**DDCC MEETING MINUTES, 7.30pm, 1 December 2025, by Zoom**

1. **Welcome and apologies**

Present: Kate Holbrook, Julian Holbrook, Constance Newbould, David Newbould, Duncan McAuslan, Carolyn Spray, Graeme Buchanan, Pippa Thomson, Colin Anderson (Fairmilehead Community Council), Jo Gillies, Ailsa Carlisle, Helen McKay
Apologies: Anna Henly

2. **Ratification of minutes, 6 October 2025, and update on actions not on agenda**

There were no corrections to the minutes.
Minutes were ratified by DM and seconded by KH.
Actions:

- Damhead and District Local Place Plan, comments on the A701 Relief Road, and associated papers now on Midlothian website.
  ACTION 1: CN to add the following documents to our own website: DDCC response and objection to housing; road and gap report; and the final version of LPP.
- Updating of LPP if/when the boundaries change. HM had contacted planning several times without reply. Advice is to wait until consultation over boundaries has completed.
- Bat boxes – JH to set out potential locations for the placement and allocation of bat boxes, which will be covered at the April 2026 meeting in order that boxes can be placed during the summer.
- Erosion on Burnside. Removal of trees has been suggested by Midlothian Council. DDCC generally are not in favour of removing all the trees although we accept that some may have to come down. There also wasn't support for an open drain.
  ACTION 2: JH to draft a paper about possible solutions in time for the next MTRAP meeting in February.
- Location of number 4 bus stop. Lothian buses had replied to HM redirecting the enquiry to Midlothian transport.
  ACTION 3: HM to follow up.
- Closure of main Park & Ride. AC had received acknowledgement that seats were needed at the alternative bus stops on the A701 to support those with mobility issues. Anna Herriman is dealing with active travel which covers Park & Rides and core paths. The next meeting is in Jan. CA had been told that there was a suggestion about siting a P&R nearer to Penicuik. ACTION 4: JG to undertake survey of local park and ride users.

3. **Police Scotland Report (full report at Annex 1)**

- As usual, there were numerous (4) thefts from the filling station.
- The police had visited Calderstone following reports of possible squatters. Although the police had contacted the named contact in Edinburgh to get contact details for the overseas owner, they have not had a reply from the owners so this is being treated as a civil matter.
- Vehicle accident on A702 at the Erraid corner.
- Off-road bikes at the Snow Sports Centre

- Child ran into the side of a stopped car at the 3-way junction. Incidents at the triple junction being collated by JG to pass on to BEAR.

**4. Strategic planning and developments:**

- MLDP2 Consultation. This is likely to be delayed.
  Housing requirements were discussed at the November Midlothian meeting and given initially as1965. Redheugh not counted because it is constrained even though it looks as though it will go ahead. The Rullion Road proposal has been included so now total is >2000. Cala development was retained despite our objections.
  Process is one further formal meeting of the Council, then public consultation for 12 weeks, then back to council, probably then to the reporter. Some Councillors do recognise that there is a shortage of infrastructure.
  We have done our utmost. Midlothian council meeting on 16th Dec. Agenda needs to be checked in advance.
  JH reluctant to wait until draft appears before formulating responses and outlined several suggestions about the relief road, housing, and Damhead Nature Network, both to celebrate Damhead's achievements and to highlight detrimental impact that the A701 Relief Road will have.
    - Review other suggestions in case there are additional points we could use to reinforce our case
    - Hold a specific meeting about Damhead Nature Network.
    - Progress the charter
    - Update list of businesses to demonstrate range and number of employers in area
    - Settlement boundary: LPP asks for Damhead and District to be recognised as a dispersed settlement. Emma Hay explained that this designation is not recognised in Midlothian therefore designation as a normal settlement statement is the best way forward in her opinion. Our options are to align with the definition of a normal settlement or not to have a settlement boundary at all. Unfortunately there is limited time to take a decision. Map of Damhead and District as a normal settlement has boundaries quite closely drawn in some areas but not others. Need clarification about what this would mean for individual owners. Agreed we'd need to consult all the local people who would be affected and to consider pros and cons.
      ACTION 5: JH to circulate the most recent map before Christmas and organise a meeting in Jan.

- A701 Relief Road and link to A702, and wider transport developments
    - A701 Relief Road planning proposals have received at least 140 objections, plus there has been a huge response to the petitions.
    - JG gave an update from BEAR. A survey of southbound traffic from Fairmilehead had been completed and analysis now underway to inform solutions to traffic build up. They recognise that there are differing views about the turn right from A702 onto Old Pentland Road (low priority to make any changes). Continuing to look at northbound corner at Erraid. Pavement repairs on Old Pentland Road expected after Christmas. Half-box for cyclists at top of Old Pentland Road will be included in future programme of works.

- Active Travel connection study between Gowkley Moss and Fairmilehead being undertaken by AECOM. BEAR have made it clear that in their view the A702 should not be considered as it's a busy trunk road. The A703 may be an option for active travel provision.
  There were divergent views on active travel provision. For example: good active travel off road could be a better solution than the relief road or local access only on A703; and the route. GB suggests speaking to SPOKES (David French). DDCC keen to engage with AECOM.

- 24/00752/PAC Cala Housing Development - covered earlier in the agenda

**5. Traffic and road safety:**

- Triple junction signalisation – covered earlier in the agenda
- Burnside erosion, drainage and proposed 40mph speed limit - covered earlier in the agenda

**6. Community activities and concerns:**

- Calderstones squatters. See police report.

**7. DDCC Administration**

- DDCC account. The December meeting was too early in the month to have the statement to the end of November to hand. At the end of September we had £3649.82. There had been no expenditure in Aug and September. We received £8.71 in interest.
- DDCC bid for grant. HM reported that there was no opportunity to bid for small grants for 26/27 at the moment. HM to liaise with DDCC as soon as the priorities for funding are clear.
- DDCC expenditure
  ACTION 6: JG to follow up on bus stop since repairs need specialist equipment
  ACTION 7: HM to chivvy GR about repairs to notice boards
- Community Council Boundaries Review - Damhead, Penicuik, Roslin and Bilston
  ACTION 8: PT still to contact neighbours ASAP about potential changes to DDCC boundary.
  ACTION 9: CN to add map to website showing proposed changes to the DDCC boundary, and to ask Paul Johnson for the consultation starting date.
- Co-option of new members on to DDCC to support responses to strategic planning developments. DDCC needs to co-opt JH officially – this was proposed by JG and seconded by DN. JH will remain on the DDCC until the next elections. PT happy to be on the sub-group.
- DDCC wish to note their appreciation of the sub-group and all its members (JH, KH, PT, CU, CN, AM-A, NM, JM, LM) for their excellent work and for making so much progress in responding to both the proposals for the A701 Relief Road and MLDP2 as various stages of the process. This work has been invaluable in enabling the DDCC to respond robustly to proposals and to support individuals to submit their own comments too.
- An FOI for cost benefit about the relief road was submitted, but the reply says that the papers contain data that could be of commercial benefit. PT says that if the case is environment they should provide a summary.

ACTION 10: PT will check on possible ways of getting a response. FOI Commissioner may be a final option.

**8. AOB**

- The new Midlothian Community Council Scheme handbook is being ratified and should be circulated by all community councils to their members. ACTION 10: JG to action in due course
- A petition proposed by an ex-community councillor expressed the view that Community Councils wanted more autonomy and powers. DDCC are concerned that it might be beyond our capacity.
- Potential Meetings 2026:

2 Feb – in person (Glencorse?) They charge or ask for a contribution.
6 April – zoom
1 June plus AGM – in person
3 August – zoom
5 October – in person
7 December - zoom

**9. Date of next meeting: 7.30pm, Monday 2 February**

DDCC Email: damheadanddistrictcc@googlegroups.com
DDCC Website http://damheadcc.org/
Midlothian Federation of Community Councils Website
https://www.midlothiancommunitycouncils.org.uk
"Damhead Community" Facebook page:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/134821255247393

**ANNEX 1**

POLICE SCOTLAND
Keeping people safe

Midlothian Community Council Report
**October/November 2025**
Beat Areas MW02
Damhead Community

POLICE SCOTLAND
Keeping people safe

**Incidents of Note**

Inc 0870 (11/10/2025) Esso Service Station, Biggar Road. Theft of fuel. £30.01 worth of fuel stolen. Crime Report Submitted.

Inc 1996 (20/10/2025) Junction of A702 and A703, Hillend. Vehicle Accident. Child crossing the road was not paying attention and ran into side of vehicle which was moving off at the junction. Child knocked over but uninjured. No Police action taken.

Inc 0861 (28/10/2025) Esso Service Station, Biggar Road. Theft of fuel. £20.36 worth of fuel stolen. Crime Report Submitted.

Inc 2854 (30/10/2025) Calderstone, Hillend. Report of lights on at property that has been empty for several years. Initial Police enquires suggest somebody is staying within however it has been established that the owner lives abroad and it is unknown if anybody has permission to live there. Enquires ongoing however is potentially a civil matter.

Inc 2409 (01/11/2025) Esso Service Station, Biggar Road. Theft of fuel x2. £43.87 and £20.01 worth of fuel stolen. Crime Reports Submitted.

Inc 0506 (10/11/2025) Pentland Road, Damhead. Vehicle Accident. Report of a vehicle leaving the road into a field. On Police attendance established the cause of the accident was driver inexperience and poor weather conditions. No injuries sustained. No further Police action.

Inc 1454 (10/11/2025) Esso Service Station, Biggar Road. Theft of fuel. £40 worth of fuel stolen. Crime Report Submitted.

Inc 2254 (12/11/2025) Esso Service Station, Biggar Road. Vehicle Accident. HGV collided with part of Service Station Structure causing damage and for Biggar Rad to be partially obstructed. Vehicle and Driver were foreign. No further Police Action.

Inc 2393 (24/11/2025) Hillend Ski Centre. Off Road Bikes. Report of x4 Off Road Bike in and around Ski Centre. Area search no trace upon Police arrival.

If any person has any information about the incidents listed above, or indeed any other crime, please contact your Community Policing Officer **PC Ross Young** via **101** or **email: MidlothianWestCPT@scotland.police.uk**

**Additional Information**

Although not Specific to the Damhead area, there is a Police Operation, Op Frankincense running between December and January in the Midlothian area. This is targeting shoplifting incidents particularly at the nearby Straiton Retail Park. Additional Officers will deploy most days both in High Visibility and Plain Clothes Patrols.

**If any resident has any other concerns or is looking for information such as Crime Prevention advice, then PC Ross Young can be contacted via his Police Scotland Email address: Ross.Young@scotland.police.co.uk**

**Crimestoppers**

Do you have information on criminal activity in your area? Please call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or through their online form - both of these routes are completely anonymous and available 365 days a year.

**Social Media**

Police Scotland use social media to circulate the latest news, events and information to the public via X (**@PSOSMidlothian** & **@PoliceScotland**) and Facebook (**Police Scotland Midlothian** & **Police Scotland**).