**Minutes of the Gifford Community Council meeting  
held** **on 15th April 2024 at Gifford Bowling Club**

**Participating** Adam White (Chair), Richard Austin, Eleanor Hulme, Wendy Ferguson, Nev Kilkenny, Hugh Broad, Rita Buchan and Jill Hyslop

**In Attendance** Cllr Tom Trotter, Mandy Harrington (VCEL), Paul Hurd and Roger Wilson

**Apologies** Dave Griffiths, Cllr John McMillan, Cllr Shamin Akhtar and Cllr George McGuire

**1** The meeting approved the minutes of 11th March (approved by Eleanor and Nev).

**2** Nothing to report on items completed since last meeting

**3 Matters Arising**

**3.1 Renewable Energy Projects**

Nothing to report (see attached planning report for current status).

**3.2 Defibrillators**

The Bowling Club defibrillator is now installed and ready for use. The Bowling Club committee need to put up the official signage and register the defibrillator on The Circuit.

**3.3 Nature Networks**

Eleanor met with council officials in March and was given mocked up visuals of planting ‘concepts’ for The Pound. The community will be consulted before anything is actioned. Eleanor will ask the council to arrange a consultation which community council will help to promote. **(ACTION: EH)**

At this point, Roger Wilson asked whether community council would support a village entry for this year’s Beautiful Scotland Awards. Interest to be noted by 30th April, presentation to be submitted by the end of June. After discussion, there was consensus that CC would give a firm commitment to preparing an entry in 2025. This would tie in with the Open Gardens schedule, the council’s nature network plans, and would give more time to respond to feedback received for the last entry.

**3.4 Airfield Memorial Plaque**

No update.

**3.5 Graveyard extension**

The proposed site has passed a Stage 1 desktop assessment. Council officials will now see what money is available for a Stage 2 assessment, which will involve soil analysis.

**3.6 Park Benches**

The timber has been cut and paint has been requested from the council. Nev will paint the new timber parts, then the repaired benches will be repainted at the Bleachfield by the Community Pay Back Team.

**4. Projects awaiting update from East Lothian Council**

**4.1 Resurfacing lane between Station Road/Tweeddale Crescent**

No update.

**5. External Reports**

**5.1 Police**

Our new Community Police Officer is PC Kiera Edmonds. Between 1st – 31st March there were 17 calls to the area, with 1 crime recorded involving a laser beam on an aircraft. East Lothian police are supporting a new Community Speed Watch scheme where volunteers will monitor traffic speed. Volunteers will not have any enforcement powers, but will be able to note the details of speeding vehicles at pre-approved sites. The registered keepers of the vehicles will then receive a letter advising them of their speed.

**5.2 Yester Estate**

Nothing to report (see planning report for recent application from Yester Estate).

**5.3 Gifford Community Woodland**

Nev reported good progress on annual tree safety work. Recent volunteer days have been well supported and he thanked Paul for lending his log splitter. The woodland is one of the shortlisted community charities that customers can vote for in store at the Haddington Tesco. Another block of Forest School will be starting shortly with a group from Yester Primary.

**5.4 East Lothian Council**

Councillor Trotter updated the meeting on recent council business.

**6 Internal Reports**

**6.1 Roads and Footpaths**

The road at Longnewton remains closed. Wendy reported that the flooding has worsened after more heavy rain. There is currently no consensus about responsibility. The council does have enforcement powers if the parties cannot agree between themselves.

**6.2 Lighting, Drains and Signs**

Dave reported before the meeting that the 8 lights on Park Road were now working. On drainage, there have been discussions with ELC about flooding problems that occur in the village whenever there’s heavy rain. A drainage upgrade on farmland is needed to solve the problem.

**6.3 Planning**

Please see attached report for planning applications within and outwith GCC Area.

**6.4 Finance**

Community Council has received its annual grant of £2,151 from East Lothian Council.

**6.5 Resilience**

Soup & Smile has paused for the summer. Wendy and Adam are looking for funding to re-start in autumn. Monthly fish & chips and Lunch Club will continue throughout the year.

**7 Correspondence**

**7.1 SEPA PVA Online Consultation.**

SEPA has launched a consultation to gather feedback about Potential Vulnerable Areas (PVAs) that are, or may become, prone to flooding. As we have 2 flood issues in the village and surrounding area, it was agreed to add this as an Agenda point for May’s meeting.

**7.2 Area Partnership Annual Public Meeting**

This will take place on Tuesday 14th May at 7pm in the Bridge Centre.

**7.3 AELCC Minutes**

These will be circulated to CC members after each meeting.

**8 AOB**

**8.1 BT problems**

Paul reported that BT had resolved the issue affecting his service, and he had been compensated for the cost of buying unnecessary new handsets.

**8.2 Edinburgh Road safety**

Rita was approached by a family concerned about traffic safety at the Edinburgh Road junction. Rita suggested that ‘children crossing’ signs could be useful, with one sign near the popular crossing point at Hoggs newsagents and another near the junction at Edinburgh Road. Jill to ask Ian Lennock (**ACTION: JH**)

**8.3 Noticeboard**

Silica gel will be added to the noticeboard to try to reduce condensation problems. To free up space, it was agreed that a shorter version of the minutes will be added to the noticeboard. People can contact CC if they would like to see the full minutes and can’t access them online.

**8.4 Parking at The Hopes**

It has been reported on local social media that the Scottish Water car park at the Hopes is no longer available for public use. Community Council will ask the Hopes if they wish to comment on the changes. It was agreed that it would be useful for the community to have access to a clear, factual statement about where you can and can’t park.

Date of next meeting: Monday 13th May

**APPLICATIONS WITHIN GCC AREA**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date Validated** | **GCC first discussed** | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 24/00362/P | Change of use of agricultural land for the installation of solar panels and associated works for domestic use | Land North Of 3 Castlemains Cottages Yester Gifford Haddington EH41 4PL | 15/04/24 | Apr 2024 | Seven ground mounted solar panels and GRP cabinet on agricultural land. | Awaiting decision |
| 24/00235/P | Installation of solar panels | 70-75 Walden Terrace Gifford East Lothian EH41 4QP | 14/03/24 | Apr 2024 | Installation of ten solar panels to roof and air source heat pumps to rear at six semi-detached properties in Walden Terrace | Awaiting decision |
| 24/00233/P | Alterations and extension to house | Muirlea High Street Gifford East Lothian EH41 4QU | 08/03/24 | Apr 2024 | Replacement of existing sun room and rear door to rear of property. | Awaiting decision |
| 24/00175/P | Erection of log cabin for ancillary residential accommodation | Yester House The Avenue Gifford East Lothian EH41 4JF | 01/03/24 | Mar 2024 | Two storey log cabin, comprising lounge, dining room, food prep room, two bedrooms and bathroom. Located adjacent to equestrian centre within Yester Estate. | Awaiting decision |
| 24/00151/P | Extension to house | Slateford House Gifford East Lothian EH41 4JB | 28/02/24 | Mar 2024 | New conservatory to replace existing. Same footprint and built on existing foundation wall. | Approved |
| 24/00124/P | Installation of air source heat pumps and solar panels | 32-37 Walden Place Gifford East Lothian EH41 4RA | 21/02/24 | Mar 2024 | Installation of solar panels to roof and air source heat pumps to rear and side walls. | Approved |
| 23/01485/P | Change of use of woodland area to domestic garden ground and installation of solar panels | Sunnyside Cottage Gifford East Lothian EH41 4JF | 16/02/24 | Mar 2024 | Change of use to formally incorporate existing woodland and open space into domestic garden. Felling of dead ash tree and overgrown plum trees to allow siting of ground mounted solar panels. Replanting of fruit trees within walled garden. | Awaiting decision |
| 24/00130/P | Alterations to house, installation of air source heat pump and erection of greenhouse | Feldon 31A Tweeddale Grove Gifford East Lothian EH41 4RB | 07/02/24 | Feb 2024 | Minor alterations to house and garage, installation of solar panels (including on flat garage roof), air source heat pump and greenhouse. | Approved |
| 24/00053/P | Siting of hut for recreational use and formation of hardstanding area | Land North Of Newlands Farm Gifford East Lothian | 02/02/24 | Feb 2024 | Siting of a shepherd’s hut for owner’s use, on hard standing adjacent to an existing grain store. | Approved subject to conditions preventing commercial letting, no connections to mains services and non-permanent foundations. |

**APPLICATIONS OUTWITH GCC AREA**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date Validated** | **GCC first discussed** | **Comments** | **Status** |
| None. |  |  |  |  |

**OTHER PLANNING MATTERS**

**Newlands Hill Wind Energy Hub (Belltown Power)**

The S36 application for the Newlands Hill project is under consideration by the Energy Consents Unit. The full application is available on the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit website [www.energyconsents.scot](http://www.energyconsents.scot), reference ECU00004603. All of the submission documents can also be accessed on Belltown Power’s project website.

**Dunside Wind Farm (EDF)**

Proposals were submitted to Scottish Government in July 2023 and are being considered. The full application is available on the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit website, reference ECU00003436.

**Solar panels at Crystal Rig Wind Farm (Fred Olsen Renewables)**

Plans can be viewed at [www.crystalrigwindfarm.com](http://www.crystalrigwindfarm.com)

**Longcroft Wind Farm (Renewable Energy Systems)**

This proposed development of 24 turbines would be approximately 9km north of Lauder in the Scottish Borders, lying to the south west of the existing Fallago Rig Wind Farm and to the west of the proposed Dunside Wind Farm. The northern edge of the development is some 15km south of Gifford. Project website is [www.longcroft-windfarm.co.uk](http://www.longcroft-windfarm.co.uk). The full application is available on the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit website, reference ECU00004774.