DDCC AGM 2nd June 2025. In person at the Steading Inn.

Present:
Residents: Pippa Thomson, Gordon Buchanan, Robin McBride, Anna Henly, Heather Bertram, Megan Bertram, David Newbould, Gill McLeod, Mark Hartree, Catriona Umpleby, Duncan McAuslan, Ailsa Carlisle, Jo Gillies, Helen McKay, Julian Holbrook, Kate Holbrook, Constance Newbould, Diane Graham, Les Graham, Tommy Telfer, Rob Diacon, Gaetan Richard, Heather Binanti, Guiliano Binanti, Sue Gray.

In Attendance

Pauline Winchester	–	Midlothian Council, Elected Member
Paul Johnson	–	Midlothian Council, Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability Worker

Apologies: Ana Isabel Castro Marques

1. Ratification of minutes, AGM on 22 April 2024 Proposed by Duncan McAuslan and seconded by David Newbould.

2. Chair's report by Constance Newbould. See Annex 1.

3. Treasurer's report by Helen McKay. See Annex 2.
PJ informed us that the accounts should be "independently reviewed, checked and verified as a true record of the accounts" and that they should be presented by the Treasurer at the AGM. This check can be undertaken by someone who lives in the Damhead area. However, that person has to be independent of the Community Council. They cannot be a member of Damhead and District Council. PJ requested that the accounts be independently checked and forwarded to him at the earliest opportunity.
ACTION: MH will review the 24/25 accounts.

4. Secretary's report by Jo Gillies. See Annex 3.

5. Stand down of office bearers, and election of new office bearers.
Paul Johnson introduced himself (Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability, Midlothian Council) and commended DDCC for their attendance at so many meetings particularly at MTRAP & Midlothian Federation of Community Councils. He highlighted progress in modernising and revising the constitution.

PJ notified the meeting that there had been six applicants for the committee; Constance Newbould, Joanne Gillies, Helen McKay, Ailsa Carlisle, Duncan McAuslan, and Kate Holbrook. DDCC's constitution allows for seven committee members so all six applicants were accepted as committee members.

PJ officiated the election of Office Bearers.
Chairperson: Constance Newbould

Nomination proposed by Graham Buchanan and seconded by Mark Hartree.

Secretary: **Joanne Gillies**
Nomination proposed by David Newbould and seconded by Kate Holbrook.

Treasurer: **Helen McKay**
Nomination proposed by Gill Macleod and seconded by Catriona Umpleby.

6. AOB
   - PW will forward JG the name of the new Flood Prevention Officer in Midlothian Council
   - Blocked drains, MH intends using What 3 Words to pinpoint the blocked drains. MTRAP provides a direct link between community and Council to consider the drains issue. CN drew our attention to the Handy Numbers on the website

7. Date of next AGM: Monday 1 June 2026

Annex 1. Chairs report (Constance Newbould)

Looking back my files this year I note my first chair's report was in 2012! And sadly many of the issues we had then we are still having today.

Planning objections and meetings have taken up lots of our time. Planning this year has been as active as ever.
The Filling station has been granted planning for housing despite objections. Calderstones likewise now has planning permission but hopefully with Jo's dogged comments to the planners our environmental issues will be addressed.
Cala and Allenvale gave a presentation to our meeting in February with their proposals for 400 houses to be built on Jim's farm and a mixed-use development on the north side of the Old Pentland Road. They were meant to hold a further consultation in Loanhead but this was cancelled. There have been objections as one consultation is not adequate for a PCR. We will still maintain Jim's farm is designated green belt and prime agricultural ground. And finally the A701 relief road. There are many aspects to the road and ideally we would like a few residents to come together as a working party to pull together all points and make representations as our small committee is overwhelmed with everything else.

Every year there are 10 Midlothian Federation meetings which we attend. Joanne and Ailsa share these with myself. These are very helpful meetings to inform us of the bigger picture in Midlothian. At the start of the year their focus was mainly on the Midlothian budget which had a large deficit and showed lots of cuts to public services such as libraries and community transport. We then moved on to the MLDP2 which is currently being drawn up by the planning department. MC had called for ideas from developers and received suggestions for sites totalling 16,500 units. Three of us from the MFCC attended a meeting with the planners to try to understand the procedure and also the various allocations of housing etc. One of the MFCC very kindly drew up an objection letter to the Council stating our opposition to the number of houses being proposed given the lack of infrastructure throughout Midlothian. We did manage to change the councillors' minds to not increase the allocation from SEStrans requirements. As a matter of note Midlothian are required to build 8851 houses between now and 2036. Land already designated and zoned for housing in the current MLDP equates to 8008 houses. Therefore we should only be adding a further 843 units to MLDP2 and nothing like the 16,500 units proposed by the developers. If any of you saw the plan that was the pink bits!

During the year we had our small working party headed up by Mark Hartree clearing the pavement of the Old Pentland Road which has made a massive difference for walkers etc. They have also rebuilt the bus shelter at the end of the A703 which was very kindly sponsored by Travis Perkins in Loanhead.

Helen has now had our Local Place Plan printed so please take a copy. These will be invaluable to hand to Councillors for example.

I did manage to get the new web site up and running and am still waiting for some photos and other interesting things to put on it. Any suggestions gratefully received.

We have also had our two litter picks although many residents do litter pick between times in order to keep the streets clear.

Our summer gathering at the Secret Herb Garden was a great success and hopefully we will organize another this summer.

We also had a ladies night out at the local Indian in Loanhead– I believe the men in Damhead meet more regularly on a Thursday night at a local hostelry- so come on girls we need to have more!

Again a big thank you to the rest of the committee.

Annex 2. Treasurer's report for 2024-25. (Helen McKay)

1. ACCOUNTS (details are given in the table below)

Starting balance: £3354.62
The starting balance for this year was **£3354.62**

Income £879.30
The Midlothian Council Small Grant was £330 (we had applied for £1330) and we were granted a further £300 in February to spend on community activities.
The total interest was £47.36.
There were no other contributions.

Expenditure: £1039.80
The major expenditure (£510) was for printing 125 copies of our Local Place Plan – this is one copy per household listed on our map, and a few additional copies to use to best effect. The Summer Gathering cost £240. The third expenditure >£100 (in fact £155.88) covered the fees for our Zoom meetings. Smaller amounts were for tea and biscuits for last year's AGM, paper and cartridges (mainly for the updated maps and newsletter) and refreshments for the two Task Force activities.

Balance at year end: £2992.18
This is calculated as the carryover from last year plus this year's income less expenditure.
The accounts will be converted into the approved Midlothian format before asking for verification and sending to Paul Johnstone.

2. GRANT APPLICATION FOR 2025-26

Our application to the Small Grant Award Fund for 2025-26 was £245 for running costs plus £75 to repair our jointly owned bus stop and £350 for a second noticeboard (a total of £670). Council awarded us £640. The request for £30 for the Zoom meetings was not accepted as there are already two Zoom licenses funded through the Midlothian Federation that can be accessed by all Community Councils,

3. BANK ACCOUNT

We have a Treasurer's Account with the Royal Bank of Scotland. Although this does not offer on-line banking and two-person authorisation, which is required by our constitution, it does pay interest of 1.50% for accounts with a balance of £1,000-10,000.

DAMHEAD AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

EXPENDITURE AND INCOME 2024-25

Helen McKay, Treasurer

		Date	Debit	Credit
Brought forward from previous year				£ 3,354.62
Income				
	Bank interest to 13Jun	27th June		£ 12.42
	Midlothian Small Grant	18th July		£ 330.00
	Bank interest to 15Sep	28th Sept		£ 12.99
	Bank interest to 16Dec	28th Dec		£ 11.57
	Midlothian Community Activities	25th Feb		£ 300.00
	Bank interest to 16Mar	27th Mar		£ 10.38
Expenditure				
	Steading (teas and biscuits for AGM)	10th May	£30	
	Constance Newbould (Zoom fees)	6th Aug	£155.88	
	Jo Gillies (summer gathering Secret Herb Garden)	1st Oct	£240.00	
	Jo Gillies (paper, cartridges)	11th Dec	£76.27	
	Mark Hartree (Task Force 1 Secret Herb Garden)	31st Dec	£22.35	
	Mark Hartree (Task Force 2 Sainsburys)	31st Dec	£5.30	
	Mackay & Inglis (printing Local Place Plan 125 copies)	1st Apr	£510.00	
Sub-totals			£ 1,039.80	£ 677.36
Balance of carry over + income - expenditure				**£ 2,992.18**

Annex 3. Secretary's report (Jo Gillies)

A key role is shaping and servicing the DDCC, including developing agendas, planning and arranging meetings, inviting guest speakers (e.g. relocation of BCHS, Cala Homes, BEAR) and supporting Helen with the minutes. With all of this ensuring two-way communication between the DDCC and the community, and also between the DDCC and the Council.

We have a range of communication mechanisms in place, but always welcome feedback if it's not working as well as it should. As well as the email database (which now covers the vast majority of the community), the DDCC google group email address, and the community map (which is a godsend with Amazon deliveries), there's also the noticeboard at the Graveyard (2nd to come at the triple junction in due course) and at the bus stop on the A703 at Tigh Na Geat. There's also the DDCC website, and separate to the DDCC there's a community facebook page (details on the bottom of the agenda).

Engaging with stakeholders:

- Engagement with MLC, e.g. speed limit options on Burnside, the repair of the bridge at the bottom of burnside, and also with Paul Johnson in relation to the workings of the community council, including the updated constitution
- Other public bodies such as BEAR/Transport Scotland around the traffic lights at Hillend, and with Police Scotland – we have a good relationship with PC Ross Young and others, which has led to regular police reports, support and reassurance to our community in relation to crime prevention, traffic monitoring and safety, and, more recently, neighbourhood watch options
- Links with councillors – ensuring they have the dates for our meetings, are invited to the meetings and provided with information so they know what we'll be discussing. Pauline Winchester has regularly attended and engaged in our meetings, but disappointing that others haven't
- Others, like keeping in touch with Neil McKay around progress with restoration of the graveyard
- Other communities and community councils, e.g. MFCC, and the oil buying circle, which is still going strong, Chris Gooding from Roslin and Bilston Community Council, and of course Colin Anderson and Gill Holmes who regularly join us from Fairmilehead Community Council.

As well as the work all the individual community councillors take forward, I help facilitate and support the community so you can also play a significant role in protecting and improving our community (we wouldn't manage nearly as much without you all):

- Mark Hartree and his hit squad and all the positive work done on pavements and verges on Old Pentland Road and around the triple junction. Agreeing and communicating arrangements, identifying and agreeing provision of resources, and doing risk assessments and the relevant paperwork
- And also with Gaetan Richard to renovate and repair the bus stop at the top of the triple junction
- Anna Henly for litter picking support and equipment.
- David Newbould for continuing to push the Council to improve their servicing of the layby on the A703, including the removal of litter and in relation to

flytipping by local businesses, and most recently the abandoned caravan, and also for continuing to keep pressure on the Council about blocked drains and flooding.
- Everyone involved in responding as part of and in support of the DDCC to planning applications and strategic developments, including Pippa, Graeme, Catriona and Ana.

As well as those community events that I've mentioned, which bring people together as well as serving a specific event, we also had a summer gathering last year at the Secret Herb Café, and regularly hold DDCC meetings in person to provide the opportunity for people to catch up in the margins.

A massive thank you to everyone for sharing views and comments, impacts and opportunities in relation to planning applications, strategic developments, local issues, community activities – it's the only way the DDCC can represent the community so thank you for sharing your views.

Regular updates to community via email distribution list (please join if not already) on road closures/speed limits/ litterpicks/ developments/events and other news items.
Website with web address www.damheadcc.org
DDCC email address to contact us damheadanddistrictcc@googlegroups.com
"Damhead Community" Facebook page