

## **DDCC MEETING, 7.30pm, 2 DECEMBER 2024, at the Steading Inn**

Present: Gaeton Richard; Gill Gray; Gordon Gray, Stuart Clark, John McLean, Keith Burwell, Robin McBride, Ailsa Carlisle, Jo Gillies, Helen McKay, Kate Holbrook, Julian Holbrook

In attendance: Councillor Pauline Winchester, Chris Gooding (Roslin and Bilston CC), Gillian Holmes and Colin Anderson (Fairmilehead CC), PC Ross Young

### 1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies: Constance and David Newbould; Paul Johnston, MLC.

### 2. Ratification of minutes, meeting of 7 October 2024, and update on actions not on agenda

- No corrections. Proposed: Gaeton Richard, seconded: Julian Holbrook.
- Changes to planning permission for 21 Damhead to allow a new dwelling to be built even though the nearest neighbours had not been notified. Distance measured to nearest neighbour used the footprint of the outbuildings rather than the footprint of the existing house. There has been an increase in antisocial behaviour associated with the existing house. PC Young's advice is to notify Air B&B and contact the police; 'Contact us' on the Police Scotland website should get a more immediate response than 101.
- Bat Conservation Trust has been contacted to help us with bats identification. JH has identified suitable sites for our new bat boxes.  
**ACTION** JH to send information on locations to JG who will contact relevant residents to see if they'd be interested in hosting a box.
- HM reported that the #4 bus is coming to Snowsports Centre again. At the moment it is stopping close to the bottom of the road and when the Centre has been completed it should go to the top.

### 3. Police Scotland Report. PC Ross Young, Police Scotland, attending. See Appendix 1.

Records show mainly fuel thefts but also a couple of traffic accidents. JG notified PC Young of further bump at the 3-way junction on 3<sup>rd</sup> October which would not have been captured in the report prior to the last DDCC meeting. [*Post meeting note*: Police Scotland have since identified relevant information and this is included in the police report at Appendix 1]. Following a discussion of some very noisy motor bikes and cars, PC Young advised us to take video evidence and report them through 'Contact us'.

Consultation is expected soon about a reduction in the speed limit on Burnside Road. It was agreed that a reduction from 60 m.p.h. to 40 was welcome but 40 was still too fast given the conditions. PC Young explained that it would be up to Midlothian Council to enforce a 20 mph by speed reduction measures and suggested that it might be better to ask for 30 mph which is enforced, at least in theory, by the police. PW advises us that there is a traffic policy which might give us helpful information about aspects that we could draw on.

MH contacted the council inviting them to tonight's meeting to discuss Burnside Road flooding and barriers, but there had not been any response.

**ACTION:** JG to contact Gillian Bathgate for advice on speed limits.

**ACTION:** HM to read the new traffic policy.

#### 4. MLC Budget.

Midlothian Council has a £9.6m deficit so big budget cuts are expected. PW explained council tax of new houses covers teachers' salaries but nothing else in the education budget. At present Midlothian's council tax income, which has expanded recently, has been used to subsidise declining Councils. This approach is under review. Beeslack replacement school on Seafield Road will go ahead although it is likely to be delayed.

#### 5. Strategic planning and developments:

- MLDP2 and the Damhead and District Local Place Plan. So far we've not had a report back on the meeting in early November of Midlothian CCs Chairs and planners. HM raised with PW that, despite Scottish Government guidance, the 700-page report did not pick up on issues that we had rejected, such as the A701 Relief Road.

**ACTION:** HM to contact the relevant planners re LPP proposals and amendments.

- Allandale housing development. Allandale have submitted pre-planning but no dates have been set for consultation. Various suggestions for action had been made by members of the community, including petitions; letters to MSPs; and shared activity and responses with Roslin and Bilston and Loanhead community councils. We agreed that there's no point in submitting our concerns until details are known. PW explained that there are six reasons to refuse planning (see Google) and also explained that enough land has already been allocated to meet housing targets.

**ACTION:** JH to pursue a Damhead podcast to emphasis the ethos of our community and the significance of the natural landscape.

- Land North of Seafield Road Bilston Roslin 19/01039/PPP  
DDCC has submitted concerns about the proposals especially about flooding in both new and existing areas. PW informed us that Midlothian Council is in the process of employing a floods officer.

#### 6. Traffic and road safety

- Hillend junction. Signalisation work has started this evening (Dec 2). The traffic lights themselves will be installed after Christmas. We noted the following concerns: the road layout remains unchanged so there could be difficulties for vehicles with tight turning circles; the traffic lights at the triple junction and snowsports centre must be synchronised and it might be helpful to close the lights at Snowsports Centre during rush hour; the new lights could cause congestion at the nearby bus stops but this must not result in these bus stops being discontinued; hatching is needed to keep entrances to houses open while residents wait for a gap in the traffic to access their homes and to avoid tailbacks and potential crashes; and speed reduction signs/measures to avoid crashes at the bends as approaching the traffic lights.

**ACTION:** JG to raise concerns and suggestions with Transport Scotland and BEAR.

- Burnside proposed 40mph speed limit. Covered under item 3.
- Burnside flooding and barriers. Covered under items 3 and next bullet.
- MTRAP have asked us to propose one carriageway and two footways to be included in the 2025-26 Roads Capital Expenditure work plan.

**ACTION:** CN to pass on our priorities to MTRAP as agreed at the meeting,

which are repairs to the Burnside Road; a cycle route along the A702/703 for active travel; and an improved footpath along Coo Lane from Seafield Road to the A702 past the Mill.

Gutters along the A703 have been cleared, but not the drains. MLC have applied for a traffic suppression order, which might enable litter picking to be undertaken at the more dangerous stretches of the A703. Old Pentland Road repairs and drains have been identified by MTRAP as a joint priority for 2024/25 and on the work plan to be done before the end of the financial year. Most of new speed signs have been installed.

**ACTION:** KH to draft request for actions by SRUC to improve footway from postbox on A703 to A702 for JG to send on behalf of DDCC. **ACTION:** HM to pass on college contact details of the new farm manager.

7. Community activity:
  - The litter pick had been very successful, as had the recent path clearing. Further path clearing to be undertaking on Old Pentland Road to make the pavement more user friendly, with another path clearing session on 8<sup>th</sup> December, meeting at 10 am at the Secret Herb Garden. Purple bags were available for residents to use for litter picking on an ad hoc basis. These will be collected and uplifted with our usual household rubbish.
  - Possible jobs for the Hit Squad to consider: cut hedges which are projecting across the pavement to the west of the Secret Herb Garden; take away old signs at the triple junction especially ones that are out of date; straighten fence posts sticking over the pavement at the bend before Seafield Mill (these are the land owners responsibility but no action has been taken)
  - Old Pentland Graveyard: Deferred until next meeting due to time constraints.
  
8. Roslin and Bilston CC and Damhead & District CC shared priorities. Chris Gooding, RBCC attended and made the following points: Bilston has doubled in size in recent years; there have been good efforts by Bilston around integration of new residents; although there is no community hub. Their big concern is the new school, in particular the expected increase in traffic and including congestion at the 3-way junction, flooding, and lack of cycle paths. CG noted that half of new houses are in Damhead suggesting the boundaries should be reconsidered. Under RBCC's constitution there is no way of progressing complaints and this will be rectified in their new constitution.
  
9. DDCC operations
  - DDCC Budget  
JG reported that MLC have a little additional funding for the operation of CCs. Noticeboards at triple junction plus Graveyard, printing of LPP; and possibly signs about a 'community of culture' all proposed.
  - PW still has some budget for environmental improvements. We suggested the notice board. Our suggestion of repairs to the bus stop will be discussed with the council in relation to their responsibilities.  
**ACTION:** HM to collate a list of ideas /projects that require funding so easier to respond to funding requests, and submit proposal(s) to PW.  
**ACTION:** JG to pursue bus stop repairs with MLC.

- Financial report. HM reported that since our last meeting the payment of £240 for the summer gathering at the Secret Herb Garden had been withdrawn leaving a balance of £3284. Withdrawals are expected for £22:35 for refreshments for the Hit Squad and £76.27 for ink cartridges and paper. Interest rates will decrease next year from 1.61 to 1.51%.  
**ACTION:** HM to follow up on printing of our Local Place Plan.
  - Meeting arrangements for 2025. The AGM and elections will be held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May and is preferable to be in person which means that we might swap the arrangements for some of the 2025 meetings.
10. AOB
- RMcB suggested that it would be worth investigating bulk buying of solar panels so residents in the community can perhaps get a better deal, and suggested a potential speaker on this topic who has done this in Stonehaven.  
**ACTION:** people who are interested to notify JG
  - Calderstone development has been agreed although there are no signs of action yet.
  - Number 15 bus. Tend to be full coming from Bush into town around 5 and 6pm. More buses needed.  
**ACTION:** HM to raise the following with Lothian Buses: why aren't people allowed to stand, more frequent buses through Bush at times when student classes end for the day.
  - JH is planning two events/gatherings on climate change and impacts on Damhead in conjunction with Climate Action. This will include Damhead Nature networks.  
**ACTION:** JG to issue invitation, and Julian to arrange venue.
11. Date of next meeting: 7.30pm, Monday 3 February 2025 by zoom.

In general, meetings take place at 7.30 on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday in every second month, and alternate between zoom and in person meetings. The calendar of meetings will be reviewed following the AGM and DDCC elections at the end of May. Forthcoming meetings include:

Monday 3 February 2025, online by zoom

Monday 7 April 2025, in person

**Monday 26 May 2025 Meeting, AGM and DDCC Elections, in person**

Monday 4 August, online by zoom

October (venue tbc, plus day/date tbc)

December (venue tbc, day/date tbc)

DDCC Website <http://damheadcc.org/>

DDCC Email: [damheadanddistrictcc@googlegroups.com](mailto:damheadanddistrictcc@googlegroups.com)

"Damhead Community" Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/134821255247393>



**Incidents of note 7<sup>th</sup> October to 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024**  
**Meeting Date - 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024**  
**Damhead Community Council**  
**Beat Area MW02**



**Incidents of Note**

Inc (04/10/24) Police were contacted about the Vehicle Accident which involved a van and car. The incident was closed off as Non Reportable as no Offences were detected, there was no damage to street furniture and both vehicles were moveable.

Inc 3882 (11/10/24) Road Traffic Offence. Section 5A Drug Driving. Vehicle stopped at Junction of A701 and A703 by Roads Policing Officers. Driver failed Roadside Drug Swipe. CR Submitted.

Inc 1191 (14/10/24) Theft of Fuel. Esso Service Station, Hillend. £90.39 worth of fuel stolen. CR Submitted.

Inc 0598 (16/10/24) Theft of Fuel. Esso Service Station, Hillend. £40.05 worth of fuel stolen. CR Submitted

Inc 2099 (13/11/24) Vehicle Accident. A702 with Junction Old Pentland Road involving Van and Car. Driver of Van issued a Conditional Offer for Careless Driving.

Inc 2532 (17/11/24) Theft of Fuel. Esso Service Station, Hillend. £15.22 worth of fuel stolen. CR Submitted

Inc 0851 (18/11/24) Theft of Fuel. Esso Service Station, Hillend. £65.15 worth of fuel stolen. CR Submitted

Inc 1703 (22/11/24) Theft of Fuel. Esso Service Station, Hillend. £50.76 worth of fuel stolen. CR Submitted

Inc 0451 (23/11/24) Report of Erratic Driving on Biggar Road. Vehicle stopped nearby and Female driver appeared intoxicated and refused Roadside Breath Test. Arrested and Reported for Section 172 RTA Offence.

Inc 0894 (27/11/24) Report of Dangerous Driving on A702 near to Junction of Old Pentland Road. Offending vehicle not identified and no Dashcam Footage available.

If any person has any information about the incident(s) listed above, or indeed any other crime, please contact your Community Police Officer PC Ross Young via 101 or email: -

[LothianScotBordersPenicuikCPT@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:LothianScotBordersPenicuikCPT@scotland.pnn.police.uk)

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**Additional Information**

Hate crime and domestic abuse can now be reported online via the official Police Scotland website at [www.scotland.police.uk](http://www.scotland.police.uk) or by visiting a Third Party Reporting Centre – details of which are also on our website.

Information regarding crime can be passed to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or through an Online Form - both of these routes are completely anonymous and available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

**Police Scotland use social media to circulate the latest news, events and information to the public via Twitter (@LothBordPolice and @MidLothPolice) and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/LothiansScottishBordersPoliceDivision](http://www.facebook.com/LothiansScottishBordersPoliceDivision) and [www.facebook.com/MidlothianPolice](http://www.facebook.com/MidlothianPolice)).**

#### TELEPHONING POLICE SCOTLAND

If you need to contact Police Scotland then the number you use will depend on whether what you are reporting is an emergency or not.

You should always use 999 when:

- \* there is a risk of injury or loss of life
- \* a crime is in progress
- \* someone suspected of a crime is nearby.

For non-emergency calls please use 101 to contact Police Scotland.