

**Damhead and District Community Council  
AGM and Meeting Minutes**

The Steading, 2 April 2014, 7.00pm

**1 Attendance/apologies**

**In attendance:** Constance Newbould (Chair), Ailsa Carlisle (joint secretary), Joanne Gillies (joint secretary), Lorna Goudie, Julian Holbrook.

**Also present:** Police Scotland representative

**Apologies:** Helen McKay, Matt Marshall

**2 Police report**

The PC read out the police report on behalf of PC Gillian. This included a minor traffic accident on Old Pentland Road in March, and the theft of two bikes from Dungavel on 19 February.

At the recent Federation meeting, Police Scotland suggested that residents who do not have a street name may find it useful to know the Ordnance Survey grid reference for their house to ensure their location can be easily identified. This can be found through 'memory map' on the internet, from an OS map, or by emailing the DDCC chair ([ddcc@mfcc.info](mailto:ddcc@mfcc.info)).

**Action:** The PC agreed to follow up on the traffic intelligence report undertaken by PC Hutchison and provide an update on progress and recommendations.

**Action:** All residents to report any suspicious activity re the theft of bikes on 19 February to Police Scotland on tel no: 101; to continue to report all thefts to Police Scotland (tel no: 101 or 999 depending on nature of incident); and to continue to inform DDCC ([ddcc@mfcc.info](mailto:ddcc@mfcc.info)) of any accidents that they witness in the area.

**3 Chair's Report**

The Chair reported on yet another busy year, with the responses to the MIR and preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. Other activity included:

- The Big Lunch held last summer, which was successful despite the weather;
- The Litter Pick in March, which collected around 75 bags of litter which made a huge difference to the area; and
- Representing community concerns in relation to a number of specific planning applications, such as the recent successful objection to planning application 14/00047/DPP.

In relation to the Neighbourhood Plan, and following extensive community engagement through the community survey, tour of local community initiatives, and consultation day (which included a planning for real exercise), the Neighbourhood Plan is now being drafted. The aim is for the draft to be available later in April/May so that residents can view and comment on this before it is finalised and submitted to MLC.

All residents are encouraged to continue to share their views as it is important that there is balanced opinion in the Plan contents. It was also suggested that there should be an official launch of the Neighbourhood Plan and celebration of its development, to which local MSPs, the Advertiser etc could be invited as well as all local residents.

In relation to the Main Issues report, there were around 2,100 comments on the Midlothian planning portal, which included a significant number from our local community. DDCC have met with a number of MSPs and Councillors, including Councillor Russell Imrie, Alison Johnston MSP, Colin Beattie MSP and Cameron Buchanan MSP to raise awareness of the potential detrimental impact of the proposals on Damhead and District. Efforts are still being made to meet with, for example, Sarah Boyack MSP and Kezia Dugdale MSP and to continue to make our concerns known.

The Chair thanked the Committee and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for all of their efforts and achievements over the course of the year. She recognised that everyone is very busy, and many of the tasks have taken a considerable amount of time.

#### **4 Treasurer's Report**

The DDCC has a healthy bank account with an approximate balance of £800. The figures for year end will be finalised and audited once the end of year bank statement has been received, with information placed on the website.

#### **5 Election of Office Bearers**

The office bearers resigned and the following individuals nominated and seconded:

**Chair:** Constance Newbould

**Treasurer:** Helen McKay, with support from Lorna Goudie

**Secretary:** Ailsa Carlisle, with minute writing support from Helen McKay

#### **6 Update on Federation News**

The Federation met on 19 March. Specific items of interest discussed at the meeting included:

- Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive of Midlothian Council, attended the meeting, and set out achievements made and areas where he still wished to see improvement, including strengthening of the relationship between community councils and MLC. As part of this, Mr Lawrie will meet the Federation annually.
- The Midlothian Advertiser has offered dedicated space to Community Councils. Kate Marshall kindly agreed to provide regular text to the Advertiser to raise awareness of DDCC meeting dates, events and activities etc.

**Action:** Federation minutes to be placed on DDCC website.

**Action:** Constance and/or Ailsa to attend next Federation meeting on 16 April.

**Action:** Kate to provide regular text on the DDCC to the Advertiser.

#### **7 Planning applications**

**Planning application 14/00047/DPP:** The planning application, which proposed skip storage on land 70m North West Of Old Pentland Sawmill, has been rejected.

**Planning application 13/00805/DPP:** The planning application, which was re-submitted to establish dog kennels on Old Pentland Road, has been rejected. Following an appeal, a review body will visit the site in June, with a particular interest in noise levels.

**Planning application 14/00203/DPP:** The planning application for Haig Hamilton Land Infill work has now been submitted. Following initial representations by DDCC, formal objections will now be lodged reflecting concerns around traffic, access to the site, the nature of the proposals, the impact of displacement of water on other areas etc. All comments on the planning application should be submitted to MLC by 22 April [NB: the date for comments has now been extended to the start of May].

## **8 Big Lunch**

It was agreed that a Damhead and District Community Big Lunch should be held on Sunday 8 June. Potential venues include Straiton Bing, or for the lunch to be hosted by the Marshall's or Newbould's.

**Action:** Venue to be confirmed in due course (Jo, Constance, Kate). Jo to start coordination of event.

## **9 Old Pentland Graveyard – repairs and maintenance**

There was a lot of concern about the damage to the information plaque and lectern, and gratitude to a local resident who had offered to repair the board. There was also concern regarding the general upkeep of the Graveyard, beyond the grass cutting carried out by MLC. This might include replacing slates, lead, etc.

**Action:** Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to consider including action to bring together organisations with an interest in the Graveyard to explore potential options for maintaining the Graveyard.

## **10 AOB**

### **Gibsones: tipping and land proposals**

Following discussion at the last DDCC meeting, it was noted that residents affected had sent a number of letters to local councillors and that a meeting had been arranged between the residents and Councillor Owen Thomson for 11 April.

### **Straiton Bing tipping**

Following discussion at the last DDCC meeting, it was noted that activity had been undertaken to insert hard core and grit over the area on the Bing that had been used as a wash out.

**Action:** Stuart to follow up with SEPA environmental protection officers.

### **Community resilience and network**

At previous DDCC meetings, and through the Neighbourhood Plan consultation activities, there has been discussion about establishing a community network to share information (e.g. local thefts, etc); to help deal with adverse weather and flooding; and to keep in touch with vulnerable people (e.g. isolated individuals due to bad weather, etc).

Alison White, Head of Services and Adult Social Work at MLC has an interest in resilience and contingency planning as well as providing support for vulnerable people. Alison is looking for a couple of local areas that she can work with to develop community models that meet the needs of their communities. In the first instance this would involve Alison coming along to a Community Council or Neighbourhood Planning meeting and discussing what we're looking for, having a look at the existing Borders model, and reviewing what would work for us within our local area.

**Action:** Jo to invite Alison White, Head of Services and Adult Social Work, to the next DDCC meeting to support development of a network for the local area.

## **11 Date of next meetings**

Meetings for the remainder of 2014 were agreed for:

**Monday 2 June**

**Tuesday 11 August**

**Monday 22 September**

**Monday 1 December**

The Damhead and District Community Council email address is [ddcc@mfcc.info](mailto:ddcc@mfcc.info). Please email us if you have any comments, queries or suggestions.