

Dirleton Village Association

Minute of Meeting of 20th April 2023

The meeting was held at The Castle Inn.

Present: F. McClintock (Chairperson); S. Low; C. Hamer; J. Macleod; T. Lonie; B. Ford; F. Dingwall; J. Thomson; B. Nimmo; M. Chynoweth; M. Davidson, P Du Vivier; P. Hutchison; M. Maitland; D. Keens; S. Lewis; G. & A. O'Mahoney; A. Brechin; J. Gallon; A. Soave; L. Anderson; M. Kent; B. Simpson; D. Holloway; K. & S. Cornwell; B. Thomson; A. Scott

Apologies: S. Paterson-Brown; T&C Drysdale; A. Orr; S. Oliver; J&C Lyndsay

1. Approval of Minutes

CH posted the draft minutes of the meeting on 16th February on the website, which were also issued with the invite to this meeting. **PDV** requested an amendment but otherwise the minutes were proposed as an accurate account by **FD** and seconded by **JM**.

2. Community Engagement

FM ran through a number of ideas that were put forward to improve community engagement with the DVA including: Reduced number and shorter meetings; guest speakers (Councillors, Primary School headteacher; Community Police Officer, whisky, cider, wine and cheese tasting; and increased communication through social media. This meeting is a trial of a few of those ideas with a change of venue to the Castle Inn, strict program to finish by 8:15pm followed by a talk and taster by Glenkinchie Distillery. **TL** confirmed that a DVA Facebook account has been set up and urged attendees to follow the group

3. Old Village Hall

An expression of interest has been raised by the DVA regarding the old Village Hall and we are awaiting feedback from East Lothian Council (ELC). **BS** confirmed that in 2000 the DVA was offered the use of the hall for the nominal sum of £1/year. There is asbestos in the building, which poses a risk to occupants if disturbed. The roof is now leaking. It was used temporarily for accommodation, but the drainage was quickly overwhelmed. **CH** commented that the use of the hall had more recently been looked into by the DVA and various levels of funding were now being considered to make it watertight for storage or more substantial remediation for more diverse use by the village.

4. Treasurer's Report

The only update is that the licence for the use of Zoom, originally purchased to enable virtual meetings during COVID lockdown, is no longer deemed necessary and will not be renewed when it next expires.

5. Village Welcome Pack

A welcome pack has been prepared to inform new residents of the various local activities, groups and services available. Some paper copies have already been distributed and a digital copy will be posted on the website. A comment was made regarding the good quality of the

village website and **JM** added that NBCAP had provided similar feedback. **CH** confirmed that the recent overhaul of the website was largely thanks to Mike Howarth.

6. Food Bank

BF provided some insight into the workings of [East Lothian Foodbank](#) in Tranent, part of The Trussell Trust's network of 428 foodbanks. He explained the type and amount of foods being offered to those that need it. There is very little in the way of fresh food as there is no refrigeration at the collection points, but some local producers are providing directly to the food bank including Drysdales of Cockburnspath, W&R Logan of Garleton, Monaghan Mushrooms of Fenton Barns and Luffness Mains Farming. A new collection point has been set up at Amalfi Café for dry goods and tinned foods. David Graham also does a collection at the church.

7. Planning

[18/00016/PM](#) Castlemains – There are currently four new houses occupied. **CH** has complained regarding the reinstatement of the grass verge to Station Road following the installation of street lighting. Post meeting note - this was completed the following day.

[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. The application was meant to have been determined by December 2022 and is still undecided.

[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. This application has been approved.

[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. **CH** confirmed ELC's legal team has contacted the developer and we await feedback.

[23/00179/P](#) The Renaissance Club (TRC) has applied to fell a copse of trees within Broad Wood to form a hardstanding area upon which a media centre can be sited during the Scottish Open, which is to be held there until 2026. The DVA has submitted a [letter of objection](#) on the grounds that the proposal is in contradiction to East Lothian Council's climate change strategy. Post meeting note – the application has been withdrawn.

[23/00203/P](#) TRC has applied to construct 6 "cottages" for visitor accommodation. Each cottage would accommodate up to 16 guests in 8 double bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms and parking for four vehicles. To enable the construction works will require felling of c.94 trees. The application will vary the consented development [19/00087/P](#) for 10 cabins and 6 cottages by moving the row of cottages east where the last cottage will fall within Dirleton Conservation Area. The DVA has submitted a [letter of objection](#) on the grounds that the proposal is in contradiction to East Lothian Council's climate change strategy. **CH** indicated that the significant contribution from TRC towards the renewal of the village Xmas lights cannot sway the DVA's objection to these planning applications.

[23/00050/P](#) Extension to Public Toilets and store at Yellowcraig. This application has been consented and includes a new coach drop off in the overflow car park and replacement of the timber deck at the beach with whin dust.

9. GADD Community Council

Unfortunately, both CC representatives (**SPB** and **DT**) are not in attendance, and we will update at the next meeting.

FM confirmed that the chevron sign at the east end of the village has been replaced. **CH** has also requested that a similar sign on the approach to Drem should be replaced. Plastic bollards outside the Open Arms have now been removed and **DC/FM** now plan to topsoil and seed the area.

10. Mobile Phone Mast

FM provided some background to mobile reception in Dirleton which is limited due to topography. Discussion highlighted that reception is variable even for the same operator. The new mast in Gullane is not operational yet but it's capability may also be restricted by topography. A survey is being arranged to assess the most appropriate site for a new mast and then assessments will be made based on financial viability, land ownership and taking into consideration the conservation status of the village. A site close to the woods on Chapelhill might provide the most effective position.

11. Dirleton Common

BS confirmed that the overflow car park at Yellowcraig used to be a village football pitch and that the Caravan Club used to make a donation to the DVA to use it as an overflow. There is no record of this on recent DVA accounts. **BS** understands that the site is owned by ELC as they have recently approved the use of this area for a historical re-enactment. It has been suggested previously that this land is common land bequeathed to the village. A sub-group has been set up to look into this. It was suggested that there might be proposals to open up this car park to camper vans but post meeting research confirms that Yellowcraig is included within ELC's 18-month trial ban on overnight parking at coastal car parks.

12. Road Safety Project

CH confirmed that all comments and proposals for traffic calming measures at the Castle Inn/Village Green were submitted to ELC Roads Department and we are awaiting feedback.

13. Committee Actions

In order to finish the meeting on time the committee's actions detailed at the end of the minutes are to be addressed after the meeting.

AOCB

- Curling Pond Wildlife Project – **CH** updated residents on progress. Frog Life approached the DVA regarding 2023 funding through NatureScot for pond restoration projects in Scotland. **CH** met with AG Thomson (Dunbar) to assess the cost of works to inform funding applications. Quotes have been received for a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA), but the DVA do not want to commit to expenditure until land ownership agreements are in place. The PEA will need to show that open water will provide a net ecological benefit taking into consideration existing habitat.

- Auburn House – **PDV** asked whether the TPO's were being respected. **FM** indicated that pruning has been minimal. **CH** asked that a check be made on the effectiveness of tree root protection measures. **MK** commented that egress from the church to Manse Road is difficult due to visibility and that there might be an accident. **PDV** suggested that the white lines on the road identifying the give way need to be redone.
- Disabled Parking – **AS** identified that there is no disabled parking in the village. **CH** indicated that the traffic safety measures proposed by the DVA included a disabled parking bay opposite the Castle Inn. Perhaps a disabled parking bay could be added to the public car park.

14. Date and time of next meeting-

The committee will meet with various sub-groups between now and the next meeting at 7.00pm 15th June, venue TBC.

The meeting was followed by a talk and tasting session by Glenkinchie Distillery.

ACTIONS

Incomplete Actions Carried over from meeting 16th February

- DC** awaiting feedback from Doug Haig regarding renewal of finger posts.
- DC** to check for potential ash die back on tree opposite Amalfi.
- SPB** to meet Doug Haig (meeting still awaited).
- CH** to report on Kirk Hall registration of community interest.
- SPB** to prepare finance report for June meeting.
- SPB, CH** to meet with Ian Lennox to discuss traffic calming.
- FM** to report DVA activities to NBCAP.
- SPB** to update chairperson welcome letter and issue to **TL** to go into the welcome pack.
- JM** to consult with the Kirk Session re internet access to the hall.
- SPB** to research mobile phone coverage and if necessary, conduct a survey with other committee members.
- SPB** to report on GADD CC meeting regarding wind farm grants.

New

- SPB** to arrange speaker for June meeting and extend invites to Mr Moodie and Councillors.
- SPB** to provide an update on the old Village Hall.
- SPB/DT** to provide an update on CC matters.
- CH** to add welcome pack to website.
- FM** to check on tree root protection at Auburn House.