

Dirleton Village Association

Minute of Meeting of 16th February 2023

The meeting was held at the Kirk Hall.

Present: S. Low (Chairperson), C. Hamer; J. Macleod; F. McClintock; B. Ford; S. Paterson-Brown; A. Orr; C. & T. Drysdale; F. Dingwall; D. Carter; J. Thomson; S. Oliver; V. & B. Nimmo, M. Chynoweth; M. Davidson, P Du Vivier

Apologies: T. Lonie;

1. Approval of Minutes

CH posted the draft minutes of the committee meeting on 19th January on the website, which were also issued with the invite to this meeting. The minutes were proposed as an accurate account by **SPB** and seconded by **SL**.

2. Community Engagement

SL reiterated the comment made by **VN** regarding improving community engagement and attendances at the meetings and opened this to attendees for suggestions.

Margaret Kent has indicated that she has some ideas but was not in attendance.

FMc suggested increased advertisement of meetings through social media and word of mouth.

AO suggesting bringing in guest speakers occasionally as we have done in the past.

SL suggested a firm target for finishing the meeting and sticking to it by prioritising the agenda and pushing back any issues not discussed to the next meeting. Also, that the time in between meetings would allow the committee to collate more information about topics and hopefully make them more interesting.

SPB suggested offering a glass of wine (**JM** "or tea and coffee") at the start. **JM** reluctant to spend DVA funds on alcohol. **SL** to provide wine at next meeting 7pm drinks for 7.15 start and attempt an 8:15 finish.

JM confirmed that a welcome pack is being prepared for new residents and it was suggested that it is issued to all residents. We need to show residents that the DVA's activities are positive for the village e.g. maintenance of the defibrillators, involvement in the Queen's Green Canopy, Street Lighting improvements etc.

VM commented that in the past meetings had been regularly attended by local Councillors, Dirleton Primary Head Teacher, Community Police Officer. **SPB** confirmed that the police don't now attend GADD CC meetings, but invites should go out to others.

3. Treasurer's Report

SPB confirmed income from subscriptions/donations which **JM** immediately updated following a reminder e-mail to members. £1,314 has been received to-date of which £478 was from subscriptions and £559 has been through donations. If we are to stop the subscriptions altogether and make all residents automatically members then it is likely that other fund-raising activities will be required on top of donations to subsidise hire of the hall, monthly fees for the website / new e-mail system, Castle entry, and general expenses.

SL suggested a just giving page be set up for donations to be made at any time.

PduV commented that the majority of the DVA funds are from a bequest made by Molly Ritchie. It would be nice to have something that is dedicated to her that reflects this generous gift. **FD** confirmed that there is already a tree with a plaque at the eastern end of the village green, by the Open Arms.

No membership would mean less administration but would require an amendment to the Constitution (confirmed by **TD**) as it specifically mentions a subscription fee. Membership to be notified that this will be on the agenda for discussion at April's meeting. Ideas for other potential activities to increase funds will be encouraged

8. Planning

[18/00016/PM](#) Castlemains – The construction materials have still not been posted on ELC's planning portal so what we see is presumably what was agreed. **CH** has complained regarding the reinstatement of the grass verge to Station Road following the installation of street lighting. Despite repeated attempts from **CH** MNM have not reapproached ELC to amend the approved street light fitting for the heritage fitting that is being used elsewhere in the village (with approval from ELC and residents). 1st occupants are expected March 2023.

[20/00882/CAC](#) and [20/00881/P](#) Demolition of workshops and Erection of 4 flats and associated works at 17 and 18 Castlemains Place. Consented for East Lothian Housing Association who have since sold the site to R3 Repairs (see below).

[22/01050/P](#) Change of use and alterations to workshops to form 2 houses at 17/18 Castlemains Place. Application by R3 Repairs for two semi-detached houses on the same footprint is under consideration. The DVA supported this application as a better outcome to the consented development.

[21/01364/P](#) Erection of 1 house with integral garage and associated works on land to the rear of Speedwell House. The application was refused on various grounds raised in the DVA's objection.

[22/00978/P](#) and [22/00995/LBC](#) Part demolition of wall and erection of a new house on land to the rear of The Castle Inn. The application was refused on various grounds raised in the DVA's objection.

[22/01315/P](#) Retrospective application for erection of a shed at 14 Chapelhill. The DVA has considered this application and feel that it should be resolved by the planning officer and neighbours without comment.

[19/00903/LBC](#), [19/00895/P](#) and [21/01382/P](#) Change of use of agricultural land to domestic garden ground and extension to house, conversion, extensions to agricultural buildings to form 2 houses, erection of triple domestic garage/store, greenhouse and associated works and design amendments at Broad Sands House (New Mains Steading). Application consented with conditions. Public Right of Way closed off and unlawfully diverted. **TD** confirmed that the developer has recently contacted ELC following their legal consultation and ELC are considering their response.

9. Dirleton Interest Group (DIG)

SPB confirmed that the new e-mail system allowing groups to use a dedicated e-mail address via the website rather than their personal e-mail is being developed. This will give the groups access to the wider contacts database compiled by DGN / DVA and others. The admin team for a group would receive an e-mail to their personal address notifying them of an incoming e-mail to the group.

10. GADD Community Council

Although **SPB** was not present at the last meeting, he understands that there were no issues raised relevant to Dirleton.

AOCB

- **SPB** confirmed that two residents have enquired about the poor quality of the mobile phone reception in the village. **FMc** suggested this is because Dirleton lies in a hollow and the radio waves from masts to the east and west largely pass over us. Although obvious sites for a mast, the kirk and castle have previously been ruled out. **SPB** wondered about the field/Hareup plantation to the north of Chapelhill as a potential site and will enquire about landownership. **SPB** suggested a resident survey of signal strength from each operator would assist the assessment. A survey could be undertaken by a select few with different suppliers making notes of signal strength as they walk through the village, although this wouldn't give an indication of reception within a property. **SPB** to liaise with Mike Howarth to confirm the operational status of masts recently erected at Dalrymple's garage and the former Fire Station in Gullane to further assess the way forward. It was mentioned that smart meters require a mobile signal, which might provide some leverage for a new mast if it is required.
- **TD** informed the meeting that wind farm operators offer grants to community projects, 40% of the value is to villages that are not directly affected. **SPB** confirmed that this is on the agenda for the next GADD CC meeting, but he will also inquire as to whether DVA can also access these funds.
- **DC** informed the meeting that the remaining heritage lighting around the village green is programmed for 2023/24 although it's not allocated within the budget.
- **JM** queried whether members would prefer to receive minutes via e-mail or access them through the website. The general feeling was that the draft should be posted on the website and issued by e-mail ASAP after the meeting and issued as usual with the agenda and invite to the next meeting.
- Following an approach to Archerfield Estate by **CH** regarding a possible wildlife project at the curling ponds, Elly Douglas-Hamilton confirmed that in accordance with their policy and programme there would be further felling of ash trees affected by ash-die back. Elly asked **CH** to make residents aware that felled or fallen timber should be left to increase biodiversity. **DC** asked that the health of replacement trees is checked and if necessary new planting introduced. **FM** suggested that old ash trees had been left as potential bat roosts following a previously survey. The survey should be revisited prior to any new felling. **CH** confirmed that the viability of the wildlife project is reliant on landownership agreements and once these are in place, detailed proposals would be drawn up and presented to the residents for consultation. Early consultation with residents at the community day back in August 2022 were very positive and **CH** confirmed that the ELC's ranger is part of the consultation. **BF** raised concern over disturbance of the deer and **CH** confirmed that if a habitat survey didn't identify a net ecological/educational benefit then there would be no point in progressing the project.

11. Date and time of next meeting-

The committee will meet with various sub-groups between now and the next meeting at 7.00pm 20th April in the Kirk Hall.

Chairperson and Deputy for the remaining meetings in 2023 are as follows:
April 20th - Chair: Fred McClintock (Deputy Janice MacLeod)
June 15th - Chair: Simon Paterson-Brown (Deputy Carl Hamer)
August 17th - Chair: Tracy Lonie (Deputy Fred McClintock)
October 19th: Chair: Carl Hamer (Deputy Sheila Low)
November 16th (AGM): Chair: Janice MacLeod (Deputy Simon Paterson-Brown)

ACTIONS

Actions Carried over from meeting 19th January

- a) **DC** awaiting feedback from Doug Haig regarding renewal of finger posts.
- b) **DC** to check for potential ash die back on tree opposite Amalfi.
- c) **TL** to set up DVA Facebook page.
- d) **SPB** to meet Doug Haig (meeting still awaited).
- e) **CH** to report on Kirk Hall registration of community interest.
- f) **SPB** to prepare finance report for June meeting.
- g) **SPB, CH** to meet with Ian Lennox to discuss traffic calming.
- h) **FM** to report DVA activities to NBCAP.
- i) **SPB** to update chairperson welcome letter and issue to **TL** to go into the welcome pack.
- j) **CH** to liaise with JF regarding a village map.
- k) **JM** to consult with the Kirk Session re internet access to the hall.

New

- l) **SPB** to research mobile phone coverage and if necessary, conduct a survey with other committee members.
- m) **SPB** to report on GADD CC meeting regarding wind farm grants.
- n) **SPB/JM** to continue to collate the village welcome pack.
- o) **JM** to extend invites to Mr Moodie and Councillors to April's meeting.
- p) **CH** to update website as requested by DIGs.