

Dirleton Village Association

Minute of Public Meeting on 19th October 2023

The meeting was held at 7pm in The Castle Inn.

Present: C. Hamer (Chairperson); J. Macleod; F. McClintock; Z. Trendell; F. Dingwall; D. Tait; V. & B. Nimmo; T. & C. Drysdale; A. Breckon; B. Thomson; R. Campbell; I. Oliver; A. Orr; M. Chynoweth; D. Carter; B. Ford; S. Oliver; P. & A. Rintoul; M. & M. Cramond; G. O'Mahoney; B. Simpson; B. Walker; E. Fulton

Apologies: S. Paterson-Brown; S. Low; T. Lonie; H. Wager; J. & C. Lindsay; R. Murray; M. McNee

1. FM noted he and JM weren't on the attendees list in the minutes of meeting 17th August 2023, otherwise approved as correct. Proposed by JM, seconded by FM.
2. **Matters Arising** – To be addressed as meeting progresses.
3. **Treasurer's Report – SPB Notes**
The final accounts for 2022/23 have been reviewed and approved by the external examiner and will be reported to the membership at the AGM on 16th November.
4. **Planning – CH**
[18/00016/PM](#) Castlemains – The facing materials that were to be approved prior to construction have now been approved and correspondence posted on ELC planning portal.
[22/01050/P](#) Change of use and alterations to workshops to form 2 houses at 17/18 Castlemains Place. CH is liaising with the planning officer regarding the sale of public amenity space to a private developer without consultation. This was supported by the DVA on the understanding that reinstatement of the redundant septic tank and former roadway would result in no net loss of public amenity. The approved documents remove this requirement. ELC planning department are liaising with ELHA regarding the septic tank.
[23/00880/P](#) and [23/00936/LBC](#) Part demolition of wall and erection of a new house on land to the rear of The Castle Inn. This is a revised application, previously under reference [22/00978/P](#) and [22/00995/LBC](#) which was refused on various grounds. The DVA has responded without objection repeating a comment regarding the proposed relocation of a sycamore which needs to be reassessed.
[23/01017/P](#) and [23/011018/LBC](#) Alterations, extension to house, erection of garden buildings and gate at Ivybank House Main Road. GOM commented that the garden office construction will require felling of 4 or 5 young trees that are not shown on plans and the new garden gate in the wall giving access to the side road is located next to a public bench and lush vegetation. Could the office be relocated to avoid felling?
[23/01029/P](#) Alterations, extension to house and formation of steps at 1 Halliburton Terrace. The DVA has responded to the consultation requesting that the public footpath

is kept open during school hours and pointing out that there is a public sewer beneath the proposed extension.

[23/00644/P](#) Alterations, extension to house, erection of summerhouse, shed and associated works at 3 Red House Cherries Manse Road. The DVA saw no reason to make a response and the application is consented.

[23/00801/LBC](#), [23/00804/P](#), [23/00801/LBC](#) and [23/00802/P](#) Alterations to The Old Manse House and extensions to adjacent Manse Cottage, erection of outbuilding, walls, gates, fencing, formation of hardstanding areas, steps and part demolition of wall. Use of traditional and matching construction materials. Would normally object to removal of c.20m hedgerow but it is conifer, and of low ecological value. It is expected that ELC will condition that works are undertaken outwith bird nesting season. The Listed Build Consent application will address the historical importance of the proposed changes.

[23/00962/P](#) Alterations to 8 Foreshot Terrace Main Road. Following review, the DVA sees no reason to comment.

[23/00553/P](#) Erection of wall, gate and fence at High Point Main Road to enclose front garden. Following review, the DVA saw no reason to comment, and the application is consented.

[23/00487/P](#) Auburn House and the Gallery. An oak tree on land adjacent to Auburn house was deemed to be in poor health and felling was approved by ELC despite the TPO. TD has researched the title deeds for the land that the tree is on and identified that the it is not within the ownership of the developer as reported by the developer to the ELC. DC commented that the proposed replacement tree in no way balances the carbon loss and more trees should be planted. The DVA will monitor the situation and report the title discrepancy to ELC.

5. *Old Village Hall*

DC confirmed that a meeting has been arranged with Wendy Gille of ELC Estates Dept. to discuss application for asset transfer. The proposal is being handled by DC, John Finlay and SPB as the DVA representative of the sub-group.

6. *Heritage Lights*

DC informed the members that the heritage lighting was completed on the church green and the south side of the village green. The Phase 2 replacement of the remaining lights was scheduled for 2023/24 however, the pressure on ELC finances has resulted in the withdrawal of the £50k priority funding allocated to the NBCAP and a shortfall of £20k for this project. There is an On the Move meeting on 1st November at which funding of various projects will be discussed. CH confirmed that the committee would discuss the matter and suggest a contribution towards the shortfall, in an attempt to raise the financial viability. It is possible that additional funding could be sought from GADD CC priorities fund. TD expressed concern of the community funding of ELC's maintenance program.

7. *GADD Community Council - ZT*

- JM introduced Zena Trendell as the new DVA representative on GADD CC.
- ZT confirmed there were discussions at the last meeting regarding recent accidents at Dirleton Toll but otherwise no matters raised concerning the village.

8. Harvest Festival – AB

AB confirmed that the final total raised for Dirleton Play Group was >£2,000 and thanked everyone that attended for their support.

9. Festive Lights - FM

FM confirmed that Fete & Games will purchase the Xmas tree as usual. FM and BF will check the electrical connections for the tree and the festive lights in the three trees around the green for a switch on event on 30th November. JM requested volunteers to assist at the event.

10. Winter Resilience – JM

JM plans to review and update the DART winter resilience plan.

11. Committee Actions

Finger Posts

The finger posts at the Main Road / Manse Road and Main Road / Ware Road junctions have been removed and a sign put up directing to the Bowling Club.

Ash Die Back

Mike Foy (ELC Tree Officer) has confirmed that there are no plans to fell the tree suffering from Ash dieback opposite Amalfi Café. This is in accordance with guidance from [Scottish Forestry](#). CH confirmed that Archerfield Estate has followed this guidance and there was limited additional felling within the curling pond wood.

Kirk Hall Internet

JM to liaise Keith Stewart.

Village Welcome Pack

Mike Howarth uploaded the village welcome pack on the home page of the website. JM requested that members inform her of any new residents.

Power Cuts/surges

CH has contacted Scottish Power regarding the recent power cuts and surges to get reassurance that the maintenance/repairs are now complete and there are no further outages planned. No response received.

Chapelhill Shrubbery

Now cut back.

12. Mobile Mast - IO

IO and SPB had a conference call with BT OpenReach on 1st August to discuss broadband issues and Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) closure. Given that Gullane and North Berwick are on build plan and PSTN switches off Dec 2025 then makes sense to detour via Dirleton. No commitment, however.

UK Gov vouchers £4.5K to £9.5K per property Scottish Govt. £4.5K per property.

IO submitted the results of the survey of village residents to the OpenReach Community portal on 15th September. 55 households registered an interest. BT Openreach are still working on an initial cost.

IO and SPB met with Billy Agnew, ELC's representative for Digital in East Lothian on 15th August. East Lothian has the 5th worst mobile coverage in the UK. BA reinforced the voucher schemes available but did also stated that we are not bandwidth "impoverished" as speed is over 20 Mbit. No indication that Virgin Media were planning to come to Dirleton, however he did indicate that Vodafone may be looking to put a mast into the village. Note: Plan is for 4G not 5G as coverage is wider with 4G.

SPB met with Glenn Preston from Ofcom, w/c 18th September and toured the village. GP agreed that the actual mobile signal was worse than the computer projected signal coverage by mobile providers.

The UK Parliament has not given Ofcom powers to resolve individual complaints about their mobile phone or broadband service. Instead, these can be dealt with by Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services. There are two ADR schemes: the Communications and Internet Services Adjudication Scheme (CISAS) and Communications Ombudsman. All providers must belong to one of the schemes.

IO feels that the European PGA Tour Golf trying to get better mobile coverage at the Scottish Open is more likely to help here.

SPB reached out to Hayden Edwards at BT and he mentioned that he knew people at Scottish Futures Trust (Sarah Eynon) well. He has also been speaking with EE too in the past 2 weeks. SPB provided HE with the postcode of the primary school and the community centre. HE will get a view from EE on their 3 year plan to upgrade/install masts. There may be an angle to see if we can "accelerate" anything.

Power Cut on 4th October caused by Virgin Media digging through the electricity cable as they installed fibre in the main street. SPB and IO both registered an interest online and VM workmen confirmed that the whole village would be covered before they left.

13. Virgin Media/O2 – DT

VM/O2 merger installing a new network in East Lothian with works currently ongoing in the village. The installation process was explained, and the network is scheduled to go live in spring 2024 when complete. DT indicated that he would be able to secure a better deal than any door-to-door sales that will occur. There will be various packages for phone, broadband and television. A power cut back up phone system will be in place using O2's network. Residents to register interest online. DT to look into potential for O2 installing a mast.

AOCB

- MM has requested that the DVA contact Caledonian Heritable, owners of land to opposite Foreshot Terrace, to request that the tree/shrub growth encroaching on to the footpath is cut back.

SPEAKERS

Sustainable and Active Travel Action Plan

Brett Walker, On the Move Group of NBCAP introduced Erin Fulton Community Development Manager for Planning Aid for Scotland (PAS). EF explained the ongoing consultation to develop an Active and Sustainable Travel Action Plan for the North Berwick Coastal Ward Area. BW and EF made a note of suggestions made by residents.

Food Bank – Lisa McCart

LM gave a presentation on the activities of East Lothian Food Bank. Distribution of weekly food contributions to those people referred by Housing Associations, NHS, ELC as being in food poverty. Currently 85 volunteers including BF who help collect, sort and distribute food. Tesco makes significant contributions. BF added that local farmers are also allowing the harvest of excess crops such leeks, potatoes and carrots to provide some fresh produce.

JM suggested that some DGN volunteers may be able to assist in preparation of Xmas packs previously provided although LM indicated that they were moving away from the specialist to focus on every day foods.

BF suggestions for the relocation of the Dirleton drop off whist Amalfi is closed until March 2024 – School, Kirk, Play Group, Castle Inn were all suggested. BF to follow up.

Next meeting

The AGM be on 16th November at 7pm in the Castle Inn.

Actions:

- a) DVA committee to discuss a potential contribution towards heritage lighting and agree with the membership. If a contribution is agreed, then apply to GADD CC priorities fund for additional funding.
- b) JM to liaise with KS regarding internet access at the Kirk Hall.
- c) CH to contact Caledonian Heritable regarding cutting back shrubs/trees on Main Rd.
- d) BF to follow up on relocation of the Dirleton drop off for the food bank.
- e) CH to submit planning application comments as appropriate.
- f) JM to review and update DART winter resilience plan.