | 9,412 | Inverleith and Corstorphine / Murrayfield | 5 and 6 | Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Central / Edinburgh Western | North West | Inverleith NA / Western Edinburgh NA |

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

| Community Council Name | Area (sq.km) | Population (NRS-mid2022) | City of Edinburgh Council Ward Name | City of Edinburgh Council Ward No. | UK Westminster Constituency | Scottish Holyrood Constituency | Localities | Neighbourhood Areas |
|---|--------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Craiglockhart | 2.83 | 6,232 | Colinton / Fairmilehead and Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart | 8 and 9 | Edinburgh South West | Edinburgh Southern | South West | South West NA / Pentlands NA |
| Craigmillar | 7.41 | 20,939 | Portobello / Craigmillar | 17 | Edinburgh East and Musselburgh | Edinburgh Eastern / Edinburgh Southern | North East | Portobello/Craigmillar NA |
| Cramond, Barnton and Cammo | 8.14 | 6,833 | Almond | 1 | Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Western | North West | Almond NA |
| Currie | 13.77 | 8,255 | Pentland Hills and Colinton / Fairmilehead | 2 and 8 | Edinburgh South West / Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Pentlands | South West | Pentlands NA |
| Davidson Mains and Silverknowes | 3.99 | 5,051 | Almond and Inverleith | 1 and 5 | Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Western | North West | Almond NA / Inverleith NA |
| Drylaw and Telford | 0.77 | 4,409 | Inverleith | 5 | Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Central / Edinburgh Western | North West | Inverleith NA |
| Fairmilehead | 6.91 | 9,811 | Colinton / Fairmilehead and Morningside | 8 and 10 | Edinburgh South West / Edinburgh South | Edinburgh Pentlands | South East / South West | Pentlands NA / Morningside NA |
| Firrhill | 1.36 | 7,667 | Colinton / Fairmilehead | 8 | Edinburgh South West | Edinburgh Pentlands | South West | Pentlands NA |

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

| Community Council Name | Area (sq.km) | Population (NRS-mid2022) | City of Edinburgh Council Ward Name | City of Edinburgh Council Ward No. | UK Westminster Constituency | Scottish Holyrood Constituency | Localities | Neighbourhood Areas |
|--|--------------|--------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Gilmerton and District | 8.36 | 20,255 | Liberton / Gilmerton | 16 | Edinburgh South | Edinburgh Eastern / Edinburgh Southern | South East | Liberton/Gilmerton NA |
| Gorgie and Dalry | 1.37 | 13,898 | Sighthill / Gorgie, Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart, and City Centre | 7, 9, and 11 | Edinburgh South West | Edinburgh Central / Edinburgh Southern | South West / South East | South West NA / City Centre NA |
| Grange Prestonfield | 3.99 | 16,255 | Southside / Newington | 15 | Edinburgh South | Edinburgh Central / Edinburgh Southern | South East | Southside/Newington NA |
| Granton and District | 2.65 | 14,005 | Forth | 4 | Edinburgh North and Leith | Edinburgh Northern and Leith | North West | Forth NA |
| Hutchison and Chesser | 1.18 | 7,600 | Sighthill / Gorgie and Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart | 7 and 9 | Edinburgh South West | Edinburgh Pentlands / Edinburgh Southern | South West | South West NA |
| Juniper Green and Baberton Mains | 1.36 | 4,023 | Pentland Hills | 2 | Edinburgh South West | Edinburgh Pentlands | South West | Pentlands NA |
| Kirkliston | 12.21 | 5,783 | Almond | 1 | Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Western | North West | Almond NA |

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

| Community Council Name | Area (sq.km) | Population (NRS-mid2022) | City of Edinburgh Council Ward Name | City of Edinburgh Council Ward No. | UK Westminster Constituency | Scottish Holyrood Constituency | Localities | Neighbourhood Areas |
|--|--------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|---|
| Leith Central | 2.07 | 26,237 | Inverleith, Leith Walk, and Craigentiny / Duddingston | 5, 12, and 14 | Edinburgh East and Musselburgh / Edinburgh North and Leith | Edinburgh Northern and Leith | North East / North West | Leith NA / Craigentiny/Duddingston NA / Inverleith NA |
| Leith Harbour and Newhaven | 4.29 | 14,376 | Forth and Leith | 4 and 13 | Edinburgh North and Leith | Edinburgh Northern and Leith | North East / North West | Forth NA / Leith NA |
| Leith Links | 1.21 | 9,370 | Leith | 13 | Edinburgh East and Musselburgh / Edinburgh North and Leith | Edinburgh Northern and Leith | North East | Leith NA |
| Liberton and District | 7.38 | 18,295 | Southside / Newington and Liberton / Gilmerton | 15 and 16 | Edinburgh South | Edinburgh Eastern / Edinburgh Southern | South East | Liberton/Gilmerton NA / Southside/Newington NA |
| Longstone | 1.35 | 4,127 | Sighthill / Gorgie and Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart | 7 and 9 | Edinburgh South West | Edinburgh Pentlands | South West | South West NA |
| Marchmont and Sciennes | 1.24 | 10,725 | Morningside and Southside / Newington | 10 and 15 | Edinburgh South | Edinburgh Southern | South East | Southside/Newington NA / Morningside NA |
| Merchiston Districts | 2.18 | 19,374 | Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart, Morningside, and Southside / Newington | 9, 10, and 15 | Edinburgh South West / Edinburgh South | Edinburgh Central / Edinburgh Southern | South West / South East | South West NA / Morningside NA / Southside/Newington NA |

| Community Council Name | Area (sq.km) | Population (NRS-mid2022) | City of Edinburgh Council Ward Name | City of Edinburgh Council Ward No. | UK Westminster Constituency | Scottish Holyrood Constituency | Localities | Neighbourhood Areas |
|---|--------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Morningside | 4.39 | 13,033 | Morningside and Southside / Newington | 10 and 15 | Edinburgh South | Edinburgh Southern | South East | Morningside NA / Southside/Newington NA |
| Muirhouse and Salvesen | 1.58 | 6,252 | Almond | 1 | Edinburgh North and Leith | Edinburgh Western | North West | Almond NA |
| Murrayfield | 3.37 | 9,695 | Corstorphine / Murrayfield and City Centre | 6 and 11 | Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Central | North West / South East | Western Edinburgh NA / City Centre NA |
| New Town and Broughton | 2.56 | 17,952 | Inverleith, City Centre, and Leith Walk | 5, 11, and 12 | Edinburgh North and Leith / Edinburgh East and Musselburgh | Edinburgh Central / Edinburgh Northern and Leith | North East / North West / South East | Leith NA / City Centre NA / Inverleith NA |
| Northfield and Willowbrae | 5.45 | 12,495 | Craightinny / Duddingston and Portobello / Craigmillar | 14 and 17 | Edinburgh East and Musselburgh | Edinburgh Eastern | North East | Craightinny/Duddingston NA / Portobello/Craigmillar NA |
| Old Town | 1.20 | 7,550 | City Centre and Southside / Newington | 11 and 15 | Edinburgh East and Musselburgh | Edinburgh Central / Edinburgh Eastern | South East | City Centre NA |
| Portobello | 3.37 | 12,098 | Craightinny / Duddingston and Portobello / Craigmillar | 14 and 17 | Edinburgh East and Musselburgh | Edinburgh Eastern | North East | Portobello/Craigmillar NA / Craightinny/Duddingston NA |
| Queensferry and District | 28.04 | 10,542 | Almond | 1 | Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Western | North West | Almond NA |

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

| Community Council Name | Area (sq.km) | Population (NRS-mid2022) | City of Edinburgh Council Ward Name | City of Edinburgh Council Ward No. | UK Westminster Constituency | Scottish Holyrood Constituency | Localities | Neighbourhood Areas |
|---|--------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|---|
| Ratho and District | 35.60 | 4,093 | Almond and Pentland Hills | 1 and 2 | Edinburgh South West / Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Pentlands / Edinburgh Western | North West / South West | Almond NA / Pentlands NA |
| Sighthill, Broomhouse and Parkhead | 2.60 | 7,675 | Sighthill / Gorgie | 7 | Edinburgh South West | Edinburgh Pentlands | South West | South West NA |
| Southside | 1.19 | 15,285 | City Centre and Southside / Newington | 11 and 15 | Edinburgh East and Musselburgh / Edinburgh South | Edinburgh Central | South East | Southside/Newington NA / City Centre NA |
| Stenhouse, Saughton Mains and Whitson | 1.17 | 6,293 | Sighthill / Gorgie and Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart | 7 and 9 | Edinburgh South West / Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Pentlands / Edinburgh Southern | South West | South West NA |
| Stockbridge and Inverleith | 3.26 | 13,593 | Inverleith and City Centre | 5 and 11 | Edinburgh North and Leith | Edinburgh Central / Edinburgh Northern and Leith | North West / South East | Inverleith NA / City Centre NA |
| Tollcross | 1.12 | 12,986 | Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart, Morningside, and City Centre | 9, 10, and 11 | Edinburgh East and Musselburgh / Edinburgh South West / Edinburgh South | Edinburgh Central | South East / South West | City Centre NA / Morningside NA / South West NA |
| Trinity and Newhaven | 1.79 | 9,380 | Forth | 4 | Edinburgh North and Leith | Edinburgh Northern and Leith | North West | Forth NA |

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

| Community Council Name | Area (sq.km) | Population (NRS-mid2022) | City of Edinburgh Council Ward Name | City of Edinburgh Council Ward No. | UK Westminster Constituency | Scottish Holyrood Constituency | Localities | Neighbourhood Areas |
|--|--------------|--------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| West End | 1.15 | 5,887 | Inverleith, Corstorphine / Murrayfield, and City Centre | 5, 6, and 11 | Edinburgh East and Musselburgh / Edinburgh North and Leith / Edinburgh South West / Edinburgh West | Edinburgh Central | North West / South East | Inverleith NA / City Centre NA |
| West Pilton and West Granton | 1.67 | 8,348 | Almond and Forth | 1 and 4 | Edinburgh North and Leith | Edinburgh Northern and Leith / Edinburgh Western | North West | Almond NA / Forth NA |
| Wester Hailes | 2.15 | 10,854 | Pentland Hills | 2 | Edinburgh South West | Edinburgh Pentlands | South West | Pentlands NA / South West NA |

14. FAQs relating to community council member numbers

| FAQs relating to community council member numbers | | | |
|---|--|--|--------------------------|
| FAQ No. | Question description | Answer | Relevant scheme sections |
| FAQ 1 | Minimum number of members required to establish a community council. | <p>Should the number of candidates elected, be below half of the total maximum permitted elected membership (as specified for the community council in Schedule 1, Column A), no community council will be established at that time.</p> <p>Example: Wester Hailes Community Council The maximum elected and co-opted members for Wester Hailes Community Council is 10 members. The minimum number of members required for Wester Hailes Community Council to establish would be 5 members.</p> <p>If 4 or less candidates were successfully nominated for Wester Hailes Community Council, then it could not be established as it would be less than half of the maximum elected and co-opted members.</p> <p>A further request from 20 or more electors to the City of Edinburgh Council to make arrangements for the establishment of a Wester Hailes Community Council under the terms of Section 52 (7) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 can be submitted after a standstill period of six months.</p> | 6.14.1 6.14.4 |
| FAQ 2 | Minimum number of members in attendance (in person or virtually) for a community council to be quorate and to be able to continue with the meeting/have valid proceedings. | <p>The quorum for community council meetings shall be at least one third of the current voting membership of a community council or 3 voting members, whichever is greater.</p> <p>Example: Tollcross Community Council Tollcross Community Council consists of 18 community council members.</p> <p>13 members are present at a community council meeting and in this scenario, all present members have voting rights.</p> <p>Tollcross are quorate because a third of their current voting membership is 6 members (i.e. 1/3 of 18 = 6) and they have 13 members eligible to vote which is 7 more than the minimum.</p> | 9.2 |

| | | | |
|-------|--|--|------|
| | | Please note that if the community council were voting to co-opt a new member, then only elected and nominated representative members of local interest groups are allowed to vote and co-opted members are not entitled to vote when co-opting new members | |
| FAQ 3 | Maximum number of co-opted members | <p>The number of co-opted members may not exceed a half of the maximum permitted elected membership for a community council (as detailed in Schedule 1, Column A).</p> <p>Example: Murrayfield Community Council The maximum elected and co-opted members for Murrayfield Community Council is 12 members. Murrayfield may not co-opt more than 6 members (i.e. $12/2 = 6$).</p> | 6.27 |
| FAQ 4 | Minimum number of members required to vote to approve a co-option. | <p>Members who are co-opted through the vacancy process must be eligible for membership of the community council as detailed in Section 5.1 above. They must be elected on to the community council by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present. (For avoidance of doubt these are elected members and nominated representative members of local interest groups.) Co-opted members shall have full voting rights, with the exception of voting on co-option of new members and will serve until the next round of elections.</p> <p>Example: Craigmillar Community Council In this scenario Craigmillar Community Council has 18 members and all are present at the meeting where it has been proposed to co-opt a new member.</p> <p>7 members were elected. 6 members were co-opted. 5 members are nominated representative members of local interest groups.</p> <p>The only members who can vote on the co-option are the elected members and nominated representative members of local interest groups ($7+5 = 12$ voting members).</p> <p>For the new co-option to be approved a two-thirds majority of voting members is required i.e. two-thirds of $12 = 8$).</p> <p>7 members vote in favour of the co-option. 5 members vote in opposition of the co-option.</p> | 6.27 |

| | | | |
|-------|-----------------------------|--|------|
| | | The co-option is not approved as less than two-thirds of the voting members voted in favour. | |
| FAQ 5 | When can co-options happen? | Community councils can decide to co-opt individuals at any community council meeting during the community council term, including their AGM. | 6.27 |

15. Dissolving a Community Council

Under what circumstances can a community council dissolve?

- 15.1 Section 16 of the [Scheme for Community Councils](#) outlines provisions for the dissolution of a community council and includes where:
- a) A community council decides to dissolve.
 - b) A community council fails to hold a meeting for a period of 3 prescribed meeting dates and fails to take action to resolve.
 - c) A community council's membership falls below the prescribed minimum for a period of 3 prescribed meeting dates and fails to take action to resolve. The prescribed minimum for each community council is detailed in section 6.14.3 of the [Scheme for Community Councils](#).

Activities that may prevent a community council from dissolving

- 15.2 A range of activities to maintain membership and remain active are available to community councils who wish to avoid dissolution.

Activities include:

- a) Proactively and regularly reach out to communicate the good work that your community council does in your local community.
- b) Regularly engage with your local communities and local interest groups operating in your area to encourage residents and local interest groups to get involved.
- c) Regularly review and reflect whether your community council meetings offer accessibility and a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone can participate and provide their input and views to matters discussed:
 - *Does your community council actively value and welcome other opinions and points of view? Consider whether surveys or anonymous forms of feedback may reveal underlying issues that could be addressed to improve participation.*
 - *Does your community council take appropriate and proportionate actions where behaviours and conduct are not welcoming and inclusive or do not comply with the [Scheme for Community Councils](#) requirements?*
- d) If members leave your community council, then consider asking if they would consent to providing feedback to you about their experience and reasons for leaving. Consider the feedback provided and where possible take applicable action to address to support maintaining and encouraging new members.

- e) Consider whether the format of community council meetings could be varied to meet the needs of diverse groups and encourage and sustain attendance and membership:
- *Could meeting formats be varied e.g. a combination of in person, online and hybrid?*
 - *Could meetings be held in different venues, on different days or different time periods?*
- f) Ensure that all members are aware and kept updated of the vacancies in your community council so that you can work together to encourage new members to join. Agree the strategy for how you will actively promote your community council and regularly encourage new membership.
- g) Retain membership vacancies as standing agenda items at each community council meeting to encourage discussion and actions to resolve and until vacancies are filled.
- h) Consider contacting other community council across Scotland to ascertain their approaches to filling vacancies and adopt good practice.
- i) Ensure that members understand the process of co-option (for local residents within your community council boundary area) and local interest group registration and nomination so that the applicable processes can be easily and clearly conveyed to interested parties and support offered where applicable.
- j) Communicate and promote your vacancies regularly through applicable communication channels e.g. website, social media, local promotion events, minutes of meetings, notice boards, [Volunteer Edinburgh](#) etc.
- k) Contact the Community Empowerment and Engagement Team (via communityengagement@edinburgh.gov.uk) for advice and support on how to engage with your local community to encourage interest and sustain membership.
- l) Contact your local councillor(s) who may be able to provide further advice or support to community councils to increase local membership. To find out [who your local councillor is](#) and how to make contact with them please visit the council website (<https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1>).

- m) Visit the community councils website (www.communitycouncils.scot) which is managed by the Improvement Service on behalf of the Scottish Government and view the [support, information and links to assist community councils](#).

Activities that must be completed by community councils before dissolution

- 15.3 Where dissolution cannot be prevented then the community council must make contact with the Governance Team to inform of the decision to dissolve (via email to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk).
- 15.4 The community council will then be required to complete the following dissolution activities. The community council will be notified once the Governance Team is satisfied that all dissolution activities have been completed.

| DISSOLUTION PROCESS | |
|--|---|
| Dissolution Activity | Dissolution Activity Process |
| Notify all existing members/applicable contacts of dissolution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that you inform the Governance Team of your concerns relating to dissolution or if you have decided to dissolve (by email to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk). • Ensure that the dissolution is communicated to all community council members (via the contact details held) and the community via appropriate means e.g. via held contact details, website, notice board, posters, social media accounts. • Ensure that nominated representative members of local interest groups and ex-officio members are informed of the dissolution. • Ensure that the dissolution is communicated appropriately to any other partners as appropriate. |
| Email contacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For all published email addresses (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Engagement and Inclusion Officer and/or generic email addresses) set up an automatic email reply advising that the community council has been dissolved effective from <insert date of dissolution> and that enquiries to this email address will not be read or responded to. |
| Room bookings and any other ongoing charges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel all room bookings for future meetings ensuring that all bill payments are up to date/resolved. • Cancel all ongoing bookings or charges e.g. software, equipment, website domain charges etc. |
| Website and any other publication methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make arrangements for website to be closed down. • Make arrangements for Facebook, X and/or any other social media accounts to be closed down. • Remove all posters and written materials from locations advertising meetings etc. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Insurance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel insurance, settle account and ensure no ongoing charges will be billed. |
| Mail | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If publicising mail addresses, then ensure that all mail is returned to sender advising of dissolution of community council. • Remove all advertising of mail address. |
| Assets (e.g. laptops and other equipment) to Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make contact with the Governance Team (via governance@edinburgh.gov.uk) to discuss assets which may be appropriate to be transferred to the City of Edinburgh Council and to be held in trust e.g. laptops, iPads, other IT/equipment etc. |
| Accounts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer cash book, cheque book, receipts, a final balance sheet and an updated asset register to the City of Edinburgh Council. • Make contact with the Governance Team via governance@edinburgh.gov.uk to arrange to deliver all documents. • Make arrangements to transfer all monies remaining in community council account to an advised City of Edinburgh Council account. • Once monies are transferred to above account then close bank account. • Provide proof of closure of bank account to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk <p><i>Any surplus and any agreed assets will be held in trust by the local authority for the new community council, if/when it is established.</i></p> |
| Securely and confidentially destroy all documentation held in compliance with GDPR regulations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm to the Governance Team that this has been done in line with data protection and GDPR regulations. • If assistance with destroying information is required, please email governance@edinburgh.gov.uk |

16. Engaging with your Community

16.1 There are two parts of engaging with your community:

- a) Finding out the views of your community.
- b) Representing the views of your community and your community council.

Finding out the views of your community.

16.2 There are many ways that you can find out views of your community. Your community council will need to agree what you believe will provide you with the best possible information.

16.3 You should make a list of the groups and organisations you want to target. Are there younger or older people living in your area? Are there black and ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities?

16.4 Talk to members of your target groups(s) to find out which methods they think are most likely to produce a response.

16.5 You will probably need to use a variety of different methods to reach your target audiences. This can be done:

- a) In person.
- b) Through paper-based methods.
- c) Using digital methods.

16.6 You can find relevant information to engage with your community from the guidance provided by the organisations below. The information they provide including new methods of engagement is updated regularly.

Representing the views of your community and your community council.

16.7 You always need to remember that you are not representing your own personal views when fulfilling your role as a community councillor. You are representing the views of your community and community council. This should not be simply stating what you believe the current views to be. These views need to be determined by what you find out when you engage with all members of it and representative of what you find.

Other resources

16.8 [The Scottish Community Development Centre](#)

The above organisation is a small charity that is the national lead body for community development in Scotland. They work with communities, practitioners and policy makers across Scotland to build on their skills and ideas when working together in communities. They have lots of resources setting out how to engage with and represent your communities, including working with other organisations.

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

They provide access to the [National Standards for Community Engagement](#) and [VOiCE](#). VOiCE assists community councils to design and deliver effective community engagement. It will help your community council to plan, monitor and evaluate community engagement. It is free for community councils to use.

Social media and digital engagement

16.9 [The Community Councils Scotland](#)

This website is run by the Scottish Improvement Service. They work with the Open University and provide support to all community councils. This includes information about funding and working with local authorities. They provide specific guidance on: [what is digital engagement](#), [how you can use social media](#) and [how you can build a website](#).

17. Conflict of Interest

- 17.1 Community council members have a duty to act in the interests of the local community and should ensure that decisions actions and representations reflect the wishes and views of the community. Community council members must not use their position as a community councillor to gain financial, material, political or other personal benefit for themselves, their family or friends.

What is a conflict of interest?

- 17.2 A **conflict of interest** is a situation in which an individual has competing interests or loyalties which may (or may appear to) influence or affect decision making.

Community Council Code of Conduct

- 17.3 If a community council member has any private and/or personal interests in a matter for the community council, they have a duty to declare this and, if this is likely to prejudice decision making, withdraw from discussions and the decision-making process with regard to that matter.
- 17.4 A member who has declared an interest in an item of business and has left the meeting may not be counted in the quorum for that item of business. If the community council is not quorate due to declaration of interests, that item cannot be dealt with at the meeting.
- 17.5 Community council members must not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to any individual or organisation that might reasonably be thought to influence how they represent the community.
- 17.6 The fundamental principle to bear in mind is that community council members must be open and not do anything that cannot be justified to the public in the terms of the Code of Conduct.

17.7 Example

17.7.1 A planning or licensing application may be under discussion by the community council that directly affects the interests of a member of the community council or of other parties with whom they have a close business, personal or familial relationship. In these circumstances, there is likely to be a potential conflict of interest with their role as a community councillor that requires to be addressed.

17.7.2 In these circumstances and as set out in the Code of Conduct, where such a conflict arises then the member affected should declare the interest, and in appropriate cases, withdraw from the meeting prior to the matter coming under discussion, and take no part in the discussion

or decision. This is to ensure openness and transparency and to avoid any perceptions that the community council, or any of its members, is acting in a non-impartial manner.

18. Equalities Guidance

- 18.1 The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against persons or groups on the grounds of the protected characteristics of race, sex, gender recognition, disability, age, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, and religion or belief.
- 18.2 Recognition should be given to the contribution of everyone participating in the work of the community council. Community councils must comply with Equal Opportunities legislation and should recognise and value diversity in their membership and in their communities, ensuring that equality of opportunity be given to every resident to have their knowledge, opinion, skill and experience taken into account.

Promoting Equalities

- 18.3 You should consider each of the questions below when promoting equalities in your community council:
- a) Is your membership open to all? How do you conduct your meetings and could this create barriers to participation e.g. times of meetings, venues, facilities.
 - b) Who attends your meetings? Are there areas of under representation such as ethnic minorities, young people etc? How would you increase inclusion in your community council?
 - c) Are there communication problems for individuals and groups who want to attend your meetings? How would you overcome them? E.g. using interpreters/signers to include those who are deaf.
 - d) How do you tackle unacceptable behaviour in your meetings? E.g. racism, homophobia etc.
 - e) How does your Engagement and Inclusion Officer make sure equalities is central to your work?
- 18.4 Community Councils Scotland provides clear [guidance on how to promote equalities](#) in your community.

19. Community Councils Social Media Guidance

- 19.1 In Scotland, the number of people with social media accounts tops 3.1 million. Increasing numbers of people are using it to get their news, talk to their friends and join in conversations. As key engagement bodies, community councils should be looking to make use of social media to engage and have conversations with constituents.
- 19.2 The use of social media can be a force for good and useful tool provided that a set of basic principles are followed. This guidance note sets out hints, tips and guidelines to help community councillors use social media in a positive way and avoid any pitfalls.

Code of Conduct

- 19.3 The Code is appended to [the Scheme for Community Councils](#) and covers matters including objectivity, accountability, respect, general conduct, bullying and harassment.
- 19.4 It is very important to note that the rules of good conduct set out in the Code must be observed in all situations where you are acting or identifiable as a community councillor. You should be mindful that your perception on this may differ to that of a member of the public.
- 19.5 Some questions to ask yourself: Are you clear about the capacity in which you are acting?
- a) Are you identifiable as a community councillor?
 - b) Would your conduct bring your position on the community council into disrepute?
- 19.6 Remember that anonymous blogging or social media activity is still considered a breach of the Code. It is not possible to circumvent the Code's provisions by hiding your identity.

Things to remember

- 19.7 *What goes online tends to stay online!*
- 19.8 An angry exchange or choice words in the pub can be overlooked and forgotten about. What you post online will stay there and may get shared with many people.
- 19.8 *Professional standards apply online too!*
- 19.9 If you behave inappropriately at a public meeting, there may be consequences. The same applies online. There may be consequences out with the community council sphere.

- 19.10 Remember that community councils exist to listen to and engage with public opinion
- 19.11 There may be occasion when you want to inform people of important information, such as a planning application. You can do so, but don't be drawn into expressing an opinion that isn't reflective of the community council or hasn't been informed by consultation with the community.
- 19.12 *Remember who you are representing!*
- 19.13 You may be posting under a personal account or a generic community council account, regardless, you should not put anything online that does not represent the account you are posting under.
- 19.14 Generic social media accounts using the community council banner are useful in that they can be used to update on official activities, advertise meetings and signpost to engagement exercises. Be careful not to use such an account for personal use.
- 19.15 Having debates, posting controversial material or engaging in non-community council related discussion is inappropriate when using a profile that is supposed to be representative of, and carries the name of, the entire body of which you are a member (even if you are an office bearer).
- 19.16 Be careful about making your views known when using such an account unless this is the official position of the community council.
- 19.17 Such activity is better suited to a personal account. This doesn't mean that you aren't still subject to the Code, but it does allow you greater parameters of use.
- 19.18 *Defamation can apply online too!*
- 19.19 There have been some high-profile examples of politicians defaming rivals online and being successfully sued. A councillor in Wales was forced to pay out £3,000 in damages in 2011.
- 19.20 *Be careful – if in doubt, don't post! You can't control others or the internet.*
- 19.21 It may be tempting, but don't think you can control what others are saying. It's a conversation that you can take part in. If somebody is being abusive or aggressive then sometimes it is easiest to switch off and walk away.
- 19.22 Sometimes people will say nasty things. This relates to the above. Unfortunately, community councils or councillors can be singled out for abuse. If people criticising have the wrong information, then it may be possible to talk to them but sometimes there is little point in engaging. On most platforms you can choose to completely block these voices from your account. But use this

function with great caution as social media communities can be sensitive to what they can see as unwarranted censorship.

19.23 *Social media is an addition!*

19.24 Social media is not the only, but another, channel or way to reach your community, your colleagues, the media, the experts and/or the interest groups.

General tips for posting on social media

19.25 Before you post, ask yourself: '*Would I say this to my boss, a reporter or my mum?*' – if the answer is yes then you should be fine. If you hesitate then it's probably best not to post it.

19.26 Never argue with someone who is argumentative. – This is good advice for life. Social media is full of people who will happily spend all day arguing or that will take a contrarian stance.

19.27 There is little to be gained from engaging with such people. Remember, you shouldn't be arguing with people at all if you are using a generic community council account.

19.28 Pictures and video work well. – People like images so if you can, take a picture or some footage. It's essential to ask for permission of the subjects before posting a picture you've taken.

19.29 Utilising information posted by others. – It can sometimes be useful to share something that others have posted in order to signpost to relevant information (i.e. a charity or community event). This can be done by the way of a share or a repost and allows you relay important information to a boosted audience.

19.30 Be careful where you share controversial viewpoints or those which do not show appropriate respect for the key internal and external stakeholders of the community council.

19.31 Always err on the side of caution! If you share something that would in itself be a breach of the Code, you yourself will have breached the Code.

19.32 Respect privacy. – If someone has approached you or the community council with an issue remember to respect their privacy.

19.33 Go to where people are. – In the same way that you pay more attention to the place with the largest audience away from the internet, do so online too. So, by all means attend the town meeting or write a letter to the letters page. But if there's a Facebook group in your community – join it as well.

19.34 How often to post. – Post regularly. Three or four times a week on Facebook is about the limit. Three or four times a day on Twitter. But as with any social media site, have a look at what other people are doing.

Managing your community council social media pages

19.35 It is your responsibility to comply with the various pieces of legislation which governs social media use.

19.36 Remove or report harmful content promptly – community councils have an important role in encouraging constructive public engagement.

19.37 Be clear about who within your community council is responsible for managing the page or account. This could be the Secretary or the Engagement and Inclusion Officer.

Remember...

19.38 Social media is a tool that can be used to carry out your engagement activities. Used correctly it will allow you to tap into public opinion, promote meetings and gain soundings from often under-represented groups on your community council.

19.39 Used badly and you may spoil the community council's reputation, personally fall out with people and break the code of conduct. If in doubt, consider the tips above and you should be fine.

20. Community Councils and the Licensing Process

- 20.1 Local authorities have jurisdiction over all manner of business activities which take place within their areas in terms of various statutory provisions including the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (“the 1982 Act”) and the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 (“the 2006 Act”).
- 20.2 In Edinburgh, people are required to apply to the Council for a licence if they wish to operate a taxi, open a late-night hot food takeaway, provide organised entertainment to the public or engage in any one of a wide range of commercial ventures, and to the Licensing Board if they wish to sell alcohol or provide gambling facilities.
- 20.3 There may be occasions when a licence application may cause concern. The purpose of this guidance note is to help community councils understand the licensing process and explain how they can voice their opinion.

Licensing Board

- 20.4 The City of Edinburgh Licensing Board has responsibility for dealing with all licences relating to the sale of alcohol under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005. The Board is a separate legal body from the Council. Board members are Councillors appointed by the Council at the first meeting of full Council after Local Government elections.
- 20.5 The Board is also responsible in terms of the Gambling Act 2005 for licensing gambling premises including betting shops, casinos, etc. The Board sits monthly, and a list of liquor applications to be considered by the Board is advertised online for the statutory public notification period. Applicants for a premises licence or major variation of an existing licence also require to place a site notice at the premises giving details of how to object to the application.
- 20.6 <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/download/13426/alcohol-licence-registers>
- 20.7 Community councils are sent notifications of applications which are relevant to their area. Additionally, anyone can object to any application for a liquor licence within statutory timescales (generally 21 days for premises licences / major variation of premises licence applications and 7 days for an occasional licence application). The Board has discretion to accept late objections, if it considers reasonable to do so. More information about attending Licensing Board meetings is available online (“What to expect at a Licensing Board meeting”):
- 20.8 <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/licences-permits/edinburghs-licensing-board/1>
- 20.9 For general information, please contact:

The Licensing Service
Level 10, City Chambers
249 High Street
EDINBURGH
EH1 1YJ.
Tel: 0131 529 4208
Email: Licensing@edinburgh.gov.uk

Licensing Sub-Committee of the Regulatory Committee

- 20.10 This Committee handles several categories of licence including Taxis, Street Trading, Late Hours Catering, Public Entertainment, Short Term Lets, Second Hand Dealers (under the 1982 Act) and Houses in Multiple Occupation under the 2006 Act.
- 20.11 For premises-based licences, the applicant is required to display a 'Site Notice'. The applicant must display the Site Notice in a prominent place on or outside the premises.
- 20.12 When the Council receives a new licence application under the 1982 Act for an activity to be carried out at a fixed location (excluding short-term letting), a summary of this application is sent to the relevant local City of Edinburgh Councillors and the Central Library. Copies of these summaries are also distributed to the relevant community councils through the Licensing Service.
- 20.13 The Site Notice requirement and notification process do not apply to applications for temporary licences under the 1982 Act (which can be for a maximum of six weeks).
- 20.14 Application details are posted online:
<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/licences-permits/licensing-registers/>
- 20.15 If a community council wishes to object to the grant of a new or renewal licence, they must write to the Licensing Service within 28 days (for applications under the 1982 Act) and 21 days (for applications under the 2006 Act) from the date of receipt of the application by the Council (or by any date specified in the notice of application, if applicable). They must set out the grounds of their objection.
- 20.16 The Committee can agree to consider late objections in certain circumstances. The right to object to a licence does not apply to applications for temporary licences under the 1982 Act.
- 20.17 Any objection to an application made by a community council will be considered by the Committee. As an objector, a community council would have the opportunity to send a representative to a Committee meeting to speak to the terms of their written objection.

20.18 The grounds for refusal of a licence include:

- a) that the applicant is not a 'fit and proper person' to hold a licence,
- b) the premises are not suitable or convenient for the purpose; or
- c) other good reason (usually meaning that the application is at odds with a licensing policy agreed by the Council)

20.19 This will be for the Committee to decide when considering the application and any objections received.

20.20 For further details or general enquiries, please contact:

The Licensing Service
Level 10
City Chambers
High Street
EDINBURGH
EH1 1YJ
Tel: 0131 529 4208
Email: Licensing@edinburgh.gov.uk

The Licensing Forum

20.21 The Council is required to establish a Local Licensing Forum. The Licensing Forum represents the views of people concerned with the operation of the alcohol licensing system in the City of Edinburgh.

20.22 The Forum keeps under review the operation of the alcohol licensing system and gives advice and makes recommendations to the Licensing Board. However, it cannot give advice or make recommendations on any individual case or the Licensing Board's consideration of any individual application.

20.23 The Forum must include between five and 21 members, who are appointed to represent the views of organisations and people in the City of Edinburgh Council area. A recruitment exercise for community and trade representatives has recently been completed. Members are initially appointed for up to three years. One year after the Forum is established and on a rolling basis thereafter, one third of members will be reappointed every three years.

21. Community Councils and Planning

- 21.1 Introduction
- 21.2 The Weekly List
- 21.3 Planning and Building Standards Online Services
- 21.4 Hierarchy of developments and pre-application consultation with communities
- 21.5 Permitted Development
- 21.6 Speaking up for the Community
- 21.7 When to submit a representation
- 21.8 When to be a Consultee
- 21.9 Variation or amendment of applications
- 21.10 Contact with the Case Officer
- 21.11 Making the Decision
- 21.12 Planning Policy
- 21.13. Help and Advice
- 21.14 Planning Aid for Scotland (PAS)

Appendix 1

Summary of the roles and responsibilities of community councils in the planning system (extract from PAN47)

Appendix 2

Hierarchy of developments full details

Revised March 2025

21.1 Introduction

21.1.1 The planning system can often seem complex and confusing, and this guidance note is intended to help community councils understand how the system works and their role within it. The Council has a suite of information available regarding [Community Councils and the Planning System](#).

21.1.2 Since 1996, community councils have had the statutory right to be consulted on applications for planning permission. [PAN 47 \(1996\)](#) sets out the roles and responsibilities of community councils.

21.1.3 You can also find out more at [Consultation on Planning | Community Council](#).

Community councils should read the following key document: Scottish Government

- **PAN47 - Community Councils and Planning**

Finding out about proposals

21.2. The Weekly List

21.2.2 The Council produces a Weekly List of planning applications and decisions. Full details regarding the weekly lists and how to be notified can be found here - <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/planning-applications-1/planning-weekly-lists>.

Planning Applications within Edinburgh

WEEKLY PLANNING BULLETIN
Date: 3 December 2013

The new look Weekly Planning Bulletin is organised by ward. Under each ward you will find the following sections:-

- Section 1 – Recently registered planning applications;
- Section 2 – Proposal of Application Notices received;
- Section 3 – Proposals for tree work in conservation areas;
- Section 4 – Proposals for tree works where there is a Tree Preservation Order.

If there are no applications or notices in a ward, the space underneath will be blank.

Section 5 at the end of the document contains consultations from other planning authorities.

Planning decisions are on a separate document.

Wards – click on the links below

[Ward A01 – Almond](#)
[Ward A02 – Pentlands Hills](#)
[Ward A03 – Drum Brae/Gyle](#)
[Ward A04 – Forth](#)
[Ward A05 – Inverleith](#)
[Ward A06 – Corstorphine/Murrayfield](#)
[Ward A07 – Sighthill/Gorse](#)
[Ward A08 – Colinton/Farmaloehead](#)
[Ward A09 – Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart](#)
[Ward A10 – Meadows/Morningside](#)
[Ward A11 – City Centre](#)
[Ward A12 – Leith Walk](#)
[Ward A13 – Leith](#)
[Ward A14 – Craighentony/Duddingston](#)
[Ward A15 – Southside/Newington](#)
[Ward A16 – Liberton/Gilmerton](#)
[Ward A17 – Portobello/Craigmillar](#)

Where can I see the documents?

You can view the plans, forms and other documents at [Planning and Building Standards Online Services](#).

Alternatively, you can view them at the Planning and Building Standards enquiry office at Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, EDINBURGH EH8 8BG. Opening times are 8:30 - 17:00 Mon-Thurs, 8:30 - 15:40 Friday.

The Planning Help Desk has a duty planner ready to help you, if you need assistance understanding the plans.

What Can I Comment on?

Under statutory legislation, you should only make comments to the City of Edinburgh Council on those applications appearing in Section 1 – recently registered planning applications.

21.2.3 Each Weekly List includes details of planning applications and proposal of application notices registered by the Council over the previous week, and of decisions made on applications. When viewing planning applications online

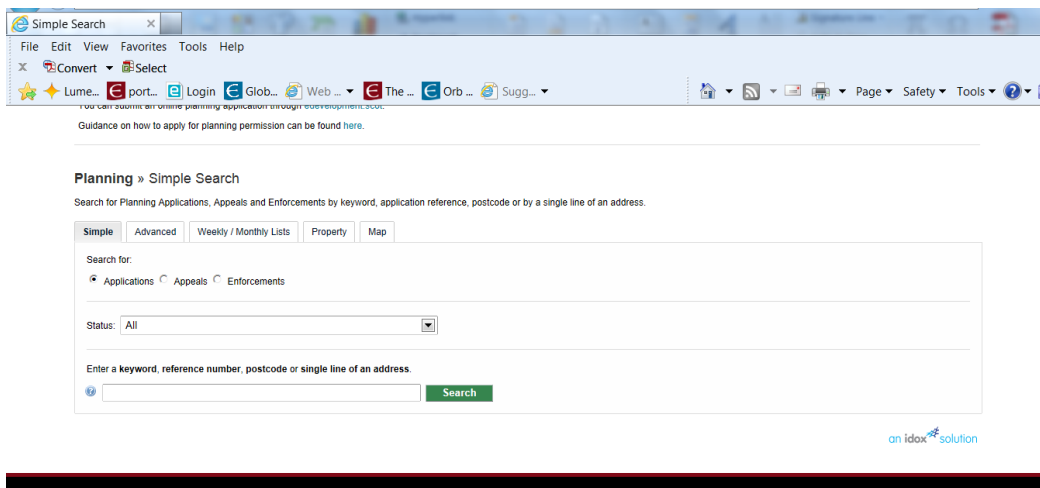
Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

using the [Planning and Building Standards Portal](#), you can also access new and decided applications. These are updated automatically and therefore provide a rolling list of more up-to-date information on the application.

21.2.4 The List is emailed each week to all the planning spokespersons of community councils as required by legislation. On viewing the Weekly List, a community council's appointed planning spokesperson should assess whether any of the planning applications listed in its area raises issues of local interest. They should then decide whether to be a formal consultee or simply make a representation. The date to comment by is included in the List.

Community councils may also wish to check planning applications in adjacent wards in case they may impact on their area.

21.3 Planning and Building Standards Online Services



The screenshot shows a web browser window titled 'Simple Search'. The browser's address bar shows a URL starting with 'www.edinburgh.gov.uk'. The page content includes a navigation menu with 'Simple', 'Advanced', 'Weekly / Monthly Lists', 'Property', and 'Map'. Below the navigation menu, there is a search form with the following elements:

- A search bar with the text 'Search for:' and a dropdown menu set to 'Applications'.
- A 'Status:' dropdown menu set to 'All'.
- A text input field with the placeholder text 'Enter a keyword, reference number, postcode or single line of an address.' and a green 'Search' button.

The page also features a small 'on idox solution' logo in the bottom right corner.

21.3.1 The [Planning and Building Standards Portal](#) allows planning application details, including the application form and associated plans, to be viewed remotely via the internet. There are several ways of searching for applications on the Portal such as by ward, property address and application number. You can use the submit comments button to make representations within the allotted period.

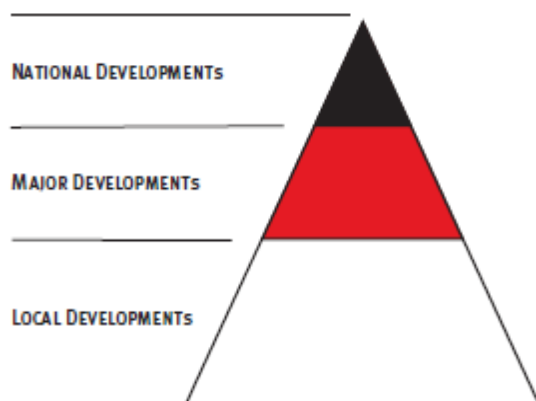
21.3.2 You may also [register](#) to receive additional functionality such as tracking applications, saving searches and email notifications about tracked applications and new search results.

As 92% of planning applications are now made online, the Planning service does not hold a paper copy of the plans.

21.4 Hierarchy of developments and pre-application consultation with communities

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

- 21.4.1 Following the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2019 there is a greater role for community councils and community engagement in the planning system. This includes early and broad-based engagement when preparing planning policies and major development proposals.
- 21.4.2 The [Edinburgh Planning Concordat 2020](#) sets out how the Council, developers and community councils will work together in the major development process.
- 21.4.3 **Hierarchy of developments** - All planning proposals and applications are classified per the [Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009](#). Proposals and applications can be designated as national, major or local developments.
- 21.4.4 **National developments** are contained in the National Planning Framework (NPF) which is produced by Scottish Government. The current (2023) version is [National Planning Framework 4](#) (NPF4). This includes enhancements at Edinburgh Waterfront. National Developments are at the top tier of the hierarchy.
- 21.4.5 Below national developments are **Major Developments**. There are 9 classes of major development in the hierarchy. For example, 50 or more houses is a major development.
- 21.4.6 For national and major developments, design and access statements have to be submitted and there may be additional scrutiny in deciding the application, such as consideration by the Development Management Sub-Committee.
- 21.4.7 All other development proposals for planning permission are classified as **local developments**.



Pre-application consultation principles

- 21.4.8 The developer/applicant is now required to undertake **mandatory [preapplication consultation for all national and major developments](#)**.

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

Pre application consultation allows communities to be better informed and to have an opportunity to contribute their views to the developer before a planning application is submitted.

21.4.9 There is no requirement to undertake formal pre-application consultation for local developments but determining community views on the proposed development at an early stage is often a good idea to streamline the assessment process.

Proposal of Application Notice (PAN)

21.4.10 A minimum of 12 weeks prior to submission of a **national or major** application, a proposal of application notice (PAN) must be submitted to the planning authority by the developer. Community councils are encouraged to work with the developer prior to the submission of the PAN during the pre application consultation period. Further details on this are set out in the Edinburgh Planning Concordat (2020).

21.4.11 This notice must provide details of the proposal and the pre application consultation to be carried out. For the pre application consultation, as a minimum, the PAN must be served on affected community councils and two public events must be held. There must be publicity for the public event in the form of a newspaper advert at least 7 days in advance. The PAN will also be published in the appropriate Weekly List.

21.4.12 Sometimes, a developer may be asked by the planning authority to undertake additional community engagement depending on the nature, extent and location of the proposed development. **Comments are made to the applicant, not to the Planning Authority.**

21.4.13 The Council has prepared a [guide](#) for community groups (including community councils) on how to get the best out of community engagement as part of the Pre-Application Consultation Process.

“The Scottish Government wants to encourage trust between parties, and promote open, positive working relationships from the earliest stages in the planning process and to provide, where possible, an early opportunity for community views to be reflected in proposals.” ([Circular 3/2022 Development Management Procedures](#))

21.4.14 If pre-application consultation is undertaken for a local development, there is no requirement to submit a PAN or to wait 12 weeks before submitting the application.

21.4.15 Pre-application consultation does not replace the opportunity to comment on planning applications once they have been received by the planning authority. As part of the planning application submission the **Community Councils Guidance** is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

applicant must submit a report on the public consultation and advise on how the matters raised in the engagement have been addressed in the proposal to be submitted for assessment.

21.5. Permitted Development

21.5.1 Many types of development require planning permission before building work can be carried out or the use of a property changed.

21.5.2 Smaller developments are often exempt from planning permission (for example small extensions or alterations to a house). This is known as [“permitted development”](#) and further details can be found within the [Planning circular 1/2024: householder permitted development rights](#).

21.6 Speaking up for the Community

21.6.1 It is the statutory duty of a community council to find out what people in the community feel and to express these feelings to the Council.

21.6.2 You may wish to consider the following actions:

- a) Talk to local people and see if they share the views of the community council.
- b) Contact the community newspaper or issue a newsletter describing the proposed development.
- c) Contact the local Councillor: they have been elected to represent the community.
- d) Find out when the particular planning application is due to be considered by the [Development Management Sub-Committee](#) and choose to attend in the public gallery or watch online. Committee reports are available six working days before Committee on the Council website, and details of any meeting and the items on the agenda can be obtained from the Council website.
- e) You may wish to check how the application has been decided although you will not be able to speak unless it is the subject of a Hearing.

21.7 When to submit a representation

21.7.1 Any individual or organisation has the right to submit comments (known as representations) on a planning application. Many community councils submit comments and objections as ‘representations’ after viewing the application details. Comments can also be made in support of a proposal.

21.7.2 The representation method is generally used where the community council has a clear understanding of local opinion on the proposal, or where the proposal is relatively minor but nevertheless raises a wider local issue. Representations are accepted on the understanding that the views contained therein are the **views of the community council**. Guidance and advice on [commenting on planning proposals](#) is available on the Council website.

21.7.3 PAN47 provides community councils with guidance on their responsibilities in this respect.

A planning authority has to take comments and representations into account in reaching its decision on a planning application, provided that they are material planning considerations.

21.7.4 The date of registration or advertisement is shown against each planning application on the Weekly List. The newspaper advertisement covering a limited number of applications appears in the Edinburgh Evening News, normally on a Friday. Time periods for representations and consultations are automatically extended during periods of public holiday.

21.8 When to be a Consultee

21.8.1 A community council can have the status of a statutory consultee if it requests that the planning authority formally consults it on a planning application within its area. Where this request is made, a formal consultation request will be sent to the community council.

21.8.2 From 3 August 2009, community councils have been automatically treated as a consultee on national or major developments. In other cases, planning legislation requires a community council to **request formal consultation within 7 working days of the issuing date of the Weekly List**. PAN47 emphasises that consultation should not cause delay in the processing of applications; community councils should organise themselves in a way that allows a response to be made within the consultation period. **Community councils have 21 days to respond, starting from the date of issue of the consultation by the Planning Service**. To request a formal consultation, contact the case officer for the application.

PAN47 advises community councils as follows in considering whether to ask to be formally consulted:

“...community councils are advised to limit their attention to proposals which raise issues of genuine community interest; householder applications will rarely involve issues of this kind.”

21.8.3 In accordance with its duty to “ascertain, co-ordinate and express” local views, a community council may decide that it is necessary to arrange a public meeting or some other form of local consultation exercise before it submits its consultation response. In such a situation, the community council may wish to seek an extension to the 21-day consultation period.

21.8.4 This is likely to be limited to proposals raising complex or controversial local issues and **would not be expected to occur on a regular basis**. The community council must discuss a request for an extension with the case officer for the application, and then confirm it in writing, giving reasons. If an extension to the timetable is agreed, the extension period will be specified so that the applicant can be informed.

Community Council representations or consultations may be available on the Planning and Building Standards Portal. They cannot be treated as confidential, although all personal details will be redacted.

21.9 Variation or amendment of applications

21.9.1 Applications are sometimes amended during their processing. This is often to address points raised by objectors or planning officers. In general, the Council will not ask for further comments unless new planning issues are raised.

21.9.2 Legislation also allows applications to be varied after approval, through the submission of a 'Non-Material Variation' request with the agreement of the planning authority, provided that the variation is not substantial. A new application for planning permission may be required, if the proposed amendments represent a significant alteration to the scheme.

21.9.3 The legislation makes it clear that it is for the planning authority to decide what is appropriate regarding notice about the variation to other parties. These changes are invariably minor and generally raise no new planning issues.

21.10 Contact with the Case Officer

21.10.1 During the assessment of an application the case officer will endeavour to offer help and advice on progress and procedures. They will be unable to enter into a debate on the merits of a scheme.

21.10.2 Similarly, it is inappropriate for case officers to express views about proposals at open meetings or other meetings with interested individuals during the consideration of an application. It is the case officer's duty to remain impartial until all the relevant information has been assessed.

21.11 Making the Decision

21.11.1 The Report of Handling sets out the reasoning behind the decision that is being recommended on an application. The report assesses the application in terms of the policy matters and considers any comments made by the community. Conditions to attach to a permission will be included or the reasons for refusal set out. The Report of Handling is available to view on the Planning and Building Standards Online Services. There is no right of appeal for community groups after a decision is made.

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

21.11.2 In Edinburgh, the final decisions on planning applications are either taken by the [Development Management Sub-Committee](#) (about 5%) or – with less complex or non-controversial decisions (about 95%) are ‘delegated’ to the Chief Planning Officer.

21.11.3 The Scheme of Delegation –

- a) The [Council Scheme of Delegation](#) (Appendix 7 - Chief Planning Officer) sets out which applications are delegated to officers, and which applications must go before Development Management Sub-Committee.
- b) For some proposals a Hearing may take place the Development Management Sub-Committee. These are restricted to significant major application and any national developments. The hearings allow community councils, interested parties and the applicants to address the committee on the proposals. The decision to hold a hearing is put forward to Members of the Development Management Sub-Committee for consideration.

21.12 Planning Policy

21.12.1 Development Plans

- a) The development plan sets out the strategy, policies and proposals which are used to direct development and to decide planning applications.
- b) The statutory ‘development plan’ comprises the National Planning Framework (NPF4) which covers the whole country, and the local development plan (LDP) for the planning authority area. Scottish Government legislation requires Councils to prepare a local development plan for their area.
- c) The Edinburgh area is currently covered by the [adopted City Plan 2030](#).
- d) Copies of the local development plan are available for everyone to inspect on the Council website and at all public libraries.
- e) Community councils are entitled to a free copy of all development plan documents, and copies of the new documents will be sent directly to the nominated planning spokesperson of each community council.

21.12.2 Community councils are encouraged to become involved in the preparation or review of the development plan, particularly when consultation exercises on the plans are undertaken. This allows communities to shape the planning framework which is used for making decisions on individual development proposals. The Development Plan Scheme sets out the timetable for preparing the next local development plan, and details on how to get involved. The Development Plan Scheme is available on the Council website and there are copies at all public libraries.

21.13 Help and Advice

21.13.1 [Supplementary Guidance](#) is produced to provide more detail to the policies of the development plan and to guide the development of larger sites. Their content is also used when deciding planning applications. They are subject to publicity and consultation and are also available on the Council's website.

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

21.13.2 There are also [quick guides](#) on planning considerations for windows, driveways, house extensions and other subjects for general advice. Guidance documents are also available on the website covering a range of development types including householder, businesses and works to listed buildings and within conservation areas and can be accessed [here](#).

21.13.3 The Council has a **Planning Help Desk** function available. If you would like any general advice on the planning process, please email planning@edinburgh.gov.uk.

21.13.4 General updates regarding the function of the Council as a Planning Authority can also be found by signing up to the [Planning Edinburgh blog](#).

21.13.5 Further information on planning is also available on the Scottish Government website - <https://www.gov.scot/policies/planning-architecture/>.

21.14 Planning Aid for Scotland (PAS)

21.14.1 In most cases, a community council will find all necessary help and advice on the Council website. However, if you find that you are still unsure or need independent advice then Planning Aid for Scotland may be able to help. This organisation is a voluntary charitable company which offers free advice to individuals, community councils and other groups. PAS volunteers are qualified and experienced planners who can provide information and advice on all aspects of Town and Country Planning and related issues. They can be contacted per the details below:

Tel: (0131) 220 9730
Website: www.pas.org.uk
email: office@pas.org.uk

Appendix 1

Summary of the roles and responsibilities of community councils in the planning system (extract from PAN47)

- statutory right to be consulted on applications for planning permission
- represent a broader yet still local view
- key task is helping to provide an informed local context within which sensible decisions can be made in the public interest
- should appoint one person as their point of contact for the planning authority on all planning matters, provide holiday cover, and inform the authority accordingly
- community councils should receive copies of the weekly list of planning applications

Community Councils Guidance is a dynamic document that may be updated and adjusted to evolving circumstances. You can access the most up to date version of this document at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils - last updated September 2025

- may wish to view particular applications in detail and can request formal consultation within 7 working days of the issuing date of the weekly list
- may not seek to be formally consulted - may submit comments (known as representations) like any other member of the public
- advised to limit their attention to proposals which raise issues of genuine community interest : householder applications will rarely involve issues of this kind
- ensure method of working allows response within the consultation period (21 days)
- should not expect to be consulted on very minor changes which are sometimes made to applications either while they are being considered or after they have been approved
- planning authorities should consider occasional training sessions for community councillors in their area

Appendix 2

Full details of the planning hierarchy

National developments are identified in the National Planning Framework and tend to be proposals for infrastructure developments such as the replacement Forth Crossing.

There are 9 classes of **major development** which are designated in the Regulations (Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009), and include proposals such as all development under Schedule 1 of the EIA (Scotland) Regulations 1999 and housing proposals of 50 dwellings or more, or housing sites exceeding 2 hectares.

Local developments are designated as those which are not national or major developments, and tend to be of a smaller scale.

22 Links and contact details for Council services

| | |
|--|--|
| City of Edinburgh Council webpage www.edinburgh.gov.uk | Main route for reporting and requesting services |
| City of Edinburgh Council Contact Webpage | Emergency Social Care Service Routes to report other emergencies Council house repairs Waste and environmental service Council tax, benefits and welfare Homelessness Antisocial noise |
| City of Edinburgh Council and Committees | Agendas, minutes and reports Find your Councillor Election results Strategy, performance and research |
| City of Edinburgh Council Comments and Complaints | Routes to make a suggestion, compliment or complaint |
| City of Edinburgh Council Locality Offices | South East Locality South West Locality North East Locality North West Locality |
| City of Edinburgh Council Managing Information | Data protection Records management Edinburgh City Archives |
| City of Edinburgh Council Schools | Term dates Special schools Primary schools Secondary schools |
| Community Centres and Organisations | Includes contact information for community centres and organisations |
| Community Empowerment and Engagement Team | Email: communityengagement@edinburgh.gov.uk |
| Governance Team | Email: governance@edinburgh.gov.uk |
| Libraries webpage | Locations Opening Times Using the Library |
| The Licensing Service | Email: licensing@edinburgh.gov.uk |
| Planning | Email: planning@edinburgh.gov.uk |

23 Key dates for Community Councils

Year: 2025

2025 AGM can be held by community councils from date of first meeting with Returning Officer till 31 December 2025.

Annual Accounts (for period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025) to be supplied no later than 10 January 2026.

Year(s): 2026 ONWARDS

AGM to be held in May or June annually.

Annual Accounts to be supplied by email to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk no later than the last working day (Monday – Friday) of August annually.

Financial years will encompass 1 April – 31 March (newly established may have a partial accounting period for their first year).

24 Forms and Templates

Click on the links below to open the form in Microsoft Word.

- a) [Declaration of Acceptance of Office](#)
- b) [Agenda Template](#)
- c) [Minute Template](#)
- d) [Action Sheet Template](#)
- e) [Resignation Template](#)
- f) [Dissolution Template](#)
- g) [Office Bearer Pro-Forma](#)
- h) [Co-option Pro-Forma](#)
- i) [Example Community Council Annual Accounts](#)
- j) [Banking Details Template](#)
- k) [Community Council Directory Page Updates](#)



THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL
SCHEME FOR COMMUNITY COUNCILS

Declaration of Acceptance of Community Council Member Role

Section 1

Name of Community Council.....

I

(Print First Name and Surname i.e. In Capitals)

having been elected/co-opted as a community councillor declare that I accept that office and undertake that I will fulfil the duties of it according to the best of my judgement and ability and in doing so comply with the requirements and standards contained in the City of Edinburgh Council Scheme for Community Councils and associated Guidance Notes.

Section 2

Type of Membership

Please tick the 1 form of membership that applies to you:

- Elected member
Co-opted Member
Nominated Representative Member of a Local Interest Group

If you are a Nominated Representative Member of a Local Interest Group, please provide the name and address of the organisation you are representing (including postcode):

.....
.....

Section 3

Your signature.....

[Original signature required - typed signature not accepted]

Date signed:



Your Full Name [In capitals]

Your Home Address (including postcode).....

.....

Your Contact Telephone No.....

Your Email Address.....

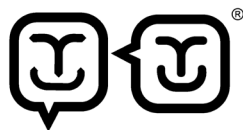
Data Protection

In processing personal information, The City of Edinburgh Council must comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Email addresses for office bearers of community councils will be publicly displayed on the Council's website. Therefore, it is recommended that for official community council business, a generic email address is provided rather than a personal email address, e.g. treasurer.edinburghcommunitycouncil@mailbox.com

Further information about how your personal data will be processed can be found in the [Community Council Privacy Notice](#).

Returning Officer: Please return the completed form by email to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk Alternatively, send by post to: FAO: Governance Team, Level 2.14 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG.



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

You can get this document on audio CD, in Braille, and **Large Print** if you ask us. Please contact Interpretation and Translation Service (ITS) on its@edinburgh.gov.uk and quote reference number **25-0199 – Declaration of Acceptance**. ITS can also give information on community language translations. You can also get more copies of this document by contacting governance@edinburgh.gov.uk

Agenda

[Name] Community Council

Time, day, date

Venue name and address

Contacts

[Role]: Name

E-mail: [e-mail address](#)

[Role]: Name

E-mail: [e-mail address](#)

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

2. Declarations of interest

3. Minute of previous meeting/s and matters arising

3.1 Minute of meeting of [date]

4. Reports

4.1 [Name of presentation/report]

4.2 [Name of presentation/report]

5. AOCB

6. Questions from the floor

7. Date of next meeting

7.1 Time, day, date – venue name and address [include joining instructions in meeting is being held remotely/online]

Minute of meeting

[Name] Community Council

Time, day, date

Venue name and address

Present:

Insert names

Apologies:

Insert names

1. Declarations of interest

1.1 [Name] declared a [financial/non-financial] interest in item x as...

2. Minute of meeting of [date] and matters arising

2.1 Approved as a correct record [Subject to – insert any agreed amendments]

3. Item 3

3.1 [Briefly describe the item of business considered]

Decision

3.2

4. Item 4

4.1 [Briefly describe the item of business considered]

Decision

4.2

5. Item 5

5.1 [Briefly describe the item of business considered]

Decision

5.2

6. AOCB

6.1

7. Questions from the floor

7.1

8. Date of next meeting

8.1 Time, day, date – venue name and address

Action Note

[Name] Community Council

Time, day, date

Venue name and address

[Actions notes can be circulated after meetings for information and confirm the actions/decisions that were agreed at the meeting. This allows individuals to know what was agreed and who the responsible person is for taking actions forward. A minute for community councils should still be produced. The wording in the action sheet does not need to be the same as the minute of the meeting.]

| Agenda Item | Item name | Action | Contact / Lead |
|-------------|-----------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. | [name] | [Action/s agreed] | Name: [name] Email: [email] |
| 2. | [name] | [Action/s agreed] | Name: [name] Email: [email] |
| 3. | [name] | [Action/s agreed] | Name: [name] Email: [email] |



Notification of Resignation of a Community Council Member

Use this form to advise the City of Edinburgh City Council of the resignation of a community council member, this form should be completed by the resigning community councillor and submitted within 10 working days of resignation being tendered. Please complete in block capitals.

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Community Council Name: | |
| Members Name in full: | |
| Type of member: (Elected, Co-opted, Nominated Representative Member of Local Interest Group) | |
| Office Bearer: Please note if community council member held an office bearer position and which position they held | |
| Resignation sent to community council on: | |
| Resignation effective from (date), if different from above: | |
| Resignation tendered: | Verbally / In Writing / Email |
| Resignation acknowledged by: (Name/ position) | |
| Reason for Resignation (Please use additional page(s) below if required) | |

Please return this form to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk

Data Protection



In processing personal information, The City of Edinburgh Council must comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Further information about how your personal data will be processed can be found in the [Community Council Privacy Notice](#).

Please use this box to provide any additional information.



Notification of Dissolution of a Community Council

Use this form to advise the City of Edinburgh City Council of the dissolution of a community council. All sections of this form should be completed and submitted within 10 working days of dissolution being agreed. Please complete in block capitals.

| | |
|--|--|
| Community Council Name: | |
| Meeting Date the decision was taken to dissolve community council: | |
| Reason for Dissolution (Please use additional page(s) below if required) | |
| I/we can confirm that I/we will make arrangements with the Governance Team to discuss the community council assets which may be appropriate to be transferred to the City of Edinburgh Council and to be held in trust e.g. laptops, iPads, other IT/equipment etc. and will make arrangements to transfer all monies remaining in community council account to an advised City of Edinburgh Council account. | |
| Full Name (include office bearer position if held) | |
| Full Name (include office bearer position if held) | |



Please return this form to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk

Data Protection

In processing personal information, The City of Edinburgh Council must comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Further information about how your personal data will be processed can be found in the [Community Council Privacy Notice](#).

Please use this box to provide any additional information.



Appointment of Office Bearer

Name of Community Council.....

Community Councillor Full Name

Was appointed to the following Office Bearer position(s)

Please tick the position(s) that applies to you:

Chair Secretary Treasurer Engagement and Inclusion Office Bearer

Date of meeting when Office Bearer was appointed.....

| Full Name (Forename and surname. This will be publicly displayed on the Council's website) | Home Address (This will not be publicly displayed) | E-Mail address (This will be publicly displayed on the Council's website. It is recommended that a generic email address is provided rather than a personal email address) | Signature of Office Bearer (digital signatures accepted) (This will not be publicly displayed) |
|---|---|---|--|
| | | | |



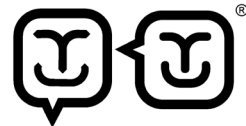
Please return the completed form by email to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk within 10 working days of the office bearer appointment being made.

Data Protection

In processing personal information, The City of Edinburgh Council must comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Email addresses for office bearers of community councils will be publicly displayed on the Council's website. Therefore, it is recommended that for official community council business a generic email address is provided rather than a personal email address e.g. treasurer.edinburghcommunitycouncil@mailbox.com

Further information about how your personal data will be processed can be found in the [Community Council Privacy Notice](#).



HAPPY TO **TRANSLATE**

You can get this document on audio CD, in Braille, and **Large Print** if you ask us. Please contact Interpretation and Translation Service (ITS) on its@edinburgh.gov.uk and quote reference number **25-0390 - Office Bearer Pro-Forma**. ITS can also give information on community language translations. You can also get more copies of this document by contacting governance@edinburgh.gov.uk



Co-option Pro-Forma

| | |
|---|--|
| Community Council Name | |
| Date of meeting when co-option was approved | |
| Co-opted Community Councillor Full Name (forename and surname) | |
| Home address of Co-opted Community Councillor (including postcode) To check if an address falls within a community council boundary please use the 'Find My Community Council' tool available on our public webpages at https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/community-planning/community-councils/1 | |
| Email address for co-opted Community Councillor | |
| Proposer 1 Full name (forename and surname) | |
| Proposer 1 Home address (including postcode) | |
| Proposer 2 Full name (forename and surname) | |



| | |
|---|--|
| Proposer 2 Home address (including postcode) | |
|---|--|

Please refer to [The Scheme for Community Councils](#) for further information relating to co-option and membership of community councils. Please also note that;

- Members who are co-opted through the vacancy process must be eligible for membership of the community council (e.g. candidates must reside in the community council boundary area and be named on the Electoral Register and be 16 years and older).
- Members who are co-opted must be elected onto the community council by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present (for avoidance of doubt these are elected members and nominated representative members of local interest groups.)
- Co-opted members shall have full voting rights, with the exception of voting on co-option of new members, and will serve until the next round of elections.
- The number of co-opted members may not exceed a half of the total maximum permitted elected membership for a Community Council ([as detailed in Schedule 1, Column A within the Scheme for Community Councils](#)) and in such circumstances the Community Council must gain approval from the City of Edinburgh Council before proceeding with any further co-options and/or explore options with the City of Edinburgh Council pertaining to calling an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM).
- Community Councils are encouraged to consider co-option as a mechanism to increase the diversity of their membership.

Please return the completed form by email to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk within 10 working days of the co-option of a community councillor being agreed.

If the intended co-option details are known in advance of a community council meeting and assistance is required to check if an address is contained within a boundary area then the co-option proforma can be supplied to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk 10 working days in advance of the meeting.

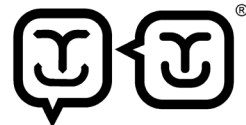
Data Protection



In processing personal information, The City of Edinburgh Council must comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Email addresses for office bearers of community councils will be publicly displayed on the Council's website. Therefore, it is recommended that for official community council business a generic email address is provided rather than a personal email address e.g. treasurer.edinburghcommunitycouncil@mailbox.com

Further information about how your personal data will be processed can be found in the [Community Council Privacy Notice](#).



HAPPY TO **TRANSLATE**

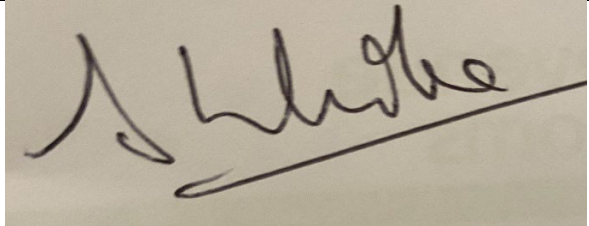
You can get this document on audio CD, in Braille, and **Large Print** if you ask us. Please contact Interpretation and Translation Service (ITS) on its@edinburgh.gov.uk and quote reference number **25-0502 - 2.10h - Co-option Pro-Forma**. ITS can also give information on community language translations. You can also get more copies of this document by contacting governance@edinburgh.gov.uk

Example: Community Council Annual Account

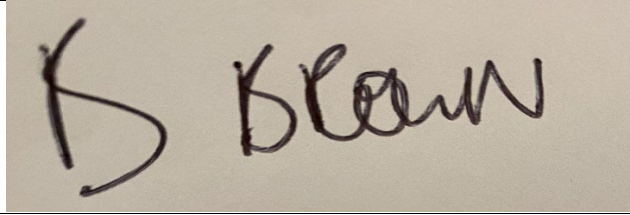
COMMUNITY COUNCIL ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Name of Community Council | Example Community Council |
| Accounting period | Accounts for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 |

Income and Expenditure Account

| INCOME | 2025 | 2024 |
|---|--|--------------|
| City of Edinburgh Council Administrative Allowance | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Gala day cake sales | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Village disco ticket sales | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Bank interest | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| INCOME TOTALS | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| EXPENDITURE | 2025 | 2024 |
| Laptop purchase for Treasurer | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Meeting room hire | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Online meeting platform costs (MS Teams) | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Insurance for community council | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Information commissioner fee | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Production of community council newsletter | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Notice board repairs | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| EACC membership fee | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| EXPENDITURE TOTALS | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Surplus of income over expenditure | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Surplus brought forward | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Surplus carried forward | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Independent Examiner Full Name (in capitals) | JACKIE WHITE | |
| Signature of Independent Examiner (in ink) |  | |
| Date Independent Examiner Approved Accounts | 14 July 2025 | |
| Treasurer Full Name (in capitals) | BRYAN BROWN | |

Signature of Treasurer (in ink)



Date Treasurer Approved Accounts

14 July 2025

Example



Community Council Banking Details

Use this template to advise the City of Edinburgh City Council of the banking details of the community council. If any of the banking details of the community council change at any point then it is the responsibility of the community council to complete and return updated details on this template with immediate effect. Please type or complete this form in BLOCK CAPITALS.

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Community Council Name: | | |
| Date banking details confirmed/supplied to Governance Team: | | |
| Name of Bank: | | |
| Address and postcode of Bank: | | |
| Name on Bank Account: e.g. Princes Street Community Council | | |
| Bank Account No: | | |
| Bank Account Sort Code: | | |
| 1st Bank Account Signatory Details and primary contact for matters relating to the Community Council bank account The primary contact for Community Council banking and financial matters would usually be the Treasurer. | Full Name | |
| | Office Bearer position | |
| | Email Address | |
| | Communication Address (including postcode) | |



Community Councils

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| At least 2 signatories must be Office Bearers and 1 of which must be the Treasurer. | | |
| 2nd Bank Account Signatory Details (at least 2 signatories must be Office Bearers and 1 of which must be the Treasurer) | Full Name | |
| | Office Bearer position | |
| | Email Address | |
| 3rd Bank Account Signatory Details (at least 2 signatories must be Office Bearers and 1 of which must be the Treasurer) | Full Name | |
| | Office Bearer position (where applicable as only 2 required) | |
| | Email Address | |

Please return this form completed to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- A bank account should be opened in the name of the community council.
- The City of Edinburgh Council must be supplied with the above bank account details and be notified immediately of any changes to bank account details (by completing this form and return by email to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk).
- The bank account should be set up in such a way that requires at least two office bearers to authorise payments agreed by each community council.
- The signatory roles must be held by at least 2 office bearers (including the Treasurer) and 1 other community councillor who does not need to be an office bearer.
- Community councils should regularly review the availability of signatories for the community council and take proactive action to ensure a minimum of 3 signatories are available during the community council term.
- Please note we are unable to provide advice to community councils on which banking institutions to use. New community councils may wish to reach out to experienced community councillors or the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils (EACC) to ascertain what their arrangements are.



- Community Councils are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the [Scheme for Community Councils](#) and [Community Councils Guidance](#) which provide further information.

Data Protection

In processing personal information, The City of Edinburgh Council must comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Further information about how your personal data will be processed can be found in the [Community Council Privacy Notice](#).

Please use this box to provide any additional information.

Community Council Directory Page updates

| | |
|--|---|
| Community Council name | Populated by Governance Team |
| Check this is your community council area | Populated by Governance Team |
| Boundary Effective from | Populated by Governance Team |
| Chair | |
| Chair email | |
| Secretary | |
| Secretary Email | |
| Treasurer | |
| Treasurer Email | |
| Engagement and Inclusion Office Bearer | |
| Engagement and Inclusion Office Bearer Email | |
| Website | If none, please leave blank or write 'N/A' |
| Facebook | If none, please leave blank or write 'N/A' |
| X / Twitter | If none, please leave blank or write 'N/A' |
| Bluesky | If none, please leave blank or write 'N/A' |
| Note | Community councils are independent organisations and have provided the contact details on this page. Update requests from community councils should be made to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk |

Please note:

All the information above **will be** publicly displayed on the Council's website. It is recommended that a generic email address is provided rather than a personal email address.

If possible, please type your responses in to the boxes and return to governance@edinburgh.gov.uk

Data Protection

In processing personal information, The City of Edinburgh Council must comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Email addresses for office bearers of community councils will be publicly displayed on the Council's website. Therefore, it is recommended that for official community council business a generic email address is provided rather than a personal email address e.g. treasurer.edinburghcommunitycouncil@mailbox.com

Further information about how your personal data will be processed can be found in the [Community Council Privacy Notice](#).