

DDCC MEETING 3rd Feb 2015

In attendance:

Ailsa Carlisle, Helen McKay, Julian Holbrook, Lorna Goudie

Apologies:

Constance Newbould

1. Police report. Ian Hutchinson (Bonnyrigg) read through the report from 1st Dec 2014 – 29th Jan 2015
 - There were three incidents of a suspicious man skulking around houses but nothing was reported stolen. The Officer advised us to report any sightings using 999 or 101. If possible take photos but not if this puts us at risk.
 - A resident reported that a man was spotted in entrance building to the Cemetery; police advise us to phone it in.
 - Julian asked for data on road incidents in D&D. Officer Hutchinson offered to follow up and pass on details of the relevant contacts.
 - A resident asked if the Police had any control over the speed of vehicles using the Old Pentland Road and the Burnside (both 60 mph limit). Officer Hutchinson explained that the Police have recently assessed the junction at the Secret Herb Garden but acknowledged that it was very difficult to get speed limits reduced and then enforced. Ricky Moffat will visit after the Bilston roadworks have been completed and traffic flows returns to normal.
 - A 3-vehicle accident on the A703, resulted in minor injuries and is not included in the standard police report statistics.
2. Minutes from last meeting
3. Treasurer's report. Helen McKay reported that there is £955 in our bank account and her application under the new grant system had been successful. A grant of £767 would be awarded in April 2015.
4. Community Resilience Plan. Helen McKay and Kate Marshall have had preliminary discussions. The key steps are: to understand which residents are vulnerable; to identify the risks in our area; compile a list of capabilities of any volunteers; lastly these vulnerabilities and offers of help must be discussed with the official emergency services to ensure that we complement one another rather than get in the way. She asked if another two or three people would be able to help so that we have a plan in place before next winter.
5. Neighbourhood plan. Julian Holbrook and Jo Gillies had presented the Neighbourhood Plan last week and Julian reported that the plan was endorsed. About 15 people were present and congratulated DDCC for the positive nature of our plan. The next step is to publish and circulate the plan and organise a launch. Thereafter an action plan based on the Neighbourhood Plan needs to be agreed.
6. Communications notice board. There are two possible locations – at the Secret Herb Garden and the lay-by on the straight just south of Damhead Nursery.

7. Planning/development issues

- Midlothian Development Plan. Midlothian Council discussed the MDP in private in December. There has not been a response to Kate Holbrook's FOI request but legally it should be answered by 6th February.

Publication is expected soon and then there will be a 6 week consultation [is this correct?]. Julian Holbrook suggests that we must meet to agree line shortly after the plan is release. These could be used as the basis for individual replies and a Council response.

If the road is taken forward it will contravene two policy statements in particular (protecting the green belt and good agricultural land) so we should make these points when responding to the MDP. Julian showed the land capability classification of our area – clearly the route of the road covers much of the good agricultural land. Although Midlothian Council are likely to claim to be implementing higher government targets for infrastructure and housing, the stated housing targets are actually greater than the central government target.

- Calderstones. Since the DDCC meeting we have discovered a website advertising Calderstones as a residential home for up to 4 young people with educational needs (google 'spark of genius').
- Film studio application. One view is that this proposal doesn't need public funding therefore there is less scope to influence planning. A decision by Creative Scotland on funding for a Glasgow film studio is expected soon. Several residents attended the open day but the route of road differed from the two options described in the Main Issues Report.

Heather McKay had spoken to Ian Johnston (Head of Planning, Midlothian Council) who confirmed that two routes east of Cameron Wood were consulted on; potential developers can propose changes but subsequent decisions would need to comply with the planning framework; pre-consultation is obligatory.

There are already a few letters on the website complaining about the pre-consultation process. Jim Telfer's daughter has complained to Head of Planning (Mary Smith) about the process, in particular the documents are misleading; actions are underhand, and the Charter is not being followed.

The film studio development is not consistent with our Neighbourhood Plan and there was a strong feeling that we had to resist both the film studio proposal and a new road. During the following discussion we suggested the following ways of bringing this to the attention of various stakeholders and decision makers:

1. Agree key lines
 - Save Jim's farm
 - Keep Damhead farming
 - Keep Damhead open
 - Where's the transparency?
 - No roads to nowhere
2. Social media campaign [Heather McKay and Holbrook junior?]
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Petition but at Midlothian-level
3. Press campaign [Gill Gray and Gareth Derbyshire]
 - Local radio
 - Local TV
 - Films (two offers, one within the comm.) [Kate and Julian]
 - Penicuik Cuckoo, Midlothian Advertiser, Private Eye, Herald,
4. Letters [Mary Turner]

5. Stakeholders [Julian Holbrook]:
 - Friendly organisations: Cockburn Society
 - Councillors/MSPs/Andrew Coventry is the newest Councillor. [Community Council should be the main point of contact]
 - Actors in Glasgow
 - Andy Wiseman “ the poor have no lawyers”
 - Farmers’ market
 - Films (two offers one within the comm.) [Kate and Julian Holbrook]
6. Direct Action [Duncan McCausland]
 - Banners
7. Fact sheets [Helen McKay, Graeme Buchan and Pippa Thomson],
 - file of letters
 - accurate record of planning

It is important to co-ordinate so we agreed that anyone from the Council and [Sub-group leads] should meet weekly (Sundays at 4pm) to review progress and agree next steps. Julian will check if we can meet at the Secret Herb Garden

- Proposed community buy-out Garden

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Helen